

ART. XVII.—On the Occurrence of *Phalaropus fulicarius*, Pennant (the red Phalarope), in New Zealand. By JULIUS VON HAAST, C.M.G., PH.D., F.R.S.

[Read before the Philosophical Institute of Canterbury, 15th November, 1883.]

THE Canterbury Museum has lately received from Mr. M. Studholme of Waimate a small bird, shot about middle of June of this year on the narrow strip of sandy beach separating the Waimate lagoon from the ocean. It was flying alone without any companions.

On examination it proved to be a specimen of *Phalaropus fulicarius*, a truly arctic species, quite new to the southern hemisphere. Unfortunately I did not receive the bird in the flesh, but judging from its total length (8.25 inches), it is most probably a female. The plumage, fully agreeing with the descriptions of European and North American specimens, proves that this Waimate specimen is in its breeding or fine summer dress. The occurrence of this bird is, therefore, one of the most curious facts on record as an addition to our New Zealand avi-fauna; but as it resembles in general appearance, at least at a distance, some of our smaller *Grallæ*, it may, although probably only an occasional straggler, have hitherto escaped detection by our naturalists.

The following remarks as to its habits and migrations may demonstrate this strange appearance in the southern hemisphere still more clearly.

In winter the red Phalarope is found regularly in Scotland and England, but not so frequently on the coasts of Germany, France, Italy, or North Africa. In Asia it has often been observed in the Black, as well as in the Japanese, Chinese, and Indian Seas; and, though essentially a marine bird, it winters regularly in some parts of the interior of Asia, as for instance in Persia.

It also occurs in the arctic regions of America, leaving for the south when the arctic autumn fairly sets in, and travelling as far as Mexico and Guatemala.

The occurrence of this bird in the southern hemisphere, as far as the latitude of New Zealand, is therefore very remarkable, especially in the middle of the arctic summer, and can only be accounted for by assuming that this bird, or more probably a flock, have been driven southwards by stress of weather when the time arrived for their returning to their home in Eastern Siberia or Western North America.

However, the most curious fact is, that the specimen before us is in its most brilliant summer or breeding dress, and quite in accordance with the time of the year when it is breeding in the arctic regions; while according

to all accounts accessible to me it has always been observed after its emigration to its winter quarters in the more southern regions to be clothed in its more sober white and ash-coloured winter dress, instead of the rich rufous and black tints our specimen possesses so conspicuously.

Might this not suggest to us that when the usual breeding time of the straggling flock came round, although in the middle of our winter, the season did not prevent the change of colour, together with the pairing in the flock !

At first sight the idea might not appear unreasonable that this bird occurs also in the antarctic zone, hybernating in the more temperate regions of the southern hemisphere, but, in that case, the specimen under review would not have been found in full breeding or summer dress.

Having drawn the attention of ornithologists to this interesting stranger, I have no doubt that, as was the case with *Streptilas interpres* (the Turnstone), more light will be thrown upon its occurrence in this part of the world now that this has been proved beyond a doubt.

ART. XVIII.—*On the Occurrence of the Spinous Shark* (*Echinorhinus spinosus*) *in New Zealand Waters.* By T. JEFFERY PARKER, B.Sc.

[Read before the Otago Institute, 10th July, 1883.]

THIS species is stated by Günther* to be confined to the Mediterranean and Atlantic, extending from the coast of England to the Cape of Good Hope. I believe the present specimen to be the first which has been recorded beyond the usual range. It was caught off Dunedin by fishermen in the employment of the Deep Sea Fishing Company during the present month (July).

The fish, which was quite new to the captors, was cut up for bait, only the mutilated remains being brought to Dunedin. Fortunately the teeth were preserved, and the tail was hardly at all injured, so that there was no difficulty in identifying the species.

Echinorhinus belongs to the family *Spinacidae*. I extract the following generic and specific characters from the "Catalogue of Fishes":—

"Genus **Echinorhinus**.

"Two very small dorsal fins, without spine, the first opposite to the ventrals; no anal fin. Skin with scattered large round tubercles. Mouth crescent-shaped, a labial fold round the angle of the mouth. Nostrils midway between the mouth and the end of the snout. Teeth equal in both

* "Catalogue of Fishes," vol. viii., p. 428.