

# Conservation

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## Protecting Our Feathered Friends

### Increase of Destruction by Insects due to Decrease of Insectivorous Birds in Canada

In any discussion of the protection of bird life in Canada, considerable opposition has always been manifested by the agricultural interests. It is claimed that birds are responsible for great damage to maturing fruits, berries, tomatoes, etc., and, earlier in the season, to the seed planted in the ground. This is true to a certain extent. But, as in the study of any subject, there are two sides to the bird protection question. The damage to the fruit is visible to the eye of the grower, and he consequently makes wroth.

The other side of the subject is one with which the agriculturist is less familiar. Could the birds save their daily food before those hostile to them, it would readily be seen to what extent they serve the interests of those who are dependent upon the products of the soil.

An analysis of the contents of the stomachs of thousands of birds has shown that 90 per cent. of the food consisted of insects and 10 per cent. of vegetable matter. Inwards of 5,000 insects have been found in the stomach of one bird. It has been estimated that the destruction by insects in Canada amounts to approximately fifty million dollars annually. Last year the tent caterpillar was very prevalent; this year the army worm

made its appearance and is doing great loss to the farmers in certain sections. It is known that, with the decrease in the number of birds which annually breed in Canada in the spring, there has been a constant increase in the destruction by insects. It has also been stated that, if all birds were destroyed, seven years would see the end of vegetation in Canada. This has been the reason for an active campaign for the protection of birds. The United States Congress has passed an act for the protection of migratory birds, and interested parties are bringing the matter before the attention of the Canadian Government.

Apart altogether from the practical view of bird life, there is the sentimental side. What would

TO EDITORS—Newspapers are invited to give prominence to the following, as this is the usual season for forest fires.

## Rules for Care with FIRE in the Woods

IF EVERY PERSON STRICTLY OBSERVED THESE SIMPLE RULES, THE GREAT ANNUAL LOSS BY FOREST FIRES WOULD BE REDUCED TO A MINIMUM

1. Be sure your match is out before you throw it away.
2. Knock out your pipe ashes or throw your cigar or cigarette stump where there is nothing to catch fire.
3. Don't build a camp fire any larger than is absolutely necessary. Never leave it, even for a short time, without putting it OUT with water or earth.
4. Don't build a camp fire against a tree or a log. Build a small one where you can scrape away the needles, leaves or grass from all sides of it.
5. Don't build bonfires. The wind may rise at any time and start a fire which you cannot control.
6. If you discover a fire, put it out if possible; if you can't, inform the nearest Forest Ranger or Fire Warden as quickly as you possibly can.

Canada be like without our feathered friends? If we could no longer look forward to the arrival of the first spring robin, or of the wren of the wild canary, something would be missing from our lives which we could not replace.

This is a subject which should engage the attention of school boards and teachers. The pupils should be taught to protect our feathered friends and their nests. The Boy Scout movement has taken up the protection of bird life and in their hands good work is being done.

## Homes for Workingmen in Suburbs

Toronto Housing Co. will extend its Work to the Cheap Lands in the Outskirts of City

The Toronto Housing Company, having practically completed its building plan originally laid out for work within the city, to supply

homes for workmen, is now arranging to extend the scope of its activities. Under the Housing Act of the Province of Ontario, 1913, the City of Toronto guaranteed the bonds of the Housing Company, with a restriction that the money be expended within the City of Toronto. Experience has, however, demonstrated that there is a greater field of usefulness in the utilization of cheaper lands outside of the city limits. The Housing Company believes that, by acquiring cheap lands and leasing to the workman or home-builder, and then either building or assisting him to build a home for himself, under proper housing and sanitary regulations, it will be able to do more to solve the housing problem than by building within the city. In order to permit this work to be carried on outside the city limits, the Toronto City Council has consented to the removal of the restriction on the field of operation originally contained in the company's charter.

## TO NEWSPAPERMEN

To further public interest in conservation subjects, the Commission will lend to Canadian journals the cuts used in this bulletin.

As there are only a limited number of these cuts, delays are sometimes unavoidable, but orders will always be filled as soon as possible after receipt of application. It is requested that cuts be made use of at the earliest possible date, and returned promptly, enclosing note showing by whom sent. We shall be pleased to receive copy of publication in which the illustration appears.

As the Post Office Department will no longer permit the franking of cuts, the Commission of Conservation will pay the postage on out-going packages of the understanding that publications requesting the use of cuts prepay return postage.

## Financial Aspects of Fur-Farming

Continued Growth of the Industry—Dangers in Company Promotion to be Avoided

Phenomenal as was the development of the fur-farming industry in 1913, the present year, in all probability, will easily outstrip it. Scores of farmers throughout Canada, and especially in the Maritime provinces, are commencing the breeding of fur-bearing animals. Heavily capitalized companies are being organized on every hand for a similar purpose, although it is now three years since the industry entered upon its first boom. This unusual condition is due, in part at least, to the fact that capitalization values are at present based on stock for breeding purposes, but it can only be a question of time before values are reduced to a pelt basis. Moreover, the extensive importation of wild-fox stock into the Maritime provinces stimulates and maintains the interest that is being taken in this form of investment. The danger of over-capitalizing such untried stock should be, and doubtless is, discouraged by those having the best interests of the industry at heart.

It is worthy of note that at the March sales of C. M. Lamson & Co., the London fur dealers, very little demand was found for black fox skins. To quote the company's report of the sale: "A feature of the sale was the entire absence of the demand for black (fox) skins, which in many instances brought less than former values."

"This is a serious matter to the breeders of black foxes in eastern Canada, as values will assuredly be lower when the supply of this class of skins is largely increased."

It is unfortunate that some form of commission, such as exists in Manitoba, is not to be found in each of the provinces, to check and prevent questionable promotions which bring into disrepute an otherwise legitimate and profitable industry.—A. D.

Only a few years have passed since it first dawned upon a people who had revelled in plenty for a century that the richest patrimony is not proof against constant and careless waste; that a nation of spenders must take thought for its morrow or come to poverty.—James J. Hill.