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[Part 8.

Birds Noted between Adelaide and England via Suez and on the Return Across the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

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[In the following notes, due allowance must be made for the fact that the recorder is familiar only with the Australian avifauna. The impressions are those of one seeing foreign species for the first time with an Australian background only.]

Birds seen at Sea, November, 1937, between Adelaide and Colombo, and on to London.

Tuesday, Nov. 9.—Approaching the Bight. Several Wandering (Albatrosses (*Diomedea exulans*) following the ship, and occasional Mutton-Birds (*Puffinus* sp.) skimming over the sea.

Wednesday, Nov. 10.—In the Bight. Birds the same. I was told that yesterday a small bird came on board or was on board, flying round, but did not see it. We were out of sight of land soon after breakfast-time yesterday.

Thursday, Nov. 11.—In the Bight and later opposite King George's Sound. Over twenty Wandering Albatrosses (*vide* Alexander's "Birds of the Ocean") following the ship; none fully adult, i.e. with nearly all the upper surface white; on the other hand, most were nearly adult; only occasionally a bird dark brown, except the undersides of the wings. (This bird seemed to flap its wings more frequently than the older birds, as if it had not yet learned fully how to make use of the wind for purposes of motion.) One much smaller brown Albatross (?) seen for a while. There may have been also a smaller Albatross, the Black-browed (*D. melanophris*) perhaps, for a while. A few Mutton-Birds (*Puffinus* sp.) the only Petrels seen.

Friday, Nov. 12.—Between Cape Leeuwin and Rottnest Island. A few Wandering Albatrosses appeared for a while, but soon left us. A few Mutton-Birds.

Saturday, Nov. 13.—Left Fremantle at noon. Two or three Wandering Albatrosses appeared in the afternoon. Also a few Mutton-Birds.

Sunday, Nov. 14.—About Lat. 27° S. at noon. Weather still fresh. Saw one Albatross for a while. A few Mutton-Birds.

Monday, Nov. 15.—One Mutton-Bird seen.

Tuesday, Nov. 16.—No birds seen.

Wednesday, Nov. 17.—Two white birds, suggesting moderately large Terns, seen at 8 a.m., making north-easterly, and two more about 9 a.m.—too far off to be sure they were actually Terns. At noon, Lat. 14° 29' S. and Long. 97° 26' E.; the Cocos-Keeling Islands must have been about 170 miles away when the birds were seen.

Thursday, Nov. 18.—No birds seen. South-east trade wind still blowing.

Friday, Nov. 19.—At noon, Lat. 5° 12' S., Long. 88° 58' E. About 8 p.m. a heavy tropical downpour with some wind during which on the upper boat-deck I heard much squawking from a bird; it was thrown overboard before I was able to see it; the officer who had picked it up said he thought it was a Black-headed Gull, so I presume it was a Tern. Later, he told me it was white underneath and on the throat and dark brown, like a Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), on the back and wings, with a long straight beak—but the light was probably poor—and this description is not worth much.

Saturday, Nov. 20.—No birds. North-west wind; occasionally heavy showers. Crossed the Line.

Sunday, Nov. 21.—No birds. North-west wind.

Monday, Nov. 22.—Colombo. Muggy. Some Crows (black with dark grey on the back) with a caw not quite the same as ours, soon settled on the rigging, as we lay a few hundred yards from the quay. A few Seagulls were flying about the harbour. A Fish-Hawk (Osprey ?) with brown (?) on the back and paler underside (?) was soaring over the harbour. We saw very few birds on the way to Kandy. Round the swamp near Colombo, with rice or grass growing in the water, an occasional White Heron (?) with a stumpy tail was disturbed. Saw one gaily-coloured Kingfisher (white, blackish brown and blue). Also heard a Woodpecker, as the guide called it. At Kandy

several delicate Swiftlets were soaring round, playing with each other. There were also Crows that here seemed all black.

Tuesday, Nov. 23; Wednesday, Nov. 24.—At sea on way to Aden. No birds seen. A cricket heard chirping on the evening of the 23rd, and a butterfly seen next morning, but probably stowaways.

Thursday, Nov. 25; Friday, Nov. 26.—North-west breeze. Weather pleasant. No birds seen.

Saturday, Nov. 27.—At 6 a.m. South of islands lying between Socotra and Cape Guardafui. On several occasions saw several Gannets (*Sula*) flying round, usually close to the water, but saw one dive. At 1 p.m., opposite Cape Guardafui, and on two occasions saw dark birds about the size and shape of Mutton-Birds.

Sunday, Nov. 28.—Arrived at Aden at midday. As we approached the anchorage several Kites, like *Milvus migrans* (Black Kite), soared round, and when we dropped anchor, scores of these birds sailed round or even sat on the rigging. Similarly they congregated round other vessels, often a hundred being countable at one time, soaring at different heights. They were also met with in the old and new towns, and at dusk were seen circling upwards to a great height. High up amongst the rugged volcanic rocks, I could see birds, probably Kites, settling for the night. There were a number of brown Gulls (probably the Aden Gull, *Larus hemprichi*), back and upper chest brownish, white rump and abdomen. The ordinary Gulls were, I think, larger than our Silver Gulls (*L. novae-hollandiae*), more like the adult phase of the Pacific Gull (*Gabianus pacificus*), but with whiter rumps. Three or four Flamingos (*Phoenicopterus antiquorum*), not with pink colouration, were searching for food in the extensive pans of saltwater undergoing, or about to undergo, evaporation for salt. I presume their food would be small crustaceans. Some Martins resembled our Tree-Martins (*Hylochelidon nigricans*), but had greyer backs. These were seen round the old Tanks near the ancient town in the crater, where a little water had collected from a recent shower. Rain only falls heavily once perhaps in ten years. Much sickness is apt to follow, probably from anopheline mosquitoes breeding in collections of water. Under these circumstances, the Martins seen would prove very useful. A few long-tailed black-and-white birds, not unlike *Lalage* (Triller) in juvenile plumage, were in the garden at the Tanks. Some Ravens (*Corvus corax*) were noted. Also an Egret (?). In addition to the ordinary Kite, were one or two with white

under-surface and black tips to the wings, and whitish on the back.

Monday, Nov. 29.—In the Red Sea. Occasional birds seen but hard to identify. I thought some were Cormorants, black-and-white, but with different markings from ours.

Thursday, Dec. 2.—Reached Suez at the head of the Red Sea at 9. Some Gulls seen, the back more dove-coloured and the posterior border of the wing blacker than in our Silver Gull. Saw no birds between Suez and Cairo on the 90-mile motor drive over the desert with, in places, rises covered with small "gibbers." In Cairo, Kites (? *Milvus migrans*) were common. On the rich flats of the flood plains of the Nile, white birds (Egrets, I think—the bills seemed to be straight, with black legs) were pecking about amongst the grass and vegetables in the little plots which are regularly flooded. These extend for miles all along the Nile. Outside the Egyptian Museum of Antiquities several Doves were feeding in the grass and Pickaxe Birds—prettily marked suggesting in a way our *Lophophaps*, with long straight bills and a straight plume on the back of the head—hence the name—were digging into the turf. Crows with grey backs were seen at times. On the way by train to Ismailia on the Canal we saw a Kingfisher with rich brown on it, many Egrets (?) amongst the gardens, and also two Kestrels (*Falco tinnunculus*) like our Nankeen (*F. cenchroides*). Round the Pyramids were one or two "Wagtails" (?) (with long tails, black and white birds). Between Ismailia and Port Said were extensive shallow lakes towards Alexandria. Flocks of Starlings (like the European) rose from time to time, and I could see what appeared to be Swallows hawking over the shallow water as well as some flocks like Stints (*Erolia*) and a few larger waders.

Saturday, Dec. 4, and Sunday, Dec. 5.—At sea in the Mediterranean. No birds seen.

Monday, Dec. 6.—By 8 o'clock a number of Gulls were following the ship. We were then out of sight of land, probably being twenty-five miles away. They followed us into the harbour of Valetta in Malta. They resembled our Silver Gulls, but had a darker edging to the posterior portions of the wings, and when they occasionally spread their tails fanwise, to arrest progress as they hovered over some object, the tips of the tail feathers were blackish (? immature birds). I do not remember often, if ever, seeing our Gulls extend their tail-feathers in this way. During our stay of two hours in Valetta, we saw no other birds.

Tuesday, Dec. 7.—In sight of islands and Cape Bon at the eastern entrance to the Gulf of Tunis at 8 a.m. The same species of Gull following us.

Wednesday, Dec. 8.—Two species of Gulls following us. Along the coast of Algeria all day.

Thursday, Dec. 9.—Gulls picked us up soon after daylight as we were within sight of Spain. Several score of them followed us through the Straits of Gibraltar. These were mostly large Gulls with very dark grey brown mantles and upper surfaces of the wings, yellow bills and white heads, probably the Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*—"mantle sooty black, slate-grey or leaden-grey") or possibly the Herring Gull (*L. argentatus*—"mantle grey"). There were a few smaller Gulls, rather like our Silver Gull, which were probably the Mew Gull (*L. canus*—"mantle pearl grey," the "Common Gull" of English writers, Alexander). Saw also a couple of Cormorants and several Gannets. The immature of the larger Gull was sometimes extensively brown.

Friday, Dec. 10.—Off the coast of Portugal all day, occasionally seeing land. No Gulls following us, though plenty of steamers are being passed that they might follow. An occasional Petrel seen.

Saturday, Dec. 11.—Off Cape Finisterre at daybreak. By breakfast time followed again by several score of Gulls, nearly all the large Gull, that I think must be the Lesser Black-backed Gull, as Alexander's figure of the Herring Gull shows a much paler mantle; also these seemed to have yellow feet, not pinkish flesh-colour. There were also a few Common Kittiwakes (*Rissa tridactyla*) both in adult and immature plumage, with the black band across the wings; Skuas, probably the Great Skua (*Catharacta skua*); and some two or three Northern Gannets or Solan Geese (*Sula bassana*), both in adult and brown plumage.

Sunday, Dec. 12.—A few Gulls in the morning off Ushant, apparently the Lesser Black-backed. In the evening, passing close to the Isle of Wight to enter Southampton, numerous Gulls, apparently, followed the ship, wheeling round and uttering cries, though it seemed too dark (though it was moonlight) for them to pick up food. Do Gulls often fly at night?

Monday, Dec. 15.—We arrived in London on 13th in a heavy drizzle, with snowstorms in parts of England, but, at sea, quite fair weather as we went across the Bay of Biscay and up the Channel.

Tuesday, Dec. 16.—Went to the National Gallery at Trafalgar Square. Coming out just before 4 p.m., the sun nearly setting, we heard a great whistling under the portico, which turned out to be Starlings going to roost with the Pigeons that are fed in the Square.

Birds seen on the Voyage between Liverpool and Boston (1938).

Saturday, April 23.—Left Liverpool on the "Carinthia" at 1.30 p.m., crossing to Dublin. Accompanied by about 100 to 150 Gulls, the Herring Gulls, with grey mantles, yellow beaks and flesh-coloured legs, rather more numerous than the slightly smaller Lesser Black-backed Gulls with white heads also, but darker wings and back, yellow bill and yellow legs.

Sunday, April 24.—Sunny, fresh. Gulls, as before, in numbers and proportions as we rounded the south of Ireland towards Galway on the west coast. Also one or two smaller Gulls, otherwise like the Herring Gulls, which turned out to be Kittiwakes. The Gulls are quite noisy at times as they fly round, making squawking and scolding sounds—apparently the Herring Gulls being responsible. These sounds I heard late at night when we entered Southampton on December 10, so apparently these Gulls follow ships at night. Saw a few following our ship when it was nearly quite dark last night. A number of Gannets seen at a distance, mostly flying low, sometimes in pairs (as if mating), once in a group of six with a suggestion of flying in formation. Round some of the islands off the Irish coast, whitish birds, probably Gannets, could be seen circling. Also saw one Skua (?).

Monday, April 25.—On going on deck, about 120 miles west of Galway, all the Lesser Black-backed Gulls and Herring Gulls had left us, but about thirty of the smaller Kittiwakes were following us. These oceanic Gulls continued all day, though in the afternoon under a score only could be seen. From time to time, they uttered rather barking, high-pitched squawks. The mantle and wings are a silver-grey, the tips of the wings are black, and the form is more graceful than those of the two larger Gulls. It is interesting to note that two at least of the three species that have followed us utter cries when flying. Our birds, I think, rarely do, but may squawk when on the ground and after food that others may seize. A dark bird seen flying at a distance about 9 a.m. was probably a Petrel. Three Gannets were seen about 4 p.m. about 240 miles west of Ireland. It will be interesting to see how far from land these birds roam.

Tuesday, April 26.—Well out in the North Atlantic. Weather fresh, sunny with occasional slight spits of rain. In the morning two or three Petrels seen, dark above, white on the under-surface, almost certainly the Manx Shearwater (*Puffinus puffinus*). No Kittiwakes seen since about 5 p.m. last night.

Wednesday, April 27.—Fresh and sunny. About 8.30 a.m. saw two or three Shearwaters, probably Manx.

Thursday, April 28.—No birds seen.

Friday, April 29.—About 8.30 a.m. passed a small greenish-white iceberg and soon after several fishing schooners. Cold, icy west wind, moderately calm, sun struggling out at times. After breakfast and again at intervals, colonies of birds, probably Shearwaters of some kind, were seen flying far behind the wake of the vessel, and on one occasion they, about thirty in number, began to soar upwards in the air. Also occasional large rather dusky birds, presumably Shearwaters, flew by and several smaller ones, mostly white with a black edge to the front of the wings. In the late afternoon, about 760 miles from Boston, we were being followed by a few Herring Gulls with silver-grey mantle and upper surfaces of the wings which have black tips, and several Kittiwakes in immature plumage with the black band crossing the wing obliquely. These were probably the birds seen earlier that seemed to have a black edge to the forepart of the wings.

Saturday, April 30.—A few Herring Gulls following us but no Kittiwakes seen. When a slight fog came on, the Gulls were no longer seen. In the afternoon, some Gannets were noted and a few Herring Gulls followed us.

Sunday, May 1.—About opposite Cape Cod at midday. Foggy at times, in sheltered water, some seaweed floating by. Very few birds. Approaching Boston Harbor, Black-backed Gulls soon followed us.

Birds seen on the Voyage from San Francisco to Melbourne by
S.S. Mariposa.

Tuesday, May 24.—Left San Francisco at noon, a number of black-backed Western Gulls (*Larus occidentalis*) with pink legs accompanying us down the Harbor. As we approached the bridge across the Golden Gate, numbers of large black Cormorants, either Brandt's Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax penicillatus*) or the Double-crested Cormorant (*P. auritus*), some in V-formation, were flying low over the water to near the entrance where many hundreds were settled on the water, presumably fishing, forming dark patches on the surface as seen from the

ship. There were probably several thousands altogether. When at sea, the water was of almost oily smoothness. We passed at some distance, dark-coloured birds, perhaps Shearwaters, though I thought I saw patches of white on the wings, either flying or occasionally settled on the water as a darker patch. The Gulls soon left us, but we were followed by eight or ten of the dark-coloured Black-footed Albatross (*Diomedea nigripes*), the light patch of feathers at the base of the bill being clearly visible with the field-glasses.

Wednesday, May 25.—Arrived at Los Angeles Harbor, accompanied in by Black-backed Gulls, squawking from time to time.

Thursday, May 26.—At sea, making towards Honolulu. Fresh, quiet sea. No birds seen.

Friday, May 27.—About 5 p.m., one Black-footed Albatross was following the ship—then about 900 miles south of west from Los Angeles.

Saturday, May 28.—Pleasant weather. Three Black-footed Albatrosses following the ship in the morning and two in the afternoon, one of the latter being immature with paler head and under parts and some white in the upper tail-coverts.

Sunday, May 29.—One Black-footed Albatross seen in the morning.

Monday, May 30.—At 6 a.m. opposite Molokai Island of the Hawaiian Group and at 8 a.m. sighted Oahu, on which Honolulu is placed. Between the two, we were followed by one or two Black-footed Albatrosses and saw companies of black and white birds, probably Gannets, and perhaps the Blue-faced Booby (*Sula dactylatra*), flying irregularly over the surface and occasionally plunging into the sea. There were also a few dusky-coloured birds, perhaps young ones. A bird flying near the ship apparently had long tail-feathers and so must have been a Tropic-Bird (*Phaethon*). No Gulls were seen at Honolulu. The Indian Mynah (*Acridotheres tristis*) and the European House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) were established at Honolulu, the former being quite common, but the latter not apparently flourishing. Several small native birds were seen.

Tuesday, May 31.—No birds seen. About 17° N. lat. and 160° E. long. at noon.

Wednesday, June 1.—Pleasant breeze, sunny. Several birds, apparently Petrels, kept level with the ship at some little distance in the morning; some of these had dusky upper parts

and whitish under parts with the under sides of the wings white with dark edges and were probably Hawaiian Petrels (*Pterodroma phaeopygia*); others had darker upper parts and dusky under parts. One small black and white Albatross (?) or possibly Gannet visited the ship for a few minutes. [Note.—Are Gannets found in the high seas far from land?] About 5 p.m. a whitish bird, suggesting a Tern, was seen, and from about 5.30 till 6 p.m., a Gannet, with legs which were pale and not red, and so was probably the Blue-faced Gannet (*Sula dactylatra*), circled round the ship, often looking as if it were about to alight with outstretched legs, but never doing so, probably from the movement of the vessel. At noon we had been 8° 10' N. lat. and 162° 44' W. long, so when these two birds were seen, the Gannet suggesting a tired bird, we were probably about eighty miles from Palmyra Island and Kingman Reef.

Thursday, June 2.—No birds seen. Crossed the Line at 1.30 p.m.

Friday, June 3.—No birds seen.

Saturday, June 4.—At 8 a.m. in sight of Manua Island, Samoan Group, at 9 a.m., opposite Tutuila Island (American Samoa) and tying up to buoys in Pago Pago at 10 a.m. When off Tutuila, several Gannets appeared, perhaps from the amount of white on the upper surface, the Red-footed Gannet (*Sula sula*). On shore at Pago Pago, some whitish birds, like Pigeons, were seen flying amongst the forest trees high up on the mountain side. Professor St. John, of Honolulu, who was with me, said he thought they might be Red-tailed Tropic-Birds (*Phaethon rubricaudus*), which he said sometimes do this. On shore, several birds were heard singing sweetly and another species was flying round amongst the coconut palms, in its habits suggesting our *Meliphaga*. On leaving the island at 5 p.m. some dark birds were seen flying low over the water, suggesting Petrels. No Gulls were seen here.

Sunday was a *dies non*, as we lost this day between Somoa and Fiji.

Monday, June 6.—At 9 a.m. off Tin-Can Island (Nuia-fu of the Tonga or Friendly Group) between Samoa and Fiji, when a Gannet with white head (?), brown upper surface and white under parts, except for a brown band, perhaps the Brown Gannet (*Sula leucogaster*), the "white head" being perhaps the pale bill, approached us. No other birds seen this day.

Tuesday, June 7.—Raining as we entered Suva, Fiji, and no sea-birds seen. Indian Mynahs (*Acridotheres tristis*) were

round the wharves and numerous in the town. Also there were a few birds with crests, and red near the vent, rather like the Mynah in appearance, evidently the Bengal Red-vented Bulbuls (*Molpastes cafer bengalensis*). Saw some Finches (?) near the wharf, apparently gathering seeds. Also a few Doves (*Streptopelia*) like the Indian Doves introduced into Australia; some Swallows (*Hypurolepis tahitica*) and some Swallow-like birds, probably Swiftlets (*Collocalia francica assimilis*). A few Terns were seen near the shore. No Gulls seen here.

Wednesday, June 8.—Steaming south to New Zealand. Out of the Tropics at midday. Fresh. No birds seen.

Thursday, June 9.—A dark Petrel seen at 8.30 a.m. skimming over the waves. At noon 31° 37' S. lat. 175° 55' E. long., being 337 miles north of Auckland. About 3.30 p.m. (i.e. about 70 miles further south), several Albatrosses began to follow the ship, but not very closely; from the dark backs and black only under the tips of the wings, they appeared to be the Shy Albatross (*Diomedea cauta*). There were also a few Mutton-Birds (*Puffinus*).

Friday, June 10.—Entered Auckland Harbour at 7 a.m. and were soon accompanied by Southern Black-backed Gulls (*Larus dominicanus*), squawking from time to time as do the Black-backed Gulls of the Northern Hemisphere, and Silver Gulls (*L. novae-hollandiae*). At Auckland introduced Blackbirds (*Turdus merula*) and Thrushes (*Turdus philomelus*) were seen. In Albert Park, elevated land near the centre of the city, a number of Silver Gulls were congregated round a fountain and pool, several drinking rainwater that lay on the pavement around. Left Auckland at 11 p.m.

Saturday, June 11.—At 10 a.m. off the North Cape of New Zealand. Several smaller Albatrosses, from the back and underwing markings (the latter with broad margins of black) probably the Black-browed Albatross (*Diomedea melanophris*), perhaps a Wandering Albatross (*D. exulans*) or two, occasional Australian Gannets (*Sula serrator*), some Mutton-Birds (*Puffinus*) and some smaller Petrels with white underneath were seen from North Cape to Cape Maria van Diemen and the Three Kings. Thereafter a strong gale in our faces.

Sunday, June 12.—The gale delayed us much in the night. In the morning, still rough. In the afternoon several Black-browed Albatrosses and Wandering Albatrosses, one in immature plumage, were following us. A few Mutton-Birds and smaller Petrels with white under parts were seen skimming over the waters.

Monday, June 13.—Sea calmer. A few Mutton-Birds and Petrels, rather smaller with white under parts and apparently black and white upper parts, were seen. As we approached Port Jackson Heads, several Black-browed Albatrosses joined us and then a number of Silver Gulls. Arrived at Watson's Bay at 5 p.m.

Tuesday and Wednesday, June 14 and 15.—The Bengal Red-whiskered Bulbuls (*Otocompsa jocosa emeria*) have become very numerous in Sydney in the Botanic Gardens, and especially in Taronga Park Zoological Gardens, where seven or eight at one time were searching the flowers in a bed of cannas. The Wedge-tailed Eagles (*Uroaetus audax*) in the Gardens were making a not very loud rather yelping cry, and a Whistling Eagle (*Haliastur sphenurus*) was giving its well-known note. Left at 4 p.m., accompanied down the Harbour by many Silver Gulls (about 200), and as we passed through the Heads these were joined by six or more Black-browed Albatrosses.

Thursday, June 16.—Followed down the coast by a large number of Silver Gulls and a score or more Black-browed Albatrosses, the bills fleshy-yellow in colour with a redder tint at the tips. Also several dark Skuas with light-coloured bars across their wings, some apparently with slightly projecting central tail feathers, apparently the Arctic Skua (*Stercorarius parasiticus*). At a distance, Mutton-Birds and smaller Petrels, dark above and pale underneath, could at times be seen. Later, at 11.30 a.m., one Yellow-nosed Albatross (*D. chlororhyncha*) with its black bill and a yellow line along the upper portion was seen and photographed—it looked a trifle smaller than the forty or so Black-browed Albatrosses flying around; the black border to the under sides of the wings seemed the same thickness in each species. One Black-browed Albatross had a dark tip to its bill, perhaps still immature. One Wandering Albatross visited us for a few minutes. At 4 p.m., north of Wilson's Promontory, there were only a few Black-browed Albatrosses about with about half-a-dozen Skuas, but four or five Sooty Albatrosses (*Phoebastria fusca*) had appeared with dark upper and under surfaces—they did not approach the ship very closely, and the bills seemed more greyish than black. At about 9.45 p.m., the moon having recently risen, but being obscured by a dense bank of clouds and the ship being off Wilson's Promontory, a black-backed Albatross, almost certainly the Black-browed, could be seen astern following the vessel, thus establishing the fact that, at least on moonlight nights, Albatrosses may continue to follow ships.