

ticularly soft and downy in order that the bird may fly without noise; and they may be erected like those of a game-cock to make the bird appear very formidable in the eyes of its prey. The prevailing color of the owl, as well as that of the hawk, is usually a brown or grey that it may blend with the surroundings. The snowy owl, which hunts partly in the day time, is white in winter and barred-brown in summer. Such coloring, intended to deceive the

hawks and owls. In one year and a half over one hundred thousand of these birds were killed, but it was very evident that in the same time the destruction of crops by field mice had increased to such an extent that the loss to the farmers amounted to millions of dollars. Doubts as to the wisdom of the law began to be felt. Finally the matter was submitted to Dr. C. Hart Merriam, Ornithologist and Mammalogist of the United States De-



RED SHOULDERED HAWK.

—By permission of The Macmillan Co.

prey, is spoken of as deceptive coloration. What fine adjustment of structure to habit might well be the conclusion of any careful student.

Returning now to the question suggested in the introduction—do hawks and owls deserve death at the hands of the gunner? A little biological history will supply the answer. A few years ago the farmers of Pennsylvania succeeded in having a law passed by the State Legislature offering a bounty on

partment of Agriculture, who turned it over to his assistant, Dr. A. K. Fisher. The latter concluded that nothing short of the examination of the stomachs of the birds in question at all seasons of the year and in different parts of the United States and Canada would give the desired answer to the great question. Some 2,700 stomachs were examined by Dr. Fisher and his assistants during a period of several years with a result