NECTARINIA VIGORSII.

Vigors' Sun-Bird.

Cinnyris Vigorsii, Sykes in Proc. of Comm. Sci. of Zool. Soc., Part II. p. 98, male.
——— *concolor*, Sykes in Ib., p. 99, female.

When writing on the ornithology of Australia, I had frequent occasion to remark the occurrence of species, the habitat of which was restricted to the eastern or to the western portions of that continent, as the case might be; and I find that a similar law exists with regard to many of the birds inhabiting the great Peninsula of India. As far as I am aware, the habitat of the *Nectarinia Vigorsii* is confined to the western parts of India, where it represents the *Nectarinia Goalpariensis*, so generally dispersed over the eastern and north-eastern parts of that great country.

The credit of the discovery, and of first bringing this fine species before the scientific world, is due to Colonel Sykes, whose valuable Catalogue of the birds observed by him in the Dukhun, published in the Second Part of the Proceedings of the Committee of Science and Correspondence of the Zoological Society, has contributed so largely to our knowledge of Indian ornithology; therein he has dedicated this magnificent bird to the late N. A. Vigors, Esq., the first Secretary of the Society, whose enlarged views of natural affinities in Zoology, as exhibited in his many valuable papers in the "Transactions of the Linnean Society," the "Zoological Journal," and the "Proceedings of the Zoological Society," have contributed so essentially to enhance the importance of science and to facilitate the labours of every zoologist. From that period to the present time, few other specimens have either reached this country or been added to the native museums at Calcutta and elsewhere; otherwise, so fine and distinct a species could not have been confounded by Mr. Blyth and others with the *Nectarinia Goalpariensis*, differing as it does in many important particulars, some of which are well detailed in Colonel Sykes's specific characters. Although really belonging to the long-tailed section of the *Nectariniæ*, the tail of this species is not so lengthened as in *N. Goalpariensis* and its near allies; indeed in the female it is almost square. It is altogether a larger and more robust bird than *N. Goalpariensis*, and moreover may always be distinguished from that species by the light yellow striæ which intersect the scarlet of the breast, and by the small crescent of brilliant metallic blue on the ear-coverts. With regard to the bird to which Colonel Sykes provisionally assigned the name of *N. concolor*, with the remark, that as all the specimens he obtained were females, and met with in the same locality as *N. Vigorsii*, it may prove to be the female of that splendid species, I find, on a careful examination of his original specimens, that the opinion he then entertained is correct; consequently the term *concolor* must sink into a synonym.

Colonel Sykes states that the *N. Vigorsii* inhabits only the lofty trees of the dense woods of the Ghauts, and that the larvæ of flies, spiders, ants and minute insects were found in the stomachs of those he dissected.

Forehead and crown dark shining green; cheeks, sides and back of the neck, upper part of the back and lesser wing-coverts, wings and lower part of the back olive-brown; upper tail-coverts and the basal three-fourths of the central tail-feathers dark glossy green; remainder of the tail-feathers brown, glossed on the basal portion of their outer webs with purple; on the rump a fan-shaped mark of pale yellow; throat and breast blood-red, striated down the centre with sulphur-yellow; on the ear-coverts a small crescent-shaped mark of brilliant steel-blue, and on either side of the throat within the red a narrow line of the same brilliant hue; under surface of the shoulder whitish; under surface dark brownish grey; bill black, with the exception of the base of the lower mandible, which is buff; irides dark brown; feet blackish brown.

The female has the entire plumage of a uniform greenish olive, except the under surface of the shoulder, which is greenish white, and that the tail is of a darker or brownish hue.

The Plate represents two males and a female of the size of life.