



Nest, young and adults of the Leaden Flycatcher (*Myiagra rubecula*)

Male near nest

Female with adult antlion

Photos, by E. M. Cornwall, R.A.O.U., Mackay, Queensland.

necessary. However, that is no reason why the most popular of sciences—ornithology—with its comparatively limited number of species should be so treated and set back.

The wording of some of the rules might with advantage be amended. Examples—(1) Art. 21. "The author of a scientific name is that person who first publishes the name in connection with an *indication*, or definition, or a description." To let bed-rock priority rest on a mere "indication" has been the cause of much evil in nomenclature. Therefore the words "an indication" should be expunged from the rule. It seems hardly just that in "an indication" such as "little lighter above," or "much darker below (as the case may be) than so-and-so" with a trinomial, the name should take precedence for all time. The description should be scientific, not slovenly.

(2) Art. 32. "A generic, or a specific, name once published cannot be rejected (even by its author) because of inappropriateness." Some up-to-date authors read this rule in a negative sense and continue to create inappropriate names. For instance, *Harriwhitea*—a proposed new generic name for the Northern or Albert Lyre-Bird.

Regarding three similar names—*Alisterus*, *Alisteranus*, and *Alisterornis*—coined by Mr. Mathews for separate Australian genera, and in referring to them I do not intend to disparage that author's work, but merely mention them to stress what may be permitted under the so-called and supposed high authority of "The International Code of Zoological Nomenclature" which we are led to believe is "to rescue science from becoming a mere chaos of words."

I am not the only voice "crying in the wilderness." In England, Mr. Robert Gurney, M.A., F.Z.S., in an ably written address, "Modern Zoological Nomenclature" (Trans. Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists' Society, 1918) has drawn attention to the unworkableness of the International Code. Mr. Gurney's paper should be read in its entirety.

Camera Craft

The Leaden Flycatcher.—I am sending some nesting pictures of the Leaden-coloured Flycatcher (*Myiagra rubecula*). The male gave me no trouble, and seemed to trust me perfectly. He came and took up the post as I was focusing on the nest only two feet from the nest, and remained there all the time I was at work. In fact, I had to ask him to leave so as to give me a chance at his mate. The hen bird was quite a different proposition, and I had to wait several days before she gave me my opportunity. The rate of growth of these little chaps is truly remarkable. In one picture, the male is brooding the young birds, which were about two or three days old, and was able to sit right into the nest. Only five days later he was fairly

crowded out by the lusty youngsters. It was most amusing to watch his antics while I was taking the pictures. He tried his best to shield his progeny from my view, but failed utterly. It was not until the young were well grown, about the eighth or ninth day from the egg, that the hen bird allowed me to snap her. The youngsters had huge appetites, and both parents were fully occupied feeding them. It was most interesting to note how the young were fed in their proper turn. Although I watched for some time, I did not detect a single instance of a young one being fed out of its proper turn.—E. M. CORNWALL, R.A.O.U., Mackay, Q.

Stray Feathers

The "White Gallinule" (*Notornis alba*), an extinct bird.—In addition to the Dinornis, or Moa, there is another Australasian bird—once, it is said, fairly common on Lord Howe and Norfolk Islands—which has also become extinct, namely, the "White Gallinule" (*Notornis alba*), which is described and figured in "Phillip's Voyage to New South Wales," published in 1789. "This beautiful bird" (says the account given in the famous "Voyage") "resembles the Purple Gallinule in shape and make, but is much superior in size, being as large as a dunghill (*sic*) fowl. The length from the end of the bill to that of the claws is two feet three inches; the bill is very stout, and the colour of it, the whole top of the head and the irides red. The rest of the plumage is white, and the legs red. This species is pretty common on Lord Howe's Island, Norfolk Island, and other places, and is a very tame species." The male was said to have had some blue on the wings, therefore, apparently, this description refers to a female specimen. One "A. Latham" is the artist responsible for the painting of the "White Gallinule" reproduced in "Phillip's Voyage," and it is doubtless the first drawing made from a specimen of this long-extinct bird, the tameness of which, coupled with its limited range, no doubt assisted in sealing its fate. The compilers of "The Voyage" gratefully acknowledge the assistance they received from "Mr. Latham" as regards the descriptions, etc., of the birds and beasts figured in it, and therefore Latham is probably the individual responsible for the description of the "White Gallinule." A specimen of this extinct bird is said to exist in a museum at Vienna. It corresponded, no doubt, to the *Notornis* of New Zealand, once believed to be extinct, but which, I think, is still seen occasionally in remote parts of that country. Birds of the *Notornis* species have a remarkable resemblance to the Bald Coot, but are built on a much larger scale. There is apparently no record of the time at which *Notornis alba* became extinct, but in all probability the mutineers of the "Bounty" during their residence at Lord Howe Island used this bird as food, and so helped in its extinction.—H. V. EDWARDS, R.A.O.U., Bega, N.S.W.