

Sheath-bill (*Chionis minor*), and subsequently found several others. The bird has a wide range, corresponding to that of the Kerguelen cabbage, occurring like it in the Prince Edward Islands, the Crozets and Heard Islands. Another species of the genus occurs in Patagonia. It resembles the Kerguelen species closely in general appearance, though differing in many essential points. A figure of it is given on p. 181 in default of one of the Kerguelen bird. It might however almost stand for this latter. The birds (the "Paddy" of the sealers) are present everywhere on the coast, and from their extreme tameness and inquisitive habits, are always attracting one's attention. A pair or two of them always forms part of any view on the coast. The birds are pure white, about the size of a very large pigeon, but with the appearance rather of a fowl. They have light pink-coloured legs, with partial webbing of the toes, small spurs on the inner side of the wings, like the Spur-winged Plover, and a black bill with a most curious curved lamina of horny matter projecting over the nostrils. Round the eye is a tumid pink ring bare of feathers; about the head are wattle-like warts.

The birds have been examined anatomically by De Blainville,\* who concluded that they are nearly related to the Oystercatchers. The birds nest under fallen rocks along the cliffs, often in places where the nest is difficult of access. The nest is made of grass and bents, and the eggs are usually two in number, of the shape of those of the Plovers, and of a somewhat similar colouring, spotted dark red and brown. They have been described and figured by Gould, and he considers the eggs to show further alliance of the Sheath-bills to the Plovers. I found two nests with three eggs, but two is the most usual number.

The young are black on coming from the egg, following the usual law with white birds, the white colouring being a lately acquired peculiarity. The young one has the nostrils wide open, and merely a tumidity about the posterior margin of the nostrils and across the beak where the sheath is commencing to grow out.

Anyone sitting down on the rocks where there are pairs of Sheath-bills about, soon has them round him, uttering a harsh, half warning, half inquisitive cry on first seeing one, and venturing gradually nearer and nearer, standing and gazing up at the intruder with their heads turned on one side. The birds come frequently within reach of a stick, and can often be

\* "Voyage de la Bonite," Zoologie, Tom. I., p. 107; Pl. Oiss. IX.

The anatomy of the Sheath-bills has been further lately made the subject of a memoir by Dr. Kidder. "Bull. U.S. Nat. Mus.," No. 3.