

ART. XXIII.—Remarks on some curious Specimens of New Zealand Birds.
By T. W. KIRK, Assistant in the Colonial Museum.

[Read before the Wellington Philosophical Society, 11th October, 1879.]

It will be remembered that, in 1876, Dr. Buller read before this Society descriptions of several varieties of the Common Wood-Pigeon (*Carpophaga novæ-zealandiæ*). I have now the pleasure of bringing under your notice two additional examples of albinism in this species.

No. 1 is a beautiful albino, the whole plumage being pure white, with the exception of the lesser wing-coverts, which are a delicate yellowish-brown colour, but much more decided than in the specimen mentioned by Dr. Buller. The claws are yellow instead of black, which is the normal colour. This specimen was shot at Springhill Station, Upper Whareama, by Mr. A. Cameron, and by him presented to the Museum; he says it has frequently been seen about the station during the last four years.

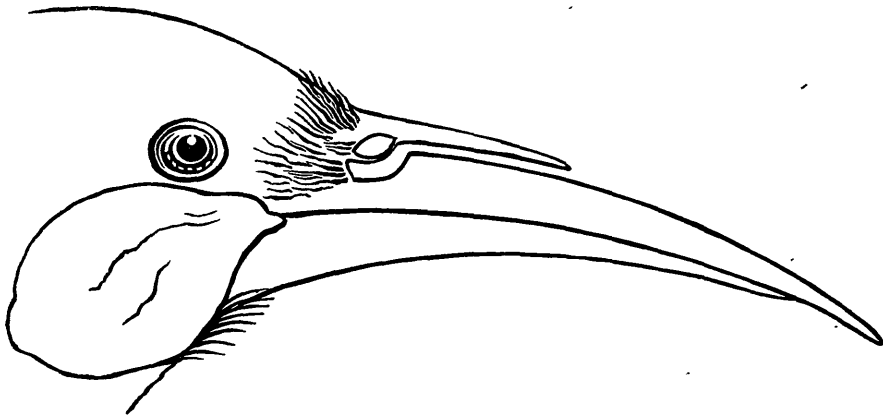
No. 2 is a partial albino. The head, neck, back, and fore-part of the breast are light brown, stained in places with coppery-purple; lesser wing-coverts, coppery-purple; quills and their coverts, light brown; quills tipped and margined with white. Tail-feathers brown, tipped with white; under-surface steel grey, changing to brown towards the extremities; under-parts from breast downwards, white, slightly tinged with brown; eyes and feet the usual carmine pink; claws yellowish-pink, tipped with black. This specimen was procured at Pahautanui, and presented to the Museum by Mr. Wise, a very old resident in the district.

The next specimen I have to draw your attention to is a curious and interesting variety of the *Kotuku*, or White Heron (*Ardea syrmatophora*).

On the right wing, near the "bend," is a patch of dark feathers; thence a band of black and brown passes right over the back and joins a much larger patch of the same colour on the left wing, and then extends obliquely across the breast, becoming fainter as it again approaches the left side. Inner webs of primaries, lining of wings and flank-feathers, more or less marked with brown, passing in places into black. A black patch about an inch in length will also be noticed on the outer web of one of the "secondary plume feathers."

I have never before heard of a specimen of this species possessing a single coloured feather, and indeed I am informed that "White as a *Kotuku*" has passed into a proverb amongst the natives. I was therefore surprised, when, on proceeding to examine the six specimens contained in the "type collection," in the Colonial Museum, I found that no less than three of them had the wings, especially the under-surfaces, more or less spotted or dashed with brown and black.

The accompanying sketch represents a curious deformity (if I may use the term) in the bill of a female *Huia* (*Heteralocha acutirostris*), now in the



Museum collection. It is evidently the result of an accident, and from its appearance I should say that a shot had just passed below the nostril, splitting the bill in the manner shown. The left side of the upper mandible has also been broken off, but this was evidently a subsequent misfortune, as the broken edge is still somewhat sharp; while the top of the bill and "spike" are smooth and polished. This unfortunate bird was presented to the Museum several years ago, by Mr. J. D. Enys, who shot it at Akitea.

ART. XXIV.—*Notes on the Nesting Habits of the Orange-wattled Crow.*

By W. D. CAMPBELL, ASSOC. M. INST. C.E., F.G.S.

[Read before the Wellington Philosophical Society, 27th September, 1879.]

THE nature of the nesting habits of the *Glaucopis cinerea* (Orange-wattled Crow) have been as yet entirely unknown, and the author, having chanced to find, towards the end of February last, two nests of this species near the Ko-i-te-rangi hill, on the Hokitika river, forwards the following description of them.

The nests, which were 15 inches externally, were somewhat loosely constructed of twigs and roots, and had well-formed cup-shaped interiors, lined with pine roots and twigs; they were built in the branches of the *Coprosma*, or "black" scrub, which grows upon the low river-flats of Westland, near the mountain ranges. The average height of the scrub in this instance was about 15 feet, while the nests were about 9 feet above the ground, and 200 feet distant from each other; one contained an egg, the other, two nearly fledged birds. The egg has been presented to the Colonial Museum. The two young birds were kept for some weeks in a cage for the