GARRULAX CHINENSIS.

Chinese Garrulax.

Lanius chinensis, Scop.

Turdus shanhu, Gmel. edit. Linn. Syst. Nat., tom. i. p. 84.—Lath. Ind. Orn., vol. i. p. 337.
——melanopsis, Gmel. ibid. p. 1829.

Corvus auritus, Daud. Orn., tom. ii. p. 250.—Swinh. in Ibis, 1865, p. 350.

Crateropus leucogenys, Blyth, Journ. Asiat. Soc. Beng., vol. xi. p. 180.

Garrulax shanhu, Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. i. p. 225, Garrulax, sp. 2.

- chinensis, Blyth, Journ. Asiat. Soc. Beng., vol. xiv. p. 598.—Id. Cat. of Birds in Mus. Asiat. Soc. Bengal, p. 95.—Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., tom. i. p. 370, Garrulax, sp. 4.—Horsf. and Moore, Cat. of Birds in Mus. East-Ind. Comp., vol. i. p. 202.—Gray, Hand-list of Birds, part i. p. 202.—Swinh. Ibis, 1864, p. 423.—Id. Proc. of Zool. Soc. for 1871, p. 371.

Le petit Geay de la Chine, Sonn. Voy. aux Ind. Orient. &c., tom. ii.

Le Geai à joues blanches, Levaill. Hist. Nat. des Ois. de Parad. &c., tom. i. p. 125, pl. 43.

Black-faced Thrush, Lath. Gen. Syn., vol. ii. p. 37.—Steph. Cont. of Shaw's Gen. Zool., vol. x. part i. p. 292.—Lath.

Gen. Hist., vol. v. p. 112.

Shanhu of the Chinese, Lath.

A fine example of this interesting bird having lived for two or three seasons in the menagerie of the Zoological Society of London, I did not fail to make a drawing of it, such an opportunity of figuring from life rarely occurring with respect to insessorial birds which are natives of the distant country of China. And here it will not be out of place to allude to the value of the above-mentioned Society from the interest it affords to the artist and the naturalist, as well as to the public at large, by furnishing them with opportunities of studying the habits, so far as they are shown in a state of captivity, of the various animals it may from time to time possess: to the zoological artist, indeed, it is of incalculable benefit, inasmuch as, however well he may be able to depict a species from its dried skin, it must of necessity be far better executed from the living object.

The following notice, by Mr. R. W. G. Frith, of a specimen of this bird in confinement is given by Mr. Blyth in the 'Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal,' vol. xii. p. 179 bis:—"The bird was excessively tame and familiar, and delighted (like a Cockatoo) in being caressed and tickled by the hand, when it would spread out its wings and assume very singular attitudes. It was naturally a fine songster, and a most universal imitator. Whenever chopped meat or other food was put into its cage, it always evinced a propensity to deposit the bits one by one between the wires (a habit it has in common with the Shrikes, and which is also strikingly manifested by the Kitta venatoria and sometimes even by Mynahs); and when a bee or wasp was offered, this bird would seize it instantly, and invariably turn its tail round and make the insect sting, this several times successively, before eating it. A large beetle it would place before it on the ground, and pierce it with a violent downward stroke of the bill; a small snake (about a foot long) it treated in like manner, transfixing the centre of the head; it afterwards devoured about half the snake, holding it by one foot, while it picked it with the bill, which was its common mode of feeding."

Mr. Swinhoe, in his Notes on the Birds of China, remarks:—"In the Hong-kong bird-shops I saw in cages Garrulax chinensis. I have never met with it wild, and therefore fancy its range is south of Canton."

In his notes from Takow, Formosa, the same gentleman says:—

"This bird I purchased alive and sent to Dr. Squire for the Society's Gardens. It seems to range from the extreme south of China to the Tenasserim Provinces, where Mr. Blyth procured it. I have never met with this fine species in a state of nature. Its ordinary call is like a corvine croak. It also emits a loud note like 'hurrah,' often repeated in a low whistle. It was very lively and noisy.

"Bill black; legs and claws brown; irides crimson. Forehead, and a short crest at the base of the culmen, black, a streak of which colour also encircles the eye, and a patch of the same occurs on the throat and under the neck; just in the rear of the frontal crest are a few pointed white feathers; and there is an oval white patch on each cheek; the general plumage is cinereous; back, wings, and tail olive-brown, darker on the two latter, with deep-coloured shafts, quills edged with cinereous; blue-grey on the head."

The Plate represents the bird in two positions, of the size of life. I believe there is no external diffence in the sexes.

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