

Elliot are white, slightly feathered on the feet, with the feathers on the head reversed; and they are rather smaller than the rock or dovecot pigeon. The beak is proportionally only slightly shorter and rather thinner than in the rock-pigeon. These birds when gently shaken and placed on the ground immediately begin tumbling head over heels, and they continue thus to tumble until taken up and soothed,—the ceremony being generally to blow in their faces, as in recovering a person from a state of hypnotism or mesmerism. It is asserted that they will continue to roll over till they die, if not taken up. There is abundant evidence with respect to these remarkable peculiarities; but what makes the case the more worthy of attention is, that the habit has been inherited since before the year 1600, for the breed is distinctly described in the 'Ayeen Akbery.'<sup>15</sup> Mr. Evans kept a pair in London, imported by Captain Vigne; and he assures me that he has seen them tumble in the air, as well as in the manner above described on the ground. Sir W. Elliot, however, writes to me from Madras, that he is informed that they tumble exclusively on the ground, or at a very small height above it. He also mentions birds of another sub-variety, called the Kalmi Lotan, which begin to roll over if only touched on the neck with a rod or wand.

*Sub-rare III. Common English Tumblers.*—These birds have exactly the same habits as the Persian Tumbler, but tumble better. The English bird is rather smaller than the Persian, and the beak is plainly shorter. Compared with the rock-pigeon, and proportionally with the size of body, the beak is from .15 to nearly .2 of an inch shorter, but it is not thinner. There are several varieties of the common Tumbler, namely, Baldheads, Beards, and Dutch Rollers. I have kept the latter alive; they have differently shaped heads, longer necks, and are feather-footed. They tumble to an extraordinary degree; as Mr. Brent remarks,<sup>16</sup> "Every few seconds over they go; one, two, or three summersaults at a time. Here and there a bird gives a very quick and rapid spin, revolving like a wheel, though they sometimes lose their balance, and make a rather ungraceful fall, in which they occasionally hurt themselves by striking some object." From Madras I have received several specimens of the common Tumbler of India, differing slightly from each other in the length of their beaks. Mr. Brent sent me a dead specimen of a "House-tumbler,"<sup>17</sup> which is a Scotch variety, not

<sup>15</sup> English translation, by F. Gladwin, 4th edition, vol. i. The habit of the Lotan is also described in the Persian treatise before alluded to, published about 100 years ago: at this date the Lotans were generally white and crested as at present. Mr. Blyth describes these birds in 'Annals and Mag. of Nat. Hist.,' vol. xiv., 1847, p. 104; he says that they "may be

seen at any of the Calcutta bird-dealers."

<sup>16</sup> 'Journal of Horticulture,' Oct. 22, 1861, p. 76.

<sup>17</sup> See the account of the House-tumblers kept at Glasgow, in the 'Cottage Gardener,' 1858, p. 285. Also Mr. Brent's paper, 'Journal of Horticulture,' 1861, p. 76.