

The Rockwood Review.

inches x .85. We are naturally excited over the find so rare and unique, and I fear forget the worries of the birds we must rob in this instance. However as the eggs are not incubated, the birds will worry but little, and in a few days will have built another nest, and commenced the duties of incubation once more.

On the next island we find three magnificent Plover, and a Dunlin, all migrating. The dunlin with his quaint black apron and long bill, has a rakish look. Here we discover a fair number of terns eggs, but crows have ruined at least one set, and having found the road to the island will no doubt destroy nearly all of the eggs. An egg is seen broken and floating near the island, and a savage assault being made on a solitary crow by a large number of enraged terns, does not leave much doubt of the identity of the robber. It is time for lunch though, and we pull for Corn Island, where there is shade. While at lunch an inquisitive loon, who is anxious to know the nature of our business, draws near and finds that we are worth watching, and determines to keep an eye on us. This is in fact one of the few remaining haunts of the loon, and that he has so long survived the perpetual shower of small shot and bullets that is poured on him, is high tribute to his ability as a diver and general. As we walk along the shore, out dart several tree swallows from a small cave in a sand bank. Surely this is not according to rule, so we investigate and find far in, a beautifully built nest, lined with the softest feathers to be stolen from the barnyard. In it are several delicate shelled eggs of snowy whiteness. The number is unusual, the average clutch containing six, and the situation of the nest is decidedly uncommon. Before the days of towns and cities, this swallow nested in hollow trees, then took kindly to the swallow houses commonly erected by kindly villa-

gers and farmers. The English Sparrow changed this order of things, and captured the houses, so now the Swallow has returned to trees, hollow telegraph poles, fence posts, and natural cavities, such as that described.

Our boat is now pointed homeward, and we shortly invade a Grebe's paradise, and soon see a pied-bill grebe on her nest. Theoretically she should disappear and dive to come up fifty yards off, but as a matter of fact she simply glides quietly into the water, and nonchalantly awaits our approach. Of course there is a reason for this unusual behaviour, and this we shall make a point of finding out if possible. First let us investigate the nest, here it is floating clear of the rushes, and a marvel of clever architecture. It is built of weeds, carefully piled in a compact mass, and anchored by four strands of weed rope, running in different directions. Two eggs are in the nest, and these are at once seen to be unfertile and "sat upon." The grebe is within a few feet of us, and something is moving by her side. See, she is raising her wings, and from beneath them on her back are peering out four pairs of little bright eyes; now a little fluffy form comes out, and in another moment we see the baby dabchicks at sea on their mother's back. No wonder she will not dive, and leave these precious treasures of black down, and the little ones are not afraid when their mother shows no fear. Loons will protect their young in the same way, and will carry their chicks on their backs when pursued. We watch the baby dabchicks and their brave mother for some time, and then reluctantly pull the boat to the landing, convinced that the day has been all too short, and knowing that we have missed so much that must have been going on before our very eyes.