

19th century when rapidly growing population and more efficient killing methods brought about an annual slaughter—for food, clothing, commercial exploitation or even wanton love of destruction—far in excess of the natural increase. Some species were almost or entirely exterminated, and others saved only by the extent and inaccessibility of the wilderness to which their survivors retreated.

Fortunately the same process of colonization which initiated this slaughter of wildlife operated, in course of time, to check it. The development of agriculture and industry made the new population less dependent on the wild resources of the country than the pioneer settlers had been. The growth of urban civilization favoured the spread of humane and thoughtful sentiments, of the realization that the creatures of the woods and lakes formed a natural resource of æsthetic and economic value, and of the knowledge that these creatures are ours to preserve and use wisely as a sacred trust and not to destroy. At first these sentiments met with strong opposition, particularly on the outer fringes of settlement; but they made steady progress, and for many years they have been accepted by the great majority of Canadian people and have been made the basis of policy regarding wildlife resources by all governments of Canada.

**Migratory Birds in Canada.**—More than five hundred different species of birds have been recorded in Canada. Omitting the few species that have been represented only by accidental visits of individuals, we may classify these birds roughly in three groups:—

- (1) Birds that are permanent residents of certain regions.
- (2) Birds that spend the season for nesting and rearing of young in one part of Canada (a central or northern area), and the colder months in another part of Canada (a coastal or southern area) where the climate is more favourable.
- (3) Birds that nest and rear their young in Canada and migrate to spend the winter months in more southerly countries, principally in the United States.

On account of the winter climate experienced over the greater part of Canada, the majority of Canadian birds—both species and individuals—fall into the third group of the above classification. Birds of this group belong, as a rule, to the species of greatest economic and æsthetic value, e.g., most kinds of ducks, geese and swans and of insectivorous birds and many sea birds.

For this reason, the question of protection of bird life in Canada is not merely national in its scope, but has important international ramifications; it is particularly affected by Canada's relations with the United States. In the early years of settlement, the conditions which decimated the wild-bird population were very similar in Canada and the United States. The growth of humane sentiments followed a parallel course in both countries, and in recent years the community of interests and the firm friendship existing between them have been of inestimable value in working out schemes of bird protection whereby each nation co-operates with and complements the work of the other.

**Migratory Birds Convention Act.**—Up to 1916, many laws of merely local effect had been passed in different parts of Canada and the United States for the protection or regulation of hunting of migratory birds. A handicap affecting all such laws was caused by the very nature of bird migration. The regular spring and autumn movements of ducks, for example, meant that the period of greatest concentration of these birds fell at a different time of the year in States and Provinces in different latitudes. Local laws, naturally, fixed duck-hunting seasons to cor-