

of native birds being granted to foreign institutions, such specimens must be shot by an official of the New Zealand Government.

It can fairly be said that as far as Government action is concerned this is all that is done to preserve the birds of New Zealand, and on paper it would seem to be all-sufficient. How lamentably inadequate it is in practice is indicated by two very paradoxical sets of facts: Firstly, those birds which are not protected, but on the contrary strenuously outlawed—for instance, the kea parrot, the shags, and the harrier hawk—are probably more abundant than ever, and in some cases extending their range; secondly, the indigenous birds of Cuba, as I had an opportunity to observe in 1925, seem in no worse case, if in no better, than those of New Zealand, yet so far as I could find they were shot or trapped without restriction. So far, then, as the protection laws in New Zealand are concerned, we can probably suggest no improvement.

With regard to *active* protection, what are we doing to counteract the deleterious influences outlined above, and what can we do? First and foremost, the laws, excellent in themselves, should be enforced, as they are most emphatically not to-day. To quote from the latest report of the New Zealand Native Bird Protection Society: "The Act does not, however, state definitely whose business it is to enforce the conditions, and we have been unable so far to fix the responsibility. The Department on which responsibility falls primarily has no apparent means of checking poaching and other breaches of the Act with reference to these absolutely protected birds. Further, all the income from wild life sources appears to be set aside in the interests of game-bird and fish conservation, excepting a half-share of opossum skin royalties allotted to the State Forest Service for the purpose of destroying goats, deer, etc. This latter, now amounting to a large sum, awaits utilisation. Our most valuable birds are thus left out in the cold. The State Forest Service, so far as their special reservations are concerned, some Acclimatisation Societies, and occasionally the police, interest themselves, but the whole matter of enforcing the conditions of the Act, so far as these specially listed birds are concerned, appears extremely vague and certainly requires elucidation." Finally, the sanctuaries and reserves themselves are under the control of a number of different Government Departments and Boards. One of the greatest aims of the Bird Protection Society is to secure unity of control in all matters related to conservation.

With regard to the sanctuaries and reserves, there exists the same notion that a mere paper declaration is all-sufficient to obtain the end in view. I am glad to see that Dr. Hill, the Director of Kew Gardens, during his recent visit to New Zealand, criticised very strongly in the local Press this mistaken policy. He writes: "The setting aside of areas as reserves is a very laudable policy,