

loquacity: the drake only hisses like common drakes; nevertheless, when paired with the common duck, he transmits to his female offspring a strong quacking tendency. This loquacity seems at first a surprising character to have been acquired under domestication. But the voice varies in the different breeds; Mr. Brent¹⁵ says that Hook-billed ducks are very loquacious, and that Rouens utter a "dull, loud, and monotonous cry, easily distinguishable by an experienced ear." As the loquacity of the Call duck is highly serviceable, these birds being used in decoys, this quality may have been increased by selection. For instance, Colonel Hawker says, if young wild ducks cannot be got for a decoy, "by way of make-shift, select tame birds which are the most clamorous, even if their colour should not be like that of wild ones."¹⁶ It has been erroneously asserted that Call ducks hatch their eggs in less time than common ducks.¹⁷

The Penguin duck is the most remarkable of all the breeds; the thin neck and body are carried erect; the wings are small; the tail is upturned; and the thigh-bones and metatarsi are considerably lengthened in proportion with the same bones in the wild duck. In five specimens examined by me there were only eighteen tail-feathers instead of twenty as in the wild duck; but I have also found only eighteen and nineteen tail-feathers in two Labrador ducks. On the middle toe, in three specimens, there were twenty-seven or twenty-eight scutellæ, whereas in two wild ducks there were thirty-one and thirty-two. The Penguin when crossed transmits with much power its peculiar form of body and gait to its offspring; this was manifest with some hybrids raised in the Zoological Gardens between one of these birds and the Egyptian goose¹⁸ (*Anser ægyptiacus*), and likewise with some mongrels which I raised between the Penguin and Labrador duck. I am not much surprised that some writers should maintain that this breed must be descended from an unknown and distinct species; but from the reasons already assigned, it seems to me far more probable that it is the descendant, much modified by domestication under an unnatural climate, of *Anas boschas*.

Osteological Characters.—The skulls of the several breeds differ from each other and from the skull of the wild duck in very little except in the proportional length and curvature of the premaxillaries. These latter bones in the Call duck are short, and a line drawn from their extremities to the summit of the skull is nearly straight, instead of being concave as in the common duck; so that

¹⁵ 'Poultry Chronicle,' vol. iii. 1855, p. 312. With respect to Rouens, see ditto, vol. i., 1854, p. 167.

¹⁶ Col. Hawker's 'Instructions to young Sportsmen,' quoted by Mr. Dixon in his 'Ornamental Poultry,' p. 125.

¹⁷ 'Cottage Gardener,' April 9th, 1861.

¹⁸ These hybrids have been described by M. Selys-Longchamps in the 'Bulletins (tom. xii. No 10) Acad. Roy. de Bruxelles.'