

To Preserve America's Wild Bird Life



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The Bird Hunter Nets Ornis, the Bird Spirit. A Scene from the Bird Masque Showing Miss Margaret Wilson, the President's Daughter, as Ornis.



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"The Egret"—One of the Charming Characters in the Mackaye Bird Masque That Will Be Played for Birds Throughout the Nation.

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The Unique Nation-Wide Campaign of Plays, Pantomines and Exhibitions to Save Our Feathered Citizens from Slaughter by Showing How Human They Are

AN organized general movement has been started throughout the United States for the protection and preservation of wild bird life.

Miss Virginia Pope, a pioneer in the movement, and known from her widespread missionary efforts on behalf of the feathered ones as "The Bird's Friend"; Mrs. Russell Sage and Miss Katherine Minahan are among the individual sponsors of the movement, and the Audubon Society stands solidly behind this as befitting all substantial and far-reaching movements for the perpetuation of the feathered species.

The newest development of this general movement among the protectors of birds is the establishment of Birds' Day in every city in the country. In a hotel, a town hall, or some other public place a miniature nest will be set up, and there live birds or the best imitations of them procurable will be placed. These tiny replicas of forests will be open to visitors, and the promoters hope that every mother will bring her children to receive the object lesson in tender care of the wild brothers of their pet birds.

The day will be a movable one, so that it will enable Miss Katherine Minahan and others to be present on that day in each town. "Sanctuary," a remarkable bird masque on "morality," "Sanctuary" was written by the poet Percy Mackaye and was produced at Meriden, N. H., before President and the late Mrs. Wilson, their daughter, Eleanor, playing the child role, Ornis, a bird.

So touching and moving is the plea for bird life in the play that it has been called the "Uncle Tom's Cabin" of the birds. Miss Minahan is the young woman from Orange, N. J., who is famous for her marvelous imitation of bird calls.

Ornis, a maiden garbed symbolically as a bird, comes fluttering upon the stage. On one of her wing-like sleeves is a spot of blood. She describes the adventure in which she received her wound:

"How sweet and strange! Are we indeed awaking
From callous slumber and old wrong?
So sorrowfully long
The hand of Man has wrought the birds'
heart-breaking—
Was it a savage dream?
Methought I sat on Morning's golden beam
And sang of God's wild gladness:
High and higher
I showered His temple woods with ecstasies!

When suddenly
The earth screamed thunder, and a
singeing fire
Shattered my wing. I fell.
"Groping in flight my feet stuck fast
In smear of lime: swift from below
A tangling net was cast
Where, panting upward, a black hell
Of bloody mouths barked under me;
And there beside them—oh,
There watched, with eyes of wanton
cruelty,
A man—bright clothed in many
colored plumes
Of my dead sisters, 'Save me from
their dooms'
I cried, 'O Sanctuary!'"

Another speech by the bird spirit im-



The Faun and the Dryad, Another Curious Scene from the Bird Play.

personated by the President's daughter was this:
"Do you not know me? I am she
Whom first beneath the dark, an-
cestral tree,
You rose upon your feet to hearken
to."

By me you grew to song and free-
dom. Round your olden feasts
You watched my circling flights,
whereby your priests
Proclaimed their omens and their
oracles;

And my sweet night bird tuned your
poets' shells
To lull and lovers in languorous
asphodels;
Yet all my influence shone dimmer
than my beauty:
My bright plumes lured you to

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A Group of Little Birds—One of the Attempts to "Humanize" the Flying Tribes.

My cranes announced
your victories, my
storks
Fed your hearth fires, my
silver-throated gulls
And golden hawks
Saved many of your sea
towns from sore pes-
tilence:

squander them.
Till in the fumes of greed
Your heart forgot to cherish me.
And sold me into death and slavery.
Yet, master, as you will:
Lo, I am Ornis, and I love you still."
Some communities are regularly giving object lessons in the means for the conservation of bird life, and protecting them from atrocities. Meriden, N. H., is one of these. With a gift of a thousand dollars made by Miss Helen Woodruff Smith, the Meriden Bird Club bought a thirty-acre farm to be laid out as a sanctuary of bird life.

Beginning with the idea that birds have much the same needs as human beings, enough to eat and drink, a shel-

ter, means to properly rear their young, the Meriden Bird Club is endeavoring to give these to the wild birds, which are promptly and encouragingly accepting their hospitality.
Ernest Harold Baynes, the president, urges that clubs for the purpose of the conservation of wild bird life be organized in every community. That done he believes that there will be no need of the slow process of legislation, or that by means of the vast network of clubs legislation will be quickly induced.
All of which explains why you will doubtless be invited to join a bird club in your town this Spring, and what "Bird Day," of which you will often hear, mean.