

south as the New England coast. Nuttall, in 1834, records the birds as then breeding in great numbers. "As a diver he is unrivaled," he says, "having almost the velocity of birds of the air. They breed in the Faroe Islands and in Iceland, Greenland and Newfoundland, nesting among the cliffs, laying but one egg each. They are so unprolific that if the egg be destroyed no other is laid during the season. It is sometimes known to lay at St. Kilda and in Papa Wastra." The last seen alive were at the Funks, a small island in the coast of Newfoundland. In 1844, the last known to be alive on the eastern continent were seen at Iceland. In 1870 a dead, frozen specimen was found at Labrador, which though in poor condition, was sold in London for \$200. The only specimens in this country are at Central Park, Vassar College, Philadelphia Academy of Sciences, Cambridge University, and the National Museum. The single egg that the great auk yearly deposited was evidently not enough to insure its preservation, and year after year it became less abundant, perhaps killed by the Indians along our coast. Finally, the last one was destroyed, and in 200 years more its existence will be a legend and the steel engravings of the present specimens the only reminders of the giant of the auks.

Of the Labrador duck (*Camptolemus*) still less is known. In former years it was common on the north-eastern coast of North America and as far south as New Jersey, but for many years not a specimen has been seen or found, and the presumption is that they have met the fate of the great auk.

Among the Maoris, natives of New Zealand, there are traditions that many years ago there lived in their country a race of gigantic birds—the moa—that served as food for their remote ancestors. They are also positive that some of the largest birds have lived within the modern times, while in the interior the natives say that the gigantic bird may yet exist. They called the bird moa from its gigantic size, and the legends tell of its wonderful plumes and tail feathers, that were only worn by the great chiefs of the ancient Maoris. Its enormous bones were made into fish-hooks and various implements. These facts of rumours fell into the hands of the Rev. Dr. Colenso, a missionary in New Zealand some years ago, and his efforts to investigate them resulted in the discovery of a number of huge bones that at least confirmed the existence of the birds. A few years later, Mr. Walter Mantell,

the naturalist, went into the interior and settled himself among the Maoris, as Mr. Cashing, of the Smithsonian, has among the Pueblo Indians, to learn all he could of their traditions. As a result of his work he collected seven or eight hundred bones of a number of different species, which are now in the British Museum, and settled to his own satisfaction at least that the birds had flourished within comparatively modern times, and had been exterminated by the early inhabitants of the country. Some of the remains found by Mr. Mantell, standing upright, point to the conclusion that some of the larger ones became mired in the swamp, becoming victims of their own weight. Mr. Mantell secured a number of fine specimens and of great eggs, one of which would have been a meal for ten men. The bones of these birds are much larger than those of an ox, and some of the birds themselves were 14 feet in height. The finest collection of them in this country is owned by the Museum of Natural History at Central Park.

In 1817 an English scientist discovered the remains of a new bird in the menacconite sand at Waingouore, New Zealand. The bones consisted of the cranium, mandibles, sternum, humerus, femur, tibia, and tarsometatarsals, of a gigantic rail. Prof. Owen examined them, and stated from their osteological characteristics they belong to a large modified fowl of the same family of the *Grallae* as the *Porphyrio* and *Brachypteryx*, and, like the latter birds, without the power of flight. From his deductions a new genus was established for its reception—the *Notornis*. Up to 1850 these fossil remains were thought to be only remnants of the bird; but in that year, much to the astonishment of scientists, a living representative of the species and genus was found in an unfrequented part of the island of New Zealand; since then a living one has never been seen, and it was undoubtedly the last of the race. The Maoris have a tradition that the bird was once very common, and a favorite article of food with their ancestors. It was called by them the Dodo, and by the natives in the south Tokohu. Mr. Mantell was the fortunate finder of the bird, obtaining the skin from some sealers who were fishing among the unfrequented islets of Dusky Bay. It appeared, according to Mr. Mantell, that when frequenting the coast in search of seals and other game, the men observed on the snow with which the ground was covered the foot-tracks of a large and