

was evident.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, Mr. R. Scot Skirving informs me that he often saw crowds of pigeons in Upper Egypt settling on low trees, but not on palms, in preference to alighting on the mud hovels of the natives. In India Mr. Blyth<sup>3</sup> has been assured that the wild *C. livia*, var. *intermedia*, sometimes roosts in trees. I may here give a curious instance of compulsion leading to changed habits: the banks of the Nile above lat. 28° 30' are perpendicular for a long distance, so that when the river is full the pigeons cannot alight on the shore to drink, and Mr. Skirving repeatedly saw whole flocks settle on the water, and drink whilst they floated down the stream. These flocks seen from a distance resembled flocks of gulls on the surface of the sea.

If any domestic race had descended from a species which was not social, or which built its nest and roosted in trees,<sup>4</sup> the sharp eyes of fanciers would assuredly have detected some vestige of so different an aboriginal habit. For we have reason to believe that aboriginal habits are long retained under domestication. Thus with the common ass we see signs of its original desert life in its strong dislike to cross the smallest stream of water, and in its pleasure in rolling in the dust. The same strong dislike to cross a stream is common to the camel, which has been domesticated from a very ancient period. Young pigs, though so tame, sometimes squat when frightened, and thus try to conceal themselves even on an open and bare place. Young turkeys, and occasionally even young fowls, when the hen gives the danger-cry, run away and try to hide themselves, like young partridges or pheasants, in order that their mother may take

<sup>2</sup> I have heard through Sir C. Lyell from Miss Buckley, that some half-bred Carriers kept during many years near London regularly settled by day on some adjoining trees, and, after being disturbed in their loft by their young being taken, roosted on them at night.

<sup>3</sup> 'Annals and Mag. of Nat. Hist.,' 2nd ser., vol. xx., 1857, p. 509; and in a late volume of the Journal of the Asiatic Society.

<sup>4</sup> In works written on the pigeon by fanciers I have sometimes observed the mistaken belief expressed that the species which naturalists called ground-pigeons (in contradistinction to arboreal pigeons) do not perch and build on trees. In these same works by fanciers wild species resembling the chief domestic races are often said to exist in various parts of the world, but such species are quite unknown to naturalists.