

## LITTLE BARRIER.

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A visit was made by the Hon. Secretary of the Native Bird Protection Society to this sanctuary. A fortnight was given to investigation. The bird and forest life were found to be in first-class condition and a credit to the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts who are in control of the island. Mr. Nelson, the present caretaker, has done his work well and faithfully, as the plenitude and tameness of the birds clearly indicates. Considerable credit to the state of matters existing on Little Barrier is due to the late Sir Thomas McKenzie, who took a keen interest in the sanctuary, whilst the Bird Protection Society has, as watch-dog, found it necessary to raise its voice on three occasions in protestation of matters likely to be harmful to the bird life. Little Barrier is overflowing with some species of birds, but in this matter is not allowed to fully function in the way a sanctuary is intended to, *i.e.*, to supply birds to the surrounding country, because pigeons and other birds are shot on the mainland, besides which insufficient encouragement is given birds to make their homes near civilisation. An object lesson on Little Barrier is to see the bell-birds and tuis fed by the dozen several times a day at the caretaker's back door. These bell-birds are exceedingly tame, and will feed out of one's hand and come into one's lap in perfect confidence. The accessories now required to make this famous sanctuary still better are the fencing in of all domestic stock, the prohibition of the keeping of pigs lest they escape, and the provision of some means of quick intercommunication with the mainland in order that the caretaker can be advised of the departure of likely poaching parties, and he himself or his family be able to receive assistance in case of need. Owing to rough seas and rocky shores it is doubtful if a launch could be successfully operated from the sanctuary, but we must remember that the Maoris passed to and fro to the mainland in their canoes in days gone by, and surely we can emulate their skill in seamanship. Something in line with the launching apparatus operated by the Maoris on Kapiti is required, where a large launch powerfully engined can be launched and got under way in two minutes, so efficiently is the apparatus handled. Little Barrier at present is patrolled weekly by a poorly engined launch. Other sanctuaries in the vicinity, such as the Hen and Chickens, Poor Knights, could be patrolled with a launch stationed at Little Barrier. The suggestion is commended to the notice of the controlling Department.