

Correspondence

To the Editors of "The Emu."

Sirs,—With regard to the origin of the name "Nullarbor," I showed the copy of the last *Emu* to Professor Sir Edgeworth David. As is well known, he recently spent some time in Central Australia. He was very interested in the two paragraphs concerning the subject, but said he was afraid that the gentlemen who wrote them were mistaken. His party enquired into the origin of the word, and discovered that it was derived from the two Latin words "Nullus" and "Arbor." The plain was named by Delissa, who surveyed the boundary between South Australia and Western Australia.—I am, yours etc.,

GEO. V. SCAMMELL.

To the Editors of "The Emu."

Sirs,—Messrs. Kinghorn and Cayley's very fine paper on the Storm Petrels published in the *Emu* for October last is a good example of the useful work which may be done by assembling available skins and instituting close comparisons. In the case of most Australian birds the type skins are not available to local students, and the action taken by the authors of the paper quoted in obtaining from M. Berlioz a sketch and notes with reference to Vieillot's type of *Fregetta grallaria* was the nearest solution of the difficulty.

I think it necessary, however, to point out that by some oversight the authors have omitted any reference to my connection with some of the skins dealt with by them.

In October, 1910, Mr. (now Professor) T. Harvey Johnston gave me a bird which he had picked up at Lord Howe Island, and placed in spirit. I had a skin prepared by Mr. Robert Grant, of the Australian Museum, and I identified the bird. The label attached to the skin is in my handwriting as follows:—"Fregetta grallaria, Vieillot. Loc. Lord Howe Island. Date, 10th October,

1910. Taken by T. Harvey Johnston. First record for L.H.I." I sent this skin to Mr. Gregory Mathews, who described it in his "Birds of Australia," vol. ii, pt. 1, p. 42 (1912), expressing his opinion that it was a distinct species, but he refrained from giving it a name. In writing to Mr. Tom Iredale, who was assisting Mathews, I commented upon the rather unusual procedure adopted by the latter, and received a reply to the effect that the bird was not named, but only described, and there was nothing to prevent me from remedying the defect and giving it a name! As I did not agree with the conclusion that it was a new species, I did not adopt the suggestion. The skin subsequently was acquired by Mr. H. L. White, and is now in the collection of the National Museum, Melbourne, and is Specimen C referred to by Kinghorn and Cayley. Mathews later obtained several skins of Storm Petrels from Lord Howe Island, four of which he described and named. One, doubtless similar to mine, was designated, with somewhat sardonic humour, "innominatus."

When Messrs. McCulloch and Troughton brought Specimen A, referred to in the paper under review, from Lord Howe Island, they submitted it to me for identification. At first I was inclined to regard it as a new species, but upon obtaining Specimen C from Melbourne, and making a careful comparison, besides studying the literature, I came to the conclusion that the new skin was merely a juvenile *F. grallaria*, in which the white abdomen was in process of development. This opinion I conveyed to Mr. Cayley. When Specimen B came to hand, I understood that Mr. Cayley was convinced that there were several species represented in the material contained in the two Museums (Sydney and Melbourne), and that he proposed to describe and figure two new species. That he has altered his opinion and arrived at the same conclusion as myself is very gratifying to me, and my congratulations are tendered to him and his collaborator for the very conscientious piece of work they have produced.—Yours, etc.,

A. F. BASSETT HULL, C.F.A.O.U.

Sydney, 2nd December, 1922.

To the Editors of "The Emu."

Sirs,—A paper on Storm Petrels, by Messrs. Kinghorn and Cayley appeared in the second part of "The Emu" (vol. xxii.), pp. 81 *et seq.* I am very glad to see new workers taking such an interest in those small birds. But I would like to comment on two matters connected therewith.

Those authors say that I have confused *leucogaster* with *grallaria*. Had they read my article in the "Birds of Australia," vol. ii., on *grallaria*, this statement could not have been made. As a matter of fact, it was I who pointed out the differences between those birds; on page 40 of my work I say that "Gould's *T. leucogaster* is a different species . . ." and on p. 44 I say that "*F. grallaria* is distinct from *F. leucogaster*." This does away also

with the statement that the bird figured as *grallaria* is *leucogaster*.

The writers go on to say that the measurements sent them of the type of *grallaria* were first published by them in their paper. But on page 41 of my work I gave the measurements of the type, in 1912 (*over 10 years ago*). The type was sent to me from France for examination.

Yours, etc.,

GREGORY M. MATHEWS.

Foulis Court, Fair Oak, Hants., 14/11/22.
