

## Commission of Conservation CANADA

Dr. CLIFTON STURGEON, K.C.M.G.

Chairman.

JAMES WATTS

Assistant to Chairman and Deputy  
Head

CONSERVATION is published the first of each month. Its object is the dissemination of information relative to the natural resources of Canada, their development and proper conservation, and the publication of timely articles on town-planning and public health.

The newspaper edition is printed on one side of the paper only, for convenience in clipping for reproduction.

OTTAWA, MARCH, 1919

### MIGRATORY BIRD ACT STANDS

Some time ago, a wholly unfounded report was current that the United States legislation ratifying the Migratory Bird Treaty with Great Britain had been declared invalid by the United States Supreme Court. The constitution of the United States provides that a treaty is supreme and that any legislation which provides for the enforcement of the terms of a treaty cannot be declared unconstitutional, consequently the legislation passed by Congress last August giving the United States Department of Agriculture the authority to apply in the United States the terms of the treaty cannot be successfully attacked or this or any other grounds. A few years prior to the ratification of the Migratory Bird Treaty, Congress had passed legislation which purported to give protection to migratory birds, and it was desirable that it be declared invalid that all conflict with the 1918 act be avoided. The act of August, 1918, has not been attacked and cannot be attacked successfully.

### REGISTER OF POPULATION

As the census registration in Great Britain is made only decennially and, therefore, rapidly becomes out of date, the necessity for a national register of population was urged at a recent meeting of the Commission for the Reconstruction of the National Birth-rate. Again, there are, at the present time, only partial registers, which are independently compiled and maintained and the information they contain is seldom available for the purpose of comparison.

The Registrar General proposes that a single master register should be kept to include the name of every man, woman and child in the country, with particulars of name, address, sex, age, occupation, date of birth, together with information as to marriage and family.

As no single register could possibly contain all useful information, it is proposed to link up each unit with the master register as part of a co-ordinated system; providing for the communication to each of the special registers of information of common interest collected by the general registers. For this purpose, the master register might record, in code form, the necessary particulars and information respecting removals, and these could be communicated to the local branches as required.

Registers of this kind would, of course, deal with many millions of names and would necessarily have to be arranged by districts. At the same time, an index to the local registers would be kept at headquarters. To this central index, would also be referred all births, deaths and removals.

The objection that this new proposal reveals family secrets, is without foundation inasmuch as it would not increase the present statutory powers of the Registrar-General. It would simply alter the form in which it is now collected.

After the case had been presented and fully discussed, the Commission resolved:

"That, in view of the National Birth-rate Commission, there is immediate need for the improvement of the vital statistics upon which all its conclusions must be based by the formation of a joint register on the lines advocated by the Registrar-General."

The application of a similar scheme based on the present form of collection of births, marriages and deaths in Canada by the provinces could be undertaken by the Dominion Government and incorporated as a part of the functions of a National Department of Health. We have followed the English system of decennial census returns. If out of date in Britain, it is equally out of date in Canada. Great Britain is anxious to keep her hand on the pulse of national vitality and the method here outlined is a means to that end. We, in Canada, have not the means of securing a national return of vital statistics which is adequate for this purpose. The scheme suggested is a proper one and the example set us should be copied with such adaptations as the relationships now existing in this matter as between the federal, provincial and municipal authorities may call for.

—C. A. Hodgetts, M.D.

### MANUFACTURE OF CARBOCOAL

In the manufacture of carbo-coal, a high-volatile coal, after crushing, is distilled at a low temperature, 850° F. to 900° F. This first distillation yields gas and tar and a product, called "semi-carbo-coal," which is high in carbon. The first distillation is continuous, the coal being agitated and mixed by a twin set of paddles. Thus all portions of the charge are uniformly distilled.

After mixing the semi-carbo-coal with part of the pitch obtained from the tar produced in the first distillation, the mixture is briquetted. The briquettes are then subjected to a second distillation at about 1,800° F., which yields carbo-coal, additional tar, and gas and a substantial amount of ammonium sulphate.

Carbo-coal is dense, dustless, clean, uniform in size and quality, and stands transportation without distintegration; its density is greater than that of coke and more nearly approaches that of anthracite; the briquettes can be made in any size from 1/2 oz. to 5 oz., the larger sizes being better suited for locomotives and the smaller for domestic use; the yield of tar and ammonium sulphate is greater than in the by-product coking process.

—James White.

### SPRING TIME IS PAINT TIME

At the recent annual meeting of the Commission of Conservation, Hon. Senator Edwards made the statement that unless Canada exercised more care with her forest resources, the day was not far distant when we would be without our supplies of lumber.

While this statement referred particularly to the protection of forests, it might with equal force be applied to the protection of our buildings, fences, farm implements, etc., for the reason that, in the latter case, there is not only the value of the original forest product to protect, but also the value of the human energy necessary for the transformation of that timber into its various wood products.

Spring, from time immemorial has been known as house-cleaning time. During recent years this period has developed a popular slogan, "Clean up and paint up." As a conservation measure this would be hard to improve upon. Wood, when exposed to the weather without protection soon deteriorates, it bears a shabby and neglected appearance, and is in a great majority of cases but an indication of the enterprise or carelessness of the owner.

Nothing adds more to the appearance of a building than a coat of paint; nothing will do more to protect the woodwork and prolong its life than covering it with a paint preservative. With building conditions as expensive as at present, and with the necessity of employing the available help in the construction of new houses, it is essential that present construction be protected.

Our soldiers are coming home, they are coming from a country of homes, where thrift is paramount, where the people take pride in their premises and keep them in the best condition. Can we not, this spring, bear this in mind, and let our boys see that the home folks have awakened to the advantages of cleaning up and painting up, that their homes bear that well-kept and cheery appearance that bids them welcome?

### WAYSIDE HOSPITALITY FOR WILD GEESE

"Next spring it was asked; will the geese come back? On the 18th of March I heard a strange honking and I looked up and saw that they were coming—thirty-two of them. They came down within one hundred feet of us and I walked out near them and they didn't fly away. I had the privilege of seeing them introduce their families. The boys shot ten, and that left twenty-two to go away. . . . They started coming (the next year) on the 20th day of February. . . . When the first was lighting in the pond, I couldn't see the end of the string of those families that were coming.

"I don't know whether you have experienced it, but I have and there is nothing more embarrassing than to have more guests than you can feed. There I was, on Good Friday of 1913, with a five-acre field full of wild geese. We couldn't begin to feed them; some of the geese must have told their friends what was not true and induced them to come to a place where there was not enough to eat. We brought the feed close to the house and let the tamer ones come there to eat. I was speaking at the Rotary Club in London the other day, and one gentleman asked me how I moved the birds. "This was my explanation to him: If you want to move the people, or a certain percentage of them—present company always excepted, of course,—move a keg of beer out to West London and you will get along. If you want to move your birds, keep moving the food accordingly, and pretty soon you can put the spoon in your mouth and the birds will light on it."—Jack Miner at The National Conference on Game and Wild Life Protection.

### FREAK CONDITIONS IN THE FISH INDUSTRY

There is no accounting for tastes, and that is being shown every day in the week in some sphere of life. In the fish industry, one has only to turn to those persons whose chief delight is to gorge themselves with a dish of devilfish. Some persons call it devilfish; in the east it is sometimes classed as sea-cat, while in the waters of the Gulf of Mexico, where it is sometimes taken in large quantities, it is called octopus or octopi. It makes very little difference what the name may be, the fish is considered a delicacy by Italians, Greeks, Japanese and Chinese. Five or six years ago devilfish sold in the Vera Cruz markets for about 35 cents a pound. Now, with the additional high cost of living, it is bringing higher prices, sales during the present week being made at 75 cents a pound, wholesale. Who says fish is high in price when devilfish brings more money in the wholesale market than any other variety outside of Kennebec salmon when it first comes to market?—The Fishing Gazette.

### BETTER AGRICULTURE

At our first Annual Meeting, the late Mr. C. C. James said that the solution of the problem of better agriculture was not the taking of the farmer to the experimental farm, but the taking of the experimental farm to the farmer. The latter was the policy adopted by us in initiating illustration farms, in each province. Later, we transferred these farms to the Dominion Department of Agriculture, that they might be extended and carried on a much larger scale than our limited financial resources would permit. In addition, maintaining these illustration farms after we have attained our object, namely, the demonstration of their great value as educational agents, would have been semi-administrative work, which we have resolutely eschewed.—James White, at Tenth Annual Meeting of the Commission of Conservation.