

three species of birds, a *Cinclodes* and two Wrens. On the main islands (all given over to sheep) this fine grass has gone, and with it its bird population, leaving large areas barren. We shall never know what birds lived in it.

I could extend this, but I think I have shown sufficient to make my point, and that point is that though we may deplore species becoming rare and going out, man is not usually capable of preventing the extinction, for the progress to that end is usually complete before the threat is noticed.

I have said above that this is a sparsely peopled country, yet we have a number of species protected. Beyond those which are game birds (ducks and snipe) I have yet to find the reasons. On this list of birds protected, either partly or wholly, there is not a single bird fit to eat, none rare, or even threatened. Under ordinary circumstances no one would waste a 3d. cartridge on any of them. But protect them by law, and you advertise the fact, "Don't touch," and like children everyone wants to, and does.

Next, the collector who hears something has become rare must have it. If he has sufficient money he gets it. Legislation may hamper, but it will never prevent this or any other form of smuggling. This fact is seldom looked in the face. You have advertised by law that something is rare, and as at a draper's summer sale, there is a rush for it.

I feel confident that many species of birds become extinct from causes that have never been suspected, yet they go, as a result of the natural law of evolution. Others, even if not observed, in most cases fill the void. Apart from the plume hunter and the species he preys on, I think that the greatest bird destruction is as follows:—

New Country.

Graze : Some slight effect on ground feeders.

Drain : Waders and aquatic forms go.

Burn forest : Destructive to most species.

Till the land : Very destructive to most ; a benefit to some.

Intensive cultivation : Only benefited species remain, mostly Passerines and Raptores that prey on them.

KERGUELEN TO BE DECLARED A SANCTUARY.

Seven years ago Dr. A. Menegaux contributed to the *Revue Francaise d'Ornithologie* an article on the possibility of using the Kerguelen Islands as a national park for the preservation of animal life in the Antarctic. In this article he urged the French Government to take action in Kerguelen similar to that which had recently been taken by the Tasmanian Government with regard to Macquarie Island, when it refused to renew a licence for the capture of penguins. (See *Emu*, XVIII., p. 64.)

The Paris correspondent of the *London Times* now reports that "the French Government has decided to make this sanctuary a reality by creating a preserve for the wild animals of the Southern Seas on

the territories in the far south of the Indian Ocean which belong to France. Chief among these are Kerguelen Island, the Crozet Archipelago, and the islands of St. Paul and Amsterdam, with the stretch of the coast of the Antarctic Continent known as Adelie Land, which lies to the west of the Ross Dependency of New Zealand. In addition to various kinds of seals, the sanctuary will also accommodate penguins, whom Anatole France has endeared to the heart of the Frenchman. These creatures are at present slowly but surely being exterminated by hunters, who kill them for their furs and feathers. The new decree will make it illegal to touch them in the areas specified and will be enforced, as far as possible, by naval patrol vessels based on Madagascar."

Australian ornithologists will join in congratulating their confrère, Dr. Menegaux on the success which has attended the movement inaugurated by him. The logical French mind evidently perceives the necessity, when making a reservation of this kind, to arrange for efficient supervision to see that the decree is effective. The idea is worthy of consideration by those responsible for the creation of reserves in Australasia. Though we frequently see announcements that reserves have been created in this part of the world, we do not recall ever seeing any announcement as to the means to be taken to ensure that the reserve would be respected.

Review.

MATHEWS' BIRDS OF AUSTRALIA, VOL. II, 1923-24.

In the preface to this volume, which was published in nine parts, Mr. Mathews makes the welcome announcement that his great work is nearing completion, as there is only one more volume to appear. The eleventh volume is on the same lines as its predecessors, the species being treated as a whole, with short notes on the subspecies recognised by the author at the end of the account. Eighty-three species are dealt with in this volume and all of them are figured by H. Grönvold on 51 plates which contain 145 figures. It will be seen that in many instances we are given more than one figure of a species, most of the more striking geographical forms of variable species being illustrated.

The families dealt with are the *Falcunculidæ*, *Sphenostomidæ*, *Sittidæ*, *Climacteridæ*, *Zosteropidæ*, *Dicaeidae*, *Pardalotidæ*, *Nectariniidæ* and part of the *Melithreptidæ*.

Falcunculidæ is a new family name for the Shrike-tits, with which the author associates the Crested Bell-bird, though expressing doubt as to whether it is really related to them. Mr. A. H. Chisholm in his "Mateship with Birds" (1922, pp. 102, 103) has suggested not only that these two forms are related, but that they have an affinity with two other anomalous crested birds, the Wedge-bill and the Whip-bird. Mr. Mathews considers that the relationships of