

crossed with each other, or when crossed, with the exception of *G. bankiva*, with the domestic fowl, produce infertile hybrids.

Finally, we have not such good evidence with fowls as with pigeons, of all the breeds having descended from a single primitive stock. In both cases the argument of fertility must go for something; in both we have the improbability of man having succeeded in ancient times in thoroughly domesticating several supposed species,—most of these supposed species being extremely abnormal as compared with their natural allies,—all being now either unknown or extinct, though the parent-form of no other domesticated bird has been lost. But in searching for the supposed parent-stocks of the various breeds of the pigeon, we were enabled to confine our search to species having peculiar habits of life; whilst with fowls there is nothing in their habits in any marked manner distinct from those of other gallinaceous birds. In the case of pigeons, I have shown that purely-bred birds of every race and the crossed offspring of distinct races frequently resemble, or revert to, the wild rock-pigeon in general colour and in each characteristic mark. With fowls we have facts of a similar nature, but less strongly pronounced, which we will now discuss.

Reversion and Analogous Variation.—Purely-bred Game, Malay, Cochin, Dorking, Bantam, and, as I hear from Mr. Tegetmeier, Silk fowls, may frequently or occasionally be met with, which are almost identical in plumage with the wild *G. bankiva*. This is a fact well deserving attention, when we reflect that these breeds rank amongst the most distinct. Fowls thus coloured are called by amateurs black-breasted reds. Hamburgs properly have a very different plumage; nevertheless, as Mr. Tegetmeier informs me, “the great difficulty in breeding cocks of the golden-spangled variety is their tendency to have black breasts and red backs.” The males of white Bantams and white Cochins, as they come to maturity, often assume a yellowish or saffron tinge; and the longer neck hackles of black Bantam cocks,²⁸ when

²⁸ Mr. Hewitt, in ‘The Poultry Book,’ by W. B. Tegetmeier, 1866, p. 248.