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NORTH DAKOTA.

BY GERARD ALAN ABBOTT.

NORTH DAKOTA, as far back as I can remember, has never been boosted as some of our states have. It is one of the most wonderful states in the Union, one becomes convinced of this after spending a few days traveling through some of the counties. No saloons, few spots with "bright lights," and almost void of manufacturing plants.

Lacking in artificial play grounds, navigable streams, and automobile highways, it is a land of plenty for those who live the simple life.

For the bird lover it is matchless. No unsurmountable obstacles are to be encountered, such as unseasonable weather, vermine, treacherous quagmires, vast forests, high mountains, malaria, or poverty.

True it is, that many species of birds are becoming rarer, but relatively speaking I believe this state will continue indefinitely to attract and retain its large per cent of the feathered tribe.

Prior to my first North Dakota invasion I received advices to the effect that the region was not the paradise it used to be. I could see that in more respects than one, notably the vast number of buffalo skulls lying about on the prairie. For the ornithologist, wishing to do any field work, the opportunities

are so favorable, that subsequent visits to other sections of our country seem insignificant by comparison.

a/ The vicious hawks, like the Sharp-shin, Cooper's and Goshawk, are of infrequent occurrence. The same may be said of the Horned Owl.

Probably the artist would find little to rave about, were he to visit North Dakota. Too much of a sameness in the land and its dwellings.

I imagine the geologist and botanist would both revel about the glacial formations, coulees, and disappearing lakes. The latter are without inlet or outlet, and evaporation is transforming into peninsulas, what were until a few years ago islands on which large colonies of gulls nested.

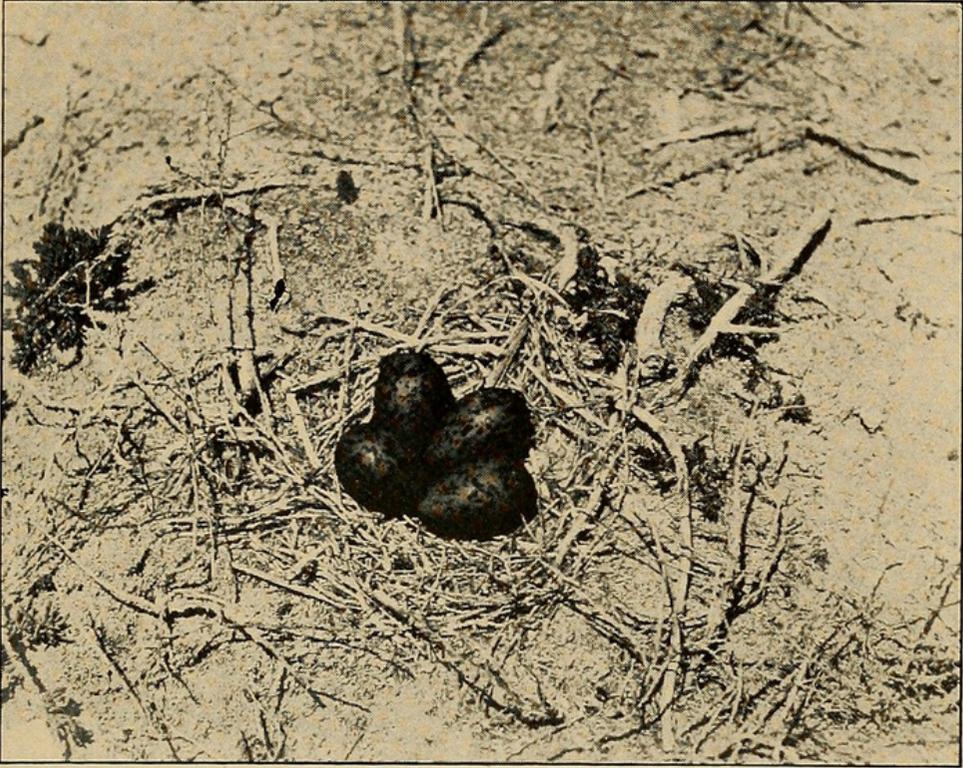
Today these "pot holes" hold countless millions of small aquatic animal life where graceful Avocets and the retiring Piping Plovers are lured to the edges of this green stagnant water.

In the bayous the Wilson's Phalarope, stately Godwit and many ducks accumulate. Upland Plovers and Willets roll their notes from the virgin prairie heights. Pinnated and Prairie Sharp-tail Grouse abound in many places, which clearly illustrates the temperament of the Dakota settlers, who allow such splendid resident game birds as those to thrive and propagate in cultivated sections.

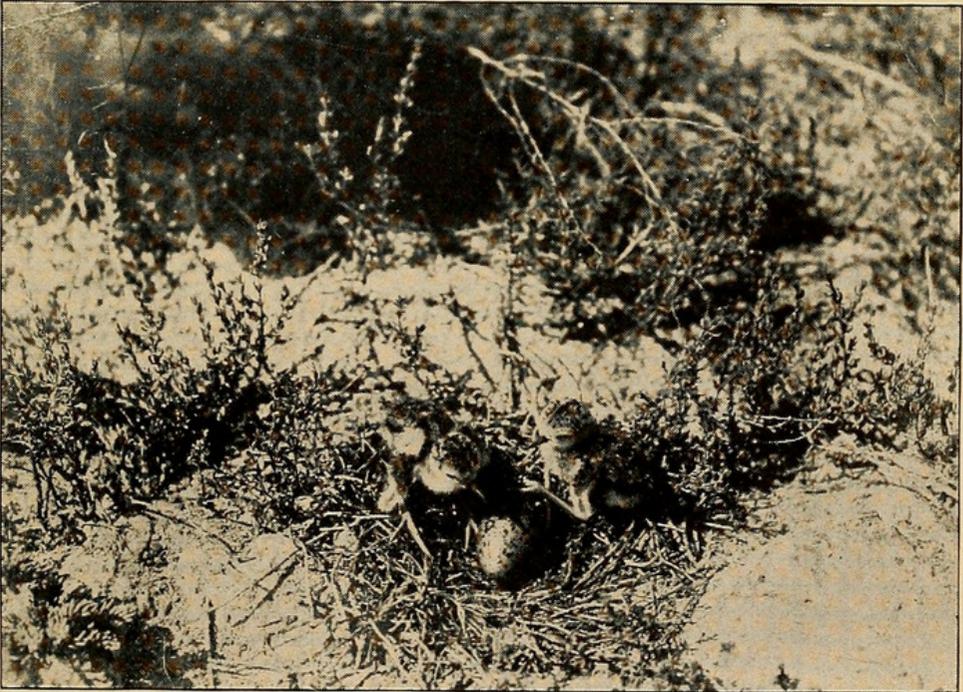
The Crane dance is rarely heard or seen today—a performance of regular and common occurrence a score of years ago, when the sloughs were quite remote from habitation. This grand bird seems to require isolation.

That silent and timid king of hawks, the Ferruginous Rough-leg, still patrols the uninhabited sections of the state. The nest is usually situated near a colony of ground dwelling rodents, which is subject to extermination through the raids of this raptore. =/

In 1900 I was attacked by a pair of Canada Geese when I attempted to capture the goslings. Only those who have visited the nesting place of this wary fowl can realize its bold and aggressive nature while the young are in the down.



Nest of Avocet.



Avocets Just Hatched.



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