

of the highest rank there have been few whose opinion is more worthy of attention than MacGillivray, a trained anatomist and a man of thoroughly independent mind."

The record of MacGillivray's life and work, as set out in the volume under notice, should be read by all ornithologists; it is inspiring.

It is interesting that two sons of the great British "bird-man," John and Paul, also became eminent in natural science, and spent portions of their lives in Australia. John MacGillivray was naturalist on three scientific expeditions, including that of the *Fly* to Torres Strait and the Eastern Archipelago (1842-46), and he died at Sydney in 1867. Paul settled in Australia. He was a surgeon, and a student of natural science. A monument to his memory has been erected at Bendigo, where he resided, and his collection of natural specimens is preserved in the National Museum, Melbourne.

Correspondence.

THE CARTER ALBATROSS.

To the Editors of "*The Emu*."

SIRS,—The editorial statement appearing in the last number of *The Emu* (October, 1910, vol. x., p. 144) is incorrect in stating that the specimen of *Thalassogeron carteri*, described as new by the Hon. Walter Rothschild (*vide Bull. Brit. Orn. Club*, xiv., p. 6)—"was found washed ashore dead off North-West Australia." It was caught by a black boy in my employment while it was swimming in the open sea at Point Cloates, and brought to me by him while still alive (*vide Emu*, vol. iii., p. 208). I think the editors, who, as far as I know, have never seen the bird, have gone out of their way to question the validity of this species, seeing that the Hon. Walter Rothschild described it as new (Dr. Ernst Hartert concurring with him), and that the late Dr. R. Bowdler Sharpe assured me (after examination of the skin) that it was a good species, when I was in England in 1903. So far, the only Albatross procured that resembles *T. carteri* was procured at Gough Island, in the South Atlantic, by the Scottish National Antarctic Expedition in 1904, and was described by my friend Mr. Wm. Eagle Clarke in *The Ibis*, 1905, p. 266, where he states:—"Dr. Hartert remarks that he finds nothing to show that other Albatrosses have the bill black in the young."

In my paper in *The Emu* mentioned above, the word "thing" has been substituted for "skin" by a printer's error in the fourth line, p. 209.—I am, &c.,

TOM CARTER.

Broome Hill, Western Australia, 27/10/10.

[No persons are more "in love" with Australian birds or

ornithology than the editors of *The Emu*. All they desire to obtain are facts. They thank Mr. Carter for his correction regarding the finding of the bird, but they submit that the criticism Mr. Carter particularly objects to is reasonable, which time alone can prove, or otherwise. Mr. Carter must be aware that the bills of the young of the *Thalassogeron* (*T. cautus*) which breeds in Australian waters are dark, and that specimens of birds and eggs of the Albatrosses of Gough Island were collected and described as far back as 1895 (*vide* Verrill, *Trans. Connect. Ac.*, vol. ix.)—EDS.]

Bird Observers' Club.

AT the Athenæum Hall, Melbourne, on 13th December, 1910, the Bird Observers' Club gave a unique entertainment. A fine series of lantern slides was displayed, illustrating the recent expedition of members of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union to the Capricorn Islands, at the southern extremity of the Great Barrier Reef. Mr. A. J. Campbell, C.M.B.O.U., presided, and made a short introductory address. Mr. Chas. Barrett, hon. secretary Bird Observers' Club, gave an account of the expedition, describing different islands that were visited and the experiences of the naturalists in camp and on reef and forest rambles. Mr. D. Le Souëf, C.M.Z.S., dealt with the bird life of the coral islands, and Mr. J. A. Leach, M.Sc., gave a most interesting account of the vegetation and of the life of the reef and lagoon. He also touched on the theories regarding the formation of coral islands. During an interval refreshments were served. Among those present were:—Mr. F. Tudor, Minister for Customs; Mr. N. C. Lockyer, Acting Comptroller-General of Customs; Mr. Theo. Fink and Miss Fink; Mr. J. W. Israel, Auditor-General, and Mrs. Israel; Mr. J. A. Kershaw, F.E.S., Curator of the National Museum, and Mrs. Kershaw; Mr. W. A. Kendall, M.R.C.V.S.; Mr. H. C. Dannevig, Director of Fisheries.—*Herald*, 14/12/10.

Under the auspices of the Bird Observers' Club, Mr. Edgar F. Stead, R.A.O.U., delivered, at the Independent Hall, on 18th November, 1910, a lecture on "Bird Life in New Zealand." Mr. A. H. E. Mattingley, C.M.Z.S., presided, and there was a large attendance. Mr. Stead, who for many years has been a student of the avifauna of the Dominion, illustrated his lecture with a series of lantern slides from his own photographs, taken in the wildest parts of New Zealand. Some of these pictures rival in interest and beauty the best work of the Kearton Bros., in England, and Radcliffe Dugmore, in the United States. Mr. Stead has undertaken so many adventurous expeditions that he was able to relate stories not only of the birds, but also of exciting incidents by flood and field. With two companions he navigated, on a frail raft, whose floats were kerosene tins, several of the big cascaded rivers of the South Island. He spoke of the Weka Rail, the Kea, the Kiwi, and other species, and told the story of his trip to an almost inaccessible rock in the ocean, where the Spotted Cormorants nest. Regarding the Kea, Mr. Stead stated that the bird does indeed kill sheep, but is not nearly so black as it has been painted. Only when frozen out of the mountains does it come seeking animal food in the lowlands and among the foothills. The Weka Rail, he was pleased to note, was holding its own against stoats and weasels. Mr. Stead was accorded a hearty vote of thanks, on the motion of Mr. A. J. Campbell, Col. M. B.O.U., seconded by Mr. D. Le Souëf, C.M.Z.S., for his lecture.