

pay for the opportunity afforded by parks like these, so that it is possible already to say that fauna preservation can be a source of revenue to the country in which the fauna are preserved.

If I seem to have laid too much stress upon the utilitarian aspects of fauna preservation, you must forgive me. In the world of to-day one is shy of appealing to any but the baser, practical motives, or suggesting that man might

take a lesson from the so-called lower animals—those decently living creatures untainted by any of the seven deadly sins.

Can we get back to Eden? It does not look like it. But, with the help of men of goodwill, we may at least secure that there shall be the makings of an Eden whenever man ceases to be a beast ravening against Nature's creatures, including his own kind.

FOREST ABUSE

Destruction in the Mamaku-Rotorua Bush

THE despoiling of the valuable forest on the Mamaku hills, the broken tableland between the Upper Thames headwaters and the Rotorua slopes has been evident to observant travellers during the last twenty years or more. A very serious aspect of this misuse and wastage of a region which should be a reserve in perpetuity for the growth of New Zealand indigenous timber has been brought to the attention of the Forest and Bird Protection Society by Mr. M. E. Fitzgerald, County Council Engineer at Matamata. Mr. Fitzgerald wrote as follows on November 25th of last year:—

"As one who is keenly interested in the protection of our remaining forests, I beg to raise the following point in the hope that you will be able to follow it up by an enquiry in the Government Offices, possibly the Mines Department. Much of the bush in this locality has been combed for millable timber, and when the millers pass on the bush is still in as fair condition as can be expected with every chance of regeneration. However, the pit-prop merchants then come along and make such a mess that blackberry and the like get a hold and the fire-stick is a natural consequence. The other day a pit-prop merchant mentioned some astounding figures as to the short life of timber in gold-mines and the huge demand for replacements that I began to wonder whether this trade was not the greatest enemy to our forests. He spoke of 12in. x 12in. x 7ft. props and sheeting having a life of only six to twelve weeks in some mines, and I wondered whether the possibilities of some more durable material had been enquired into."

Enquiries were made in Wellington as suggested, and the President communicated the

result to Mr. Fitzgerald, who then wrote in reply to Captain Sanderson:—

"From your letter of the 5th I gather that the Mines Department gave you a candid admission that they still live in the 'dark ages.' The Public Works Department's road engineers have abandoned their old rule to slash and burn the bush for chains wide to 'let in the sun and wind,' as well as ragwort and blackberry, and now have a well-developed bush-preservation complex. The Forestry Department is still too commercially minded—at least, its fieldsmen will let any axeman take anything if he produces the royalty in advance. For a number of years pit-prop men operated in the State bush on the Mamaku Hills bordering the Rotorua-Cambridge highway. They were supposed to keep ten chains away from the public road, which was some concession to aesthetics, but they failed to do so. The story is on the files of the Forestry League. The particular place I had in mind when I wrote you is a mile or two south of the Government railway line Auckland to Rotorua, and about midway between Arahiwi and Ngatira railway stations. It is either on the large Government Reserve or some adjoining native land. However, the trade is common in many parts of the bush in the Rotorua district, both State forest and other. The usual sequence of events is as follows:—

"The timber-millers comb the bush for millable trees, leaving behind many small trees of up to 15 inches diameter. The forest floor is still well carpeted, no serious injury to climatic conditions has resulted, saplings and seedlings immediately set about the work of regeneration—which is far more rapid than many suppose. However, at any time from now on the bush-