

more or less infertile. Nearly similar experiments have recently been tried on a great scale in the Zoological Gardens with almost the same result.¹⁵ Out of 500 eggs, raised from various first crosses and hybrids, between *G. sonneratii*, *bankiva*, and *varius*, only 12 chickens were reared, and of these only three were the product of hybrids *inter se*. From these facts, and from the above-mentioned strongly-marked differences in structure between the domestic fowl and *G. sonneratii*, we may reject this latter species as the parent of any domestic breed.

Ceylon possesses a fowl peculiar to the island, viz. *G. stanleyii*; this species approaches so closely (except in the colouring of the comb) to the domestic fowl, that Messrs. Layard and Kellaert¹⁶ would have considered it, as they inform me, as one of the parent-stocks, had it not been for its singularly different voice. This bird, like the last, crosses readily with tame hens, and even visits solitary farms and ravishes them. Two hybrids, a male and female, thus produced, were found by Mr. Mitford to be quite sterile: both inherited the peculiar voice of *G. stanleyii*. This species, then, may in all probability be rejected as one of the primitive stocks of the domestic fowl.

Java and the islands eastward as far as Flores are inhabited by *G. varius* (or *furcatus*), which differs in so many characters—green plumage, unserrated comb, and single median wattle—that no one supposes it to have been the parent of any one of our breeds; yet, as I am informed by Mr. Crawford,¹⁷ hybrids are commonly raised between the male *G. varius* and the common hen, and are kept for their great beauty, but are invariably sterile: this, however, was not the case with some bred in the Zoological Gardens. These hybrids were at one time thought to be specifically distinct, and were named *G. ceneus*. Mr. Blyth and others believe that the *G. temminckii*¹⁸ (of which the history is not known) is a similar hybrid. Sir J. Brooke sent me some skins of domestic fowls from Borneo, and across the tail of one of these, as Mr. Tegetmeier observed, there were transverse blue bands like those which he had seen on the tail-feathers of hybrids from *G. varius*, reared in the Zoological Gardens. This fact apparently indicates that some of the fowls of Borneo have been slightly affected by crosses with *G. varius*, but the case may possibly be one of analogous variation. I may just allude to the *G. giganteus*, so often referred to in works on poultry as a wild species; but Marsden¹⁹ the first describer, speaks of it as a tame breed; and the specimen in the British Museum evidently has the aspect of a domestic variety.

¹⁵ Mr. S. J. Salter, in 'Natural History Review,' April 1863, p. 276.

¹⁶ See also Mr. Layard's paper in 'Annals and Mag. of Nat. History,' 2nd series, vol. xiv. p. 62.

¹⁷ See also Mr. Crawford's 'Descriptive Dict. of the Indian Islands,' 1856,

p. 113.

¹⁸ Described by Mr. G. R. Gray, 'Proc. Zoolog. Soc,' 1849, p. 62.

¹⁹ The passage from Marsden is given by Mr. Dixon in his 'Poultry Book,' p. 176. No ornithologist now ranks this bird as a distinct species.