

FAIR PLAY FOR NATIVE HAWKS.

Mr. E. T. Frost, representative of the Forest and Bird Protection Society in North Auckland, a careful observer, makes a spirited protest against the persecution of native hawks, which are enemies of rats and other rodents. Here is some interesting comment of Mr. Frost:—

I found a harrier hawk's nest when it had four eggs in it, and kept it under observation until the birds were just ready to fly. Three eggs hatched out.

I saw the young birds practically every week for eight weeks, and during that period I never saw the remains of any bird around the nest. What I did see was rats' tails, and one day as I passed the nest I saw the remains of a rat half devoured. One hour later I rode past it again, and the old bird arose from it as I got near. During that interval it had brought another very large rat, which the young ones had just begun to devour.

In face of these facts we must admit that these birds have a necessary function in ridding us of a large number of rodents, including weasels, stoats, and others. I am certain that during the eight weeks the young were in the nest the old bird must have brought over a hundred rats to them. Just think of the nests that these rodents would have raided and the damage they would have done our own food supplies!



"WHO SAID 'RATS'?"—Young Native Harrier Hawks, North Auckland.