

fires will largely cease and trees will have an opportunity to extend their area of growth in every direction. Further, as cultivation increases and a drainage system is more generally carried out, summer frosts will largely disappear and the climate become more suitable for forest trees as well as grain. The extension of the forests will, no doubt, have its effect in somewhat increasing the rainfall, but will also afford breaks to the winds which now prevail. The general effect must be a modification of the climate in some degree, probably rendering the atmosphere less dry and somewhat moderating the cold in winter.

THE PROTECTION OF NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS.

By ALFRED H. MASON, F.C.S.

A communication on this subject having been addressed to the Society by Mr. Montague Chamberlain, a member of the Council of the "American Ornithologists' Union" and Canadian Superintendent of that union, the Council of the society decided that it was a subject of importance to naturalists, and I was invited to bring the matter forward.

The American Ornithologists' Union was organised in 1883 at New York, at a convention of the leading scientific workers in that branch of study. The object of the Union is to advance the study of ornithology and to organise for systematic and combined action in the determination of important questions. It has issued a new classification of North American Birds, established a successful journal "The Auk," and organised and made successful a very large body of observers of the phenomena of bird migration. Allen, Baird, Coues, Merriman, Ridgway and Henshaw, are among the leading professional Zoologists of America.

AUTHOR'S NOTE.—This paper consists mainly of a résumé of the work of the American Ornithological Union, and of extracts from its recent circular, and the chief object aimed at is to aid in directing general attention to the ruthless destruction of birds.