

graphic records were taken, so at least in books the species will be preserved. It may seem ironic to some that so much fuss is made over him now when a little less neglect in years gone by might have kept his kind alive. And still more ironic is the fact that he has been allowed to live out his natural existence amid the scrub oaks and fields instead of being killed. This privilege of life and liberty has too seldom been accorded his brethren—if it had, a different story would now be told.

He is a symbol, this last heath hen, silently living out his few remaining days amid the scenes of former heath-hen glory—a symbol of the slowly but steadily departing wild life. His pathetic figure carries the tragic story of the passenger pigeon, the great auk, the Carolina parakeet—and the heath hen. For these only one epitaph need be written—"Created by Nature's bounty, destroyed by the wantonness of man."

The State of Massachusetts has helped conservation immeasurably by its efforts to save the heath hen. The dramatic passing of the last specimen may so stir the imagination of men as to make it impossible for other dwindling races to be exterminated at the hands of humans. If so, the last heath hen will have done his share; his race will have been exterminated not entirely in vain.

BIRD-ENEMIES.

Bird-enemies are legion—bird-enemies are everywhere. One wonders how the little birds can have the grit to throw back their heads and sing when death continuously hovers over them.

Birds respond more quickly to protection from enemies than to any other factor. Where enemies are few, birds abound. The converse of this is true also, however; where birds abound, enemies will assemble. A Bird Sanctuary that does nothing towards lessening bird-enemies cannot expect to have very many more birds than the surrounding country because, as soon as the bird-life increases, a "feeding station" for cats, rats, weasels, etc., has been automatically set up and they are just as sure to move in as were the birds when their food was increased. Especially is this true of stray cats which will come from miles around in the hope of catching some of the birds. It is very often necessary to reduce their numbers.

The same may be said for the powerful and ever present Norway rat—it often becomes a fierce bird-killer and destroys every nest it can reach.

The slingshot and air-gun do not kill many birds, but they certainly can disturb the peace of mind of birds and keep them ever timid. They should naturally be discouraged everywhere and especially near a Bird Sanctuary.—*Bird Lore*.