Survey Shows Birds' Service to Agriculture

Many Species Falsely Accused of Hurting Crops, Federal Bureau Finds

Insects Principal Food

Destruction of Weed Seeds is Another Useful Habit

Whether birds are useful or injurious to crops depends upon what they eat. Many birds are accused of eating or destroying this or that crop when in reality the accusation is unfounded. Because of this the Bureau of Biological Survey of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, says "The Pathfinder," has spent many years in a systematic investigation of the food of those species which are most common about the farm and garden. Within certain limits, says this authority, birds eat the kind of food that is most accessible, especially when their natural foods are scarce.

The investigation revealed that the great majority of land birds subsist upon insects during the period of nesting and molting, and also feed their young upon them during the first few weeks. Many species were found to live almost entirely upon insects, taking vegetable food only when the former were not obtainable. Because of this it is difficult to estimate the value of birds to the farmer in restraining the great tide of insect life. Another useful function of birds is the destroying of weed seeds. In winter when insects become scarce the birds turn to vegetable food such as seeds of weeds.

One of the most familiar and welcome of our feathered visitors is the bluebird. It is one of the earliest northern migrants, and everywhere is hailed as a harbinger of spring. So far as known the bluebird has never been accused of stealing fruit or of preying upon crops. Nearly 70 per cent. of its food consists of insects and their allies, while over 30 per cent. is made up of various vegetable substances. But so far as vegetable food is concerned the bluebird is positively harmless. The western species of this bird is even more commendable in its food habits than its eastern relative.

Robin Pays Its Way

In many parts of the country the robin is one of the most cherished of our birds. It is found throughout the United States, far north through Canada and even in Alaska. The robin is an omnivorous feeder and its food habits cometimes cause apprehension to fruit growers. It is fond of cherries and other small fruits. But examination of over a thousand stomachs showed that more than 42 per cent. of its food is animal matter, principally insects, while the remainder is made up largely of small fruits, mostly wild. Although robins take a small amount of cultivated fruits, it must be remembered that they are a natural enemy of the insect world, and that they work during the whole season to make the crops possible. Thus when the fruit-ripening period comes they already have a standing account with the farmer for services rendered.

According to a department bulletin the very character of the food of birds of the titmice family gives a peculiar value to their services to the farmer. It is in the winter season that titmice do their greatest work. When there are no insects flying or crawling about these birds must feed upon such species as they find hibernating in crevices or upon the eggs of insects laid in similar places. There are some seventeen species of titmice in this country and as many subspecies. Nearly 70 per cent. of their food consists of animal matter. The former is made up of small caterpillars and moths and their eggs. Titmice are known as chickadees. Examination of the stomcahs of these birds revealed that they contained injurious insects to the extent of over 50 per cent. The vegetable food of this species seems to consist most of broken up seeds.

House Wren Friend of Farmer

The food habits of the diminutive house wren are entirely beneficial to the farmer. They live principally upon animal food—98 per cent. insects and their allies and only 2 per cent. vegetable matter. The house wren is only one of a numerous group of birds of similar habits.

International Finance

London Referee (Cons.): There will soon be no one in control of credit who is not also an international financier. Are international financiers desirable custodians of the fate of nations? Will their activities tend to world peace or to world war? Observe how two groups of them love one another when they fall out! Observe their callousness towards communities when they work together!

Immigration

London Morning Post (Cons.): Canada moves more slowly than the United States because she has a smaller population. If she desires to take her share in the development of the Continent, it is a little difficult to see why she follows her present policy of restricting immigration from the Mother Country.

Foresees British Industrial Revival

American Magnate Declares Methods Will Be British and Not American

New York.—Through business methods that will be British and not American, the British Empire, within the next 20 years, will experience the greatest industrial renaissance of modern history. This was the opinon expressed in New York by Robert W. Johnson, American industrialist and vice-president of Johnson & Johnson, New Brunswick, N.J., on his return from Europe.

"My tour of English industrial cities and my conversations with British industrialists and Parliament members of the younger generation confirm a conclusion to which I had been moved by eight years' study of world markets for American business," said Johnson.

"I am convinced that Great Britain is to experience the greatest industrial revival of modern history. I feel equally certain that the methods by which this renaissance is to be brought about will be typically English and not adaptations of practices learned in America or any other country.

Records of British Members Is Sought

London.—An undertaking promising the collection of vast, hitherto untapped sources of information for all whose ancestors have taken part in the British political life of past generations is promised by the project to which 200 members of the House of Commons have now signed a memorial in support. It is for the Government to appoint a committee to prepare a complete record of members of Parliament from 1264 to 1832, describing their personalities, political views and elections.

Col. Josiah Wedgewood has already collected the particulars for the Staffordshire members. Sir Martin Conway, Sir Charles Oman, John Buchan and Sir Robert Hamilton are also cooperating.

Scots Australians Tour Industrial Towns in Britain

Plymouth, Eng.—Six hundred Scottish Australians have arrived here for a tour of British industrial towns. Every one is of Caledonian descent, and the tour will end in Scotland after visits to Exeter, Salisbury, London, York, Newcastle and Scottish towns, finishing in Inverness. Each individual selected has been successful in his particular calling.

Sugar, cotton and fruit growers from Queensland, wheat farmers from South and Western Australia, Victoria wool farmers, wool manufacturers, cattlemen, timber merchants, fish canners, iron and steel masters from the big cities are mixed with bankers, merchants and industrial salesmen.

The object of the visit is to bring similar types of business men in the British Isles into contact for their mutual benefit. It is also felt that actual testimony from those who have succeeded will do much to dispel misgivings among possible intending emigrants.

Over Fifty Minerals Being Produced

A notable feature of the progress of the Dominion as a mining country is the diversity of lines along which Canadian mining has advanced. Some fifty different minerals, metallic and non-metallic, are listed in the production figures for 1926, and this number includes a variety such as nickel, cobalt, asbestos, gold, lead, silver, copper, and zinc, in which Canada either leads world production or ranks among the greater producing nations.

Nova Scotia's Salt Deposits

In Nova Scotia many attempts had been made to turn to commercial use some of the numerous salt springs found in various parts of the province, but until the discovery of valuable salt beds near Malagash, in Cumberland county, no important salt industry had been developed. Since 1919 there has been an important and growing production of rock salt from the Malagash mine, which finds a ready market especially in the fish-curing industry of the Maritimes and of Newfoundland.

Call on 35 Meters Comes Out of North

Montreal, Que.—Isolated in a far north mission, with radio as his only contact with the outside, Father L. Ducharme is anxious to get into communication with amateurs on 35 metres.

In a letter written April 10 at the Roman Catholic Mission at Chesterfield Inlet, far up on the west coast of Hudson Bay, Father Ducharme says that he has called repeatedly on the short wave lengths but could get no response. He adds that he plans to come on the air each Saturday night just as KDKA, Pittsburgh, signs off in the hope of getting a contact.

Doubly Romantic

WON 14,000-MILE RACE

Finish Barque Hergozin Cecilie reached Cardiff 96 days out of Australia. Below is Jennie Day, 24, an artist, who was a stowaway discovered on the ship nearly starved.

Ontario's Mines Show Progress

Hon. Charles McCrea is Optimistic of Canada's Mineral Future

Ottawa.—During the first three months of this year the value of mineral output of this province had exceeded the corresponding months last year by $1, 250,000, Hon. Charles McCrea, Provincial Minister of Mines, recently said. "Within the next 25 years Canada, and especially Ontario, will have reached a degree of prosperity beyond the bounds of realization at the present time," he said.

"We are only beginning to raise the curtain upon the vast mineral resources which lie beneath the great pre-Cambrian shield of the earth. And fully 95 per cent. of these resources lie wholly within Canada," he said. He then went on to speak of the pre-Cambrian layer of the earth's crust as the greatest mineral bearing stratum known to exist in the entire world.

He told of properties lying in the Province of Manitoba which contain $500,000,000 worth of minerals, which await the spade of the miner.

The American Move

London Times (Ind.): The United States is for the first time for years entering upon an international negotiations. That is all the greater reason why the British Government should strongly support this initiative.

Grand Banks Ice Patrol Is Reviewed by Comm. Gabbett

Coast Guard Cutter Mojave Arrives at Halifax; Daily Broadcast Is Made

Halifax, N.S.—The work of the international ice patrol this season was reviewed by Commander Cecil M. Gabbett, of the United States Coast Guard cutter Mojave, when the vessel put in here after its second tour of duty on the Grand Banks. It was the first time that the Mojave, which alternates on patrol with the cutter Modoc at fortnightly intervals, had called here. Commander Gabbett reported that weather conditions, on the whole, had been excellent since the patrol was begun in March, although during the Mojave's second tour five days of continuous fog were encountered.

The Mojave, like the Modoc, is electrically driven, and is one of the few vessels of that type afloat. The ship is equipped with every modern aid to navigation, including a fathometer which tells the depth of water under the vessel by means of sound waves. The radio equipment permits transmission of mesasges over a radius of 2,000 miles, and daily reports are sent to Washington. On her present cruise the Mojave transmitted a total of 70,000 words by radio. Four broadcasts are sent out daily to inform steamers of the position of icebergs south and east of the Grand Banks, and steamers in communication with the cutter are requested to report the position and description of any other bergs sighted. These are carefully plotted on a chart and a complete record is kept of the movement of the bergs until they melt or drift out of the trans-Atlantic steamship lanes.

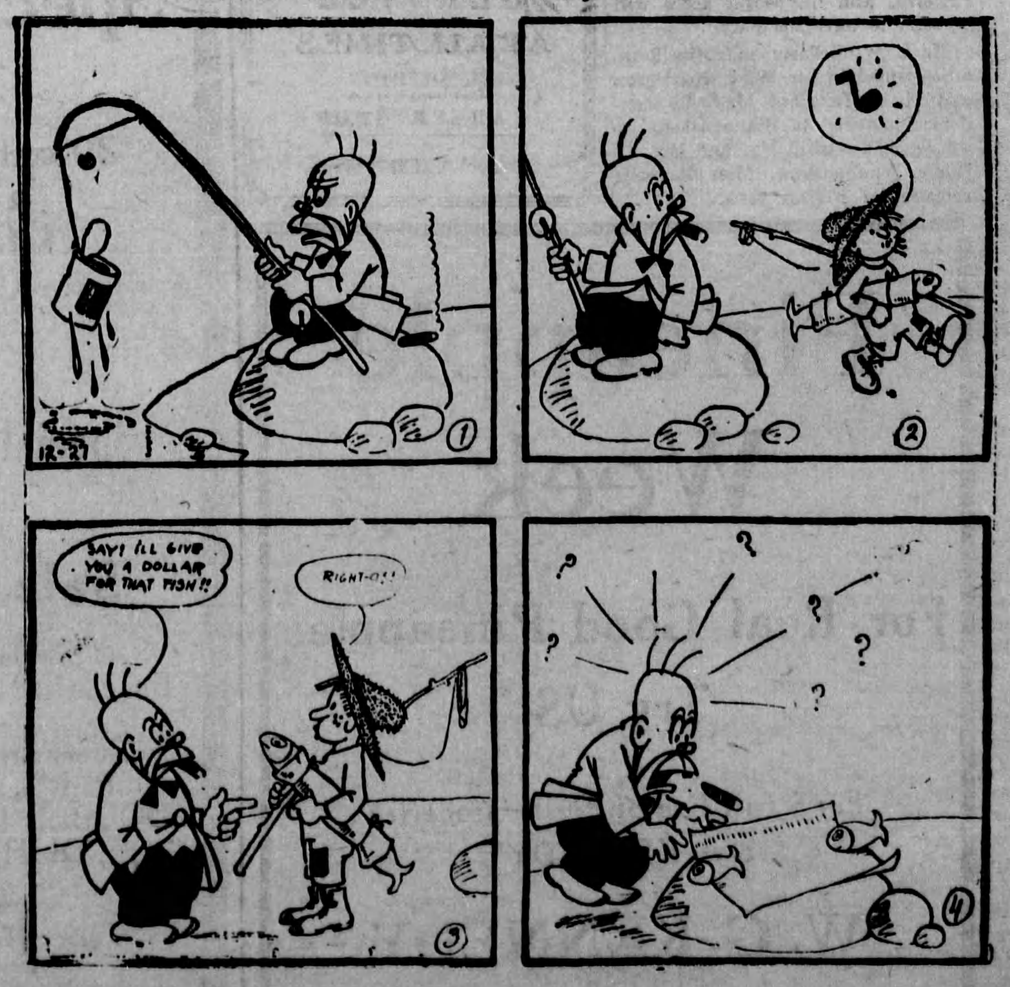
From the glaciers in the far north about 500 icebergs drift down into the steamship lanes during a normal season, but last year only 350 bergs were reported as a result of the cool weather. It was one of these mountains of ice into which the steamship Titanic crashed to sink with a loss of 1,500 lives in April, 1912. It was as a result of that disaster that the international ice patrol was established by the United States under an agreement with several other nations. As an example of the work of the patrol, Commander Gabbett reported that on the present cruise the cutter received a wireless message from a large passenger liner that she was in a dense fog and asking if any icebergs were near by. The steamer gave her position and speed, and by referring to their charts the Mojave officers were able to give warning that the steamer was in danger of colliding with a large berg. The steamer changed her course and the danger was thus averted.

The Mojave and the Modoc will remain on patrol until the iceberg menace has passed. During the patrol the morale of the 110 members of the crew is kept at a high point by frequent exhibition of motion pictures and other entertainment, and when the cutter is in her home port at Boston dances are conducted weekly aboard the vessel.

Canada Boys Win Cup in Shoot

London.—Canada won the King's Special Challenge Trophy for 1927 in the miniature rifle shooting competition for boys of the British Empire. Canada's average for 3,000 boys who competed was 79.2 points out of a possible 100.

ADAMSON'S ADVENTURES—By O. Jacobsson.



Amundsen Bid To Aid Recalls Nobile Feud

Veteran Explorer of Arctic Forgets Dispute Over Norge Trip to Help Fellow-Flyer

An Arctic drama of more than usual intensity would be produced if Roald Amundsen veteran Polar explorer should go to the aid of General Umberto Nobile, now missing in the dirigible Italia, since there has been friction between the two men ever since the famous flight of the Norge to the North Pole in 1926, says the Associated Press.

After the flight was all over, the published memoirs of the two men showed that all had not been smooth between them, Nobile as the builder and captain of the Norge referring to Amundsen as merely a passenger, while Amundsen accused the Italian flyer with "attempting to appropriate for Italy the last great undertaking of his life, the flight of the dirigible over the North Pole.

NORGE ALSO WAS MISSING

On that trip the Norge also was missing for many hours. Radio communication had been maintained between the dirigible and land stations until the Norge crossed the Pole when no further messages were intercepted. For many hours the fate of the expedition was unknown and the world waited anxiously for news at length to hear that the dirigible had landed safely at the tiny village of Teller, Alaska, about ninety miles from Nome.

After that air voyage Amundsen said that his exploration days were over and recounted his discovery of the Northwest Passage into the Arctic Ocean, the Northern Magnetic Pole and the South Pole.

Lincoln Ellsworth, of New York, who had financed, at least in part, the two air expeditions of Captain Amundsen, was the first to denounce Nobile after the Norge flight by saying that others had been responsible for the safe navigation of the dirigible from Spitzbergen to Alaska.

AMUNDSEN CRITICIZED NOBILE

For a year Amundsen had refused to be drawn into the controversy. In that year Nobile had been promoted from colonel to general and was decorated by the Italian government.

Then Amundsen published his autobiography and dwelt at great length on Nobile's conduct while in the air over the Pole He said that while he and Ellsworth had limited themselves to two tiny Norwegian and American flags to save weight and space, Nobile took armfuls of small Italian flags to cast into the air over the Pole and finally let loose a huge flag which, Amundsen said, threatened to tie up a propeller.

Britain to Compel Food Profiteers to Show Accounts

London.—The Government has decided to compel merchants to disclose their accounts where food profiteering is charged.

Replying to questions in the House of Commons regarding the difficulty in obtaining information experienced by the Food Council, the official body commissioned to investigate prices, Stanley Baldwin, the Premier, said: "The Government is prepared to give the Food Council all the support required to enable them to obtain essential information, and they are so informing the council. Unless, therefore, within a reasonable period, the requisite information is supplied by those traders who have so far failed to do so, the Government proposes to ask Parliament to grant the necessary powers."

This announcement is understood to mean that the Food Council may be armed with authority to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of books, refusal carrying penalties of a fine and imprisonment.

Indian Gave Us Maple Sugar

The early settlers in Canada from the Old Land learned from the Indians the art of maple sugar making, and indeed followed for many years their crude methods until modern equipment replaced the old. As a matter of fact, until about 50 years ago there was little improvement on primitive Indian methods.

Man in Restaurant: Give me a steak and some prohibition buns. Waitress: I'm sorry, but we haven't any prohibition buns. Man: Yes, you have; I got some dry as a bone here the other night!

A very mean man went into a glassware shop in search of a present for a friend. After spending some time looking at different articles and finding them too expensive, he at last saw a vase which was broken in several pieces. He inquired the price, and, finding it was practically nothing, decided to sen dit to his friend, hoping that he would think it had been broken in the post. Accordingly, he asked the assistant to pack and dispatch it. A few days later he received the following reply from his friend: "Thanks for the vase. So thoughtful of you to wrap up each piece separately."