

**Protection of
the Pelican**

One of the states that early adopted this bill was Florida. On the Atlantic coast of that state, in Indian river, there is an island of about four acres, where two thousand brown pelicans have been coming, from time whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary, to lay their eggs and rear their young. About the time this law was enacted long quills became very popular in the millinery trade. We found that millinery stores in the large cities were selling feathers taken from the bush turkey, the albatross, the brown pelican, and also from the old turkey buzzard of the south. A gentleman in the Florida Legislature arose and suggested the repeal of this law. He said it was ridiculous, that it protected the pelican, which fed on fish. Evidently he was not aware that these pelicans were feeding almost entirely upon menhaden, which is not usually esteemed as food. Furthermore, he said, the quills were worth two dollars a bird in New York markets, which made \$4,000 worth of feathers on this island, and we had quite a fight to keep the Legislature from being stampeded.

Then, as men might raid a bird colony, the question arose: Would it be possible to get the United States Government to take hold of that island in some way? In Florida there are two Federal courts. A man who kills a bird would rather be haled before a local magistrate, where the jury probably would be composed of friends and neighbours, who had killed birds themselves. In such a case it was a simple matter to leave the plough for a day and stand trial. But in a Federal court it is a different matter. A man may have to travel half way across the state to attend the court, he must appear before men who are strangers to him; and so it comes about that in the southern country men do not care to be haled into a Federal court.

**First Bird
Sanctuary
Established**

There did not seem to be any way whereby this federal control could be secured until the matter was finally taken up with the President. The President said in substance, "Is there any precedent for this sort of thing, or any law? What is the island good for, can you raise anything on it?" He was told, "No, one cannot raise corn, peanuts, razor-backed hogs, or, in fact, anything, on this island but pelicans, and there appears to be no specific law or precedent for the Government to create it as a bird reservation." Then he said, "If the land office will recommend that this land is not good for agricultural purposes we will make it a bird-reserve under the care of the Department of Agriculture, provided the Audubon Society will agree to hire a man to act as guardian on the island."

That suited us exactly. The chief clerk in the U.S. Land Office, Mr. Bond, is an Audubonian of long standing. In a very short time