

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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The Canadian Government and the Proposed Hunting of Caribou with Aeroplanes.

In several English periodicals that have reached me I find reference to the correspondence in the *Times* concerning a suggestion emanating from Toronto that our barren-ground caribou might be driven in large numbers into corrals by means of aeroplanes and slaughtered in order to increase the meat supply. Such a suggestion has naturally created some alarm in the minds of many naturalists, sportsmen, and others in England, and hopes have been expressed that no such scheme would be permitted.

It is with the view of assuring zoologists in England and all those who are interested in the conservation of wild life that they need have no fear that such a scheme would be sanctioned by the Canadian Government, if it follows, as is usual, the recommendations of its advisers, that I am taking the opportunity of presenting a few of the facts concerning the subject.

On the recommendation of the Commission of Conservation and the Government's Advisory Board on Wild Life Protection, an inter-departmental committee, the North-West Game Act was completely revised two years ago. This Act governs the protection of game, fur-bearing animals, and wild life generally throughout the North-West Territories, which region includes all the portion of Canada north of latitude 60° (excluding Yukon Territory, which is governed, however, by an ordinance generally similar in its provisions, and Quebec). The main reasons for this revision were to give greater protection to the bison, musk-ox, caribou, and fur-bearing animals.

No person, other than a native, may hunt or kill caribou or other game without a licence from the Minister of the Interior. Such control is exercised for the express purpose of preventing harmful or excessive killing.

The idea of hunting caribou with aeroplanes is not new. Similar proposals have been made by different people at various times since the development of the aeroplane and its use in the war; some enthusiasts have added Maxim-guns to their means of offence. But to all such suggestions a deaf ear has been turned. During the war repeated efforts were made to secure a general relaxation of the game laws to permit the killing of game for food owing to the high price of meat. The Canadian Government resolutely opposed any such action, and a similar firm stand was taken by the Provincial Governments. It was realised that any such relaxation of the laws and the resulting excessive killing would mean the destruction almost to the point of extermination of many species of our game animals. The utilisation under Government control of the enormous herds of barren-ground caribou as a means of supplementing the domestic meat supply was very carefully considered by the Advisory Board on Wild Life Protection, but it was decided that the existing means of transportation and storage rendered any scheme of that nature impracticable at the present time. There is no doubt that with adequate protection it will be possible in the future to utilise the caribou, and, we hope, the musk-ox, which are the grazing animals most suited to that vast territory. But at the present time a policy of careful protection is being carried on by the Canadian Government.

All who are interested in the conservation of wild

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life may rest assured that the Canadian Government is carrying on a vigorous policy in this matter. In February last the first national conference on wild-life protection was held in Ottawa, and attended by officials and representatives from all the provinces of the Dominion. I am now preparing a report on the wild life of Canada and its conservation, which will probably be issued by the Commission of Conservation during the year. This volume will indicate the extent to which those responsible for the conservation of our Canadian wild life are fulfilling their responsibilities to posterity. Canadians are realising that Canada is the last stronghold for the greater portion of the big-game animals of North America, and are taking the necessary measures to ensure their adequate protection before it is too late. The rescue of the bison from the border-line of extermination will for ever stand as a monument to the foresight of the Canadian Government.

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May 2.

X-Rays and British Industry.

THE remarks made by Major G. W. C. Kaye in his article upon "X-Rays and British Industry" (*NATURE*, May 8) reflect so gravely upon British manufacturers that I must ask for the courtesy of a little space in order to comment on them.

Major Kaye apparently takes the view that British manufacturers, in the first place, persist in recommending induction coils rather than the more up-to-date transformers or interrupterless machines; and, secondly, do not put really intelligent design and construction even into the manufacture of the coils.

It is quite true that the invention of the interrupterless machine was due originally to an American, namely, Mr. H. Clyde Snook, but my firm placed machines of this type on the market before, I think, any American firm had produced them, and can certainly claim to be the pioneers in Europe of modern X-ray apparatus.

The difficulty in this country has lain not so much with the manufacturer as with the conservatism of medical men, the majority of whom have refused for years even to consider a closed-circuit transformer as compared with an induction coil, and, to a certain extent, hold the same opinion even to the present day.

Even now, although we are selling interrupterless machines almost faster than we can make them, it is unfortunately the case that the bulk of our output has to be sold abroad, and that there is still, comparatively speaking, little demand for them in this country, the medical public being still apparently content with putting in apparatus which would be laughed at in almost any other country in the world.

I should also like to say that, although I regard the induction coil as obsolete for ordinary radiography, it does still possess certain advantages for other work, notably therapeutic treatment, and I cannot agree with Major Kaye in his statement that the induction coil of to-day differs but little from its predecessor of Spottiswoode's day.

My firm bought the business of the late Mr. Alfred Apps, and therefore I am in a position to contrast the methods of Mr. Apps (rightly referred to in his day as the "prince of coil-makers") with the methods of the present day, and I can assure Major Kaye that progress has been a little more than he thinks, and that there have been rather more intelligent design and electrical knowledge applied to the instrument than he quite appreciates.

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