

AGAINST CRUEL BIRD-CAGING.

BRITAIN'S BUCKMASTER ACT.

Some people who are really kind-hearted keep birds in cages. Persons who would not knowingly commit the slightest act of cruelty keep singers as prisoners in cages hardly big enough to allow the captives to stretch their wings. It is a case of thoughtlessness—lack of imagination. No cruelty is intended, but it is there all the same. Whether cruelty is deliberate or unintentional, the bird's suffering is the same.

Happily, public opinion in Great Britain has been strongly developed on behalf of wild birds. Hence has come the Buckmaster Act, forbidding the caging of wild birds.

Catching of wild birds has long been barred. The use of bird lime is also prohibited. The Buckmaster Act shows that New Zealand is lagging behind the Mother Country. At certain times of the year boys and men may be seen using bird-lime in and about many towns of the Dominion.

GLAD TO DIE.

LAMENT OF A CAGED GOLDFINCH.

A wretched little Goldfinch I!
My song is changed to piteous cry.
Through long days drear I fret and rage
Pent tight within this narrow cage.
Broken my leg, worn bare both wings and tail
In puny efforts—but of no avail—
To free myself. I can't get out!
I hear the children play and shout
And wonder on this sunny morn
Why bird like me was ever born.

Hearken! One comes with hushed breath.
He whispers "Birdie, I am Death,
Love's servant, sent to set you free."
I feel a warmth enfolding me
Like mother wings in bygone days,
To kindly Death be thanks and praise.
Man's cruelty I can now defy,
And so I . . . little Goldfinch . . . die.

F. L. Horner.