

over the prairie on our arrival our driver pointed to the grass just appearing through the dead mat of last season's growth and remarked that it should be from 8 to 10 inches high. The poplars were just coming into leaf and the few oaks in the big woods behind the camp were still bare and gaunt. Though the day of our arrival was oppressively hot a change came before we had pitched camp and thereafter we had raw, cold weather during most of our stay, with ice forming in the pails of water at night and towards the middle of June we were glad to have our stove in the working tent even throughout the warmth of the day.

The lake is subject to sudden cyclonic squalls and high winds. The former burst suddenly out of clear skies, whirl a cloud of dust and debris high in the air, and subside as quickly as they rise. On one occasion we saw where a boulder of consider-

lake, but evidently are becoming fewer each year. Waders still visited the shores, and birds were fairly numerous. We had no difficulty in obtaining as many specimens as we were able to prepare. Unfortunately in shipping our collections to the Museum one box, containing the majority of our small birds, was lost in transit. Manitoba is the most eastern of the prairie provinces and one of the most important subjects of geographical distribution in Canada is the location of the meeting points of prairie forms with those of the eastern woodlands. As the determination of these fine subspecific points must be based directly upon specimens the loss of them was serious and it was largely to replace them that Mr. Young returned to Shoal Lake the spring of 1918, spending from April 23 to October 2 on the same grounds we had occupied the previous spring.

He arrived just after the ice had broken up on



The shores of Shoal lake in 1917-18: view near camp.
The shores were of this character everywhere.

able size had been rolled over and over on the mud shores by a particularly vicious twister. The squalls do not last long but they try tent material and pegs. The steadier wind storms are violent and sustained and during our stay several of them tested the texture of our canvas and raised anxiety for our specimens and effects. I would advise all future campers to select sheltered spots for their quarters.

In the fall the writer spent from September 17 to 26 in the same neighbourhood to obtain an idea of the autumnal conditions and to fill some of the gaps of the spring work. It was after the first frosts and while the days were warm and pleasant, the nights verged on freezing.

We were disappointed in not finding any great breeding ground for water birds; a few ducks still remained in spite of the altered conditions of the

lake and the ducks and geese, after being confined to the narrow strip of open water between the shore and the main ice field, had repaired to mid-lake where they could be occasionally seen and even recognized but seldom collected. He found the land slightly if any wetter than it had been the previous fall, and where we had waded thigh-deep in the spring was dry and growing hay. April and May were very dry, the restriction of marshy areas increased apace and heavy rains in July failed to replenish them even temporarily. Consequently, the ducks and water birds that remained in 1917 deserted the vicinity and very few bred in 1918.

Mr. Young worked all the adjoining country in the neighbourhood of the Ward homestead as far as it was possible on foot and made several