

In past years many Ministers have headed forest and wild life administration. Few had even a rudimentary knowledge of matters connected with their charge, but with an eye ever on the next election, they have been bandied about from pillar to post like a shuttlecock by press propaganda, lobbying, deputations and other ruses of the various contending parties. The sad sequel of this old political swirl is seen in loss of native forests and decline of wild life. The time is long overdue for a scrapping of the old haphazardness and a planning of a new regime which will take notice of trained biologists' field observations, otherwise the country will be obliged to suffer a very severe penalty.

When we are dealing with geological matters geologists are consulted. When we are dealing with biological matters we are guided by laymen, which is about as wise as if we consulted a navy for the treatment of appendicitis.

The Minister of Public Works, the Hon. R. Semple, has declared that he is now faced with the problem of finding millions of pounds for river-erosion work alone. Mr. Burnett, M.P., estimates that it will cost £5,000,000 to exterminate deer. It is pleasing to note that these gentlemen recognise whither the country is heading. The final word, however, in the efficient conservation of forests and wild life rests in a full and proper realisation of the need by the general public who, if they were fully informed, would insist upon proper, modern methods. The failure on the part of the public to back up the necessary campaign for efficiency would mean no forests, no game, no fish, and no native bird life. The final result would be national ruin due to disastrous floods and loss of productive soil.

## SHAGS AND MORE SHAGS.

