existence or non-existence of food of a particular kind suited to a species is one of the causes of its absence or presence: thus the fact of the majority of the trees of Australia not having a bark adapted for insect life would indicate the absence of the Woodpecker family; and accordingly no one of its members is found there. The large White Falcons figured in this work are restricted to the northern hemisphere, to which the Ptarmigan, Grouse, and Ducks upon which they mainly subsist almost solely resort, only a single representative species, the Falco hypoleucos of Western Australia inhabiting the southern hemisphere. On the other hand, Peregrines or Duck-Hawks not only frequent the northern hemisphere, but are also found in all southern countries; thus there is a Peregrine at Cape Horn, another at the Cape of Good Hope, and a third in Tasmania.

Not wishing to multiply generic terms in a work like the present, I have retained that of Falco for the birds under consideration; but I am not less of opinion that Cuvier and the older writers were right in giving them a separate generic appellation—that of Hierofalco; for they certainly do differ in many respects

from the Peregrines, for which the term Falco is rightly employed.

"Of all the birds used in falconry in this country," says J. C. Belany, in his 'Treatise on Falconry,' printed for the author at Berwick-on-Tweed, in 1841, "the Gerfalcon has ever been ranked the foremost. Superior in strength and agility to every other bird of its size, and endowed with powers of flight equalled by none that wing the air, with a corresponding courage, he dashes into the air fearless of every other bird, however large; nor will he, at times, hesitate to dispute precedence with the 'monarch of the skies.' Nor need any one acquainted with the anatomical structure of this bird wonder at its power. The breadth of the sternum, the depth of the keel affording a vast extent of surface for the muscles that move the wings, the furcula, circular, broad, and strong, giving a firm support to the shoulders, with his long acuminated wings, and with the feathers firm, narrow, and so arranged as to pierce the air and resist pressure, give him powers which few of the feathered tribe possess. Mr. Mudie considers him the boldest, the most perfectly winged, and, in proportion to his weight, the strongest, both for action and endurance, of all the feathered tribe." Notwithstanding this affirmation, I question whether the Hierofalcones are equal in either flight or courage to the female of the true Peregrines.

Latham, without distinguishing one from another, says:—"This species, with its varieties, has ever been in much estimation for its use in falconry; and Iceland has the reputation of furnishing the most generous breed. The King of Denmark is said to send there annually to buy up all that can be procured, the established place being Bessested, to which the Icelanders bring them as soon as taken, the white ones being in most esteem: and they must be very docile; for people catch them, in nets, of any size or age. Bell, in his Travels in Russia, says that about Zabach-Yeer and Casan are caught the best and largest Falcons in the world, which are purchased by the Turks and Persians; the Russians prefer the old ones, which are taken in nets with a live bird as a decoy. These will fly at Swans, Herons, or Cranes, and will take a Duck out of the water when only the bill appears. The Tartars also fly them at antelopes and hares. Some of the Falcons are as white as a Dove."

I cannot conclude without calling attention to the admirable delineations of all these large northern Falcons, for which I am indebted to the pencil of Mr. Wolf, whose abilities as an artist are so justly celebrated, and who thoroughly understands the subject. I trust they will be duly appreciated by the possessors of the present work, as I feel every one must have been delighted with the illustrations of Messrs. Schlegel and Verster van Wulverhorst's 'Traité de Fauconnerie,' by the same master hand.