

narrowed to the merest slits, and every feather flattened against the skin, he bore but small resemblance to a bird, and might easily have been taken for a piece of stick. While in this attitude the "Mopoke" becomes so curiously rigid that it feels brittle enough to break. If annoyed (but not alarmed), this curious bird possessed the power to turn itself into a strange, round object; with every feather standing almost erect, wings lowered at the side, great beak wide open to show the yellow interior of the mouth, and eyes round and shining, the harmless "Mopoke" became so alarming in appearance that only the bravest cat or dog would dare to touch it.

If in the rain, our pet would raise his wings right over his head, as though to form a shelter. He loved to sit still in the evening with his mouth wide open, shutting it with a loud snap if a mosquito or any small insect flew in. He had a painful habit of flying on to a table in search of the small insects attracted by the light (none was too small for him), and, flapping his great wings, would put out the light! Also, he would create diversions (not always welcome), by flying in and out of windows at night—sitting on the bedposts and getting tangled up in the mosquito nets.

As he grew older he acquired a strange habit of eating his feathers. I wondered then if anything were lacking in his diet, until I happened to read an article by Mr. W. P. Pycraft in the *Illustrated London News* (October, 1925), in which he said: "The Great Crested Grebe, in place of loading its gizzard with stones for digestive purposes, uses instead its own feathers. The Dabchick behaves in like manner." Since reading that I have inclined to the belief that the "Mopoke" also is addicted to feather-eating as an aid to digestion.

Double-banded Dotterel.—While visiting recently a beach about 12 miles from Devonport, I came upon a party of a dozen Banded Dotterels (*Charadrius bicinctus*), a species which I have not seen for several seasons. They were picking about just above the ripple of the incoming tide, and allowed me to get fairly close, so that the difference in the markings was very noticeable. In some cases (probably females and young) these markings were so faint as to be hardly discernible, and in others both the black and chestnut bands were very distinct. This Dotterel appears on Tasmanian beaches only in winter and early spring, leaving us before the summer, apparently for New Zealand, where it is known to breed. Mr. T. H. Potts, the well-known observer of bird habits, recorded very early nesting of the Banded Dotterel: "August 2, 1856, saw a nest with two eggs, Rakaia River; September 1, 1855, nest with three eggs, Rakaia River."—H. STUART DOVE, West Devonport, Tasmania (June 5, 1927).