

has been, it appears to me, the one great reason why ornithology has not made the advance in Canada that it has in other countries, I take this opportunity of drawing attention to the matter.

Lest the reader might think that my idea of the extent and importance of the work yet required is exaggerated, I will quote some extracts bearing on this subject from letters of prominent Naturalists who have made a special study of American birds. These letters were addressed to me privately, and were not written for publication, but as the matter is exceedingly instructive, coming from such eminent authorities, I have asked permission to print it.

The following is from the pen of Prof. J. A. ALLEN, of the American Museum of Natural History, New York, who has been President of the American Ornithologists' Union ever since its formation, and who takes rank among the foremost of American Zoologists. Prof. ALLEN writes:

"I have long watched with interest the reports of the Canadian Survey, and have been disappointed to find the Natural History portion of the work receiving so small a share of attention, where the field is so inviting and as yet so little worked. The birds and mammals of British North America offer a particularly attractive field for research. While we know in a general way what species occur there, and somewhat of their distribution, many problems of exceeding interest in relation to North American birds and mammals can be settled satisfactorily only by means of extensive field-work and large series of specimens gathered in the great regions north of the United States. It is in this vast territory we are to look for many of the connecting links between various northern forms of birds and mammals. In respect to the latter we are especially lacking in material, the want of which seriously interferes with intelligent work. Doubtless not a few new species, and a considerable number of new sub-species, await discovery in Canadian territory; while our knowledge of the manner of occurrence and distribution of the birds and mammals generally in this region is extremely unsatisfactory. No portion of this continent north of Mexico offers so inviting a region for natural history exploration as the great northern interior, where only the most superficial harvest has been reaped."

Dr. ELLIOTT COUES, of Washington, whose brilliant scholarship has so enriched the literature of American ornithology, and who is the best known in Canada of recent authorities, writes to me thus: