

## OIL POLLUTION.

"Wild ducks lie dead and dying by the score, even hundred, on the South Beach this week, as they have lain for the past week or ten days. Helpless from floating oil, they seek the land, forewarned by some instinct of their fate, and there, in such slight shelter as they can find among the low beach hills, die miserably."

This is quoted from the *Martha's Vineyard Gazette* for February of this year. The story continues to paint a sad and vivid picture of the ducks, most of them eiders, trapped by the insidious oil as it floats upon the tide. And this is not an isolated

tragedy. It is multiplied many times where oil-polluted waters take toll of sea bird life, kill or injure shell fish or crustaceans, and upset the entire balance of life in the sea.



BLACK-FRONTED TERN LANDING NEAR NEST.

Oil pollution is therefore an important phase of conservation. It is a part, not only of the problem of preserving wild life and food sources

in the sea, but, as well, conservation of mineral oils. It is an issue of international significance demanding the co-operation of all maritime nations.

What has been done about it? In 1924 the Oil Pollution Act was passed. Under this the dumping of oil or oily bilge from vessels was prohibited within the three-mile limit. No restrictions were placed upon land industry situated on or near navigable streams and dumping their waste into such water courses. This last fact, coupled with the extreme difficulty of any effective enforcement of the Act itself, has brought charges of discrimination from the steamship people, and a more or less careless disregard of the law.

In recognition of the international significance of the question, there was held in Washington, D.C., in 1926, a convention of the maritime nations. An agreement was drawn up binding the