

variety of *C. livia* ; but I have seen doves brought from Yorkshire without any trace of chequering, like the wild rock-pigeon of the Shetland Islands. The chequered doves from the Orkney Islands, after having been domesticated by Colonel King for more than twenty years, differed slightly from each other in the darkness of their plumage and in the thickness of their beaks ; the thinnest beak being rather thicker than the thickest one in the Madeira birds. In Germany, according to Bechstein, the common dove-pigeon is not chequered. In India they often become chequered, and sometimes pied with white ; the croup also, as I am informed by Mr. Blyth, becomes nearly white. I have received from Sir. J. Brooke some dove-pigeons, which originally came from the S. Natunas Islands in the Malay Archipelago, and which had been crossed with the Singapore doves : they were small and the darkest variety was extremely like the dark chequered variety with a blue croup from Madeira ; but the beak was not so thin, though decidedly thinner than in the rock-pigeon from the Shetland Islands. A dove-pigeon sent to me by Mr. Swinhoe from Foochow, in China, was likewise rather small, but differed in no other respect. I have also received through the kindness of Dr. Daniell, four living dove-pigeons from Sierra Leone,<sup>17</sup> these were fully as large as the Shetland rock-pigeon, with even bulkier bodies. In plumage some of them were identical with the Shetland rock pigeon, but with the metallic tints apparently rather more brilliant ; others had a blue croup, and resembled the chequered variety of *C. intermedia* of India ; and some were so much chequered as to be nearly black. In these four birds the beak differed slightly in length, but in all it was decidedly shorter, more massive, and stronger than in the wild rock-pigeon from the Shetland Islands, or in the English dove. When the beaks of these African pigeons were compared with the thinnest beaks of the wild Madeira specimens, the contrast was great ; the former being fully one-third thicker in a vertical direction than the latter ; so that any one at first would have felt inclined to rank these birds as specifically distinct ; yet so perfectly graduated a series could be formed between the above-mentioned varieties, that it was obviously impossible to separate them.

To sum up : the wild *Columba livia*, including under this name *C. affinis*, *intermedia*, and the other still more closely-affined geographical races, has a vast range from the southern coast of Norway and the Faroe Islands to the shores of the Mediterranean, to Madeira and the Canary Islands, to Abyssinia, India, and Japan. It varies greatly in plumage, being

<sup>17</sup> Domestic pigeons of the common kind are mentioned as being pretty numerous in John Barbut's 'Description of the Coast of Guinea' (p. 215),

published in 1746 ; they are said, in accordance with the name which they bear, to have been imported.