TURDUS GOULDI, *J. Verr.*

Gould's Thrush.

Merula Gouldii, J. Verr. Nouv. Archiv. du Mus., tom. vi., Bull. p. 34, & tom. vii., Bull. p. 32.—David, ibid., tom. vii., Bull. p. 6.

The French savant, M. Jules Verreaux, having named this Thrush after myself, I should be wanting in courtesy were I not to acknowledge that I duly appreciate the compliment he thereby intended to convey, although the bird is an inhabitant of some of the distant provinces of Thibet, a country too far off for me ever to see, and where my name will probably never be heard.

It is difficult to distinguish generically the differences between the genera *Turdus* and *Merula*. Structurally the Thrush and the Blackbird are very much alike; yet, to say nothing of the differences in the colouring of the sexes of the latter, how different are they in their plumage, their habits, and their economies! Ultimately, I have no doubt, ornithologists will deem it necessary to give more definite characters to each of those genera than have yet been assigned to them, and will in all probability separate the other members of the family still further than at present. This Thibetan bird and several allied species will then hold an intermediate station between *Turdus* and *Merula*. To me the bird is certainly not a true *Merula*; neither do I consider it to be so closely allied to the *M. castanea* of the Himalayas as, it will be seen, M. Verreaux is inclined to believe.

The *Turdus Gouldi* is another of the many interesting discoveries made by the Abbé Armand David; and all that is known respecting it is embodied in the following extract from the seventh volume of the 'Nouvelles Archives du Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle de Paris,' which I have taken the liberty of transcribing. The description and remarks are by M. Jules Verreaux.

"Head and neck a dark earth-brown, paler from the chin to the upper part of the chest; the whole of the body chestnut-red, somewhat darker on the under surface; wings and tail black; under tail-coverts black, with white centres and tips; irides brown; beak yellow.

"The female differs in the head being tinted with grey, which becomes lighter on the neck; the red of the body is also lighter; and the black of the wings and tail is not only paler but tinged with red; it is the same with the under tail-coverts, where the white of the tips and edges of each feather is strongly tinted with red.

"Three examples—namely, a male, an adult female, and an immature female—were killed at Moupin on the 24th of June, 11th of March, and the 1st of November, 1869.

"The difference which exists between this species and the *Merula castanea* of Gould, from the continent of India, is recognizable at a single glance, if it be only by the pale grey head and white neck shown in the drawing of that author in his 'Birds of Asia.' We are happy, then, to give the name of our clever colleague to a species which offers so great an analogy with that which he was the first to describe, and which several modern authors have placed in the genus *Geocichla*, but according to Mr. Jerdon (whom we have recently seen, and whom all the world looks upon as the highest authority of our times in all matters relating to Indian ornithology) is not a true *Merula* in its manners. The Abbé David, who discovered this beautiful species in the forests of the large mountains of Moupin and other Thibetan principalities, tells us that its habits and voice are precisely similar to those of the true Thrush, but that its ordinary cry is weaker and more shrill than that of the Blackbird; it frequents the most solitary woods, where it is not rare, and whence the cold causes it to descend into the valleys in great numbers, especially at the commencement of winter."

The accompanying Plate represents, of the size of life, a male specimen kindly lent to me by Mr. Elliot.