"This small North-American species," says Mr. Stevenson, "was first included among the accidental visitants to this country by the late Mr. Yarrell, in the third edition of his 'British Birds,' in which will be found the notice of a specimen shot in the neighbourhood of Leeds in 1852, of which a figure and description were given in the 'Naturalist' for the same year (p. 169). Mr. Gurney informs me that some years back he purchased from the late Mr. Thurtell an adult specimen of this rare Owl, said to have been killed near Yarmouth, but till then supposed to be only a European Scops Owl. This bird was unfortunately destroyed after it came into Mr. Gurney's possession."

## Genus Nyctea.

Of this form the single species known is exclusively an inhabitant of the high northern regions of both the Old and the New World.

Snowy Owl.

I have always regarded this bird as an accidental visitor to England, Scotland, and Ireland; but Mr. J. H. Dunn informs me that forty-five years ago it bred every year on the hills about four miles from Stromness, and Mr. Robert Gray says it may almost be regarded as a regular spring visitant to the Hebrides. Its great size and powerful claws indicate that quadrupeds of considerable bulk are within the compass of its destructive powers; and hence the hare, the lemming, white grouse, and the ptarmigan have but little chance of escape when once enclosed within the grasp of its talons. Its proper home is the icebound regions of the north; in Lapland it follows the lemmings in their migration southwards.

"So little has been published in England," says Professor Newton, when exhibiting some rare eggs at a meeting of the Zoological Society (Dec. 10, 1861), "respecting the Snowy-Owl's manner of nidification, that I hold myself excused for presenting the information I have been able to collect on the subject.

According to Herr Wallengren, Professor Lilljeborg, on June 3rd, 1843, found on the Dovrefjeld a nest of this bird containing seven eggs, placed on a little shelf on the top of a bare mountain far from the forest and easy of access. Professor Nilsson mentions, on the authority of Herr A. G. Nordvi, that the Lapps in East Finmark assert that the Snowy-Owl lays from eight to ten eggs, in a little depression on the bare ground on the high mountains. These accounts were in every way corroborated by the information obtained by Mr. John Wolley during his long sojourn in Lapland. He several times met with persons who had found nests of this Owl, and states that he was told the old birds sometimes attack persons that approach their nests.

They seem to breed commonly, in the districts explored by him, only when the lemmings are unusually