

country in July, when the fawns are small and helpless and the Eaglets are large and hungry, and climb to a few dozen Eagles' nests, and he will receive enlightenment. The writer has done this and knows whereof he writes.

The writer has a great deal of personal sentiment for the Eagle. He considers it a grand bird and would be among the first to protest if there were any danger of its extermination, but anyone conversant with the facts knows there is no such danger in Alaska.

This is still a frontier country and man, in killing the game necessary to his subsistence, has upset the balance of nature. To save the game, this must in some way be restored. This we hope to accomplish by keeping the numbers of predatory animals and birds within proper bounds, and we believe that we, who are on the ground and conversant with conditions, are the proper ones to define these bounds.

G. WILLETT.

Los Angeles, Calif., August 1, 1927.

Generic Name of the Emu.

The Editor of 'The Auk,'

Your brief note on the correct scientific name of the Emu (Auk, XLIV, p. 466) treats the question whether *Dromiceius* or *Dromaius* should be used as if it were solely a question of priority. As the Emu is such a well-known bird and is mentioned in all general works on ornithology, its correct scientific name is obviously a matter of interest to all ornithologists, not merely to those of Australia. Perhaps therefore you will allow me to state very briefly the reasons which led the Check-List Committee of the R. A. O. U. to retain the name *Dromaius*, instead of the prior *Dromiceius* used by Mathews and advocated by you.

Dromiceius appears on page 54 of Vieillot's "Analyse" as the scientific name for the "Emou." On page 70 of the same work appears a list of "New names, derived from Greek, which are employed in this Ornithology." *Dromiceius* is not included in this list but instead appears *Dromaius* with its Greek derivation "dromaios" (spelt in Greek letters) and its Latin equivalent "velox" (swift). *Dromaius* had not been used earlier in the book so it seems certain that the word *Dromiceius* is really a misprint for *Dromaius*. These words look decidedly different in print but in writing they are not at all dissimilar and it is easy to see how such a mistake could be made by a printer setting up type from a manuscript.

Agassiz in 1842 gave *Dromiceius* in his "Nomenclator" as a typographical error for *Dromaius*, and Newton in his "Dictionary of Birds" speaks of *Dromiceius* as "an obvious misprint corrected a few pages further on to *Dromaius*." Article 19 of the International Code reads:—"The original orthography of a name is to be preserved unless an error of transcription, a lapsus calami, or a typographical error is evident." The majority of the Australian Committee, in agreement with the authorities quoted, con-

sidered that *Dromiceius* was an evident error for *Dromaius*, and therefore spell the name as it seems certain that Vieillot intended to spell it. No question of priority arises if this view is taken.

Yours, etc.

15 Edridge Road,
Croydon, England.
July 28, 1927.

W. B. ALEXANDER.

[The editor was merely showing what is necessary if we follow exactly the rules of the International Code. The minute we begin to depart from the rules and assume what an author intended to do we open the door to all sorts of dissension. There is, however, a procedure open to all, namely to submit such cases to the International Commission for a ruling. Personally I should like to see *Dromiceius* for the Emu and "*Rubicola*" for the American Woodcock, a probable misprint for *Rusticola*, ruled out.—W. S.]