

weed, which agrees so nearly with the surrounding herbage, as to pass wholly undetected unless carefully looked for. When unmolested, they are by no means shy, but at a respectful distance may be watched for any length of time, diving after their food, or preening their glossy feathers, the rich chestnut crests of the old birds glistening in the sun as they shake the moisture from their silky plumage. In winter the Loons quit the inland broads altogether, and betake themselves to the vicinity of the sea-coast, where they are not unfrequently killed on Breydon or other saline waters, kept open during the sharpest frosts by the action of the tides."

It may not be considered out of place, in a writer on our native birds, to question the taste of using the skin of this bird for decorative purposes. Fashion, however, will have its sway, even to the annihilation of so ornamental a bird as a Grebe. How much is this to be regretted! How palpably wrong is it that every pair which annually take up their abode on our great broads and extensive sheets of water should be harassed and shot down for this purpose! Yet such is the case. A writer in the 'Zoologist,' for the year 1851, makes a boast of having collected twenty-nine of these birds in full summer plumage, all in Norfolk. Wholesale destruction like this almost amounts to extermination: such wicked acts are most reprehensible; for, besides the cruelty, it is killing the goose that lays the golden egg.

"The under surface of the body," says Mr. Yarrell, "being of a delicate silvery whiteness, and of a shining silky appearance, one of the names of this well-known bird is that of *Satin Grebe*; and skins, from their beauty, are in great request for making ladies' muffs, or, more frequently, to cut up into narrow strips as trimming for pelisses. A good skin sells for six or eight francs on the Continent; and in the vicinity of the Lake of Geneva, which is frequented in autumn by these birds, it is usual for sportsmen to make parties on the lake to obtain specimens by shooting. This sport has been described to me by an English gentleman who had pursued the amusement.

"A party of four hire a boat, with able rowers, and on a calm day, when the surface of the lake is smooth, they put off, and look out, with telescopes, for a large Grebe, towards which the men row. On their approach, the bird dives; and the boatmen pull with vigour in the direction the bird has taken, in order to be near it when it comes up to the surface to breathe. One of the shooters stations himself in the bow of the boat, one at the stern, and the others, one on each side, about the middle, in order that one or the other may be in a position to take the shot as soon as the bird is visible. At the commencement of the pursuit, when the bird is strong, it frequently comes to the surface of the water out of shooting-distance, and has perhaps altered its course; but, a good look-out being kept by the shooters at their different posts, the bird is soon descried, and the rowers again urge the boat in chase; the bird dives again, and is again pursued, and, on rising, is perhaps shot at, but at too great a distance to be effectual, and the bird dives again. In this way the chase is kept up for a time: the bird, partly exhausted by the necessity of maintaining its exertions, and perhaps slightly wounded, is unable to remain so long under water; but, as the boat is close at hand, the exertion must be continued, and the Grebe still rises and dives again with so much rapidity that several unsuccessful shots are frequently made. The rowers, from practice, calculating the length of time the chase has lasted, can tell very nearly, whenever the bird dives, how many strokes of the oars will bring the boat near the place where it may be expected to rise; and by giving out this notice, and counting aloud, the interest is kept up throughout the pursuit, till a fortunate shot gives the fatal blow, when the prize is handed into the boat, and the telescope again put into requisition to find out a new victim."

Crown of the head and ear-tufts dark olive-brown; lower part of the frill pure black; chin and sides of the face fawn-white, gradually passing beneath into reddish chestnut; a stripe of reddish chestnut also surmounts the eye; back of the neck, back, and rump blackish brown, most of the feathers having greyish edges; centre of wing and primaries the same colour; but the upper part of the wing and some of the secondaries are pure white, as is also the rest of the body, the under surface being very silvery; bill light horn-colour, excepting the culmen, which is of an olive hue; irides brilliant crimson, passing, in the corners of the eye, into rosy white; between the eye and the bill a narrow mark of naked, dark olive-brown skin, continued over the bill towards the nostrils and on the base of the lower mandible; immediately below the bare skin on the lores is a little lengthened tuft of olive-brown feathers; tarsi and outer side of the toes olive beneath, and dull primrose-yellow at the upper joint in front; inside of the tarsi and toes horny white, inclining to yellow in parts; nails pale blue.

It gives me sincere pleasure to record my thanks to my excellent friend Lord Hill, for his kindness in enabling me to render the accompanying Plate so perfect as it is. From the extensive lake at Hawkstone, where it annually breeds, he has sent me examples of this Grebe in every stage, from youth to maturity. Neither am I less indebted to the Hon. Rowland Hill: both father and son take a lively interest, not only in the productions of their own, but of every other country.

The Plate represents an old bird, the size of life, with a brood of young ones a day old.