

only been out here two years, but all that I have observed tends to prove that much more migration takes place to New Zealand than is generally accepted. At Lake Ellesmere, in 1900, the first example of the Spotted Plover for the South Island was shot. The first specimen of the Little Whimbrel for N.Z. was also shot in June, 1900. In February, 1902, a specimen of the American Godwit was obtained; in March, 1902, a specimen of the Spotted Plover in breeding plumage; in July, 1902, the Red-necked Stint was added to the list, whilst in April, 1903, a specimen, or, rather, a pair of the Curlew Sandpiper was obtained. I believe I am correct in saying that these are all due to the efforts of one man, Mr. Edgar Stead. I think it would be too much to try to believe that the above are the only individuals that happen to reach New Zealand.

"Speaking of migration, on the night of the 5th May there was a migration of White-eyes over Christchurch. From 7 to 10 p.m. the air was full of their notes. It was a cloudy night, with an east wind, and the birds were flying very low, and next day odd parties were flying about and around the city. I saw 13 engaged upon the skull of a dead sheep one day the week after."

The information is still very meagre, and contrasts strangely with recorded observations from European lighthouses; but it is the first step in a good work. One fact is notable—the flight of the birds which do strike the lantern cannot be as rapid as that of the migratory species of the Northern Hemisphere. There many are killed by the impact; here, at most, but stunned. A question suggested is—Are the flights on this side of the equator as dense or as rapid as those on the northern one? Stray specimens only are here recorded. It is too early yet, however, to form a definite opinion on the subject. When returns from the mainland lights, more particularly those of the eastern coast of Australia, come to hand, fuller information will doubtless be available. But it will be a matter of years' observation before really definite conclusions can be drawn.

The South African Ornithologists' Union.

WITH reference to the formation of the South African Ornithologists' Union, Mr. A. Mattingley, hon. treasurer Aust. O.U., has received from Mr. Alwin Haagner, hon. secretary of the African Union, the following communication, the latter part of which is virtually the same as forwarded to some British publications:—"It is very good of you to take such a kindly interest in us, and I can assure you it is very greatly appreciated by us all. Your balance-sheet proves very interesting, and will no doubt be a guide to us in our initial efforts. Of course, printing out here (Transvaal) is much more expensive than in Australia; but we hope to have ours done

in England. At present we only number 52 members, but they are really all enthusiastic ornithologists, and the Union was only founded on 8th April this year. We hope to bring our first No. out with the beginning of the new year, when I trust we can effect an exchange, which would be of mutual interest and assistance. Our subscription is one guinea, which I am afraid is a little under what should have been the amount.

"Will you please tender our thanks to your Council for their kind assistance."

Every member of the Aust. O.U. must be glad that in South Africa an effort is being made to encourage the study and protection of birds, and wish the new society all the success it deserves.

In connection with the founding of the South African Ornithologists' Union the following appeared in *The Transvaal Leader*, 9/4/04 :—

"A number of gentlemen met in the Normal School, Pretoria, in response to a circular letter issued by Mr. A. K. Haagner. The object was to form an Ornithological Union for South Africa, and the attendance, and number of letters received on the subject, proved that the time was a most opportune one.

"Mr. W. L. Sclater, M.A., F.Z.S., presided, and representatives from all the South African colonies were present. Mr. Sclater opened the proceedings by calling upon Mr. Haagner to read his report on what had been done. The report showed that 40 gentlemen interested in the subject had sent in their names. These were divided amongst the colonies as follows :—Transvaal, 21; Cape Colony, 12; Natal, 4; Orange River Colony, 2; Rhodesia, 1.

"Dr. Gunning, F.Z.S., proposed—'That an Ornithologists' Union for South Africa be formed, and that a committee be appointed to draw up rules and to inquire into and report upon the possibility of publishing a journal.' This was seconded by Mr. J. A. Bucknill, M.A., of Pretoria, and carried unanimously.

"The committee elected was as follows :—Mr. W. L. Sclater, M.A., F.Z.S. (Director South African Museum, Cape Town); Dr. J. W. B. Gunning, F.Z.S. (Director Transvaal Museum and Zoological Gardens, Pretoria); Mr. J. A. Bucknill, M.A., Pretoria; Mr. A. D. Millar, Durban; Mr. W. Macdonald (editor *Transvaal Agricultural Journal*), Pretoria; Mr. J. A. Alexander, F.R.S. Edin., Johannesburg; and Mr. A. K. Haagner, M.B.O.U., Modderfontein, hon. sec. *pro tem*. It was decided to leave the framing of rules and election of officers to a subsequent meeting.

"Mr. W. L. Sclater then read an interesting paper on the history of similar societies, and the early South African pioneers of ornithology.

"After a hearty vote of thanks to the chairman the meeting terminated."