

half fledged. The little creatures hid under the thyme bushes. 11th December.—About a couple of chains from above spot I disturbed a Painted Quail with four young ones. In the short glimpse I obtained as they ran to the reeds I noticed they appeared to be clothed in down intermingled with feathers. They had all been lying in a sand-bath when I suddenly disturbed them. A few days afterwards, on 20th December, I passed through the same patch of reeds. It was about 7 o'clock in the evening, and as I was walking quickly along a male Painted Quail whirred in front of me. Looking down, I saw where it had been dusting; so I thought—"Sitting bird, dusting so late in the day," and set to work to hunt for the nest, but for some time without success. As light was fading, I was just giving up the search for that day when I discovered another dusting hollow and much excreta. This at once told me it was a sitting bird I had flushed, so, searching longer, I discovered four eggs in a little depression under a banksia sapling about 2 feet high. The nest was sheltered by the reeds and banksia and lined with half a dozen grass-stalks. The eggs were lying with their points towards the centre. In Mr. Seth-Smith's paper he tells how the female leaves the incubation of the eggs to the charge of the male bird and seeks a fresh mate. The above facts from nature appear to corroborate the conduct of the *Turnix varia* in captivity.

Variation in *Trichoglossus*, Vig. and Hors.

BY ROBERT HALL, C.M.Z.S., COL. M. B.O.U.

SOME time ago I purchased in one parcel 60 skins of what appeared to be *T. septentrionalis*, sub-sp., Robinson. They were labelled "Southern Queensland." Robinson says*—"The northern representative of this common Australian Lory can readily be distinguished by the smaller size and by the brighter and purer blue of the head and abdominal patch. Some of the specimens from Mounts Sapphire and Bellenden-Ker agree very fairly with the original specimens from Cooktown, whilst others approach the typical form more nearly, so far as colouration is concerned, but all are distinctly smaller in dimensions."

Salvadori, writing of the species, *T. novæ-hollandiæ*, Gm., says†:—"Breast yellow, more or less stained with red along the middle, sometimes almost entirely red except on the sides."

My skins show—

- a. The young (six specimens) exhibit a nearly uniform yellow breast, with a small proportion of red upon the central area.

* *Ibis*, October, 1900, p. 642.

† Cat. Birds Brit. Mus., xx., p. 59 (1891).

- b.* Certain of the fully adult specimens show the sides to be red also; a vestige of yellow upon one.
- c.* Ten specimens show uniform red breasts, with a very small proportion of yellow upon the sides of the neck.
- d.* As the bird matures the breast red becomes separated from the abdominal blue by a clearly defined horizontal line. Only 7 per cent. of the specimens show this stage of development.
- e.* The depth of colour on the occiput varies considerably between a light violet or violet-brown to a deep violet and blue. This appears as much in the adult as in the young birds.
- f.* The abdominal blue in 20 skins is dull, mostly lustreless. In 20 others it is full of lustre. No dates are upon the skins to indicate the time of year in relation to moult or nesting. In many more the transitional phases are showing.
- g.* Wing measurements in adults show 6.2 to 6.8 inches, mostly 6.5.

I think, with Mr. Robinson, that there is a sub-species, and that it is confined to the extreme north of Queensland. About the Richmond River we get the species. I think the sub-species is nomadic in Northern Queensland, while the species is migratory between Southern Queensland and Tasmania.

Birds Seen at Cumminin Station, Western Australia.

BY ALAN FAIRFAX CROSSMAN, F.L.S., F.Z.S., M.B.O.U.

CUMMININ is situate about 90 miles east from Beverley and 200 miles due east from Perth. It is, roughly speaking, about half-way between the two rabbit-proof fences, and is some 30 miles south of Merredon, on the Eastern Goldfields railway. The country is very undulating, the hills being chiefly timbered with jam-wood (*Acacia acuminata*) and York gum, while the valleys grow forests of salmon-barked gum, gimlet gum, and morell, interspersed with tea-tree and occasional patches of yate (eucalypt). Through part of the country runs what is called the Salt River—a river only in name. Though occasionally in very wet winters it does run, it consists really of a chain of lakes of varying sizes, some of which have often a considerable amount of water in wet seasons, and are the haunts of innumerable Ducks. Throughout the district the good land is surrounded by vast sand-plains, some of which are useful for feeding stock, while others are covered with practically impenetrable scrub, and are the haunts of kangaroo, Emu, Mallee-Fowl, and other game. Out of the jam-wood country one finds huge granite rocks outcropping, and it is under these that