

and in summer only, as it is with us. Mr. Fellowes met with it in Asia Minor; Mr. Strickland in Persia; Lieut. Sperling has seen it in abundance in Syria, Rhodes, Candia, the Ionian Islands, and Greece; Mr. Salvin found it in the Eastern Atlas; Loche states that it frequents the whole of Algeria; and we learn from the Rev. H. B. Tristram's interesting "Notes on the Ornithology of Palestine" that, "of the three species of Turtledoves inhabiting that country, the present one is by far the most abundant, but only in spring and summer, returning about the end of March and overspreading every part of the country, highland and lowland alike." In his valuable little work, 'On the Natural History of the Bible,' he says:—"But the Turtle-dove to which, no doubt, the various Scriptural passages refer is our own (*Turtur auritus*). Its return in spring is one of the most marked epochs in the ornithological calendar. 'The Turtle and the Crane and the Swallow observe the time of their coming.' 'For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the Turtle is heard in our land.' Search the glades and valleys, even by sultry Jordan, at the end of March, and not a Turtle-dove is to be seen. Return in the second week in April, and clouds of Doves are feeding on the clovers of the plain. They stock every tree and thicket. At every step they flutter up from the herbage in front, they perch on every tree and bush, they overspread the whole face of the land. So universal, so simultaneous, and so conspicuous is their migration that the prophet might well place the Turtledove at the head of those birds which 'observe the time of their coming.' While other songsters are heard chiefly in the morning or only at intervals, the Turtle, immediately on its arrival, pours forth, from every garden, grove, and wooded hill, its melancholy yet soothing ditty unceasingly from early dawn till sunset. From its fidelity to its mate, and its habit of pairing for life, among other reasons, the Dove was selected as a symbol of purity and an appropriate offering by the ancient heathens, as well as the Jews. Its amateness is referred to in the Song of Solomon; and its gentle eye has supplied several comparisons:—"Behold, thou art fair; thou hast Dove's eyes within thy locks." "His eyes are as the eyes of Doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk and fairly set," alluding to the bright red skin round the dark eye of the Turtle.

"The Turtledove is more numerous in Palestine than in any other country where it is found; and, indeed, the Pigeon-tribe generally abound there to a degree unknown in other countries. This is accounted for by the botanical character of that region, where the herbage principally consists of leguminous plants of the clover and allied species, the leaves of which supply the food of most Pigeons. Owing, therefore, to the luxuriant growth of the clovers and lucernes, there is no limit to the number of Doves the Holy Land can maintain in spring and summer."

The Turtledove is a frequenter of woods, fir-plantations, and the thick and high hedges between cultivated lands. The nest is a thin, transparent, flat structure, composed of a few small crossed twigs, and is usually placed on a horizontal branch, at about eight or ten feet from the ground. The eggs, which are deposited about the middle of June, are white, somewhat pointed at one end, rather more than an inch in length, and nearly an inch in breadth. "The parent birds," says Mr. Yarrell, "sit by turns; the male occasionally feeds his mate during incubation; and both afterwards mutually labour for the support of their young. In this country they are considered as producing but one brood in the season; but in the south of France they are known to have a second pair of young. In the autumn they fly in small parties of ten or twelve, and leave this country about the end of August, and sometimes as late as the end of September, particularly in those seasons when our harvest is backward. . . . I have observed that these birds are more numerous in the thickly wooded parts of the middle of Kent than elsewhere:" this agrees with my own observation; for I have seen it breed there in great numbers, and have remarked that it has become still more numerous now the pilfering Jays, who constantly robbed them of their eggs, have been killed down.

There is no difference in the external appearance of the sexes; but the young are destitute of the neck-mark, and are altogether duller in their colouring—particularly in the less pure blue-grey of the head, and the chestnut and black markings of the back and scapularies. At this age, too, the naked orbital skin is bluish, instead of red, the nostrils are large and swollen, and, as well as the bill, of a uniform dark olive; front of the tarsi and toes reddish purple; hinder part of the tarsi destitute of scutella, and of a greyish white.

The Plate represents a male and a female, with the nest, all of the natural size. The plant is the *Clematis vitalba*.