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SOUTHERN SKUA

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THE BUSH CONFERENCE

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WHEN the depression first made its appearance, we here in New Zealand were prone to refer to Australia as being in a bad way. At first the public in this country did not realise that they were in the same boat, and that Australia, owing to having much greater recuperative powers economically, would be the first to get out of the bog.

Now we are prone to hold up our hands in horror when we hear about the terrible floods and dust storms which are occurring in America owing to the depletion of her forests on watersheds. We are failing to notice, for the time being, that we here in New Zealand are if anything in a worse plight, simply because we have less forest-covered land in proportion to our land area than America has, and because we are a mountainous island country. America is a vast continent, mainly flat. Aotearoa, as the Maori name indicates, is a long narrow country, rising steeply out from very deep seas. The alluvial soil is therefore quickly carried by swift rivers and streams into and under the sea, and the sea does not give it back. In countries where the rivers flow into shallow seas, some giving-back of soil, in the form of sand, does take place, and reclamation results. But our soil, washed into deep water, returns not. Its fertility is lost; its reclaiming value is nil.

It is sincerely to be hoped that the Bush Conference will be the forerunner of a great awakening on the part of the public of New Zealand and that they will quickly realise the situation.

The case is, however, different with a land where the adjacent seas are shallow, or where the area is so extensive that sufficient soil can be supplied to reclaim seas. In South Africa, for instance, in the Transvaal, and the Orange Free State, where vast herds of many species of deer once roamed, there are countless small hills called kopjes dotted over the countryside. These are merely hard rocky formations which have resisted the forces of erosion in a greater degree than the surrounding alluvial soil. The softer earth covering in Southern Africa has been carried down the Vaal, Limpopo and Zambesi Rivers to form a rich coastal belt shelving into shallow seas which extend many miles out to sea, no doubt made shallow as the result of the depositing of the inland soil for centuries.

His Excellency the Governor-General and the Hon. Messrs. Langstone, Parry, and Semple have given the public a vigorous lead by drawing their attention to the matter of forest depletion and made some very candid remarks on the subject. Nothing can succeed, however, without public sympathy. It is now up to the general public to back their leaders up not only by insisting upon adequate legislation and action on the part of the authorities, but by showing that they—the public—realise the gravity of the position. By their action and help the public can show that they will not tolerate any further loss of native bush unless a sound forest policy is adopted, ensuring the replacement of any forest destroyed, and eventually the re-clothing of those lands which should never have been deforested. Let us all follow the fine example of the many who paid their own expenses, in some cases from remote districts, in order to attend the recent Bush Conference. They gave their time and money in the interests of their native land.

THE SOUTHERN SKUA

(*Megalestris antarctica*).

By R. A. Falla.

JUST as there are birds of prey on land, so some families of seabirds obtain their living by preying upon other species. The most rapacious of these in southern seas is the southern skua, locally known as the "sea hen" or "sea hawk" at Stewart Island and along the south coast generally. Its range elsewhere is subantarctic throughout the southern ocean, and its habits are everywhere the same. This skua is a member of the gull family, but is larger and heavier than other gulls, and may be distinguished by its build, dark colour, and the whitish bar in the wings.

The prejudice against all birds of prey has resulted in some hard things being said about the skua, and an idea prevails generally that smaller birds are benefited when skuas are destroyed. It cannot be emphasised too often, however, that, whether we like it or not, most species reproduce more of their kind than the natural food supply will support, and that the sudden death of many to support another species is preferable to slow starvation of many more. In the case of the petrels, upon which skuas mainly feed, tens of thousands die annually over and above the toll taken by skuas. There is, in any case, a rigid natural check on the increase in skuas, provided by the fact that their "savage" disposition includes fierce jealousy among themselves, and one finds strictly only one pair in possession of an island where there may be food supply for a dozen.

These birds nest on exposed headlands, and the nest itself may be only a depression in the rock lined with grass, or the flattened top of a trampled tussock. Two olive brown, dark-blotched eggs are laid, and in about three weeks the chicks hatch. Sturdy legs and bright beady eyes are the main features of these cinnamon-coloured downy youngsters, and from the day of hatching they commence to roam, only returning to the nest in obedience to the parents' call. Early morning and late evening are the chief hunting times, when small petrels are leaving their burrows

for the sea or returning to them at dusk. Sometimes, too, the old skuas kill petrels at sea in broad daylight. For their own supply the adults swallow small petrels whole, and eat all but the wings of the larger ones. The chicks begin with "insides" and later learn to pick a carcass. Even at an early age the instinctive spirit of rivalry begins to assert itself, and the stronger of a pair of chickens has been known to kill and devour his nest-mate.

There is no bird more courageous in defence of nest and young than the southern skua. Both male and female join in bold attack on any intruder and swoop down upon him repeatedly with defiant cries. This courage and their strong mutual attachment are things which should be recorded to the skua's credit when its acts of bloodshed are being chronicled. Male and female are equally fearless in defence of home and young, and only the death of one of them will terminate the alliance—not even death, indeed, for I have seen a male skua perish in a subantarctic blizzard while standing guard over his dead mate.

Much interesting information about the domestic life of the skua may be obtained from the writings of H. Guthrie-Smith and E. F. Stead, and good photographic illustrations accompany their published work.

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The Mutton Bird—a species preyed upon by Skuas.



SKUAS DEFENDING THEIR NEST

Valiant Knights of the Sea

Mr. Edgar F. Stead, by whose courtesy we are able to produce this picture, writes:—"These skuas are attacking intruders near their nests. Hovering nearly stationary in a high wind, the birds would actually rest their breasts on the stick or hatchet and peck at it."



Fending Off the Attack.

WILD LIFE ENEMIES

NATURAL AND UNNATURAL

By E. V. Sanderson.

THE casual observer, the world over, is invariably impressed with the idea that if the natural enemy of any species could be eliminated then that species would increase and multiply. Such has been the fallacious idea with hunters especially, in the past. And what is the almost universal result of the setting into action of this idea and the killing of vast numbers of so-called vermin—less game?

The biologist will, however, tell a totally different story. He will point out that all Nature is war from the infinitesimal diatom living in the sea right up to or down to Man—the greatest destroyer of all—and that every species has and must have a natural enemy for the sake of its own preservation. Man certainly has no other natural enemy besides himself, but he needs none because he is quite capable of preventing his numbers overcoming his food supply. Note for instance that when man invents or fashions something—say an aeroplane, poisonous gas, or more powerful explosive, things which might be put to uses beneficial to his requirements—his first thought is “By jove this will be a grand thing to kill the other fellow with!” He is ready to function at any moment as Nature decreed and act as his own natural enemy.

The game bird hunter who advocates the killing of hawks is at very serious disadvantages in securing accurate data for his conclusions. First of all, most wild creatures immediately detect movement and the upland bird hunter must move. He heralds his approach with his heavy tramping, by whistling or calling to his dog and intermittently discharging his gun. As a result most wild creatures flee before him or seek cover. All wild life assumes an abnormal state of excitement. The wild cat is safe lying on the high branch of some tree and that scent at the foot of the tree is not what the hunter takes it to be—an opossum. The stoat and weasel have disappeared, the rats were already safe from view before the hunter approached. But what about the hawk? It, the wise old bird, connects the sound of a gun with easily got

food in the shape of wounded game, as the result of long speculative or bad shots, and is therefore attracted to the vicinity of the gunner, who reports with all sincerity at the next Acclimatisation meeting that hawks are numerous and are the real enemies of game birds.

How different is it with the trained observer! He is prepared to keep still and remain concealed for hours at a time. All wild life then assumes its accustomed habits and peculiarities. He sees the rabbit quietly feeding with a hop or a skip, anon, the pheasant as it leisurely picks up morsels from the ground, the quail stringing their way along some usual beat oblivious of the crouching cat. But what is now happening? Why that sudden arresting of feeding and then an equally sudden stampede, even extending to domestic animals? *Homo sapiens* approaches with his gun and his hereditary ally the dog.

The special place of the natural enemy in what Man is pleased to call the lower creatures is really in many cases to act in a merciful manner by killing off the diseased, the starving, the wounded or otherwise weakened and already doomed individuals of the species preyed upon. In this manner it assists in no small degree to maintain the virility of the living by removing the diseased individuals promptly and reducing the numbers to the carrying capacity of the feeding ground. The living having now a sufficiency of food and being free from disease will multiply in the spring. The lion, the tiger, the hawk, the eagle, the shag, etc., do not secure their prey easily. Well-fed desirable prey is wary, alert, virile, fleet of foot or wing and not easily captured, therefore, the flesh-eating creature has usually to be content to take the easiest caught—the weak individual.

No! conservation can never succeed by destroying natural enemies, but rather must it fail as a consequence of any such indiscriminate destruction. Definite evidence of this is obtainable in almost every country where it is practised. The secret of success in conservation lies in the preservation or the setting up of the

natural habitat. Food and cover, especially winter food, will decide the carrying capacity of the habitat, which may be likened to a pastoral run in that it will carry what it can winter, except that some wild creatures will migrate to other feeding grounds if available. New Zealand as a whole, will, however, carry only that wild life which it can winter, and thus it has always been. This carrying capacity can only be varied by adding to or destroying the natural food supply or augmenting it artificially.

When, however, the term "Vermin" is applied to unnatural or exotic enemies to wild life, the argument is quite different, and we need not go beyond New Zealand for many notable examples of inevitable results, as witness the deer, goats, etc., as unnatural enemies of our plant life. Stoats, weasels, rats, cats, etc., are also unnatural to our native bird life, which had prospered for ages upon ages in association with its natural enemies. They were then suddenly attacked by these strange enemies which had new and different methods of securing their prey. Add to this the effect of imported disease, with the destruction of the natural habitat; then it can be seen that the calamities were indeed overwhelming. Take for instance the introduction of the Little or German owl. The

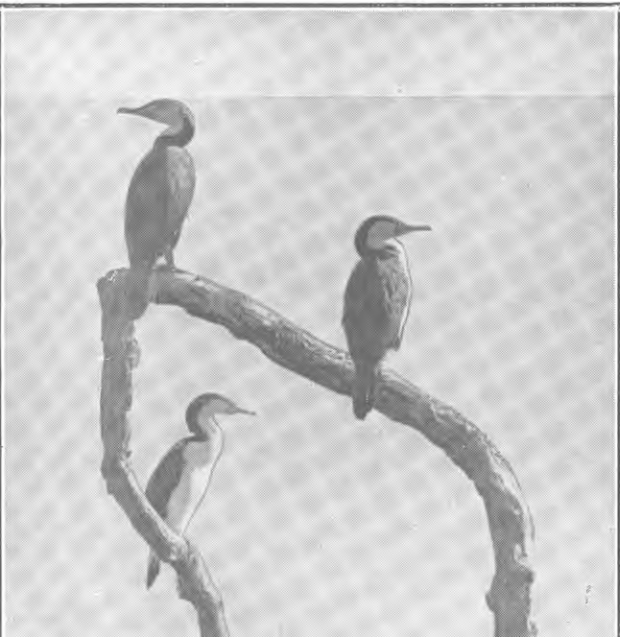
fantail had long been accustomed to prey upon flying insects right up to dusk, and the attack was then taken up by bats until total darkness. Then the rats came out to prey upon eggs, nestlings, etc., and to be preyed upon themselves by the morepork. The Little owl, however, takes the fantail in daylight, a form of attack which the fantail or its ancestors had never previously experienced. The purposely introduced Little Owl thus played sad havoc with one of man's most useful allies. But then we must not forget that Man is his own natural enemy.

Photo courtesy Edgar F. Stead



The Shag and the Harrier Hawk, two much-condemned birds of prey. Their food habits, however, have never been systematically examined.

Photo courtesy Bernard Sladden



PROTECTING THE WILD FOWL

PUKEKO AND DUCK.

NATIVE species of bird life are now often exposed to attack by the ignorant or the unscrupulous. Farmers are especially shortsighted in such matters. An example of popular ignorance of biological facts is the periodical call for the destruction of the pukeko. If farmers only knew it, the harmless and beautiful pukeko is one of their best friends, by eating grubs and other pests that attack crops. It is a friend of the flax-owner also, through its habit of feeding on the grubs in flax roots. Strict wild life control will ensure the protection of the pukeko, whose ancient feeding grounds are dwindling with the draining of the swamps.

More lakes and lagoon sanctuaries are needed for the saving of the native duck and teal, as well as the pukeko. Sportsmen's activities could be directed more to the imported swan, which is injurious to the indigenous waterfowl by taking their food. A close season of three or four years is urgently necessary for native duck.

The Department of Internal Affairs keeps a vigilant eye on the helpless native birds. It has done most excellent service to the cause of protection. The proposed Wild Life Division of the Conservation authority will find its path made clear for it by the Department's policy of care of the bird life of the wood, the water, and the waste.

Pukeko Eggs and Chicks.

Photo courtesy Ellis Dudgeon



THE DEMON "EROSION" AT WORK.



FORESTS

*Address delivered at Forest Conference held in Wellington on 2nd April,
by E. V. Sanderson, President Forest and Bird Protection Society.*

YOUR Excellency, the Honourables Messrs. Langstone and Parry, Ladies and Gentlemen. First of all I should like to congratulate your Excellency and those of your Ministers whose duties bring them in contact with forest matters, on the recent efforts to grapple with the very serious forest problems which have accumulated in this country owing to past lack of knowledge of the value of standing forests.

Now at last, after years of indifference, there is to be a change. It is with profound pleasure and gratitude that this Society greets the new policy.

For the first time we have an administration which is alive to this urgent need for a reversal of the bad old system of free play for forest destroyers.

There are here in New Zealand the same two sections in the community which are to be found in most countries occupied by the white man. On the one side we have the organised commercial-minded minority who are bent on exploiting all available assets, (frozen assets they have at times been called) for their own immediate advantage and without much thought as to the consequences to the community. The other section consists of a disorganised majority (sometimes dubbed by the first section as sentimentalists) who are prepared to put national interests before individual gain. The Forest and Bird Protection Society, which comprises many of the second section, welcomes the fine idea of calling this Tree conference together and congratulates those who, along with Your Excellency, are responsible for its being convened.

Let us all now look this question of forestry squarely in the face. When the matter of all our forest policy is reviewed, as from the date of colonisation, it must be admitted that possibly in no country in the world, or at no time in the world's history, has the foundation been so well laid for creating those disasters which have wiped many former civilisations off the face of the earth. New Zealand, owing to its configuration, is very sensitive to the disastrous effects of uncontrolled water run-off such as

floods, erosion, etc., therefore Nature provided it with the most remarkable and effective protection-covering known, composed of a plant community the like of which is found nowhere else. Naturally therefore we have forest problems to deal with, the solution of which does not lie in merely copying what other countries do or have done.

It seems to me and to many others that we should fully realise what an excellent job we have made of laying the foundation of the future destruction of this once fair land. We have introduced foreign plant-eating animals onto the mountain tops, and all manner of browsing animals such as deer, opossums, cattle, etc., into our main forests, despite warnings from eminent authorities as to the unsuitability of our plant life to withstand the ravages of such creatures, especially as their natural enemies are absent. Man actively aids all these destructive agents with his fire, axe and saw. The Maori lived on the interest nature produced. We live on the capital.

The fact that no nation can live in prosperity, nay exist, without a sufficiency of standing forest appears to have been entirely ignored in the past. A few have been permitted to accumulate wealth at the expense of the community.

This is where we are to-day. The remedies must be of a drastic nature in order to combat effectually the state of forestry affairs which I have dwelt upon. The Forest and Bird Protection Society therefore recommend:—

1. That a great effort be made to educate the community old and young to the value of our native plant life both economically and aesthetically.
2. The undertaking of immediate demarcation of all lands under three main headings: Agricultural, Pastoral and Forestry, irrespective of ownership.
3. All remaining native forests be sub-divided into two classes, Protection and Commercial. Protection forests to be removed from the Departments at present administering them and placed under a Department of Conservation,

Bush Destruction on Mt. Tongariro at 3,000 ft.

whose administration would include all wild life, sanctuaries for wild life or forests such as Waipoua, Scenic Reserves, National Parks and similar national monuments. Their policy would naturally be the elimination of all exotics both plant and animal where possible. Commercial forests to be administered by the present State Service, who would be compelled by legislation to operate them as a perpetual crop without interfering with their scenic value in any marked manner such as interplanting with exotics.

4. All State exotic plantations to be administered by the State Forest Service. Continuous

pure stands to be avoided. Further plantations to be made for various purposes such as timber, pulp-wood, etc.

5. All native forests now existing to be tax free while standing, but a heavy compensating tax to be charged on timber milled on native-owned or privately-owned native forest. That milling and felling of native trees be placed under a licensing system, under the Department of Conservation. That all mills operating on native forest be rationed down to at least two thirds of their present output which is now much in excess of what New Zealand can afford to sacrifice, and that the importation of

building timber be resumed from America and elsewhere in order to cope with the increased demand, and thereby conserve our own greatly diminished supply. The Forest and Bird Protection Society has received a report which goes to indicate gross mismanagement owing to the lack of such a system. High up on Mount Tongariro, this report states, a wonderful native-owned forest is being cut and milled by a Syrian. This forest, which is at an elevation of 3000 feet, should be part of the Tongariro National Park, but we have been told that no funds are available to purchase it despite the fact that finance is usually forthcoming for such schemes as the new road to Milford. Exploitation invariably dominates conservation in New Zealand.

6. The export overseas of native timber, at least from the North Island, should be prohibited. New Zealand cannot afford to send its valuable native timber to Australia. This applies emphatically to kauri, white pine and rimu.

7. A special effort should be made in order to acquire knowledge as to the conditions required to grow our native timber trees rapidly. Some small experiments by private individuals tend to demonstrate that this can be quite easily done provided the proper conditions of soil, moisture, drainage, etc., are ensured. The fact that we have never seriously attempted the regeneration of kauri forests is surely a reflection upon our enterprise. Beech, totara, rimu and kahikatea will all grow reasonably fast under proper conditions. White pine may, however, require such good soil that the cost may be prohibitive owing to the heavy accumulation of compound interest incurred by the initial cost of the land.

8. All lands upon which the bush has been felled and which have been found to be economically unfitted for pastoral purposes should be abandoned and where we cannot afford to replant, should be left to nature and guarded against fire and plant-eating animals. The initial growth would be fern, manuka, etc. This is, however, quite a good check against excessive water run off.

9. That all protection should be removed from the opossum, that it should be declared a pest, and that free trapping should be allowed to rid the forests of it. Trappers should not be permitted to damage the forest as they do at present. Every opossum in the bush means so

much less food for the native birds, so much less protection for them.

10. That timber milling should never be allowed in a water supply reserve such as the Akatarewa or the Waitakere. No official forester is needed. Not another tree should be felled. There Nature is the best forester. All that is necessary is to protect the forest from fire and animals and it will continue to reproduce itself as it has done for centuries until man came to ruin it.

To summarise, Forests are the first essential in the economy of a nation. They protect the top soil (which produces nearly all our wealth and food supplies) from being washed away into the sea and hold back the stony debris and such like material which would follow the loss of the top soil and cover over much of our lower land with its useless material. Forests further, have a marked effect climatically; without them hard, harsh desert-like conditions arise. No individual should be permitted to acquire wealth by destroying forests on watersheds, high country or steep country because the resulting losses to the community far outweigh individual gain. Some arguments used in order to destroy the forest are puerile, such as the need for grass for more stock. Trees are in all probability a much more productive and permanent crop than grass, as Japan has discovered. She has 67 per cent. of her total area in forest and 15½ per cent. in agriculture. Yet she carries an incomparably larger population than ours on much the same area. All the facts and all the statements made are, however, without any avail unless the public realise them as correct. Nothing can be done without public sympathy, therefore, the first essential is to secure this backing, and it can be done by telling the public the facts in their own language in as simple a form as possible. The Forest and Bird Protection Society has gone as far as its funds would permit in this direction, with, we are pleased to think, marked success, but the funds available are wholly inadequate to do the work quickly.

FOREST and BIRD SOCIETY BADGES

Metal badges nicely designed in gilt and nephrite green enamel are now being issued by the Society, at the price of 1/6, or in silver and paua shell at 7/6 each. These make handsome brooches.



RED AND WHITE PINE

THE CALL FOR BUTTER BOXES.

IT has become apparent even to the farmers who seldom have given a thought to forest-conservation that New Zealand cannot afford to send rimu and kahikatea out of the country any longer. A Hawke's Bay farming association recently passed a resolution requesting the Government to prohibit the further exportation of those timbers. We need every bit of those timbers ourselves, so far as the North Island is concerned. The farmers and the dairy industry are becoming concerned about material for making butter boxes. Very large quantities of these two valuable timbers have been sent to Australia for that very purpose. Now, however, the Government has very wisely stopped the excessive export of white pine.

Rimu, it must be stated emphatically, is too good a timber to devote to butter-boxes in lieu of the vanishing kahikatea. It should be reserved for house-building and furniture. Reference is made elsewhere to the need for regenerating kahikatea. The same remark applies to rimu. At this moment those trees are disappearing like smoke, before the desperate onslaught of timber-millers who have practically a free hand in our forests.

The country is being scoured for every available standing stick. We have recently seen rimu hauled out of gorges and gullies and felled on hillsides in steep country that will fall to ruin if the destruction continues, yet the cut-away and haul-away gaily continues without a thought for the future.

A timber-man on the Akatarewa-Waikanae mountain road, a bushman of great experience and skill, was asked by a Wellington man making an unofficial inspection of the ravaged bush: "What is going to be done with this high country when you strip the big trees off it?"

"Oh," he replied, "the usual thing, I suppose. Burn off the small stuff and grass the land for sheep. Anyhow, all we want is the big fellows."

And this was rugged country from a thousand to fifteen hundred feet above sea level, where the "small stuff"—the forest of the future, if cared for scientifically—is the soil-

covering that holds the precipitous ranges and gully walls together. Young rimu and kahikatea trees are there in their thousands, with many other species of coming-on timber. But what is this to the timber miller, or the sheepfarmer?

ALAS, TOO TRUE!

THAT the desire to "get rich quick" was to some extent dominating forestry planting in New Zealand, Australia and South Africa was a statement made by Sir Arthur W. Hill, director of Kew Gardens, London, at the annual dinner of the Royal English Forestry Society. He said: "A more deplorable destruction of beauty and scenery than in such countries as New Zealand and Australia I have never seen. The neglect of native trees in the desire to raise quick growing pines is changing the face of these countries, and great risk is being run that native trees and vegetation will gradually disappear."

Dr. Cockayne, who was well called the Empire's greatest botanist, was of like mind to Sir Arthur Hill in regretting the disappearance of our forests. Unhappily, such men have never been in a position to decide forest policy. What a difference it would have made to the country, in wealth and area of indigenous timberlands, had a Hill or Cockayne been head of our State forest service twenty or thirty years ago!

BIRD MONTH.

August is the month when large numbers of birds die of starvation, because then the cold is usually severe and food scarce. Most birds, however, choose their winter quarters about May, and it therefore behoves the large number of people who now feed birds to attend to their feathered friends regularly. Spasmodic feeding is apt to do more harm than good, because those birds which have chosen to be the guests of your hospitality have to go hungry if neglected. Therefore give your scraps, your suet, your well sweetened porridge and milk, and such like, regularly.

PRICE OF BETRAYAL

WORLD-MUSEUM DEFILED FOR FORTY POUNDS A YEAR.

How long it takes to educate a Government even in the A B C of decency to indigenous fauna and flora is strikingly shown during the dozen years or more of our fight for fair play in the Auckland and Campbell Islands. Here are two mile-posts of history:

(1)—3rd July, 1925: Minister of Lands, the Hon. A. D. McLeod, to the Forest and Bird Protection Society: "In view of the annual rental the Lands Department is receiving from the (sheep) runs, I do not see that the proposal to reserve the Islands (the Auckland Islands) for the purpose suggested (conservation of flora, fauna, avifauna) is warranted."

(2)—1936: H. Guthrie Smith in "Joys and Sorrows of a N.Z. Naturalist" (chapter on the Auckland Islands): "The numbers of albatross, according to those who have known their haunts for half-a-century, have of late years much diminished. This is owing to the presence of sheep on areas not fit for sheep—an enterprise that has hurt the very originator of the idiotic business, benefited in the present nobody, and is abridging the existence of birds that are a source of pleasure to everyone who sails the sea."

A former New Zealand Government permitted and abetted the defilement of the sub-Antarctic islands by sheep, not only in the case of the Auckland Islands, but also of Campbell Island. Thither also were taken from New Zealand thousands of sheep—it is said, 3000. Mr. Guthrie Smith describes what has happened on Campbell Island as "an offence to God and man," and he adds:

"What has been done, the defilement by stock of this splendid natural sanctuary for the pitiful sum of £40, is truly an example of what not to do—forty pounds to enable every man who has touched it in the business way not to gain but to lose money; forty pounds for the right to burn, graze, and destroy."

THE "THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER" OVER AGAIN.

The forty pounds mentioned by Mr. Guthrie Smith as the annual rent received by the Government from the Campbell Island sheep run

was also the annual rent received by the Government from the Auckland Islands sheep runs. Fancy—a whole forty pounds.

It was "in view of the annual rental" (this fateful forty pounds) that conservation of the Auckland Islands was deemed by a Minister of Lands to be not "warranted." It is hard to believe that such an opinion could have been held at the Lands Ministry only a dozen years ago.

These forty pieces of gold deserve to rank with the historic thirty pieces of silver as a classic price for betrayal of the innocent.

No excuse in the way of ignorance was open to the New Zealand Government for the desecration of sub-Antarctic islands, as for at least two generations their bird treasures and their plant treasures were a matter of world-knowledge. For instance, the world had long known that the Auckland Islands had at least five bird species (snipe, parrakeet, "flightless" duck, a shag, and a merganser) found nowhere else on earth. And in "New Zealand Plants and their Story," the late Dr. L. Cockayne, F.R.S., had written of the unique plants of the Auckland Islands, so justly famed and so hard (some impossible) to reproduce in our gardens.

DR. COCKAYNE AND THE FORTY POUNDS.

Had the late Dr. Cockayne been asked at any stage of the proceedings for his opinion as to whether the Government should aid and abet sub-Antarctic sheep-farming, or do its best to remove the sheep, there is no doubt what his opinion would have been. He is known to have remarked to a friend: "Forty pounds a year for the destruction of one of the finest open air museums on earth!"

It was not till March, 1934, that the Government reserved the Auckland Islands for preservation of fauna and flora, the sheep-run licences having expired, except so far as one portion—Adams Island—is concerned. This island, comprising an area of 55,000 acres, was reserved under the Land Act in 1910. On Campbell Islands ("originally nearly as wonderful as the Auckland Islands"—Cockayne) the sheep-run licences also have expired, ac-

ording to information received by the Forest and Bird Protection Society.

But "the evil that men do lives after them."
—*THE SHEEP REMAIN!*

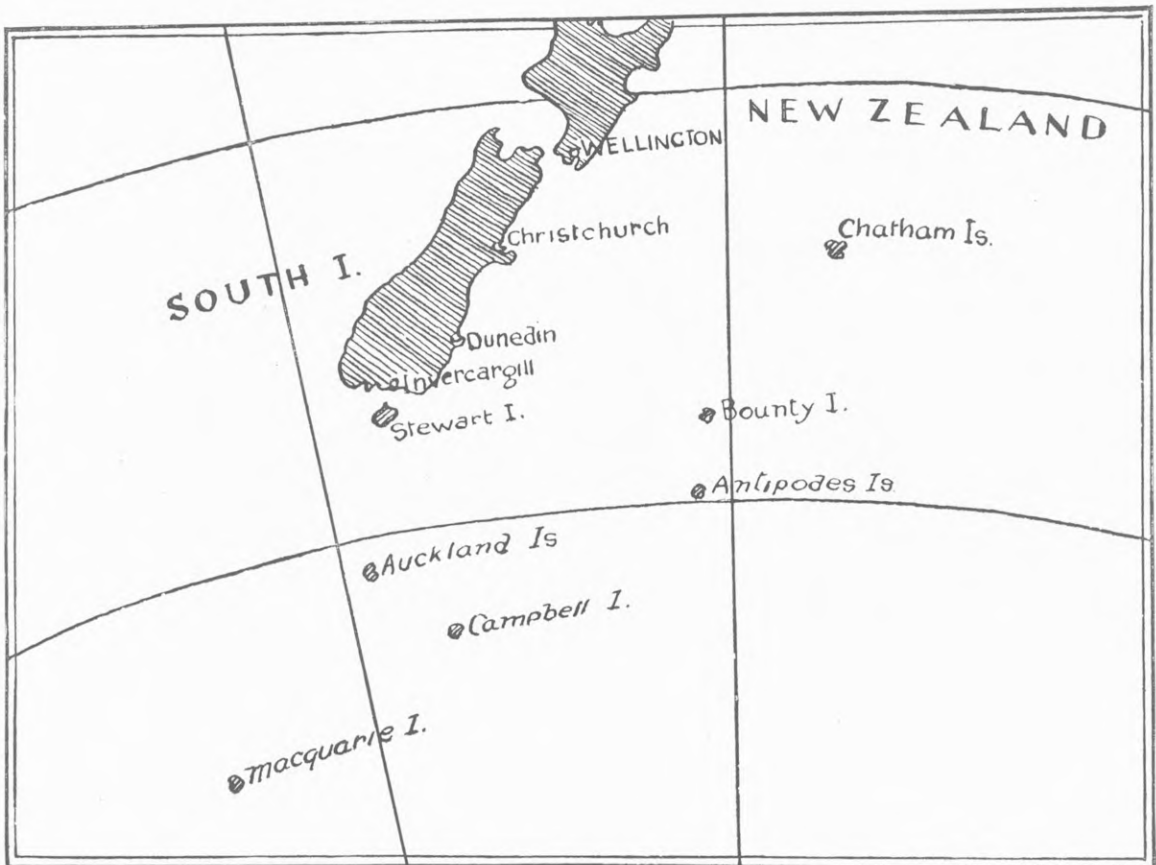
From 1926 onward the Forest and Bird Society never dropped its demand that the sheep licences be discontinued and that the islands be reserved. Likewise it will persist in its advocacy of some Government effort to place the islands under effective supervision, so that exotic animals may be reduced and seal poachers (also trespassers and collectors) warned off.

The whole subject is revived by Mr. Guthrie Smith's recently published book, quoted above. The fight for the freeing of the Auckland Islands—in the course of which the Forest and Bird Protection Society had certain remarkable negotiations indirectly with the licensees as well as with the Government—may be worth re-telling in a future issue with more space.

NESTING PRIVACY OF ROYAL ALBATROSS DESTROYED.

On Campbell Island Mr. Guthrie Smith found Royal Albatross diminishing, but "not every one of the great eggs had been basely cooked and eaten; not all of the majestic birds had been destroyed by degradation of pasture or worried by stray sheep dogs." After "a long tramp" he found sitting birds, but on "the grazed moorland" the tussock that should have sheltered their nests was absent. The great birds might as well have nested on a carpet. "They looked sadly out of place in their glaring, staring, flagrant, salient obviousness."

And he fires this parting shot at the wisdom of past Governments down to 1926: "What a poor, curtailed, mutilated, sterile world we threaten our descendants with!"



Plan by courtesy Lands and Survey Department.

If we remembered our sub-Antarctic dependencies, we would not permit these crimes against the Auckland and Campbell Islands.

SOME NEGLECTED NEW ZEALAND TREES

(Continued from February issue.)

By B. C. Aston.

WHAU.

AN excellent small tree for a centre piece for lawns or beds is the New Zealand cork tree or Whau (*Entelea aborescens*). It grows rapidly; strikes easily from cuttings and may be raised from seed; has very large green mulberry-like leaves and white flowers succeeded by prickly burr-like fruits containing large whitish seeds. Although common at one time in the Taranaki Province it has been largely eaten out by cattle in many places. A few are still to be found at Paekakariki, the most southerly habitat known. It is quite hardy in frost-free localities and thrives on the Karori hills, given a deep soil and fairly sheltered position where the frost is light enough only to blacken the leaves in winter. This shrub-tree will make a handsome addition to any garden large enough to afford the space to show off its characters as an isolated specimen. A few years ago there was a well known tree at Mahara House, Waikanae, where it was universally admired for many years. The wood of this tree is so light that the Maori used it as a buoy for fishing nets in the same way as the Pakeha uses cork. *Entelea aborescens* belongs to the family of plants called *Tiliaceae* and therefore is related to the New Zealand wineberry (*Aristotelia racemosa*), Makomako, and to that charming European street shade-tree the lime or linden.

NEW ZEALAND BEECHES.

The most outstanding instance of neglect in the case of New Zealand trees for ornament which is difficult to understand is that instance of the New Zealand beeches (*Nothofagus*) that group of trees which is often miscalled "birch" by the bushman or settler. They are all easy to grow and are all beautiful, and are the quickest growing large trees of New Zealand. They grow naturally in the most exposed and dry situations and on the poorest soil, and therefore are extremely hardy in cultivation. In addition to this they are extremely prolific in the native forests, millions of seedlings being available under the trees. There is one thing that one cannot do with any New Zealand beech tree, it cannot be struck from cuttings.

This is a decided drawback when one happens to find a specimen with highly coloured leaves or a hybrid which has unusual characteristics. It is also somewhat difficult to obtain the fertile seed of any of the beeches as they so soon are shed when ripe. For those who have fairly large gardens and can afford to give the necessary space there is no New Zealand tree which will so quickly yield satisfying results to the planter as a garden or shrubbery plant for boundaries or carriage drives. New Zealand beeches are the host plants of two scarlet flowered New Zealand mistletoes, *Elytranthe Colensoi* and *E. tetrapetalus*, as well as of the orange flowered *E. flavidus*, and when the right technique of growing these brilliant parasites is determined it will add another reason for growing beech trees more plentifully in garden, plantation, or public reserve. Opinions may differ as to what is the most beautiful of the beeches, but probably the hardiest and one easily obtained is that which yields the well-known "Southland beech" timber now largely used in the timber trade. This species is variously called "silver beech" from the silvery bark, "cherry beech" from the cherry-like bark, "brown beech," or Menzie's beech or "toothed-leaved beech," (*Nothofagus Menziesii*). In nature it is so abundant that it is the dominant forest growth in large areas of the North Island above 2000ft. and South Island from sea level. It is so beautiful that armfuls of the foliage will be eagerly accepted by garden visitors. The red beech, (*N. fusca*), has leaves which turn a charming reddish colour in winter and the leaves of this species are comparatively large. The smallest species of the family is the mountain or entire-leaved beech. (*N. cliffortioides*). H. J. Matthews, at one time Chief Government Forester, thought this the most beautiful of the species and certainly there is much to be said for this view. The small size and slower growth make it more suitable for the small garden than the larger species.

REWAREWA OR HONEYSUCKLE.

One of the most neglected trees is the Rewarewa, or New Zealand Honeysuckle (*Knightia*

excelsa). Any specimens planted in a well drained moist soil will flourish and quickly grow into a shapely tree. It is particularly hardy and grows rapidly. Its leaves have a very characteristic and unusual shape, and the outline of the tree is extremely neat and symmetrical, being conical or columnar and therefore suitable for planting among buildings. The foliage is the most conspicuous and ornamental part of the tree; the red flowers are highly attractive when detached but they are concealed by the leaves when growing. It is one of the trees which produce nectar for the honey eating birds. This species belongs to the great Australian and South African family "Proteaceae"; indeed, it has a somewhat alien aspect but it is a true New Zealander. The illustration shows the tall columns of *Knightsia* standing out above all other trees. The timber is the well-known "New Zealand honeysuckle" useful for veneering and other ornamental woodwork.



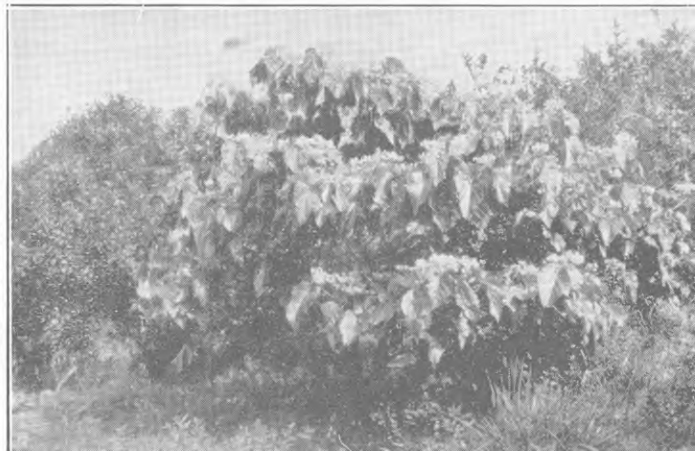
Rewarewa.

Silver Beech.



Whau.

Photo courtesy Bernard Sladden



MILLED FOREST AREAS

By Rakau.

SOUND principles of scientific forestry are infringed immediately tree-planters tinker with the pure indigenous timberlands by introducing foreign species. This process of interplanting with alien trees has unfortunately begun in New Zealand to the disgust of all those who treasure the unspoiled vegetation of the land. In State and municipal-owned bush in certain districts, where the timber-millers have taken out the large trees, and where the young growth should be allowed to assert itself undisturbed, this offence against Nature is perpetrated. It is a strange state of mind, this indifference to the rightful claims of the vegetation that is native to the soil.

In other countries the foresters recognise the superior value of their own timbers. In Java the teak forests are reproduced, generation after generations of cutting, without admixture with inferior foreign trees. Every country with a scientific forestry system strives to reproduce its timber trees and the whole forest life. But here all kinds of fantastic tricks are tried.

Rimu trees, the second most valuable timber in the land, are being replaced in one area with the comparatively worthless *lawsoniana*, which is really best fitted for shelter belts and hedges.

KEEP THEM PURELY NATIVE.

The writer has noted much well-grown *lawsoniana* in the Waikato and other districts lately, and undoubtedly it makes a first-rate hedge, it grows so thickly and so close to the ground. But as a timber-content tree it is of negligible worth; it cannot seriously be considered a fit substitute for the splendid rimu.

Even in water-supply reserves, where felling and milling should not be permitted on any pretext, the natural timber covering of the hills is not respected. Anything, everything is better, apparently, and so we find the local bodies in charge allowing interplanting with all kinds of inferior foreign trees, in the hope that they will smother the young native growth. The vigorous indigenous saplings will probably survive all right, but the spectacle of such an ill-matched woodland will sicken the lover of the real New Zealand forest life.

The admixture of native and alien species is not only unscientific as a forest scheme but is an offence against the ancient laws that made our forests and renewed them from century to century. Alien species of any kind introduce new problems, probably new insect pests. The only safe, and sightly, plan is to maintain the indigenous life untampered with. Exotics have their own rightful and separate place.

A SCENIC HIGHWAY

THE AKATAREWA—RIKI-O-RANGI ROAD.

THIS road, the great scenic route of Wellington, penetrates a ruined forest, where not a tree should have been destroyed. On the very top of the watershed, at an altitude of 1400 feet, there is a shocking scene of destruction caused by the operations of timber fellers, who have left acres of bush in dead timbers and broken trees. The road is wonderfully well engineered, but what will be the use of such a scenic way when the bush is destroyed? Forest

is still being milled and motor-cars on the road frequently meet lorries loaded with rimu logs—a scandalous sight in those water supply catchment ranges.

There is time to save it yet, or a good deal of it. Not another tree should be felled. There Nature is the best forester. All that is necessary is to protect the forest from fire and animals and it will continue to reproduce itself as it has done for centuries until men came to ruin it.

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FOREST AND BIRD PROTECTION SOCIETY

OF NEW ZEALAND (Inc.)

APPEAL FOR BEQUESTS.

Is there any cause more worthy of bequests by public-spirited citizens than the objectives of the Forest and Bird Protection Society, which is working wholly and solely for the welfare of New Zealand, present and future? Here is a suggested form of bequest:—

"I give and bequeath the sum of to the Forest and Bird Protection Society (Incorporated), and I declare that the receipt of the Treasurer for the time being of the said Society shall be a complete discharge to my executors for the legacy hereby given to such Society."

The work and record of the Society, the personnel of its membership and Executive are a good guarantee that the best possible use will be made of such bequests.

CALL FOR SANCTUARIES.

The Society would also welcome the responsibility of administering suitable sanctuaries for land or sea birds, provided that a small annuity is added for the payment of a caretaker. *Such sanctuaries could be named after the donor, and would thus be a perpetuation of his name as a saviour of New Zealand's forest and bird life.* It is suggested that such sanctuaries should be administered in a manner to ensure their return to their original and natural conditions as nearly as possible.

OBJECTS.

To advocate and obtain the efficient protection and preservation of our native forests and birds, enlisting the natural sympathy of our young, unity of control of all wild life, and the preservation of sanctuaries, scenic reserves, etc., in their native state.

Affiliated with the Society for the Preservation of the Fauna of the British Empire (Patron, His Majesty King George VI.) and with the International Committee for the Protection of Wild Birds (President, Dr. T. Gilbert Pearson).

Recognising that it is essential for all those who desire to save our Forest and Bird Life to band together, I enclose herewith my subscription of £..... as a subscriber to the Society. I shall be glad to receive the quarterly magazine, "Forest and Bird," without further charge.

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Children	.....	.....	£0	1	0	per annum
Ordinary	.....	.....	0	5	0	" "
Endowment	.....	.....	1	0	0	" "
Life	.....	.....	5	0	0	" "