

*Report on a Zoological collection from the Somáli country.—By*  
E. BLYTH.

The collection on which I have now the honor to report was made by Lt. Speke, of the 46th B. N. I., and was forwarded to the Society's Museum by Lt. Burton of the Bombay Service, in command of an expedition into the Somáli territory, or African region bordering on the Red Sea.\*

This collection comprises 10 species of mammalia, 36 of birds, 3 of reptiles, 1 fish, a scorpion, and 3 species of *Coleoptera*. The whole of the *Vertebrata* (if not the rest also) being distinct species from any found in this country; save only a Lynx (*FELIS CARACAL*), and a Wheatear (*SAXICOLA MELANURA*, Temminck), which latter is figured among the Burnes' drawings from Sindh, though we did not previously possess an example of the species.

The actual novelties are not many; but comprise a highly interesting rodent, in a new generic form affined to the hitherto isolated African genus *CTENODACTYLUS*, Gray; and among the birds, a second species of the *Sturnidous* genus *SPREO*, a handsome undescribed true Sparrow, and a small Floriken remarkable for the shortness of its tarsi. There is also a *Sturnidous* bird, which is probably the *LAMPROTOERNIS MORIO* apud Rüppell; but is quite distinct from the species so denominated of S. Africa, from which it is now probably first distinguished.† A *Bayá* (or 'Weaver-bird') sent would seem to be the long lost *Baglefecht* of Buffon, which the older systematists confounded with our Indian *PLOCEUS PHILIPPINUS*, and in Griffith's edition of Cuvier's 'Animal Kingdom' is placed as a synonyme of *EUPLECTES ABYSSINICUS*: and a beautiful small Honeysucker (*NECTARINIA ALBIVENTRIS*, Strickland, described from the Somáli country,) is now probably only for the second time received in any collection. The reptiles comprise an apparently new Scinque.

\* *Vide* p. 245, *ante*.

† Since the above was written, we find (from a recent No. of the *Comptes Rendus*) that this Abyssinian bird has lately been discriminated by M. Verreaux, who terms it *AMYDRUS RUPPELLI*.

With the exceptions of *FELIS CARACAL* and *OXYLOPHUS GLANDARIUS*, the whole of the species would have been new to the Society's museum, had we not just previously received the collection from Dr. Rüppell noticed in my Report for April of this year,\* and which supplied us with examples of *CANIS VARIEGATUS*, *DENDROBATES ÆTHIOPICUS*, *SAXICOLA ISABELLINA* (?), *PLATYSTEIRA SENEGALENSIS*, *NECTARINIA HABESSINICA*, and *PTEROCLES SENEGALENSIS*: but in all of these instances the examples prepared by Lt. Speke are finer, and he has favoured us with both sexes of the *PTEROCLES*.

As acquisitions of especial interest may be indicated the *HYÆNA*, the Abyssinian *HYRAX*, the little Salt's Antelope (a particularly fine and well prepared specimen), and the new rodent; and among birds the *Bateleur* Eagle, the Hornbill, two species of *PROMEROPS* (a genus intermediate to *BUCEROS* and *UPUPA*), the *CHIZÆRIS*, *CORVI*, *BUPHAGA*, *LANIARIUS CRUENTUS*, *HYPHANTORNIS BAGLEFECHT*, the *RASORES*, new Floriken, and *CHENALOPEX* or 'Egyptian Goose,' of which common African bird we did not previously possess a specimen.

In proceeding to details, we distinguish by inverted commas some notes obligingly supplied by Lt. Burton.

#### MAMMALIA.

*CANIS VARIEGATUS*, Rüppell. "The Somáli Jackal (male), fine and large: probably on account of the quantity of Sheep's tails which he has devoured. He carries off kids and lambs, rather disdainingly garbage; and unless driven away by dogs, he is capable of doing great damage to the flocks. The Somáli call him *Dowao*, دواو."

\**HYÆNA CROCUTA*? (Erxleben), var.? Bright fulvous *Hyæna*, with dark spots not very distinct, and a black tail-tip: probably of the race termed *H. CROCUTA RUFÆ* by Fischer, and which Dr. Gray refers to *H. BRUNNEA*, Thunberg (*H. rufa*, Cuv., and *H. fusca*, † Geoffroy), from S. Africa (Pt. Natal); but which is not the 'Strand Wolf' of the Cape colonists (who term the common Spotted *Hyæna* the 'Tiger Wolf'), or *H. VILLOSA*, A. Smith, which Dr.

\* *Vide* p. 252, *ante*.

† This name more probably refers to the specimen in the Paris Museum described by Cuvier, *Oss. Foss.* VII, 318 (4th edit), and which is evidently *H. VILLOSA*, A. Smith (*Lin. Trans.* XV, pt. 2, 461).

Gray considers to be a S. African variety of *H. STRIATA*, Zimmerman, the common Striped Hyæna of Asia and N. Africa. We have seen *H. VILLOSA* alive, and have minutely compared its skull with skulls of the Spotted and of the Striped Hyænas; and arrived at the conclusion that it was a distinct species, nearly affined to *H. STRIATA*, but with the solitary true molar less developed, though more so than in *H. CROCUTA*.\* Dr. Gray even institutes a genus *CROCUTA*, to which he refers as species *CR. MACULATA* (*Canis crocuta*, Erxleben, *Hyæna maculata*, Humb., v. *H. capensis*, Desmarest), the ordinary Spotted Hyæna, and *CR. BRUNNEA* (with synonymes as before cited). The Somáli animal is probably the latter. The specimen is a female. "The Somáli call it *Waraba*, وارباب, or *Durwa*, دود. It is common to all the Somáli country, whines about the camp all night, and devours anything it can find during the day, pulling down camels and even children. The natives have many superstitions about this animal, and you often hear of a man being called *Waraba* after his proper name; the idea being that by rubbing certain plants over the body the magician can convert himself like Mars into a Wolf. In the cold season when the *Waraba* is hungry he attacks man. The Somális all declare this animal to be a hermaphrodite, copulating and being copulated with alternately." (*Vide* Pliny, VIII, 30; as cited by Cuvier, *Oss. Foss.* VII, 312, 4th edit.)

\* *MUNGOS FASCIATUS*; *Herpestes fasciatus*, Desmarest: *Viverra mungo*, Kæmpfer; *V. ichneumon*, Schreber (from Buffon, III, t. 19); *H. zebra*, Rüppell; *Ryzena suricata* apud Children, 'Appendix to Clapperton's Travels'. "Called the *Kadaf*, كدف. These animals run about in large batches, and defend themselves savagely when wounded. They inhabit the plateau, burrow deep, and when pursued endeavour to escape by hiding themselves: yet with characteristic curiosity, they must peep out of their asylum after a few minutes' concealment."

*FELIS CARACAL*, Schreber. "Called by the Somális *Jumbil*, جمبيل. It is principally found in the plains."

\* *XERUS RUTILANS*; *Sciurus rutilans*, Rüppell: *X. brachyotus*, Hemprich and Ehrenberg, apud Gray. "Ground Squirrel, called *Dabakálla*, دبكالا. It abounds all over the country, burrows especially

\* *Vide* also Cuvier, *Oss. Foss.* VII, 319 (4th edit.)

into deserted ant-hills, and under dead trees. The testes of the male are enormous; and the colour of the coat is glossy and brilliant."

\*PECTINATOR (*n. g.*) SPEKEL, nobis, *n. s.* "Common Rat. *Barrabdbl*, بربّ دّبل. Inhabits stony ground, like the HYRAX." This highly interesting rodent belongs to a peculiar N. African group, of which one species only appears hitherto to be tolerably known, the CTENODACTYLUS MASSONII, Gray.\* The animals of this group are clad with delicately soft fur, have very long moustaches, and four toes only on each foot. The palms and soles are naked, the latter to the heel or tarsal joint; and the entire length of the tarse is brought to the ground when walking. Over each claw is a curving tuft of stiffish bristles, more conspicuously developed on the hind-feet; and the innermost toe of the hind-foot has a peculiar combing apparatus, which has been described by Mr. Yarrell in the instance of CTENODACTYLUS MASSONII. "With this comb-like instrument," remarks that naturalist, "the little animals were observed [in the London Zoological Garden] to be continually dressing their soft fur; and the facility with which they managed to reach every part of each lateral half with the toe of the foot

\* Vide a notice of the anatomy of this animal, by Mr. Yarrell, in *Proc. Zool. Soc.* 1831, p. 49. A second species would seem to exist in the *Mus gundi*, Rothman, or *Gundi Marmot* of Pennant's 'Zoology;' which, being described to be of the "size of a small Rabbit," and of a "testaceous-red colour," can scarcely (as remarked by Dr. Gray) be specifically identical with *Ct. MASSONII*, even though from the same country—Barbary. The fur of *Ct. MASSONII* is pale yellowish-brown; and its tail is described by Mr. Yarrell to be 1 in. long. The *Gundi* is merely stated to have a "short tail." Accordingly, the following (obviously another of the same group and region), with rudimentary tail "but just perceptible to the touch," is probably a third species, which was observed by Capt. Lyon in the mountains north of Tripoli. That traveller informs us, that—"It much resembles a Guinea-pig in form, but is of a light brown mouse-colour. Fur longer than that of a Rat, and very silky; eyes black, large, and prominent. Orifices of ears, which are quite flat against the sides of the head, also black, and free from hair: the tail, or rather a little stump in place of one, is just perceptible by the touch, and from it grows a tuft or bunch of long black hairs. The body is very round and fat, and particularly broad at the shoulders. These animals burrow amongst the rocks. They are eaten with great relish by the natives, and no doubt are very good, as the flesh is exceedingly white and fat, and resembles that of a Rabbit." 'Travels in Barbary,' p. 32.

on that side, as well as the rapidity of the motion, were very remarkable." The muzzle is completely furred; and the rudimentary or short tail is furnished with long hair (as in the *SCIURIDÆ*). The rodential tusks are narrow and rounded; and in *CTENODACTYLUS* there are only three molars on each side above and below, and which are surrounded with enamel; the upper having one deep indentation externally, the lower being indented on both sides. In our new genus there is a small and simple fourth molar anteriorly above and below; and the next to it above is smaller than the third and fourth, and seems to have no distinct indentation (the molars being, however, much worn away by attrition in the specimen examined). The lower jaw of *PECTINATOR* is very remarkable for shewing no indication even of a coronoid process; a fact not mentioned by Mr. Yarrell in his description of the anatomy of *CTENODACTYLUS*. The condyle is small, and articulates on a level with the crowns of the molars. The auditory bullæ are remarkably large, and are seen from above (as in *CHINCHILLA*).—The ant-orbital foramen is large. Palate contracted, narrowing to the front; and the post-palatal emargination is continued forward to a line with the middle of the last molar. Externally, *PECTINATOR* is distinguished from *CTENODACTYLUS* by having the tail and ear-conch well developed; a smaller eye; and apparently a general adaptation for more diurnal and less fossorial habits. The eyes are scarcely so large as in a common Rat. The auricles are broadly ovoid, sub-nude, with a fringe of whitish hairs on their anterior margin, and a patch of dense whitish fur at base on their outer surface. Length of *P. SPEKEI*, from nose to base of tail, about 6 in.; and tail probably  $2\frac{1}{4}$  in., or with hair  $3\frac{1}{4}$  in. Tarse with toes  $1\frac{3}{8}$  in. Auricle (measured posteriorly)  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. The skull measures  $1\frac{7}{8}$  in. in length, and  $1\frac{1}{16}$  in. in greatest breadth (at the *zygomata* posteriorly); between the orbits somewhat exceeding  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. Fur soft and moderately long, of a sandy grey-brown colour, slightly washed with rufous especially on the crown; the basal half of the piles pale dusky: at the *nates*, the fur is more dense and woolly, and rufescent-whitish or pale isabelline: the moustaches are chiefly black, and the longest of them measure about 3 in: the hairs upon the tail are shorter towards its base, then lengthened as in the Squirrels; these long hairs being of a

sullied or isabella-white for the basal half, and then black with a white tip: hence, in the living animal, the bushy tail would appear whitish along its middle, with broad black lateral and longitudinal bands, which again are fringed externally with dull white: hairs upon the feet whitish, the tufts or brushes over and impeding the hind-claws shewing conspicuously: the combing apparatus of the innermost hind-toe consists of some exceedingly harsh and stiff short bristles immediately impending (but shorter than) the claw, and above these again are some equally short bristles which are not quite so rigid; over which is finally the long incurved tuft of finer bristles, the lowermost of which are shorter and more rigid than the upper: on the next toe the same remarkable structure is seen, and more easily *felt*, but is considerably less developed.\*

\*HYRAX HABESSINICUS, Hemprich and Ehrenberg: *Ashkoko* of the Appendix to Bruce's Travels; recognised as a distinct species by Dr. Gray; but referred by Dr. Rüppell to H. DAMAR, Cuvier, v. SYRIACUS of Schreber. Half-grown specimen. "The Somál call it *Bauni*, بوني. It inhabits rocky ground and delights in sunning itself, running about the rocks, and living in chinks and holes. Neither Lt. Speke nor I ever saw it in the plains. The Arabs here eat it, but the Somál do not."

\*GAZELLA ———? Heads of male and female, of one of the

\* This discovery of a second generic form of a peculiar group, hitherto represented only by CTENODACTYLUS (which has long stood quite isolated among other *Rodentia*), will be hailed with some satisfaction by those who have paid attention to the classification of the Order, and will tend to remove such doubts as may exist of the propriety of recognising this as a separate family (however limited, according to present knowledge), about equivalent to the CHINCHILLIDÆ of S. America, to which, upon the whole, the PECTINATORIDÆ would seem to be more nearly affined than to any other known form. It is highly probable, however, that more species and even generic forms remain to be discovered of this peculiarly African family; and that it will prove to be at least as extensive as the CHINCHILLIDÆ; and perhaps that even PETROMYS should be admitted within its extreme confines. Capt. Lyon's Tripoli animal, with tail reduced to a mere tubercle, is certainly one species which has not yet been scientifically examined; and the *Gundi Marmot* of Pennant is probably another: but these little mouse-coloured rodents seldom attract the attention of unscientific collectors; unless, indeed, it should so happen that their attention had been especially directed to them.

several species which have been more or less confounded under *G. DORCAS*; and quite distinct from the common Aden Gazelle, which is frequently brought alive to Calcutta. One marked peculiarity consists in the ears being of an ash-grey colour, contrasting strongly with the hue of the neck and doubtless also of the body. Horns robust, curved backward and then upward, and diverging but slightly; much longer, and with the annuli wider apart, than in the Aden Gazelle, though the animal would seem to be of the same size. The horns of the female are very much stouter than we have seen in any other female Gazelle, and follow the same curve as in the male, having rudimentary annuli. Muzzle whitish, with a strongly contrasting black nose-patch. The Society possesses a species of Gazelle (habitat uncertain), which much resembles the Aden Gazelle except in being considerably larger, with proportionally longer and more distantly knobbed horns, much as in the present race: but both of these have the ears rufescent and not ashy. At present, we are far from being satisfied with the manner in which Dr. Gray has brought together sundry of these affined races of Gazelle, in the *Proc. Zool. Soc.* for June 11th, 1850 (*Ann. Mag. N. H.* VIII, 1851. p. 131). It seems like cutting rather than unravelling of the tangled knot. Lt. Burton writes—"A kind of Gazelle called by the people *Dera*, ديرا; as you may observe that there is an elevation of loose replicated skin upon the nose. It seems to live during the dry season without water, and affects the desert, not being very shy in presence of man, but avoiding jungle. They are found in flocks."

\**MADOQUA SALTIANA*; *Antilope saltiana*, Blainville; *A. madoqua*, H. Smith. A beautiful skin of a male; and heads of two other males and of a female. "This little Antelope is called *Sagaro*, ساگارو, by the Somál; *Beni Israel* in Abyssinia; and *Ghazalah* by the Arabs. It abounds throughout the country generally in pairs, and is fond of ravines under hills, the beds of nullahs, and patches of desert vegetation. In the northern Somáli country, these Antelopes are caught in snares: elsewhere they are run down on foot, taking half a day on account of their great swiftness. The Jackal (*CANIS VARIEGATUS*) cannot catch them. They sleep by day under the trees; and in the plains their dung (which becomes peculiarly foetid with a musky odour in the sun) is found in heaps as if they

assembled for that purpose." Many animals resort habitually to one place to deposit their dung: among them the Indian Rhinoceros, which in the Rajmahal hills is watched for and shot by the natives at such places; and we have observed the Indian Four-horned Antelope to exhibit the same propensity, when tame and loose in a large enclosure.

\**OREOTRAGUS SALTATRIX*; *Antilope oreotragus*, Forster: *A. saltatrix*, Boddaërt. The '*Klip-springer*' of the Cape colonists. Head of female, and one fore-foot. "A kind of Antelope called *Alakrut*, الاكرت. They live in the higher ranges of the mountains, only in pairs, and are not unlike the Musk-Deer in coat. They are by no means shy, seldom flying before the foot-fall is heard. They hop in an awkward manner on the points of the hoof, at no great pace or distance at a time. The people of the country prize the venison."

#### AVES.

*PEEOCEPHALUS RUFIVENTRIS*, (Rüppell). "The only species of Parrot observed in the Somáli country. These birds fly in considerable numbers; and they have red irides."

\**HELOTARSUS ECAUDATUS*, (Daudin): *Bateleur* of Levaillant. "Called *Nabodi*, نبودي. There are many superstitions about this bird, and its shadow is supposed to be injurious to children. This may be accounted for by the habit it has of swooping down upon any one carrying meat. It devours the small Antelopes and birds, and generally soars high, but I have seen it wheeling close overhead. The female lays one egg in a large loose nest of sticks on the top of tall trees, and if the egg be taken she abandons her home. Irides red."

\**MELIERAX POLYZONUS*, Rüppell. "A kind of red-eyed Sparrowhawk, very swift. The people call it *Hatkaadag*, هانكاادگ."

\**BUBO* (?) *AFRICANUS*, (L.), Temmink, *p. c.* 50. Called *Shimír libah*, سمرليبا, the "Lion-bird." This is probably the species so identified by Rüppell, though not well according with the descriptions to which we have access. Size of ordinary *ASIO* (v. *OTUS*), but the auditory aperture as in *BUBO*. Length about 16 in.; of wing 12 in.; and tail 7 in. Colour rufous-brown above, speckled and variegated with dull black, and some oval white spots bordering



the scapularies and upon the wings: lower-parts barred with narrow transverse dusky rays, each margining a broader rufous band; tarse almost spotless dull white: primaries and tail banded. Head and neck (with aigrettes) rufous, each feather having a terminal blackish spot, extending up more or less as a medial streak: facial disk black-tipped; and the radiating plumelets whitish, tinged with rufous.

\**BUCEROS* (*TOCKUS*, LESSON,) *FLAVIROSTRIS*, Rüppell. "A common bird, called by the Somál *Kudunkutu*, كدنكطو. He makes a loud quacking noise, not unlike a frog; is fond of the jungle trees, and is noisy about sunrise."

\**PROMEROPS* *SENEGALENSIS* (?), Vieillot: *Nectarinia melanorhynchos* (?), Licht. "A bird with an offensive smell; flies in flocks, and feeds in acacia trees. It is numerous on the plateau." This is distinct from the Cape species, *PR. ERYTHORHYNCHOS*, (Latham); but may perhaps be the Abyssinian bird which Dr. Rüppell refers to the latter (*Systematische uebersicht*, &c., p. 28). Beak black, but red internally: not much curved, and measuring  $2\frac{3}{4}$  in. (in a straight line) from gape to point: wing  $5\frac{3}{4}$  in.; and middle tail-feathers 9 in. The white spots on the wings and tail are considerably more developed than in the Cape species, and extend quite across six of the primaries, without being divided by black along the shaft of the feather. The coloured glosses also are less splendid than in the Cape bird, save chiefly on the throat.

\**PR. MINOR*, Rüppell. Two specimens, male and female; the latter having a considerably smaller and still more arched bill. "This bird makes a loud noise, and inhabits large trees, especially the acacias."

*DENDROBATES ÆTHIOPICUS*, (Ehrenberg). "Heard tapping the hollow trees, like the Woodpeckers of Europe. These birds abound on the plateau. They are called *Daudaulay*., دودولي, from the sound."

\**DENDROMUS HEMPRICHII*, Ehrenberg). "This small Woodpecker is commoner than the last, and also inhabits the plateau."

\**CHIZÆRIS LEUCOGASTER*, Rüppell. "Called in some parts of the country *Gobian*, گوبيان; in others *Fât*, فات. It is a noisy bird, with a loud cry, and has all the cunning of a Magpie when pursued. It is fond of the thick trees on the banks of ravines. The Arabs call this bird *Kakatua*, and consider it a species of Parrot."

OXYLOPHUS GLANDARIUS, (L.) "Only this specimen obtained."

\*CORVUS AFFINIS, Rüppell. Two specimens. "Common all over the country. Somáli, *Tukka*, ❧.

"In the Harar hills I remarked another variety, very large, with a bright white patch on the back of the head, and a tremendous beak, arched and exceedingly hard. It is a very strong bird, taking a powerful load to kill: my Somális had never seen it before." The CORVULTUR CRASSICOLLIS, Rüppell, is here intended.

\*C. UMBRINUS (?), Sundevall. Not having seen a description of this bird, we are not quite certain that it is correctly identified; especially as the late H. E. Strickland remarked of it, after noticing C. SCAPULATUS (PHŒOCEPHALUS, Cabanis),—"Distinguished by the length and curvature of the beak, and by the grey-brown tint of the head and neck."\* In the Somáli specimen under examination, the beak resembles that of C. SCAPULATUS; and there is a further general agreement of size and structure, extending to the shape of the feathers. The bird was evidently young, and a dull brown tint prevails on the plumage, especially on the head and neck, which might well have suggested the appellation *umbrinus*. Can it, however, be the *young* of C. SCAPULATUS? Lt. Burton writes—"A common Crow. *Sometimes the breast-feathers are tipped with white, in small semi-circles extending as far as the abdomen.* The Somáli do not distinguish between this and the other Crow." On the other hand, may it be a variety of C. SCAPULATUS, as C. CORONE is certainly a black variety of C. CORNIX,† and as the black variety of C. SPLENDENS which inhabits Burma?

\*AMYDRUS RUPPELLI, Verreaux; *Lamprotornis morio* apud Rüppell, but distinct from A. MORIO, (L., *verus*), of S. Africa. Male and female. As compared with fine specimens of both sexes of the Cape species, this bird has a shorter and deeper bill, with more arched upper outline; longer wings; and much longer tail: but the colouring of the plumage is nearly the same; except that in the female of the northern bird, the head, neck, and breast, are paler and *unmixed* ash-gray; and in both sexes there is much more black tipping the primaries. Both have the rudimentary first primary black; but in the Cape species, the rest have both

\* *Ann. Mag. N. H.* IX (1852), p. 345.

† We possess an intermediate specimen from Norway.

webs rufous to very near the tip; whereas in the northern bird, the black is continued along the outer web to near its emargination, and also far up the margin of the inner web: in the second (or first developed) primary of A. RUPPELLI, the outer web has its terminal  $\frac{3}{5}$  black, and the inner web its terminal  $\frac{2}{5}$ , the two colours being distinctly defined apart; whereas the corresponding feather of A. MORIO is rufous throughout, passing insensibly into weak dusky at tip, and along the margin of the inner web. In A. RUPPELLI, the length of wing is—male 7 in., female  $6\frac{1}{2}$  in.; middle tail-feather—male 8 in., female  $7\frac{1}{4}$  in.; bill to gape  $1\frac{1}{4}$  in., and fully  $\frac{3}{8}$  in. in vertical depth. The corresponding measurements in A. MORIO are—6 in. and  $5\frac{3}{4}$  in.,  $5\frac{1}{2}$  in. and 5 in., and  $1\frac{3}{8}$  in. by  $\frac{5}{16}$  in. “This bird is found all over the hills, follows the cattle, and flies in flocks seldom exceeding 6 or 7. The eye is dark.”

\*LAMPROTORNIS SUPERBA, Rüppell. “A kind of *Maina*, called *Lhimber-load*, لمبرلود, the ‘Cow-bird.’ It is found in large flocks, and is fond of cows, whence its name. Irides white.”

\*SPREO ALBICAPILLUS, nobis, n. s. Length about 12 in.; of wing  $6\frac{1}{4}$  in.; and tail  $4\frac{3}{4}$  in., its outermost feathers  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. shorter: bill to gape  $1\frac{3}{16}$  in.; and tarse  $1\frac{3}{8}$  in. Colour dull metallic green, with a white cap, vent, lower tail-coverts, tibial plumes, flanks posteriorly, axillaries, and under wing-coverts: rest of the lower-parts with narrow brownish-white mesial streaks to the feathers, which are sub-acuminate, and but slightly streaked on the chin and throat: secondaries chiefly dull white on their exterior webs, forming a large patch on the wing. Bill and feet black. As compared with the Cape species, SPR. BICOLOR, (Gmelin; *Lamprotornis albiventris*, Swainson), the bill is less slender and Thrush-like, having more of the LAMPROTORNIS form; and the tarsi are shorter: but we do not hesitate to refer it to the same genus. “Its Somáli name is *Hanagur*, حين اكر. The eye, like that of the *Maina*, is white; and it flies in large flocks.”

\*BUPHAGA ERYTHORHYNCHA, Stanley. *Hurio*, هريو. “This bird clings to Camels, and injures the wounded by picking out parasites and larvæ. Its eye is a light and brownish red. Habitat generally the plateau above the hills.”

\*HYPHANTORNIS BAGLEFECHT? (Vieillot). This bird seems to agree sufficiently with Buffon’s description of *le Baglefecht*.

Length about  $6\frac{1}{2}$  in.; of wing  $3\frac{1}{4}$  in.; and tail  $1\frac{7}{8}$  in.: bill to forehead 16 in.; and tarse  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. Crown and under-parts bright golden-yellow, paling a little or passing to a purer yellow on the belly and lower tail-coverts, including the tibial plumes: back greenish-yellow with dusky mesial streaks; upper tail-coverts and tail yellowish olive-green, the rump somewhat yellower: wings dusky, the small coverts margined with greenish-yellow, the greater coverts and tertiaries with pale yellowish-brown, and the primaries with dull yellow: lores, ear-coverts, chin and throat, black, passing backward as a straight line from the nostrils, so as just to include the eyes. Bill infuscated, probably changing colour according to season; and feet brownish-carneous. "This bird flies in large flocks, and is fond of flowers, blossoms, and grass-seeds; avoiding jungle and trees."

\**PASSER CASTANOPTERUS*, nobis, *n. s.* Length about 5 in.; of wing  $2\frac{3}{4}$  in.; and tail 2 in. Structure typical. Crown and occiput, scapularies and wing-coverts, vivid light chesnut: back, rump, and upper tail-coverts, greenish olive-grey, the first black-centred: cheeks and lower-parts clear pale yellowish, sullied with olive on the flanks: the usual black gular mark, extending down upon the breast; and the lores and feathers at the base of the lower mandible also black: a trace of a white wing-band; and the great alars and caudals dusky, more or less pale-edged, the margin broadest and more rufescent on the tertiaries. Bill and legs as in *P. DOMESTICUS*. "This species of Sparrow affects the jungles."

\**P. (?) TRISTRIATUS*; *Serinus tristriatus*, Rüppell. Bill typically formed; the white gular mark as in *P. GULARIS*, Lesson (*P. simplex* apud Swainson), of W. Africa: feet and claws more slender and delicate than in other Sparrows; and the plumage soft and lax. "Inhabits the mountains, and flies in flocks."

"The common English Sparrow does not exist in the part of the Somáli country visited by Lt. Speke: and it is generally asserted that it cannot live in Aden. The experiment of transporting them was tried by an officer, who brought from Bombay a batch of Sparrows and Crows. The former soon died; and the latter lingered through an unhappy life, became mangey, and (to judge from the absence of young) ceased to increase and multiply."

\**PYRRHULAUDA LEUCOTIS*, (Stanley). "Found only at the village

of 'Goree Bunder:' the female has no black upon the breast, and somewhat resembles our Hedge-sparrow (*ACCENTOR MODULARIS*) in colour, only that she is a lighter."

\**LANIARIUS CRUENTUS*, (Ehrenberg). "By no means a common bird. The Somális call it *Idatris*, ادتريس."

*PLATYSTEIRA SENEGALENSIS*, (L.).

*SAXICOLA ISABELLINA*, Rüppell, *Atlas*, pl. 34, f. b.: according with the figure cited, except in having a greater extent of black tipping the tail-feathers, viz.  $1\frac{1}{8}$  in. on the outermost: but apparently distinct from the species sent by Dr. Rüppell himself as his *S. ISABELLINA* (p. 260, *ante*), however closely affined. In the latter the short first primary measures 1 in.; in the Somáli bird  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. only, being also considerably narrower. In Dr. Rüppell's bird, the crown is fuscous, and the upper parts are much infuscated; the lower dull ferruginous with white throat, and the lower tail-coverts deeply tinged with ferruginous: lores black, surmounted by white, which is continued into a slight supercilium; and the outermost tail-feather is black for its terminal  $1\frac{1}{4}$  in.: tertiaries broad, measuring about  $\frac{5}{8}$  in. across; and the bill somewhat broader than in the other, especially at base. The Somáli bird is pale sandy-isabelline above, still lighter below and without a tinge of ferruginous; and the tertiaries are about  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. in breadth: both have the upper tail-coverts white; and they agree in dimensions. "Inhabits the plateau."

\**S. MELANURA*, Temminck. "Inhabits the plateau, and loves small trees." There is a figure of this bird, from a specimen obtained in Sindh, among the drawings of Sir A. Burnes and Dr. Lord.

\**DICRURUS LUGUBRIS*, Ehrenberg. "This 'King-crow' follows the flocks, perching upon animals, and balancing itself upon the waving plants. Irides red."

*NECTARINIA HABESSINICA*, Ehrenberg. "A Honey-bird, lighting upon flowers, and avoiding jungle."

\**N. ALBIVENTRIS*, Strickland, Jardine's *Contr. Orn.* Male and female. "Seen in pairs; and like the last inhabits the plateau above the hills." This species has only been obtained in the Somáli country.

*PTEROCLES SENEGALENSIS*, (Latham): *Pt. guttatus*, Lichtenstein.

Male and female. "This has all the habits of the corresponding Indian bird" (PT. EXUSTUS, which is likewise African), "and is found on the plateau, where huge flocks abound. It is called *Fuku*, فُقُو"

\*PT. LICHTENSTEINI, Temminck. Lt. Burton mistakes this for the Indian 'Painted Rock Pigeon' or 'Painted Grouse' of sportsmen (PT. FASCIATUS); to which it is generally affined, but readily distinguishable upon comparison, being a considerably larger bird, &c. He remarks, that "it is the *Katá*, كَتَا, of Arabia, and is here called by the same name as the last, *Fuku*. It flies in flocks, and goes to great distances every evening to find water. If disturbed at the well, it flutters about with piercing cries. In Arabic poetry, it is used as a simile to express great swiftness."

\*PTERNESTES RUBRICOLLIS, (Latham). Male and female. "Common in the Somáli country. The natives call it *Dignin*, دِغْنِن; the Arabs *Dijajat el bar*, دِحَاجَاتِ الْبَرِّ, or 'wild hen'; and the Persians (I believe) *Kabk*, كَبِك. It represents the domestic fowl in E. Africa; and its flight and run resemble those of the Guinea-fowl. It is a strong bird, requiring heavy shot, and has a game flavour. The Somáli have a prejudice against eating these, as well as other birds."

\*SCLEROPTERA GUTTURALIS, (Rüppell). "Found on the top of the mountains, and not observed on the plateau or on the maritime plain." This is one of the African Partridges classed in FRANCOLINUS by Dr. Rüppell, Dr. A. Smith, and others; but which do not range well with the Asiatic FR. VULGARIS, FR. PICTUS, FR. CHINENSIS (Osbeck, v. *perlatus*, Gmelin, of China, whence introduced into the Mauritius, and there known as the 'Pintado Partridge'), and FR. PHAYREI (of Pegu). They form a particular group, which is peculiar to Africa.

"Lt. Speke saw, but did not procure, a species of Corn Quail. I also observed many small Quails in the northern Somáli country, In the Gudabuzi country I observed the usual Dove of these climates, a fine large blue Pigeon like the 'Blue Rock' of India. The natives called it *Elal Jag*, اِلَلْجَاغ, or the 'haunter of wells.'"

\*SYPHEOTIDES HUMILIS, nobis, n. s. "A Floriken with bright yellow iris, called by the Somális *Waradada*, وَرَادَادَا. Its cry is a

loud *Ka-ke-rák*. It is found in the plateau among heather" (low herbage), "and is not so shy as the Indian bird" (meaning probably the *Likh* of Bengal or 'Floriken' of S. India, *S. AURITA*). "Its pair [the male ♂] is smaller, and the feathers below the lower mandible are black."

A small and undoubtedly new species, remarkable for its very short tarsi. Plumage similar to that of a pale female *S. BENGALENSIS*; but the neck tinged with ashy, and the crown more fully crested: wings white underneath, but the long axillary feathers black; primaries dusky-brown, not banded; the secondaries blacker; and a large white spot formed by the basal  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the coverts of the primaries: throat speckled with black. Length of wing  $9\frac{1}{2}$  in.; of tail 5 in.; bill  $1\frac{1}{3}$  in.; and tarse  $2\frac{1}{2}$  in. only. A female specimen, to all appearance.

"Lt. Speke also observed a large species of Bustard" (probably *EUPODOTIS ARABS*). "Ostriches are found all over the Somáli country: they are very shy, and at about 3 P. M. disappear to hide themselves for the night. The natives say that the Ostrich is blind at night, and that they can then easily be killed."

\**EDICNEMUS AFFINIS*, Rüppell. Well distinguished from *O. CREPITANS*. "Called *Hedinhitu*, هدنهيتو, a name also given to a smaller Plover. It is half blind during the day, and may almost be ridden down, as it rises under the horse's hoofs with a loud cry. The eye is a light yellow. Its habits correspond with those of the Indian bird" (*O. CREPITANS*). It is found in all the upper regions of the Somáli country.

\**CHENALOPEX EGYPTIACUS*, (L.) "Called *Etal-Jaz*, اتلجج, 'who lives at wells.' It was found on the plateau at a brackish spring, and never observed on the coast."

\**PHALACROCORAX LUGUBRIS*, Rüppell (*Carbo melanogaster*, *cuv.*, *Par. Mus.*) "A common *palmipede*, shot on the sea-shore."

## REPTILIA.

The reptiles consist of two Lizards and a Snake, neither of the former full grown.

\**AGAMA RUDERATA*, Olivier (*A. mutabilis*, Merrem, &c.) A small specimen apparently of this or a closely affined species, with tail

not much longer than the head and body, exceedingly compressed throughout, and somewhat serrated above and below.

\**TILLIQUA BURTONI*, Kobis, *n. s.* Small and young individual,  $5\frac{1}{4}$  in. long, of which tail  $3\frac{1}{2}$  in. Very like *T. RUFESCENS* of India; but the auditory orifice conspicuously smaller, and a series of broad scales along the upper surface of the tail: occipital group of plates also differently formed. Colour dark, with the two pale streaks upon the head and body strongly contrasting; and the throat freckled with dusky.

\**PSAMMOPHIS SIBILANS*, (L.); *C. moniliger*, Lacepede. Var.? Apparently one of the many varieties of this common African Sand-snake, of a plain pale sandy-brown colour, somewhat more ruddy on the sides, and paler below; a dark brown streak passing through the eye, but no stripe on the body; the labials and sides of the abdominal plates obscurely and minutely freckled with buff-colour on a whitish ground. When the body is bent, the dark skin between the scales shews at the tip of each (on the convex side of the bend), imparting a speckled appearance: 17 rows of scales; scutæ 172; scutellæ 90 pairs. This Snake, according to Lt. Burton, is "called *Mas*, مس, in Arabic *Hansh*, حنش. It infests the lower hills (this specimen was found upon the plateau), and is much feared by the natives when travelling at night. It is said to be very venomous. There are many other varieties." It is not venomous.

#### PISCES.

\**TETRODON DIADEMATUS*, Rüppell. This is the only fish sent.  
And of

#### ANNULOSA.

A Scorpion and three species of *Coleoptera*.