

the noddies. The weather side slopes more gently; and all over it, on every little flat space, are the boobies' nests, mere hollows, some containing two eggs, but the majority one only. The eggs are as large as a fowl's, sometimes dirty-white all over, sometimes blotched with brown. In many of the nests were young of all ages; some just out of the egg, ugly big-bellied black lumps, without a particle of down or feathers; then larger ones, as big as one's fist, covered with white down; then others, as large as a fowl, thickly clothed with down; then larger ones again, with brown wing feathers and brown feathers on the breast, the white down remaining only in patches, about the head especially, and finally birds with brown feathers all over, full-sized, and just beginning to fly. Around all the nests were small flying fish, which are brought by the old birds in their crops, and ejected for food for the young or for the females whilst sitting. Fitzroy visited St. Paul's Rocks on February 16th; Ross on May 29th; the Challenger on August 29th; and on all these occasions eggs and young birds were found; hence it would appear that breeding goes on all the year round. Some of the old boobies were found sitting on their young on the top of the peak when this was first visited. They would not move until actually pushed off the nest. Yet they are by no means so foolish as their name would imply, for late in the afternoon of the same day they had so far profited by experience that when it was desired to obtain a few specimens for stuffing, considerable difficulty was experienced in getting within shot of any of them.

The only terrestrial inhabitants of the rocks, besides the birds, are insects and spiders which infest them. These are to be found chiefly by breaking up the nests of the noddies. Darwin¹ mentions the following:—A pupiparous fly (*Olfersia*), living on the booby as a parasite, which belongs to the same group as the curious *Nycterybia*, so common on the bodies of fruit-eating bats. A Staphylinid beetle (*Quedius*), a tick, a small brown moth, belonging to a genus which feeds on feathers, and a wood-louse, living beneath the guano, and spiders, complete Darwin's list. Two species of spiders² were found which cover the rock in some places with their webs, and, in addition to the insects noted by Darwin, the larva of a moth, apparently a *Tortrix*, and a small Dipterous fly. Dr. v. Willemoes Suhm also found a *Chelifer*, but could not find either the beetle or the wood-louse. Besides these there are of course to be reckoned the lice, parasitic as usual upon the birds, and the list of air-breathing inhabitants seems then complete.

A closed glass tube was left on St. Paul's Rocks containing a page of the Navy List, with the names of the Challenger officers, and a notification on parchment as follows:—

¹ Darwin, Journal of Researches during the Voyage of H.M.S. "Beagle," p. 10, ed. 1879.

² Rev. O. P. Cambridge refers the spiders collected by the Expedition to the genus *Chiracanthium*, and adds, "the examples are immature, so it is impossible to be certain but they appear to be identical with, or at any rate nearly allied to, *Chiracanthium nutrix*, a Swedish species."