

Nowhere did we see or hear of a single old mature tree that is still alive and bearing. We were told of a large tree which had one stout bearing branch left in 1946, but this had been girdled by the fungus in the summer of 1947. Only one tree producing fully formed nuts did we ourselves see and of its entire crop we succeeded in rescuing no more than four nuts from the squirrels. This tree is near Fonthill in Welland County, has a height of about twenty feet and is already infected close to the ground. Nuts of three other trees were sent to us by mail. We received a report of a tree thirty-five feet tall and laden with burs; these upon examination turned out to be empty. This tree and all the others mentioned will be carefully inspected in 1948.

But what of the promise for the chestnut in its native region in Ontario? The facts regarding the present really give the answer. The conditions are the same throughout the region. Suckers are common everywhere, some bunched in clumps, some standing singly. Possibly some of these solitary specimens may be seedlings sprung from nuts planted by squirrels. These young trees range in height from one foot to ten feet, the dead and the living of all heights being about equal in number. It is clear then that the blight strikes as early as the plant's first two or three years. The vast majority are blasted before they reach six feet. Rare indeed is the one that exceeds twelve. So ubiquitous is the scourge that the odds against a chestnut escaping infection and attaining the size of a normal forest tree are overwhelming. That such a tree will ever be found again there is only the faintest ray of hope; this emanates from the fact that the oriental chestnut

now being used on this continent in crosses with our native tree is itself a resistant survival of the blight in China. Faint as the hope is it is enough to fire our plant-hunters with the zeal to keep up their search.

The extinction of the native sweet chestnut has brought to a host of people in southern Ontario a regret that is akin to distress. This comes partly from a sense of economic loss, partly from a tender sentiment formed in childhood. Many are ready to incur expense on any project that promises to restore their lost tree. So the door is wide open for the racketeer to step on to the scene. And there he is already. This last autumn a large quantity of American chestnuts was imported, apparently from the State of Washington, and put on sale in southern Ontario. No claim was made that they possessed any special quality, such as that of being able to defy the blight. The price put upon them was fantastic — one dollar apiece! In a few hours the entire lot was sold. To get a vision of the profitableness of the transaction — for the seller — one need only make a rough guess of the return from a single quart. As for the buyer, his gain will come sooner or later in the form of a lesson rudely learned through the shattering of a fond hope.

Happily, the last word of this report is not one of unqualified despair: at least one cheerful note has been sounded. One correspondent tells us he knows a chestnut tree which is fully fifteen years old and which, still apparently intact, stands conspicuously among the gaunt skeletons of its defunct neighbors. May spring break early that we may go and see!²

² When examined in May, 1947, this tree was found to be badly infected, its trunk of six inches being almost completely girdled.

A PUZZLING LABRADOR REFERENCE¹

W. L. McATEE

Chicago, Illinois

IN THE COURSE of extensive consultation of publications on vertebrates of the nearctic region, finding the following reference² came as a challenge:

"1844. [Unknown.] Verzeichniss der in Labrador befindlichen Landsäugethiere und Vögel. *Bullet. Akad. München*, pp. 122, 129.

¹ Received for publication, April 5th, 1948.

² From Elliott Coues's excellent *Bibliographical Appendix to "Birds of the Colorado Valley"*, 1878.

Not seen — title from Giebel."

An unseen work by an unknown author! what more could a bibliographer ask? Inspection of papers on the fauna of Labrador by O. L. Austin, Jr. (*Nuttall Orn. Club Memoir* 7, 1932) and of Quebec by R. M. Anderson (*Ann. Rep. Provancher Soc.*, 1938) indicated that the paper had maintained its elusive status. And no wonder; without the author's

name, consulting the Catalogue of Scientific Literature is hopeless; and the periodical cited is so rare that only two complete sets are known in libraries of the United States and Canada according to the Union List of Serials (1943).

In attempting to borrow the proper volume of one of them, instead of the Bulletin, I received the *Gelehrte Anzeigen* in which, with the assistance of Walter Necker, at least a related article was found, but it had the appearance of an abstract. An annotated citation is:

von Schubert, Hofrath.

Correspondenz-Nachrichten aus Labrador.
Gelehrte Anzeigen herausgegeben von
Mitgliedern der K. bayer. Akademie der
Wissenschaften [München].

- [1] b) Verzeichniz der in Labrador Befindlichen Landsäugethiere. Nro. 52, 13 März, 1844, columns 418-421.

Notes on 21 groups under their Eskimo names.

The articles on birds have no letters preceding their titles, which are:

- [2] Verzeichniz der bekanntesten Wasservögel in Labrador. Nro. 52, 13 März, 1844, columns 421-422, and Nro. 53, 14 März, 1844, column 425.
- [3] Land-und Strandvögel, Nro. 53, 14 März, 1844, columns 426-429.

Together these present notes on 60 groups under Eskimo names.

At the upper left of the first page of each "Anzeigen" is reference to the Bulletin; thus on No. 52 it is to Bul. 16, and on No. 53 to Bul. 17.

One of the two complete sets of the Bulletin in North America is in the State Museum, Albany, New York, where Mrs. Lillian C. Stoner kindly examined Volume 3 (1844) and reported the findings to me. The references are exactly as given above except for bulletin and column numbering which are:

- [1] Nro. 16, 13 März, 1844, cols. 122-125
- [2] Nro. 16, 13 März, 1844, cols. 125-126 and Nro. 17, 14 März, 1844, col. 129
- [3] Nro. 17, 14 März, 1844, cols. 130-133

To sum up: In this case, at least, the contents of the articles in the Bulletin and *Anzeigen* are apparently identical, and the rarity of the Bulletin will be no insuperable handicap to those wishing to consult the *Verzeichnizen*. However, they are of slight value except to persons interested in Eskimo names of vertebrates. The annotations explain these names, but include no scientific designation, and only brief references to habits. The member who presented the articles to the Akademie and who must be cited as author was Gotthilf Heinrich von Schubert, 1780-1860. The real contributors were some of the Moravian missionaries who for nearly two centuries have worked with the Eskimos and have four stations on the coast of Labrador. In the Schubert transmittal (*Anzeigen* 52, columns 417-418) are meteorological notices and in *Anzeigen* 53, column 430, Dr. Zuccarini is recorded as saying that valuable notes had been received from the same correspondents on the flora of Labrador. One of the missionaries, Samuel Weiz, published a "List of vertebrates observed at Okak, Labrador" (*Proc. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist.*, 10, 1866, pp. 264-269).

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

Breeding of the Sora in New Brunswick. — Although the Sora (*Porzana carolina*) is commonly reported in New Brunswick I am not aware of any published nesting records for this province. On June 20, 1948, I was fortunate enough to find two nests of this species in the Midgie Marsh about four miles from Sackville, Westmorland County, New Brunswick.

The nests were located about 100 yards apart in the midst of a dense area of cattails (*Typha latifolia*). Both nests were well concealed and were placed about six inches

above the water. The first nest contained seven fresh eggs (one of which was collected). There were five eggs and one newly hatched young in the second nest. The second nest was easily located due to the behavior of the parent bird which exhibited great anxiety and remained in the vicinity.

On July 8, in another part of the marsh, about one half mile distant, a young rail presumably of this species (*Porzana carolina*) was seen swimming across a small ditch. — GEORGE F. BOYER, Dominion Wildlife Service, R.R. #1, West Sackville, N.B.



McAtee, W. L. 1949. "A puzzling Labrador reference." *The Canadian field-naturalist* 63(2), 89–90. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.341116>.

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