

Entering outer paddock a small flock of Straw-necked Ibis—about 20—took flight. Grasshoppers were plentiful under-foot, and a very few Spur-winged Plovers were feeding amongst them. The lake seemed quite dry—from far out on the bed of the lake a man with horse and cart was (presumably) drawing water from a well. Five Ducks—two White-eyed Ducks and three Black Ducks—took rapid flight when I lifted my walking stick to show their position. Not another bird to be seen—all very desolate."

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## Annual Camp-out

Owing to organizing difficulties, the proposed visit to the Bass Straits Islands this year has been cancelled, and arrangements are being made to hold the next Congress of the Union in Hobart and the Camp-out on Bruny Island, southern Tasmania, towards the end of November. The exact dates, and all further details available, will be supplied on the annual notice paper to be sent to members shortly.

The Camp will be held on the shores of Adventure Bay, a place of great historical interest, and a good district for birds. Most of the indigenous Tasmanian birds are found in the forests of the island and lagoons adjacent to the bay. The locality is noted for fine scenery. The southern end of the bay is flanked by the sheer cliffs of Fluted Cape and Cape Conella, at the foot of which lies Penguin Island, which can be reached easily at low tide. At the northern end of the bay, which sweeps around in a great crescent, is Cape Frederick Henry, where the Short-tailed Shearwater has a large breeding colony, and where Cormorants and Silver Gulls also nest, as well as a few Fairy Penguins. Oystercatchers, and Hooded Dotterels breed on the beach, and the Black-cheeked Falcon in the cliffs.

Bruny Island is divided into two parts, and the connecting link consists of a long sandy neck, very narrow in parts, and composed of tall, weed-covered dunes, among which the Fairy Penguin breeds. A shallow bay on the western side, facing D'Entrecasteaux Channel, is the feeding place of the Black Swan, Musk Duck, Caspian Tern and others, whilst out to sea, on the other side, are Gannets, Albatrosses and Petrels. To the south of Adventure Bay lie the Friars, a group of rocks where Prions are known to nest.

Adventure Bay is reached by comfortable channel steamers from Hobart in a few hours. A landing is made at Lunawanna on the sheltered side of the island, and passengers are transported by vehicles for about seven miles across the island to the bay. There is swimming to be had, as well as fishing, and timber tracks leading inland provide easy walking for the bird-observer.

Arrangements for the camp are in the hands of the State Secretary, Dr. W. L. Crowther, 180 Macquarie Street, Hobart, to whom early intimation of intention to attend should be sent. Please notify the Hon. General Secretary also. Here is an ideal way to spend a holiday, and members are asked to ensure a good muster.

## Reviews

[\* *England's Birds*. By W. K. Richmond. London, Faber & Faber Ltd. Price, 10s. 6d. stg.]

When Mr. Richmond's *Quest for Birds* came under our notice we were impressed with his ability to take us with him as he stalked the birds of the copses and spinneys or splashed through water and mud after waders: and he has done just that again. It is necessarily difficult, here in Australia, to place England's birds on the background of scenery that we are used to, but the author obviates that inasmuch as the proper atmosphere and locale is so interwoven with his descriptions.

Favoured hunting-grounds are river mouths and marshes on England's east coast, whither severe weather drives numbers of birds from the Continent, so that many a stranger appears overnight—chiefly water birds, ducks and the like. Unfortunately they bring not only a thrill to the ever-expectant watcher, but some urge to kill to hunters around the estuaries. We think that Mr. Richmond *should* have written "dastardly," not nearly have done so, when referring to punt-guns. Here in Victoria several sections of the Game Act impose heavy penalties for using or having punt-guns in one's possession.

A note on the Starling is interesting. Even in its home country it has "recently . . . come in for a lot of criticism and contumely, many writers saying that it is so abundant as to be a pest." The opinion of some observers concerning the species would probably be expressed more forcibly in many parts of Australia, yet here, as there, it has its champions. The Barn-Owl is referred to as hunting by daylight in mid-winter—does it do so here, too? Many other notes such as these suggest parallels, or the converse, with the same or allied birds in Australia.

Mr. Richmond is still worried about the territory theory in bird-life. He does not deny the principle—"territory is a fact of bird-life, not a theory"—but he believes it is much more vague and elastic than the theorists originally gave us to understand, and that its repercussions have been its most valuable incident.

Bird calls, transcribed into written words, are prominent through the pages, and their importance as field-identification characters is stressed. Interesting notes on