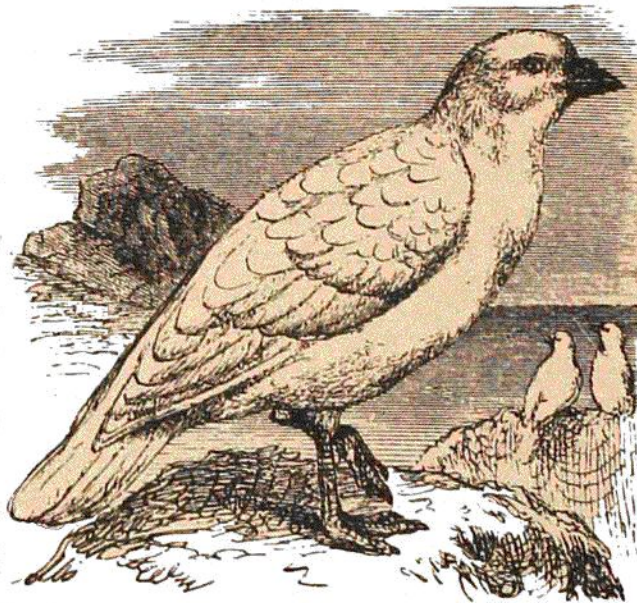


I saw once about a dozen of these birds swimming together at Royal Sound, but usually they hawk over the sea singly, with a long sweeping flight like that of the albatross. The young are like round balls of grey down, and, as might be expected, have the nostrils much more widely open than the adults.

Further we found a Stormy Petrel (*Oceanitis sp.*). It makes a short small hole in the turf at the verge of the cliffs, and lays a white egg, with slight red speckles at one end, large in size in proportion to the bird.

A more interesting petrel is the diving Procellarid (*Pelecanoides urinatrix*), which is a petrel that has given up the active aerial habits of its allies, and has taken to diving, and has become specially modified by natural selection to suit it for this changed habit, though still a petrel in essential structure. The habits of the bird, which occurs in the Straits of Magellan, are described by Darwin in his Journal.* This bird is to be seen on the surface of the water in Royal Sound when the water is calm, in flocks of very large numbers. On two days in which excursions were made in the steam pinnace, the water was seen to be covered with these birds in flocks, extending over acres, which were black with them. The habits of the northern Little Auk are said to be closely similar to those of this bird; so



SHEATH-BILL OF FUEGIA. CHIONIS ALBA.

close is the resemblance, that the whalers have transferred one of their familiar names for the Little Auk to the Diving Petrel. The diving petrels dive with extreme rapidity, and when frightened, get up and flutter along close to the water, and drop and dive again. It is a curious sight to see a whole flock thus taking flight. The birds make holes in the ground like the Prions, and lay an egg, white with a few red specks at one end. They breed in enormous quantities on the islands in Royal Sound. They are readily attracted by a light, and some were caught on board through coming to the ship's lights.

On one of the digging excursions I found a nest of the

* "Journal of Researches," p. 200.