

CERTHIA HIMALAYANA, *Vig.*

Himalayan Creeper.

Certhia Himalayana, Vig. in Proc. of Comm. Sci. of Zool. Soc., Part I. p. 174.—Blyth, Cat. of Birds in Mus. Asiat. Soc. Calcutta, p. 118.—Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. i. p. 143.

Certhia Asiatica, Swains. Anim. in Menag., p. 353.

THE describing and figuring of additional species of certain well-known European genera is not the least interesting portion of a work on the Birds of Asia; indeed when we remember that the two continents are inseparably connected, we may without any degree of surprise expect to find additional species of such forms to exist in countries further eastward, and in the present instance, among many others, we have a case in point. The Common Creeper of our own island is a bird familiar to every observer of nature, and here we have a species inhabiting the temperate and higher regions of India closely allied to it, but which may be distinguished at a glance by the numerous narrow bars on the wing and tail-feathers, and by its somewhat larger size.

The *Certhia Himalayana* was first described by the late Mr. Vigors, from specimens forming part of my early collections from the Himalayas; over the greater portion of which, judging from the numerous examples which have from time to time been sent from thence, it appears to be dispersed: Capt. Boys collected many examples, but unfortunately does not say where they were obtained; Mr. Blyth states that it is found in Deyra Doon; and the late Hon. F. J. Shore procured it at Chum-coa Gurree.

As is the case with the Common Creeper, the sexes assimilate so closely in their plumage that it is impossible to distinguish the one from the other. Both Mr. Shore and Capt. Boys state that it feeds on insects, but neither of those gentlemen has given any account of its habits and actions; without taking any undue liberty with nature's laws, I may assert that it procures its food from the interstices of the bark of the holes and branches of the trees precisely after the manner of our own species.

General plumage very dark brown, with a few paler stripes down the crown; the remainder of the feathers of the upper surface with an oblong mark of pale brown or reddish white; primaries and secondaries crossed near their base by an oblique broad band of buff, and near the tip by another of pale brown, and with a small spot of the same hue at the tip; scapularies and tail-feathers pale greyish brown crossed by numerous narrow bars of dark brown; over each eye a narrow line of whitish; throat whitish gradually deepening into pale brown on the under surface; eye dark brown; bill brown, with the exception of the basal three-fourths of the under mandible, which are yellowish brown; legs light brown.

The Plate represents the two sexes of the natural size.