

is becoming. A flock of 10 or 12 goes hopping across the road before us. Their cat-like call is very remarkable. An orchardist one day thought that another cry of these birds sounded like "Every three yards, every three yards." He was planting fruit-trees at the time.

At the close of day I waited near a camping place of Laughing Jackasses (Great Brown Kingfishers), where I was much entertained watching the home-coming of the family, notwithstanding the crowds of stinging mosquitoes. At dusk, or 40 minutes after sundown, two birds coming from opposite directions sailed into the tree, and after a hearty laugh moved to a particular perch. Soon afterwards three others came, one by one, each in turn receiving a noisy welcome, ending in chuckling notes of seeming satisfaction and contentment. Convivial choruses from other families could be heard in the distance in different directions. At last darkness was complete, and all had shut down for the night.

Australasian Ornithologists' Union.

ROUGH MINUTES, 30TH MEETING A.O.U. COUNCIL, HELD AT DR.
C. RYAN'S, ON WEDNESDAY, THE 21ST JUNE, 1905.

Correspondence was received from Professor J. A. Allen, thanking the Council for electing him an honorary member of A.O.U. Mr. P. Peir, of Sydney, also wrote, stating that the cost price of the official badge of the A.O.U.—viz., an Emu carved on Emu-egg shell, and designed by him—would be 3s. for the carved shell, and if set in an 9-carat gold pendant, suitable for wearing on the watch chain, or on the lapel of the coat, or as a brooch, it would cost 8s. complete. These prices were considered by the Council as remarkably reasonable.

Communications were received from Mr. W. Rodier, of Tambura Station, N.S.W., and the *Review of Reviews*, New York.

Mr. R. Henry, of Pigeon Island, Dusky Sound, New Zealand, also wrote, stating that he had no objection to his article "Bird Sanctuaries of New Zealand," which appeared in *The Emu*, being republished in the Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institute for 1904, in conjunction with the article by R. A. Vivian entitled "Some Bird-Life of British Papua," which the Institute also wished to republish.

Auditors for the current year were elected, viz :—M. Symonds Clark and Edwin Ashby, as general auditors, and as local auditors C. L. Barrett and E. D'Ombraim.

It was decided that the next Annual Congress, which is to be held at Adelaide, should take place about the middle of October, and that a "working field trip" would be taken to Kangaroo Island, since many interesting features are to be found amongst

its avifauna, and that an official visit could then be paid to the lighthouse there, which regularly forwards reports on the migratory birds that strike the light.

The hon. sec. was instructed to write to the Hon. the Premiers of Tasmania and New Zealand, and also Sir Joseph Ward, of Wellington, asking them to support the motion of Mr. Walter Lionel Rothschild which was brought before the International Ornithologists' Congress now being held in London, that the Penguins on Macquarie and other islands south of New Zealand be protected, as was cited in a recent cablegram.

Mr. H. Kendall was unanimously elected advisory editor of *The Emu*.

The question of the next coloured plate was dealt with, and it was suggested that Dr. Sharpe be written to and asked to advise the Council as to what specimens were the more important for figuring in *The Emu*, as Dr. Sharpe has several unfigured skins of Australasian birds in his possession. It would also obviate sending skins to England, and so facilitate the work and reduce the expenditure.

The advisability of instituting an inquiry column in *The Emu* was dealt with, and it was decided to empower the hon. editors to introduce this new feature. It was also mentioned that the permanent requirements of "working" ornithologists relating to Australasian avifauna, such as the discovery of the unknown nests and eggs of known birds, be published also.

A portion of a dichotomous key to the birds of Australia, that Mr. A. G. Campbell was at present working out, was exhibited, and it was suggested that the key be issued as a supplement to *The Emu*. After some discussion it was decided to deal definitely with the matter when the key was complete, so that there would be an indication of the cost of its production. It was also inferentially mentioned that a dichotomous key on "Oology" should accompany the one on birds.

Mr. C. L. Barrett, on the retirement of Mr. A. G. Campbell, was elected unanimously "press correspondent."

Reports of the birds striking the different lighthouses were read by Mr. D. Le Souëf, and some important observations were recorded, especially from Cape Wickham.

Inquiry Column.

It is thought that a column of inquiry for matters pertaining to ornithology would be useful to many members, especially to those residing in the country, not to mention the far bush. The Council of the A.O.U., therefore, through the editors, invite questions about bird subjects, such as identification, &c., which may perplex any member. The replies, if possible, will be made through *The Emu*.