

upon our heads and shoulders while we were replenishing their food supply. Then, one day heralding an epoch of beautifully fine weather, the green birds forsook the temporary sanctuary for their natural haunt—the bush. On the eve of inclement weather they returned, their peculiar plaintive cries announcing their arrival. From that time the Silvereyes have remained, habitating the feeding-grounds and turnip paddock by day, retiring to roost in a plantation of firs at night. For roosting purposes they also frequent a gully choked with black scrub and flax. Usually they perch in the extreme top of the trees. Many of them appear to recognise an ideal camping-ground in a dense escalonia hedge; this, however, is occupied by a colony of noisy, quarrelsome sparrows, and the little green chaps seem to think it wise to avoid the quarters of such omnipotent birds, for although many of them regard it wistfully yet none of them ever sleep there.

The presence of the green visitors seem to be greatly resented by a pair of native larks who have regarded the lawn and porch as their particular hunting-ground for the last four years. These latter are remarkably friendly, always appearing several times every day to be fed. Upon the arrival of the Silvereyes, however, they invariably disappear, only putting in an occasional appearance, usually on some bitterly cold day, where they stay long enough to eat a hasty meal, ere they depart. Often I come across this drab grey pair running about in some spot, never very sheltered, in the vicinity of the house, sadly preferring to eke out an existence, however meagre, rather than mingle with the Silvereyes. Just why this is, is beyond my comprehension, for of all New Zealand birds, none is more gentle, quiet, and friendly than this same native lark.

As I write, a Silvereye—vivacious little chap that he is—has hopped on to the window sill, and after regarding me with bright eye, has flown down to join his fellows at their feasting. Ah, well! little green birds, you are welcome here until the cold weather goes, when once more you can return to your beautiful forest home.