

DICÆUM EXIMIUM, *Sclater.*

Brown Dicæum.

Dicæum eximium, Sclater, P. Z. S. 1877, p. 102, pl. xiv. fig. 2.

THE home of this beautiful little bird, justly named *eximium*, is New Ireland, where it was procured by Mr. George Brown in March 1876. In describing the bird, Dr. Sclater remarked that it was different from any species known to him; and in looking over my series of Dicæidæ, I cannot find any single one which approaches it in style of coloration. Indeed it is seldom that such a very distinct species comes to our notice in these days; and we may fairly suppose that the group of islands where Mr. Brown worked will yield many further discoveries in natural science as they become better explored.

I have copied below the original description given by Dr. Sclater; and I can scarcely agree with him that the *Dicæum æneum* of Messrs. Jacquimot and Pucheran (Voy. Pôle Sud, Zool. iii. p. 97) is likely to turn out to be the female of the present bird. The last-named species is said to have been procured in the Solomon Islands; and perhaps a translation of the description may be useful for comparison. It is as follows:—

Grey, with bronzy reflections on the head, back, and upper wing-coverts; throat white, somewhat tinged with yellow, this yellow colour being a little more pronounced on the thorax; middle of abdomen white, the sides yellowish olive; quills blackish above, with the inner webs edged with clear greyish; under wing-coverts white, and the wing below ashy grey; the grey colour occupies also the sides of the neck, and impinges somewhat on the median line; quills blue-black, duller below; their coverts in the latter sense are yellow, somewhat inclining to whitish; the iris is yellow; bill and feet blue-black, with a little yellow at the base of the lower mandible.

The following is Dr. Sclater's original diagnosis of *D. eximium*:—Above dark bronzy green, the crown and sides of the head browner; rump crimson; under surface of body white, with a narrow pectoral band of crimson; sides of body and middle of belly dusky slate-colour; the flanks bronzy, as on the back; under wing-coverts white. Total length 3·3 inches, wing 2·0, tail 1·0.

The figure in the Plate is taken from the type specimen lent to me by Dr. Sclater, to whom, and to the Marquis of Tweeddale, I am under great obligations for allowing me to figure so many of the fine novelties discovered by Mr. George Brown.