

When travelling through the Buller Gorge recently I made the acquaintance of a reliable observer, who told me of their large colonies existing in certain mountain ranges surrounding the famous waterway.

Parrots as a rule are not noted for dignity and workmanship in the matter of nest building, and in this respect the Kakapo is no exception. The nest is a rough excavation, with only the faintest attempt at linings and comfort. The nest usually contains three or four white eggs, about two inches in length. "Kakapo" is the name given to the bird by the Maoris, and means "Night Parrot." As this name has been handed down for many generations, it would seem that at least for many centuries past, this bird has been possessed of nocturnal habits, in all probability was always a nocturnal bird, but still the circumstantial evidence mentioned above is quite sufficient to lead one to the belief that a wonderful change has come over the bird during some ancient period. It is difficult at times to reconcile existing conditions with the scientific theories which tell us that all flightless birds of to-day were at one time or other, away back in the ancient times of their ancestors, possessed of full powers of flight; but no such difficulty exists in the case of the Kakapo. Here we have a bird feathered in every detail like a bird of flight, the rounded full-sized tail, the large, well proportioned wings, the short thick legs, and heavy clawed feet, all tell us that such a bird was never created to work out its destiny on the floor of the forest. In fact, these outstanding features alone immediately force us to the conclusion that this bird was at one time a flyer, and leave us bewildered at the thought that to-day that power has passed. And why? Is it because this beautiful bird found no charm in opening its wings, and floating from tree to tree, from hilltop to hilltop, and that it preferred the heavy drudgery of the cold, inhospitable forest floor, to the gay life of the bird on the wing? All these things must remain unanswered, and we bow to the mighty powers of evolution that leave us pondering over the extraordinary mysteries of Nature, whether they are of regeneration, or as in the case of the bird under notice, degeneration.

**The Turquoise Parrot on the Nullarbor Plain.**—In view of the great scarcity of the Turquoise Parrot (*Neophema pulchella*), any note as to present-day habitat is of interest. When representatives of the Australian Museum were at Ooldea, in 1921, they secured one young male of this species. Mr. G. A. Heumann noted a pair in the same district a little later. In answer to inquiry, Mr. A. Bolan, Stationmaster at Ooldea, who is a keen naturalist, sends me the following note:—"Regarding the Grass Parrot, yes, I have noted a bird answering description—small, living in grass; greenish back, blue face, yellowish underneath. I noticed one last year in a donga out on the Nullarbor Plain. I remember stopping and having a good look, as he was so pretty."—A. S. LE SOUEF, C.M.Z.S., Taronga Park, Sydney.