

the "Ghour" or "Khur" of travellers in that country. The second was from Syria, having been presented by the late W. Burkhardt Barker, Esq., in 1854, and was of much interest as being, doubtless, of the same race as the "Wild Ass" of the Holy Scriptures.

#### 4. *ASINUS TÆNIOPUS*, ex Abyssinia.

The only Wild Ass not represented in the Society's collection was that of Eastern Africa. It was curious that the only species of this section of the *Asini* which occurred in the African continent was that which approached most nearly to the Zebras in possessing a distinct dorsal cross, and in having the strongest indications of Zebra-stripes. Dr. Sclater had examined the animal in the Jardin des Plantes, which is mentioned in the 'Comptes Rendus' \* by M. I. G. St.-Hilaire as the *Onagre d'Abyssinie*, and had obtained, by the permission of the authorities of that institution, an accurate drawing of it. The example in question had been transmitted to the Jardin des Plantes by M. Delaporte, French Consul at Cairo, and M. Degoutin, French consular agent at Massouah. The fact of Wild Asses being found in Eastern Abyssinia had long been well known. To the authorities mentioned by Mr. Blyth in his article on Wild Asses, in the twenty-eighth volume of the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (p. 229), might be added Leipsius †, as quoted by Dr. Wagner, and Mr. John Petherick, H. B. M. Consul at Khartoum, who noticed these animals in herds of from five to eight on the elevated sandy plains of Taka. But the animal now in the Jardin des Plantes was believed to be the first of this species brought to Europe.

This Wild Ass had also been obtained by Dr. Th. v. Heuglin during his last expedition to Eastern Africa, and had been described and figured in the twenty-eighth volume of the 'Acta Acad. Leopoldino-Carolinæ,' under the name *Asinus tæniopus*. There seemed every reason to believe that our domestic Asses were descended from this Abyssinian species.

The following papers were read:—

#### 1. ON SOME NEW AND RARE BIRDS FROM NEW GUINEA. BY ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE.

(Plates XIX., XX., XXI.)

The birds now brought before the Society were collected by my assistant, Mr. Allen, on his last voyage. They comprise several in-

bray like the ordinary domestic Ass. Your animal, while under my care, used to emit short squeaks and sometimes snorts, not unlike those of a Deer; but she was so young at that time that her voice may not have acquired its mature intonation. I do not remember to have heard or read of this species braying, though the animal is frequently spoken of by Taverner, Porter, and all our travellers in Persia."—P. L. S.

\* Comptes Rendus, xli. p. 1221.

† Briefen aus Aegypten, p. 154.



interesting species, hitherto only known by specimens in the French or Dutch collections, and now, I believe, for the first time exhibited in England, viz. :—

*Nasiterna pygmæa*, Q. & G. Remarkable as being the smallest of the *Psittaci*, and for its curious, rigid, spined tail.

*Tanysiptera nympha*, G. R. Gray. This specimen decides the locality of this interesting and beautiful bird to be the N.W. peninsula of New Guinea, in the interior.

*Peltops blainvillii*, Garn. This rare bird also inhabits the island of Mysol, where a single specimen was obtained by Herr Rosenberg. Mine came from the N.W. of New Guinea.

*Eupetes cærulescens*, Temm. This bird and the last seem quite out of place in New Guinea, as we must pass over all the Moluccas and Celebes to find their nearest allies in Borneo, Java, and Sumatra.

*Ptilorhynchus buccoides*, Müll.

*Hierococcyx leucolophus*, Müll.

*Campephaga melas*, Müll.

Besides these, adult specimens of the fine *Talegalla cuvieri* were also obtained, and Mr. Allen's collection also comprises five new species of great interest—a Pigeon, a Kingfisher, a Parrot, and two Passeres, of which the descriptions follow.

#### 1. CORIPHILUS RUBRONOTATUS.

Above dark green; beneath yellow green; a large spot on the forehead, sides of the breast, and under wing-coverts bright red; a spot on the upper tail-coverts dull red; ear-coverts deep blue; wings and tail as in *C. placentis*. Bill and cere carmine-red; feet pale red.

Total length  $9\frac{1}{2}$  in.; wings  $3\frac{3}{10}$  in.

Allied to *C. placentis*, but smaller, and wants the red face and blue rump which distinguish that species, as well as the yellow-tinged crown, which is replaced by a red spot.

*Hab.* Salwatty, and the N.W. extremity of New Guinea.

#### 2. HALCYON NIGROCYANEA. (Pl. XIX.)

Back, and sides of the head and neck, deep black; throat, lower part of the breast, and belly white; forehead and crown deep blue, margined from the eyes round the nape with lighter blue; a band across the breast, the shoulders, and wing-coverts deep blue; quills dusky black, margined with blue to near the tips; middle of the back narrowly white, shading into blue, which becomes dark on the tail-coverts; tail deep blue, inner margins of the feathers and beneath black; under tail-coverts black, tipped with blue; sides of the breast and flanks black; under wing-coverts black, with a white central band. Bill black, pale in the centre beneath; feet black.

Total length 9 in.; wing  $3\frac{5}{8}$  in.

The young bird has slightly rufous lores, and the pectoral band rufous mingled with black and blue.

*Hab.* N.W. peninsula of New Guinea.



3. *TODOPSIS GRAYI*.

Beneath bluish white, almost white on the throat; head light-greenish blue, the centre of the crown dusky; a black spot on the ear-coverts extending towards the nape; back dusky, the feathers margined with greenish blue; wings dusky, the quills margined with rufous olive, shoulder-coverts margined with greenish blue; tail dusky olive, with a minute whitish spot at the tips of the feathers; thighs rufous-tipped. Bill black; feet dusky.

Total length  $5\frac{5}{8}$  in.; wing  $2\frac{1}{2}$  in.; bill from gape  $\frac{8}{10}$  in.

The bill in this species is nearly as broad as in *Machærirhynchus*. I have named this interesting bird after Mr. George Robert Gray, who has described the other species of this genus sent home by me.

*Hab.* N.W. peninsula of New Guinea: Mountains of Sorong.

4. *GRACULA PECTORALIS*. (Pl. XX.)

Black, the feathers broadly margined with metallic green and purple; plumes of the neck and breast decomposed, and of a rich orange-buff colour, as are also the vent, rump, and upper tail-coverts; on the nape a collar of whitish buff reaching round to the orange of the throat; under tail-coverts cream-white, tinged with orange at the base; a white band across the wings towards the tips. Iris yellow; bill and feet pale yellow.

Total length 10 in.; wing  $5\frac{3}{4}$  in.

The young bird has the breast and belly black, uniformly margined with light orange.

This species differs from the rest of the genus in having neither wattles nor naked skin on the face, but in general structure and coloration closely resembles the other species.

*Hab.* N.W. peninsula of New Guinea: Sorong.

5. *PTILONOPUS HUMERALIS*. (Pl. XXI.)

Very near *P. iozonus*, G. R. Gray, but a little larger, and at once distinguished by the violet-grey patch on the shoulder having its lower half deep purple; the tail also wants the grey apical band of that species, which is replaced by a subapical narrow one, only visible on the lateral feathers and beneath. The wing-coverts are all of a rich violet grey, margined with green. Chin ashy; the rest as in *P. iozonus*. Bill greenish, tipped with bright yellow, base above red and swollen; feet purple red.

Total length  $8\frac{3}{4}$  in.; wing  $4\frac{7}{8}$  in.

*Hab.* Salwatty, and the adjacent coast of New Guinea.



del. et lith.

M & N. Hanhart Imp

HALCYON NIGROCYANEA.





Vogel et lith.

M. & N. Hanhart Imp<sup>t</sup>

GRACULA PECTORALIS.



del. et lith.

M. & N. Hanhart, Imp.

PTILONOPUS HUMERALIS.