

municated a message from the hon. secretary to the effect that the society was arranging for a deputation to the Premier.

Mr. Frank Farnell (chairman of the National Park Trust), Mr. F. J. W. Harrison (secretary to the Kuring-Gai Chase Trust), Mr. F. M. Rothery (secretary of the Animals Protection Society of New South Wales), and others, also spoke.

It was resolved that a sub-committee, consisting of Messrs. R. T. Baker, W. W. Froggatt, A. G. Hamilton, J. H. Maiden, A. J. North, and the *ex officio* members, be appointed to confer with the other societies which are contemplating an appeal to the Government.

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The Mutton-Bird (*Puffinus tenuirostris*) Traffic.

IMPORTANT RECOMMENDATIONS.

THE Commissioner of Police (Mr. Lord) has submitted to the Attorney-General (Tasmania) his report upon his investigations made during his recent visit to the Furneaux Group in the Strait.

After giving a general history of the claims for Mutton-Bird reserves on the island, Mr. Lord submitted a number of deductions and recommendations. Stock-grazing on rookery reserves should be discontinued. He asserts that even if all arguments in favour of stocking were to be admitted, then it should still be prevented, because if stock were once landed there could be no guarantee that it would be removed before the birds laid. A grazing lease which was issued in June last for the Chappel reserve he considered to be *ultra vires*, and thought it should be cancelled as from 1st September, steps being taken to have stock removed immediately.

Mr. Lord next recommended that freehold blocks on the islands upon which Crown lands have been reserved for Mutton-Birding should be resumed by the Crown. He holds that there can be no satisfactory administration of the regulations until this be done. He recommended that blocks should be resumed at Chappel Island totalling 90 acres, 100 acres on Babel Island, and five acres on Little Green Island. There were no freeholds on the other islands reserved for Mutton-Birding purposes. The whole of the rookeries had been deserted, and the remainder were not so good as they were, yet a greater number of birds were taken.

The Mutton-Birds traced to Launceston merchants for the markets during the past five years were as follows:—1904, 379,804; 1905, 459,094; 1906, 493,777; 1907, 572,671, and 1908, 636,592. Nothing was done to improve the existing rookeries, or to limit the number of birds destroyed.

On such lines, remarks Mr. Lord, it would be remarkable if the supply did not eventually run out. He recommended to limit the issue of the Mutton-Bird license to the capacity of the respective Mutton-Bird reserves, licenses to be issued only to *bonâ-fide* residents of the Furneaux Group of 12 months' standing. It was

his opinion that the industry should be maintained by the islanders, who, as he had stated previously, were very largely dependent upon it. It was not large enough to withstand mainland labour or enterprise. He recommended, further, the proclamation of other small islands as Mutton-Bird reserves at once. Cat Island and Rum Island were instanced, and he thought that if these small islands were not even worked, the rookeries upon them should be preserved as breeding grounds. He recommended that every person employed upon Mutton-Bird reserves during the Mutton-Bird season should be licensed. He thought the present fee (10s. and 5s.) small enough. At present the license fee worked out at about 2s. per thousand, while the value of the Mutton-Birds was £5 per thousand. He thought, however, that a license fee of 10s. should only be charged to persons over the age of 12 years, instead of 10 years. He further urged that the season should open four days later, on 24th March instead of 20th March. This would reduce the take somewhat, and the birds taken would be of better quality, and better prices would rule. It would be wise also to prevent birds being taken after dark. Any person found with a light on the rookeries at night should be liable to a heavy penalty. He would improve the reserves by commencing holes for birds where they were nesting indifferently, and propagate natural cover. He further recommended substituting 15th September for 1st September, thus allowing persons to land upon the Mutton-Bird reserves to within a few days of the return of the birds.

The erection of birders' sheds should also be attended to, and better provision should also be made to prevent any eggging and capture of old birds, and in enforcing the regulations generally. Mr. Lord thinks the constable at Cape Barren Island should be provided with a motor boat, to enable him to get about speedily and in all weathers. He recommended provision being made for inspection during the birding season (March to May), and thought dressing, packing, and curing should be done under supervision. The birds for 1908 season might safely be estimated at from 1,000,000 to 1,030,000, and the value (including feathers, oil, &c.), at over £6,000.

His last recommendation in respect to the Mutton-Bird industry was for the prohibition of dogs landing on reserves.—*The Examiner*, Launceston, 4/9/08.

Bird Prosecutions under the "Game Acts," Victoria.

MR. C. W. Maclean, engineer in charge of the Ports and Harbours Department, is also honorary executive officer of the Victorian *Game Acts*, which are administered under the Hon. the Minister of Public Works. Mr. Maclean and his officers have shown commendable activity in the numbers of successful convictions they have secured against offenders. Omitting animals and fishes, the following statement shows the convic-