FREGILUS GRACULUS.

Chough.

Corvus graculus, Linn. Syst. Nat., tom. i. p. 158.
——— *coracias*, Lapierre.
Coracia erythroramphos, Vieill. Nouv. Dict. d'Hist. Nat., tom. viii. p. 2.
Pyrrhocorax graculus, Temm. Man. d'Orn., 2nd edit. tom. i. p. 122.
——— *rupestris*, Brehm, Vög. Deutschl., p. 175.
Fregilus graculus, Cuv. Règn. Anim., 1817, tom. i. p. 406.
——— *europæus*, Less. Traité d'Orn., p. 324.
——— *erythropus*, Swains. Class. of Birds, vol. ii. p. 268.
Coracia gracula, Gray & Mitch. Gen. of Birds, vol. ii. p. 321.

Chough, Cornish Chough, and Red-legged Crow are three of the trivial names by which this bird is commonly known. It was formerly much more numerous in the British Islands than it is now. When I was a boy it occurred plentifully at the Needles, in the Isle of Wight; and it was there that I killed the specimens figured in my 'Birds of Europe.' To say that the bird has totally disappeared from that place, the neighbouring Beachy Head, and Shakspeare's Cliff at Dover would perhaps not be deviating from the truth. Now as these steep and precipitous chalk rocks, and the closely cropped downs at their backs, have undergone no change, and consequently are as well suited to the habits of the bird as in former times, it is the hands of the relentless gunner and egg-collectors which have either extirpated it or driven it away to other localities. On some of the cliffs of the south coast of England it still holds its own, as is evidenced by the following note received a short time since from W. R. Glennie, Esq. Writing from Osborne House, Swanage, this gentleman says:—"You asked me whether I had met with Choughs of late on the south coast. As we were talking then of Devon, perhaps the question had reference to the south coast of that country only; but I send a line to say that I find them pretty frequent here on the Dorset cliffs. I saw several pairs yesterday in a walk of about eight miles along the coast, between this place and Kimmeridge, and stood behind a stone wall watching one pegging away for beetles within fifteen yards of me." In his 'List of British Birds,' Mr. Rodd states that the Chough is much less numerous in Cornwall than formerly, but is still sparingly observed in different localities along the coast, and that it breeds annually in Zennor Cliffs. It is numerous in many parts of Wales and in the Isle of Man, is very abundant in Islay, Galloway, and some of the western islands of Scotland, but appears to be comparatively scarce in the north-eastern parts of that country. Thompson states that it inhabits the precipitous rocks of various parts of Ireland. Temminck informs us that on the European continent it inhabits the high Alps of Switzerland, Italy, the Tyrol, Bavaria, and Carinthia, and that in rigorous winters it accidentally occurs on less elevated mountains, such as the Jura and the Vosges, always in the vicinity of regions covered with rime. Mr. Howard Saunders found it abundant in the mountain-districts of Southern Spain, especially at the back of the Sierra Nevada. It is said to inhabit the island of Crete; but Lord Lilford remarks that he did not meet with it in Turkey or Greece; yet, according to Loche, it frequents the nearly opposite high mountains of Algeria, and it was seen in large flocks near Tetuan, in Eastern Morocco, by Mr. C. F. Tyrwhitt Drake. The Rev. H. B. Tristram did not meet with it on the Lebanon, where, he remarks, it surely ought to be. Whether it ever occurs in Northern Russia or Siberia is a question I am unable to solve. The bird of this form that exists there may prove to be the very different *Fregilus himalayanus*.

Many of the actions of the Chough remind us of the Jackdaw. It is very active in its movements, both during flight and when on the ground; is cheerful and happy under restraint, and readily becomes reconciled to the aviary, where its inquisitive disposition renders it very amusing. Like its congener, it is fond of petty thieving, particularly of any thing that is glittering. In the British Islands it mostly dwells among the rocks on the sea-side; it is not, therefore, to be sought for inland, except in high and mountainous districts. Its eggs, which the collector always looks upon with interest, are very difficult to procure, in consequence of the excessive caution of the birds in selecting their places of nidification, which, the Rev. W. D. Fox informed Mr. Hewitson, are always on the face of the steepest cliffs, and in general in clefts far in, the passage to which turns at right angles frequently, so that you cannot reach the nest, or even see it. The nest is outwardly composed of sticks, succeeded by a quantity of roots and dry grass, lined with very fine roots, grass, and wool. The eggs are easily known from those of any of the Crow-kind; they are