

governing principle is explained these isolated facts piece together into one continuous chain of meaning and of interest. In the light of what this extremely useful book has to say, no bird, however monstrous its structure or its habits may at first appear, will be anything but a beautiful expression of the influence of surroundings in the great scheme of things to which it belongs.

Correspondence.

To the Editors of "The Emu."

GALDENS.

SIRS,—Referring to Mr. E. Scott's letter in *The Emu*, vol. vi., part 3, page 151, respecting the probable identity of the birds called "Galdens" by Dampier, I think it is taking too much for granted in assuming that the Little Mangrove Bittern was meant. Mr. Scott refers to the colony of these birds (*Butorides stagnatilis*) mentioned by Gould as observed by Gilbert near Port Essington, and says:—"This may well have been the same colony as observed by Dampier." Now, according to Mr. Scott's letter in *Emu*, vol. vi., part 1, page 22, Dampier observed Galdens (not a colony) in Shark's Bay. It is a far cry from Shark's Bay to Port Essington—a distance of about 1,800 miles. As I have seen a good deal of Shark's Bay, I venture to assert that the following species of the Herodiones would be much more likely to come under notice there (especially in a passing visit, as Dampier's was) than *Butorides stagnatilis*, viz.:—*Demigretta sacra* (Blue and White Reef-Heron), *Notophox nova-hollandiæ* (White-fronted Heron), *N. pacifica* (White-necked Heron), or *Nycticorax caledonicus* (Night-Heron). My personal experience of *Butorides stagnatilis* is that it is a very shy and solitary bird, only seldom seen feeding outside its favourite shelter of dense mangroves. I have not observed this species myself south of the North-west Cape, and take it to be mostly found in the tropics, although it possibly does occur in the mangroves which grow along the north and east sides of Shark's Bay, and between the mouths of the Gascoyne River, which empties into the northern portion of Shark's Bay. It was near the mouth of the Gascoyne River that Gregory, in the early exploring days, observed two Jabirus (*Xenorhynchus asiaticus*) and shot one, parts of which were sent to Gould—probably the only record of this species for that locality. I have spent many days shooting for specimens in the vicinity of the Gascoyne River delta, but never came across *Butorides stagnatilis*, though, as I say, it is possible it may have been overlooked. Upon turning over my book of field notes, made during my residence of 16 years in the north-west of this

colony, I find an entry that an old sailor and whaler, and a close observer of nature, who was with me some years, once informed me that he had seen a large colony of White Herons (Egrets?) nesting in the mangroves south of the Gascoyne River. Perhaps this may have some bearing on the subject of "Galdens."—Yours truly,

Broome Hill, W.A., 19/2/07.

TOM CARTER.

South Australian Ornithological Association.

THE bi-monthly meeting of the above association was held at the residence of Dr. A. M. Morgan, Adelaide, on Friday evening, 25th January, 1907. Mr. J. W. Mellor presided over a good attendance. In reference to the reported destruction of Pelicans and other protected birds on the Coorong by officials of the Fisheries Department, the sub-committee appointed at the previous meeting reported that full inquiries had been made. The committee was satisfied that no depredations had been committed. Inspector M'Intosh, when interviewed, had shown himself to be in favour of bird protection. Capt. S. A. White drew attention to the lateness of birds breeding this season, and to the large numbers of common Teal about in all swampy localities. It was thought that the remarkably mild weather and copious rains in the interior in the spring were responsible for these facts. Mr. J. W. Mellor reported having attended, in company with Capt. S. A. White, the Australasian Ornithologists' Union Congress in Tasmania in November of last year. Afterwards he had travelled extensively in the interests of natural history through the interior of that State, and had visited many elevated situations to observe the bird life. Mr. A. H. C. Zietz, F.L.S., graphically described a visit to the Big Scrub, New South Wales, in company with his son, Mr. F. R. Zietz, last spring. They had done remarkably good work in taking field notes and securing specimens for the Adelaide Museum, some of which were much-needed species. Mr. Zietz showed the Sanguineous Honey-eater (*Myzomela sanguinolenta*), Rose-breasted Robin (*Petræca rosea*), Orange-backed Wren (*Malurus melanocephalus*) and the Variegated Wren (*M. lamberti*), Caterpillar-eater (*Edolisoma tenuirostre*), Scaly-breasted Lorikeet (*Trichoglossus chlorolepidotus*), Noisy Pitta (*Pitta strepitans*), Russet tailed Ground-Thrush (*Geocichla heinii*), Drongo Shrike (*Chibia bracteata*), and bright-plumaged Fruit-Pigeons, viz., the Purple-breasted (*Megadoprepia magnifica*, White-headed (*Columba leucomela*), and the Topknot-Pigeon (*Lopholæmus antarcticus*). Specimens collected by Dr. A. Chenery in the locality of Oodnadatta were exhibited, and the peculiar rusty colouration of the feathers, corresponding with the aspect of the country, was noted. Dr. A. M. Morgan displayed a number of birds' eggs, including those of the Black-capped Tree-runner (*Sittella pileata*) and Orange-winged Tree-runner (*S. chrysoptera*). Mr. M. Symonds Clark tabled a conspicuous notice which is being issued by the Government to assist in the protection of our useful native birds, which the meeting thought was a step in the right direction.

Notes and Notices.

A COLLECTION OF CUCKOOS' EGGS.—Mr. Sept. Robinson, A.O.U., has now field notes on eggs of 68 species of foster-parents of the various Australian Cuckoos observed with an egg each, or sometimes two, of a Cuckoo.