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Our Feathered Friends, IV—Second Series.

*By John MacSwain.*

WHAT enjoyment is experienced while standing on the border of the mighty ocean as in its calm moods it molds the sand into ripples at your feet. You feel the invigorating and exhilarating influence of the sea breeze, with its wealth of life sustaining oxygen as it is gently wafted landward. There is the view of the great expanse of water, limited by the far extending horizon, beyond which the eye would feign to gaze and see the ever moving ocean as it rolls in its tidal fluctuations of ebb and flood around the world.

“Emblem of eternity,  
Unbeginning, endless sea.”

Its unvaried surface and unobstructed horizon contrast with the undulating beach, diversified by its ripple-marked sands, its seaworn rocks bordered by projecting crags and sand built dunes.

Over these the wandering snipe and plover with rapid pinions wend their flight, or with irregular pace move restlessly in eager search for their food.

Here are the haunts of the shore birds when in their semi-annual migrations north and south they visit our shores.

The Limicolæ, or shore birds, an order divided into several families, is represented among our birds by our Snipes and Plovers, a Phalarope and a Turnstone. Though living by the sea they are not swimming birds, but they may be seen wading in the shoal waters, picking up the small animals upon which they feed. A few, particularly the larger species, visit adjacent uplands.

The Snipes have long and slender bills, uniformly firm in texture from base to tip. With one or two exceptions, their bills are grooved, the grooves, in one case, extending along the bill beyond the nostrils even to the tip. The Plovers, on the other hand, have a shorter and stouter form of bill, which is not throughout of a horny consistency like the Snipe's, but is softer or fleshier at its base. Where