waste of marsh or cypress-grown water, it has escaped extermination only through the aid of its human friends.

There are twenty heron colonies along the Atlantic coast, but only three are protected by individuals; the rest are cared for by the National Association of Audubon Societies. One of these is the Crane Neck colony, belonging to Mr. James Sprunt, the present owner of Orton Plantation, and wholly preserved by him. He who notes the sparrow's fall put into the heart of Mr. Sprunt a great love for wild creatures, and it is a joy and satisfaction to him to afford the heron wise enough to seek refuge at Crane Neck complete protection from the mercenary and merciless plume-hunter. Here the snowy egret, American egret, great blue, little blue, black-crowned night, Louisiana, and green herons nest and chatter of the brooding time in as great security as others of their kind, peopling, perchance, the same pond, and mingling their familiar "quock, quock" with the rippling waters as the first ship sailed up the Cape Fear, enjoyed more than two hundred and fifty years ago. No doubt the adventurous explorers, Hilton, Fabian, and Long, witnessed, as those fortunate enough today may witness, the heron flight high in the rare air of the purpling dawn, woven into its ravishing cloud-films and vanishing with them.

> "They near, they pass, set sharp against the sky;
> Grotesques some Orient artist might have drawn
> Blue on a golden dawn;
> They pass, are gone like leaves blown cloud-high,—
> And oh, my heart is mad to follow where they fly!"

Such may have been the sentiment of the early adventurous spirit, dreaming of conquest; such seems now the sentiment of certain heirs of that conquest, dreaming of greed. But the heron of Crane Neck flies in peace.

This colony was brought to the attention of the ornithological world in 1898 by Mr. T. Gilbert Pearson, secretary of the National Association of Audubon Societies, himself a North Carolinian, and the association, of which Mr. Sprunt is a member, feels unusual satisfaction in the preservation by its owner of this single egret colony in the State. According to the report of Mr. Pearson at this time, "the colony contains probably 800 pairs of little blue herons, about the same number of Louisiana herons, 125 pairs of great blue herons, 40 pairs of American egrets, 25 pairs of snowy egrets, and probably 20 pairs of black-

crowned night herons, also a few green herons, and now and then a few anhingas."

The curator of the State Museum, Mr. H. H. Brimley, visited the colony in 1913, and reported a somewhat smaller number than Mr. Pearson now estimates, but both have stated that the colony holds its own. Mr. Brimley makes the encouraging statement that "the American egrets have increased in number during the past few years, and that the snowy egrets have at least held their own," and adds, "No evidence of any kind was noted of the plume herons having been 'shot up.'" Concluding, Mr. Brimley says: "The pride taken in this interesting heron colony by its owner, Mr. James Sprunt, of Wilmington, and his interest in the conservation of all wild life, is responsible for its immunity from being 'shot up.' It is widely known, locally, and the means of reaching it are known even to some of the old-time plume-hunters, and to the efforts of Mr. Sprunt in preserving these birds all praise is due." The feeling expressed by Mr. Brimley is the feeling entertained by all bird-lovers, who rejoice that the heron has this safe retreat.

PLANTATIONS ON THE NORTHEAST RIVER.

By Dr. John Hampden Hill.

About forty-one years ago Dr. John Hampden Hill,[1] a prominent Cape Fear planter of Lilliput, a gentleman of culture and refinement, generally respected and admired, wrote some interesting reminiscences of the Lower Cape Fear, and for personal reasons instructed his friend, Mr. DuBrutz Cutlar, to reserve them from publication until after the author's death. Upon my earnest solicitation, however, he permitted me to copy these papers in the year 1892 and to use them in a series of newspaper articles entitled *A Colonial Plantation.* I reproduce them here as worthy of more permanent record.

After this section began to be visited, and settlements made by emigrants from Europe and from the other provinces, amongst the earliest places that attracted attention was Stag Park. It was first located and patented by George Burrington, then governor of the province of North Carolina. This Governor Burrington was a very worthless and profligate character, so much so, that on one occasion being at Edenton, he was pre-

[1]Dr. Hill was born April 28, 1807, at Hyrneham, and died February 19, 1893, at Goldsboro, full of years and the consolations of an honorable Christian life.