Saving Ontario's Natural Resources

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THE OWLS' FOOD

The short-eared owl should have a real welcome from every farmer since it is one of our most potent destroyers of mice. It is a bird of the open fields or marshes. The only place where I have ever seen it was Cataraqui marsh, near Kingston, where Edwin Beaupre found it breeding many years ago. These owls have late winter or spring roosts in groves of evergreen trees. They bolt their food entire, regurgitating the skin and bones as a pellet when digestion is completed. So, when a roost is found, examination of the ground under the trees will often show many pellets and these, if collected and sorted, give a definite picture of the recent food of the owl.

What They Ate

L. L. Snyder and C. E. Hope of the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology have been studying the food of this owl for some time past. On a golf course near Toronto they found a roost of these owls in some ornamental evergreens, to which they resort year after year. In 1936 during April the observers collected a half bushel of the pellets from this roost. From other evidence they assumed that about 18 owls were present and that the pellets represented about 1,000 meals of these birds.

The next step was to sort out and find what animals were represented in these remains of the food. They did this by comparing the bones that they found in the pellets with bone specimens that they have in the museum. As each animal has characteristic skull or teeth it was a fairly simple job for one who knows how.

Mostly Meadow Mice

They found 1,181 meadow mice, 450 deer mice, 1 house mouse and the remains of 15 birds. Figured in percentages the owls took, as food, during the month of April 72% meadow mice, 27% deer mice, the remainder making up less than 1%. To my mind, it shows that the short-eared owl is definitely beneficial. The mice taken by these birds had been doing considerably damage to young trees and shrubs. Property owners told the authors that mice were a veritable plague in the vicinity that year. The owls helped control this plague without cost to man.

Maid of Erin

By HOWARD L. TERRY

I came from the land where the shamrock, green growing,
Is the emblem of love in the homes of the Isle,
Where free was my youth as the wild waters flowing
Through highlands, through lowlands, through green-walled defile.

I've kissed the blessed stone in our dear Castle Blarney,
I've paddled my boat on the waves of Killarney,
I've searched the dark chambers of Fingal's vast cave,
I've climbed the high mountains, I've swum the blue wave.

I've scaled the steep peaks which the boldest decline,
The wild beasts subdued by these dark eyes of mine.
My father had castles and riches untold—
I cared not for riches, the life they unfold.

And many a one who had courted me long,
Must needs be content with a smile and a song.
I loved but the mountains, the moorlands, the sea,
The roar of the ocean was music to me.

The shadowy wood and the pinnacled height,
The fast-racing waves and the bright stars of night.
Oh, to live in the love of this freedom of mine,
To gaze on earth's beauty, to drink of its wine.

And so all untamed the sweet days passed away,
But now, far from home, are the raven locks grey,
And memory nurses the sorrowful strain,
"Oh! give me my youth and my Isle again."

Retail sales of gasoline in Canada during the first nine months of 1940 amounted to 660,105,000 gallons compared with 601,191,000 gallons in the corresponding period of 1939.

Outstanding Movie Actor and Actress of 1940

Ginger Rogers, crowned the outstanding actress of 1940, is shown, LEFT, arriving for the annual dinner of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, accompanied by her mother, Mrs. Lela Rogers. James Stewart was awarded the "Oscar" for the best actor of 1940, at the same banquet, and Jimmy is shown here accepting the award.

THE WAR WEEK—Commentary on Current Events

TURKEY'S STAND KEY TO BALKAN SITUATION

"The position taken by the Bulgarian government does not lead to consolidation of peace, but to extension of the sphere of war and to Bulgaria being involved in it. In view of this, the Soviet Government, true to its policy of peace, cannot render any support to the Bulgarian government in the application of its present policy."—Soviet Note to Bulgaria.

"Turkey will oppose by arms any aggression directed against her territorial integrity or her independence."—Foreign Minister Saracoglu of Turkey.

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The diplomatic sensation of the week came when, for the first time since January 15, the Kremlin in Moscow made a pronouncement relative to the war in Europe which could be termed official. The long silence was broken with the handing of a sharp note to Bulgaria—incidentally an indirect slap at Hitler—containing the information that Russia refused to give support of any kind to Bulgaria's new Axis-dominated policy.

Ankara Gives Closest Ear

The Soviet reproof to Bulgaria had a variety of repercussions in the capitals of the world. London was inclined to discount its value as a factor in the tense Balkan situation. Berlin inferred that Moscow "didn't understand." In Athens, the Moscow move appeared to have been timed carefully to coincide with British-Greek negotiations taking place there. (It could not fail to stiffen Greek resistance to the German "peace" offensive). But in Ankara the closest attention was paid to the Russian note. It became strongly evident that Turkey was encouraged to take measures against any further German moves, feeling that it could count on at least passive Russian approval should it make a firm stand.

Would Turkey Fight?

Turkey's recent pledge to "honor all her obligations" still did not make it clear what action Turkey would take should German troops not sweep towards the Dardanelles; should German or Bulgarian armies not attack the borders of "Turkey-in-Europe" . . . but solely were concentrating on the Greek frontiers in order to force a peace upon Greece. Would Turkey fight if Greece went under? In the answer to that question lay the key to the outcome of the Balkan situation.

Nazi Aims In Balkans

The Nazi press last week declared that the military occupation of Bulgaria was to prevent any British effort to "disturb the peace" in the Balkans, that is, to open up a new war front in that zone. The indications were that Hitler desired at all costs to avoid an upheaval there and that he expected to achieve his objectives without threatening Turkey directly.

Hitler's immediate aim, as we have pointed out before was to bolster the flagging Italian war effort at as little cost as possible so that Mussolini could continue to keep a large section of the British fleet busy in the Mediterranean, plus formidable British land forces, far from the scene of the Battle of Britain. (His occupation of Bulgaria secondarily served to give idle divisions of the German army something to do; and added considerably to Axis prestige in southeastern Europe and the Near East). For the present, the Dardanelles and Suez could wait, Hitler's actions indicated. But the British might move first, from Salonica, and scotch his plans by forcing him to accept the reality of a two-front war.

Supremacy At Sea

Unless she can maintain supremacy at sea, Britain must succumb. Such supremacy involves ability to keep the sea lanes open (the Axis presented a strong challenge in the Mediterranean and the North Atlantic), and particularly to transport in safety the industrial output of the United States. The Roosevelt administration in Washington last week was thought to have readied plans to give the British, following the passage of the Lease-Lend bill, what they so vitally needed; repair facilities in United States ports; a supply of merchant ships; and convoys.

U. S. Takes Risks

The United States in the opinion of most experts was expected to adopt a full war economy for the nation immediately after enactment of the bill, since each and every provision made to aid Britain could bring war to the western hemisphere. The U. S. would have to be ready for anything.

Nevertheless a war incident was deemed much more likely to occur in the Pacific than the Atlantic. In the Far East American naval and air power had been mobilized with due consideration for eventualities. And there, the U. S. was ready to fight.

"The question of what kind of world our children will live in is being asked us now."
Mrs. Wendell L. Willkie.

St. Patrick's Day Games

Many Are The Requests For Suggestions For Games Suitable For St. Patrick's Day—From A Number of Sources The Following Have Been Gathered

RING TOSS: On a good sized piece of board draw and paint a green shamrock at least a foot across. In each of the leaves drive three nails, long ones with large heads. Have them well separated. Paint beside or under each nail a figure to be the value of the ring tossed upon that nail. Provide each player with three rubber jar rings from the kitchen. Give a prize for the highest score made when the rings are tossed from a distance of three feet or more.

SLIPPERY SNAKES: For this have a supply of long macaroni, cooked and drained. Provide each player with a silver fork and a piece of macaroni. Line them all up to race across the room. When a piece of macaroni slips from a fork, the player carrying it is out of the race. First one at the goal wins.

ROCKY ROAD TO DUBLIN: Cut out of wrapping paper or cardboard small and large, irregular pieces. Lay them on the floor in as big a ring as possible and fasten each to position with a tiny bit of melted candle wax underneath. On linoleum flour paste will do the trick and is easily removed afterward. The players in turn try to run the "rocky-road," without missing a single piece of paper or stepping on the floor around the bits. The one who completes the circle without error in the fastest time wins.

FAIRY RINGS: Each player receives ten small brass curtain rings and a knitting needle. The rings are laid flat on the floor. At a signal, each player stoops and tries to get the rings on the needle without touching them or the floor with the hands.. First player with all rings on needle wins. Any player whose hand touches floor is disqualified.

PADDY'S PIGS: Green plasticine is provided for each player, and green toothpicks are passed around. Each one tries to model a pig. For variation, brown plasticine may be used, for modeling potatoes.

IRISH SONGS: From a plug hat decorated with clay pipe and bunch of shamrock, each player draws the name of an Irish song or of a person mentioned in an Irish song. When called upon by the leader, each player is expected to sing, play or recite one verse or chorus of that song before the count of nine. Failure results in paying a forfeit to be decided by the whole group.

1940 Grain Crops

The third estimate of the 1940 Canadian grain crops in bushels is as follows, with the 1939 production shown for comparison:

	1940	1939
Wheat	551,390,000	520,623,000
Oats	380,526,000	384,407,000
Barley	104,256,000	103,147,000
Rye	13,994,000	15,307,000
Flaxseed	3,189,000	2,044,000
Peas	1,355,000	1,307,000
Beans	1,477,000	1,527,000
Buckwheat	6,692,000	6,848,000
Mixed grains	43,133,000	44,072,000
Corn for husking	6,956,000	8,097,000

Should Test Seed Then Plant It

That's the First Step In War Crop Production For 1941—Pamphlet Outlining Methods of Home Germination Tests Can Be Obtained From Ont. Dept. of Agriculture

With Ontario being geared for the greatest possible crop production this year, the first step in farm war production effort is to make sure the seed you plant tests high in germination, otherwise you may harvest poor crops despite favorable weather conditions.

Unfavorable harvest conditions in Central and Western Ontario last year have increased the need of testing seed before planting. This has been demonstrated recently at the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph, where it was found that some plump seed of satisfactory color germinated poorly while some badly weathered lots germinated much better than their appearance would indicate.

CAN BE DONE AT HOME

The only sure way to make positive your seed grain will give maximum crop returns, is to have it tested for germination and this can be done at home by every farmer in Ontario.

Full directions for germination tests are contained in a small pamphlet written by Dr. G. P. McRostie, Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph, and can be obtained from your Agricultural Representative or by writing direct to the Statistics and Publications Branch, Ont. Dept. of Agriculture, Toronto.

Seeds of the following crops can be satisfactorily tested at home: oats, barley, wheat, rye, buckwheat, field corn, peas, beans and soybeans.

VOICE OF THE PRESS

BIG TIME PROSPECT

The finance companies that offer loans up to $500 on easy repayments might be able to interest the Dominion Government. —Woodstock Sentinel-Review.

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CAN'T BEAT PIONEERS

The enthusiastic golfer is still face to face with the fact that the axe and bucksaw have done more for this country than the niblick ever will. — Guelph Mercury.

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IT'S EXPENSIVE, TOO

Owing to some oversight a man was recently appointed a judge in Nicaragua who has been dead for four years. That habit of not burying the dead has caused some strange appointments in Canada, too. — Toronto Saturday Night.

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FIGHT FOR THE MARKET

Ontario farmers had better look to their laurels. In the first six weeks of 1941 Ontario farmers have delivered to packing plants 225,000 hogs. Alberta farmers have delivered 176,000. Last week Albertans delivered 31,000 against Ontario's 33,000.

Competition for markets for farm products within Canada has never been great while the west could rely on selling its wheat crop. With the wheat market badly clogged western farmers are turning to mixed farming products which compete more directly within Canada. What is happening in hog production shows what the west can do when forced to it.—Lethbridge Herald.

with Toast, Muffins, Tea Biscuits, Waffles and Pancakes.
Bee Hive Golden Syrup

Safer To Fly Than To Walk

Air Fatalities Are Fewer Than Those Which Take Toll of Pedestrians

No mode of travel carries an absolute guarantee of safety, says the Galt Reporter. Probably more people meet their ends while using the simplest form of locomotion provided by nature, walking, than by utilizing swifter modes of travel, such as airplanes. Death comes to them individually. A pedestrian here, knocked down and killed by an automobile. Another, thousands of miles away, slips on an icy pavement and receives fatal injuries in the fall. These isolated incidents of death attract little attention. A few paragraphs in the local papers, and that is all, unless the person enjoyed national prominence.

We accept these fatalities as the logical consequence of the hazards we must continually meet in this risky business of living.

Fatal train wrecks and airplane crashes receive a prominence out of all proportion to the really few fatalities directly attributable to these modern modes of travel. The ingenuity of man has made it safer to fly than to jay walk across the ice-encrusted street or a busy city thoroughfare. However, certain hazards remain, and one of several possible ones turned the westbound flight of the Trans-Canada Airlines plane into a tragedy at Armstrong the other week, a tragedy in which 12 lost their lives.

Previously, 81,000 passengers had been carried by T.C.A. without injury of any kind. A total of 8,165,000 miles had been flown in creating this splendid record.

LIFE'S LIKE THAT — By Fred Neher

"Let's organize a bridge club, girls, then we can sit down and talk!"

REG'LAR FELLERS — Just Practice — By GENE BYRNES