

wanderers being omitted. Each bird has a fairly full description, both vernacular and scientific names being given. Scientists will probably regret the absence of references, but these would have unduly cumbered the book so far as general readers are concerned. At the conclusion of the birds there is a delightfully written article—"Vocal Characteristics of Some N.Z. Birds," taken from "Out in the Open," by the late Mr. T. H. Potts.

As to what happened during the Tertiary age the authors say:—

"Towards the end of the age in the world's history called the Cretaceous period New Zealand was a small group of islands with a very scanty fauna and flora; but later on, very early in the Tertiary era, it was gradually elevated until it attained almost continental dimensions, stretching away north through New Caledonia and Fiji, and joining the mainland at New Guinea.

"Birds had only lately come into existence in the Northern Hemisphere, but, now that New Zealand was joined to the mainland, they moved south and colonized it. . . . Towards the close of the Eocene period the northern land sank. New Zealand was then isolated, and it has remained so ever since. Yet it was visited every year by migratory birds from the North."

And so in the last respect it is to the present day. Among the most interesting portions of the book are those dealing with migration, confined not alone to the introduction, but occurring in the observations on the different species throughout the work.

### Notes and Notices.

PAPERS RECEIVED.—From Dr. E. A. D'Ombraïn, "Field Notes on Some Birds of the Casterton District (Victoria)." From Mr. Fred. Lawson, "A Visit to Rottnest Island" and "A Glance at the Birds of the Moore River (W.A.)"

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DR. A. B. MEYER, writing from Dresden, 8/8/04, desires to say, in reference to the doubt raised in the last issue of *The Emu* (p. 25) as to the eggs of the Kangaroo Island Emu being in that Museum, the "copyist" had made a mistake in the list by inadvertently writing *Dromæus ater* for *D. novæ-hollandiæ* when copying the names from the "British Museum Catalogue."

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MEMBERS are again reminded that the fourth annual session of the Aust. O.U. will this year be held in Sydney on 28th, 29th, and 30th November. The Council will endeavour, on the occasion of its first *reunion* in such an (Australian) historical centre, to make the meetings a thorough success. Sydney is connected with days of Australian ornithology which are too apt to be forgotten—those when Cook and his collectors first landed (now recalled so vividly by the discovery of one of his cairns on the Queensland coast) and when many earlier observers whose names

have either been forgotten or grown famous sought out its treasures in bird-life. Gould, Swainson, and Lewin, Masters, Ramsay, Bennett, and other less known names—what suggestions they offer as the “bird” possibilities of a strip of coast whose flora is unique, whose bird-life has features, consequently, of its own. These facts alone should be an inspiration for a great gathering of present-day bird-lovers. In addition to the usual formal business, including the consideration of a “Check-List” of Australian birds, some most interesting papers will be read at the meetings, and Mr. Robert Hall, F.L.S., C.M.Z.S., hopes to deliver a highly popular lecture on his trip through Japan, Manchuria, and Siberia (regions possessing much interest at the present juncture). A “camp-out” should prove one of the most enjoyable features of the gathering.

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A NATIONAL PARK.—Scarcely any other civilized country under the face of the sun has done less in the way of preserving its original fauna and flora than Australia. We are really behind the English-speaking and even the Japanese race. New South Wales and New Zealand are the only honourable exceptions amongst our group. In the former a tolerable area of suitable land has been vested in trustees; in New Zealand several islands around the coast are so strictly protected that no one without a special “permit” may even land. Professor Baldwin Spencer and several others have continued an agitation which was commenced some years ago by the Field Naturalists’ Club of Victoria, to have Wilson’s Promontory—an area of land virtually of no use for anything else—proclaimed a permanent National Park, where the few species that remain of what in a few years will be obsolete (though really typical) may have room to exist for a few years longer. Had our politicians the real interests of the country at heart they would act as statesmen in America have done—have areas permanently reserved for bird and animal protection—not make a pretence of doing anything, as in the case of the Victorian “National Park” at Wilson’s Promontory, or some others that could be named. One of the most suitable areas in Victoria was “proclaimed” in the same way as Wilson’s Promontory has been up to the present. Result—an invasion of 10-acre men, who cut down, burned, destroyed all shelter for our fauna and avifauna—went even beyond legitimate rights to do so. A further result—they cannot even make a living from their “blocks,” hence want to pass on. Now the same nonsensical process is wanted to be applied to Wilson’s Promontory. Why not take a lesson from the Yellowstone reserve in America, or even from those nearer home, the two National Parks in New South Wales? In both the latter cases fertile country has been conceded. In Victoria the “selecting demon” has his eye on every inch of land—worthless or not—which may be burned and “cleared.”