PERDIX BARBATA, J. Verr. & O. Des Murs.

Bearded Partridge.

Perdix barbata, J. Verr. & O. Des Murs, in Proc. of Zool. Soc., 1863, pp. 62 and 371, pl. ix.—Swinh. ibid. p. 307.—G. R. Gray, Hand-list of Birds, part ii. p. 267.

Tetrao perdix, var. daurica, Pall. Zoog. Rosso-Asiat., tom. ii. p. 78. Perdix sibirica, Pall. Itin., p. 80.

— (Starna) cinerea, Middendorff, Reise, Vög., p. 209.

- daurica, David, Nouv. Archiv. du Mus. d'Hist. Nat. de Paris, tom. iii. p. 38.

All ornithologists and every sportsman will at once perceive that the bird represented in the accompanying plate typifies, in Dauria and China, the well-known Grey or Common Partridge of Europe; but it is not known to sportsmen generally, or those unversed in the science of ornithology, that the two birds above mentioned and the Thibet Partridge, named Perdix Hodgsoniæ, are the only known species of the genus Perdix as now restricted. Such, however, is the case; and I may state in a few words that the three species are each restricted to a somewhat limited area:—the Common Partridge (Perdix cinerea) being confined, with a trifling exception, to Central Europe; the Thibet Partridge (Perdix Hodgsoniae) to the tableland at the back of the great Himalayan range of mountains; and the Bearded Partridge, here figured (Perdix barbata), is found in most, if not all, of the mountainous parts of the Altai, and thence eastward to the neighbourhood of Peking and Tientsin, the markets of which cities are supplied with it as our own are with the common European bird. There mark that not more than three species are known of the genus Perdix, is intended for the information of those who do not attend to the minute division of the forms of birds which has of late been instituted by ornithologists; for such persons would naturally say, "there are many other Partridges besides these." True, but not of the same form—the Red-legs constituting a distinct group by themselves under the generic title of Caccabis, the little Ammoperdix of Persia and India another; and there are still many more forms, which it is not necessary to enumerate here. Each of these presents some one or more characters not common to the others. For instance, the Caccabes or Red-legs are all spurred, and the two sexes are alike in colour; while the true Partridges (genus Perdix) are unspurred, and the sexes are distinguished by several particulars, the most prominent of which is the presence of a well-defined horse-shoe like mark on the breast of the males.

Unfortunately I have nothing original to communicate respecting the habits and economy of the Bearded Partridge; for the little that is known respecting it I must therefore be indebted to the pens of others.

In the 'Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London' for 1863, MM. Jules Verreaux and O. Des Murs characterized this species under the name of *Perdix barbata*, with a description which they say "was taken from a fully adult male example obtained in Central Dahuria," and state that "the bird is met with in the environs of the city of Nertschinsk, and in all the mining districts of Nertschinski-zawod. It evinces a preference for cultivated fields and brushwood; during winter it descends to meadows near rivulets, and sometimes approaches the houses. Its voice and flight are similar to those of *Perdix cinerea*."

In some notes kindly furnished to me by Mr. Swinhoe, that gentleman says:—"This bird was minutely described by Pallas in 1811 as *Tetrao perdix*, var. daurica; in his 'Zoographia Rosso-Asiatica,' tome ii. p. 78, where he states that it is found in the Altai mountains, at Jenisea, and in Dauria; and that it abounds in autumn in places among the rocks which are exposed to the sun, and where it passes the winter in coveys, often hiding under the snow. At p. 80 of the same work, Pallas refers to this bird under the name of *Perdix*. often hiding under the snow. At p. 80 of the same work, Pallas refers to this bird under the name of *Perdix*. sibirica. Von Schrenck does not mention its occurrence in Amoorland. Middendorff, in his 'Reise in den sibirica. Von Chrenck does not mention its occurrence in Amoorland. Middendorff, in his 'Reise in den sibirica. Von Chrenck does not mention its occurrence in Amoorland. Middendorff, in his 'Reise in den sibirica, 'Isbirica, 'Isbi

"In Père Armand David's Catalogue of Peking Birds in the 'Nouvelles Archives du Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle de Paris,' tome iii. p. 38, this bird is stated to be 'very common in Mongolia, rarer in our bare mountains poyer on the plains'

mountains, never on the plains.'

"The only Partridge I have met with on the hills near Peking," continues Mr. Swinhoe, "is Caccabis chukar; but sportsmen who have roamed about the Mongolian country beyond the Great Wall have informed me that but sportsmen who have roamed about the Mongolian country beyond the Great Wall have informed me that but sportsmen who have roamed about the Mongolian country beyond the Great Wall have informed me that they frequently came across coveys of a Partridge which they took to be the ordinary Home Horseshoe. The Bearded Partridge is brought in numbers in a frozen state to the Peking markets in winter by the