

when I observed them, though doubtless they partake of the pasture. No person being permitted to fire a shot on Lurgan Green was probably the cause of their tameness. They were captured in little pitfalls, dug in the earth, without being in the least degree injured. Several placed in the aquatic menagerie at the Falls, near Belfast, at once became tame, and proved to be of a mild and gentle disposition. About the middle of October, in the years 1848 and 1849, flocks of about twenty in number were seen flying over the sea and points of land in a southerly direction, off Analong, at the base of the mountains of Mourne. They flew in a line, like wild geese, about twenty yards above the sea or ground, and were headed by an old stager whose adult plumage was strongly defined. In Belfast Bay the Bernicle is a rare visitant, chiefly in the early part of winter; but a single bird has been obtained there as late as the beginning of August. The bird has been met with in many other parts of the country; but its only regular haunt is the locality above mentioned—Lurgan Green."

Mr. Selby states that "upon the Lancashire coast, the Solway Frith, &c. it is very abundant, frequenting the marshy grounds that are occasionally covered by the spring tides, and such sands as produce the sea-grasses and plants upon which it feeds. Like the rest of the genus it is a very wary bird, and can only be approached by the most cautious manœuvres. It is sometimes shot by moonlight when it comes on the sands to feed, by persons crouched on the ground, or from behind any occasional shelter in such places as the flocks are known to frequent. Its flesh is sweet and tender, and highly esteemed for the table. It is a bird of handsome shape, and from the length of its neck and tarsi stands high upon the ground. When caught alive it soon becomes very tame, and thrives well upon grain &c.; but no attempts have been hitherto made to domesticate the breed."

The history of this species, brief as it is, would be still more so (and, moreover, incomplete) without at least an allusion to the old legends connected with it. Its trivial name of Bernicle [or Barnacle] is derived from an oft-told tale, the absurdity of which has scarcely, if ever, been surpassed. It is that the bird derives its origin from the Barnacle shell, the *Lepas anatifera* of Linnæus. "This curious fancy," says Macgillivray, "which no doubt arose from the slight resemblance of the filaments of that animal to the sprouting feathers of a young bird, is still entertained by many persons; but, like the milking-propensity of the Goatsucker and the winter submersion of the Swallows, it might now, I think, be allowed to rest in its grave." Those who may wish to read the legend in part or in the whole, may refer to Professor Max Müller's 'Lectures on the Science of Language,' p. 540, or to the 12th volume of Shaw's 'General Zoology,' p. 50.

Mr. Selby states that no attempt has been made to domesticate this fine Goose. It is to be regretted that this has not been done; for pinioned birds readily breed in a semidomesticated state at Hawkstone, the seat of Viscount Hill, who kindly allowed me to shoot one for the purpose of the present work. I suspect, however, that it would be necessary to pinion the young birds so reared, to prevent their obeying the impulse that would doubtless urge them to migrate to countries better suited to their existence during summer—probably Lapland, Finland, northern Russia, and Siberia.

Mr. Newton, in his 'Notes on the Ornithology of Iceland,' informs us that, according to Faber, this species arrives in Iceland about the middle of April, and departs about the middle of October. He found it most abundant in the South-west, but does not believe that it breeds on the island.

There is no perceptible difference in the colouring of the sexes; but the markings of the male are stronger and more beautifully arranged.

The Bernicle is a smaller and more elegant bird than the Bean Goose, and on the other hand is much larger than its near ally the Brent, its weight being about seven pounds.

As it is impossible to represent so large a bird of the natural size, my figures are necessarily much reduced.