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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

nesta principally along the uncleared fringes of the roads, where its bulky nest is easily found and frequently emptied by boys on the way to and from school. So, too, with swamp areas which have been drained. The aquatic birds have disappeared, but their places have been taken by other species, according to the extent of the reclamation and the nature of the cultivation. It is in swamp areas and mallee country that Mr. Ashby's suggestion for sanctuaries might be carried out by leaving certain parts undrained and uncleared. Now, take an open forest area in which year after year the birds are left undisturbed by man. Although many species hatch out two or three broods of young each season they do not increase in numbers. In places which I have been in the habit of visiting regularly for years I have known certain pairs of Speckled Warblers dwelling within fairly well-defined limits, and there has been no difficulty in finding each pair at any time within its domain. If the progeny of these birds lived for a few years the bush would not contain enough food to support them. Next consider an area which has suddenly been denuded of bird life of a particular species. I have in mind a locality of no great extent, but densely clothed with scrub, in which there were either seven or eight pairs of Pilot Birds. All these birds suddenly disappeared, and although I have no proof, I have no doubt they were all shot, but within two or three years as many pairs of new birds had taken up their quarters there. Did not a devastating cyclone in Queensland some years ago practically exterminate bird life in certain places, and were not those places inhabited again by feathered denizens as soon as the vegetation grew up again? No legitimate collector would shoot out all the birds in one area, and no collector could cause the devastation which the cyclone caused, but even the ravages of the cyclone were soon repaired. A most significant fact in connection with this subject is that most of the species which are said to be approaching extinction are birds of which both skins and eggs are unknown (or almost so) in collections, e.g., Night Parrots and Noisy Scrub-Birds. And what of the aboriginals who roamed this land prior to the advent of the white races? The blacks took for food all the eggs, young birds, and mature birds they could secure. Still the birds held their ground, and the numbers of birds shot and eggs taken by collectors are not to be compared with the toll taken by the blacks.