

3. NOTES ON SEMIOPTERA WALLACII, GRAY, FROM A LETTER ADDRESSED TO JOHN GOULD, ESQ., F.R.S., BY A. R. WALLACE, ESQ., DATED AMBOYNA, SEPT. 30, 1859.

"The *Semioptera wallacii* frequents the lower trees of the virgin forests, and is almost constantly in motion. It flies from branch to branch, and clings to the twigs and even to the vertical smooth trunks almost as easily as a Woodpecker. It continually utters a harsh croaking cry, something between that of *Paradisea apoda* and the more musical cry of *Cicinnurus regius*. The males, at short intervals, open and flutter their wings, erect the long shoulder feathers, and expand the elegant shields on each side of the breast. Like the other Birds of Paradise, the females and young males far outnumber the fully plumaged birds, which renders it probable that the extraordinary accessory plumes are not fully developed until the second or third year. The bird seems to feed principally upon fruit, but it probably takes insects occasionally.

"The iris is of a deep olive; the bill horny-olive; the feet orange, and the claws horny.

"I have now obtained a few examples of apparently the same bird from *Gilolo*; but in these the crown is of a more decided violet hue, and the plumes of the breast are much larger."

4. NOTES ON THE YOUNG OF MENURA SUPERBA. BY LUDWIG BECKER, ESQ., IN A LETTER TO JOHN GOULD, ESQ., F.R.S., ETC., DATED MELBOURNE, VICTORIA, SEPT. 24, 1859.

"In the month of October 1858 the nest of a Lyre-bird was found in the densely wooded ranges near the sources of the river Yarra-Yarra. It contained a bird, which seemed at first to be an old one in a sickly condition, as it did not attempt to escape; but it was soon discovered to be a young bird of very large size as compared with its helplessness. When taken out of the nest it screamed loudly; the note being high and sounding like 'tching-tching.' In a short time the mother bird, attracted by the call, arrived, and, notwithstanding the proverbial shyness of the species, flew within a few feet of its young, and tried in vain to deliver it from captivity by flapping her wings and making various rapid motions in different directions towards the captor. A shot brought down the poor bird, and with its mother near it the young *Menura* was soon silent and quiet. It was taken away and kept at a 'mia-mia' erected in the midst of the surrounding forest. The following is as correct a description of the bird as I can give you:—

"Its height was 16 inches; the body was covered with a brown down, but the wings and tail were already furnished with feathers of a dark brown colour. The head was thickly covered with a greyish-white down of from 1 to 2 inches in length; the eyes were hazel-brown; the beak blackish and soft; the legs nearly as large as those of a full-grown specimen, but it walked most awkwardly with the legs bent inwards. It rose with difficulty, the wings as-