

in drilling and were content to lay their eggs in a hollow only three inches from the entrance, where they were visible when one looked in. In fact, the cavity was scarcely large enough to hold the sitting bird, and each time I passed by I could see its back or head from a distance of half a dozen yards, and in some cases the head and bill were projecting from the entrance. My visits to the nest with the camera were often greeted with a sharp pinch on the hand as I endeavoured to make the bird leave the hollow while I was getting the camera into position. It was the most tenacious Kingfisher I had known, but once off the eggs it was never in a hurry to return, and a wait of between three and four hours was often necessary for a single exposure.

Many nests of the Black-and-White Fantail (*Rhipidura leucophrys*) were found during the season, varying in height from two inches to 20 feet above the ground, but perhaps the most interesting was one which was built in the heart of a hawthorn bush, where it was well protected from the prying eyes of boys. There were many other good nesting sites in the neighbourhood, but this pair evidently preferred the shelter of an imported tree.

The Whisper-Song.—On Monday afternoon last (August 19), while working in the garden, I heard a low melodious gurgling song proceeding from the direction of a Cape-wattle growing by the fence. The sound had a ventriloquial quality, and I was uncertain as to whether it came from that tree or from one further away in the same direction. On walking towards the first one, however, I disturbed the singer, a Butcher-bird or Derwent Jackass (*Cracticus torquatus*), which flew from a low-down branch where he had been esconced in solitude, indulging in that low, sweet gurgle. On one occasion I heard a White-backed Magpie (*Gymnorhina hypoleuca*) indulge in the same sort of ditty in a White-Gum near the cottage, and the little Grey-backed Silvereye (*Zosterops halmaturina*) does the same in the recesses of a thick shrub; these instances have occurred in late summer after the nesting season is over, and usually (in the case of the Silvereye) during the hottest part of the afternoon. The "Derwent Jack" was practising his soft undertones in the very early spring, and with quite a cool breeze blowing. Mr. Johannes C. Andersen, of Wellington, N.Z., has noted the whisper-song in the Silvereye over there, which is the same species as our own, and he has also heard it from several other birds in the Dominion. —H. STUART DOVE, Tas., 24/8/29.