drooping legs over it. Instances almost without end of the delight which the study of birds affords might be cited; but I will now say a few words on their uses as articles of diet.

As a rule, birds are far less utilized in this country than on the Continent, where even the smallest are eaten, the Robin, the Wryneck, and the Wren not excepted, as a visit to the markets of Paris and Rome will testify, the sylvan Beccaficos and the Ortolans being specially regarded as bonnes bouches.

Among the water-birds, the Scoters and other diving ducks, being regarded as partly fish and partly fowl; are allowed to be eaten on fast-days, and are therefore in great request; and Mr. Augustus Smith, of Scilly, tells me that the French sailors who land on those islands frequently ask his permission to kill Cormorants and Shags, considering them, as they do, the best of fowl. The Gannet is largely eaten in the northern parts of the kingdom; while the Fulmar not only forms the principal diet of the St.-Kildan, but its feathers constitute his bed, and its oil furnishes him with medicine and the means of light. The late Mr. John Macgillivray states that the eggs "are much esteemed by the natives, who gratify their partiality by robbing all the nests in the month of May, and apparently trust to the bird laying a second time;" "and," adds Mr. Robert Gray, "the young is valued more than all the other tribes of birds taken together; it may be said to be their staff of life. The 12th of August, if a notable day on the moors, is more so on the rocks of St. Kilda; for it is the harvest of the people, who are aware that it will only last eight days; and therefore sleep itself is banished for this space, seeing that the millions that may be left on the eighth day after the 12th are sure to be off to their own fairy world for a season. The number killed in this one week may be from eighteen to twenty thousand." In a valuable paper on the Solan Goose or Gannet by Dr. R. O. Cunningham, published in 'The Ibis' for 1866, it is stated, on the authority of the celebrated Harvey, that "the young, when they attain the magnitude of the domestic Goose, are sweet and fit for eating; but the flesh of the old birds is hard, lean, and dry." And Ray in his 'Itineraries' mentions that "the young ones are esteemed a choice dish in Scotland. As the bird feeds upon mackerel and herring, the flesh of the young smells and tastes strong of these fish."

At the present time, according to Dr. Cunningham, "from one to two thousand of the young birds are killed annually for sale, and after being plucked obtain prices of from sixpence to a shilling each. At one time they figured at the tables of the Scottish monarchs, and more recently were esteemed by the citizens of Edinburgh and other towns, being roasted and eaten as a relish before dinner. Now, I believe, their consumption is chiefly limited to the lower classes; and I have been informed on good authority that, after being parboiled and having had their legs cut off, they are sold in considerable numbers to the Irish peasants who come over to Scotland at harvest time."

It is quite impossible to give an estimate of the numbers of wild Ducks and Geese that are yearly