

been visible and had been attended to by fanciers, assuredly an additional number might easily have been fixed in the Pouter. If these latter characters had once been rendered constant, we should never have suspected that they had at first been highly variable, or that they had arisen from correlation, in the one case with the shortness of the wings, and in the other case with the length of the body.

In order to understand how the chief domestic races have become distinctly separated from each other, it is important to bear in mind, that fanciers constantly try to breed from the best birds, and consequently that those which are inferior in the requisite qualities are in each generation neglected; so that after a time the less improved parent-stocks and many subsequently formed intermediate grades become extinct. This has occurred in the case of the Pouter, Turbit, and Trumpeter, for these highly improved breeds are now left without any links closely connecting them either with each other or with the aboriginal rock-pigeon. In other countries, indeed, where the same care has not been applied, or where the same fashion has not prevailed, the earlier forms may long remain unaltered, or altered only in a slight degree, and we are thus sometimes enabled to recover the connecting links. This is the case in Persia and India with the Tumbler and Carrier, which there differ but slightly from the rock-pigeon in the proportions of their beaks. So again in Java, the Fantail sometimes has only fourteen caudal feathers, and the tail is much less elevated and expanded than in our improved birds; so that the Java bird forms a link between a first-rate Fantail and the rock-pigeon.

Occasionally a breed may be retained for some particular quality in a nearly unaltered condition in the same country, together with highly modified off-shoots or sub-breeds, which are valued for some distinct property. We see this exemplified in England, where the common Tumbler, which is valued only for its flight, does not differ much from its parent-form, the Eastern Tumbler; whereas the Short-faced Tumbler has been prodigiously modified, from being valued, not for its flight, but for other qualities. But the common-flying Tumbler of Europe has already begun to branch out