other countries. In England it was far more abundant formerly than at present, the young, or Cygnets,@@1 being highly esteemed for the table, and it was under especial enactments for its preservation, and regarded as a “ Bird Royal ” that no subject could possess without licence from the crown, the granting of which licence was accompanied by the condition that every bird in a “ game ” (to use the old legal term) of Swans should bear a distinguishing mark of ownership (*cygninota)* on the bill. Originally this privilege was conferred on the larger freeholders only, but it was gradually extended, so that in the reign of Eliz­abeth upwards of 900 distinct Swan-marks, being those of private persons or corporations, were recognized by the royal Swanherd, whose jurisdiction extended over the whole kingdom. It is impossible here to enter into further details on this subject, interesting as it is from various points of view.@@2 It is enough to remark that all the legal protection afforded to the Swan points out that it was not indigenous to the British Islands, and indeed it is stated (though on uncertain authority) to have been introduced to England in the reign of Richard Cœur de Lion ; but it is now so perfectly naturalized that birds having the full power of flight remain in the country. There is no evidence to shew that its numbers are ever increased by immigration from abroad, though it is known to breed as a wild bird not further from our shores than the extreme south of Sweden and possibly in Denmark, whence it may be traced, but with considerable vacuities, in a south­easterly direction to the valley of the Danube and the western part of Central Asia. In Europe, however, no definite limits can be assigned for its natural range, since birds more or less reclaimed and at liberty consort with those that are truly wild, and either induce them to settle in localities beyond its boundary, or of themselves occupy such localities, so that no difference is observable between them and their untamed brethren. From its breeding- grounds, whether they be in Turkestan, in south-eastern Europe, or Scania, the Swan migrates southward towards winter, and at that season may be found in north-western India (though rarely), in Egypt, and on the shores of the Mediterranean.

The Swan just spoken of is by some naturalists named the Mute or Tame Swan, to distinguish it from one to be presently mentioned, but it is the Swan simply of the English language and literature. Scientifically it is usually known as *Cygnus olor* or *C. mansuetus.* It needs little description : its large size, its spotless white plumage, its red bill, surmounted by a black knob (technically the “ berry ”) larger in the male than in the female, its black legs and stately appearance on the water are familiar, either from figures innumer­able or from direct observation, to almost every one. When left to itself its nest is a large mass of aquatic plants, often piled to the height of a couple of feet and possibly some six feet in diameter. In the midst of this is a hollow which contains the eggs, generally from five to nine in number, of a greyish-olive colour. The period

of incubation is between five and six weeks, and the young when hatched are clothed in sooty-grey down, which is succeeded by feathers of dark sooty-brown. This suit is gradually replaced by white, but the young birds are more than a twelvemonth old before they lose all trace of colouring and become wholly white.

It was, however, noticed by Plot *(N. H. Staffordshire,* p. 228) 200 years and more ago that certain Swans on the Trent had white Cygnets ; and it was subsequently observed of such birds that both parents and progeny had legs of a paler colour, while the young had not the blue bill ” of ordinary Swans at the same age that has in some parts of the country given them a name, besides offerιng a few other minor differences. These being examined by Yarrell led him to announce *(Proc. Zool. Society,* 1838, p. 19) the birds presenting them as forming a distinct species, *C. immutabilis,* to which the English name of “Polish” Swan had already been attached by the London poulterers.@@3 There is no question so far as to the facts; the doubt exists as to their bearing in regard to the validity of the so-called “ species. ” Though apparently wild birds, answering fairly to the description, occasionally occur in hard winters in Britain and some parts of the European Continent,@@4 their mother country has not yet been ascertained,—for the epithet "Polish" is but fanciful,—and most of the information respecting them is derived only from reclaimed examples, which are by no means common. Those examined by Yarrell are said to have been distinctly smaller than common Swans, but those recognized of late years are as distinctly larger. The matter requires much more investigation, and it may be remarked that occasionally Swans, so far as is known of the ordinary stock, will produce one or more Cygnets differing from the rest of the brood exactly in the characters which have been assigned to the so-called Polish Swans as specific—namely, their white plumage slightly tinged with buff, their pale legs, and flesh-coloured bill. It may be that here we have a case of far greater interest than the mere question of specific distinction,@@5 in some degree analogous, but yet in an opposite direction, to that of the so-called *Pavo nigripennis* before mentioned (Peacock, vol. xviii. p. 443).

Thus much having been said of the bird which is nowadays commonly called Swan, and of its allied form, we must turn to other species, and first to one that anciently must have been the exclusive bearer in England of the name. This is the Whooper, Whistling, or Wild Swan@@6 of modern usage, the *Cygnus musicus* or *C. ferus* of most authors, which was doubtless always a winter- visitant to this country, and, though nearly as bulky and quite as purely white in its adult plumage, is at once recognizable from the species which has been half domesticated by its wholly different but equally graceful carriage, and its bill—which is black at the tip and lemon-yellow for a great part of its base. This entirely distinct species is a native of Iceland, eastern Lapland, and northern Russia, whence it wanders southward in autumn, and the musical tones it utters (contrasting with the silence that has caused its relative to be often called the Mute Swan) have been celebrated from the time of Homer to our own. Otherwise in a general way there is little difference between the habits of the two, and very closely allied to the Whooper is a much smaller species, with very well marked characteristics, known as Bewick’s Swan, *C. bewicki.* This was first indicated as a variety of the last by Pallas, but its specific validity is now fully established. Apart from size, it may be externally distinguished from the Whooper by the bill having only a small patch of yellow, which inclines to an orange rather than a lemon tint ; while internally the difference of the vocal organs is well marked, and its cry, though melodious enough, is unlike. It has a more easterly home in the north than the Whooper, but in winter not unfrequently occurs in Britain.

Both the species last mentioned have their representatives in North America, and in each case the trans-Atlantic bird is consid­erably larger than that of the Old World. The first is the Trumpeter-Swan, *C. buccinator,* which has the bill wholly black, and the second the *C. columbiamιs* or *americanus@@*7*—*greatly resem-

@@@1 Here, as in so many other cases, we have what may be called the “table-name" of an animal derived from the Norman-French, while that which it bore when alive was of Teutonic origin.

@@@2 At the present time the Queen and the Companies of Dyers and Vintners still maintain their Swans on the Thames, and a yearly expedition is made in the month of August to take up the young birds—thence called “ Swan-upping ” and corruptly “ Swan-hopping ” —and mark them. The largest Swannery in England, indeed the only one worthy of the name, is that belonging to Lord Ilchester, on the water called the Fleet, lying inside the Chesil Bank on the coast of Dorset, where from 700 to double that number of birds may be kept—a stock doubtless too great for the area, but very small when compared with the numbers that used to be retained on various rivers in the country. The Swanpit at Norwich seems to be the only place now existing for fattening the Cygnets for the table—an expensive process, but one fully appreciated by those who have tasted the results. The English Swan-laws and regulations have been concisely but admirably treated by the late Serjeant Manning *(Penny Cyclopaedia,* xxiii. pp. 271, 272), and the subject of Swan-marks, elucidated by unpublished materials in the British Museum and other libraries, is one of which a compendious account, from an antiquarian and historical point of view, would be very desirable.

@@@3 M. Gerbe, in his edition of Degland’s *Ornithologie Européenne* (ii. p. 477), makes the amusing mistake of attributing this name to the *“fourreurs*” (furriers) of London, and of reading it *“Cygne du pôle”* (polar, and not Polish, Swan) !

@@@4 Chiefly in the north-west, but Lord Lilford has recorded *(llns,* 1860, p. 351) his having met with them in Corfu and Epirus.

@@@5 The most recent authorities on the Polish Swan are Stevenson,

in separately-printed advance sheets (1874) of his *Birds of Norfοlk* (vol. iii.), and Southwell *(Trans. Norf.* & *Norm. Nat. Society,* ii. pp. 258-260), as well, of course, as Dresser *(B. Europe,* vi. pp. 429-433, pi. 419, figs. 1, 2). .

@@@6 In some districts it is called by wild-fowlers “Elk, which perhaps may be cognate with the Icelandic *Alft* and the Old German *Elbs* or *Elps (cf.* Gesner, *Ornithologia,* pp. 358, 359), though by mo­dern Germans *Elb-schwan* seems to be used for the preceding species.

@@@7 Examples of both these species have been recorded as occurring in Britain, and there can be little doubt that the first has made its way hither. Concerning the second more precise details are required.