

insessorial species are enumerated which had not bred, and of these only four were known to have coupled.

Parrots are singularly long-lived birds; and Humboldt mentions the curious fact of a parrot in South America, which spoke the language of an extinct Indian tribe, so that this bird preserved the sole relic of a lost language. Even in this country there is reason to believe⁴¹ that parrots have lived to the age of nearly one hundred years; yet they breed so rarely, though many have been kept in Europe, that the event has been thought worth recording in the gravest publications.⁴² Nevertheless, when Mr. Buxton turned out a large number of parrots in Norfolk, three pairs bred and reared ten young birds in the course of two seasons; and this success may be attributed to their free life.⁴³ According to Bechstein⁴⁴ the African *Psittacus erithacus* breeds oftener than any other species in Germany: the *P. macoa* occasionally lays fertile eggs, but rarely succeeds in hatching them; this bird, however, has the instinct of incubation sometimes so strongly developed, that it will hatch the eggs of fowls or pigeons. In the Zoological Gardens and in the old Surrey Gardens some few species have coupled, but, with the exception of three species of parrakeets, none have bred. It is a much more remarkable fact that in Guiana parrots of two kinds, as I am informed by Sir R. Schomburgk, are often taken from the nests by the Indians and reared in large numbers; they are so tame that they fly freely about the houses, and come when called to be fed, like pigeons; yet he has never heard of a single instance of their breeding.⁴⁵ In Jamaica, a resident naturalist, Mr. R. Hill,⁴⁶ says, "no birds more readily submit to human dependence than the parrot-tribe, but no instance of a parrot breeding in this tame life has been known yet." Mr. Hill specifies a number of other native birds kept tame in the West Indies, which never breed in this state.

The great pigeon family offers a striking contrast with the parrots: in the nine-year Report thirteen species are recorded as having bred, and, what is more noticeable, only two were seen to couple without any result. Since the above date every annual Report gives many cases of various pigeons breeding. The two magnificent crowned pigeons (*Goura coronata* and *victoriæ*) produced hybrids;

⁴¹ Loudon's 'Mag. of Nat. History,' vol. xix., 1836, p. 347.

⁴² 'Mémoires du Muséum d'Hist. Nat.,' tom. x. p. 314: five cases of parrots breeding in France are here recorded. See also 'Report Brit. Assoc. Zoolog.,' 1843.

⁴³ 'Annals and Mag. of Nat. Hist.,' Nov. 1868, p. 311.

⁴⁴ 'Stubenvögel,' s. 105, 83.

⁴⁵ Dr. Hancock remarks ('Charles-

worth's Mag. of Nat. Hist.' vol. ii., 1838, p. 492), "it is singular that, amongst the numerous useful birds that are indigenous to Guiana, none are found to propagate among the Indians; yet the common fowl is reared in abundance throughout the country."

⁴⁶ 'A Week at Port Royal,' 1855, p. 7.