

WITH THE BIRDS IN FOURTEEN STATES.

"How can I pass the time?" is the all-absorbing question to those who must travel far, by rail or water. To such persons it must seem at least peculiar that anybody could deliberately plan a 7000 mile journey for the sole purpose of studying birds, partly, to be sure, on the ground, but partly also aboard train. It may be putting it a little strong to say that the sole purpose of this journey was bird study, but for the writer it came near that.

This Summer's work was largely a partnership work, hence the report of the results will be double-barreled. Rev. William Leon Dawson, the partner in question, makes his report under the caption "Wing Shots and Rests," which report pretty fully covers the partnership part of the work, while the writer supplies the horizons from both note-books for this part, and adds his own work done alone. Little more need be said in introduction further than the restatement that this piece of work is the natural outgrowth of the close intimacy which grew up between these two bird-lovers engaged in study at the same college. It is but fair to say that Mr. Dawson was the prime mover in the scheme, and his personal knowledge of the west from residence in Washington made it feasible.

It is needless to say that this idea of studying birds by rail is not new. Indeed, it is nearly a score of years old. The only new feature introduced is the keeping of horizons for certain places, or certain lengths of time aboard train or steamer, in the effort to more clearly illustrate what one might hope to find in retraversing this region.

In a rapid work of this kind there must be a considerable margin of error, yet we think this has been greatly cut down by eliminating every record about which there may seem to be a doubt. A sharp lookout, a quick eye and discrimination, born of long practice and familiarity with many species, where two are working together, leave little room for misidentifications where the bird is seen well. Yet there are probably errors.

For the sake of continuity it seems best to give space first to the report of Mr. Dawson, followed by the horizons in chronological order, accompanied by a few explanatory notes.