

Nor is it probable, from what is known of the distribution of birds, that the islands near Europe should have been inhabited by peculiar species of pigeons; and if we assume that distant oceanic islands were the homes of the supposed parent-species, we must remember that ancient voyages were tediously slow, and that ships were then ill-provided with fresh food, so that it would not have been easy to bring home living birds. I have said ancient voyages, for nearly all the races of the pigeon were known before the year 1600, so that the supposed wild species must have been captured and domesticated before that date.

*Secondly.*—The doctrine that the chief domestic races are descended from several aboriginal species, implies that several species were formerly so thoroughly domesticated as to breed readily when confined. Although it is easy to tame most wild birds, experience shows us that it is difficult to get them to breed freely under confinement; although it must be owned that this is less difficult with pigeons than with most other birds. During the last two or three hundred years, many birds have been kept in aviaries, but hardly one has been added to our list of thoroughly reclaimed species: yet on the above doctrine we must admit that in ancient times nearly a dozen kinds of pigeons, now unknown in the wild state, were thoroughly domesticated.

*Thirdly.*—Most of our domesticated animals have run wild in various parts of the world; but birds, owing apparently to their partial loss of the power of flight, less often than quadrupeds. Nevertheless I have met with accounts showing that the common fowl has become feral in South America and perhaps in West Africa, and on several islands: the turkey was at one time almost feral on the banks of the Parana; and the Guinea-fowl has become perfectly wild at Ascension and in Jamaica. In this latter island the peacock, also, "has become a maroon bird." The common duck wanders from its home and becomes almost wild in Norfolk. Hybrids between the common and musk-duck which have become wild have been shot in North America, Belgium, and near the Caspian Sea. The goose is said to have run wild in La Plata. The common dovecot-pigeon has become wild at Juan