

from time to time in Norfolk, three having been shot within the last eight or nine years : the first of these, a male in my own collection, was killed, during very severe weather, on the 29th of December 1853, in a turnip-field on the road leading from Winterton to Yarmouth ; it was in high condition, and had its stomach literally crammed with vegetable matter, apparently fragments of some large leaf with a rough surface and serrated edge. Several more specimens were killed about the same time in other counties, and were recorded in the 'Zoologist' for 1854. On the 4th of March 1858, a fine adult female was shot in the South Town Marshes at Gorleston, near Yarmouth ; it is now in the possession of J. H. Gurney, Esq. This bird was also in good condition, the stomach being filled with various kinds of green food. The wind at the time this bird was killed, and for some days previously, was N.E., the weather intensely cold, with snow on the ground—in fact, exactly such weather as at the time the male above mentioned was obtained. In the case of such an accidental visitant to our coast, it may not be uninteresting to enumerate as far as possible the herbs and grasses, portions of which formed the contents of the stomach of the specimen. By far the larger part consisted of a long fine grass, with a brackish odour, apparently from the marshes, mixed and matted with which was a species of *Conferva* from the ditches, two flowers of the common daisy (*Bellis perennis*), and a narrow scolloped leaf resembling cat's ear (*Hypochaeris glabra*), fragments of a thistle, and of the water-ranunculus (*Ranunculus aquatilis*). These were all that could be identified. The third and last Norfolk example was procured at Blo Norton, near Thetford, on the 29th of November 1860. It proved to be a female, and was killed in a turnip-field, which seems to be the favourite resort of the bird when visiting this country ; for Mr. Lubbock remarks that, in the three instances of its occurrence that had come under his observation, it was found in fields of this kind of vegetable. This specimen appeared during somewhat mild weather, which preceded only by a week or two the intensely severe frosts of the following two months, during which two others occurred in the adjoining counties of Suffolk and Essex ; it is evident, therefore, that the Little Bustard is merely a winter visitant to our coasts, its appearance depending in a great measure upon the degree of severity in the weather." In France, where the bird is common, it arrives in April, and departs in September. It is said to be polygamous, the male assuming a station, and attracting the females by his cries.

Captain Blakiston, R.A., informs me that, during his sojourn in the Crimea, "the Little Bustard was occasionally shot in the Chersonese during the winter and in the spring, until near the end of April ; and he saw several on the plains between Sebastopol and the Alma at the end of May, but only two that were in company."

Mr. Yarrell states that "the nest is on the ground, among herbage which is sufficiently high to hide the bird. The eggs, which are laid in June, vary in number, according to different authors, from three to five ; the length two inches, the breadth one inch six lines ; the colour of one in my own collection uniform olive-brown ; but I have seen them slightly clouded with patches of darker brown." "Those eggs which I have seen," says Mr. Hewitson, "are all more or less suffused with colour. Any one who had previously seen the eggs of the Great Bustard would look for a similar character in those of the present species ; and he would be pleased in observing the resemblance which they bear to each other, distinct as they are from those of all other birds." M. Bailly, in his 'Ornithologie de la Savoie,' states that the eggs are three or four in number. The young follow the mother like those of a domestic fowl, and on the appearance of danger conceal themselves by squatting among the herbage : they are unable to fly until about the middle of August.

The Little Bustard is occasionally sent to this country as an article of food ; and those of my readers who deal with the London poulterers—Bailey, of Mount Street, or Fisher, of Duke Street—may have a chance of ascertaining for themselves the quality of its flesh, which, in my opinion, is preferable to that of the larger species. Mr. Yarrell says it has the appearance and flavour of that of a young hen Pheasant ; others say it is dark-coloured, but of an exquisite flavour.

That the *Otis tetrax* bears confinement tolerably well is evidenced by the circumstance of examples having lived for many months at a time in the menagerie of the Zoological Society, and become as familiar with the visitors as any of the other denizens of the aviaries, among which at this moment (April 1864) are several fine examples of their larger brethren.

The flight of the Little Bustard is very rapid, and it runs with equal celerity over the sterile wastes, upon which it is frequently found, and upon which it squats close to avoid detection on the appearance of danger.

The Plate represents a male and a female, in summer—the former of the natural size, the latter somewhat reduced—with a small figure of a male in the distance.