

required as a lighthouse, the woodwork inside has long since decayed, but in falling has not injured the masonry. There are now no supplies of any sort at the beacon, even the iron tank is completely worn out, nor would it be of any use landing another, unless the tower were re-roofed; however, as any party which made Raine Island could reach the settlement at Cape York in twenty-four hours, there is no necessity to re-victual the beacon.

The birds form the most striking feature at Raine Island. They are in such numbers as to darken the air as they fly overhead, and the noise of their various mingled screams is very trying to the ears at first, but not so painful as that of a penguin rookery. Eleven species of birds were seen on the island. A Heron, seen only at a distance, the cosmopolitan "Turnstone" (*Strepsilas interpres*), and a small Gull (*Larus novæ-hollandiæ*) appeared to be casual visitors to the island, as they were not nesting there, the Turnstones being seen in flocks on the shore. The birds breeding on the island were as follows:—A Landrail (*Rallus pectoralis*), a widely spread species, occurring commonly in Australia, Central Polynesia, the Moluccas, and the Philippines. These birds were so tame that they could be knocked down with sticks and caught by the hand; they had full-fledged young running about. A Tern (*Sterna fuliginosa*), a widely spread species, the well-known "Wideawake" of Ascension Island, was exceedingly abundant. The stretches of flat ground above the shore line covered with grass were absolutely full of the brown fledged young of this bird, and eggs were already very scarce. A Noddy (*Anous stolidus*), the same bird as that at St. Paul's Rocks and Inaccessible Island, so far off in the Atlantic, makes here a rude nest of twigs and grass amongst the low bushes, but often nests also on the ground. There were plenty of eggs of this bird, it being not so advanced in breeding as the Tern. Two species of Gannets (*Sula leucogastra* and *Sula cyanops*) were nesting on the ground, and especially on a plot quite flat and bare of vegetation, probably the site of the dwellings of the men employed in 1844 in putting up the beacon. *Sula leucogastra*, the "Booby" of St. Paul's Rocks, makes a slight nest of green twigs and grass on the ground. *Sula cyanops* makes a circular hole in the earth, about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches deep. This species is nearly white, with the naked parts about the head of a dull blue, and a bright yellow iris, which gives the bird a ferocious look as it ruffles its feathers and croaks at an intruder. It would almost seem as if the cause of the colouring of the eye might be the savage appearance which it gives to the bird, possibly thus protecting it from attack. A third smaller species of Gannet (*Sula piscator*) has red feet, which distinguish it at once from the other two; one or two of its nests were observed made in the bushes, like those of the noddies, raised 6 inches from the ground. There remain to be mentioned the Frigate Birds (*Fregata minor*), whose nests were nearly all confined to a small area near the cleared patch already referred to. They are, like those of *Sula piscator*, raised on the bushes, and are compact platform-like masses of twigs and grass matted together with dung, about 8 inches in diameter.