MALACOTURNIX SUPERCILIOSUS.

Slate-coloured Partridge.

Rollulus superciliosus, J. E. Gray, Knowsley Menagerie, p. 8, pl. xvi.
Malacoturnix, Blyth in Proc. of Zool. Soc., May 1867, p. 475.
Malacortyx superciliaris, Blyth in Ibis, July 1867, p. 313.

It gives me great pleasure to figure, in the 'Birds of Asia,' both sexes of this highly curious member of the *Gallinaceæ*—a bird which is, I believe, only known by two specimens in the Derby Museum at Liverpool, and an example in the British Museum, to which establishment it was presented by Col. L'Estrange. When the bird was figured in the first part of the late Earl of Derby's 'Knowsley Menagerie,' its native country was unknown; and from that date, 1846, no other example had been recorded until Mr. Blyth exhibited Col. L'Estrange's specimen at the Meeting of the Zoological Society on the 8th of May, 1867.

"Of this fine species," says Mr. Blyth, "heretofore only known from a pair, male and female, in the Derby Museum at Liverpool, which were said to have been brought from India, two examples were shot from a flock passing overhead in the vicinity of Massooree in unusually cold weather, one of which was given to Col. L'Estrange, of the Royal Artillery, who kindly submitted the specimen to my inspection. At the present time so fine a species is quite an unexpected addition to the list of Indian game-birds."

This species, the sexes of which differ very considerably in their colouring, appears to me to offer a close alliance to *Ammoperdix*.

I cannot close this meagre account without expressing my thanks to the Trustees of the Derby Museum at Liverpool, and to Mr. T. J. Moore, their Curator, for the loan of the late Earl of Derby's original specimens, the possession of which testifies to the scientific value of the fine collection bequeathed to that town by their estimable donor. Were additional means requisite for handing down to posterity the name of the 13th Earl of Derby as that of a nobleman who ever took the greatest interest in zoological science, I know no other bird so likely to answer the purpose as the present one, since it is to him that we are indebted for the first knowledge of its existence.

Male.—Lores, chin, throat, and sides of the face and ear-coverts deep black; forehead, a broad stripe above and behind the eye silvery grey, each feather on the forehead with a still lighter shaft, above the light stripe a second one of black, the centre of the hinder part of the head and nape light greyish brown; upper surface, tail, and under surface olive, tinged with grey on the breast and abdomen, all the feathers of both surfaces margined on each side with a line of black; under tail-coverts black, every feather with a small tooth-like mark of white on each side near the base, a similar but larger mark about two-thirds from the base, and two coalescing oval spots of white at the tips; bill reddish; tarsi brown. Total length 9 inches; bill $\frac{5}{8}$, wing $3\frac{1}{2}$, tail $2\frac{3}{4}$, tarsi $1\frac{1}{8}$.

Female.—General tint cinnamon-brown, with a rufous edging to each feather; those of the upper surface with light-coloured shafts and a triangular mark of dull black on the inner web near the tip, preceded by a small mark of the same hue as the shafts; on the under surface the dark mark occupies the centre of the tip of each feather, and is of a lanceolate form; the throat is pale greyish cinnamon, as is also the head, where there is an indication of the superciliary stripe seen in the male, the feathers of the crown and behind the eye being somewhat greyer than the others, and having polished shafts; on each side of the nape a dark stripe as in the male; tail irregularly barred with black; under tail-coverts dark cinnamon, with a stripe of black in the centre, between which and the margin is a stripe on each side, which unites with a large patch of the same hue near the tip.

The figures are of the size of life.