

commotion that occurs in the poultry yard, or the discovery of scattered feathers and picked bones.

Other farmers are more observant. They see things more fairly. The remains of a fowl, like the remains of a pheasant, do not prove that the harrier captured the bird in the first place. It may have been a cat or a stoat, and in some instances a rat. Should a "hawk" be caught red-handed, they endeavour to shoot or trap it. This is the most logical course to pursue. We do not seek to destroy *all* dogs because one or two become renegades and worry sheep.

The harrier does quite a considerable amount of good by catching rabbits, the young ones in particular falling an easy prey. It also devours a very large number of rodents and insects such as crickets and grasshoppers, and here we open up a fresh question: How much grass do these pasture-haunting insects devour? This subject would yield some surprising results to an enterprising observer. If some idea was gathered of the amount eaten by one individual and this multiplied by whatever was considered the average number to an acre, I venture to say the loss in grass would be astonishing. It is not everyone who is fortunate enough to have unlimited time at his disposal, but if the opportunity occurs, it is worth while watching the ravenous appetite of a grasshopper and seeing the rapidity with which even a coarse pasture leaf like *paspalum* is devoured.

Judging by the amount of really reliable information we have, it would seem that the good done by the harrier at least balances the harm. Yet it is condemned. Surely the Powers-that-be are not so ignorant of that wonderful thing called Nature, as to take the birds of prey as a class and label them a menace to other bird life! On the contrary, the dashing falcons keep the species they prey on from becoming degenerate by continually weeding out the weak and undeveloped. Perhaps, had New Zealand possessed a reasonable quota of preying beasts and birds, we should not have to-day the degenerate kiwis, wekas, and other birds with their useless or almost useless wings. They would be better able to hold their own against the carnivora we have introduced.

But the harrier lacks the dash and courage of the falcons, so can hardly be considered detrimental in any way to our native birds or of even playing an important part in preventing degeneration. I do not advocate allowing the harriers to multiply unchecked, for that would probably result in an insufficiency of food for all, and in consequence the bird would become a nuisance. Nor do I agree with the plan of putting a price on each bird's head (or rather feet), for this tends to encourage ruthless slaughter.—(S. D. POTTER.)