

denied that the latter has greatly improved his song from listening perhaps to the warbling of other birds.

It was about the beginning of the sixteenth century that the canary became first known in Europe, when a ship having a large number on board and bound for Leghorn was wrecked on the coast of Italy. The birds having regained their liberty, flew to the nearest land, which happened to be the island of Elba, where they found so mild a climate that they built their nests there, and became very numerous. But the desire to possess such beautiful songsters led to their being hunted after, and it is in Italy we find the first tame canaries, and here they are still reared in great numbers.

So attractive has been found the canary on account of its pretty form and charming qualities of its mind that it is now kept and reared throughout the whole of Europe, Australia, and North America. Indeed, as Bechstein has justly remarked, "the qualities of its mind are as varied, or even more so than its plumage, for amongst them it has been discovered, as amongst quadrupeds, and even men, some individuals are gay, and others melancholy ; some quarrelsome, others mild ; some intelligent, others stupid ; some with quick memories, others lazy ; some greedy, others frugal ; some petulant, others gentle ; some ardent, others cold."