MERULA BOULBOUL.

Grey-winged Merula.

Lanius boulboul, Lath. Ind. Orn. Supp., p. 80.—Ib. Gen. Hist., vol. ii. p. 48.—Shaw, Gen. Zool., vol. vii. p. 308.
Merula boulboul, Blyth, Journ. Asiat. Soc. Beng., vol. xvi. p. 47.—Ib. Cat. of Birds in Mus. Asiat. Soc Calcutta, p. 162.—Horsf. and Moore, Cat. of Birds in Mus. East Ind. Comp., vol. i. p. 196.
Turdus pœcilopterus, Vig. in Proc. of Comm. of Sci. and Corr. of Zool. Soc., part i. p. 54.—Gould, Cent. of Birds from Him. Mount., pl. xiv.—Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. i. p. 219.—Gray, Cat. of Spec. and Draw. of Mamm. and Birds pres. to Brit. Mus. by B. H. Hodgson, Esq., p. 81.—Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., p. 274.

It is much to be regretted that this well-marked species of *Merula* should have received not only the trivial, but also the scientific name of *boulboul*, since, to British ornithologists, another and very different group of birds is better known by this appellation; but it now appears that Latham's specific term of *boulboul* has the priority over the *pœcilopterus* of Vigors, and no alteration is admissible. It is one of the species figured by me in my "Century of Birds from the Himalaya Mountains." A splendid male is now, and has been for a long time, living in the menagerie of the Zoological Society in the Regent's Park. This individual has all the habits of the English Blackbird, bears its confinement equally well, and as spring approaches serenades its caged brethren and the visitors with its cheerful song. After it has completed its moult, the feathers of the breast, which are most perfect, are regularly and elegantly fringed with grey, in which character it much resembles the Ring Ouzel, *Merula torquata*; it differs, however, from that species in its shorter wings, in which respect it is allied to our Common Blackbird, the *Merula vulgaris*, which it may be said to represent in the hill countries of India, that is, the southern slopes of the great Himalayan range, where it frequents similar districts to those tenanted by the *M. albocincta* and *M. castanea*.

Much difference occurs in the colouring of the wings, some individuals having the secondaries and coverts very light, almost approaching to greyish white, while in others those parts are greyish white, strongly tinged with brown. This wing-mark is much less distinct in the female, which sex, moreover, differs from the opposite one in being of an almost uniform brown, offering a strong contrast to the deep black colouring of the male.

The male has the entire plumage black, with the exception of the feathers of the breast and abdomen being finely fringed with grey, and the greater wing-coverts and the outer webs of the secondaries being ashy grey, with purer grey tips; bill and eyelash very rich gamboge-yellow; irides brownish black; legs and feet brownish black, with a tinge of yellow behind and on the soles.

The figures are of the natural size. The plant is the *Rubus biflorus*.