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ONTARIO'S BIG GAME.

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A PAPER in a recent number of *The Century Magazine*, by Mr. Madison Grant, has suggested the thought of how little is known, and how little has been written, about the game in the Province of Ontario. It is not improbable that there is no other region where game is so abundant near the habitations of civilization; yet, very little is known about the haunts and habits of our wild animals, except by the trapper and hunter.

With the exception of the able, and, as a book of reference, valuable report of the Fish and Game Commission, recently published by the Ontario Government, there has been scarcely an effort made by any writer to draw the attention of the public to the fact, that as a field for the sportsman, the Province of Ontario stands second to no province or state on this continent.

It is to be regretted that amongst the numerous newspaper correspondents and others of literary ability, who spend a considerable portion of every summer rustivating amidst the beauties of our northern wilds, scarce one seems to know anything at all about the vast hordes of the lordly moose, the caribou, and, although much smaller, the still more graceful red deer, which roam through our backwoods.

It is the opinion of most people that game is not now as plentiful in Ontario as it was in the early days of the century. This opinion is correct so far as it applies to the settled parts of the province. But probably the moose, the caribou and the red deer, and, with the exception of the beaver, the fur-bearing animals generally, were never more numerous in the backwoods of the province than they now are. We must not overlook the fact that a century ago they formed the staple food of the Indian tribes which peopled nearly the whole of our wilds. But this cause of the destruction of the game is now, in many parts, entirely removed.

Some persons blame the Indians for the almost total extinction of the beaver during the last few years. But this is entirely erroneous. The full-blooded aborigine, although noted for his improvidence, is not ignorant of the consequences of killing the goose that lays the golden eggs, and was ever careful, while he had the hunting-ground to himself, not to destroy in one season more than half the beaver in any pond or lake.

So, also, with the moose and deer: there was no slaughtering for the skins alone, leaving the carcasses to rot in the woods and taint the atmosphere, or to be used as bait for bears and