

be strips of coarse hair-like filaments, from one-half to three-quarters of an inch in length, and perfectly black, but are in reality tufts of extremely fine downy feathers. A strip of these filaments encircles the crown, a line passes down the course of the spine, and there is another along the outer edge of each wing and behind each thigh.

I would venture to suggest to the Museum authorities that, as Mr. Garrod has carefully studied the anatomy of this singular bird, and is now devoting his attention to embryonic ornithology, it would be very desirable to place this unique specimen at his disposal for more critical examination.

I have only thought it necessary to place the general facts on record, as furnishing an interesting addition to our knowledge of the habits and life-history of the rare and beautiful Huia.

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ART. XX.—*On the Occurrence of Apteryx oweni at high altitudes in the North Island.* By WALTER L. BULLER, C.M.G., D.Sc.

[Read before the Wellington Philosophical Society, 12th February, 1876.]

WE have been so accustomed to speak of the *Apteryx oweni* as a strictly South Island species, and, as representing these, the Brown Kiwi of the North Island (*Apteryx mantelli*), that the discovery of its existence, under certain conditions in this Province is an interesting fact in geographic distribution. The fine specimen which I now exhibit, and for which I am indebted to Mr. Morgan Carkeek, of the Survey Department, was obtained by that gentleman, on Mount Hector, at the head of the Hutt River, in December last. It was caught by his dog among the snow-grass, at an elevation of about 3000 feet. At a higher altitude he found the species comparatively abundant, and he met with it occasionally below the snow-line, frequenting mossy places in the bush free from undergrowth.

This peculiarity of range, as compared with the distribution of the species in the South Island is very suggestive, and it will be interesting to discover whether this bird inhabits the summits of mountains further north.

In connection with the *Apteryx*, there is another matter to which I will take this opportunity of referring.

Captain Hutton, in his valuable essay on the "Geographical Relations of the New Zealand Fauna" ("Trans. N.Z. Inst.," Vol. VI., p. 232) says:—"The *Apterygidae* have a more generalised structure than the other struthious birds; they, therefore, belong to an older type, and cannot, with any degree of correctness, be said to represent the extinct race of Moas."

And, again, in his review of my "Birds of New Zealand," in the "New Zealand Magazine," p. 99, Captain Hutton says:—"We must take exception to the Kiwi being considered as the living representative of the Mōa, or as Dr. Buller puts it in his preface, 'the only living representative of an extinct race.' No doubt the Kiwi and the Mōa have several features in common; but it is certain that both the Emu and the Cassowary are far more nearly related to the Mōa than is the Kiwi." It will be interesting to the meeting to learn that Professor Mivart has recently read a paper before the Zoological Society of London, on the axial skeleton of the Struthionidæ, which effectually settles the question at issue. The learned professor pointed out that, judging by the characters of the axial skeleton, the Emu presents the least differential type, from which *Rhea* diverges most on the one hand, and *Apteryx* on the other; that the resemblance between *Dromæus* and *Casuarinus* is exceedingly close, while the axial skeleton of *Dinornis* is intermediate between that of *Casuarinus* and *Apteryx*; its affinities, however, with the existing New Zealand form very decidedly predominating.

It will be seen, therefore, that I was fully justified in referring to the existing species of *Apteryx*, as "the diminutive representatives of colossal ornithic types that have disappeared."

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ART. XXI.—Remarks on Dr. Finsch's Paper on New Zealand Ornithology.

By WALTER L. BULLER, C.M.G., D.Sc.

[Read before the Wellington Philosophical Society, August 7, 1875.]

I HAVE read with interest Dr. Otto Finsch's valuable contribution to the last volume of the "Transactions," (pp. 226-236,) which is merely a precursor of his promised "Synopsis of the Birds of New Zealand," and I find we are still at issue on several points:—

1. *Stringops greyi* is undoubtedly a mere variety of *S. habroptilus*. It is no more entitled to recognition as a species than the handsomely marked specimen in Brogden's Collection, of which I have recorded a description. ("Trans. N. Z. Inst.," Vol. VII., p. 201.)
2. I do not believe in the existence of *Acanthisitta citrina*, Gmelin. The plumage of *A. chloris* differs in the male, female, and young.
3. I entirely dissent from Dr. Finsch's present view that the so-called *Orthonyx albicilla* and *O. ochrocephala*, of the North and South Islands respectively, belong to "totally different families." In one of his earlier articles ("Journ. für Orn.," July, 1870), he