

ornithology than the editors of *The Emu*. All they desire to obtain are facts. They thank Mr. Carter for his correction regarding the finding of the bird, but they submit that the criticism Mr. Carter particularly objects to is reasonable, which time alone can prove, or otherwise. Mr. Carter must be aware that the bills of the young of the *Thalassogeron* (*T. cautus*) which breeds in Australian waters are dark, and that specimens of birds and eggs of the Albatrosses of Gough Island were collected and described as far back as 1895 (*vide* Verrill, *Trans. Connect. Ac.*, vol. ix.)—EDS.]

### Bird Observers' Club.

AT the Athenæum Hall, Melbourne, on 13th December, 1910, the Bird Observers' Club gave a unique entertainment. A fine series of lantern slides was displayed, illustrating the recent expedition of members of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union to the Capricorn Islands, at the southern extremity of the Great Barrier Reef. Mr. A. J. Campbell, C.M.B.O.U., presided, and made a short introductory address. Mr. Chas. Barrett, hon. secretary Bird Observers' Club, gave an account of the expedition, describing different islands that were visited and the experiences of the naturalists in camp and on reef and forest rambles. Mr. D. Le Souëf, C.M.Z.S., dealt with the bird life of the coral islands, and Mr. J. A. Leach, M.Sc., gave a most interesting account of the vegetation and of the life of the reef and lagoon. He also touched on the theories regarding the formation of coral islands. During an interval refreshments were served. Among those present were:—Mr. F. Tudor, Minister for Customs; Mr. N. C. Lockyer, Acting Comptroller-General of Customs; Mr. Theo. Fink and Miss Fink; Mr. J. W. Israel, Auditor-General, and Mrs. Israel; Mr. J. A. Kershaw, F.E.S., Curator of the National Museum, and Mrs. Kershaw; Mr. W. A. Kendall, M.R.C.V.S.; Mr. H. C. Dannevig, Director of Fisheries.—*Herald*, 14/12/10.

Under the auspices of the Bird Observers' Club, Mr. Edgar F. Stead, R.A.O.U., delivered, at the Independent Hall, on 18th November, 1910, a lecture on "Bird Life in New Zealand." Mr. A. H. E. Mattingley, C.M.Z.S., presided, and there was a large attendance. Mr. Stead, who for many years has been a student of the avifauna of the Dominion, illustrated his lecture with a series of lantern slides from his own photographs, taken in the wildest parts of New Zealand. Some of these pictures rival in interest and beauty the best work of the Kearton Bros., in England, and Radcliffe Dugmore, in the United States. Mr. Stead has undertaken so many adventurous expeditions that he was able to relate stories not only of the birds, but also of exciting incidents by flood and field. With two companions he navigated, on a frail raft, whose floats were kerosene tins, several of the big cascaded rivers of the South Island. He spoke of the Weka Rail, the Kea, the Kiwi, and other species, and told the story of his trip to an almost inaccessible rock in the ocean, where the Spotted Cormorants nest. Regarding the Kea, Mr. Stead stated that the bird does indeed kill sheep, but is not nearly so black as it has been painted. Only when frozen out of the mountains does it come seeking animal food in the lowlands and among the foothills. The Weka Rail, he was pleased to note, was holding its own against stoats and weasels. Mr. Stead was accorded a hearty vote of thanks, on the motion of Mr. A. J. Campbell, Col. M. B.O.U., seconded by Mr. D. Le Souëf, C.M.Z.S., for his lecture.