

Professor and the Wonderful Egg

prepared for him. There was marmalade, there were scrambled eggs and that was all—no! horror! not all! His wife had taken the Great Auk's Egg, which he had found the other day, and had actually boiled it for breakfast. The Professor sank back in his chair with dismay and looked sadly at the egg.

"No one must know of this," he said, "it would ruin me. To think that a Great Auk's Egg, and so beautiful and rare a specimen of it, should have been cooked for breakfast!"

Still it was too late now—as usual—and he had to put up with it.

"Better finish it off as soon as possible," he said, and with a tap he broke the shell.

Worse and worse, the egg should never have been boiled at all, for out stepped a little Great Auk Chick, who coolly bowed to the Professor and said, "Thank you, my man." It was such a strange little bird to look at, that the Professor was quite as much pleased as frightened.

"A new specimen!" he cried, "what a discovery! I shall be famous now."

"Yes," said the little Great Auk Chick, "you will be famous, for I shall tell the story about you." And then without any further delay the strange little animal began to eat the Professor's breakfast, and in half a minute the marmalade and the scrambled eggs had disappeared down its throat for ever.

"Most extraordinary," said the Professor, and though he sadly missed his breakfast, he was more excited with the wonderful appearance of the bird than anything else. He began to examine the little Great Auk Chick more closely, so that he could report upon it to all the other professors in the world. But when he looked he started back with wonder. Perhaps it was the marmalade and perhaps it was the scrambled eggs. Anyhow, the little Great Auk Chick was growing visibly, and was by this time already the size of a full-grown hen. And it was still