

humming-bird should be found in the Old World. From the character of the other gallinaceous birds of Africa, it is not probable that Gallus is an African genus. We need not look to the western parts of Asia, for Messrs. Blyth and Crawfurd, who have attended to this subject, doubt whether Gallus ever existed in a wild state even as far west as Persia. Although the earliest Greek writers speak of the fowl as a Persian bird, this probably merely indicates its line of importation. For the discovery of unknown species we must look to India, to the Indo-Chinese countries, and to the northern parts of the Malay Archipelago. The southern portion of China is the most likely country; but as Mr. Blyth informs me, skins have been exported from China during a long period, and living birds are largely kept there in aviaries, so that any native species of Gallus would probably have become known. Mr. Birch, of the British Museum, has translated for me passages from a Chinese Encyclopædia published in 1609, but compiled from more ancient documents, in which it is said that fowls are creatures of the West, and were introduced into the East (*i.e.* China) in a dynasty 1400 B.C. Whatever may be thought of so ancient a date, we see that the Indo-Chinese and Indian regions were formerly considered by the Chinese as the source of the domestic fowl. From these several considerations we must look to the present metropolis of the genus, namely, to the south-eastern parts of Asia, for the discovery of species which were formerly domesticated, but are now unknown in the wild state; and the most experienced ornithologists do not consider it probable that such species will be discovered.

In considering whether the domestic breeds are descended from one species, namely, *G. bankiva*, or from several, we must not quite overlook, though we must not exaggerate, the importance of the test of fertility. Most of our domestic breeds have been so often crossed, and their mongrels so largely kept, that it is almost certain, if any degree of infertility had existed between them, it would have been detected. On the other hand, the four known species of Gallus when

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and lastly, it is asserted that they have become feral in New Zealand, but whether this is correct I know not.