MEROPS VIRIDIS, *Linn.*

Hurrial Bee-eater.

Merops viridis, Linn. Syst. Nat., tom. i. p. 182.—Lath. Ind. Orn., tom. i. p. 269.—Vieill. Ency. Méth. Orn., part i. p. 273. pl. 105. fig. 3.—Blyth, Cat. of Birds in Mus. Asiat. Soc. Calcutta, p. 53.—Sykes, in Proc. of Comm. of Sci. and Corr. of Zool. Soc., part ii. p. 82.—Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. i. p. 86, *Merops*, sp. 10.—Ib. Cat. of Birds in Coll. Brit. Mus., part ii. sec. 1. p. 69.—Gray, Cat. of Spec. and Draw. of Mamm. and Birds presented to Brit. Mus. by B. H. Hodgson, Esq., p. 58.—Bonap. Consp. Gen. Av., p. 162, *Merops*, sp. 11.—Horsf. Cat. of Birds in Mus. East Ind. Comp., vol. i. p. 84.—Layard, Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist., vol. xii. 2nd ser. p. 173.

Apiaster Madagascariensis torquatus, Briss. Orn., tom. iv. p. 549. pl. xlii. fig. 2.

——— *Philippensis minor*, Briss. Orn., tom. iv. p. 555. pl. xliii. fig. 2?

Guêpier à collier de Madagascar, Buff. Pl. Enl. 740.

Guêpier à gorge bleue, Buff. Hist. Nat. des Ois., tom. vi. p. 497.

The Indian Bee-eater, Edw. Nat. Hist. of Birds, part. iv. p. and pl. 183.

Indian Bee-eater, Lath. Gen. Syn. Supp., vol. ii. p. 672.—Penn. Gen. of Birds, pp. 16, 62. pl. vii.—Shaw, Gen. Zool., vol. viii. p. 156.—Lath. Gen. Hist., vol. iv. p. 122.

Merops Lamarcki, Cuv. Règn. Anim. 1829, tom. i. p. 442.

——— *Orientalis*, Lath. Gen. Hist., vol. iv. p. 134?

——— *Coromandus*, Lath. Gen. Hist., vol. iv. p. 135.

——— *Indicus*, Jerd. Journ. of Lit. and Sci., vol. xi. p. 227.—Blyth, Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist., vol. xii. p. 93.

——— *torquatus*, Hodgs., Gray, Zool. Misc. 1844, p. 82.

——— *ferrugineiceps*, Ib. p. 82.

Le Guêpier à gorge bleue, ou *Le Guêpier Lamarck*, Levaill. Hist. Nat. des Guêp., t. 10.

Le Guêpier jaune, de la côte de Coromandel, Sonn. Voy., ii. p. 213. pl. 119?

Hurrial and *Putringa*, Hindoos, Jerdon.

Bans-puttur ("Bamboo-leaf"), Hindoos, Blyth, Dr. F. B. Hamilton.

Monagyee, Aracans, Blyth.

Putinga, Capt. Boys.

This species of Bee-eater enjoys a far wider range of habitat than any other member of the family with which I am acquainted. I have at this moment before me specimens from nearly every part of the Peninsula of India, from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, and others from the island of Ceylon; the Zoological Society of London possesses a specimen from the Mauritius, which so closely accords with those from India, that I cannot consider it to be different; Dr. Rüppell includes it in his 'List of the Birds of North-Eastern Africa,' and, as will be seen in the synonyms given above, Buffon figures it as a bird of Madagascar, from which country, however, I have not myself as yet seen an example. Specimens from all these countries closely agree in size and in their general admeasurements, but those from very distant localities offer some slight differences in the colouring of their plumage: for instance, specimens from Nepaul have the crown of the head and the back of the neck more strongly washed with reddish-brown than others from the more southern parts of the Continent; in like manner, specimens from Egypt accord with Indian ones in size, but have the filamentous portion of the central tail-feathers longer, and no trace of the blue on the throat,—that part being of the same rich golden-green as the head, a hue which also pervades the upper part of the tail.

Although so generally dispersed over India, the bird seems to be subject to the law of migration, or at least, to a change of residence, according as circumstances may be favourable to the production of the requisite supply of food; hence in Scinde, during the hot months of summer, when the vegetation is parched up and insect life all but absent, the bird is not to be found in that country. In a note on Scindian birds addressed to me by my son, Dr. Gould, dated Ghiznee, October 1854, he says, "The monsoon being now over, birds are beginning to return, and Bee-eaters, Shrikes, Hoopoes, Stone-chats, Wheat-ears, Willow-wrens, and many other species are now appearing amongst the rocks, where a month since nothing but a lark was to be seen; and Terns, which could only be found at sea, now come wandering over the land and hunting up and down in search of dragon-flies and other insects, which are now numerous."

"This bird," says Mr. Blyth, "is extremely common, but disappears in the rainy season. It breeds in the neighbourhood of Calcutta, as I have had specimens brought me with eggs ready to lay, in the month of March. The general habits of this bird are those of a Fly-catcher, but it frequently hawks for insects on the wing, many together, like swallows."

Mr. Jerdon states, that "This well-known and common bird is spread in numbers over all India. It