

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## District No. 1:

Robert S. Harrison.....Sherwood, Talbot County

## District No. 2:

John T. Handy.....Crisfield, Somerset County

## District No. 3:

Herman A. Woodfield.....Galesville, Anne Arundel County

The Governor appoints the Conservation Commissioner for a term of four years from the first Monday in May (Ch. 29, 1922), and the members of the Advisory Committee for a term of four years from June 1 (Ch. 369, 1927).

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 CONSERVATION

The Conservation Department succeeded the Conservation Commission of Maryland, which was organized in 1915, when the Legislature consolidated the various commissions and boards which dealt with the administration of the natural resources of the State. At that time, there were in existence the Maryland Shell Fish Commission, the State Game Warden, the State Fishery Force and the Board of Fish Commissioners, each of which had some integral part of the above resources under its supervision. The Conservation Commission, when first appointed, was composed of three members, but in 1922 it was reduced to a one-man commission.

## The Future of the Crab Supply

The Conservation Department is very much concerned about a bill passed by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia during its last session, which permitted the taking of egg-bearing or sponge crabs in the waters of Virginia during the months of April, May and June. Through Governor Ritchie a hearing was arranged before Governor Pollard of Virginia, and a special committee, headed by the Maryland Conservation Commissioner, visited Richmond and strongly protested against the signing of this bill.

Maryland's protest was backed by the United States Bureau of Fisheries, as it was realized that the present increase in the crab supply of the upper Bay was due to the protection afforded the sponge crab. It was pointed out by the Commissioner of Fisheries of Virginia that the sponge crab was so numerous during this period, that the crabber could not fish his trot line without catching female crabs with the egg sponge, and it was his opinion that with mild winters there would be a sufficient supply of sponge crabs remaining in the waters to supply the upper Bay. The Virginia law, it was also pointed out, gave the Commissioner authority to prevent the taking of sponge crabs, should conditions warrant, after giving 15 days' notice to the crabbers and packers. The Conservation Department is carefully watching the supply in our waters, and a special investigation is being carried on from the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory, in the region of the Capes, to determine the migration of young crabs.

Just how important the crab industry is to Virginia and Maryland was brought out at a hearing before the United States Tariff Commission in connection with a request made to Congress to increase the duty on Japanese and Russian crab meat imported into the United States.