

I have closely questioned Vingoe on the subject ; and he is quite certain that he has scarcely observed any variation in these large autumnal Petrels." "Penzance, October 23rd, 1867. The *Puffinus major* (Greater Shearwater) has turned up again in our bay this week. It is in the same state of plumage, the tips of the dorsal feathers being broadly edged, like those I have before seen and obtained ; the upper tail-coverts are white ; the under portion of the belly, thighs, and vent broccoli-brown."

Lord Lilford informs me that he has occasionally seen the Great Shearwater in the Mediterranean, but never obtained a specimen, and adds :—"I found the bird evidently breeding on some of the more westerly islands of the Scilly group in July 1852 ; and Mr. Vingoe and I found a fine specimen dead on the beach near Marazion in that month."

The two birds figured by Mr. Yarrell were transmitted to him by the late D. W. Mitchell, Esq., accompanied by the following account of the appearance of the species on the same coast :—"In November 1839 a man brought me a *Puffinus major* alive, which he said he had found asleep in his boat when he went to unmoor her preparatory to a fishing-expedition. I suppose this happened about three in the afternoon ; and the bird had probably taken up its quarters at daylight. The moorings at Newlyn are from one hundred to two hundred yards from the shore. There were great numbers of this species off Mount's Bay at that time ; and I soon after had two more brought to me which had been taken by hooks. One of them is the light-coloured specimen in your collection ; the dark-coloured bird you have figured, was, I believe, obtained in a similar manner about the same period in 1838. It is the only example in that state which I met with during my residence in Cornwall. The adult bird appears pretty regularly every autumn, though not always in equal numbers. It has long been in several collections at Plymouth, though it does not appear to have been distinguished there from *Puffinus anglorum* until Dr. Moore published his 'Catalogue of the Birds of Devon.' The latter is not a very common bird there, which may have been the cause of such a mistake.

"*P. major* is very well known to the Scillonians, by whom it is called *Hackbolt*. They inform me it is a constant visitant in the latter part of autumn, and represent its manners on the water as resembling those of *P. anglorum*. I recollect seeing four last year through a telescope in Mount's Bay. It was late in the afternoon, the wind blowing hard from S.S.W., which accounted for their being so far inshore ; they are generally deep-sea-goers. They had exactly the flight of *P. anglorum*, and kept so close to the water as almost to skim the tops of the waves. Mr. Clement Jackson told me last spring that some autumns they appear off Looe and Polperro in thousands."

To this account of the bird as seen on our shores, the notes by Mr. Thompson on those which have occurred in Ireland will form an appropriate pendant. "Our observation of this species as Irish is chiefly due to Mr. Robert Davis, of Clonmel, who kindly furnished me with the particulars of two examples, which he procured in different years. Mr. Davis remarked of the first specimen :—"This was taken near Dungarvan, county of Waterford, and sent to me alive. It was apparently in good health, but would not eat any thing, and died after being in my possession for about ten days or a fortnight. It had an extremely rank, fishy, or oily smell at all times ; but I never saw any appearance of oil being discharged from its mouth or nostrils. It seemed unable to walk, but scrambled along with its breast about an inch from the ground. Although its wings were perfect and uninjured, it made no attempt to fly, but, if let fall from a height, dropped heavily to the ground. It showed an inclination to climb, having several times mounted up the handle of a long spade that rested against the wall of a yard in which it was kept. It did not ramble about, nor care much for water, but, when put in a large tub, very dexterously pulled itself up by the hooked bill until the claw got on the edge. When handled, it bit severely. The second specimen was captured one or two miles outside Dungarvan, by a person fishing for hake (*Merluccius vulgaris*), with a hook and line, it having taken his bait. I kept it alive for about a week ; it was more lively than the former one, and ran along with the breast about an inch from the ground. Having on one occasion placed it on a roof, it seemed to be more at ease on the inclined plane afforded by that situation than on a flat surface, and mounted rapidly to the top, though on reaching the edge no attempt was made to fly, and it fell heavily to the ground. It rarely stirred at all during the day, but kept itself as much out of view as possible, and, if the body could not be concealed, would endeavour to hide its head. This species is never seen near the shore, but only far out. The fishermen sometimes keep them for weeks about their houses ; and in some instances they have become tame : they never attempt to fly. I cannot hear of this species ever being shot or otherwise taken than on a hook. It is commonly known by the name of *hag-down*."

The egg of this species figured by Mr. Hewitson in the third edition of his 'Coloured Illustrations of the Eggs of British Birds' was brought from the Desertas, a group of four sterile rocky islands which lie about twenty miles south-east of the town of Funchal, in Madeira ; it is represented of a creamy white, and nearly two inches and three quarters in length by two inches in breadth.

The figure is as near the size of life as may be.