

ness, with as little friction as possible with other life around.

After a few hours' rest under the lee of some bushes we were awakened about 2.30 a.m. by little cries overhead. The flash of a powerful torch revealed little Petrels in the air, their rounded wings and white undersurface showing up clearly. The wind had died away completely. The main business of the night was nearing its close. Mates had been fed, the first early chicks provisioned for another day, and the birds were now collecting in the air prior to departure for the open sea. Observations showed that some birds had changed places with their mates, while some were taking an airing before returning to their task of incubation. The focus of activity in the air is in the zero hours. Within the rays of the light twelve to twenty birds could be seen at one time wheeling or circling about, or hovering to investigate the strangers. Occasionally a bird would drop on to the burrows and every now and then one would rise therefrom. The torch's rays disclosed birds in the air all over the petrelry and caused several to dash in bewilderment towards the glare. In flight their wings made no sound, but the tapping of their feet as they skimmed the water could be distinctly heard. By 3.30 a.m., at the first flush of dawn, all the Petrels had disappeared. Curlews and other sea birds began to call to one another, and not long afterward a pair of Swamp Hawks and several Silver Gulls patrolled the banks seeking what they might devour.

A colour variation of the Crested Bronze-wing Pigeon.— Among a flock of ten Crested Bronze-wings (*Ocyphaps lophotes*), which flew on to the garden fence the other morning, I noted one of them was of a totally different colour, practically the only parts of the bird that were normal in colour being the bronze on the wing and the red legs. The shape and size was typically that of *Ocyphaps lophotes*, but there the likeness ended. His general colour was brown; lower back, upper tail coverts, primaries, and secondaries, black; nape, crown and crest, slate; legs, very red. Perhaps the dark colour of the body generally made the colour of the legs stand out so conspicuously. The bronze on the wings seemed to show out more distinctly than on the others; this also may have been on account of the dark background. Had I been capable of making a decent skin I would have secured it for the Museum. I am sure it would have been of interest as a curiosity.—N. GEARY, R.A.O.U., Dalby, Qld.