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*From J. A. ROSS, Esq., R.A.O.U., Malvern, V.*

In support of the very strong appeal made by Mr. Ashby for the encouragement of private collections and the more liberal issue of permits, I desire to make two definite statements—firstly, that without material (which has been collected) to work upon students of ornithology cannot make much progress; secondly, that proper collecting by ornithological students for the purposes of study does no appreciable harm. With regard to the latter statement, I shall mention a few matters which have come under my observation. The increase of population and the gradual extension of clearing of land for cultivation and grazing purposes is lessening the numbers in several species of birds by depriving them of the cover and conditions without which they cannot live, but, on the other hand, it provides conditions which are suitable to and quickly accepted by other species, and they correspondingly increase in numbers. Take, for example, that vast area in South Australia abutting on the northern part of the west boundary of Victoria and extending many miles over the border into the latter State, and known as the Mallee Country. Thousands of square miles have been cleared of the natural trees and scrub, and the process of clearing is ever extending. Thus the original birds (Scrub-Robins, Ground-Birds, etc.) are destroyed, for they do not become more numerous on the fringes of the clearings for any length of time; but the birds which prefer the open country (Pipits, Song-Larks, Magpies) rapidly increase in numbers and spread over the areas made suitable for them. Particularly have I noticed the spread of the Black-backed Magpie, and this in spite of the fact that it