

CHAPTER VII.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLANDS. THE CROZET ISLANDS.

Appearance and Formation of Marion Island. Vegetation of the Island. *Azorella selago*. Limit of Vegetation in Altitude. Relations of the Flora. Former Extension of Land in this Region. Nesting of the Great Albatross. Mode of Courtship. Skuas. "Johnny" Penguins. Rock Hoppers. Rookeries of King Penguins. Absurd appearance of the Young Birds. Singular Mode of Incubation. Habits of Sheath-bills. Appearance of the Crozet Islands. Tree-trunks found in the Island by former Voyagers.

Marion Island, December 26th, 1873.—Marion Island, which with the smaller island of Prince Edward makes up the Prince Edward Group, was sighted on the evening of December 25th. The centre of Marion Island is in lat. $46^{\circ} 52' S.$, long. $37^{\circ} 45' E.$, that of Prince Edward Island in lat. $46^{\circ} 36' S.$, long. $37^{\circ} 57' E.$, the City of Lyons being in a nearly corresponding latitude in the northern hemisphere.

The islands are distant from the Crozets (which lie a little to the north or west of them, and are the nearest land) 450 miles. The African continent is distant from them about 960 miles, the nearest point being about Cape Recife at Algoa Bay. From Kerguelen's Land the Marion Islands are distant about 1,200 miles, from Lindsay and Bouvet Islands about 1,400 miles, from Tristan da Cunha and Gough Islands about 2,150 miles; and, lastly, from the Falkland Islands and Fuegia (to which, in common with all the other Antarctic islands hitherto examined, except the Campbell and Auckland group, they are in their flora most nearly related) they are distant about 4,500 geographical miles.

The islands lie, as do the Crozets and Kerguelen's Land, well within the course of the Antarctic drift, which, fusing with the Cape Horn current, sweeps in an easterly direction across the Antarctic sea and further within the broad belt of prevalent westerly winds. The combined action of the winds and the current have, no doubt, brought about in greater part the diffusion of the Fuegian and Falkland Island plants to the islands lying eastward of them; but it is possible that the multitude