

different breeds, living in various parts of the world, makes the fact highly remarkable.

We shall hereafter see, especially in the chapter on Pigeons, that coloured marks are strongly inherited, and that they often aid us in discovering the primitive forms of our domestic races. Hence, if any wild canine species had distinctly exhibited the tan-coloured spots over the eyes, it might have been argued that this was the parent-form of nearly all our domestic races. But after looking at many coloured plates, and through the whole collection of skins in the British Museum, I can find no species thus marked. It is no doubt possible that some extinct species was thus coloured. On the other hand, in looking at the various species, there seems to be a tolerably plain correlation between tan-coloured legs and face; and less frequently between black legs and a black face; and this general rule of colouring explains to a certain extent the above-given cases of correlation between the eye-spots and the colour of the feet. Moreover, some jackals and foxes have a trace of a white ring round their eyes, as in *C. mesomelas*, *C. aureus*, and (judging from Colonel H. Smith's drawing) in *C. alopex*, and *C. thaleb*. Other species have a trace of a black line over the corners of the eyes, as in *C. variegatus*, *cinereo-variegatus*, and *fulvus*, and the wild Dingo. Hence I am inclined to conclude that a tendency for tan-coloured spots to appear over the eyes in the various breeds of dogs, is analogous to the case observed by Desmarest, namely, that when any white appears on a dog the tip of the tail is always white, "de manière à rappeler la tache terminale de même couleur, qui caractérise la plupart des Canidés sauvages."⁴¹ This rule, however, as I am assured by Mr. Jesse, does not invariably hold good.

It has been objected that our domestic dogs cannot be descended from wolves or jackals, because their periods of gestation are different. The supposed difference rests on statements made by Buffon, Gilibert, Bechstein, and others; but these are now known to be erroneous; and the period is found to agree in the wolf, jackal, and dog, as closely as could be expected, for it is often in some degree variable.⁴² Tessier,

⁴¹ Quoted by Prof. Gervais, 'Hist. Nat. Mamm.,' tom. ii. p. 66.

⁴² J. Hunter shows that the long period of seventy-three days given by Buffon is easily explained by the bitch having received the dog many times during a period of sixteen days ('Phil. Transact.,' 1787, p. 353). Hunter found that the gestation of a mongrel from wolf and dog ('Phil. Transact.,' 1789, p. 160) apparently was sixty-

three days, for she received the dog more than once. The period of a mongrel dog and jackal was fifty-nine days. Fred. Cuvier found the period of gestation of the wolf to be ('Dict. Class. d'Hist. Nat.' tom. iv. p. 8) two months and a few days, which agrees with the dog. Isid. G. St.-Hilaire, who has discussed the whole subject, and from whom I quote Bellingeri, states ('Hist. Nat. Gén.,' tom. iii. p.