

Stray Feathers.

New Foster-Parent for Pallid Cuckoo.—On the 11th November, 1911, in company with Mr. F. E. Wilson, R.A.O.U., I observed at Beaconsfield (Victoria) a nest of the Bell-Miner (*Manorhina melanophrys*) containing fresh eggs. Two of the eggs had been laid by the Miner and the third egg by a Pallid Cuckoo (*Cuculus pallidus*).—L. G. CHANDLER. Malvern, 20/11/11.

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Honey-Lovers.—On the 7th December last, I noticed several Honey-eaters (*Meliornis novæ-hollandiæ*), making a great fuss in a tecoma creeper (*T. radicans*) in full flower. I soon saw that while gathering honey themselves out of the long tubular flowers, they were protesting most emphatically at the presence of a pair of *Melithreptus gularis*. The latter were using their sharp and short beaks to pierce the tecoma flowers near their base, and thus extracting the honey by a short cut. I examined the flowers, and noticed that the birds had made quite a considerable perforation in the corolla tube. Were the "New Hollands" objecting to the damage done the flowers or to the "Black-throateds" sharing the supply of honey?—EDWIN ASHBY. Adelaide, 12/12/11.

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The Malurus.—A pair of Blue Wrens (*Malurus cyaneus*) has for several years built in the creepers on my house, "Wittinga," Blackwood, South Australia. On the 11th November last I noticed two full-plumaged males on the guttering of the house, fussing about, evidently waiting to take some morsel to the young birds in the nest, but a little fearful because of my presence. The female bird then appeared on the guttering, and I moved a little further away, and immediately one of the male birds flew down to the nest to feed the young ones. Directly he had flown away the second male flew down and supplied the cravings of the young birds, and when he had returned the female bird did likewise. My sight was not good enough to see the insects in the birds' beaks, but there was no doubt that each of the three adults was supplying the young with food.—EDWIN ASHBY. Adelaide, 11/12/11.

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Cuckoos as Nest Robbers.—Recently when fishing along a creek near Yea I flushed a Narrow-billed Bronze-Cuckoo (*Chalcococcyx basalis*) from some grass tussocks. Thinking it was after the nest of some Blue Wrens (*Malurus cyaneus*), which seemed excited, I looked about and soon found a nest of the Wren containing one fresh egg; so, placing myself behind cover, I waited, and soon the Cuckoo came hopping along the ground to the nest, but whether it carried its egg in its bill I cannot say. After being at the nest for about half a minute the Cuckoo flew away with the Wren's egg in its bill and left its own in the nest. The Wren subsequently laid two more eggs. I think this accounts for the finding

of so many nests containing the egg of a Cuckoo and an unusually small clutch of the foster-parent.—ARTHUR P. INGLE, R.A.O.U. Yea, 2/1/12.

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Acclimatization of Torres Strait or Nutmeg Pigeons.—When at Herberton, N.Q., in January, I visited my friend Mr. Newell. He is an old bird-lover. He showed me a small flock of fourteen Torres Strait or Nutmeg Pigeons (*Myristicivora spilorrhoea*)—glorious birds, with their white plumage and black pinions flashing in the sunshine. These birds came from Low-wood Island, off Port Douglas, when quite young, and were put in a cage. Three or four got out and one was lost, the rest caught and put back. Then a dog got at the cage and more got out, but returned to be fed. One by one the rest were let out, and one was drowned, but the rest are still here—for the past three years. On 28th January I saw one on its nest, some 8 feet from the ground. What a primitive raft for the single egg! The bird sat quite quietly, and I was but a few feet away. These birds remain here all the year round, and their home is 3,000 feet above sea-level. The migratory instinct is evidently gone. They know Mr. Newell well, and it is a very pretty sight to see these handsome Pigeons come down to him to be fed. They will take food from his hand.

I was at the Museum to-day, and an *employé* tells me he has for years past had Torres Strait Pigeons at his home at Kangaroo Point—quite domesticated, he says. I inquired as to breeding, but he said they had not bred. I saw them breeding, egg and young, 3,000 feet up, and so I fancy there may be some mistake about their not breeding in Brisbane. As to any hybridizing, the answer was in the negative, and that corresponds to what Mr. Newell told me and I saw. A beautiful Torres bird was in love with a Columba bird of local origin. I saw them repeatedly together away from home. Mr. Newell reports this has happened, and an egg or eggs laid, but with no result. These very handsome birds should be a great attraction to any park or gardens, and evidently are easily kept.—F. HAMILTON KENNY. Sherwood, Brisbane, 6/3/12.

Forgotten Feathers.

SHAW, "ZOOLOGY OF NEW HOLLAND, 1794."

BY GREGORY M. MATHEWS, F.R.S.E.

IN 1793 was begun a book dealing with some of the "Zoology and Botany of New Holland," as it was then called. The botanical specimens therein figured were all sent to England by John White, the Surgeon-General to the colony.

Although the title-page and preface to the "Botany," both of which are dated December, 1793, appeared in part i., I cannot find that that part was issued before 1794. The title-page of the