

sufficiently explains it) that in spite of Mani's cautions the tiny birds could not control their mirth. They screwed up their little cheeks, but at last the *Tiwakawaka* could hold it in no longer. He exploded in a giggle and a chirp of laughter, which woke



RIRORIRO (BUSH WARBLER).

up the ancient woman, who instantly snapped the poor hero in two. That was how Death came to the world. Who would imagine that the action of the harmless-looking fantail could be responsible for such a dread result? Certainly the *Tiwakawaka* deserves our severest reprobation for its criminal levity at such a critical moment, but you can hardly find it in your heart to fling a stone at the lively little thing as it hops round you in the bush and displays its pretty fan-tail like a lady showing off a new dress—no matter how much it may deserve it.

The *Riroriro*, or diminutive bush warbler (wren I see it called sometimes) is another sociable little creature which enlivens the tedium of the bush journey or the camp with its merry restless chirp. There is an old Maori song beginning—

"Tangi e te *Riroriro*,  
He tohu o te raumati."

"Singing now is the *Riroriro*,  
A sign of summer days."

Two very interesting birds of passage, of the family *Cuculidae*, visit our shores every spring and summer. They are the shining cuckoo (*Piwiwharauroa*) and the long-tailed cuckoo (*Koheperoa*). These hand-

some birds arrive here in the springtime from the South Sea Islands, it is supposed, and when their pleasing voices are heard in the groves on the East Coast, it is time to plant the *kumara*. The brown-backed *Koheperoa's* clear note is frequently heard on the Little Barrier and other East Coast localities as summer draws on, and the *Piwiwharauroa's* shrill whistle strikes on the ear in the long warm days of Christmas-tide.

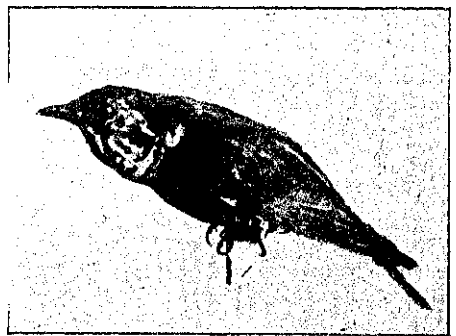
The *Koheperoa* (*Eulynanus Taitensis*) has a long tail something like the sparrow-lark's, and has a short, strong body. The other migrant (*Chrysococcyx Lucidus*) has a white breast with rows of greenish gold feathers, the back is green and bronze. This summer visitor of ours is quite a pretty little bird.

In an old Maori *langior* song of lamentation I find these lines :

"He aha te huhuatangu whakarongo au?  
Ko te tangi o te *Piwiwharauroa*—  
'Kui, kui! Whiti, whiti orn!'"

"What is that pleasant sound?  
'Tis the cry of the cuckoo—  
'Kui, kui! Shine, shine and live!'"

This was interpreted by the Maoris to be the cry of the *Piwiwharauroa* when the warm summer days came and gladdened its heart



PIWIWHARAUROA (SHINING CUCKOO).

and warmed its blood. These birds are said to take wing for the warm latitudes of the South Seas—the Hawaiiiki of the Maoris—in March.

Of wading birds there are a number of varieties in New Zealand. Besides the rare