Act 3 Hen. VII. continued to exist for about fifty years, but disappeared towards the end of Henry VIII.’s reign. Its powers were not lost, but fell back to the general body of the council, and were among the most important of those exercised by the council sitting in the star- chamber. A court not unlike that created in 3 Hen. VII. was erected in 1540. The Act of 31 Hen. VIII., which gave the king’s proclamations the force of law, enacted that offenders against them might be punished by the usual officers of the council, together with some bishops and judges, “in the star-chamber or elsewhere.” These powers also came after a time, like those granted in 1488, to be exercised by the council at large instead of by certain members of it. It is clear, however,—and this was one of the chief complaints against the court,—that the jurisdic­tion which belonged by law or custom to the whole body of the king’s council was usurped at this time by the inner body of advisers called the privy council, which had engrossed all the other functions of the larger body. Sir T. Smith (temp. Eliz.) tells us that juries misbehaving “ were many times commanded to appear in the star- chamber or before the privy council for the matter.” The uncertain composition of the court is well displayed by Coke, who says that the star-chamber is or may be com­pounded of three several councils—(1) the lords and others of the privy council, (2) the judges of either bench and the barons of the exchequer, (3) the lords of parliament, who are not, however, standing judges of the court. Hudson (temp. Car. I.), on the other hand, considers that all peers had a right of sitting in the court. The latter class had, however, certainly given up sitting in the 17th century. The jurisdiction of the court was equally vague, and, as Hudson says, it was impossible to define it without offending the supporters of the prerogative by a limitation of its powers, or the common lawyers by attributing to it an excessive latitude. In practice its jurisdiction was almost unlimited. It took notice of maintenance and liveries, bribery or partiality of jurors, falsification of panels or of verdicts, routs and riots, murder, felony, forgery, perjury, fraud, libel and slander, offences against proclamations, duels, acts tending to treason, as well as of a few civil matters,—disputes as to land between great men or corporations, disputes between English and foreign merchants, testamentary cases, &c.,—in fact, “ all offences may be here examined and punished if the king will” (Hudson). Its procedure was not according to the common law ; it dispensed with the encumbrance of a jury ; it could proceed on mere rumour or examine wit­nesses ; it could apply torture ; it could inflict any penalty short of death. It was thus admirably calculated to be the support of order against anarchy or of despotism against individual and national liberty. During the Tudor period it appeared in the former light, under the Stuarts in the latter. It was abolished by the Long Parliament in 1641, and was never afterwards revived.@@1

*Authorities.—*Smith, *Commonwealth of England*; Bacon, *Reign of Henry VII.* ; Hudson, *Treatise of the Court of Star-Chamber (Col­lectanea Juridica,* vol. ii.) ; Hallam, *Const. Hist. of England·,* Gneist, *Engl. Verfassungsgeschichte* ; Dicey, *The Privy Council* (Arnold Prize Essay). The pleadings in the star-chamber are in the Record Olfice ; the decrees appear to have been lost. (G. W. P. )

STARGARD, an ancient manufacturing town in eastern Pomerania, Prussia, is situated on the left bank of the navigable Ihna, 20 miles to the east of Stettin. Formerly a member of the Hanseatic League, the town retains memorials of its early importance in the large church of

St Mary, built in the 14th and 15th centuries, the 16th- century town-house, and the well-preserved walls with gateways and towers dating from the 14th century. The extensive new law-courts and three large barracks are among the modern buildings. Stargard has a consider­able market for cattle and horses, and carries on trade in grain, spirits, and raw produce. Its manufactures include cigars, tobacco, wadding, and stockings ; and there are also iron-foundries and linen and woollen factories in the town. The population in 1885 was 22,109 (in 1816 8706), of whom about 730 were Roman Catholics and about 560 Jews.

Stargard, mentioned as having been destroyed by the Poles in 1120, received town-rights in 1229, and became the capital of eastern Pomerania. As a Hanseatic town it enjoyed considerable commercial prosperity, but had also to undergo siege and capture in the Middle Ages and during the Thirty Years’ War. In 1807 it was taken by Schill. The name Stargard (from the Slavonic Starograd or Starigrod, meaning “ old town”) is common to several other towns in the north of Germany, of which the chief are Prussian Stargard, near Dantzic, and Stargard-in-Mecklenburg.

STARLING (A.S. *Stær, Stearn,* and *Sterlyng∙,* Lat. *Sturnus ;* Fr. *Étourneau),* a bird long time well-known in most parts of England, and now, through the exten­sion of its range within the present century, in the rest of Great Britain, as well as in Ireland, where, though not generally distributed, it is very numerous in some districts. It is about the size of a Thrush, and, though at a distance it appears to be black, when near at hand its plumage is seen to be brightly shot with purple, green, and steel-blue, most of the feathers when freshly grown being tipped with buff. These markings wear off in the course of the winter, and in the breeding-season the bird is almost spotless. It is the *Sturnus vulgaris* of ornithologists.

To describe the habits of the Starling@@2 within the limits here allotted is impossible. A more engaging bird scarcely exists, for its familiarity during some months of the year gives opportunities for observing its ways that few others afford, while its varied song, its sprightly gestures, its glossy plumage, and, above all, its character as an insecticide—which last makes it the friend of the agriculturist and the grazier—render it an almost universal favourite. The worst that can be said of it is that it occasionally pilfers fruit, and, as it flocks to roost in autumn and winter among reed-beds, does considerable damage by breaking down the stems.@@3 The congrega­tions of Starlings are indeed very marvellous, and no less than the aerial evolutions of the flocks, chiefly before settling for the night, have attracted attention from early times, being mentioned by Pliny (*Hist. Naturalis,* x. 24) in the 1st century. The extraordi­nary precision with which the crowd, often numbering several hundreds, not to say thousands, of birds, wheels, closes, opens out, rises, and descends, as if the whole body were a single living thing— all these movements being executed without a note or cry being uttered—must be seen to be appreciated, and may be seen repeatedly with pleasure. For a resident, the Starling is rather a late breeder. The nest is commonly placed in the hole of a tree or of a building, and its preparation is the work of some little time. The eggs, from 4 to 7 in number, are of a very pale blue, often tinged with green. As the young grow they become very noisy, and their parents, in their assiduous attendance, hardly less so, thus occasionally making themselves disagreeable in a quiet neighbourhood. The Starling has a wide range over Europe and Asia, reaching India ; but examples from Kashmir, Persia, and Armenia have been considered worthy of specific distinction, and the resident Starling of the countries bordering the Mediterranean is generally regarded as a good species, and called *S. unicolor* from its unspotted plumage.

Of the many forms allied to the genus *Sturnus,* some of which have perhaps been needlessly separated therefrom, those known as Grackles (vol. xi. p. 26) have been already mentioned, and there is only room here to notice one other, *Pastor,* containing a beautiful species *P. roseus,*

@@@1 The name is probably derived from the stars with which the roof of the chamber was painted ; but it has also been derived from a Hebrew word *shetar,* or *sh'tar,* a bond, on the supposition that the room was that in which the legal documents connected with the Jews were kept prior to their expulsion by Edward I.

@@@2 They are dwelt ou at some length in Yarrell s *British Birds,* ed. **4,** vol. ii. pp. 229-241.

@@@3 A most ridiculous and unfounded charge has been, however, more than once brought against it—that of destroying the eggs of Skylarks. There is little real evidence of its sucking eggs, and much of its not doing so; while, to render the allegation still more absurd, it has been brought by a class of farmers who generally complain that Skylarks themselves are highly injurious.