## CENTROPHANES LAPPONICA.

Lapland Bunting.

From the date, now somewhat more than forty years ago, when Mr. Selby first assigned this species a place in our avifauna, many examples have been shot or captured in this country. In most instances they were either immature or in the winter dress; it is evident, therefore, that the British Islands are not the bird's summer home, and that its occurrence here must be regarded as purely accidental. The specimen characterized by Mr. Selby had been sent to Leadenhall market with some Larks from Cambridgeshire; a second and a third were taken near Brighton; a fourth a few miles northward of London; a fifth in Lancashire, and a sixth in Westmoreland. During the autumn of 1866 one was caught near Highgate, and subsequently placed in the aviary of the Zoological Society; and another is recorded by Mr. Cooke, of Liskard, as having been purchased in the Liverpool market from a Southport bird-catcher. Mr. Stevenson, of Norwich, also records that a male was taken, during extremely severe weather, at Postwick, near that city, and, being placed in the aviary of J. H. Gurney, Esq., assumed the full summer plumage in the following spring. "The only other Norfolk specimen of this Bunting I have either seen or heard of," says Mr. Stevenson, "was shown to me by the Rev. E. J. Bell; it had been netted near Norwich, a few weeks before, and was gradually assuming its summer plumage, having the black on the head and throat imperfect, with a chestnut bar on the nape." There may be some other instances of its having been taken with us; but sufficient has been said to establish the Lapland or Lark-heeled Bunting as an occasional visitant to Britain. Its true home is whither the Fieldfare, the Redwing, and the lovely Blue-throated Warbler (Cyanecula suecica) retire for the purpose of incubating—the land of the Lap and the Lemming. There it breeds in abundance; and if any son of Britain desires to observe the bird during the performance of this duty, he must leave for a while the song of the Lark and the tinkle of the sheep-bell, and betake himself to the fells, the fjelds, and fjords of Norway, Finland, and Lapland, and dwell for a time among the nomadic races of those countries and their herds of reindeer; and how much pleasure he may derive thereby will be readily apparent from the following chapter from Mr. Wheelwright's papers entitled "Spring and Summer in Lapland," which appeared in the Field for March 31, 1863, and which cannot fail to be interesting to every one desirous of information respecting this bird:-

Lark, did not rest in the lowlands, but went up to the fells at once; I don't think we saw six examples at Quickiock the whole spring, whereas in the middle of June they were literally swarming in certain places on the fell meadows—so much so that in one night we took thirteen nests, from all of which we shot the old birds. They seemed, however, to be very local; and it was long before we could discover their breeding-place. At last we found a low flat at the foot of the highest snow-fells (but still, perhaps, 2000 feet above Quickiock), covered with tough tussocky grass and patches of willow bushes, and studded with innumerable lakes and watercourses. This was a rich tract to us; for here we also found the nests of the Blue-throated Warbler, Broad-billed Sandpiper, Temminck's Stint, Wood-Sandpiper, Phalarope, Scaup and Long-tailed Ducks. It is one of the sweetest spots that can well be imagined—a real oasis in the desert; and I never enjoyed a summer ramble so much as in this wild tract. There are certain circumstances in life, as well as places, which leave an impression on the mind never to be obliterated; and this fell-meadow forms one of the brightest flowers in the field of memory as regards my Lapland journey.

"When I first searched this spot I was attracted by a soft loud pipe, very much resembling the call of the Golden Plover. It was long before I could make it out; for I could not see the bird which uttered it: at last one rose, and I shot it on the wing; it proved to be a male Lap Bunting. The mystery was now solved; and we had no difficulty in finding the nest, as it was not far off: and I soon became more familiar with its habits. The female rarely rises, unless you tread close to the nest, but runs away on the ground, much like the Pipit. The male sits on a stone or heap of earth, uttering his monotonous, plaintive whistle, till disturbed, when he rises in the air, much after the manner of the Common Bunting, soars for a while, and then suddenly drops to the ground, as a Skylark does into a field of young wheat in England. While in the air the song of the Lap-