

large lake, where it proceeded to feed quite unconcernedly. After watching it for some time I shot it. I had been hoping that if I ran across any phalaropes I would have the pleasure of seeing them swim, but this one persistently dabbled in the mud and refused to go out into the water. Its breast feathers were quite soaked with water and mud when I took it up showing that it had ventured into the muddy water over the depth of its legs.

MAMMALS.

There are no native land mammals on Sable Island. The walrus was formerly abundant on its coasts, but was hunted to extermination long before the memory of the present inhabitants. Two species of seal are common, the larger one of which, the harp seal, was frequently seen off shore, at the time of our visit, among the dozens of the harbour seal, which was very common, several herds of over a hundred each being seen in driving a few miles along the North Atlantic shore. Some pups of the latter were found, evidently recently born, upon the beach, after the herd had wobbled into the sea. The inquisitiveness of the small seals is very great. Unless the sea is very rough, one cannot walk any distance along the beach without assembling an admiring audience of from five to twenty-five of these creatures, which swim along twenty, thirty or forty yards from the shore, with many heads constantly above water, staring at the intruder; and the general effect of their countenances is so human that it gives one the uncomfortable feeling of being stared at, and makes him inclined to let out a yell that will disperse his audience. But he very soon discovers that this does not accomplish the desired result, and is forced to endure their staring with philosophical fortitude. When one catches a pup of the harbour seal the mother swims in the water close to shore, with evident anxiety; but the inhabitants told us that when the pup belonged to the other species the anxiety very soon changed places and fell on the captor, who must run fairly fast to escape the mother of the youngster. The young of the harp seal are pure white, and are born in midwinter. When a band of the harbour seals is drawn out on shore, covering a surface of say 30 yards square, they are visible at a considerable distance, and when the team approaches they commence to pro-