out reference to the Australian Children's Encyclopædia, a
2-volume work of 1056 pages with popular accounts by a
number of experts in their respective fields.

Coming closer to ourselves—to his contacts with the
R.A.O.U. and the like—Charles Barrett was a foundation
(1901) member and remained associated most of the years
thereafter. For a short time (1910 to 1916) he assisted
Leach with the editing of The Emu. He served as editor of
The Victorian Naturalist from May 1925 to August 1939.
He took a leading part in the formation of the Bird Observers
Club in 1905. He was a corresponding member of the Zoological Societies of London and of New York.

Charles Barrett was a quiet and reserved man, not unfriendly but largely concerned with his family, his books—
he had a fine library of Australiana and writings on the
Pacific which latter is to go to the National Library, Can-
berra—and his own interests and concerns. He did not seek
to be a clubman, a man of the world, a good mixer, a 'go-
getter'—but, after all, many people prefer men like that.
—C.E.B.

Correspondence

PLUMAGE OF PARROTS

To the Editor

Sir,—Erhard F. Boehm in ‘Parrots and Cockatoos of the
Mount Mary Plains, South Australia’ (Emu, vol. 59, p. 83)
contradicts the accuracy of my published statements that
adult plumage is attained by the Adelaide Rosella (Platy-
cercus adelaide) at about the age of fifteen months and by
the Ringneck Parrot (Barnardius barnardi) between twelve
and eighteen months of age. The statements to which he
refers are the result of carefully-recorded observations of
numbers of birds of both species bred in captivity in my
own private collection and in the Adelaide Zoological Gar-
dens.

In order to substantiate his opinion that, in the case of
the Adelaide Rosella, certain plumage changes “of fine old
birds do not appear to be attained until at least the third
year and possibly only in the fourth year of life” and in the
case of the Ringneck Parrot that certain features of the
plumage “of fine old individuals are certainly not acquired
until the third, and possibly not until the fourth year of
life”, Boehm would need to have banded many nestlings of
both species and to have collected them at varying times
thereafter. If he has done so, his figures in regard to num-
bers banded, total number of specimens collected and num-
ber of recoveries would make interesting reading; but until
he is able to publish such records, his statements in regard
to plumage changes can only be regarded as worthless con-
jecture.

Boehm's statement in regard to the "pale pink crests" of
the Pink Cockatoo (Kakatoe leadbeateri) merits correction.
The crest feathers of this species are red with white ex-
tremitities and with a band of yellow running through the
red, this being broader in the female than in the male.

Yours, etc.,

Alan Lendon

Adelaide, S.A.
July 6, 1959.

TATTLERS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

To the Editor,

Sir,—My letter (The Emu, 58, 336-337) and choice of
words were aimed at all those who consider that 'possible'
and 'probable' records should appear in print. More often
than not the proclivity to acclaim the unusual record springs
from honest zeal, but nothing is to be gained by publishing
observations about which there is the slightest doubt. Where
problematical groups are concerned, such as the waders,
sight observations do not contribute much to our knowledge
of bird distribution nor can the binocular "almost com-
pletely" replace the gun.

C. N. Austin (The Emu, 59, 71) has taken the opposite
view to mine. I hope his remarks will not encourage a prac-
tice which I think should be discouraged lest "the face of
Australian ornithology" become unrecognizable. Mr. Austin
regards as meaningful the sentence "probably most migra-
tory waders follow the coastline" which implies "more evi-
dence for than against". I cannot agree with that. Perhaps
Messrs. Glover and Schodde meant 'possibly'; probabilities
and possibilities are two different things as everybody knows.

Mistakes can always occur in field identifications, no
matter how knowledgeable the observer may be. The litera-
ture is full of erroneous data: therefore let us exercise cau-
tion at all times when doubts can be raised from whatever
source.

Yours, etc.

H. T. Condon

Adelaide, S.A.
June 8, 1959.

Correspondence on the foregoing matter is now closed.—Ed.

The date of publication was August 20, 1959.