EXCALFATORIA CHINENSIS.

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Chinese Quail.

Tetrao Chinensis, Linn. Syst. Nat., vol. i. p. 277.—Id. Gmel. edit., vol. i. p. 765 —Raffl. in Linn. Trans., vol. xiii. p. 324.

Coturnix Philippensis, Briss. Orn., vol. i. p. 454, sp. 17, tab. 25. fig. i.; (8vo.) vol. i. p. 71.—Bonnat. Tab. Ency. Méth. Orn., part i. p. 223, pl. 96. fig. 3.

Perdix Chinensis, Lath. Ind. Orn., vol. ii. p. 652.

Coturnix excalfatoria, Temm. Hist. Nat. des Pig. et Gall., 8vo, tom. iii. pp. 516, 743.—Shaw, Gen. Zool., vol. xi. p. 371.

Chinese Quail, Lath. Gen. Syn., vol. iv. p. 783.—Edw. Glean., pl. 247.—Lath. Gen. Hist., vol. viii. p. 318.

Coturnix Chinesis, Less. Traité d'Orn., p. 509.—Gray, Gen. of Birds, vol. iii. p. 507, Coturnix, sp. 14.—Blyth,

Cat. of Birds in Mus. Asiat. Soc. Calcutta, p. 255.

flavipes, Blyth, Journ. Asiat. Soc. Bengal, vol. xi. p. 808, female.

Caille des Philippines, Buff. Pl. Enl. 126. fig. 2, female.

Perdix Manillensis, Lath. Ind. Orn., vol. ii. p. 655, female.

Tetrao Manillensis, Gmel. edit. Linn. Syst. Nat., vol. i. p. 764, female.

Petite Caille de Manille, Sonn. edit. Buff. Hist. Nat. des Ois., tom. vii. p. 142.

Coturnix Manillensis, Bonnat. Tab. Ency. Méth. Orn., part i. p. 221, pl. 97. fig. 4.

Manilla Quail, Lath. Gen. Syn., vol. iv. p. 790.—Id. Gen. Hist., vol. viii. p. 321, female.

Excalfatoria Chinensis, Bonap. Tabl. Parall. des Gall., Compt. Rend. de l'Acad. des Sci., tom. xlii. séance du 12 Mai 1856.—Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., part. xxvii. (1859) p. 129.

HITHERTO a much wider range of habitat has been assigned to this beautiful little Quail than it really enjoys; for it has been stated that it inhabits not only China, Assam, Burmah, and many parts of India, but that it is also found in Australia; it will be seen, however, on reference to my Handbook to the birds of that country, that I have separated the Australian species, and indicated the particulars in which it differs from the bird inhabiting the other countries above mentioned. Admitting, then, that the *Excalfatoria Chinensis* is found over the whole of Malasia from China to Madras, its range is still a most extensive one.

Not having had an opportunity of seeing this species in any of its numerous haunts, I am unable to give an account of its habits and economy as the result of my own personal observation. Dr. Jerdon, however, has in a measure supplied this desideratum in his 'Birds of India,' from which I take the liberty of extracting the following passage:—

"This beautiful little Quail is found in many parts of India, but is generally rare, except in Bengal and the adjacent provinces, is more common in Assam, and is very abundant in Burmah. I have killed it once only in the Carnatic; and one specimen is included in my 'Catalogue of Birds from Belgaum, in Western India.' It occurs occasionally in Central India, and in the Upper Provinces as far as Bareilly, but it is rare in all those localities, and perhaps only stragglers find their way so far. In Lower Bengal it is tolerably abundant in damp grassy meadows, the edges of Indigo-fields, and in the grass on roadsides; and in Purmeah it was the only Quail I observed. It breeds in the month of July, the eggs being pale olive-green. When the young are full-grown they disperse all over the country; and this dispersion is greatly assisted, and, in many parts, perhaps, caused, by the heavy inundations to which a great part of the country in Bengal is annually subjected, generally in August or September. In the cold season they are replaced by the Grey Quail and the so-called Rain Quail."

To this I may append the following extract from Latham's 'General History of Birds,' coupled with the remark that I suspect he is in error when he says that this species is trained for fighting—a statement which I believe applies to a species of *Turnix*:—

"Inhabits China, the Philippine Islands, and various parts of India; also Java and Sumatra, there called Pikau; is often seen in flocks of one hundred together. This bird is used, as well as the Common Quail, to warm the hands in winter, as may be seen in various drawings and paper-hangings from China, where they are called Chau-chin. Many of these are purchased by Europeans to be made into pies on their voyage home, and cost three kandarins a piece. They are said to be caught by means of a call-pipe, as in Europe. Both this and the Common Quail are trained to fight against each other, in the manner of Game-cocks in Europe, and much money is lost and won upon such occasions."

In size this species is somewhat larger than its Australian ally, from which it also differs in the lighter colouring of the back and upper surface; the tarsi, too, are much longer and stouter, and the toes more lengthened.