

Whose household words are songs in many keys,
Sweeter than instrument of man e'er caught!
Whose habitations in the tree-tops even
Are half-way houses on the way to heaven!

—LONGFELLOW, *Birds of Killingworth*.

CONTROL OF WILD LIFE.

(By CAPTAIN E. V. SANDERSON.)

The wild life of any country has an intimate bearing on the prosperity of its human inhabitants. As for instance in New Zealand our forests supply the all essential timber, check erosion and the devastation of our farming lands thereby, while our pastoral and agricultural pursuits are largely influenced by the presence of desirable birds and their activities in checking insect and rodent pests and germ diseases. Indeed, the very prosperity of our country depends in a very large degree on the efficient care and control of wild life matters.

Here in New Zealand Acclimatisation Societies were formed many years ago to introduce desirable forms of wild life owing to the upsetting of Nature's balance by the comparatively sudden conversion of forest covered lands into open country. A sufficiency of birds adapted to the purpose of checking insect pests was not present; insect life increasing beyond all bounds, threatened to make agricultural pursuits an impossibility. A great and onerous responsibility was thus thrown largely upon Acclimatisation Societies. As years went on, owing to the method of the election of the executives of these societies by the votes of sportsmen alone, they have drifted largely into fishing and shooting clubs, leaving the main objects of their original formation neglected and all interests other than the sportsman's. Other bodies took up various branches of wild life as the necessity arose, as for instance the Department of Lands held on to the care of scenic reserves, Internal Affairs sanctuaries under the Animals Protection and Game Act, 1921-2, the Tourist Department other sanctuaries, and later the Forest Service were handed the care of Forest Reserves, etc., etc. This multi-control has, as would be expected, resulted in much waste of wild life revenue and much diffusion of any expert knowledge available, a conflict of opinions, and an endeavour on the part of those bodies controlling to use the various sections as they thought fit. Research into the many complex and vital problems con-