COLUMBA LEUCONOTA, Vig.

White-bellied Pigeon.

Columba leuconota, Vigors, P. Z. S., 1830–31, p. 23.—Gould, Cent. Himal. B., pl. 59.—Knip & Temm. Pigeons, ii. pl. 50.—Jerd. B. Ind., iii. p. 471.—Gray, Hand-l. B., ii. p. 232.—Henders. & Hume, Lahore to Yark., p. 274. Schl. Mus. P.-B. Columbæ, p. 69.—Giebel, Orn. Thes., p. 745.

This Pigeon is not figured here as a bird of novel or startling interest, for a plate has already appeared in my 'Century of Himalayan Birds;' but the species is so peculiar and well-marked that no work on Asiatic birds would be complete without it. At the same time it gives me the opportunity of bringing forward some of the notes which have appeared respecting the species since the appearance of the above-mentioned work.

It seems to be almost exclusively found in the Himalayas, where, Dr. Jerdon says, it is met with "chiefly towards the north-west, and is stated to frequent rocky heights and sequestered valleys, from 10,000 feet to the snow-level, in large parties. It feeds in the fields, returning to the rocks to roost, and is said to be shy and wary." Mr. Hume adds the following information respecting its range:—"During the summer this species is, doubtless, as Dr. Jerdon remarks, chiefly found at heights of from 12,000 to 14,000 feet, far in the interior of the Himalayas; but during the winter it descends to the lower ranges, is common about Simla, Massuri, Murree, &c., and the valleys below them, at elevations of from 3500 to 7000 feet, and occasionally stragglers are killed quite at the foot of the hills. This species is not confined to the north-west. I have it from the Sutlej valley, east of Chini, from Kumaon, beyond the Dhuj, on the borders of Nepal, and again from the hills north of Darjeeling, but from exactly what locality I am ignorant."

Dr. Leith Adams found the species to be "gregarious; common in certain sequestered mountain-valleys on the northern Cashmere ranges. Seen often with *Columba intermedia* feeding in fields in the Wurdwan valley; it was met with in Ladakh on one occasion." Dr. Henderson also procured it in the last-mentioned country; and he observes:—"A single specimen was obtained in June near Dras, where it was very abundant."

The characteristics of the species are so clearly shown in the life-sized figure opposite that I do not add a more detailed description.