

through to the North Atlantic, and there was not so much as a single blade of grass within twenty feet of the nest. It is rather a misnomer to call the place where their eggs were laid a "nest," as it was merely a hollow, which contained a single small piece of shell. Later on, the boys told me, the Piping Plover lines its nest very extensively with pieces of shell; but in this case there was only the one fragment, though the set was complete, and the other nest that I found contained only one small bone of a bird about an inch long. The substances must surely be more in the line of decoration than for any assistance in the task of incubation. One of these nests I stumbled upon while skirting the lake one afternoon having just shot the female under the impression that she belonged to the species rather than to the variety; but on picking her up I found that my surmise was incorrect, as the band across the chest by which the distinction is made, really did extend right across, although very faint in the centre, and her mate, who was seen but not killed, had a wide black bar completely across. The other nest, however, cost me much thought and trouble, and were it not that one welcomes difficulties for the sake of overcoming them, it is not likely I should ever have found it.

The male bird seemed to pass most of his time on the shores of the lake about two hundred yards south of the nest and here, on some little sandy knolls, I searched on several occasions without success. Each time the male would run along before me apparently quite concerned, and after a while his call would bring the female. At last I caught a glimpse of her coming through the gully before mentioned leading to the North Atlantic and that gave me the hint I needed. I went back to the gully and the birds followed, but search as I would I could not find that the numerous tracks, which could be readily followed on the loose sand, led to any nest at all. Leaving them for that time, I returned the next day, crept carefully to the top of the hill overlooking the gully, and fired off my gun, in the hope of starting the bird from the nest. But there was no response. After waiting perhaps five minutes the male began calling at me from below, and with the aid of my glass I located him, standing still; soon I saw the female standing near him, and I descended and made another fruitless search. A second time I went back and crept again to the