

fact belong to the genus *Carpophaga*. Fourthly, *Columba guinea*, which ranges from Guinea⁸ to the Cape of Good Hope, and roosts either on trees or rocks, according to the nature of the country. This species belongs to the genus *Strictœnas* of Reichenbach, but is closely allied to *Columba*; it is to some extent coloured like certain domestic races, and has been said to be domesticated in Abyssinia; but Mr Mansfield Parkyns, who collected the birds of that country and knows the species, informs me that this is a mistake. Moreover, the *C. guinea* is characterized by the feathers of the neck having peculiar notched tips,—a character not observed in any domestic race. Fifthly, the *Columba œnas* of Europe, which roosts on trees, and builds its nest in holes, either in trees or the ground; this species, as far as external characters go, might be the parent of several domestic races; but, though it crosses readily with the true rock-pigeon, the offspring, as we shall presently see, are sterile hybrids, and of such sterility there is not a trace when the domestic races are intercrossed. It should also be observed that if we were to admit, against all probability, that any of the foregoing five or six species were the parents of some of our domestic pigeons, not the least light would be thrown on the chief differences between the eleven most strongly-marked races.

We now come to the best known rock-pigeon, the *Columba livia*, which is often designated in Europe pre-eminently as the Rock-pigeon, and which naturalists believe to be the parent of all the domesticated breeds. This bird agrees in every essential character with the breeds which have been only slightly modified. It differs from all other species in being of a slaty-blue colour, with two black bars on the wings, and with the croup (or loins) white. Occasionally birds are seen in Faroe and the Hebrides with the black bars replaced by two or three black spots; this form has been named by Brehm⁹ *C. amaliæ*, but this species has not been admitted as distinct by other ornithologists. Graba¹⁰ even found a difference in the bars on the right and left wings of the same bird in Faroe. Another and rather more distinct form is either truly wild or has become feral on the cliffs of England and was doubtfully named by Mr. Blyth¹¹ as *C. affinis*, but is now no longer considered by him as a distinct species. *C. affinis* is rather smaller than the rock-pigeon of the Scottish islands, and has a very different appearance owing to the wing-coverts being chequered with black, with similar marks often extending over the back. The chequering consists of a large black

⁸ Temminck, 'Hist. Nat. Gén. des Pigeons,' tom. i.; also 'Les Pigeons, par Mme. Knip and Temminck. Bona-partie, however, in his 'Coup-d'œil,' believes that two closely allied species are confounded together under this name. The *C. leucocephala* of the West Indies is stated by Temminck to be a rock-pigeon; but I am informed

by Mr. Gosse that this is an error.

⁹ 'Handbuch der Naturgesch. Vögel Deutschlands.'

¹⁰ 'Tagebuch, Reise nach Färo,' 1830, s. 62.

¹¹ 'Annals and Mag. of Nat. Hist.' vol. xix. 1847, p. 102. This excellent paper on pigeons is well worth consulting.