"d. P. insignis has the tips of the under tail-coverts washed with green. My P. shawi series was certainly devoid of this character; but, on the other hand, in at least seven of P. insignis also not a trace

"e. In P. shawi the rump has greenish reflections. But so had the majority of my specimens of of it was present.

P. insignis.

"f. Lastly, feet and tarsi of P. insignis blackish brown, of P. shawi greyish. This does not hold good: some of my P. shawi series had darker feet and tarsi than P. insignis; and many of the latter had the legs

and feet lightish grey.

"Having failed to discover that Mr. Elliot's description would help us to uphold two species, I next ventured to try if I could not find something distinctive myself. I started several points, the wing-coverts the edgings of the feathers of the lower back, the colours of the thighs, &c.; but they really would not answer; the series were alike in these respects. The following three points were the last and most promising:-

"1. Three specimens of P. insignis had a narrow half-collar of white almost continuous at the back of the neck. This was interesting as bearing on Mr. Elliot's statement that the bird was allied to P. mongolicus, but was of no value as a distinctive character, as it was not constant, and, besides, one of

the P. shawi series showed the beginning of this white streak also.

"2. The shaft of the tail-feathers in one P. shawi was alternately dusky and yellowish white; in P. insignis it was dusky throughout. Now, I thought, if this be only constant throughout the two series, it will, taken with

3. The one marked point—the abrupt termination of the green of the neck, so well shown in Elliot's figure of P. shawi, though not exactly mentioned by him in words—satisfy one that there are two species of Pheasants in Yarkand.

"To test this, I began to draw the birds out of the covers. The first had the shaft variegated; and on turning it round to look at the breast it proved to be P. shawi. The second gave a like result. The third showed the shaft of the tail-feathers dusky throughout, and the characters of P. insignis as to breast: this became exciting. The fourth had the shaft dusky and yellowish, and the breast—Eh! what? P. insignis or P. shawi? I rushed to the window to get a good light on the subject. Mortifying result! It was impossible to tell by its breast whether it were P. shawi or P. insignis; it was intermediate. Another specimen was tried; it had the tail-shaft dusky throughout, and it was also intermediate as to the breast.

It must be given up! I have only one species represented by my entire series of specimens.

"It seems scarcely possible that there should be really two species of Pheasants in Yarkand, and that during a residence of ten months there I should only have come across one of them; besides, as I have explained above, I really think that I have some of the birds in the slightly different states of plumage which are shown in Mr. Elliot's two plates. Now I know by the dates on the tickets of my specimens that this slight variation is not due to season; and I can therefore only suggest that it may be a question of agea view which the length of the spurs seems to confirm. The heads of the birds are alike; so are the measurements; and intermediate forms occur; but as I feel sure Mr. Elliot must have had some weighty reason for making two species out of the skins he received, I should be glad to know what the distinctions on which he relies really are. If there really are two species, I can only say that they so closely resemble each other as to make it impossible to discriminate them without being told in what points they differ, that they are both found in the same localities in a small tract of country, and that the natives (who are exceedingly good at discriminating species, as I know from my personal experience) have only one name for them—Kirghaul. The majority of the specimens I have seen approximate most to the plate of P. insignis; but if, as I believe is the case, there be only one species of Pheasant of Yarkand, I feel sure that Mr. Elliot will be the first to agree that it should stand as Phasianus shawi in honour of Mr. R. B. Shaw, who was the first to introduce this beautiful Pheasant to the notice of Europeans."

I am indebted for the loan of the fine pair figured in the Plate to the kindness of Captain Biddulph, who shot them himself during the Mission to Yarkand under Sir D. Forsyth.

The figures are somewhat less than the size of life.