

It is evident that the description of the Pacific Petrel is not definite enough for the identification of the Shearwater Latham had before him, and it is idle to read into the description a meaning the words do not convey. I see, therefore, no justification for discarding determined *chlororhynchus* and substituting undetermined *pacifica* as the specific name of the Wedge-tailed Shearwater. In fine, a long-established specific name should not be superseded unless the evidence against it is beyond reasonable doubt. The law of priority is accepted as a means of obtaining stability, not instability, of names.

If a stable nomenclature is to be attained in species and the higher groups, such a nomenclature must be the outcome of investigations by monographers having a profound knowledge of their special subjects. All-around name hunters have failed because the quarry has been beyond the reach of superficial knowledge.

**Spider Webs and Birds.** I was very interested in the note (*Emu*, Vol. XXIII., p. 236) and photographs by Mrs. Imis Humphrey, of Poopoonah, Q. They brought back to my mind a similar experience which came under my notice when a child in Queensland, and living a few miles from Toowoomba. One afternoon I saw a small bird apparently caught in nothing. From the distance its wings appeared to be folded to its sides, giving it the appearance of having suddenly stopped in the air while falling. I ran along to investigate, and found the bird, a Fly-eater (*Gerygone*), from what I remember, wrapped in a spider web. I cannot say how long it had been there, but it seemed too weak to struggle free. The web was spun between two gum saplings, just off the crown of a rather sharp hill, and, to my mind, in such a position easily to trap a small bird flying quickly downhill. By the time it noticed the web it would be in it. As I watched, a large, black spider, with a greenish tinge, began to descend from a bunch of leaves in the left-hand sapling. The captive commenced to tremble or struggle. I am not sure which now. Anyhow, I know my sympathy for the bird came uppermost, and I seized a stick, smashed the web, freed the bird from the sticky stuff, when it flew away from my hands. The spider retreated to his den. Since then, I have wished my childish sympathy had waited a while to see what the spider would do. Once again I found another web in a similar position. A Leatherhead (*Tropidorhynchus*) made a sharp curve upwards to avoid being entangled in its meshes. I do not suppose that the strands would retain such a large victim; still, it is surprising the strength there is in a cobweb. I have tested the webs of this spider with my fingers, and found them very strong and sticky. I have also run straight into one without seeing it until arrested by the horrid stuff all over my face. It is most disagreeable.—(Miss) J. A. FLETCHER, R.A.O.U., "Lyeltya," Eaglehawk Neck (Tas.).