

scientific nomenclature to avoid. In the second place, even granted the necessity for a change, the specific name *australis* is surely much too wide and colourless for the case in question. There are at least fourteen species of *Maluri* inhabiting Australia—why should one of these have appropriated to it a name that is equally applicable to all? It was reasonable enough for the first naturalist explorers to label a species *novæ-hollandiæ* or *australis*, though perhaps they rather overdid it; they had at least the excuse that they did not know of the existence of other Australian species belonging to the same genera—a plea we nowadays cannot put forward. No doubt it is not always possible to denote the specific characters clearly and exactly by the specific name; but such should be the object aimed at, and for that reason the name *australis* should be confined to species which have no congeners in Australia. Mr. North's researches are of considerable historical interest, but no adequate reason has been shown why the existing names—that is to say, *Malurus cyaneus* for the South-east Australian bird, and *M. gouldi* for the Tasmanian—should not continue to be used as heretofore. However, this is a matter for the Check-List Committee to consider.

### About Members.

MR. F. M. Littler, F.E.S. (Launceston), has left by the *Persic* for England. He has gone on a six months' trip, chiefly on business, but hopes to have time for the pleasure and profit of making the acquaintance of many ornithological brethren in the "old land."

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ON the retirement of Mr. D. Le Souëf, C.M.Z.S., &c., from the hon. secretaryship of the A.O.U., the following letter was addressed to him by his successor, Mr. A. Mattingley:—

"On the occasion of your retirement from the position of honorary secretary of the Australasian Ornithologists' Union, the Council unanimously desire to convey to you their mark of the esteem in which they hold you personally, and also to indicate the appreciation with which they regard your labours as the first honorary secretary of the A.O.U.

"The present successful position of the Union is largely due to the indefatigable efforts maintained by you since its inception. The tact, attention, and considerate manner with which you have treated everything and everybody has endeared you to your Council colleagues, with whom you have worked so harmoniously.

"The Australasian Ornithologists' Union is indeed under a deep debt of gratitude to you for the able manner in which you have carried out the onerous duties pertaining to the honorary secretaryship during the first three years of its existence, while ornithological science at large has been advanced. Hoping that you may long remain one of the 'Birds of a feather.'"