

GYPS BENGALENSIS.

Bengal Vulture.

- Vultur Bengalensis*, Gmel. Syst. Nat., tom. i. p. 245, young.—Gray, Ill. Ind. Zool., pl. 15.—Lath. Gen. Syn., vol. i. pl. 1.—Id. Supp., p. 3.—Vieill. Nouv. Dict. d'Hist. Nat. 2nd Edit., tom. xxxv. p. 247.—Ib. Ency. Méth. Orn., part iii. p. 1168.—Lath. Ind. Orn., vol. i. p. 3.—Shaw's Gen. Zool., vol. vii. p. 30.
- *Changoun*, Daud. Traité d'Orn., tom. ii. p. 14, adult.
- *leuconotus*, Gray, Ill. Ind. Zool., pl. 14, adult.
- *Indicus*, Scop. Del. Flor. et Faun. Insub., p. 85?—Sonn. Voy., tom. ii. p. 183. pl. 105?
- *Changoun*, Vieill. Nouv. Dict. d'Hist. Nat., tom. xxxv. p. 248?—Ib. Ency. Méth. Orn., part iii. p. 1169.
- Gyps Bengalensis*, G. R. Gray, List of Birds in Brit. Mus. Coll., part i. p. 3, 2nd Edit. p. 6.—Gray and Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. i. p. 6, *Gyps*, sp. 2.—Blyth, Cat. of Birds in Mus. Asiat. Soc. Calcutta, p. 33.
- Bengal Vulture*, Lath. Gen. Hist., vol. i. p. 24. pl. 4.

THIS species, one of the smallest of the typical Vultures, is very abundant in all parts of India, and is a summer visitant in Afghanistan; specimens from the neighbourhood of Calcutta are contained in the Museum of the Asiatic Society of that city, and it is figured in the Drawings of the late Hon. F. J. Shore from a specimen killed at Hurdwar. Latham and some other authors state that it also inhabits Africa, but I have never seen any example from that country, and have therefore no doubt that they have confounded it with some nearly allied species. The specific term of *Bengalensis*, too, is singularly inappropriate for a bird ranging so widely over the country; but although in the first instance assigned to the young only, it must, according to the rule of priority, be the one retained; otherwise the term *leuconotus* bestowed upon the adult by Mr. Gray would be very descriptive.

From the notes of the Hon. F. J. Shore I learn that the bird is called *Gid* or *Geed* by the natives of Hurdwar, and *Guroor* by the Guhrwalles; and Latham states that it is called *Gurra* in Hindostan and *Karges* in some other parts of India.

No account whatever has been given of its habits and economy, which has doubtless arisen from their being so similar to those of the other members of the group, that a particular description of them has been deemed unnecessary. My figure is taken from a fine adult specimen in the Gardens of the Zoological Society, where it has resided for many years, and borne its captivity with the usual stolid indifference of its race.

Skin of the head and neck purplish brown covered with thinly dispersed hair-like brown feathers; on the lower part of the neck a ruff of white lengthened feathers, the ruff being broadest at the back of the neck and decreasing in breadth until it meets in front; general plumage dark greyish slate-colour, becoming of a silvery hue on the under surface, and some of the breast feathers margined with white; back snow-white, but not perceptible when the wings are closed; bill dark horn-colour; irides dark brown; legs and feet greyish purple.

The figure represents the bird somewhat more than half the natural size.