

solemnly on telegraph wires, and seemed unheeding of the chorus of their mates—a true Australian hymn to dying day—which rose from all around. But neither “Jackass” nor Magpie had last word to say; that was to be a voice of Spring. For us a Bronze Cuckoo had begun the day; a Pallid Cuckoo ushered in the night.

Flycatchers v. Ticks—Gannets.

BY WM. M'ILWRAITH, Emu Park, near Rockhampton.

THE dreaded cattle tick continues to extend the area of its operations in Queensland, and there are some stockowners who anticipate that it will migrate slowly to the Southern colonies. It may be interesting to note that among the enemies of the tick is the common and familiar Black and White Fan-tail, or Flycatcher (*Rhipidura tricolor*). Cattle here are tick-infested, and I noticed a cow at my gate on which gravid ticks were very perceptible. She lay down to rest, and became the subject of attentions from a Flycatcher. It alit on the extended side of the cow, dug its beak into the hair, pulled and tugged, and dropped to the ground with something in its beak. It went through a gobble-gobble performance and rested for a few seconds. Then it searched on the cow's side, and again seized some object, pulled it out, and swallowed it. This proceeding it continued for some time. Though I was not near enough to see what it was feeding on, I have not the least doubt it was immature ticks. Other insects being scarce at present, the tiny ticks were evidently acceptable. The common fowl is a tick consumer, and picks the mite off cattle whenever it is visible and chuckie can get at it. Infested cows keep still while their feathered friends are attending to the parasites.

The weather here has been very cold, the sou'-westerly winds experienced coming off the snowfalls in New South Wales and South Australia. Among visitors driven north by cold weather are Gannets. They are not visible in summer. Now they are numerous close in shore, and it is most interesting to witness their aerial gyrations and diving. Yesterday forenoon (30th July) they were very busy; at the turn of the tide—about three o'clock—the wind fell, and it became a dead calm, when they ceased diving. The calm lasted an hour, when one or two took wing again; others could be seen sitting on the water in parties of half a dozen. There were brown immature birds besides the black and white.

MR. CLARENCE SMART, in June, shot on the shores of Port Phillip a Golden Plover. A veritable “stray,” indeed. What was the bird (a female) doing in Australia at midwinter, when it should have been breeding under the “midnight sun” on the tundras of Northern Siberia?