

“ Dominion Day was celebrated in these offices by holding an informal reception, at which the Lord Mayor, Sir Stephen Morell, Ministers of the Crown, foreign Consuls, and many other prominent citizens called to pay their respects to New Zealand. The occasion is always successful, and affords an excellent opportunity of keeping our offices conspicuously before the public.

“ Members and their staffs of important delegations visiting the Commonwealth, such as Hon. L. S. Amery, Secretary of State for the Dominions, the British Motor delegation, and the British Air Commission, proceeding to New Zealand found these offices of the utmost value to them and their respective missions when completing their arrangements in connection with their visit.

“ Other important visitors on fishing bent, such as Mr. Colman, Lord Grimthorpe, Dr. Lewis Smith, of London, and General Douglas, passing through Melbourne, have also found the assistance we were able to afford them invaluable. One and all have been most profuse in their thanks and appreciation of the services rendered. Besides those mentioned above, anglers of local fame, including Sir Thomas Bridges, late Governor of South Australia, Sir John McFarland, Chancellor of the Melbourne University, Rev. McRae Stewart, and Mr. George Chirnside, have not failed to avail themselves of the information we have from time to time been able to provide them with in respect to our fishing.

“ On Anzac Day we assisted resident returned New Zealand soldiers in their arrangements to participate in the celebrations. A New Zealand flag was provided, and individuals were induced to march in the procession, with the result that a unit of over a hundred men was got together. They marched well, and as representatives of the Dominion were cordially received by the crowd lining the entire route.

“ In the course of a few weeks a demonstration of British-made goods is to be made in Melbourne and the principal towns of the State, under the auspices of Empire Shopping Week, and arrangements have been made to make a display of New Zealand goods in one of the main thoroughfares of this city. A prominent window has been engaged for the purpose, and it is expected that the exhibit we make will stimulate inquiry and lead to extended trade in our products.

“ Our services have been fully availed of by the Customs, Public Works, Railway, Agriculture—in fact, by all the State Departments—and the duties performed on their behalf naturally covered an extensive range of subjects, necessitating busy days in coping with the extra work involved.”

The other Australian agencies, and also those in South Africa, have been kept busy during the year, and comprehensive and satisfactory reports have been received from them.

LITTLE BARRIER.

Mr. Nelson, the caretaker, supplies the following report, which is published for the information of those interested in the preservation of New Zealand bird-life:—

“ I have extensively travelled up many of the gullies, penetrating almost to the base of the mountains, and going over much new ground. I was pleased to observe a very large supply of bird-feed, and many of the native birds in the trees feeding. I noticed increasing numbers of young birds, especially the bell-birds and tuis, and also the stitch-birds. I am very pleased to report about the increase of the stitch-birds. I have come across them several times in small numbers, both on the ridges and the gullies. On one occasion I counted fourteen stitch-birds, which is very satisfactory.

“ I have several times walked along the coast, occasionally travelling to Pohutukawa Flat, which is about half-way round the island. With the mail-carrier's boat I have gone twice right round the island, hugging the beach the whole way for the purpose of examining closely to discover if any poachers have landed. Everything seemed quite safe.

“ The native robin is an easy prey for the wild cats, but I am glad to find the birds increasing, for every time I am in the bush I see them in twos and threes wherever I am resting. The kiwis have been much in evidence near the house since the months of February and March. I hear them calling to one another in different parts of the bush whenever the darkness sets in.

“ I also saw two yellow-fronted parrakeets. They are still very rare. The red-fronted species are very plentiful and tame, and come very close to the house.

“ I have seen the white kiwi once during the year. It was very active and in good condition. During the prolonged dry spell I put out receptacles filled with water for the birds which live near the flat and the house, and they took full advantage of it. We heard the kiwis at night quite near. Although our tanks were empty, we have a spring of pure water on the beach.

“ I cannot close my report without again referring to the bell-birds and tuis. We had a very large crop of grapes on the vines, and when they began to ripen the birds soon found them out, and the bell-birds and tuis would have soon cleaned them up. To save some for ourselves and for our winter supply of jelly, Mrs. Nelson hit on a plan. She filled two cake-tins with the old last year's jelly and some fruit-pulp, then set it out near the vines on the paths. In a few minutes scores of both species were round the tins, feeding on the sweet mixture. They were so busy feeding that the tuis never tried to chase the bell-birds away, and more than a score were round the two tins, standing on the edge feeding. The next day the birds greatly increased, and before a full week I began to think that both species—every one of them—had forsaken the bush and had landed at the house. It was amusing and very interesting to watch them feeding, standing on the edge of the tin, while others flew around and could not get near. The moment one flew off the place was occupied by another. Latterly the tuis chased the bell-birds away, and they danced around watching an opportunity for a place on the tin. I believe there were more than a hundred sitting on the branches of an apple-tree preening themselves, while as many more were feeding on the tins and flying about.”

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; printing (625 copies), £14 10s.