

fences which bound the enclosures for their cattle. They are, to a certain degree, domiciled and harmless. The people do them no injury; on the contrary, they are rather glad to see and encourage them, because they clear the premises of all the offal and filth they can find. In default of other food they eat frogs, lizards, and snakes."

In the Eastern Atlas, according to Mr. Salvin, "wherever a cliff exists in the mountains that surround the tablelands, sure enough it will be occupied by a pair of these birds; generally speaking, the nests of *N. percnopterus* are not so inaccessible as those of *Gyps fulvus*. One nest I visited, near Kef Laks, I could reach with my hand from a perfectly accessible ledge; it was in a crevice of a rock, and entirely composed of sticks. The bird begins to lay about the 10th or 12th of April."—*Ibis*, 1859, p. 180.

Speaking of the bird as observed by him in Palestine, the Rev. H. B. Tristram informs us that *Neophron percnopterus* is "universally distributed, and is equally abundant in the plains of Sharon and the naked hill-district of the south. Breeds in great numbers in the valley of the Kedron, heaping up its enormous nest of sticks, rubbish, and old rags on every convenient ledge. While the adult bird was to be seen throughout the whole country, I never observed a single specimen in the sombre livery of youth. One very fine bird paid the penalty of its curiosity while we were sitting on a rock on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. It made several swoops, as though anxious to share our chicken, and, hovering over us, fell dead at a discharge of No. 7 shot."—*Ibis*, 1859, p. 23.

"That very useful but despicable scavenger 'Pharoah's hen,' as Europeans term the Egyptian Vulture, is a handsome bird on the wing; and the distribution of the black and white in its plumage has a fine effect as it circles over head, or sweeps past the traveller down some deep ravine. It never breeds in colonies, and seldom are two nests to be found very near together; but it is the most universally diffused of all the Raptores of Palestine during summer, it being impossible to travel a mile or two in any part of the country without putting up a pair. It has no dislike to the neighbourhood of man, and fearlessly resorts to the dunghills of the villages to feed. No filth, vegetable or animal, seems to come amiss to it; and I once surprised a pair in the act of gorging at a heap of spoilt figs. The *Neophron* is strictly migratory, begins to return about the end of March, and by the middle of April the country is full of them. The first egg obtained was laid near the plain of Gennesaret on April 1st; and our last pair of *fresh* eggs were found on May 24th in the mountainous region near Hermon. The nests, though always in the cliffs, were generally low down, and comparatively easy of access. I took an egg from a nest in an arched passage through the rocks, close to the village of Mejdél, and so little concealed that every passer-by could see it; and a child might have climbed up to it. The eggs are rarely alike, one being invariably much more richly coloured than the other, though, before incubation has been long continued, both become alike sodden and discoloured by filth. There is a rich variety in the colouring of the fresh eggs, from a deep russet-red to a paler red, uniformly diffused over the whole surface; sometimes they are mottled and blotched, at others faintly spotted, and even almost a pure white. The nest is an enormous congeries of sticks, clods of turf, bullocks' ribs, pieces of sheepskin, old rags, and whatever else the neighbourhood of a village or camp may afford, and is generally somewhat depressed in the centre. The *Neophron* is more plentiful in Gilead and Moab than elsewhere; at least we obtained more nests in those regions, to which the birds seem to be attracted by the enormous flocks and herds of the Bedouin, on the ordure of which they largely feed."—TRISTRAM in *Ibis*, 1865, p. 249.

Messrs. Elwes and Buckley state, in their "List of the Birds of Turkey," that they saw "only one or two of these birds in Greece, and that in Macedonia they are by no means common during the winter months. The '*Ak baba*,' as it is called by the Turks, does not associate with the other Vultures during the breeding-season. M. Alléon says that the Egyptian Vulture arrives in spring, and remains till the beginning of autumn, but is found during that time in great numbers in the town of Constantinople. It seems to distinguish between Turks and Christians; for in Pera, which is chiefly inhabited by foreigners, it does not breed; while in Stamboul it breeds on the cypresses, mosques, and roofs of the tanneries, where it is never molested by the Mussulmans, and repays its hospitable treatment by carrying off the garbage in the streets."

"The Egyptian Vulture," says Lord Lilford, "is very common in Andalucia and, probably, all other parts of Spain, and follows the plough, as observed by Captain Widdrington. In fact, during my last visit to Andalucia, in almost every instance when I observed ploughing, there were a pair or more of these Vultures waiting about, and picking up the grubs turned up by the ploughshare. They are very fearless of man, and are conspicuous objects against the tawny-brown hills so characteristic of Southern Spanish scenery."

Modern research has determined that this bird does not go to India, its place there being supplied by a very nearly allied species, the *Neophron ginginianus*.

The Plate represents:—an adult, about two-thirds the natural size; and the young, from Mr. Woodward's specimen, very much reduced.