TAB. XXIII.

PITTA BRACHYURA.

It may be observed, that in figuring this beautiful bird in the "Century," no novelty will be added to science, since the species has been already both described and figured by more than one author: but it has been thought proper to give a Plate of *Pitta brachyura* for the purpose of showing that the habitat of the genus is not restricted, as is generally stated to be the case, to the warmer portions of India, but extends to the colder regions of the Himalayan mountains, where the species before us has been found, as well as to New Holland, from which various species have been received.

The habits of this bird, like those of its congeners, are strictly terrestrial: it gains its food wholly from the surface of the earth, to which station its length of limb points it out as peculiarly adapted, insects, worms, snails, &c., forming its principal means of subsistence. In its general manners as well as in its food it greatly resembles its allies the true Thrushes. On comparing these two nearly connected groups together, we may observe that although the vivid colouring of the plumage of the present genus confers upon it a great superiority over that of the Thrushes, yet the disproportionate and almost grotesque form of the tail gives it a proportional inferiority in point of elegance of form.

The plumage of the back is metallic green; the shoulders and quills are black with a bar of white, each feather being tipped with grey; the scapulars and rump are bright lazuline blue; a black line extends from the beak to the occiput and down the neck, bordered on each side by olive brown; the ear-coverts and sides of the neck are jet black; the throat white; the breast and under surface tawny; the under tail-coverts are scarlet; the bill black; the tarsi horn colour.

The figure is of the natural size.