PERDIX HODGSONIÆ.

Thibet Partridge.

Sacfa Hodgsoniæ, Hodgs. Journ. Asiat. Soc. Beng., new ser. vol. xxv. p. 165. pl. not numbered.

The Red-legged Partridges having been generically separated from our well-known Grey Partridge (Perdix cinerea), the latter bird has until now been the only species of the genus known; the discovery, then, of a second, in the distant and little-explored country of Thibet, will be regarded by ornithologists with especial interest, and it is with great pleasure that I give a representation of it in the "Birds of Asia."

For the knowledge of the existence of this fine bird I am indebted to two gentlemen, one—B. H. Hodgson, Esq.—celebrated for his high scientific attainments, and for the extent to which he has made us acquainted with the natural history of Nepaul; and the other-Lieut. William J. Smith, of the 75th Regt.-for his travels and shooting excursions on the high ranges or watershed of North-western India. To the latter gentleman the credit is due, I believe, of having brought the first specimen to Europe, while Mr. Hodgson has the merit of priority in naming and publishing a description of the species. A drawing from Mr. Hodgson, and a unique specimen on loan from Lieut. Smith, reached me almost simultaneously, and I here beg to record my sense of their kindness.

The colouring of the specimen was considerably paler than the drawing; this was doubtless due to the circumstance of its having been killed in the height of the breeding season, when, as is well known, the feathers become worn and, from long exposure, paler in colour. Mr. Hodgson states that his description was taken from a female. Lieut. Smith's bird is now deposited in the British Museum, where in all probability Mr. Hodgson's specimen will also find a resting-place, since it is there that the 10,000 specimens and drawings, so liberally presented by him to the country, are deposited. If hereafter it should be found that the bird represented in the drawing is distinct from that brought by Lieut. Smith, which, however, I think will not prove to be the case, I shall have much pleasure in giving it a place in this work. Mr. Hodgson has made this species the type of a new genus, to which he has given the appellation of Sacfa; but upon comparing Lieut. Smith's bird with a male of our well-known Partridge, I can come to no other conclusion than that it is of precisely the same form; like that species, it presents no indication of a spur on the tarsus, while the horse-shoe-shaped mark on the breast, and other markings, are of a similar, but more decided character; the generic name of Sacpha must therefore, I fear, sink into a synonym. Mr. Hodgson states that it is called Sacfa or Sakpha by the natives; but Lieut. Smith tells me that the Chikore, a Red-legged Partridge (Caccabis Chukar), is also called Sakpha; I therefore conclude that it is a term applied to Partridges generally.

In his account of this species, published in the twenty-fifth volume of the Journal of the Asiatic Society

of Bengal, Mr. Hodgson says:-"To General Jung Bahadoor, Prime Minister of Nepal, I am indebted for the gift of, what appears to me, decidedly a new species, and probably also a new type of the Partridge group of birds. The General, in his recent military expedition into Thibet, procured the bird alive; but it died at Kathmandu, and he

sent me the spoils in very fine condition. "I have taken the liberty of dedicating this handsome species to Mrs. Hodgson, whose accurate and tasteful delineations of Himalayan scenery will do much to attract attention to this fine field of scientific

"This fine species is denominated Sakpha by the Thibetans. It was obtained in the western province of research. Tsang. I know nothing of its habits. My sample is a female, and therefore the peculiar heavy overlying upper mandible, so marked in this sex, must be more so in the male, and resembles in fact that organ in Lophophorus, or the Monâl.

"Bill and legs horn-green; orbital skin reddish, above transversely marked with black, rufous and chestnut, in frequent bars, the black being more developed on the wings, and the chestnut on the flanks, where indeed the black nearly disappears, while on the belly it is so much developed as to constitute the main and almost only colour. Neck, above and laterally, and all the lateral tail-feathers, full unmarked chestnut; cheeks, throat and breast luteous or albescent-buff; a black zone round the throat from the cap,

"In conclusion I may remark, that the bird has much of the character of Caccabis, whilst in colours it and a black patch before the eye. greatly resembles the Grey Partridge of India, without, however, losing certain Caccabine traits which the

To this statement Mr. Blyth appends the remark, "It most nearly approximates in type to Perdix cinerea;" expert will at once detect." and I might ask, is not the overlapping of the bill, so strongly pointed out by Mr. Hodgson, due to the

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