

and birds' eggs were to our ancestors; nay, even as hen eggs are to us to-day. I have just purchased half a dozen, because Man must eat to live, but there is no necessity to do cruel things like needlessly robbing birds' nests just because our ancestors had a need to do so in order to live.

BIRD LIFE OF LITTLE BARRIER.

Miss Ruth E. Nelson (daughter of the late caretaker of the Little Barrier Bird Sanctuary) writes interestingly about the bird life there.

The only enemy they had was the hawk (she remarks), and in this respect they were in no way stupid, always having a sentinel placed on guard on the highest point of the beach to warn them if the enemy was in sight. The method was very characteristic of these birds, being a loud "coo" repeated twice or thrice, and making a great commotion with the wings the bird would fly swiftly to the nearest tree for safety, all the rest of the flock following as fast as they could. I do not think many of them were seized by the hawk; only an occasional one was taken.

Many of them found food in the garden. Much preference was given to the hearts of cabbage and cauliflower, which appeared to be greatly to their taste. In this way they would become a nuisance; so we had to find adequate protection for the growing plants. This all shows how tame these birds could become when left unmolested.

Pigeons were to be seen at any time of the year. Some went inland during the winter months, others crossed to the mainland; but the majority were always with us.

The little green parrakeets would also come down with the rest to eat. They were quite common also. We had a tame kaka parrot which stayed with us for a long time. It was very quaint indeed, and would give us a lot of fun watching its antics with the other birds. It preferred to have the dishes all to itself, and would run from one dish to another, chasing the other birds away. The tuis objected to this form of play, and when the kaka was eating would hop round about and flap their wings in a gallant effort to drive it away; but it would take not the slightest notice of them, and went on eating quite indifferent to everything but the food in its claw until it had eaten its fill.