

Thus in spite of the general superficial resemblance of the Oceanitidæ to the smaller forms of Procellariidæ, with which all ornithologists previous to Garrod had confounded them, the differences between the two families are, it will be seen, numerous and important. The special points of resemblance which the Oceanitidæ have with such Procellarian genera as *Procellaria* and *Cymochorea*—such as the general small size, style of coloration, form of skull, comparative simplicity of the *tensor patagii* arrangement, simple sternum and syrinx (the last three peculiarities being also common to *Pelecanoïdes*)—may best be explained by supposing that these small Procellarian forms are on the whole less specialised than the larger ones (Fulmars, Albatrosses, Shearwaters, &c.), and so retain more of the characters possessed by the primitive and now extinct common form from which both the Procellariidæ and Oceanitidæ must have been derived.

The Oceanitidæ are a small and, on the whole, compact group, with but few differences of importance between the four genera contained in it. Of such differences the most important are the loss of the *ambiens*, and the very flattened nails and feet of *Fregetta*; the lengthening of the foot in *Pelagodroma*; and the acquisition of an ocreate tarsus by *Fregetta* and *Oceanites*. *Garrodia* is, therefore, on the whole, the least modified form of the group. The four genera may be distinguished as follows:—

Garrodia. *Ambiens* present; tarsus scutellated anteriorly; sternum posteriorly entire.

Oceanites. *Ambiens* present; tarsus ocreate; sternum posteriorly slightly excavated; interdigital webs yellow.¹

Pelagodroma. *Ambiens* present; tarsus scutellated; sternum and webs as in *Oceanites*; feet very long.

Fregetta. *Ambiens* absent; tarsus ocreate; sternum entire; feet very short, and nails peculiarly broad and blunt.²

The Procellariidæ, comprising as they do by far the greater number of species and genera of the group, show much more divergence *inter se* than is the case with the Oceanitidæ. The Albatrosses are by far the most aberrant forms of this group, with which, however, they have all the characters above noted in common, though in themselves specialised in several points. The discovery of a rudimentary hallux, and of an aftershaft in these birds, disposes of two of the characters which have hitherto been available for their separation from the other Tubinares, as do the gradations of form that exist in the amount of separation of the two parts of the dorsal tract of another. As peculiarities of the Diomedeinæ may be included:—

¹ To the genus *Oceanites* belong *Thalassidroma gracilis* (Elliott, Ibis, 1859, p. 391—the type (?) of which, now in the Smithsonian Institution, I have examined) and *Thalassidroma lineata* (Peale, Orn. U.S. Expl. Exped., pl. xxxix. p. 403). *Thalassidroma segethi* (Philippi and Landbeck, Wieg. Arch., 1860, p. 282) may be the former bird, or, as suggested by Mr. Salvin (Proc. Zool. Soc., 1878, p. 736), *Fregetta grallaria*.

² Besides *Fregetta grallaria* and *melanogastra* there seem to be two other species to be referred here, viz., *Procellaria albogularis*, Finsch, (Proc. Zool. Soc., 1877, p. 722), and *Fregetta mæstissima*, Salvin (Proc. Zool. Soc., 1879, p. 130).