## POLYPLECTRON BICALCARATUM.

Malayan Peacock-Pheasant.

Pavo bicalcaratus, Linn. Syst. Nat., tom. i. p. 268.

— Malaccensis, Scop. Flor. et Faun. Insubr., p. 93.

Polyplectron bicalcaratum, G. R. Gray, List of Spec. of Birds in Coll. Brit. Mus., part v., Gallinæ, p. 23.—Blyth, Cat. of Birds in Mus. Asiat. Calcutta, p. 242.—Sclat. in Proc. Zool. Soc., 1863, p. 124.

Le petit Paon de Malacca, Sonner. Voy. aux Ind. Orient. et à la Chine, tom. ii. p. 173, pl. 99.

Four or five distinct species of the beautiful tribe of birds known to ornithologists by the generic title of *Polyplectron*, or Peacock-Pheasants, doubtless exist; that there are more than these is, in my opinion, very questionable; and it is quite certain that a far larger number of specimens than are to be found in any museum must be brought side by side, and very carefully compared, before the actual number of the species can be determined with accuracy. The synonymy of two of them, which in this work I shall respectively call *P. bicalcaratum* and *P. chinquis*, is involved in such complete confusion as to defy the most astute ornithologist to ascertain correctly to which of them many of the names of the older authors really pertain. I have therefore only placed such synonyms to the present bird as I believe have reference to it, retaining, like Mr. Blyth, the term *bicalcaratum* for the Malayan bird, skins of which are so commonly found in collections sent from Singapore and the Malay peninsula, and which is represented on the accompanying Plate. "Sufficient for the time is the evil thereof;" I shall therefore defer speaking of *P. chinquis* and its synonymy until I figure that equally beautiful species.

The present bird, *P. bicalcaratum*, is somewhat smaller than *P. chinquis*, and, moreover, differs from that species in the browner tint of the ground-colour of its plumage and in the larger size of the spots on its tail-feathers. It is, as before mentioned, an inhabitant of the Malayan peninsula, but not of China, on the one hand, nor of Java, on the other; as regards the avifauna of the Peninsula of India, neither it nor the *P. chinquis* is comprised therein. The females of all the members of this well-defined genus differ very considerably from the males—their plumage being sombre indeed when compared with that of their mates, as may be seen on reference to the opposite Plate.

The specific term bicalcaratum, although not inappropriate, is not the best that could have been applied, since in some cases (in the specimen from which my figure was taken, for instance) two spurs are found on one leg and three on the other; it is evident, therefore, that this is a variable character.

The male has the crest greenish blue, the remainder of the head and the back of the neck banded with alternate irregular bands of black and grey; all the upper surface and wings brown, freckled and spotted with dark brown; each of the feathers of the mantle, scapularies, and wing-coverts with a nearly circular, glossy, and apparently raised or convex spot, which in some lights appears green, in others fine purple with an edging of black, and which is rendered the more distinct by the ground-colour of the feather surrounding the spot being of a lighter tint and forming a ring; upper tail-coverts browner, and more minutely freckled with blackish brown, a few on each side with a double oval spot near the tip, like those just described; on the last row of coverts these spots become greatly increased in size, are bounded posteriorly with buff, and anterior to them the tip of the feather becomes washed with rufous; on the tail-feathers a precisely similar arrangement of spots and tints is seen, but greatly increased in size; primaries brown; throat grey, with lighter shafts; under surface brown, each feather having the shaft, its margin, and its freckled sides of a paler brown; centre line of the throat freckled and spotted with black on a buffy ground; under tail-coverts very dark brown, and the spaces so luminous above are plain brown without freckles; the orbits appear to have been reddish; irides yellow; bill and feet horny lead-colour.

The general plumage of the female is brown, freckled and margined with a lighter tint, and with a faint indication of spots on the tail.

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The Plate represents a male and a female, about the natural size.