

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITORS, *The Emu*.

Sirs,

Under "Further on the R.A.O.U. Check-list," in the last issue of *The Emu* Mr. Milligan says in his letter that he did not intend to pursue the correspondence further. Perhaps that would have been the wisest course, because every time

Mr. Ogilvie Grant's name is brought forward as rejecting trinomials, and every time it is stated that the American ornithologists are not in favour of trinomials, it must make those oversea ornithologists smile, when the ornithological world knows that they are of one accord in the support of trinomials.

Re Mr. Milligan's statement at the presentation of the Check-list, that the system would fall by its own weight (that is by using trinomials) and that leading British ornithologists were not using trinomials, it matters not who he was quoting, or who put the information into his hands at the last moment, it is enough that Mr. Milligan made good use of his brief, and laid great stress on the lines quoted to impress his audience with the necessity of accepting a list in binomials.

The quotation from *The Auk*, Vol. XXIX., pp. 561-5. written by Mr. Joseph Grinnell of California, seems to be misunderstood completely, as the works of that gentleman will plainly show.

I would like to refer to "Letters of Appreciation" in the last "Emu." The only one which carries weight, being that of Mr. Tom Carter. I am much surprised at the letter, and cannot believe now that Mr. Carter would take such a step backwards. Why not quote the last *Ibis*, tenth series, Vol. II., No. 1, p. 148. When speaking of the R.A.O.U. Check-list it says this is supposed to be based on the work of Gould, and on the catalogue of the birds in the British Museum, and its adoption could only lead to the most *hopeless confusion*.

The Auk, Vol. XXX., pp. 445-7, after a most scathing review of the R.A.O.U. Check-list, concludes with, "We regret exceedingly that we cannot endorse this Check-list for general use: aside from all questions of nomenclature, it would serve a valuable purpose as a conservative list of Australian species and sub-species, but here it fails in so much as the lack of synonymy makes it difficult or impossible to ascertain with which forms the many recently discovered races have been united.

If the reviews of the leading scientific journals of the world were published it would give Australian ornithologists a chance to weigh them with "Letters of Appreciation."

Since seeing Dr. Leach's letter in the last "Emu" I have been wondering if some of us are not looking at Australian

ornithology from two vastly different standpoints, because, if the R.A.O.U. Check-list was intended for 50,000 members of the Gould League of Bird Lovers, who are mostly children, and know as much about the list as the majority who attended the session when it was adopted (if this be the case, and it is not to be accepted as scientific), then it will answer the purpose.

Oversea ornithologists have killed the R.A.O.U. Check-list in one blow. South Australia has turned it down to a man, and many in the other States are doing likewise, so what use for more on the subject.

I am, etc.,

S. A. WHITE.

