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Jan. 25. 1837

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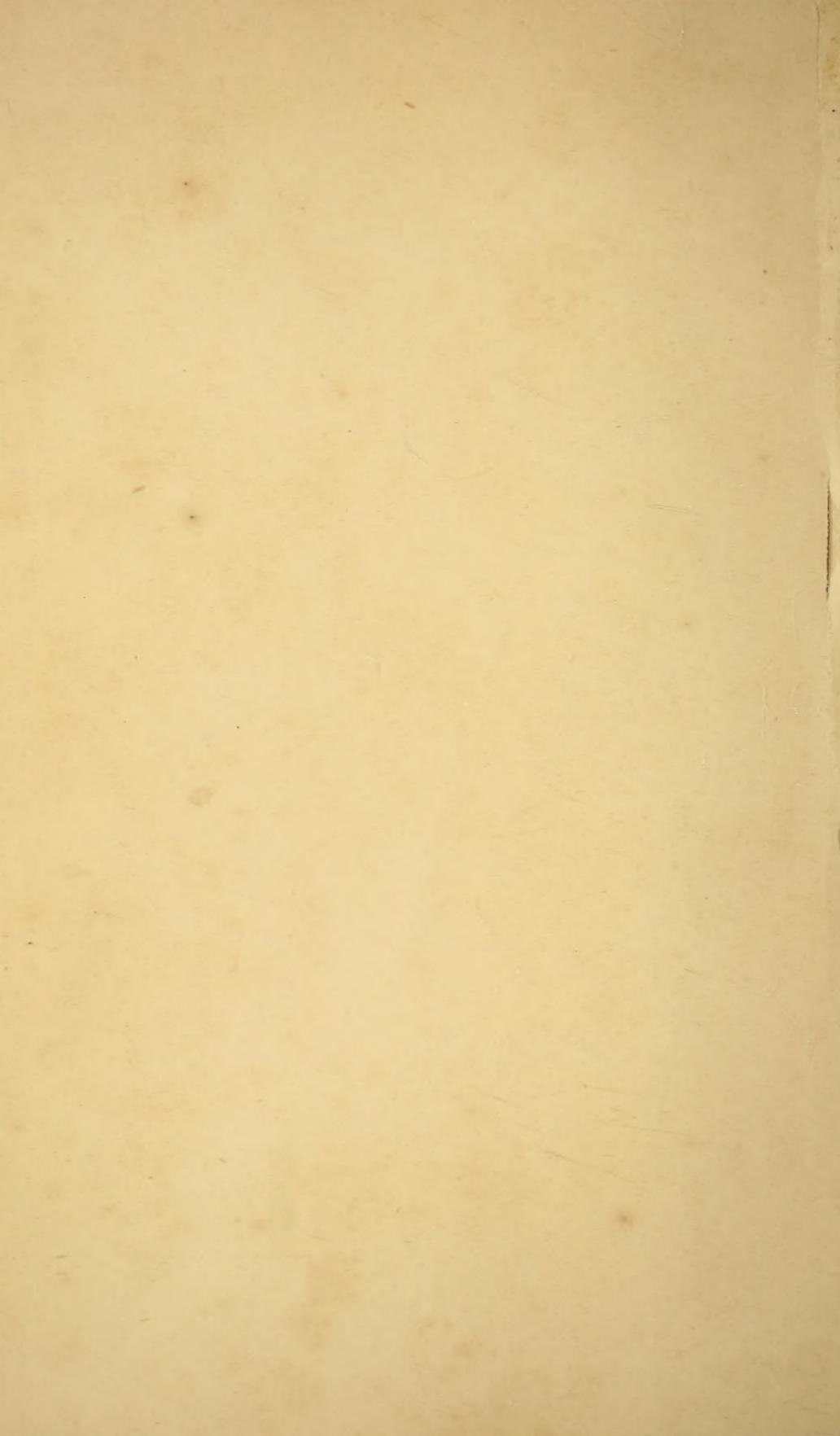
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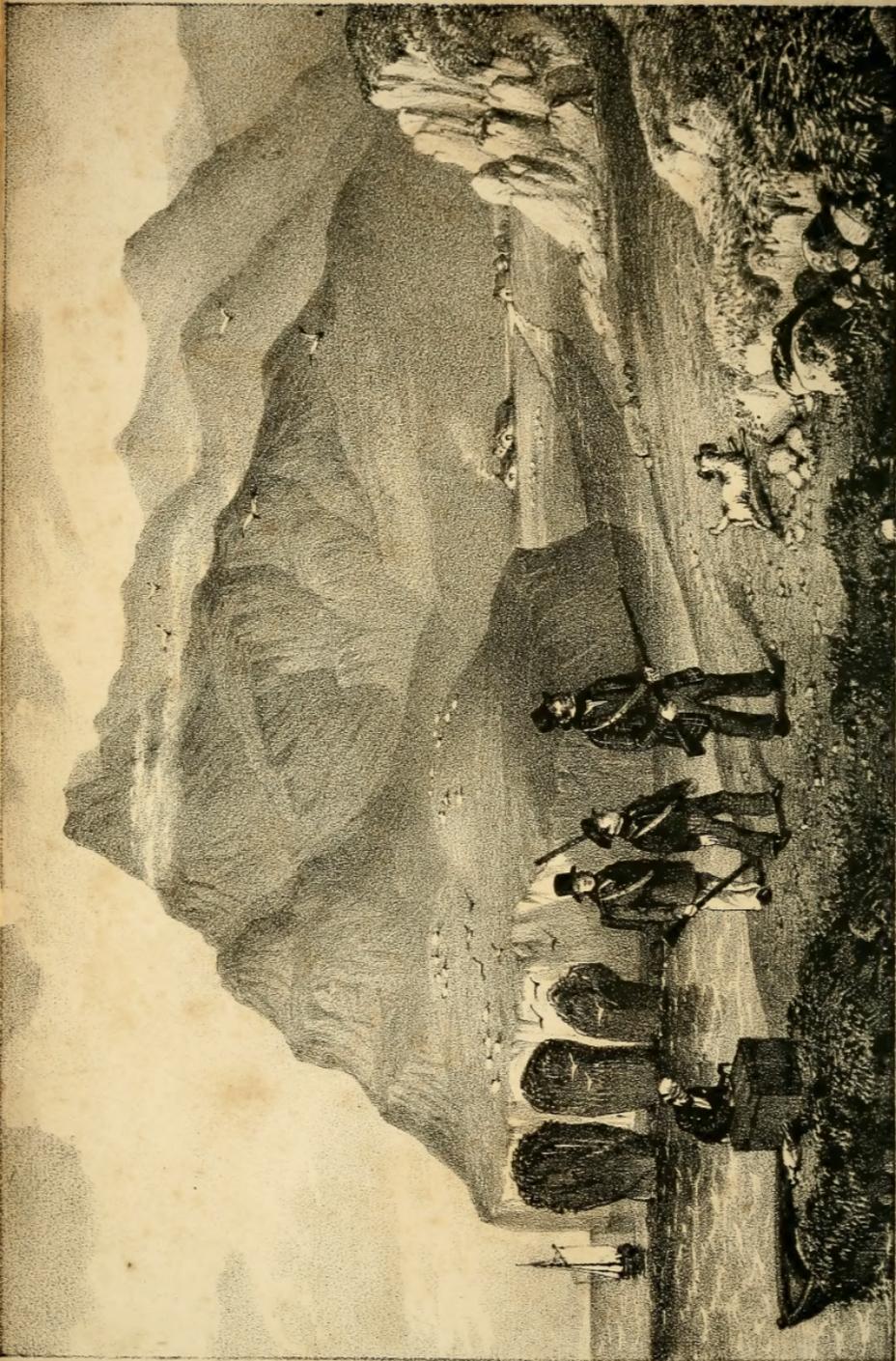
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RONA'S HILL, SHETLAND.

*From a Sketch by the Author.*

*Engraved by C. Hulme and Co.*

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THE  
ORNITHOLOGIST'S GUIDE

TO  
THE ISLANDS OF  
ORKNEY AND SHETLAND.

By ROBERT DUNN,

ANIMAL-PRESERVER,

HULL.

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LONDON:

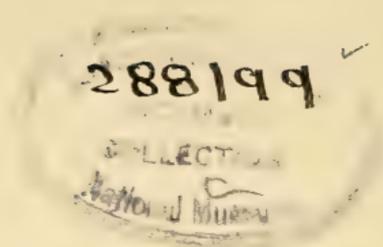
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Chas. W. Richmond  
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3 Birds

TO  
W. H. RUDSTON READ, Esq., M.A.  
F.L.S. F.Z.S. & F.E.S.,  
OF FRICKLEY HALL, DONCASTER,  
AN ARDENT LOVER OF NATURAL HISTORY,  
THIS VOLUME  
IS WITH HIS PERMISSION DEDICATED,  
AS A SLIGHT TOKEN OF RESPECT FOR MANY  
ACTS OF KINDNESS,  
BY HIS OBLIGED AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,  
THE AUTHOR.



## INTRODUCTION.

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HAVING frequently sustained considerable loss and inconvenience in my business from the want of fine examples of many of our native water-birds, I came to the determination, in the early part of 1831, of visiting the Orkney and Shetland Islands, for the purpose of procuring some of the rarer kinds, being well aware that as these islands are the most northerly of the British Isles, and the nearest to Norway and Iceland, they must consequently be the first places of resort for birds migrating from those countries, some few of which never migrate further to the southward, but remain there and breed, in consequence of their being but little disturbed, the inhabitants few in number, the ground in general not admitting of much cultivation, and the is-

lands affording many localities peculiarly adapted as sites of incubation; all of which advantages are peculiarly favourable to the feathered race.

I cannot say that my expectation of obtaining many rare species was realized, although in forming a general collection I was so far successful that I was induced to take three more voyages to the islands for the like purpose. While on these journeys it was my custom to take notes of my routes and of the occurrences that took place, with passing observations on the manners and customs of the people, &c. These remarks have lain by me some time: they were taken at the moment, without any regard to order or arrangement, solely for my own amusement, and without the smallest idea that they would ever be submitted to the inspection of the public, otherwise more pains would have been taken in their composition; but having been persuaded, by several of my friends who had perused them, to give them publicity,—not with the view of obtaining any credit

thereby, for they will not bear criticism, but for the purpose of furnishing a guide to those whomightbedesirous of visiting these islands to collect specimens of Natural History,—I have determined upon complying with their request ; and I trust, from the experience I have had, I shall be able to point out to the traveller the easiest and most convenient routes, the localities where the various species of birds are to be found, the mode of obtaining them, the articles necessary on such occasions, and the description of guns I found to answer best.

Had I on my first visit possessed such a guide it would have saved me much time and money, two things of vast importance to a traveller of my description, especially when his time is limited and his funds not very extensive.

In detailing some account of my wanderings it is not my intention to enter into a minute description of the Orkney and Shetland Islands or their productions, much having already been published on this sub-

ject by other and far more intelligent travellers ; neither, as I do not profess to be a scientific naturalist, will the description of the birds, &c. be very minute, my principal object being to point out the localities where they may be found.

Like myself, the student of natural history who may visit these islands for the purpose of collecting specimens and for otherwise investigating this department of science, will meet with many disappointments to damp his ardour, for which patience, perseverance, and study will amply repay him, and he will moreover derive a high gratification from searching deeply into this delightful branch of nature's works, to which those who merely take a superficial view of her productions must be strangers.

In conclusion I beg to add, that should my humble endeavours be the means of inducing any individual to commence the study of this branch of science, or of stimulating to further advancement any one who has already begun, I shall feel proud indeed.

## NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.

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MANY of the Author's friends having expressed an opinion that the value of this Publication would be much enhanced by the addition of Maps of the Orkney and Shetland Islands, the Author has determined upon complying with their suggestion, and has therefore appended two Maps which were published in 1835, and which he believes to be very accurate. The additional expense thus occasioned renders it necessary to increase the price of the volume to Five Shillings; which, however, the Author trusts will not be productive of any dissatisfaction to the Subscribers; at the same time he begs to add that those who do not wish for the Maps may have the Volume without them at the original price of Four Shillings.



THE  
ORNITHOLOGIST'S GUIDE  
TO  
THE ISLANDS OF  
ORKNEY AND SHETLAND.

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ON my first visit I arrived in Shetland on the 21st of March 1831, and remained there between seven and eight months: in the spring of the following year I visited Orkney, and remained there seven months. In the year 1833 I again visited Orkney, early in January, for the purpose of getting the winter birds, and remained nine months. In 1834 I went to Holland for the like purpose, but, I regret to add, did not meet with the same degree of liberality from our Dutch neighbours that had been accorded to me by my own countrymen. Being ignorant of their laws, I unfortunately arrived in Holland when the shooting-season had expired; and so strictly are their penalties enforced against any offender of the game laws, that I could not even carry a gun without subjecting myself to a fine. I stopped a month in the country, travel-

ling from place to place all the time, and saw several of the birds I went with the intention of procuring, such as Spoonbills, Purple Herons, Quails, Golden Orioles, several of the Falcon tribe, &c., but was obliged to return without them, highly mortified at my disappointment.

In the spring of the following year (1835) I again visited Shetland, being my fourth voyage to these islands.

The appearance of Shetland and Orkney, to a traveller coming from the south, is by no means attractive: still their coasts, which are rocky, unequal, and in many places very bold, with high headlands projecting a considerable distance into the sea, present a grand and imposing appearance; the hills are bleak, and not unfrequently covered with a thick fog: the wild scenes of nature here predominate, and in some places are highly romantic. The climate is very variable and damp, although, I am informed, not unwholesome to the inhabitants.

Lerwick is situated about the middle of the mainland, on its eastern side, and immediately opposite to the island of Bressa. The town is not very ancient, but I am unable to state the time of its foundation. In the year 1633, when Captain Smith visited Shetland, Lerwick was not in existence:

that gentleman resided on the island for some time, and was frequently in Bressa Sound, which he described as a capital harbour, but never mentions Lerwick. When Brand was in Shetland, in 1700, Dr. Edmonston informs us it contained between two and three hundred families ; he also adds, that about thirty years before there were only four houses where two hundred then stood : it therefore seems probable that Lerwick was built about the year 1670, and being situated near a fine harbour, frequented by many ships, its increase for a time was very rapid.

It is about three quarters of a mile long, and is built on the side of a hill close to the sea. Fort Charlotte stands at the north end of the town, and at the south end is a small hill, forming its boundary in that direction. It contains about four hundred houses, some of which have a very respectable appearance ; most of them are built of common walling-stone, and are erected in a very irregular manner, generally with their ends towards the sea. The principal street is well paved with flags, but is of very unequal breadth, being in some places not above six feet wide, and in others eighteen. The houses situated on the rising ground towards the hill have neat gardens to them, which renders them very pleasant in the summer time ;

there are also a few neat country-houses in the neighbourhood, belonging to some of the most opulent merchants, where, in imitation of their more favoured brethren of the South, they retire and enjoy a relaxation from the toils of business.

The greater part of the ground in the immediate neighbourhood of Lerwick is now in a cultivated state. There are several roads skirting the town, which are kept in tolerably good repair by the inhabitants, each man having either to pay six shillings a year or work six days at them. They are at present making a new road to Scalloway; it extends nearly three miles from Lerwick, and is the longest road in the country; another runs two miles towards Weesdale; these are the principal ones: others only run behind the town. Lerwick can boast of few ornamental buildings; the chief and most important is the Fort, which Dr. Edmonston states was originally constructed in the time of Cromwell. It was rebuilt by Charles II. in 1665, during his first war with Holland, but both the garrison and the guns were removed at the peace. In the next Dutch war, in the year 1673, an enemy's frigate entered Bressa Sound when the fort was in this defenceless state, destroyed the principal place in the garrison, and burnt several houses in the town. It was completely new-modelled in

1781, and called Fort Charlotte, and in time of war has a garrison of soldiers. It mounts twelve guns, which flank the town, and is calculated to repel any attack from sea, as from their elevation the guns command the entrance of the harbour. A neat church, and an old building called the Town-house, complete the public buildings of Lerwick; the former is very well attended, and the latter serves for a court-room, masons' lodge, and prison.

The harbour is large, about two miles long, and has a good anchorage ground with from five to sixteen fathoms water. The south entry is the one at which vessels of a large draught enter; they can also come in at the north entry, but it is narrower, and having a strong tide, it is more dangerous; besides which, even at spring tides, it never exceeds eighteen feet water.

There is no dry harbour at Lerwick. The tide never rises or falls more than seven feet: sloops and schooners unload during fine weather at the wharfs: the harbour is much frequented by merchant vessels and occasionally by men-of-war. Many of the whalers call here and take an additional number of men, and it is also much frequented by the Dutch fishermen; I have seen as many as forty of these Dutch bushers, as they are called, in the harbour at one time. Considerable

sums of money are annually brought into Lerwick by the fishing-ships, particularly by the Greenlandmen, for the purpose of paying the wages of the crews and for victualling the ships, by which the commercial people of the town are great gainers, as they supply the sailors with whatever they need, and are the agents for their pay.

There is no regular market at Lerwick, but the town is well though not regularly supplied with provisions from the country at a comparatively low rate. The beef is small and fine-flavoured, but is rarely fat; it varies from threepence to fivepence per pound, and is either sold by the quarter or entire, several families joining together and buying the whole bullock: the poorer classes seldom indulge in this luxury. The sheep are small, generally in better condition than the oxen, and moderately fat, and may be bought for from six to ten shillings; a lamb for two or three shillings: during my last visit I bought a lamb for two shillings, which when dressed weighed nine pounds. Veal is extremely cheap, the price of a calf being only 2s. 6d., while the skin alone is worth one third of the money; it is very poor, and is generally killed when only a few days old. If you ask a Shetlander the age of his calf when exposed for sale, his answer invariably is, "Three days old tomorrow."<sup>22</sup>

Autumn and the beginning of winter are the seasons when beef and mutton are the most plentiful, and consequently the cheapest, the farmers being obliged to sell their cattle, not having fodder to supply them with. The poultry is very good and cheap when there are not many vessels in the harbour, the presence of shipping affecting the price considerably. A goose may be bought for 1s. 6d., a duck for sevenpence or eightpence, and a hen for sixpence, but the ducks are not generally liked: eggs from twopence to threepence per dozen. There are neither hares nor partridges in the islands: there is an abundance of rabbits in some parts; in Orkney they are sold at fivepence the couple, but in Shetland they are not killed for the purpose of sale. Fish at particular seasons is very abundant both in Orkney and Shetland, and one kind or other may always be had when it is moderate weather. Halibut, haddocks, and flounders are the most plentiful, excepting the young coal-fish called sillocks, which abound about these islands: they are the principal food of the poorer classes, and may be easily obtained at all times; a child five or six years of age is able to catch as many in an hour or two as will supply the family for a day; a small rod, two or three yards of hair line, and four or five bent pins, with a piece of white feather attached

to each, are the only implements necessary; sometimes two boys furnished with four such rods get into a boat, which is gently pulled along by one, while the other is sufficiently occupied in hauling in the lines, not unfrequently with a fish on every hook.

There are a few salmon, but they are seldom caught; the lakes and sea abound with fine trout, some of which nearly equal the salmon in size, and have a peculiarly fine flavour; there is also an abundance of shell-fish, such as the muscle, oyster, cockle, razor-fish, commonly called spouts, all of which are very cheap; the oysters are very fat and are about eightpence per hundred. Although lobsters are very plentiful in Orkney, and considerable numbers are taken from thence to supply the London markets, I never saw one all the time I was in Shetland; still I have no doubt they prove abundant if sought after.

All vegetables are scarce with the exception of potatoes, which are in general very plentiful; they are small, but those taken out by the fishing-ships are found to keep much longer than the English ones, and they also possess another advantage, that of being obtained much cheaper.

There are but few respectable lodgings in Lerwick, and but one regularly established inn, and

that was only opened during my last visit to Shetland; this want has been greatly complained of by strangers and by the Shetlanders themselves who are compelled to visit Lerwick on business, that town being the grand emporium of commerce for the Shetland Isles. The lodging-houses in the country are very mean and uncomfortable, and on some occasions I should have been unpleasantly situated had it not been for the kindness of the gentlemen farmers, or lairds as they are called, who politely offered to accommodate me in their own houses; I shall not be so invidious as to mention any particular individual, as I received from them generally the utmost kindness and attention.

The population of Lerwick, I believe, amounts to between sixteen and seventeen hundred, exclusive of those living in the country part of the parish; according to Dr. Edmonston, the whole population of Shetland in 1802 was 22,379. The inhabitants are naturally hospitable, and their liberality and kindness amply make up for the want of public inns.

Many of the Shetland gentlemen are intelligent and well informed; some of them have received a liberal education at the Scotch universities, and a great many young men who possess the advantage of money, leave Shetland for the same places, to finish their education, as they find it essentially

necessary to keep pace with the improving spirit of the age.

A stranger walking through the streets of Lerwick would suppose, from the number of shops, that a great deal of business must be done. There are upwards of fifty persons who are regularly licensed to sell spirits, either to be consumed on the premises or to be taken away. They deal in all descriptions of articles, and you will not unfrequently see those peculiar to the milliner, the grocer, the ironmonger, the hatter, and the druggist mingled together in elegant confusion, whilst the background is occupied with several casks, bearing on them the tempting inscription of "Real Highland Whiskey" or "Prime Holland Gin;" they are sensible enough when they have got a stranger to deal with, and are not at all scrupulous in making their charges; the country people principally exchange the home-manufactured goods, such as stockings, gloves, &c., and the produce of the farm-yard with the shopkeepers for tea, sugar, &c.: I am informed that even the professional gentlemen of Lerwick have frequently received geese, fowls, potatoes, &c. as a fee for their professional advice: upon what scale this is regulated I am ignorant. Money with the country people is a scarce article, and when once they have got possession of it,

having an excellent knowledge of its many virtues, they retain it with an iron grasp, until stern necessity compels them to relinquish it, which they do with great reluctance.

The Shetlanders in general are not addicted to drinking ardent spirits, but are extravagant in the luxuries of tea and tobacco. The English language is commonly spoken by the people, but with the accent peculiar to the North of Britain; they have introduced into it a great many words from the Norwegian, Danish, and Dutch languages, and this medley uttered by a native of the country is exceedingly unpleasant to the ear and very difficult to understand: the fashionables of Lerwick speak very good English and are great politicians. The lower orders, to a stranger coming from the South, are very inquisitive. I wish I could add that their curiosity was prompted by laudable motives; on the contrary, they have seldom the acquisition of useful knowledge in view. The men in general are stout and robust, and able to bear great fatigue; they are excellent rowers, which is not to be wondered at, as they are accustomed to it from their infancy; but it requires much persuasion and many promises before you can get them to exert themselves: they are indolent in their disposition and dirty in their habits. The women, on the other hand, are

active, industrious, and persevering; nearly all the agricultural labour is performed by them,—I may safely say the most laborious part of it,—and should they not possess ponies the duty devolves upon them of carrying the manure to the land, which they do on their backs in small hampers, or caseys as they are called; and during this labour their hands are occupied in knitting,—indeed it is the custom of the women on all occasions to carry the articles necessary for that purpose along with them,—while in all probability the husband or brother is smoking at home or basking in the sun on the side of some neighbouring hill.

The houses or huts of the Shetland peasantry are very imperfectly built of stone and clay; and in many situations where the latter cannot be obtained, and they are consequently destitute of this material, they are rudely and imperfectly thatched with straw and the outhouses covered with turf; they are exempt from the duty on windows, as the light in most of them enters through the opening of the doors and chimney: the dwelling-house consists of two apartments, with a fire in the centre of the largest room, in the roof of which is a hole that answers the double purpose of allowing the escape of the smoke and the admission of light. The pigs enjoy the privilege of sleeping around the fire in the

room with the inhabitants, and the chickens occasionally enter and perch on the shelves, and on the tops of the beds, if they are so fortunate as to possess any furniture of the latter description.

The dress of the Shetland peasantry is not peculiar; both sexes wear the coarse manufactured stuffs of their country: the men make a kind of shoe of the untanned skins of the ox and seal, which are called rivilins; they are very light, and are well adapted for travelling; they are worn with the hair outwards. Their food consists of coarse oat and barley cakes, fish, milk, and potatoes; occasionally a small piece of mutton or pork, the latter of which, by the by, is very inferior, as the pigs are generally fed upon fish. Their chief drink is a liquor called bland, or the fluid that remains after the butter has been removed from the churn; it is much used by all classes in the summer time. Travelling in Shetland is very disagreeable and inconvenient; the chief conveyance is by water in open boats, or by their native ponies; it is also requisite to have a guide to accompany you, as there are no roads. I should have given a table of their charges for the benefit of those who may travel there, but I find it difficult to make a fixed statement, it varies so much, according to the state of the

weather. I find the statement of Dr. Edmonston agrees nearly with my own calculation; I shall therefore give it according to his account: but it must be understood, that in travelling by water you are frequently obliged to land short of your intended destination, through bad weather, and are sometimes detained several days, to the sad increase of your expenses; you have also the crew to pay in addition to the passage fare. The freight of a boat with six men from Unst to Fetlar is 2*s.* 6*d.*; Uzea Sound to Reafirth, 6*s.*; Burra Voe to Lunna, 6*s.*; Burra Voe to Symbister, 9*s.*; Whalsey to Lerwick, 12*s.*; Catfirth to Lerwick, 6*s.*; Lerwick to Dunrossness, 1*l.*; Scallaway to Sand or Rewick, 6*s.* I generally found that a voyage in a four-oared boat cost me one shilling a mile; the fares across the small ferries are in proportion. The usual charge in Shetland for horse-hire is about threepence per mile, or you may engage for the day, when you pay, according to the part of the country you may be in, from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* per day. The allowance to the guide is from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* per day; they will not scruple to ask more, and I should advise the traveller on all occasions to make a bargain before starting. If you wish to hire a boat on a shooting excursion for the day, with two men,

the charge is 6*s.*, one third of which they deduct, according to their mode of calculation, for the wear and tear of the boat, the remainder being divided between themselves.

The Shetland peasantry are remarkably superstitious, and they firmly believe in necromancy; this one would attribute to ignorance and their mode of life, but I have found that the minds of many of the superior classes were well tintured with the same feeling: on no subject are they more superstitious than in everything relative to fishing; in fact, the lower orders never undertake anything which they conceive to be of importance without first consulting their oracle, which is in general some old dame, who has enjoyed for many years the important privilege of foretelling to others the future events of their lives, while she remains in the darkest ignorance of what is to happen to herself: her answer to the questions, whether favourable or otherwise, may in general be calculated, according to the value of the fee she receives, which is an undisputed part of the agreement, and must always be paid beforehand; in fact, the spirits would not obey her command unless this was scrupulously attended to. I remember one tale which has been often told me, and as I find that a late traveller has thought it

worth recording I shall take the liberty of repeating it. It runs thus : An inhabitant of the island of Unst, while walking along the sandy margin of a voe, saw a number of fairies dancing, by moonlight (of course), and several seal-skins strewed about them on the ground ; at his approach they all fled to secure their garbs, and taking upon themselves the form of seals, plunged immediately into the sea ; but the Shetlander, perceiving that one skin lay close to his feet, snatched it up, bore it swiftly away, and concealed it. Returning to the shore he met the fairest creature he had ever gazed upon, lamenting the robbery by which she should become an exile from her submarine friends, and a tenant of the upper world ; vainly she implored the restitution of her property, for the man was too far overpowered with her fascinating appearance to listen to her equitable demand, and had already drunk deep of the intoxicating draught of love ; her prayers and her entreaties that he would restore her to her friends were alike in vain ; he offered to make her his bride, and she, perceiving that the upper world must now be her sphere, accepted his offering. This strangely combined attachment existed for some years ; several children were the fruits of it, who bore no other resemblance to their mother

than a particular bend of the hand, and the rudiments of a web between the fingers; which peculiarity is said to be possessed by their descendants to the present day. The Shetlander's love for his fairy bride was unbounded, but his affection was coldly returned. The lady would often steal unobserved to a particular part of the sea-shore, and on a signal being given, a large seal would make his appearance, with whom she held in an unknown tongue an anxious conference. Years glided away in this manner, when one of her children found concealed beneath some rubbish near the house a seal's skin, and delighted at the discovery ran with the prize to its mother; her eyes glistened with rapture, she recognised it as her own, and gazed on it as the means by which she could pass through the ocean to her original, her native home. She burst forth into an ecstasy of joy, which was only moderated when she beheld her children whom she was about to leave for ever, and after hastily embracing them, she fled with all speed to the sea-side. Her husband entered immediately afterwards, and having been informed of the discovery that had taken place, ran to overtake his wife, but only arrived in time to witness her transformation into the form of a seal, and see her bound from a ledge of rock into the sea; the

large animal with whom she had held so much secret converse soon appeared, and evidently congratulated her in the most affectionate manner on her escape: but before she dived she cast a parting glance at the wretched Shetlander, whose despairing look excited in her bosom a few transient feelings of commiseration. "Farewell!" she said, "and may every happiness attend you! During my stay on earth I loved you tenderly, but I could not forget in my happiest moments the husband I had left a tenant of the deep. I loved you much, I loved him more." She bade the poor fellow a lasting farewell, and then plunged into the depths of the ocean.

Another superstitious tale, relative to seals, which I have frequently heard, but have not seen it recorded, I shall also relate as it was told to me by the boatmen with whom I visited the place. A boat's crew landed at ebb tide upon some rocks, or skerries as they are called by the natives, on which were a number of seals, for the purpose of killing them. They had stunned a great many with their weapons, and in this state stripped them of their skins, with the blubber attached to them, leaving the carcasses as a treat to the sea-birds, many of which were hovering over their heads impatient to commence

the banquet. They had been too much occupied in flinshing the seals to observe that a heavy swell had set in directly upon the rocks; they were about to set off for the shore of Papa Stour, when, perceiving the danger of their situation, they all flew to the boat as quickly as possible, and were successful in getting into it excepting one poor unfortunate fellow who had lingered behind. The crew, unwilling to leave their companion to perish on the rock, made several unsuccessful attempts to back the boat to the skerry, but the swell increasing rapidly they were reluctantly compelled to leave him to his fate; and having offered up a prayer for his preservation, pulled for the land, which they reached in safety. A stormy night coming on, the deserted Shetlander saw no prospect before him but that of perishing with cold and hunger, or of being washed into the sea by the waves, which every moment threatened to break over the rocks. At length he perceived many of the seals who by flight had escaped the attack of himself and his companions approach the skerry, disrobe themselves of their watery dress, and assume the form of fairies; their first object was to assist in the recovery of their friends, who, having been stunned, in that state had been stripped of their

skins, and who, on recovering their sensibility, also assumed the form of fairies, and lamented in the most mournful strains, wildly accompanied by the storm, the loss of their sea dresses, which would prevent them from ever again enjoying their native azure atmosphere, or meeting in their coral mansions, which lay below the deep waters of the Atlantic. Their chief lamentations were for Ollavitimus, son of Groga, who having been stripped of his seal-skin would be for ever parted from his comrades, and condemned to perpetual exile in the upper world. Their song was suddenly interrupted on perceiving one of their enemies near to and anxiously observing them, his limbs shivering with cold, and appearing in the utmost despair. Groga immediately conceived the idea of rendering the perilous situation of the poor fellow subservient to the recovery of her son; she addressed him with mildness, regretted the misfortune which had placed him there, sympathized with him on his hopeless situation, and at length proposed to carry him safe on her back across the sea to the shore of Papa Stour, on condition of receiving the skin of Ollavitimus in return for her service. The bargain was immediately struck, to the no small joy of the poor fellow. Groga instantly clad herself in

her waterproof dress, but the Shetlander grew pale with fear when he observed the stormy waters he had to cross, and particularly with such a conveyance; he therefore very prudently begged leave of the matron that he might be permitted, for his better preservation, to cut a few holes in her sides and flanks, in order to procure between her skin and flesh a more secure fastening for his hands and feet. The request being complied with the man grasped the neck of the seal, and committed himself to her care; she scrupulously performed her promise, and landed him in safety on the shore, when he immediately went in search of the skin, which he was successful in finding, and brought it to the lady. They parted mutually satisfied, Grogga taking with her the skin of her son, the only thing that would restore him to his lost home, one of those coral mansions, over which the sea spreads its green mantle.

Seals were regarded by the Shetlanders in the earlier periods of Christianity as fallen angels, who for some act they had committed were condemned to dwell in the sea, with the privilege of assuming other forms. They had also the name of Sea Frogs given them, as belonging to the Prince of Darkness. Brand seems to have con-

firmed this view by assenting to the opinion of the sailors, that they were devils, who, in the shape of seals, destroyed their fishing-nets, adding, "It seems more than probable that evil spirits frequented both the land and the sea."

I shall now return, after this long digression, to give a description of my own proceedings. Immediately after my landing I set about the business of my journey, and having procured lodgings, the next thing necessary was to engage a man as servant, to accompany me either in the boat or on shore. I had not much difficulty in accomplishing this, and selected one who, with many other good qualifications, was a pretty good shot, and who on many occasions was very useful to me in that capacity. I engaged this man on both my visits to the Shetland Islands, and only speak the truth and pay him a just compliment when I say, he was at all times very attentive, and, above all, perfectly honest and faithful in the discharge of his duty. The wages I paid him were nine shillings per week, whether I had occasion for his services or not, and an additional allowance of spirits and biscuit, the quantity of which was regulated by our journey and the state of the weather ; he was also to have the blubber of the seals, if any were shot. I next

engaged a boat, which during my stay in Lerwick I hired by the day; the owner, who accompanied us, and my servant were quite sufficient to manage on short journeys, such as shooting along the shore in the neighbourhood, &c. In this manner I visited all the voes or inlets of the sea within seven or eight miles of Lerwick. The birds I procured on these expeditions were chiefly Eider and Long-tailed Ducks, Great Northern and Red-throated Divers; the two latter species are not very plentiful in this part of Shetland, and are extremely shy, and difficult to obtain a shot at. The Crested and other Shags are plentiful about the south entrance of the harbour, and the Rock Pigeon is to be found on the cliffs in the neighbourhood, but are not numerous. After having spent some time in collecting specimens of the above birds, I was informed that a small island in the neighbourhood was a favourite breeding-place of the Arctic Gulls, and being anxious to obtain some I immediately set off thither. The island is called Noss, and is situated at the east end of the Island of Bressa, from which it is separated by a narrow sound. The east end of Noss Island rises abruptly from the sea to the height of 600 feet, the summit of which considerably overhangs the base, from which circumstance

it receives the name of Nöss Head, or Hang Cliff. In the crevices of this rock almost all the various species of sea birds breed in perfect security; and about half a mile to the north-west of this is a deep cavern in the cliff, which the natives call the Doo Cave, from the number of Rock Pigeons which are always to be found there. The island gradually descends towards Bressa, where there are good landing-places; it is very fertile; the lowest ground is covered with moss, and the sides of the hill, and even the top, with long grass. It was amongst the moss and the long grass at the lower part of the hill that I found the nests of the Arctic Gulls. I shot a great number of the old birds, and got several eggs. After my return from the North Island I visited this place again, for the purpose of obtaining the young birds, which I was fortunate enough to procure. The island abounds with rabbits, and the farmer who lives on and rents it is anxious to have them exterminated, on account of their destroying his crops.

Having obtained specimens of the various birds, I now felt anxious to visit the Northern Islands, and having everything prepared, I set off on the 11th of June in an open boat, with four men, my own man, and my son, for Catfirth. During the

first stage from Lerwick, we had a very rough passage, and after getting clear out at the north entrance of the harbour I regretted extremely that I had left the land; but the danger being fully as great in returning as in proceeding, I determined upon the latter, greatly against the inclination of the boatmen, and after cheering them with a little exhilarating cordial we proceeded on our journey. The sea broke into the boat several times, and not being in possession of waterproof clothing we were all soon wet through. The boatmen being exhausted with contending so long against wind and sea, we kept as near the land as prudence would allow, and observing a place I considered favourable to land on, we ran the boat ashore, hauled her up after baling out the water, and then rested ourselves on the rocks. Taking advantage of this short respite we made a bold attack upon the eatables, for the destruction of which we were well prepared. Having refreshed ourselves, we launched the boat, and commenced the second part of our voyage, which we safely terminated by reaching Catfirth at ten o'clock in the forenoon. This, however, was not the end of my journey; I had to travel a distance of five or six miles further by land, to Osnafirth Voe; and if the passage by water had been disagreeable and

dangerous, this portion of the route was not without its inconveniences. There is no regular road between these places, and the traveller may take any direction most agreeable to himself. There is one small public-house at Catfirth, where I remained during the time the landlord was procuring the necessary number of men and horses to convey us to Osnafirth. When the signal was given that all was ready, I found our troop to consist of two men, two women, two horses, my man, my son, and myself. One of the horses, which had been selected for his strength, carried 140 pounds of shot, on the other I placed my son and a little luggage; my guns and the remainder of the luggage were carried by the guides and women. We now commenced our pilgrimage from Catfirth, and from leaving that place to arriving at Osnafirth we did not meet a single individual, either to ask any impertinent questions or to laugh at our grotesque appearance. The greater part of the way we travelled in a glen, or rather on the side of the hill, which was chosen on account of its being better ground. The prospect was beautiful, with lofty hills on both sides of us, in many places scantily covered with vegetation, while in the valley were many lakes, some separated from each other by a slight rising ground,

which nevertheless was quite boggy; others connected by a small stream, giving the whole a wild and romantic appearance. About half way between Catfirth and Osnafirth, on the side of the hill, is a small cavern or grotto; it is called by the Shetlanders the half-way house, and is the only place during the journey in which you can get shelter from the weather: those who have refreshments with them stop here for the double purpose of eating and of resting themselves, and on such occasions it makes a very comfortable dining-room. The path to it is rugged on account of the stones which have fallen from the sides of the rocks, but the cavern itself is smooth, and not so damp as might be expected from its situation. We halted here and took some refreshment, during which the Shetlanders, as usual, entertained us with some superstitious story relative to the place. As soon as the articles of food had disappeared,—not however by being returned into the repositories from which they had been taken,—I gave the word to march, which we did in extended line. The remainder of the country to our journey's end was the same in appearance, bleak and bold. I observed a few of the Common Curlew on the sides of the hill, and according to our guide's account it breeds here: occasionally a Golden Plover or two

rose up before us, but during the journey we saw very few birds of any kind. After a fatiguing journey we safely arrived at Osnafirth without any accident or misfortune having happened to us, excepting a laughable somerset which my little boy and the horse he rode made in descending one of the steep hills. I here parted with my guide, horses, and female attendants.

Osnafirth is surrounded with tremendously high hills, and is a small place with only a few straggling houses; there is no house appropriated for the reception of travellers, and any one visiting the place must be indebted to the kindness and liberality of Dr. Addy, who has a neat comfortable house near the town, and whose door is always open to strangers visiting the country. Many others along with myself can bear testimony to his hospitality. It was in his house we got some refreshment, and during the time we were so agreeably occupied, Dr. Addy sent his servant to hire a boat for our conveyance, as I had determined to proceed to Aceter in Northmaven, a distance of sixteen miles further, whither I could proceed by water, Osnafirth being situated on the west side of the main-land at the head of a long inlet opening into the Western Ocean. During the season they occasionally catch a great number of herrings

at this place, and, as is the case in all parts of the Shetland Islands, almost every other description of fish may be taken. Previous to my arrival they had caught a female basking shark in their nets, which had no doubt become ensnared in its chace after the herrings: it was the first that had been taken there; the fishermen informed me they had never seen one before, and were ignorant of its name. Having got our luggage into the boat we took leave of our kind host at ten o'clock at night, and proceeded down the voe, the land on either side of which was very high with steep rocks next to the sea. At this season of the year and in this latitude the nights are very short. At midnight it was so light that we could easily distinguish the land on either side of us; by one o'clock in the morning we could see objects at some distance very distinctly, and the sun rose soon after. The different species of Gulls, excepting the Arctic and Skua, are very numerous here; and as we pulled along close to the cliffs, accidentally disturbing some from their resting-places, they sallied out on the signal of alarm being given, and gave us a tune in the absence of other music, which certainly was anything but harmonious. We had now got nearly to the mouth of the voe, when the boatmen I had engaged at Osnafirth delicately hinted to my servant that they

should feel much better, provided they were indulged with a glass of whiskey each. Accordingly I ordered him to serve out the desired quantity; and I certainly think it had a wonderful effect. They had been pulling a long time and began to show symptoms of fatigue; the spirit seemed to infuse fresh vigour into them; they changed their style of pulling from the short dabble to the long stroke, and we were quickly out of the voe into the Western Ocean. The weather for some time had been remarkably fine, and as the wind was blowing off the land, the Atlantic was as smooth as oil, and its glassy surface unbroken even by a ripple; but there was the constantly rolling swell peculiar to that sea, not so heavy however as to make a passage in a boat disagreeable.

The scene which here presented itself was truly beautiful, and requires a master-mind to do it justice. In front of the voe we came in sight of three high rocks; they are very small, and stand off Ilswickness in the sea, and viewed from where they first came in sight, to us they were like a schooner under sail, but as we drew nearer to them they gradually changed into a three-master; they are very high, and I believe of granite formation. Behind us were the high mountains and rocky cliffs of the mainland; the tops of the mountains

in the interior were enveloped in fog. The sun was just rising above the lowest hills in the east, which gave a richness to the picture surpassing description. After stopping a short time to enjoy this wild scene of nature, we pulled along the land under the high black cliffs towards what is called the South Voe, which leads to within a quarter of a mile of Aceter. The Gulls are equally as numerous along this coast as in the inlets, and saluted us as we passed, which I occasionally returned, but with hostile intention. On entering the South Voe I saw two pairs of Eider Ducks; I endeavoured to get a shot at them, but they were too shy. It is a great chance to get within a hundred yards of them in a boat propelled with oars, while in a sailing-boat you may get pretty near. This inlet is nearly two miles long, and at an early hour in the morning I expected to have fallen in with more ducks, but was disappointed. We soon arrived at the head of the voe, and from here we had a distance of a quarter of a mile to walk overland to Aceter, my intended place of residence for some time. The boatmen being loaded with the luggage, we proceeded on at a slow march for the village, which on our arrival, at this early hour, was speedily in an uproar; the alarm was first given by the dogs, and the pigs (animals which enjoy high privileges in

this country) joining the cry, drew themselves out in martial array, as if determined to dispute our further entrance. The watchword was speedily passed to the interior of the mansions, and was first answered by the children, whose squalling, combined with the barking and grunting, produced such melody as could not have failed to dishearten any stranger from entering into their society. The men and women quickly sallied out to ascertain the cause of this sudden interruption of their slumbers, almost in a state of nudity, and stood staring at us in mute astonishment. There are but three families in the town, all fishermen; and although the trunks are so few in number, yet the branches are very numerous. The population in this place is certainly on the increase; I do not know whether it is in proportion to the production or not, but from the appearance of the place and the country around it I should say they are not equal. I used often to wonder what might be the cause of this prolific quality of the inhabitants, whether their diet or mode of life might have any effect; the former is extremely simple, fish, milk, and potatoes being the chief articles: fishing in the summer and farming in the winter are their only occupation. The climate in the summer and autumnal months is pretty steady, in the winter and spring damp and

changeable; but perhaps there is something in it more than is dreamt of in our philosophy. If the place itself possesses any virtue, in time it might become the Brighton of Shetland, and a fashionable resort for those who unfortunately want heirs to their estates; at any rate they need not depart without one, for they can have choice from a fine healthy lot ready made.

One of the families had heard previous to my arrival of my intention of visiting the place, and anticipating my wants had prepared a pretty comfortable room for me, into which I had my things conveyed. I now parted with my boatmen, after giving them a glass of whiskey each, and they set off on their return home. As the weather was still fine, I determined not to delay a moment, although I should have much enjoyed a few hours' sleep. I consequently ordered my servant, while breakfast was getting ready, to hire a boat, as I intended to go out shooting immediately: he accomplished his errand, and soon returned. I then sat down to a comfortable breakfast; the table was certainly not overloaded with delicacies, but we had fish taken that morning, eggs warranted fresh, cold fowl, tolerable coffee, and cream in abundance. I did ample justice to it, the fatigues of the journey and the sea air having given me an

excellent appetite. My servant, who received the second edition, rather grumbled at being disturbed so soon from his meal, and muttered something about impatience, which I think he had little occasion to do. Had he sat much longer he would have spared the landlady the trouble of removing either eatables or drinkables from the table, for he was rapidly depositing them into his own larder; however, a glass of spirits prevented all further dispute, and we set off for the boat. We crossed the inlet called Rona's Voe, for the purpose of getting to a celebrated hill named Rona's Hill, which is a favourite breeding-place for sea birds, and of which the Frontispiece is a faithful delineation. It is the highest hill in Shetland, and is said to be 3944 feet above the level of the sea, towards which the cliffs are rugged and perpendicular, and being exposed to the force of the Atlantic Ocean, it is exceedingly difficult and dangerous to get to them. It was the fineness of the weather that tempted me to visit it so early after my arrival; another inducement was, its being a favourite breeding-place of the Skua Gulls, of which I was particularly anxious to obtain some specimens. We landed and commenced the ascent, the guide leading the way. The ground is very uneven and difficult to travel over, but after two hours' exertion, with

great fatigue we arrived at the summit, when the delightful and extensive prospect amply repaid us for the trouble. At one view we could embrace the whole of the Shetland Islands, washed by the Atlantic and German Oceans ; while the land appeared to be drawn within a narrow compass, and to lie completely beneath us. The remainder of the island of Northmaven, which is celebrated for the variety and magnificence of its rocky scenery, was poor in comparison. The land is everywhere interspersed with lakes, which, as the sun was shining brilliantly at the time, presented a beautiful contrast to the dark scenery around. It is rarely that so favourable an opportunity occurs of viewing the island from the summit of this hill, as it is frequently enveloped for days together in a dense fog, while the lower grounds remain perfectly clear. The upper part of the hill is covered with loose pieces of red granite ; the vegetation is very scanty, and the temperature of the atmosphere differs considerably from that of the lower ground. An old building, supposed to have been erected by the Picts, formerly stood on the top of this hill, and was called by the fishermen the " Look-out House ;" but some man-of-war's men visiting the place erected a pole, and took the stones of the old building for a pedestal on which to place the staff. There is a kind of cellar still remaining, covered

with two large stones. These probably were too heavy, or the sailors in their work of destruction would have removed them also. This place affords a little shelter for taking refreshment in ; and a custom prevails, the origin of which is very obscure, for every visitor to drop a piece of money or a button behind the large stones that cover the apartment. I observed a great number of bones belonging to various animals and birds strewed about the place, that had been picked to satisfy the keen appetite of former travellers after their ascent.

I now descended the north side of the hill by a gradual slope for the distance of two miles. I heard some Plovers, and immediately afterwards fell in with a pair of Skua Gulls, which I fortunately shot ; this stimulated me to persevere, and I found several more : this I considered to be worth all the time I had spent, and the fatigue I had suffered. We now returned to the boat by a different route, and found the road much better for travelling, as well as easier for either ascending or descending the hill. We arrived at our quarters at midnight, at which hour I could see to read the smallest print. After getting some refreshment and a glass of toddy I retired to rest, greatly fatigued from the day's excursion and from want of sleep, but highly pleased with my success.

The next morning, feeling greatly refreshed, and anxious to procure a further supply of birds, I proceeded down Rona's Voe, which is a long narrow inlet with high cliffs on each side, and presents one of the most romantic scenes I have witnessed, the cliffs being bold and rocky, the hills around gradually rising, while high above them all stands the majestic Rona, its summit towering to the clouds, defying both time and tempest. At certain times this voe abounds with seals; during my first visit I shot twenty-six; likewise Crested Shags, Red-breasted Mergansers, Large Black-backed Gulls, Black Guillemots, Lesser Black-backed Gulls, Herring Gulls, &c. Very few of the Duck tribe frequent this voe. I never saw more than three Eider Ducks in it, two of which I shot. Many of the sea birds breed in these cliffs, but most of them are far too high and dangerous to attempt their ascent for the purpose of procuring the eggs. Being anxious to visit the west side of Rona's Hill, or that part which is exposed to the Western Ocean, and the morning being tolerably fine, we set off to make the attempt, but were disappointed, a heavy swell from the westward setting directly into the voe, and preventing us from getting out. This being the case, my old boatman informed me that we were near to a landing-place; and as it was im-

possible to go round by water to the part I particularly wished to visit, I determined again to cross over the hill; we therefore proceeded to the landing-place mentioned by the guide, but were again disappointed, for after landing, we could not get up the rocks they were so steep; we then proceeded in the boat a little further to the westward, tried the second place, and succeeded, but not without some difficulty. This was a part of the island I had not visited; and wishing to cross the hill to the place where I obtained the Skua Gulls on my first excursion, I put myself under the guidance of the old boatman, who I soon found was as ignorant of the routes across this part of these hills as myself. I fortunately happened to have my pocket compass with me, which was now our only director, and on this as well as many other occasions it proved of essential service. We proceeded over three tolerably large hills, gradually increasing in height, and lying in a due north direction, I selected this route, conceiving that from the situation of the place where we landed, it would lead us near to the spot where I found the Skua Gulls. The result proved I was not mistaken, for after travelling a few hundred yards further I was agreeably surprised to hear some of them squeaking. I soon found them, and procured several, along

with one Arctic Gull. After spending some time, we returned towards the boat, but in a different direction; this I did for the purpose of seeing as much of the country as possible, and of procuring any specimens I could find. When I mentioned to the old boatman my determination to return by a different route, he expressed his disinclination in language by no means suitable to a delicate ear, adding that if I attempted it we should not arrive at home that night, for to his experienced eye, the fog would soon be so thick as to render it impossible for us to find our way, though at that time there was not the smallest appearance of it. Be it as it would, I was determined to proceed in the direction I had chosen; and sure enough in a short time we were completely enveloped,—not in such fogs as I have witnessed in England, but one so dense and substantial as to make one fancy it might be cut with a knife, or, to use the expression of my guide, “so thick you might sup it with a spoon.” As we drew nearer to the bottom of the hill and towards the water, we gradually got clear of the fog, which remained stationary on the hills. On arriving at the water’s edge we could distinctly see the land on the other side of the inlet, where the sun was shining very brilliantly, while the tops of the hills there were also covered. It fre-

quently occurs in this country, when the wind is in a particular quarter, that the higher parts of the hills are invisible, while the lower grounds are perfectly clear. We found some difficulty in getting down the rocks into the boat, and the boatmen were very glad when they got safe on board, not having much faith in my steering by the compass on land in thick weather.

The next morning I set off for Stenness, a fishing-station, distant about seven miles, and as we had to travel by land, I procured one man and a boy as guides, and two horses to carry the luggage; on our way we called upon Mr. John Sheen at Tanwick, and experienced another instance of Shetland hospitality. Mr. Sheen is one of the principal landlords in the neighbourhood. After partaking of some refreshment, and making him acquainted with the object of my visit to that country, he politely invited me to remain at his house, assuring me he would do all in his power to make me comfortable, and assist me in procuring specimens. I thanked him for his liberality, but declined the offer of his kindness, as the situation was not adapted to my pursuits. Before we parted, he insisted on my visiting him that evening from Stenness, which he informed me was about one mile and a half from his residence. We proceeded on our journey,

and soon arrived at the fishing-station, a most miserable place, composed of a few straggling fishermen's huts. The weather was boisterous, and consequently the fishermen were at home; some attending to the fish undergoing the process of salting and drying, others preparing their lines. Many boats were drawn up on the beach, giving it a cheerless appearance. As soon as our cavalcade arrived, all work instantly ceased, that they might have an opportunity of scrutinising the strangers, or asking questions with an impertinent curiosity peculiar to the Shetland peasantry. The examination did not terminate until we removed ourselves from their observation. The first thing necessary was to procure lodgings for the men, which after some time I accomplished in one of the best-looking huts in the place, hung inside and out with fish; the smell of some, in a state of putrefaction, being by no means an agreeable accompaniment: however, by this time I was well habituated to the living as well as dead nuisances infesting a Shetland hut. I returned in the evening to Mr. Sheen's at Tanwick, and after spending a pleasant evening and enjoying a comfortable night's rest, which through the kindness of that gentleman I was spared from passing in the hut at Stenness, I breakfasted, joined my compa-

nions, and found a six-oared boat I had engaged the night previous in readiness for me, and we immediately proceeded for the islands of Eskness, which are small, and are situate at the mouth of the bay of Stenness, forming a natural breakwater, and affording shelter to the fishing-station from the wind and sea. The weather was stormy, and a heavy swell was setting on the islands, but I managed to shoot a female Eider Duck, and took the nest with five eggs. These birds are sometimes very numerous here, along with the Oystercatcher, Terns, &c., of each of which species I procured several eggs. There is good pasturage upon these islands in the summer season, on which the inhabitants of Stenness take the advantage of browsing a few sheep. In landing on the outer island an accident happened to me which might have been attended with serious consequences. The swell being very heavy at the time, we durst not approach so near as to step out of the boat upon the rocks, but had to watch the opportunity of a swell raising us so that we could spring out upon them. This I attempted to do with a gun in my hand, but instead of landing on the rocks, I fell directly under the bow of the boat, which the next sea would have thrown upon me but for the exertions of the boatmen. I fortun-

nately got hold of the rocks with both hands, but was obliged to remain for a few seconds lying at full length, with the gun under my breast, destitute of the power of getting any higher and the sea washing up to my neck at every swell, before I could obtain a slight hold for my feet ; and not without great difficulty and using great caution, I at length got upon dry ground. Another gun was thrown to me from the boat, as the one I had with me had, like myself, received a good ducking. After wandering about the island some time without finding anything worth shooting, or to reward me for the trouble I had taken in getting upon it, I returned to the boat, which I was fortunate enough to get on board of without a repetition of the immersion. I soon found that Stenness was not a suitable place for shooting, or at least that it was not the season when the birds are most plentiful there. The next day was spent in boating, and collecting information from the fishermen as to where the greatest number of birds were to be found. I bought of one of the fishermen several very fine pieces of native coral, and left him a box, with directions if he should get any more to send it after me. Stenness is merely a temporary place of residence for the fishermen who come here from different parts to fish. The season commences on the 12th of May and ter-

minates on the 12th of August. About forty boats arrive here annually; each boat's crew, which in general amounts to six in number, have a hut, in which they live during the season, composed of loose stones indiscriminately thrown together, neither wind- nor water-tight; the roof is covered with turf and moss, through which in wet weather the water finds an easy passage. I spent the evening with Mr. Sheen, and then returned to Aceter, where the men with the luggage had gone before me. The next day being Sunday, I attended the church at Ilswick, and I found it equally as well filled, taking into consideration the part of the country, as that at Lerwick: some of the congregation had to walk a distance of ten miles, and others came a still greater distance in open boats. To their infinite credit, the Shetlanders are scrupulously attentive to the observance of the Sabbath, and nothing but difficulties which they cannot surmount prevents them from discharging this duty. During the time of service they deport themselves with a humility becoming a Christian, and which might serve for an example to their southern neighbours. On these occasions it is pleasing to see the people so neatly dressed. The women, as is the custom throughout the North of Britain, invariably pull off their shoes and stockings during the journey, and put them on again previous to enter-

ing the church ; whether this is done from a motive of economy or cleanliness, I do not know, but in my opinion it is carrying either to too great an extreme, and is moreover a practice which many would gladly see dispensed with.

On the 2nd of July I went down the South Voe to Ilswickness, where I found several Eider Ducks, but only shot one. The weather being too boisterous to allow of my going out to sea, I sailed to a voe in the immediate neighbourhood, called Gunnesta, where I shot another Eider Duck ; from thence to Hammee Voe, where I landed, and proceeded to a lake a short distance inland, in consequence of having been informed that the Lesser Black-backed Gull bred there. On arriving at the edge of the lake, I shot a female Red-throated Diver as she flew from her nest, if it deserves that term : in the nest were two eggs ; they were laid close to the water's edge, among a few loose stones, and must inevitably have been overflowed had there been any wind on this the lee side. I was somewhat disappointed in not meeting with the Gulls ; but as there were two or three more lakes a short distance from this, I thought it probable we might fall in with them there. On visiting these lakes I saw several Red-throated Divers, but very few Gulls ; the former had either been alarmed at the

report of my gun, or had observed us, and taken flight to sea. In returning to the boat, I got a shot at another Red-throated Diver, which I killed.

On the 5th, the weather being fine, I made another attempt to get to the west side of Rona's Hill, and succeeded; there was a considerable swell, which prevented us approaching so close to the rocks as I wished. Indeed it is very rare that a boat dare venture to this place in the finest weather, there being always a heavy swell here, owing to its exposed situation, with nothing to shelter it from the force of the Western Ocean; and while in other places the wind might be blowing a pleasant breeze, it would here create a sea so rough as to endanger the safety of a boat. When viewed from the sea, this side of the hill has a most barbarous appearance; the cliffs are high and rugged, with several extensive chasms, into which the sea was rolling and breaking against their sides with a noise like distant thunder, the white spray forming a beautiful contrast to the black rocks. Not far from the land, at irregular distances from each other, are many rocks, or stacks, some rising to a great height, resembling the spire of a church, others only just appearing above the surface of the water; there are also

many sunken ones, which are extremely dangerous from the small depth of water upon them. Any one who has seen the place will have no hesitation in predicting what would be the fate of the crew of any boat that might unfortunately be upset here. These rocks, especially the highest ones, are well inhabited with the different species of Gulls; it is also a favourite place for seals, and is well adapted to their habits, the numerous caverns in the cliffs affording them situations wherein to breed and lurk in perfect security. I here shot several Gulls, some of which were excellent specimens; and I again visited this place for the purpose of shooting seals, upon which occasion, when we were about four miles from the mouth of the voe, a strong breeze of wind sprung up from the westward, the sea at the same time rising very rapidly; giving us sufficient warning to exert ourselves, and endeavour to get into a place of security as speedily as possible. For some time we pulled in a direct line for Rona's Voe, but the wind, which had sprung up very rapidly abeam, obliged us to alter our course, as the water threatened every moment to break into the boat; we therefore brought her head to the sea, intending, with the assistance of the oars, to keep her in this position, and weather out the gale.

Not much liking the idea of remaining here any length of time exposed to the storm, I held a consultation with the boatmen as to the best mode of proceeding. Some were for making a fair wind of it, and advised that we should set sail and run for an inlet about eight miles distant, observing that it was nearly high water, and that when it began to ebb the sea would be still more highly agitated, and consequently the danger would be greater; others dissented from this opinion and were for taking to the oars again, for the purpose of getting into Rona's Voe. Thinking the latter plan the most advisable, we put the boat about and pulled for the voe. The tide was already ebbing, forming another obstacle, and we now had wind, tide, and sea to contend against. We got some shelter for a few minutes behind one of the large stacks, and during this respite baled out the boat, trimmed her as well as we could with the two seals I shot before the storm came on, set my son astride of them, and held the dog so as to keep the boat steady. I then asked the men if they thought they were able to pull the boat against wind and tide; they replied they would try, but the majority were for turning back to the other inlet, a proposition which I would not agree to. I now gave the men a glass of whiskey

each and some biscuit, and proposed to make Rona's Inlet: this required a desperate effort. As there was another stack a little distance from the one we were sheltered under, and the sea by this time began to break very fearfully between them, I determined to wait for a 'lull', as the sailors call it, which there generally is after three or four seas. Each of us got an oar in his hands ready for the attempt; we counted the four seas, then pulled with all our strength, and got out from between the two stacks before the sea broke in again; and being now out of the greatest danger, we pulled on in this way for four miles, during which time such was our anxiety that I think there was not a word spoken by any one. The wind was blowing so strongly against us that we could not tell whether we were making any way or not. When we arrived in the voe we got shelter, and being both wet and fatigued, rested ourselves and took a little more spirits. Several seals had followed us; we could pay no attention to them at the time, but having now got into shelter, I prepared my guns, as I expected they would come around us; and I was not disappointed, for as soon as I had my gun ready, one came staring up at the stern of the boat, which I shot instantly. We now pulled to our landing-place, about two miles up the voe, and arrived at home about two o'clock in the

morning. The people told us they never expected we had gone out of the voe in such a stormy day, and the fishermen at the fishing-station would not believe we had been on the west side of Rona's Hill and got safe on shore again in such a heavy gale of wind.

On the 9th I took the boat and went to Voe, a small village so called situated at the head of Rona's Voe, for the purpose of making arrangements for my return to Lerwick, to effect which it was necessary to hire a boat at Ollerberry, as I wished not to return the same way I came, for the sake of seeing more of the country. At Voe I hired a horse and a guide, and travelled over a highly mountainous country to Ollerberry, where I had the pleasure of meeting with Mr. Sheen (brother to the gentleman of that name who resides at Tanwick), who very kindly invited me to remain at his house, which invitation I accepted, as my business happened to be with himself; for he having all the men in the place in his employ, it was necessary to obtain a boat and crew from him. My request was immediately granted, and he assured me that at any time I chose to appoint the boat should be in readiness, at the same time advising me to choose moderate weather and when the tide was in our favour; we should then be able to reach Lerwick

the same day. Indeed it is only in moderate weather that it is possible for boats to make the passage: the currents are so very rapid in the sound, that many accidents have occurred, and a very melancholy one had recently happened whereby several lives had been lost. It was witnessed by their relations from the shore, who instantly rendered every assistance, but unfortunately too late. After spending the day very agreeably I returned by the same route to Aceter, where I arrived late at night. The next morning, the weather being moderate, I went out for the purpose of shooting seals, which were very numerous, but so extremely shy that I was only able to procure a single specimen. Rough weather, though disagreeable, I found to be by far the best time for shooting these animals, as I rarely succeeded in obtaining more than one during moderate weather.

This day terminated my shooting excursions amongst the north isles of Shetland. During the night we were busy packing up, and early in the morning we started in the boat for Voe, taking with us as much luggage as possible, and leaving the remainder to be sent by the first trading-vessel to our head quarters at Lerwick. At Voe I procured the necessary number of men, horses, &c., for the conveyance of our luggage, and travelled on to Oller-

berry, where we arrived in good time the next morning, after a fatiguing journey, principally occasioned by the badness of the road. Through the kindness of Mr. Sheen a six-oared boat was quickly ready, into which everything was stowed, and after taking leave of our kind friend, whose obliging manners I can never forget, we started for Lerwick, distant from this place about twenty-four or twenty-five miles.

The day being remarkably fine, and the tide in our favour, we pulled merrily along the east side of the main land until we arrived at Lunna, where we landed the boxes, &c., and dragged the boat across a narrow neck of land into the sea, by which means we saved ourselves a long pull round. We then proceeded past Lunna Head into Walsey Sound, and through that into Hog's Sound, which is a very narrow passage between two rocks, with only a sufficient depth of water at high tide, and entered the harbour of Lerwick by the north passage at ten o'clock at night. I chose this route on account of its being the shortest, and I considered myself extremely fortunate in getting through it in one day.

On the 15th I visited the island of Bressa, for the purpose of collecting some Arctic Gulls, of which I got a few adults and also some of the young.

The four following days I remained at home packing up my collection preparatory to leaving Shetland.

On the 20th I again visited the island of Bressa, and in the neighbourhood of Noss Head or Hang Cliff shot several Guillemots, Razorbills, and Kittewakes; the latter are more numerous here than in any other part of Shetland. My principal object was to procure some of their young in the downy state. I found it impossible to climb the cliff, and was therefore necessitated to obtain them by firing at their nest and knocking them out. I could soon have filled the boat with them had I wished it, but desisted as soon as I had procured sufficient for my purpose. At each shot the old birds flew from the cliff in a complete cloud, and returned to their nests before I could reload. It is impossible for any one to imagine the number that are here in the breeding-season. This summer two young men attempted by some means to climb these rocks, for the purpose of getting eggs. They had succeeded in getting some distance up, when one of them lost his hold, and was instantly precipitated into the sea, and most probably struck against the rocks, as he was never seen again. There are several cliffs, in the neighbourhood where the Herring Gull breeds, and also a few of the Common Gull,

which are the scarcest of the tribe in Shetland with the exception of the Skua Gull.

I had now procured specimens of almost all the birds to be found in Shetland excepting the Stormy Petrel, and not wishing to leave the country without obtaining some of them also, I proceeded on the 26th to Scallaway, the second town in point of importance in Shetland : it is situated on the west side of the mainland and is five miles from Lerwick. I took with me two men to carry the luggage, and arrived there at night. Having in the early part of the summer seen several of the Stormy Petrels flying about in the neighbourhood of some islands lying a few miles off Scallaway, I determined upon visiting them, as I considered that would be the most likely means of obtaining some specimens, more especially as it was now their breeding-season. In the morning I landed on the islands, which we diligently searched for a length of time without success. I was about leaving the fourth island, on which, near the beach, many loose stones were collected, when I was arrested by a cry coming from among the stones, and knowing it to proceed from some bird the note of which I was a stranger to, I summoned our force and proceeded to remove them in such a manner as to leave no place of retreat.

We continued our labours for two hours, when I at length found the little creature whose cry had struck me, and to my gratification it proved to be a Stormy Petrel; it was sitting on its nest, which was composed of a few loose pieces of seaweed, and contained one small white egg very minutely spotted at the broader end with brown. It did not make the least effort to escape. I took it in my hand, and when there, it squirted an oily matter from its nostrils at me two or three times in quick succession. We had removed a great number of stones, and amongst the remainder I could hear many more birds chirping and running about, which, as the females sat so closely to their nests, I supposed to be males, disturbed by the noise we had made. I therefore placed myself in a suitable situation and desired the men to continue their work, expecting, as their places of retreat were cut off, the male birds would fly out, and afford me an opportunity of shooting a few of them. I was not disappointed, for on the stones being removed the birds flew out, and I shot several; my son also caught one young one. The men durst not touch them, as they were afraid of the oil they squirted having some injurious effect. I remained here until six o'clock at night, when a thick fog coming on suddenly, I thought it prudent to make the best of

my way back to Scallaway, which with great difficulty we effected by eight o'clock, all heartily tired, after one of the most fatiguing days' sport I had in Shetland.

Early the next morning I again visited these islands and saw several of the Common Heron, which, as I had not seen one during the preceding four months, had, I presumed, migrated from the south after the breeding-season was over. I was fortunate enough to find another of the breeding-places of the Stormy Petrel, and procured several of the birds and their eggs from among the ruins of an old Pictish building situated close to the shore, and a part of which we were obliged to remove before we could get to the nests: I trust, however, I have not given any great offence to the lovers of antiquity by this demolition. The Stormy Petrel does not fly much in the daytime, nor in fine weather; as night approached they became numerous on the wing, while the contrary might have been expected, as we had been disturbing them all day. I found my dog very useful on these occasions; he soon understood what we were looking for, and frequently detected single birds by scent amongst the loose stones where they had secreted themselves, when we should have passed such situations as unworthy of notice. There was no

difficulty in understanding him when he found one ; he would stand close to the place wagging his tail, and looking towards us in the most significant manner. We returned to Scallaway very late at night, but as I was particularly anxious to be at Lerwick I determined to set off thither immediately. The two men I had brought with me were so fatigued that they were obliged to remain at Scallaway ; I therefore engaged another man to accompany me, and to carry part of my luggage : we arrived at Lerwick at two o'clock in the morning very much fatigued. It occupied me two days in skinning and preparing the specimens I had obtained on my last expedition, and there not being any ship in the harbour bound for Hull, I determined upon waiting for one, several being daily expected. To spend the time therefore as profitably as possible, on the second of August I set off again for Scallaway, leaving word that if any of the fishing-ships should arrive in my absence notice was to be sent me. I got several more Stormy Petrels, and one young one. The day was excessively hot, and I was informed the glass stood higher in the shade this day than had been known for many years previously. In returning to Lerwick at night, the fog was so dense that for some time I lost myself amongst the hills, in consequence of not having

taken the regular road, but crossing the moors in a direction most agreeable to myself and to save distance. When I returned to Lerwick two fishing-ships had arrived from Greenland, and reported that the Abram of Hull might be expected daily.

On the 11th I went out at the north entrance of the harbour, and shot one young Black Guillemot on the water, being the first I had seen from the nest.

On the 22nd, while crossing over one of the hills, I observed with my glass a ship out at sea apparently steering for the harbour. There being little wind at the time, I did not think she would be able to get in that night; however, I returned home expecting it might be the Abram, and commenced preparing my things for the passage. At eleven o'clock at night the ship came to anchor, and she proved to be the vessel I had expected. Early the next morning I got my packages, &c. on board. The Captain having settled his business on shore we weighed anchor at eleven o'clock, and with a fair wind proceeded out of the harbour, bidding adieu, though I trusted not for the last time, to bleak and barren Shetland, over whose mountains I had had many severe days' toil. To its hospitable inhabitants I shall ever feel grateful; for from them I received the greatest kindness and attention, and for them I shall ever entertain the highest respect.

During the interval between my first and second visit several parties from the South travelled through Shetland, principally for amusement, and having fowling-pieces with them, destroyed indiscriminately every bird that came within their reach, in fact almost annihilated several species, particularly the Skua Gull: a great number were also shot by the officers of a cutter which was stationed in Rona's Voe for two or three months. These gentlemen, I was told, destroyed great numbers of birds of all kinds, but particularly this Gull, which would the more readily become a victim from its habit of returning any attack upon it, thereby affording the gunner a surer aim. Mr. Sheen blamed me for thinning them more than any other person: in this he was certainly mistaken, as I did not take so many as to injure the breed; these gulls were however so scarce when I last visited the islands, that I had great difficulty in obtaining permission to visit the places where they breed, the landlord assigning as a reason for his refusal that the birds had almost become extinct, but allowed me, as a great favour, to shoot a single pair. He certainly had some reason to complain, for I found their numbers considerably diminished.

In the course of my rude narrative the reader will readily perceive the dangers of travelling in

Shetland by water, and the delays to which the traveller is exposed on account of the weather; I have frequently been out when boats have been swamped not far from me, and considered myself extremely fortunate in having escaped.

It will not be necessary to give a minute description of the Orkney Islands; in appearance they are similar to Shetland, but more fertile and not so mountainous. Kirkwall is the capital, and is far more pleasantly situated than Lerwick (the capital of Shetland) and contains a greater number of inhabitants, but I was not able to ascertain the exact amount: the whole population of Orkney is about thirty-three thousand. The ancient church is built in the Gothic style and has three bells; near the church there is a beautiful ruin called the Old Palace, and there are several very comfortable inns. Stromness is the next town of note; it is not so pleasantly situated as Kirkwall, being, like Lerwick, situated on the side of a hill, but is the resort of a far greater number of shipping than Kirkwall, in consequence of there being a very good harbour, and sufficient depth of water for ships of a very large draught to anchor in front of the town; it also possesses the convenience of a patent slip, erected last year, whereby vessels can be drawn up for the purpose of repairs. There are

two other small towns, viz., St. Margaret's Hope and Long Hope, where travellers may procure very comfortable lodgings. The inhabitants of Orkney get their living in a similar manner to the Shetlanders, and the prices of provisions are much the same. I made Stromness my head quarters, in consequence of nearly all the birds that frequent the Orkneys inhabiting within the distance of ten or twelve miles.

After I had arrived at Stromness and obtained lodgings, I inquired the price of boat-hire and men's wages, which I was informed were much higher than in Shetland, and also that there would be a difficulty in getting a boat at any time I might require it. I therefore perceived it would be necessary to buy a boat; and as I had my son with me, who was about twelve years of age, I thought we should be able to undertake many short excursions alone, I having by this time acquired tolerable skill in the management of a boat. Accordingly I bought one that had formerly belonged to the preventive service, consequently pretty well known to the country people, and a very fine sea boat; I got her repaired, and painted each side a different colour, for when I was in Shetland I fancied the birds knew the boat I used from every other. By the time she was ready for sea, the purchase of the boat, sails, &c. cost me about eight

pounds. I made use of this boat on both my visits to Orkney, a friend taking charge of her during the time I was at home. I found this a much cheaper plan than hiring a boat, and after engaging a pilot for a few trips, we were able to go all round the islands by ourselves, excepting when it was a calm, and then I was obliged to employ men to row; this however is very seldom the case, it more frequently blowing very hard. The tide runs rapidly between these islands, and when the wind happens to be against the tide the sea soon rises to a great height; in Hoy Sound, at spring tides, the current runs nine or ten knots an hour. The current is occasionally so strong that I have seen a ship with all her sails set come in from the westward with a fine breeze in her favour, and passing through the water at a very rapid rate, forced back again by the tide on arriving at the narrowest part. These are very dangerous situations for a boat and require great care. It is a curious sight to see a boat cross this sound under sail, particularly when the wind is from the eastward and the tide running to the westward, the boat seems to fly so very rapidly sideways. I was crossing this sound one very foggy night to Stromness, when the current forced us out into the Western Ocean; it was so dark that we mistook the harbour, and were obliged to remain there until the

tide returned to bring us back, during which all we could do was to keep the boat's head to the sea. At the time this happened I had a man with me who pretended to be well acquainted with, and able to pilot me about this neighbourhood, but of course I never trusted to his pilotage afterwards. I remained in Stromness about two months, and visited all parts within twelve miles round.

There is an inlet about seven miles to the southward of Stromness called Lerwick-burn, which is frequented by the Northern Diver, Red-throated Diver, Eider Duck, Velvet Duck, Long-tailed Duck, Red-breasted Merganser, Shel Drake, Black Guillemot, and Oyster-catcher. At the mouth of this inlet I shot two specimens of the Horned Grebe; about a mile inland the Arctic Gull breeds; Grouse, Snipes, and Golden Plovers are plentiful on the hills, and there is an island about half a mile distant, upon which lie a considerable number of seals when the tide begins to ebb, and where they will remain during the ebb if they are not disturbed: those who may wish to shoot them must approach very cautiously; they are generally to be found at the lee side of the island.

After having procured specimens of the different birds inhabiting this neighbourhood, we started for the Northern isles. I engaged a man to go with

us as far as Scappy Bay, a distance of twelve or fourteen miles from Stromness and one mile from Kirkwall, and then engaged two carts to carry our boat and luggage over land to Kirkwall, a practice frequently resorted to in order to avoid the long distance round by water. We stopped two days at Kirkwall, and then went in a sloop to Sandy, distant about fifteen or twenty miles, our boat being towed astern. We remained in Sandy about three weeks. Mr. Strang, a very hospitable and intelligent gentleman, resides here, at Lopeness, near the lighthouse, who treated me very kindly, and gave me all the information he could respecting the localities where I should find the different birds, and I may justly say he is the best ornithologist I met with in Orkney; here I got the Red-necked Phalarope, Eider Duck, and Arctic Gull, but the latter was not very plentiful. There is only one lodging-house at Sandy, and I would recommend any traveller going there to make an agreement about his lodgings before entering, without which precaution he is sure to be imposed upon; I paid more here than at any other place where I have travelled. We proceeded to Addy, a distance of seven miles, where we got lodgings at a moderate rate; a small island lies off of this, called the Holm of Addy, where the Arctic Gull, Common

Gull, Eider Duck, Red-breasted Merganser, Arctic Tern and Grouse breed; this is one of the most useful islands in Orkney; it supplies Sandy and Westra with turf, these places being destitute of this necessary article. The poorer class of people, who are not able to purchase turf, are obliged to burn cowdung and dried seaweed; the cowdung appeared to be mixed with straw and light soil, and is made into a kind of cake, which, when dried a little, is set upon its edge to dry thoroughly, and is then fit for burning: you may scent the houses where this kind of firing is used at a great distance, particularly if you are to leeward of them. We remained at Addy about six weeks, and then proceeded to Westra, distant about ten miles. This was the worst passage we ever had; when starting we got into a tideway called the Boar, and it was with the greatest difficulty we contrived to get out again; it was, moreover, such a short and broken sea as I had never seen before, and is occasioned by the meeting of two tides, the one running out from between the islands, and the other along the outside. We expected nothing else than that the sea would rush into the boat every moment; for it was breaking on all sides of us, and we had first to twist the boat's head one way and then another to meet the sea, which would surely have swamped

us had we been ignorant of this precaution; and had it once broken into the boat nothing could have saved us. The people that saw us from the shore told us next day they conceived our vessel was a schooner, as they never expected a boat could live in such a sea: some time before this a sloop got into this Boar and had her mast rolled out of her before she could get out. In consequence of having been drawn into this tideway we were carried nine or ten miles to the northward of Stave, near Nunse Castle, the place we intended to stop at, and by rowing to get clear of the Boar, we had rowed twelve miles out to sea; after this we set sail, steered south-west, made the north end of Westra, and landed at Stave. After all our fatigue we could not get lodgings, not even for one night; we were therefore recommended to go to Pearaway, which was not far by land but was six or seven miles by water. As we were unacquainted with the route we got a man who was fishing for lobsters to pilot us; and it was very fortunate we did so, for it came on very thick and dark, but we arrived safe at twelve o'clock at night. This was by far the most fatiguing day I ever experienced, and to add to our comforts, the people where we lodged could not accommodate us with a fire to warm or dry ourselves, but as there was no inn to resort to for better accommodation,

we were obliged to make ourselves contented. After eating a little biscuit and taking a glass of grog we retired to bed. The next morning by the time we got up the landlord had managed by some means to get us a tolerably good fire ; we made a hearty breakfast and then got our landlord to pilot us over to Pappa Westra, distant about a mile : this is the island from whence the Great Auk was sent to Mr. Bullock. A gentleman resides here of the name of Trail whom I was anxious to see, in order to make inquiries about this bird. I accordingly waited upon him and was received very kindly ; I stopped and dined with him, and in the course of conversation he informed me that there was none of the Great Auk to be got, and also, that not one had been seen for many years, at all events not since the one which had been sent to Mr. Bullock, at which time its companion disappeared : this was by no means agreeable news, as I had flattered myself from what I had heard that there would be some few here still. There is a small island close to this called a holm ; it belongs to Mr. Trail, and abounds with birds, such as the large Black-backed Gull, Herring Gull, Black Guillemot, Eider Duck, Red-breasted Merganser, and Arctic Tern ; it is a kind of preserve, no one being allowed to shoot on it without permission : but on my asking

leave it was granted immediately, and a man-servant sent with me to assist in getting anything I might want. I collected a few eggs and shot two Eider Ducks, but there was nothing else that I had not got already. The day before they had killed twenty score of young Gulls on this holm; this day they also killed twelve score, and might have killed another twenty while we were there if they had wished, for they were running in all directions; they are killed for the purpose of salting and for the sake of the best of the feathers. We returned to Mr. Trail's, who then kindly granted me permission to visit the holm whenever I thought proper, and after taking leave of our kind friend we set sail for Pearaway.

The next day we went out and shot some Eider Ducks and two large seals; the day following I went to Nunse Castle, close to which there is a lough, where the Brown-headed Gull and Red-necked Phalarope breed; the latter was very difficult to be got at, as the lough was so very swampy that it is impossible for any one to travel through it; I have frequently been up to my middle in such bogs, but it is not pleasant going further. We remained in this neighbourhood about a week and then returned to Addy; on our passage we saw several Shearwaters, and shot two: we remained

at Addy about a week, and then went to Sandy to procure some more Phalaropes, but were unsuccessful, not seeing even one: we remained at Sandy a few days, and then prepared for Stromness, our head quarters. By this time our luggage had greatly increased. We now got all ready, and nothing was wanting but a fair wind and a pilot, which we at length obtained; but the pilot thinking I would not attempt going without him, endeavoured to extort from me a far greater sum than I conceived would be a fair remuneration for his services; we were unable to come to terms, and the next morning being fine, with a fair wind, I started without him. The day continued very fine, and as the wind was in our favour during the whole of the passage, we did not land until we arrived at Stromness about two o'clock in the morning, by which time we were much fatigued and very hungry, our sea-stock being all exhausted soon after starting; for not expecting to reach Stromness in one day, we had not taken a sufficient supply. I remained at Stromness about three days, unpacking the specimens I had collected, many of them not being sufficiently dry; we then went to Sandwick, distant eight miles from Stromness by land, where there is a lough on which the Phalaropes breed: we remained here

two days ; we were not very successful, but got a few birds and four of their eggs. We visited this place again about a week after this, and got five more birds, being all we could find. We next took a trip to St. Margaret's Hope, distant about twenty miles from Stromness, in order to visit an island which lies on the left hand about a mile and a half before you get to St. Margaret's Hope, where the Stormy Petrel breeds. Some of the nests were found in rabbit-holes, others in old stone walls; they were not very plentiful, but we got a few both of the birds and eggs. We stopped all night at St. Margaret's Hope at a public-house where we got very comfortable lodgings ; the next day we set off for Stromness and visited several islands as we went along. About six o'clock it came on to blow very fresh from the westward and the wind increased till ten ; it then turned to rain, and became so thick that we could not see two boat's lengths before us : we managed to make Howton about two o'clock in the morning, a distance of six miles from Stromness, having for a part of the time lain under the lea of an island, thinking it would clear up. A young gentleman resides here of the name of Moncrief, whom I had frequently called on before ; he received us very kindly on this occasion as well as on all others, and as soon as he knew

who it was, he sent his servants to assist us in drawing up the boat; and by the time we got into the house there was a good fire made to dry us, and a hot supper which was very acceptable. After supper and a glass of grog we retired to bed; the gale lasted for two days, and although we were only six miles from head quarters, we could not attempt the passage until the third day, by which time we had collected specimens of all the birds inhabiting these islands that I was desirous of procuring. Having nothing particular to do while waiting the arrival of the *Isabella* from Davis's Straits, in which ship I intended to proceed to Hull, we amused ourselves with fishing until she arrived on the 12th October, when as soon as she brought up I went on board, and to my agreeable surprise, Captain Humphreys introduced me to Captain, now Sir John, Ross and his officers, who had been picked up in the Straits, upon which I told Captain Humphreys that as he had so many passengers on board I should decline going with him; but with his usual kindness he would not hear of it, adding, there was plenty of room and I was quite welcome. I thanked him for his kindness, and after taking a glass of wine went on shore and set about getting my things on board, which being effected, and a fair wind springing up,

we weighed anchor at four o'clock the next morning and proceeded between the islands, bidding adieu to Orkney and its kind inhabitants.

The route I have attempted to describe in the course of this narrative is the one I should recommend any person to take who might be desirous of collecting specimens of the birds to be found in the localities mentioned. It will not be necessary to give a minute description of the birds I obtained during my excursions, as they have already been minutely and anatomically described in various ornithological works; I shall therefore content myself with giving the scientific appellations, with their common English and provincial names, the addition of an asterisk indicating those by which they are generally known in Shetland and Orkney.

*AQUILA CHRYSÆTA*, *Flem.* Golden Eagle.—This noble bird breeds in Orkney among the cliffs on the west side of Hoy Hill, but is so scarce that I only saw a single pair.

*HALIÆTUS ALBICILLA*, *Selby.* Erne. White-tailed Eagle. Cinereous Eagle.—This bird breeds in both countries, and is the only species of Eagle inhabiting Shetland. The places most frequented by it, and where it breeds in the latter country, are,

the Bard of Bressa, on the west side of Rona's Hill, in Northmaven, at Fitfullhead, the southernmost extremity of the mainland, and at Hoy in Orkney. These situations are admirably adapted for its residence, being highly mountainous, with bold cliffs facing the sea and in many places the summits overhanging the base. On the shelves and in the fissures of these rocks they are perfectly secure from the attacks of man; for, from their natural position, it is almost impossible to get at their nests. On my first trip to Shetland I obtained two, and on my last six. I am informed they are more numerous in winter than in the summer, probably in consequence of some migrating from Norway and Iceland at that season. The cry of the Eagle somewhat resembles that of a young dog, but is very acute, and may be heard at a great distance. I once saw, while shooting on Rona's Hill, a pair of Skua Gulls chase and completely beat off a large Eagle: the Gulls struck at him several times, and at each stroke he screamed loudly, but never offered to return the assault. He was sailing along close to the steep part of the cliffs near the breeding-places of these Gulls, and was most probably looking out for a repast, which he would doubtless have secured had he not received the hint that his company could be dispensed with. I have also seen

from ten to fifteen of the Arctic Gulls attack an Eagle and beat him from their habitations.

**FALCO PEREGRINUS, Linn.** Peregrine Falcon.—This beautiful species, which surpasses most of its congeners in courage and daring intrepidity, is pretty numerous about the Shetland Islands, but is confined to certain districts. It selects the most mountainous parts, where it can settle on the shelving rocks of the stupendous cliffs, and breed in security in the midst of plenty; it is rare that more than a single pair have their nest on the same cliff, or even near to each other. I once found two pairs during the breeding-season on Noss Head or Hang Cliff; and a better place they could not have chosen, from the security it affords and the abundance of food which the nests of the sea-birds, abounding in the same rocks, supply them with. During my visits I captured several specimens of the Peregrine Falcon, and also procured some of their eggs. It is a shy bird and difficult to get within shot of. I have repeatedly laid wait for it on the tops of the cliffs and observed it flying slowly along the face of the rocks immediately below me, but out of distance, watching the opportunity during the absence of the Herring Gulls and Kittiwakes, to pick a young one from their nests,

which it frequently does with great dexterity. I know of no certain method of decoying this bird; the way in which I obtained my specimens was by first finding out their breeding-place and then lying in wait for and shooting the birds as they flew to and from their nests.

FALCO *ÆSALON*, *Temm.* Merlin.—This bird is not so common in Shetland as the Peregrine Falcon, but is more numerous in Orkney; like the Peregrine it chooses the most inaccessible parts of the rocks for breeding-places. I have frequently shot it from my boat, while in the act of chasing small birds on the water, and on one occasion a lark flew into the boat to escape from this enemy, which hovered above our heads in apparent disappointment at losing his victim. The lark was permitted to escape on our arrival on shore, but the Merlin on the spot paid the forfeit of his life for his temerity.

These are the only two species of Falcon I have met with in my wanderings through these countries, though Dr. Edmonston says that the Gos-hawk has been seen there: this may be the case, but I conceive instances of its occurrence are extremely rare. Owls are also very scarce, but they occasionally visit both countries in the winter season.

*HIRUNDO RUSTICA*, *Linn.* House Swallow.—I never saw this bird either in Orkney or Shetland, though the weather in the summer, during my visit at the latter place, was remarkably fine. I was informed by a friend who resides in Shetland that a pair once remained for some time in the summer, and built their nest under the window of a house at Sumburgh Head, but the people unfortunately destroyed it, after which the old birds deserted the place.

*HIRUNDO RIPARIA*, *Linn.* Sand Martin.—I have frequently seen a few straggling pairs of the Sand Martin in both countries; I do not believe it breeds there, or I should have found it at least for some time about the same situation; but I did not, and as it was at long intervals that I observed them, I conclude they were only accidental visitors.

*CAPRIMULGUS EUROPEUS*, *Linn.* Night Jar. Goatsucker.—During my last visit to Shetland one example of this bird was brought to me for sale by a countryman as one of the greatest curiosities, he assuring me as an inducement to buy it that it was the only one that had ever been seen in that country. I believe he was pretty cor-

rect in his statement ; the people were entirely ignorant of its name, and from inquiries which I made, I am inclined to believe it was the first that had been seen for many years. I never met with it in Orkney.

*MERULA VULGARIS*, *Ray*. Blackbird. Black Ouzel.—This bird is only seen in these countries in the winter season, when it appears to have been forced thither by bad weather, and it departs again as soon as a favourable opportunity occurs.

*MERULA PILARIS*, *Selby*. Fieldfare.—This bird as well as the Redwing, *Merula Iliaca*, Selby, is occasionally seen in the winter in both countries, in the course of their migrations from one country to another.

*SAXICOLA CENANTHE*, *Bechst*. Stone-checker. Wheatear.—This bird is very regular in its migrations to these countries : but is seen only in pairs during the breeding-season ; it makes its nest in old walls and frequently on the ground. The Shetlanders entertain a superstitious belief, that whoever robs its nest will soon after be affected with sickness.

*ERYTHACA RUBECULA*, *Swains.* Redbreast.—This bird is by no means plentiful in Orkney, and is very rare in Shetland, where, however, it is occasionally seen in severe winters. Its nest, as I am informed, has not been found in either place.

*REGULUS AURICAPILLUS*, *Selby.* Golden-crested Wren.—This diminutive bird I shot in Orkney, and had brought to me in Shetland; it is a rare visitant, for when I required its name from several of the people, to whom I exhibited it, they said they had never seen such a bird before.

*MOTACILLA ALBA*, *Linn.* Pied Wagtail.—This bird is not common in either country, but I have seen it more numerous in Orkney than in Shetland; I am not aware that it breeds in either country.

*ANTHUS AQUATICUS*, *Bechst.* Teetick\*. Rock-lark.—This bird is very abundant in all parts of Shetland and Orkney; it builds its nests in holes and shelves of the rocks, and lays its eggs very early in the spring; it does not ascend into the air like the Skylark, but flits from rock to rock; its note, which is sharp, twittering and totally destitute of melody, is uttered on the wing. I have

seldom seen more than a pair together, except when the young birds have left their nests, when the different families are abroad preparatory to their final separation : they are mostly to be found amongst the rocks, near to the sea-shore.

*ANTHUS PRATENSIS*, *Bechst.* Titlark. Meadow Pipit.—The Titlark is common in both countries, but not so numerous as the Rock-lark. There are no trees on which it can perch, but the rocks and stone walls afford a good substitute ; it is chiefly found near or about the edges of the lakes, and does not visit the sea-shore so much as the Rock-lark.

*ALAUDA ARVENSIS*, *Linn.* Lavrock\*. Skylark.—This bird makes its appearance very early in the spring, and remains during the summer and autumn, but retires to a more southern latitude on the approach of winter.

*PLECTROPHANES NIVALIS*, *Meyer.* Snowflake\*. Snow Bunting.—The Snowflake appears regularly in both countries, in large flocks, in the beginning of winter, and leaves again on the approach of spring. It is numerous about Lerwick and Stromness. Specimens shot in these islands do not

differ in their plumage from those taken in England.

*EMBERIZA MILIARIA*, *Linn.* Bunting.—This bird regularly resorts to both countries in the spring in considerable numbers, remaining to breed during the summer, and leaving again on the approach of winter.

*EMBERIZA CITRINELLA*, *Linn.* Yellow Bunting. Yellow Hammer.—This is a rare visitor in both countries, and is only to be seen during the winter season.

*PASSER DOMESTICUS*, *Ray.* House Sparrow. Common Sparrow.—Sparrows are numerous dispersed through Shetland and Orkney, where, as in warmer latitudes, they build in old buildings and in holes in the rocks, but never far from the habitation of man.

*LINARIA MONTANA*, *Ray.* Twite. Mountain Linnet. Heather Lintee\*.—This, as far as I am aware, is the only Linnet that breeds in these countries, over which it is pretty numerous dispersed. I have repeatedly taken its nest, which I found in shaded situations amongst long heath. In the

winter it appears in large flocks, frequently in company with Sparrows and Snowflakes, and infests the corn-yards.

*STURNUS VULGARIS*, *Linn.* Sterlin\*. Starling.—This bird is numerous in both countries. It frequently builds its nest in the walls of the houses so low that it may be easily reached with the hand, yet it is seldom disturbed by the people.

*CORVUS CORAX*, *Linn.* Raven. Corby\*. Great Corby-Crow.—This bird breeds in Shetland in considerable numbers, but is not so numerous in Orkney. It builds its nest in situations similar to those of the Eagle and Peregrine Falcon. It possesses the sense of smell in an exquisite degree of perfection, and is easily decoyed by placing carrion near any place where it resorts. It is very destructive to the young poultry and weakly lambs.

*CORVUS CORNIX*, *Linn.* Royston Crow. Hooded Crow.—This bird is a constant resident in Shetland and Orkney. It builds its nest in rocky cliffs, and frequently on the rocky tops of hills, which are by no means difficult of access. It is rather a shy bird: numbers are annually shot by the natives on account of their destructive habits. I

was informed that Eagles, Ravens, and Crows are not so numerous in Shetland now as they were formerly. It had been a custom for many years for the Commissioners of Supply to give three shillings and sixpence for every eagle's head, fourpence for that of a raven, and twopence for that of a crow, as an encouragement to the people to destroy them, on account of the mischief which they do to the lambs and poultry ; but this reward ceased in 1835, at the time I was there.

*TROGLODYTES EUROPÆUS*, *Cuv.* Robin\*. Wren. Kitty Wren.—The Wren is a constant resident in these islands, frequenting rocky and sheltered situations, and building its nest under stones, in crevices of the rocks, and in the ruins of old turf dykes.

*CUCULUS CANORUS*, *Linn.* Cuckoo.—Two pairs of these birds have regularly visited Orkney for the last four or five years, and bred there. The place they selected for that purpose was in the immediate neighbourhood of Stromness. I do not know if it has been seen in Shetland.

*COLUMBA LIVIA*, *Linn.* Rock Dove. Rock Pigeon\*.—There are considerable numbers of the

Rock Pigeon both in Orkney and Shetland. They breed in the rocks and deep subterranean caverns, the mouths of which open to the sea, and to which they constantly repair during the night. There is one cavern on the north side of the island of Bressa celebrated as a breeding-place of these birds. The method I took to procure specimens was, to go about the dusk of the evening, and make a noise at the entrance of the cave ; the birds would then fly out, and I frequently killed three or four at a shot. They are smaller and of a darker colour than our tame Pigeon. During the day they fly about in large flocks, searching for food, and when not engaged in feeding, their favourite resort appears to be such portions of the high precipices as are covered with soft grass.

*LAGOPUS SCOTICUS*, *Leach*. Red Grouse. Moor Fowl.—Although the Red Grouse is tolerably numerous in the Orkneys, I have never seen one in Shetland ; I was, however, credibly informed that it is occasionally seen on Rona's Hill in winter.

*LAGOPUS MUTUS*, *Leach*. Ptarmigan. White Grouse.—A few pairs of this bird were shot in one season some years ago on Hoy Hill in Orkney,

but I believe none have been seen since, and I have never heard of their having been seen in Shetland.

The foregoing list comprehends all the land birds I have met with, or that I am credily informed may be found in these islands. No doubt many others visit them occasionally, and rare specimens might be obtained were any naturalist resident there who was able to distinguish them, or give accurate details respecting their size, colour, and appearance. Such a person would, from the number of opportunities, be able to supply ornithologists with much useful information, many birds being seen whose names are unknown, and whose appearance is not therefore recorded. I shall now proceed to enumerate the Water Birds, which are numerous in all parts of these countries, though some few species are limited to certain localities.

GRUS CINEREA, *Bechst.* Crane. Common Crane.  
—This bird is an occasional visitor in severe winters or stormy weather; two examples were shot in Shetland in the interval between my first and second visits.

ARDEA CINEREA, *Lath.* Heron. Common He-

ron.—The Heron is very plentiful in Shetland, and still more so in Orkney on the small islands lying off Rissa Little. In Shetland, the islands in the neighbourhood of Scallaway appear to be its favourite place of resort, but it does not breed there. I have observed that this bird, let the wind be high or low, invariably selects the lee side of the island or rock on which the wind may be setting.

NUMENIUS ARQUATA, *Lath.* Whaap\*. Curlew.—This bird is rather plentifully distributed throughout these countries; it is very shy, and resorts to the most retired parts of mossy hills, in which situations it lays its eggs. It rarely frequents the sea-shore in Shetland, but remains in the neighbourhood of the lakes, in the muddy banks of which it procures its food.

NUMENIUS PHÆOPUS, *Lath.* Tang-Whaap\*. Whimbrel.—The habits and manners of this bird are in all respects the same as those of the Curlew, but they do not associate together, although I have found their nests within shot of each other. They are equally as numerous as the Curlew, but leave immediately after the breeding-season.

TOTANUS CALIDRIS, *Bechst.* Redshank. Sand-

cock.—This bird visits both countries occasionally, but does not remain long. I have found it scattered about in various parts of the country. It is of a solitary habit, being mostly seen alone or in pairs only.

*SCOLOPAX RUSTICOLA*, *Linn.* Woodcock.—The Woodcock is occasionally seen in both Orkney and Shetland, but does not stay any time, merely resting itself on its passage to and from the countries bordering the Baltic.

*SCOLOPAX GALLINAGO*, *Linn.* Snippick\*. Common Snipe. This bird is very numerous in both countries, frequenting marshy situations, where it breeds, and makes its nest on the mossy banks of lakes and small running streams.

*SCOLOPAX GALLINULA*, *Linn.* Plover Page\*. Jack Snipe. Judcock.—I have seen very few of the Jack Snipe either in Orkney or Shetland, and in the breeding-season these disappeared. Although I found many nests, and procured the eggs of the Common Snipe, yet I could not obtain those of the Jack Snipe. I have occasionally seen this bird in the company of the Ring Dotterel.

*TRINGA MARITIMA*, *Brunn.* Purple Sandpiper.

The Purple Sandpiper is very numerous in Shetland and Orkney, appearing early in the spring and leaving again in the latter end of April, about which time it collects in large flocks, and may be found on the rocks at ebb-tide, watching each retiring wave, running down as the water falls back, picking small shell-fish off the stones, and displaying great activity in escaping the advancing sea. It does not breed there.

*TRINGA VARIABILIS*, *Meyer*. Ebb-Sleeper\*. Dunlin.—The Dunlin breeds and is very plentiful in both countries. It frequents more particularly the inland lakes and the rocky shores. The female is rather larger than the male, but in other respects nearly resembles him. I took a nest of this bird with four eggs, on the side of Rona's Hill. The nest is very difficult to find, and it is only by frightening the old bird from the nest that you have a chance of succeeding. When driven from its nest, it will endeavour to draw your attention towards itself. I have had it rise from close under my feet in the breeding-season, and resort to every artifice to effect its object, thereby the more plainly convincing me that the nest was close to me, and yet I have been unsuccessful in my search, so secretly do they make it. A few of

these birds remain in both countries during the winter, when, in consequence of their change of plumage, they are considered to be a distinct species, and are then called the Purre or Stint. At this season they frequent the sea-shore, particularly when there is much surf, and occasionally the lakes near the sea. If, when only slightly wounded, the Dunlin should fall on the water, it can readily raise itself and fly off.

PHALAROPUS HYPERBOREUS, *Lath.* Red-necked Phalarope.—I have never seen this bird in Shetland. I got several in Orkney, but it is not plentiful. It arrives in the month of July, and departs on the approach of winter. It breeds in August, and builds its nest in swampy situations close to the edge of the water; sometimes on small green islands in the middle of the lakes. The places where I procured their eggs and found the birds most numerous, are in a small sheet of water three or four miles from the lighthouse of Sanda, a lake near Nunse Castle in Westra, and at Sandwick, near Stromness.

CREX PRATENSIS, *Bechst.* Corn-Crake. Land-Rail. This bird regularly visits Shetland and Orkney in the summer; it is very numerous in

the latter place, particularly on the island of Sanda. It leaves about the month of October, and returns in April. Its appearance is the harbinger of returning life and vegetation.

*FULICA ATRA*, *Linn.* Coot. Bald Coot.—The Coot breeds regularly in Orkney in a lake on the island of Sanda, and in the same lake with the Red-necked Phalarope at Nunse Castle. I am aware of only one example of this bird having been taken in Shetland, and this a gentleman had tame in his possession at Scallaway, where I saw it on my last visit.

*HÆMATOPUS OSTRALEGUS*, *Linn.* Choldrick\*. Oyster-catcher.—This bird is very plentiful in both countries during the breeding-season, when it is extremely shy and solitary. Some few remain during the winter, but the greater part leave on the approach of that season; previous to their departure they collect in great numbers. The males are very watchful, and upon the least alarm run off with a loud scream, disturbing every other bird that chances to be in the immediate neighbourhood; from which circumstance they are a great annoyance to the fowler. I have never seen the Oyster-catcher take the water from

choice, but when wounded it can both swim and dive, though not rapidly or dexterously. It is always to be found along the rocky shores, where it makes its nest chiefly amongst the shingly stones not far above high-water mark, and occasionally upon the low shelves of the rocks. It lays three or four eggs; I have taken many nests, and more frequently found three than four. The young leave the nest as soon as they are hatched.

*STREPSILAS INTERPRES*, *Leach*. Turnstone. This bird only visits these islands in the winter season, and is not numerous. It leaves early in the spring.

*VANELLUS CRISTATUS*, *Meyer*. Peewit. Lapwing.—This is a rare bird both in Orkney and Shetland, only a few pairs visiting these countries in the summer.

*CHARADRIUS PLUVIALIS*, *Linn*. Golden Plover.—The Golden Plover breeds and is very numerous in both countries. At the period of incubation it is very tame and falls an easy prey to the fowler. It is seen in large flocks in the daytime on the hills in the months of September and October. In the winter, when the ground is covered with snow,

it resorts to the sea-side ; great numbers however leave on the approach of that season for a more southern latitude.

CHARADRIUS HIATICULA, *Linn.* Sandy Loo\*. Sea Lark. Ring Dotterel.—This bird is very plentiful ; it may be met with on almost every shore, sometimes in flocks of twenty. It appears to prefer the sandy margins of the lakes to the sea-side, for I have found it more numerous in such places. It lays its eggs in any slight depression on a small-grained gravelly beach, sometimes just above high-water mark, from which situations I have frequently taken them.

ANSER PALUSTRIS, *Flem.* Wild Goose.—Considerable numbers of this bird visit both countries in the winter, but do not breed there. They may generally be found feeding during the day on swampy ground in the neighbourhood of lakes, but are seldom seen at sea.

ANSER BRENTA, *Flem.* Brent Goose.—This bird is very rare in both Orkney and Shetland. I never saw one in the latter country, though I am informed they have sometimes been shot there. On one occasion I saw four in Orkney, three of which

I obtained ; it was early in the spring, during very stormy weather, and I presume they had merely halted there in the course of their migrations : these were the only examples I saw during my stay.

CYGNUS FERUS, *Ray*. Wild Swan.—Large flocks of this bird annually visit Shetland and Orkney in the spring and autumn. They generally select the largest and most unfrequented lakes. During the day they keep in the centre of the lake, but approach the shore towards night for the purpose of feeding, at which time they are frequently shot by the fowler, who secretes himself by the side of the water waiting their arrival. Five have been killed at one discharge in this manner.

TADORNA VULPANSER, *Flem*. Shieldrake.—Although this elegant species is common in Orkney, it rarely visits Shetland. It is seldom met with in places remote from the sea. Its principal food is seaweed, small shell-fish, and marine insects ; in Orkney, where it receives the appellation of Sly Goose, it breeds regularly, selecting such places as are near to the water's edge, to which the parent birds conduct their young as soon as they are hatched or are able to waddle along, after which

they seldom come on shore again until they are well able to fly, nor do the old birds forsake them until this takes place ; I have occasionally found the nest of this bird in old rabbit-holes.

*ANUS BOSCHAS*, *Linn.* Stock Duck\*. Mallard. Common Wild Duck.—This shy and wary bird remains in both countries during the whole year, frequenting the lakes, marshy wastes, and heads of the more retired bays. It is more plentiful in Orkney than Shetland.

*QUERQUEDULA ACUTA*, *Selby.* Pintail Duck.—I have never met with this bird in Shetland, but it is tolerably plentiful in Orkney, particularly in the island of Sanda. It frequents the inland lakes more than the sea-shore, and leaves these islands early in the spring.

*QUERQUEDULA CRECCA*, *Selby.* Teal. Common Teal.—This beautiful little species is by no means numerous in either country. It is most plentiful in the winter, but a few pairs occasionally remain during the summer and breed. It prefers the inland lakes to the sea-shore.

*OIDEMIA FUSCA*, *Flem.* Velvet Duck. Double

Scoter.—This species is rare in Shetland, but is very common in Orkney, where it arrives in the beginning of winter and retires again very early in the spring. It frequents the sounds in flocks of ten or twelve, generally feeding in the middle or deep water and in the stream of the tide. It is remarkably shy, and great caution is required in approaching it.

SOMATERIA MOLLISSIMA, *Leach*. Dunter. Eider Duck.—This wild but valuable species is rather plentiful amongst these islands in the winter: a few pairs remain during the summer and breed, choosing for that purpose the most unfrequented and exposed situations, such as the small islands and rocks; the nest is formed of seaweed and grass, and lined to a great thickness with fine soft elastic down from their breasts, and is placed in the most sheltered spot the bleak and solitary place will afford. These birds, particularly the males, vary very much in plumage at different seasons of the year. That part which in the winter is pure white, in the summer becomes mottled with black, in some birds much more so than in others. During the breeding-season they are very shy, but on the contrary it is reported that in the winter they are the most familiar of the duck tribe.

*SOMATERIA SPECTABILIS*, *Leach*. King Duck.—It has been asserted that this bird breeds regularly amongst the most northernmost of the Orkney Islands. I have visited these islands twice, and also Pappa Westra, where, according to report, its nest was taken. In all these situations I searched with the utmost diligence, in hopes of finding it, but was disappointed. I made particular inquiries in Shetland, and described the bird to many persons, but could not hear of any ever having been seen there.

*FULIGULA MARILA*, *Steph*. Scaup Duck.—The Scaup Duck, like others of the same genus, quits the high and cold northern latitudes in the winter months, and at the beginning of that season it arrives in considerable numbers in Orkney, but is not so plentiful in Shetland. It is to be met with in the sounds in large flocks, feeding in company with the Long-tailed Duck, and in lakes that empty themselves into, or are contiguous to the sea. It leaves early in the spring.

*HARELDA GLACIALIS*, *Leach*. Calloo\*. Long-tailed Duck. Swallow-tailed Shieldrake.—This species is very plentiful in both Orkney and Shetland, arriving about the middle of October

and departing again in the month of March. It is to be met with in all the inlets or voes, generally in large flocks, never far from the land, feeding upon small shell-fish and star-fish. When on the wing it utters a musical cry something like Calloo, which may be heard to a great distance; from this cry it derives its provincial name.

CLANGULA VULGARIS, *Leach*. Gowdy Duck\*. Golden Eye.—A small number of this species visit both countries in the winter season, and remain there until late in the spring; their chief resort is the freshwater lakes. It is a quick diver and not easily shot except on the wing.

MERGUS MERGANSER, *Linn*. Goosander.—In the winter this bird occasionally visits both countries; it is seldom seen on the sea-shore, but retires to the inland lakes. It leaves very early in the spring.

MERGUS SERRATOR, *Linn*. Herald Duck. Red-breasted Merganser.—This wary bird is very plentiful in both countries, and is a constant resident; it is extremely shy at all seasons. It makes its nest, which consists of dry grass and moss lined with its own down, amongst the heath on the

margin of lakes, and on the banks of small rivulets, frequently under large stones; the female lays from eight to ten eggs rather larger than those of a duck. In the summer season the male loses his beautiful plumage, and approaches in colour to that of the female. This bird is seldom seen far from land, but frequents the inlets and inland lakes.

PODICEPS CORNUTUS, *Lath.*—Sclavonian or Horned Grebe.—This beautiful species is extremely rare in both Orkney and Shetland. I cannot say whether it is a constant resident in these countries or only migratory. During my stay in the former place I saw seven or eight, three of which I shot; this was in the month of April, and they were then in bad plumage. I have only seen one in Shetland, which I fortunately killed: it was on my last visit, about the latter end of May, and was in the most perfect plumage; indeed I never saw so fine a specimen. This Grebe differs from any other in having the irides of two colours. It is a very shy bird and a most expert diver, frequenting the sea, but always remaining close to the rocks, where the seaweed which is attached to the land floats on the surface of the water. When once alarmed it dives to a great

distance, and on coming to the surface immediately takes wing. The young of this bird is known by the name of the Dusky Grebe, and is very rare in both countries. I have seen very few, and these only in the spring, on the lakes near to or communicating with the sea. Two or three pairs used to frequent the Loch of Stenness in the neighbourhood of Stromness.

*PODICEPS MINOR*, *Lath.* Little Grebe. Dab-chick.—The Little Grebe is rather plentiful in Orkney; a few are also occasionally seen in Shetland. It breeds in the former place, but I am not certain that it does in the latter country. It frequents the sea-shore and lakes, and builds its nest in the lakes contiguous to the sea.

*COLYMBUS GLACIALIS*, *Linn.* Ember Goose\*. Great Northern Diver. Loon.—This beautiful bird is plentiful both in Orkney and Shetland in the winter and spring. It leaves about the latter end of May, by which time it has acquired its perfect summer plumage. It is extremely shy and very difficult to get within shot of; it generally congregates in parties of four or five: it dives with the utmost facility, can remain a long time under water, and rises again at a great di-

stance. In the act of diving it does not appear to make the least exertion, but sinks gradually under the surface without throwing itself forward, the head being the last part that disappears. It differs considerably in size and weight: the largest I shot in Shetland weighed sixteen pounds, the smallest ten pounds. It frequents the narrow inlets and sounds where there is a sandy bottom, and the best way to procure it is to secrete yourself amongst the rocks near the water's edge; by this means you will frequently get a shot at it, as it swims pretty close to the land in shallow water when feeding. It must be shot dead, for if only wounded your chance of getting it is very small. I once fired at eight in Orkney from my boat, six of which I wounded very severely: some appeared to be dead, but before I could get amongst them they recovered, and immediately disappeared under the water. I chased them for some time, but was obliged to give it up without getting one. A short time afterwards I killed two at one shot. On my last visit to Shetland I saw a Northern Diver in Hammer Voe, in the parish of Northmaven, on the 28th of June; it was in perfect plumage, and I was informed it had been there all the summer. I presume it must have been wounded or it would have left in the spring. It was remark-

ably shy; I tried several times to get a shot at it, but was unsuccessful. I am much surprised that Dr. Edmonston, a native of Shetland, who has resided there many years, and who has had constant opportunities of procuring and examining specimens of the natural history of his country, should have asserted in his published History of Shetland, that the *Colymbus glacialis*, as exhibited in museums, and described and figured in books on ornithology, is not known there. I am convinced, from the number I have seen, that the most ignorant man could not cross any of the sounds from one island to another, (which all there are obliged frequently to do,) without observing them.

COLYMBUS ARCTICUS, *Linn.* Black-throated Diver.—I have never seen this bird in Shetland; there is however no doubt of its visiting there occasionally. It is extremely rare in Orkney; I only saw three during my stay there, but did not succeed in getting one. They were sitting on the water in Hoy Sound, but flew off to sea before I got within shot of them. It is rather larger than the Red-throated Diver, and like it has the same disagreeable cry. It is even more shy than the Northern Diver. It is reported that the Black-

throated Diver is more numerous in the Hebrides than the Red-throated Diver.

COLYMBUS SEPTENTRIONALIS, *Linn.* Rain Goose\*. Red-throated Diver.—The Red-throated Divers are very plentiful in both countries; they frequent the sea and lakes; on the banks of the latter, they lay their eggs close to the water's edge, so close indeed that the bird can touch the water with its bill while sitting on its eggs; they are remarkably shy, particularly during the breeding season, and if any one approaches the lake, instantly leave their nests and take to the water. The female lays two eggs, which in general are deposited amongst a few loose stones. Perhaps these birds have the power of removing their eggs from their proximity to the water; for were it to be swollen only two or three inches in height the eggs would be destroyed. I have taken several of their eggs, and invariably found them not more than two or three inches from the water's edge. To procure these birds two or three persons should go together, never less than two; one should secrete himself close to the water and the other move round to the opposite side, and letting himself be seen will, by great caution, drive the birds towards the person in ambush. I have practised

this method repeatedly with success. It requires more patience and caution in shooting these birds than any others I know of excepting the Northern Diver; for in general they select such a place for the site of incubation as from its natural situation will admit of their perceiving any one that approaches; and very often after creeping a great distance on your hands and knees towards a lake, believing yourself unobserved, on arriving there you have the mortification to find the object of your search is on the side exactly opposite to you.

URIA TROILE, *Lath.* Willøck. Guillemot.—This bird is very numerous in both countries: in Shetland it is known by the name of Kuggoy, and in Orkney by that of Backie. In the breeding season I have seen them sitting on the shelves of the rocks close together, in lines of equal length. The young birds take the water immediately after they leave the shell; I have seen them repeatedly in their downy state swimming in company with the old birds.

URIA GRYLLE, *Lath.* Tystie\*. Black Guillemot. Greenland Dove.—The Black Guillemot is very plentiful amongst the islands of Orkney

and Shetland, and is seldom found far from the land; it makes its nest in holes under stones, and in fissures of the rocks. The female lays two eggs. I have repeatedly taken the eggs from under large stones, when I could not reach them, by screwing my ramrod into them. It is rather a singular circumstance that the young of this species never leave the nest until perfectly fledged and able to provide for themselves; as soon as this takes place the attendance and care of the parents cease; they do not even continue in the company of their young, which associate together for some time afterwards.

MERGULUS MELANOLEUCOS, *Ray*. Rotche. Little Auk.—The Little Auk appears regularly in Shetland every winter. I have not heard of any having been seen in Orkney, though I should suppose it occasionally visits those islands. It is not numerous, rarely frequents the shore, but keeps in deep water: in severe weather it retires into the harbours and small inlets, where it is frequently shot.

ALCA IMPENNIS, *Linn*. The Great Auk. Northern Penguin.—I have never seen a living specimen of this bird, nor do I believe it ever visits

Shetland. I made inquiries at every place I visited, but no one knew it : had such a remarkable bird been seen there I must have heard of it. During my stay in Orkney, and while on a visit at Pappa Westra, I was informed by Mr. Trail, whom I had the pleasure of seeing two or three times, that a pair of these birds were constantly seen there for several years, and were christened by the people the king and queen of the Auks. Mr. Bullock on his tour through these islands, made several attempts to obtain one, but was unsuccessful ; about a fortnight after his departure one was shot and sent to him, and the other then forsook the place. Mr. Trail supposed they had a nest on the island, but on account of its exposed situation the surf must have washed the eggs from the rocks, and thus prevented any further increase.

ALCA TORDA, *Linn.* Sea Crow\*. Razor-bill.  
—This bird is tolerably plentiful in Shetland and very numerous in Orkney ; it breeds in both places, and is said to lay only one large egg ; it frequents the inlets in company with the Guillemots, diving after fish, and is attended by a great number of Gulls of different species, which hover about anxiously waiting to pick up any small fish that

may escape the Divers, and should the former change their ground, the Gulls invariably accompany them. The young of this bird is generally known by the name of the Black-billed Auk. I was formerly inclined to think with Montagu that they were a distinct species, in which opinion I was strengthened by the circumstance of the Razor-bill being numerous in the summer months and leaving on the approach of winter, while, on the contrary, the Black-billed Auk, or young, is scarce in summer, but more abundant in winter; subsequent experience has however convinced me of my error.

FRATERCULA ARCTICA, *Steph.* Tamie Norie\*. Puffin. Coulterneb.—This bird breeds plentifully in Orkney and Shetland, and constructs its nest on the upper part of high rocks, under large stones, and in holes in the ground. It is a migratory species, appearing in May and leaving again in August; it is a shy feeder, is never seen near frequented places, but always resorts to deep water in the neighbourhood of high rocks.

PHALACROCORAX CARBO, *Steph., Flem.* Brongie\*. Scarf Cormorant.—This species is a constant resident amongst these islands, but is not

numerous: its nest is composed of sticks and seaweeds, and is built on the shelves and inaccessible parts of the cliffs; frequently on the small rocky islands, where it collects in small numbers. It is extremely shy, which probably arises from its being so much disturbed. It is difficult to get within shot of this bird, as it instantly flies off on the approach of a boat.

*PHALACROCORAX CRISTATUS*, *Steph., Flem.*  
Crested Shag. Green Cormorant.—This bird congregates in large flocks and is very numerous in both countries; it builds its nest on the shelves of high rocks, the female laying two eggs. The young are easily tamed, and are docile, sagacious, and affectionate. The adult bird is in the most perfect plumage in the months of April and May; after this time it loses the crest. In several specimens which I procured in the month of June, part of the feathers on the top of the head were wanting, and the remainder easily came off on being handled.

*SULA BASSANA*, *Briss.* Gannet\*. Solan Goose.—This species is more numerous in Orkney than in Shetland, where it arrives in great numbers about the latter end of September and the beginning of

October, in search of the herring fry and sillocks, which abound in those months. It is constantly on the wing feeding, and pounces on the small fish swimming near the surface with great rapidity and from a considerable elevation. It is very frequently taken alive in calm weather by the boatmen, after it has gorged to such an excess that it is unable to rise without the assistance of a wind. I once killed six at a shot in Orkney, out of a flock sitting on the water. It does not breed in either country.

STERNA ARCTICA, *Temm.* Picke-ta\*. Arctic Tern.—This beautiful little bird is plentiful in both countries in the summer. It makes its nest on the gravelly beach, and low rocks, and sometimes amongst the short dry grass on the tops of low cliffs, always in exposed situations. The female lays three or four eggs. This bird is seldom seen but on the wing, in pursuit of the small coal-fish (sillocks) which abound in the harbour and inlets of these countries. It darts down upon them with great rapidity as they swim on the surface of the water. It is the only species of Tern I have met with amongst these islands.

LARUS RIDIBUNDUS, *Linn.* Hoody Crow\*.

Black-headed Gull.—This bird is not plentiful in either country : a few pairs regularly resort thither during the breeding-season, and make their nests on the small islands in the lakes which are contiguous to the sea, generally selecting those which are in the neighbourhood of deep bogs, on the gravelly shores of which they are frequently to be met with. In Orkney I have found their nests in a lake near Nunse Castle, and in another on the Isle of Sanda. In Shetland they are most numerous in a lake at the back of Rona's Hill.

LARUS CANUS, *Linn.* Maw\*. Common Gull.—During the summer season this bird is the scarcest of the Gull tribe in these islands. I have found a few pairs incubating in company with the Herring Gull, and occasionally a solitary pair breeding in the cliffs without any associates ; they may be found occasionally on the small islands in the lakes. The female generally lays three eggs.

LARUS RISSA, *Linn.* Kittiwake.—The Kittiwakes are migratory : during the summer season they are by far the most numerous of the Gull tribe. They select the bold rocky headlands in

which to build their nests, occupying the same places for years in succession, to the exclusion of almost every other bird. The nest is in general placed a considerable height in the cliff. I have seen a few pairs of Guillemots, Razor-bills, and Puffins occupying the lower parts: these appeared to be the only birds that were permitted to enjoy the privilege.

LARUS ARGENTATUS, *Brunn.* Blue-backed Maw\*. Herring Gull.—This bird is more numerous than the preceding species both in Orkney and Shetland: its general manners and habits resemble the Black-backed Gull; like it, it is bold and clamorous when danger approaches, giving warning to all other birds within its call, some of which seem perfectly to understand the hint, and almost always take advantage of it by flying off before the fowler can approach within gunshot of them; like a true general, after sounding the retreat he is the last to leave the field, and frequently returns to reconnoitre, making a sweep as if to strike the person who has caused this disturbance, which habit frequently draws down the gunner's vengeance on itself, and causes it to become the victim of his own good intention. The scream of this bird on such occasions is peculiarly

wild and indicative of anxious impatience. Its nest, which is rarely placed in situations of difficult access, is composed of a few pieces of dry grass, placed on the low projecting ledges of the rocks, and frequently on small islands among long dry grass. I have taken many eggs from the nests of these birds in the latter situation, generally two, but sometimes three, from one nest.

LARUS MARINUS, *Linn.* Swabie\*. Great Black-backed Gull.—The Great Black-backed Gull is generally dispersed over these countries, but is not numerous; it builds its nest on small islands, on stacks, and the most inaccessible parts of the rocks. The situation selected for nidification it reserves entirely for itself, not even permitting one of its own species or any other intruder to settle there; it is generally shy and reserved, but during the breeding-season it is bold and courageous, and will defend its nest and young with great obstinacy, frequently making a dash at the fowler and coming within a foot or two of his gun. Like the Oyster-catcher it greatly annoys the gunner, by intimating his approach to other birds. It is an inseparable attendant on the Shag and Cormorant from selfish motives: their voracious appetites inducing them to devour more than they

can digest, they are frequently compelled to disgorge part of their meal, which the Gull is permitted quietly to receive as the reward of his voluntary attendance: he is, moreover, a vigilant sentinel, and repays them for their liberality by giving them warning on the approach of danger. To the Seal this bird is of essential service. It is the custom of these animals to lie upon the rocks for hours in succession, and so well acquainted are the natives with their haunts, that they raise small bulwarks to conceal their approach. This Gull however frequently frustrates all these precautions by sounding the note of alarm, thereby informing the Seal that danger is close at hand, and if the latter is not disposed to avail himself of this friendly intimation, they will frequently strike them on the head with their feet: when the Seal retires into the water all further care on their part ceases, as they consider him then in a situation to protect himself, but should he appear again within gunshot of the place he has left, the Gull will dart down at him and frequently splash the water in his face, as if to threaten him for his temerity. The female in general lays three eggs; I have taken four from a nest, but it is rare to find the latter number.

*LARUS FUSCUS*, *Linn.* Lesser Black-backed Gull.—This bird regularly visits Shetland and Orkney in the breeding-season, but is not numerous, and is confined to a few situations; I found it most plentiful on the lakes in the parish of Northmaven, in the former country. It breeds and rears its young on the small islands in the inland lakes, depositing the eggs among the short grass and moss. The natives visit the islands on floats generally twice during the breeding-season, for the purpose of collecting the eggs. In the daytime this bird may be found feeding in low swampy places in the immediate neighbourhood of the lakes. It sometimes visits the sea-shore, but seldom leaves the land. This species is easily distinguished from any other of its race. It is smaller than the Herring Gull, the feathers on the back and wings are much darker, and the legs are yellow.

*LESTRIS CATARACTES*, *Temm.* Bonxie\*. Skua Gull. Brown Gull.—I never saw this bird in Orkney, and there are only three places in Shetland where it breeds, viz. Foula, Rona's Hill, and the isle of Unst: in the latter place it is by no means numerous, and is strictly preserved by the

landlords on whose property it may have settled, from a supposition that it will defend their flocks from the attacks of the Eagle. That it will attack the Eagle if he approaches their nests is a fact I have witnessed; I once saw a pair completely beat off a large Eagle from their breeding-place on Rona's Hill. The flight of the Skua is more rapid and stronger than that of any other Gull. It is a great favourite with the fishermen, frequently accompanying their boats to the fishing-ground or Haaf, which they consider a lucky omen; and in return for its attendance they give it the refuse of the fish which are caught. The Skua Gull does not associate in groups, and it is seldom that more than a pair are seen together. During the breeding-season it is highly courageous, and will strike furiously at, and will even pursue, any one who may happen to approach its nest, which is constructed amongst the heath or moss; the female mostly laying two eggs but sometimes three.

LESTRIS RICHARDSONII, *Swains*. *Scoutiallin*\*. Richardson's Gull.—Numbers of this bird breed in Orkney and Shetland, appearing regularly in May and leaving in August; it is confined to a few situations, and is strictly preserved, from the same motive as the Skua Gull. The place where

I found it most numerous in the former country was the Holm of Eddy, and in the latter on the island of Noss near Lerwick. It constructs its nest on low wet mossy heaths in exposed situations. The female lays two eggs, and has recourse to the same stratagem that the Plover employs to decoy you from the nest; but when a person approaches near to the place where the nest is built, becomes bold and fierce, and strikes severely with the feet and bill. A dog I had with me on my first visit had been so repeatedly and severely struck by this bird, that had he heard one cry, the sound of which from experience he was perfectly familiar with, he would instantly come behind me for protection, and all my efforts to make him hunt again were ineffectual until we had got some distance from the place; another dog I had with me on my second visit possessing more courage than the former, after feeling the effects of their bills and wings once or twice, and appearing much astonished at such a foe, would watch the bird pouncing at him and spring from the ground to meet the attack, and by this means he escaped many severe blows. There is a great variety in the plumage of this bird, which in my belief does not depend upon either age or sex. In fact, in several pairs which I procured, it was

impossible to tell from outward appearance the sex to which each belonged ; and that this difference does not depend upon age, is proved by the circumstance of my having frequently taken the full-fledged young birds of a dark brown colour, the parents of which were white-breasted, and, on the contrary, light-coloured young birds from dark-coloured parents ; the light-coloured birds however are not so numerous as the dark ones. Difference of colour appears to have no effect in their associating together in the breeding-season ; they mix indiscriminately : I have seen instances of two of these birds pairing together, the one dark brown, the other much lighter with a white breast ; two both light brown ; and again two both dark brown.

*PROCELLARIA GLACIALIS*, *Linn.* Malemuk Fulmar Petrel.—This bird occasionally visits Shetland during the winter in stormy weather ; I am not aware of its having been seen in Orkney.

*PUFFINUS ANGLORUM*, *Ray.* Lyrie\*. Manx Petrel. Shearwater.—The Shearwater is tolerably plentiful both in Orkney and Shetland during the summer season. Considerable numbers breed in Foula and Unst in the latter country, and in

Orkney their favourite residence is upon some rocks near Pappa Westra. They build their nests in holes and fissures of the cliffs in situations similar to the Puffin.

*THALASSIDROMA PELAGICA*, *Selby*. Stormy Petrel. Mother Carey's Chicken.—This little bird, the least of the web-footed tribe, is numerous in Shetland; it is however local and by no means generally dispersed, but is attached to particular spots for the purpose of nidification. I found it most plentiful among the small islands lying off Scallaway on the west side of the mainland in Shetland, and in Orkney in the small inlets near St. Margaret's Hope. It makes its nests amongst loose stones, the female laying but one egg; occasionally it builds in rabbit-holes. I have watched this bird for hours together and never saw one dive. It is never seen in fine weather excepting at night. The following beautiful lines of Barry Cornwall will, I doubt not, prove acceptable to the reader.

“ A thousand miles from land are we,  
Tossing about on the roaring sea,  
From billow to bounding billow cast,  
Like fleecy snow on the stormy blast;  
The sails are scattered abroad like weeds,  
The strong masts shake like quivering reeds,

The mighty cables and iron chains,  
The hull, which all earthly strength disdains,  
They strain and they crack, and hearts like stone  
Their natural hard proud strength disown.  
Up and down, up and down,  
From the base of the wave to the billow's crown,  
And amidst the flashing and feathery foam,  
The Stormy Petrel finds a home ;  
A home, if such a place may be  
For her who lives on the wide wide sea,  
On the craggy ice, in the frozen air,  
And only seeketh her rocky lair  
To warm her young, and to teach them spring  
At once o'er the waves on their stormy wing.  
O'er the deep, o'er the deep,  
Where the whale, and the shark, and the sword-fish  
    sleep,  
Outflying the blast and the driving rain,  
The Petrel telleth her tale—in vain ;  
For the mariner curseth the warning bird,  
Who bringeth him news of the storm unheard.  
Ah! thus does the prophet of good or ill  
Meet hate from the creatures he serveth still,  
Yet he ne'er falters : so, Petrel, spring  
Once more o'er the waves on thy stormy wing."

I have thus given a slight but general view of the birds to be met with in these similar and sister countries ; some few species named in the list I did not obtain, though I have included them along with the others, as I have been informed by persons of unquestionable veracity that they have

been procured there. It will be perceived that comparatively few species are permanent residents ; a great number being migratory, some only occurring occasionally, and others being merely accidental visitors.

In concluding this slight sketch of the Ornithology of these northern appendages of Britain, I shall give a short account of the animals which breed there. The following list comprehends all they afford. The Horse, Ox, Sheep, Hog, Cat, Rat, Mouse, Rabbit, and Ermine.

EQUUS CABALLUS, *Linn.* Horse.—The native Shetland Horse is small, but strong and capable of enduring great fatigue ; some are very diminutive, I brought one to England which did not exceed thirty-two inches in height. Those of Orkney are much larger and better proportioned. They generally run wild on the hills in Shetland until they are between two and three years old, when they are caught (a task of considerable difficulty) for the purpose of carrying loads. Though never regularly broken in, they soon become tractable ; this docility however does not arise so much from a natural want of spirit in the animal as from the poor supply of provision they are allowed. Great

numbers are annually exported from both countries.

*BOS TAURUS*, *Linn.* Ox.—This animal is also of a small size, and rarely to be obtained in good condition except in the middle of summer, at which season the flesh is delicate and fine-flavoured.

*OVIS ARIES*, *Linn.* Sheep.—This animal compared with the southern breeds of England and Scotland is very small, often not exceeding thirty pounds in weight. They are of various colours, black, white, dark brown, and spotted. In general they are very lean; some few are fattened in summer for sale or for the farmer's own consumption, and in the autumn and the beginning of winter, when the fodder is scarce, great numbers are killed for the purpose of being salted and dried: those of Orkney are much esteemed for the delicacy and flavour of their flesh.

*CANIS FAMILIARIS*, *Linn.* Dog.—Dogs are numerous and principally of the shepherd kind. I believe that not a single instance of that most frightful disease hydrophobia has been known to occur in these islands.

*MUSTELA ERMINEA*, *Linn.* Ermine.—This animal is pretty numerous in both countries, frequenting the rocky cliffs, and is sometimes to be met with along the sea shore: in the summer months they are of a brown colour, and white in winter, the change commencing in November.

The remaining Quadrupeds are generally known and present nothing peculiar.

In the order AMPHIBIA are the Seal and Otter, of the former of which there are two species.

*PHOCA VITULINA*, *Linn.* Selkie\*. Common Seal.—Seals are tolerably numerous on the shores of Shetland, but not very plentiful in Orkney; in both countries they are more numerous in the summer than in the winter. In Shetland they are vulgarly known by the name of Tang Fish. They vary much in size.

*PHOCA BARBATA*, *Müll.* Haaf Fish. Great Seal.—This animal is considerably larger than the common species, from which it differs in form and habits; the head is larger in proportion to the body than in the common seal. The male is larger than the female: they associate in pairs, frequenting

the most inaccessible parts of small rocks and skerries : their favourite resorts in the breeding-season are deep caverns, where they bring forth their young, generally in October; when the young are three or four days old they are as large as the young of the common seal at several months; they keep by themselves and never appear to associate with the other species.

LUTRA VULGARIS, *Erxl.* Otter.—Otters are numerous in both countries, frequenting the rocky cliffs in the deep bays or inlets of the sea, occasionally in the winter visiting the inland lakes, more particularly those which communicate by a small rivulet with the sea, and where in that season they principally obtain their food. They have frequently been taken on land in their passage to and from the lakes to the sea. The female in general produces two at a birth.

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I have thus endeavoured, as far as my abilities will permit, to give a short account of the natural history of Shetland and Orkney. Of what service it may be to Ornithological collectors, for whose assistance it is especially intended, time will show, but I can warrant its accuracy as regards the

localities of the different species. It will afford me much pleasure, if at some future period I should hear from any traveller who may have condescended to read it, that he has found it correct, or of the least service to him in obtaining the object of his pursuit.—I shall now describe the various articles required by a traveller of this description, being such as I had with me, and which I found to answer admirably.

It will immediately strike any one previously to his visiting these countries, if he is in the smallest degree acquainted with the modes of conveyance, that his luggage cannot be too portable, and this must be particularly attended to. His guns should be of the best description, for they are the most essential articles, and on them in fact, coupled with his own dexterity in using them, depends the success of the collector. On my first journey I fell into an error by having my guns too small in the bore and too short in the barrel, and likewise too few in number. Previous to my second visit I got three made of the following dimensions; they had the advantage of carrying a greater charge, and of killing much further; it is true they were considerably heavier than a common fowling-piece, but this is not of much consequence in shooting from a boat: the longest was four

feet six inches in the barrel, with a bore seven eighths of an inch in diameter, and one inch and seven eighths across at the breech. The next in size was four feet long in the barrel, three fourths of an inch in width of bore, and one inch and three fourths across the breech, outside measurement. The smallest, for the boat, was three feet six inches in length of the barrel, the width of the bore and the strength of the breech being in the same proportion. I had also a small fowling-piece for shooting on land. Whatever size the guns may be, I should recommend the traveller to have them made strong, particularly about the breech, as they are so liable to get wet even with the best care and attention that can be paid to them ; by being particular in this respect accidents may be prevented. It will be unnecessary to speak in favour of percussion locks ; they have stood the test of trial, and are now almost universally used ; in shooting the Divers they are invaluable. Guns of the above description with twisted barrels will not burst, with fair play ; in firing at large flocks of birds, I have frequently put double charges into mine, and have tried them in other respects very severely without any accident happening. I had also three square tin boxes of different sizes, made perfectly water-tight, and a small wicker basket,

in every respect similar to the one used by trout-fishers, for the purpose of carrying eggs in; one of the boxes will be necessary to contain a few clothes, &c., and the others for packing specimens; they should be conveniently made, with a broad leather strap, so that they may be easily carried over the shoulder. These things must be the traveller's constant companions, either in visiting the lakes or shooting at sea; they are easily stowed in a boat, and are necessary for putting the specimens into as soon as the blood gets coagulated, thus preventing them from being destroyed.

The route I should recommend to the naturalist as the most convenient one, and that in which the greatest abundance of birds is to be found, is, after arriving at Lerwick, and having searched all the inlets in the immediate neighbourhood of that place, not forgetting to visit Hang Cliff, to proceed by water to Catfirth, where there is a small inn, and spend a few days there, which he may do very profitably; from thence overland to Osnafirth, where a boat must be procured to proceed to Aceter, where I should advise him to remain some time, as almost all the different species of birds inhabiting Shetland may be found in the neighbourhood. The country around is but thinly

populated; it abounds with freshwater lakes, and having numerous inlets of the sea is admirably adapted for the collecting of specimens: the place itself affords poor accommodation to the traveller, but the hospitality of the inhabitants amply compensates for this want. In returning from Aceter to Lerwick the traveller should pass through Yell Sound, in which there are many small islands where birds are very numerous; if agreeable to himself the traveller may stay some days on his route at the different fishing-stations, from whence at any time a boat can easily be procured to proceed to Lerwick. After having taken a tour of the Northern Isles, the next place worth visiting is Scallaway. I have already mentioned the islands lying off there, where the Stormy Petrel breeds, along with many species of Gulls, &c. The southern extremity of the mainland does not afford so many birds as the north, for being more populous, and the birds consequently much disturbed, they naturally retire to those parts where they are more secure.

Those who travel for pleasure will take a direction most agreeable to themselves, as a few days' delay at any place is no inconvenience to them; but one whose object is profit as well as pleasure, and whose time is of importance, ought so

to regulate his journeys that he may immediately remove from one place to another should he not meet with anything worth detaining him. By taking the route I have pointed out, wind and weather permitting, it will give him many advantages. The parish of Northmaven and the neighbourhood of Scallaway are of all others, so far as I am acquainted with Shetland, to be preferred; and to the admirer of the wild and grand scenes of nature, Northmaven will afford high gratification and sufficient employment both for his pen and his pencil.

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For the information of the traveller I subjoin a list of the steam-vessels now voyaging between London and Hull, Hull and Leith, Leith and Orkney, Orkney and Shetland.

*From the Custom-house Quay, London, to Hull, Three times a Week.*

The Yorkshireman	on Tuesday Mornings.
The London	on Thursday Mornings.
The Gazelle	on Saturday Mornings.

*From Hull to London :*

The London	on Monday Mornings.
The Gazelle	on Wednesday Mornings.
The Yorkshireman	on Saturday Mornings.

Fares, Best Cabin 4s. ; Fore Cabin 2s.—Agents, Messrs

W. I. Hall and Co., Custom-house Quay, London ;  
Messrs. Brownlow and Pearson, Hull.

*From London to Hull :*

The Waterwitch on Wednesday Mornings.

The Vivid on Saturday Mornings.

*From Hull to London :*

The Vivid on Tuesday Afternoons.

The Waterwitch on Saturday Afternoons.

Fares, Best Cabin 10s.; Fore Cabin 4s.—Agents, Messrs.  
Griffin and Hillhouse, Beal's Wharf, London ; Messrs.  
Hudson and Cobby, Hull.

The City of Glasgow leaves London for Hull every  
Sunday Morning, and leaves Hull for London every  
Thursday Morning.—Fares, Best Cabin 10s.; Fore  
Cabin 5s.—Agents, Messrs. Holden and Sampson, Hull.

*From Hull to Leith :*

The Pegasus, R. Cook, Commander, leaves Hull for  
Leith every Wednesday, and returns from Leith to  
Hull every Saturday.—Fares, Best Cabin 10s.; Fore  
Cabin 3s.—Agents, Messrs. Thompson and Co., Hull.

The St. George leaves Hull for Leith every Wednes-  
day, and returns from Leith to Hull every Saturday.  
—Fares, Best Cabin 5s.; Fore Cabin 3s.—Agent, T. S.  
Pim, Hull.

*From Leith to Caithness, Orkney, and Shetland :*

The Sovereign leaves Leith every Monday Morning

for Wick and Kirkwall, proceeding to Lerwick once a fortnight.

There are also two schooners trading regularly between Leith and Kirkwall; a schooner and a sloop between Leith and Stromness; and two schooners and a sloop between Leith and Lerwick.

THE END.



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