

city with all these murdered "protected" birds in his possession. The imposition of a ten-shilling gun-tax annually would put an immediate stop to a vast deal of this useless slaughter, and the sooner it comes the better for our birds and our farmers also. The State Government is often at its wits' end to make up a revenue, yet here is a method by which a considerable sum could be raised annually without injuring anyone, for a gun is no more necessary here for protection than it is in England, where the ten-shilling tax has obtained so long, and which country is full of delightful wild songsters. With regard to the wholesale poisoning of native fauna, this is, if possible, a still more serious question, and one worthy of all consideration and discussion in the pages of *The Emu*.—Yours, &c.,

H. STUART DOVE.

Launceston, Tasmania, 8th May, 1907.

### Bird Observers' Club.

THE quarterly dinner was held in Melbourne on 26th February, 1907, when thirteen members were present. Before commencing the business of the evening Mr. Leach was congratulated by the chairman (Mr. D. Le Souëf) on his taking the degree of Master of Science of the Melbourne University, and also on his appointment to an important position in the Education Department in connection with nature study. It was resolved, on the motion of Mr. A. J. Campbell, seconded by Mr. C. L. Barrett—"That the Premier be written to protesting against the Waranga Basin or any other reserve being opened by a Minister of the Crown for shooting purposes." The exhibits of the evening were plentiful and varied. Mr. G. Shepherd showed nests and eggs of Jardine Caterpillar-eater and Leaden-coloured Flycatcher. Mr. A. G. Campbell showed a fine series of skins of the birds of Mornington district found within a quarter of a mile of the coast; total, 32 species, of which 11 are in Tasmania unaltered, 9 are in Tasmania represented by an insular form, 13 are in north-west Victoria, 21 are in north-east Victoria, 24 are in south-west Victoria, and all in Gippsland and around Melbourne. Mr. A. G. Campbell also exhibited skins of adult and fledgling of *Pelagodroma marina* (White-faced Storm-Petrel); and interesting accounts of their habits and their rookeries were given by Messrs. Campbell and Mattingley, who have recently visited Cygnet (Mud) Island. Mr. Mattingley showed a fine series of pictures of the Pilot-Bird (*Pycnoptilus floccosus*), showing nest and eggs, birds feeding young, and bird at nest. Mr. Mattingley is to be complimented for his patience and success in bird photography, as this is a branch of nature study that appeals to the student and collector alike.

On 25th March, 1907, the ordinary monthly meeting of the Club was held at the residence of Dr. Charles Ryan, the host being voted to the chair. Fourteen members were present, and apologies were received from four others. Mr. Hill's resignation as a member was accepted, as he had left the State. On a ballot being taken, Mr. Isaac Batey, of Drouin, Vic., was unanimously elected a corresponding member of the Club. The subject for the evening's discussion was "Nocturnal Birds of Prey." Many fine specimens of Owls were exhibited by Messrs. Le Souëf, A. G. Campbell, Mattingley, and Ryan. Mr. Le Souëf pointed out the difference of plumage existing in various *Podargi* and other night birds, and holds the belief that

*P. strigoides* and *P. cuvieri* are distinct species, but adds that more skins are needed, as the difference can only be discovered by carefully sexing the birds.

The quarterly dinner was held on the evening of 22nd May. At the meeting afterwards there was a large attendance of members and friends. The chairman (Mr. A. J. Campbell) bade a hearty welcome to Mr. Isaac Batey, who had the honour of being the oldest bird observer present, and whose observations and field notes (to be published in *The Emu*) went back 60 years, to the time when the illustrious John Gould was in Australia collecting material for his great coloured work, "The Birds of Australia." Mr. Mattingley then entertained the company with a lecturette on "The Murray Swamps," illustrated with some of his unique lantern views of bird life, depicting, among other things, White Egrets in their nests at a height of 50 feet from the ground, where the photographer could only reach them at some risk by the aid of rope ladders and climbing irons.

### South Australian Ornithological Association.

THE annual meeting of the above was held at the residence of Dr. A. M. Morgan on Friday evening, 8th March, 1907. Mr. J. W. Mellor presided over a good attendance. The hon. secretary (Capt. S. A. White) read the eighth annual report, which showed that good work had been accomplished during the year. Six general meetings had been held, at which the attendance was good. Exhibits were always plentiful, which, combined with field notes, formed valuable groundwork for discussions and dissemination of useful knowledge relative to the habits and identification of native birds. The association had ever been watchful to bring under the notice of the authorities any breach of the law connected with birds, and it was thought that the work in this direction was beginning already to bear fruit. There seemed to be an awakening interest on the part of the public generally to protect the useful native birds, and it was trusted that by the study of the habits of our feathered friends the rising generation would become more interested, and eventually the spirit of destruction among the young would be stamped out. Two delegates (Mr. J. W. Mellor and Capt. S. A. White) attended the annual congress of the Australasian Ornithologists' Union in Tasmania at the close of last year. At these meetings they advocated the introduction of the Lyre-Bird (*Menura victoriæ*) into Tasmania and the mound-raising Pheasant or Mallee-Fowl (*Lipoa ocellata*) into Kangaroo Island. Both places were ideal localities for these birds, as there they would be free from the ravages of the fox, which threatened to exterminate them on the mainland. The indebtedness of the association to Dr. Morgan for the use of his rooms for meetings and generous hospitality always shown to the members was placed on record, and a hearty vote of thanks was carried by acclamation. The secretary reported upon the visit to Tasmania and work done at the various meetings, excursions held in Hobart and Launceston, and gave extended notes of the birds found on Mount Wellington, showing several skins procured there, including the Black Cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus funereus*), Small-billed Cuckoo-Shrike (*Graucalus parvirostris*), and the Bronze-Cuckoo (*Chalcococcyx plagosus*). The chairman in his annual address dealt with the natural history aspects of Mount Barrow, which was visited by the ornithologists while in Tasmania. The ascent of Mount Barrow by the party was graphically described, and the peculiar plant life seen in these elevated parts—4,644 feet above the sea, or 500 feet higher than Mount Wellington—was described. Mr. R. Crompton showed a peculiar albino Crow from Lake Frome (S.A.) Mr. F. R. Zietz reported having a pair of the Yellow-rumped Finches (*Munia flaviprymna*) in captivity. Mr. A. H. C. Zietz, F.L.S., recorded the