

in the subordination and contrast with which the colours are arranged. These extraordinary developments are nearly always confined to the male, and are, doubtless, bestowed upon these little gems as a gorgeous train is given to the Peacock, beautiful markings to the Polyplectron, &c. I know of no others but the two species of the genus *Cephalepis* in which a single feather is made to serve the purpose of ornament. In all other instances the feathers are disposed in pairs, or in equal number on either side of the head or body, as the case may be; but in both these species the crest terminates in a single plume, which greatly adds to the elegance of the slender topping. How splendid are the spangles which deck the neck-plumes of the *Lophornithes*! and how well do the blue ear-tufts of the *Petasophoræ* harmonize with the surrounding green of the neck! The genera *Oxygogon* and *Ramphomicron* may be cited as singular instances of ornamentation; for they are both bearded and crested. Independently of these extra-developed portions of the plumage, certain parts of the body are gorgeously coloured; and here, again, some curious features are observable. In very many instances the crowns are truly resplendent, as in *Heliodoxa*; while in *Helianthea* the forehead only is decorated, with a star brighter than Venus, the queen of planets.

All the members of the genus *Helianthus* are remarkable for their beautiful gorgets, succeeded by a crescent of white separating it from the green of the under-surface. Some species of the *Eriocnemides*, beside their thickly clothed tarsi, have rich and luminous upper tail-coverts; while others, such as the *Eriocnemis Alina*, have the under tail-coverts unsurpassingly brilliant and beautiful. The members of the genus *Augastes* are conspicuous for the shining, metal-like masks with which their faces are adorned; while, differing from all these, the *Aglæactines* have the lower part of their backs clothed in armour-like feathers, the brilliancy of which must be seen to be understood, but which, strange to say, is only apparent when viewed from behind; for if looked at in the direction of the feather, none of these hues are perceptible. Many more instances besides these might be mentioned; but a reference to the plates on which they are represented, or, still better, the birds themselves, will give a more correct idea of these remarkable colourings than can be conveyed by any description.

Before leaving the subject of extra development, I may mention that I often find it carried to a greater extent in some one species of a genus than in the others. I will give an example of what I here intend, by reference to what is observable in another family of birds, the *Trogonidæ*. Here the extra development of the upper tail-coverts which occurs in members of the genus *Pharomacrus* commences in the *P. paroninus*, increases in the *P. Antissianus*, and extends beyond the tail in *P. auriceps*; but no species with upper tail-coverts of intermediate length between those of the last-mentioned species and the immensely long plumes of *P. paradiseus* appears to exist. In like manner, among the Andean Humming-Birds there is a tendency to a gradual increase in the length of the bill, to the extent of two or two and a half inches; but no species has yet been seen in which that organ is intermediate between that length and the extraordinarily developed bill of *Docimastes*, which measures at least five inches. A similar fact is also observable with respect to the spatules in the *Spathuræ*.

Apart from developement, I observe that in the Humming-Birds, as in some other groups to which I have paid particular attention, the species of one genus are much more numerous than those of others, and that, whenever this is the case, the genus usually comprises many closely allied species.

Among the most pleasing recollections of our youthful days is that of a birds' nest. Where is the person