

shot or hunted down. When it does so far leave its natural home as to proceed up one of our inland rivers on a fishing-excursion, it will dive to an enormous distance, and does not hesitate to turn back under the boat containing its pursuers, reappearing in a part of the river where least expected. Lord Falmouth's keeper assured me that he was for days in pursuit of one in the Tresillian river; ultimately, however, he was successful in obtaining it; and the bird is now in the Museum at Tregothnan House.

As there are few collections in the country, from the National Museum to that of the most humble admirer of nature, which is not graced by a mounted specimen of the Great Northern Diver, it would be useless to particularize where this or that individual was killed. But it may be as well to mention one or two, the state of whose plumage may tend to confirm what I have said about the changes the bird undergoes. Mr. C. Monfort, of Worthing, showed me two fine examples which he had procured in Orkney in the beginning of August, and which were evidently undergoing a change from the full-spotted plumage to the plain dress of winter, their throats and faces being interspersed with newly assumed perfectly white feathers, which were doubtless the forerunners of the others that would ultimately cover the whole of the neck and under surface. In opposition to this, Mr. Monfort saw a Great Northern Diver in its full spotted plumage, off the coast at Brighton, on the 5th of November. Other instances might be given, but the above will be sufficient.

"The Great Northern Diver," says Macgillivray, "is among the most beautiful of those birds which seek the waters of the great deep. A wanderer on the ocean, it not only frequents the margins of the sea, fishing in the bays and estuaries, but may often be met with many miles from land, although seldom at such distances as the Gulls and other hovering birds. There it floats lightly, it may be, but apparently deep in the water, its body being so much depressed that little of it seems exposed, compared with what we see of the Black-backed Gull—the one like a deeply laden ship scudding steadily along, the other in ballast, with scarcely a hold on the water, as it mounts the heavily rolling waves and again descends into the trough. But though the Gull floats thus lightly, the Diver soon overtakes and shoots far ahead of it. In turning, the Gull has the advantage, moving round with ease as on a pivot, the Diver steadily and majestically. The Loon makes but little use of his wings, and his great bulk and robust frame are ill-adapted for the hovering flight of the Gulls and Petrels. There he comes, followed by his mate, and advancing with marvellous speed. Now they stop for a moment to survey the shore. Forward again they start, the smooth water rippling gently along their sides. Small effort they seem to make; yet powerful must be the stroke of the oars that impel masses so large at so rapid a rate. Now and again they dip their bills into the water, then the head and neck; one glides gently into the water, without plunge or flutter, and in a few seconds appears with a fish in his bill, which, with upstretched head and neck, he swallows. The other, having dived, appears with a fish larger and less easily managed. She beats it about in her bill, splashing the water, and seems unable to adapt it to the capacity of her gullet, but at length, after much striving, masters it. I have several times seen this bird shot by lying in wait for it in a place it frequents; but it is very seldom that in a boat one has a chance of procuring it; for it is generally shy, and always extremely vigilant. If shot at and not wounded, it never flies off, but dips into the water and rises at a great distance; and unless shot dead, there is very little chance of procuring it, its tenacity of life being great, and its speed exceeding that of a four-oared boat. On ordinary occasions it is quite silent, but often, even at night, its loud, clear, melancholy cry may be heard from the sea, and in calm weather at the distance of half a mile or more. It is very seldom seen on wing; but in the estuaries and channels, at the turn of the tide, or early in the morning and again in the evening, it may be seen flying at a great height, with a direct rapid flight, performed by quick beats of its expanded wings, which even then seem too small for its body, and contrast strangely with those of the Gulls. In a direct course, it rapidly overtakes and passes a Gull flying at its utmost speed."

"The situation and form of the nest," says Audubon, "differ according to circumstances. Some are placed on the hillocks of weeds and mud prepared by the musk-rat on the edges of the lakes, or at some distance from them among the rushes; others on the mud, amid the rank weeds, more than ten yards from the water. The eggs are mostly three in number, $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches in length, by $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches in breadth. They are of a dull greenish-ochrey tint, indistinctly marked with spots of dark umber. The young are covered at birth with a kind of black stiff down, and in a day or two after are led to the water by their mother."

The Plate represents the bird in its full summer plumage, about two-thirds of the natural size.