Notes on the Ground Parrot and Other Parrots.—Mr. W. S. Campbell, who is now 89 years of age, has a remarkable memory, and his recollections of the wild life inhabiting the environs of Sydney, upwards of sixty or seventy years ago, are full of interest. Recently Mr. Campbell wrote me about the Ground Parrot (Pezoporus wallicus). In the same letter he commented upon the original illustration from a collection of early paintings in the Mitchell Library, a photographic copy of which appeared in The Emu (Vol. XXXII., 1933, pl. 33). His remarks, together with some notes on Parrots generally, are quoted below:—

From what I can remember of this parrot, the illustration seems to me to be too long in the body and the tail is rather long, but it is a great many years since I have seen a ground parrot. When a younger, about seventy years or so ago, I used to see several in our paddock near the Parramatta River, seven miles from Sydney, or five in a direct line. I am under the impression that they used to feed on the tubers of several species of orchids which then grew plentifully everywhere. The Dieris seemed to be the favourite. This at one time was made use of by the blacks, whose women dug them up with their "yam sticks" just as they dig up wild yams and grass roots in the Northern Territory. . . .

We used to have thousands of parrots at times when the Blackbutt (Eucalyptus pilularis) were in blossom, which occurred irregularly. I had a paddock of about three acres of these trees which I preserved. About sixty years ago the trees all blossomed at the one time and the noise of these birds being knocked about, Budgerigars, Rosellas, etc.,


Butcher-Bird’s Double Song.—An early morning ramble on July 22, 1933, brought me to the edge of a gully where I made the following observation. A pair of Grey Butcher-birds (Cracticus torquatus) flew into a tree close by, and one of them sang four notes of music, then, immediately it ceased, the second bird sang four notes. The latter song followed the first perfectly, so that if one did not see the birds the impression would be given that it was a single bird singing an harmonious song. Another Butcher-bird flew towards the tree, but was chased away. Then both birds sang in the same manner as before, the second bird each time commencing to sing immediately the other had finished. A variation was occasionally made, six notes being sung by No. 1 bird—when that happened No. 2 bird followed suit, and sang six notes. During the pauses I heard, somewhat faintly in the distance, a Butcher-bird sing the single bar of four notes. It seemed as though it were answering the birds that I was observing. Later on in the day I heard the typical rollicking, irresponsible-sounding song of a Butcher-bird, but it was different, and seemed to lack the mellow sweetness of the birds that I watched. Since then I have heard, in the distance, this double song, and if I had not made the above observation I would have been deceived into thinking that it was a single bird song.—G. R. GANNON, R.A.O.U., Artramon, N.S.W., 30/8 33.