

BIRD PROTECTION IN CANADA.

Canadian conservationists are to be congratulated upon the success so far achieved in bird protection in the Dominion. Probably the most important step ever taken in any country in this direction is the ratification of the International Migratory Bird Convention with the United States whereby the two great North American powers are bound to co-operate in the protection of migratory game and other birds. This is now the law of the land and founded upon international treaty.

In addition to a number of bird reservations created in the west we have lately achieved the following in the east: Point Pelee, Ontario, on Lake Erie, established as a wild life sanctuary; its unique bird life will be permanently retained in coming Canadian generations and a place reserved for them where they may see and hear the Mocking Bird, Cardinal, Carolina Wren and other southern birds of song and story within our own borders.

Lately, a bill has passed the Quebec Parliament preserving Percé Rock, the bird ledges of Bonaventure Island, and Bird Rock, all in the Gulf Coast, as permanent bird havens, and the threatened destruction of some of our national wonders is prevented.

The next serious protection problem is the condition of bird life on the north shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the "Canadian Labrador." Today we have every reason for serious effort in this direction,—economic, that a necessary food supply shall not be lost to the inhabitants of this bleak and desolate coast; sentimental, that no form of innocent life perish from the face of the earth; and moral, that we live up to the conditions and responsibilities imposed upon us and agreed to by us in the solemn treaty we have entered into. The following correspondence from those who speak from first hand observation on the Labrador coast, will indicate how critical this question is and how necessary it is that all join together in assisting and supporting Dominion officials in this direction.

BOSTON, MASS., DECEMBER 11, 1918.

To the Editor of THE OTTAWA NATURALIST:

The following note received by me from Dr. Robert T. Morris, of New York, which he has allowed me to use in any way that will do good, is deserving of the widest publicity.

The chapter he refers to in my book was published in advance in 1916 in the seventh annual report of the Commission of Conservation of Canada, and describes in detail the terrible destruction of bird life on the coast of the Labrador Peninsula. The subject is so important, if the bird life of this region is to be saved, that I have taken the liberty

of quoting from this chapter some suggestions which I believe to be of vital importance.

"What then is to be done? Is there no hope for the birds and for the people to whom the birds are such a valuable asset? I think there is. I believe that the whole problem can be solved most rationally and satisfactorily for all concerned by the immediate establishment of *bird reservations*. These should be islands or groups of islands or suitable portions of the main coast that can be watched by guardians. Here the birds should be undisturbed and allowed to rest, feed and breed in peace. The people should be made to understand that these reservations are not established to cut down their hunting, and thereby invite poaching and violation of the laws, but for the purpose of preserving and increasing the birds so that there shall be better shooting for everybody on the coast.

"A campaign of education is necessary, therefore, and I believe that the bird reservation will do more good in making the people understand, not only the need of bird conservation, but its advantages. The game wardens will be looked upon, not as enemies to be avoided and cheated, but as friends who are working for the people's good. If the matter is well managed, the people will regard their reservation with pride, and public opinion will keep the birds there inviolate. The wasted regions near fishing villages now devoid of all sea-bird life on the one hand and the crowded bird reservations on the other will be powerful object lessons in this process of education. I would suggest the placing of a brief notice on each reservation, printed in English, as well as in French, Montagnais or Eskimo, where these languages are used, worded somewhat as follows:

"BIRD RESERVATION

"The purpose of this reservation is to preserve the birds from destruction and to increase their numbers, so that there will be better shooting on the coast. The people are asked not to disturb the birds or their eggs on this reservation and to avoid the use of guns in its neighborhood."

CHARLES W. TOWNSEND.

616 Madison Ave.,

NEW YORK CITY, NOVEMBER 15, 1918.

To DR. CHARLES WENDELL TOWNSEND,

98 Pinckney St.,

Boston, Massachusetts.

Your treatment of the subject of conservation in Labrador in the book, "In Audubon's Labrador", which I have read with great interest, meets with my approval or more than that. On my trips to the Gulf Coast of Labrador and on the eastern coast