

always kept shut and fastened. Young children should not be allowed to climb into chairs or on to the table, etc., as many nasty tumbles may result.

Substances in the Eye, Ear, and Nose.—Children very often put such things as peas, beads, or cherry-stones into their noses or ears. If they have only just put the substance inside the nose or ear, it is easy to remove it, but should it be pushed tightly in, there is always a good deal of difficulty in getting it out, and it is very unwise to attempt it, as specially-shaped instruments may be necessary, and even chloroform may have to be administered. Every unsuccessful attempt pushes the substance further in and increases the risk and trouble in finally removing it. When anything gets into the ear, turn the head on one side, with that ear undermost, and if a few gentle taps on the head do not dislodge the body, do not make any further efforts, but take the child to a doctor.

When anything gets into the eye, gentle efforts to remove it may be made by using the end of a tightly-

rolled paper spill, which has been softened by chewing. Hold the lower eyelid down, and carefully remove any dust, etc., then bathe the eye with warm milk and water.

Peas, beads, etc., in the nose are difficult to remove, and if they cannot be expelled by an attempt at sneezing, or by putting your mouth over the child's mouth and blowing sharply, you should seek medical assistance.

Swallowing Coins, Buttons, etc.—If any substance sticks in the child's throat, and it threatens to choke, try to pull it up with your fingers, passing them as far down as possible, and hooking the substance up. If this is impossible, make the child swallow coarsely-chewed bread to try and send it down. Do not give emetics or aperients.

Sufficient has now been said to show how a little intelligent first aid is often of great use in preventing serious consequences following the little mishaps which are likely to occur in the nursery.

BIRD DWELLERS BY THE SEA.

BY F. A. FULCHER.



OYSTER-CATCHER'S dwelling-place is paved with gold. Yellow sands stretch far and wide where these quaint birds make their abode, gleaming pale gold under a wintry sky, burning red gold in the fierce heat of summer, gold alloyed to shifting shades of changeable yellow, lemon, maize, orange, as cloud and wind and weather work it. Summer is the time to see the pale sands to per-

fection. Wild rock borders find their fullest expression in winter, when a seething sea boils over and floods the boulder-strewn beach and the cliffs bow beneath the weight of scudding storm clouds as they sweep over the brow of the hill. Storm winds howling as they climb the ramparts, storm waves booming as they cannonade the fortress, they but whisper the tale of the mighty convulsions and explosions and upheavals that have written the story of the spot, but they tell nevertheless of the rock sorrows and rock conflicts whose scars and whose triumphs are here. It is then that rock-beaches tell out their sermons.

But summer is the time to see sands. They creep

out from under the blue waters where the mills of God are grinding slowly fresh grains to replenish their store, and spread upwards towards high-water mark where they may take courage and bring forth the beautiful blooms of sea-poppy, golden like themselves, and tufts of sea-holly, blue in memory of the waters behind. Onward go the drifting sands where they travel high and dry led on by the tiny blades of marram, that wonderful land-winner—working in its quiet way and reclaiming vast tracts of salt sands to add to the rich pastures of inland. Fields of sea-lavender often wave purple triumph where the sea sand-grass has won a victory and a patch of barren sand has been converted and has become a fruitful field. The sunlight falls softly on the sands when their flowers are blooming, each tiny particle reflects it, and a brilliant shimmer of light plays on their wide surface, the gentle ripples of clear waters wash them softly to and fro in waving ridges—a soft haze from the deep blue beyond sails in upon the wandering breeze and veils, but scarcely dims, the brightness of the glowing flowers and the smooth yellow sands that were else too gay in the summer garden of a sandy shore.

The oyster-catchers have the wit to appreciate this phase of the varied charms of their abode, and when the dunlin, and the sanderlings, the godwits, and turnstones, grey plovers, and hooded crows, who have spent the winter with them on the sea sands, fly away to the moors and fells far north, they remain and in company with the little-ringed plovers and the sand-martins have the best of sand seasons to themselves as far as birds are concerned.

The birds on such strands by the sea in winter are

legion. These are the favourite sanctuaries of the bird refugees from the north. A large proportion of those myriads from the Arctic regions which pass in dense clouds across the island of Heligoland on their way south are the shore-loving birds whose haunts, whether at home or abroad, are on the margin of wave-washed shores, and many more that in summer frequent the hill countries inland, spend the winter at the seaside.

Some of our native birds, mostly those belonging to the large family of plovers, come down from their inland rivers and marshes and lakes and moors, and join the foreign visitors at the sea sands. The beautiful redshanks and the little dotterel with all the many grades that lie between in plover type, may be seen here when fields and ponds lie frost-bound.

In summer the bird life is not so varied, except for the vagrant sand-martins who arrive just in time to tunnel out nests in the sand banks and stay only to rear their young; the birds on sand beaches in summer are just those which are there all the year round.

The sands receive no other home-comers than the *papillons de montagne* when the emigrants return in the spring and the wayside fields and hedgerows are made musical with their song, neither do the sea birds, the true sea-fowl which through isolated rocks and desolate cliffs in spring, come here. Only the sand's own tribes—the oyster-catchers, the ringed plovers, and the little mining martins—have their home here. For a bird's true home is where its nest is, that is where its heart bides—the little heart that beats so fast, even when wandering instincts carry the frail creature far over land and sea, and the winter migrants though they be here half the year, are but aliens after all. Near by, the gulls may be building in a colony in a grassy meadow or marsh, and they sail over the yellow sands or settle like foam flakes at low tide, but they are too cosmopolitan to be identified with any one spot;

here, there, and everywhere, wherever land and sea shake hands in the dark like wreckers, there go the gentle gulls to succour them "that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters."

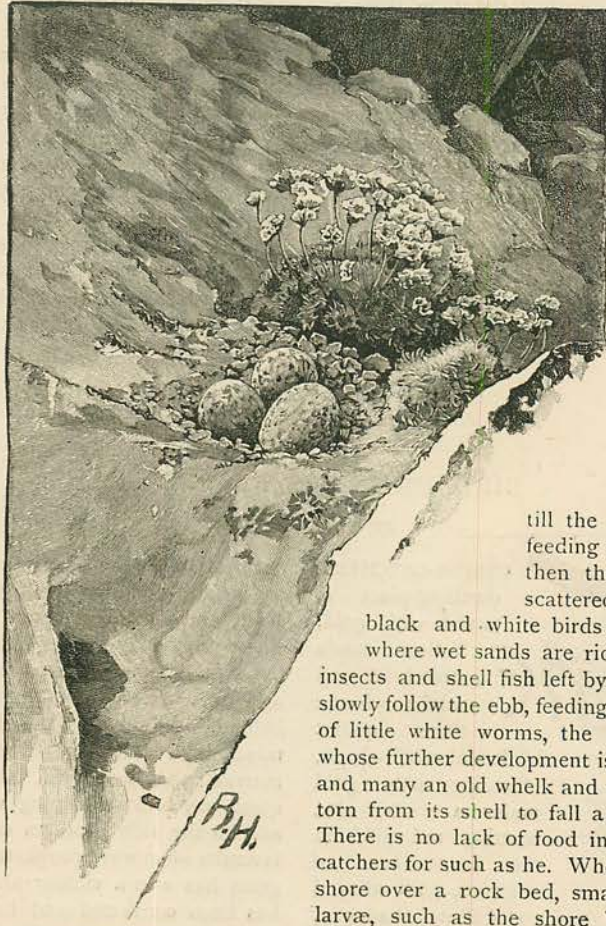
Not so the oyster-catchers. Should you meet one astray on a pebbly beach, he is a mere nobody, even where some go to the rocks to breed they are but temporary visitors, but we must speak of a bird as we find him, and on the golden sands by the sea, where the oyster-catchers dwell in flocks of a hundred strong, they are lords of the manor, and their odd habits and striking plumage are conspicuous features of interest. You may see them there in long line, close-ranged like well-drilled soldiers standing at attention,

till the tide goes down and the feeding banks are nearly visible; then the line is broken and in scattered companies the handsome

black and white birds march leisurely down to where wet sands are rich in a harvest of marine insects and shell fish left by the receding tide. They slowly follow the ebb, feeding as they go upon hundreds of little white worms, the larvæ of winged insects whose further development is then and there arrested, and many an old whelk and many a clinging limpet is torn from its shell to fall a prey to the hungry birds. There is no lack of food in the home of the oyster-catchers for such as he. Where the sea flows in to the shore over a rock bed, small creatures, insects and larvæ, such as the shore birds seek for food, are scarce.

Oyster-catchers are not insatiable like the voracious hooded crows which come down from Norway in the winter to share their store. As to eating oysters they are quite innocent, for whatever their taste in the matter may be, oysters live far too deep under water to be caught by any of the birds of this family, even though like these they have learned to swim. Long before the tide begins to turn, the oyster-catchers have finished their meal and fly up the beach again, rarely returning, as they go, in marching order, sometimes calling aloud their noisy clamorous note while they circle in short flights before alighting. Now and then the birds feed on the upper shore, and vary their diet with tender buds and roots of plants, blades of grass, and juicy leaves of vetch and other small plants.

The oyster-catchers take immense pains to produce what seems to us most uncomfortable and inconvenient homes. Not always, for often they, too, lay their eggs



OYSTER-CATCHER'S NEST,
SCILLY ISLANDS.



on bare rocks or in a hollow in the sand, but when they do take any pains to form a nest it is, according to the tenets of birds with any architectural knowledge whatever, to make the hard ground far more uncomfortable than it would be if left to Nature. They collect little pieces of stone and shell, all very white and of about the same size, and arrange them with as much care as the chaffinch gives to its woven cup of grass and hair and moss; and the gulls laugh as they go by to their snug hollows in the grass, and the ringed plovers think they might as well be contented with the sand or the shingle like themselves, and the sand-martins say they will never make miners. No doubt these quaint builders have some good reason for their strange plans though they do not choose to divulge it, for they take no heed of their neighbours' remarks but go on building grottoes.

Not the least of the summer charms of a sandy shore is the presence of these birds. Early in summer their ways are most interesting as they wander along the shore in small groups with their tiny young ones following after, and later, when the chickens have grown up, large flocks roam far and wide pursuing their most characteristic daily routine. And in winter

"SEA-HOLLY, BLUE IN MEMORY OF THE WATERS BEHIND."

when the flowers have gone away and the martins flown after them, when the sands are dull and dreary and the sea has lost its glamour, the still expanse of silent sands is cheered by the lively birds who are always there on the golden strand, the birds who go by the trivial name of oyster-catchers.

CHARLEY DOWN'S ORDEAL: A RAILWAY ROMANCE.

BY HENRY FRITH.

CHAPTER THE FIRST. A FAITHFUL GUARD.

"I THINK, sir," remarked Wrightson one afternoon as we were sauntering by the sluggish stream, "that I mentioned to you a guard, Charley Down, who was on our line."

"Yes, you told me he was one of the guards of the tidal train, I think. He was mixed up in that accident

in which Fireman Deane's intended bride was mortally injured."

"Just so: well, yon's his cottage; and if you and me could persuade him, over a pipe, to tell you his 'sexperience' of the van, he'd just astonish you."

"Well, let us go and see him—you know him well, I suppose?"

"Ay, well enough; but he's a quiet chap is Charley.