generally hunts, like the true Fly-catcher, from a fixed station, which is either on the top or upper branch of a high tree, or on the branch of a shrub or hedge, a bare pole, a stalk of grain or grass, or some old building. Here it sits looking eagerly around, and on spying an insect, which it can do a long way off, captures it on the wing with a distinct snap of its bill, and then returns to its perch, generally sailing slowly with outspread wings, the coppery burnishing of its head and wings shining conspicuously in the sun-beams. Sometimes it hunts alone, at others in small parties, seated near each other. Frequently it captures one or two insects before it returns to its perch; and in the morning and evening considerable numbers are often seen, sometimes in company with swallows, hawking actively about. The Bee-eater also often changes its perch, taking up a fresh one at some distance. It has a peculiar, loud, yet rather pleasant whistling note, which it often repeats in the morning and evening when gathered together. In the bare table-land it generally retires to some secluded and jungly district for the purpose of breeding, which it is said to do in holes in ravines. It sometimes picks an insect off the ground, or off a flower or branch. I have often seen this bird collect towards sunset in small parties on a road, and roll themselves about in the sand and dust, evidently with great pleasure."

From Dr. Horsfield's valuable 'Catalogue of the Birds in the Museum of the East India Company,' we learn that "Mr. C. W. Smith, in his MS. notes, says, 'Their time of incubation is the month of June; and for months after they are hatched, the whole brood congregate, and swim about with the swiftest and most entire movements through the air, making short dips, and returning to the topmost twig from which they took

flight: during these evolutions, they are busily employed in snapping up the insects."

Mr. Pearson informs us that "The Green Bee-eater has the power of gliding along for some distance without closing its wings, so that its flight consists of two parts,—a rapid commencement, in which the wings flap rapidly; and a quick glide, with the wings and tail fully expanded. Its motion, especially in this latter position, is extremely elegant."

I find a figure of this species among the drawings of the late Hon. F. J. Shore, and the following brief remarks among the accompanying notes:—

"The sexes are alike: the young are all dull green: some have the forehead gilded.

"Common from Calcutta to the Himalayas, and in the Sagur and Nurbudda territories. Killed at Allahabad, Mar. 19, 1832."

Captain R. C. Tytler remarks that the little green Merops viridis is very common at Barrackpore.

The following notice of this bird occurs in the MS. of Capt. Boys:—

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"The beauty of the plumage of this lively and active little bird tends much to enliven an Indian scene. It darts with celerity on any passing insect, and returns with its captive to the twig whence it started, and which in the earlier parts of the morning is usually on the sunny side of some tall shrub or tree, and on the shady side during the heat of the day. Its note is monotonous, between a chirp and a twitter, and only emitted while the bird is on the wing. It is common all over the eastern parts of India, and as low down as Sultanpore, where I shot examples at the end of September 1841. I have not seen it at Shirkarpore, and only as low down the Indus as Gothku. I observed it to be numerous at Ferozepore in May 1846."

And lastly, Mr. Layard, in his 'Notes on the Ornithology of Ceylon,' informs us that there, "This species is confined to the open plains of the maritime districts. I have seen it at Trincomalee and Hambantotte, and traced it from Chilau to Mulletivoe. I am not aware if it be found near Columbo or in the interior, where the M. Philippinus and M. quinticolor appear to replace it.

"It delights in the neighbourhood of water, over which it hunts for insects. I have even seen it take them from off the surface, which it has struck with its breast in the endeavour. It is a much bolder bird than either of the other two, often allowing of approach within a few feet before seeking its safety in flight.

"Merops viridis roosts in large flocks, always returning to the same tree for successive months, and usually retires before five o'clock in the evening, whereas M. Philippinus flies till dark."

Head, upper surface and wings green, with a wash of golden-brown on the crown and the back of the neck; primaries and secondaries rufous, washed with green on the outer webs and tipped with brownish-black; tertiaries green; under surface of the wing fawn-colour; lores and ear-coverts black; under surface grass-green, with a wash of blue on the throat and a conspicuous streak of black, ending in a point on each side, across the chest; tail green, the lateral feathers margined internally with ashy; all with dark shafts, and the elongated portion of the two central feathers black; irides crimson; bill black; feet purplish-grey.

The sexes offer no perceptible difference in their colouring, but the young differ in being destitute of the filamentous prolongations of the middle tail-feathers.

The foremost figure in the Plate is of the natural size, the other is a little reduced.