

Demaillet * conjectures that the ibis might be the bird peculiar to Egypt, and which was named Pharaoh's Fowl (*Chapon de Pharaon*), and at Aleppo *Saphan-bacha*. It devours serpents. There are of them white, and white and black; and it follows, for more than a hundred leagues, the caravans which go from Cairo to Mecca, for the purpose of feeding upon the carcasses of animals which are killed during the journey, while at any other time there is not one seen along this route. But the author does not consider this conjecture as certain; he even says, that we must give up understanding the ancients, when they have spoken so as not to be understood. He ends with concluding, that the ancients have perhaps indiscriminately comprehended under the name of Ibis, all birds which rendered to Egypt the service of clearing it of the dangerous reptiles which this climate produces in abundance, such as the vulture, the falcon, the stork, the sparrowhawk, &c.

He had reason not to regard his Pharaoh's fowl as the ibis; for, although its description is very imperfect, and although Buffon fancied he recognised the ibis in it, it is easy to judge, as well as by what Pokocke says of it, that this bird

* Description de l'Égypte, part ii. p. 23.