

47 *C. Kleinii* Sp. 49 *C. blandus* R. and *C. pentagonis* R. 51 *C. obscurus* Willd. 52 perhaps a variety of *Ip. cymosa*. 53 *C. dentatus* R. *C. flavus* Willd. 54 *C. pilosus* R. 55 *C. Wightii* Wall. Pl. As. Rar. 57 *C. pedetus* Roxb. 58 *C. digitatus* R. 61 *Retzio pilosi* Rott. 62 *C. Malcomi* R. 64 *Con. calycinus* R. 65 *C. uniflorus* Burm. *C. emarginatus* Vahl. *C. Rheedii* Wall. 66 *C. Semidigynus*. 67 *Ip. parviflora* Rott. 68 *E. sericius* Wall. *E. angustifolius* R. 69 These two probably the same species.

EXPLANATION OF PLATES.

PLATE I.

- Fig. 1. *Pharbitis* A. C. D. ovar. 3 celled.
 „ 2. *Ipomea* A. C. D. F. G. H. sepals verticillate.
 „ 3. *Batatas* A. C. D. E. corol. campanulate, stamens included.
 „ 4. *Quamoclit* A. C. D. E. corol. infundibuliform, stamens exerted.
 „ 5. *Rivea* A. B. ovar. 4 celled.
 „ 6. *Aniseia* A. C. D. F. G. H. sepals inserted, some lower down than others.

PLATE II.

Ipomea obscura.—a. g. m. p. q. r. u. v. I. *obscura*.

III.—*Indication of a new Genus belonging to the Strigine Family, with Description of the New Species and Type.*—By BRIAN HOUGHTON HODGSON, Esq. British Resident in Nepal.

Family STRIGIDÆ.

Sub Family NOCTUINÆ.

Genus NINOX, nobis (a *Niso* et *Noctua*).

Type NINOX *Nipalensis*, nobis.

Character.—Bill, disc, conch, and feet as in *Noctua*.—General contour, with the character of the plumage, strictly falconidine. Wings long and firm, 3d quill longest, 1st and 2d moderately gradated; the primes, pretty strongly emarginated high up from the tips; their edges, entire or nearly so. Tail long, straight and even. *Type*, *Ninox Nipalensis*, nobis. *Habitat*, central region of Nepal. Habits, insectivorous and crepuscular.

The experienced *Shikaree* who brought me, recently, a fine male specimen of this bird, asked me, when he put it in my hands, whether it was a *Baáz* (hawk) or an *Ulu* (owl)? And the more I examined its graceful form, its unrelaxed plumage, its strong and ample wings and tail, and even its peculiar colouring, the greater reason did I perceive to admire the man's acuteness of observation. It is an owl, undoubt-

edly, but the most accipitrine of owls; and, much as the peculiar attributes of *Noctua* had prepared me to expect, in or near this group of the *Strigidæ*, the type and symbol of the *Accipitrinæ*, I did not hope that the forests of Nepal would so soon yield that type to my own hands.*

SPECIES new, *Nipalensis nobis*.

Form.—Bill to head as 1 to $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch, short, arched from the base, considerably compressed and feeble rather before the large cere; the tomæ entire and very little trenchant; tip of lower mandible very obliquely and slightly truncated. Nares small, round, anteal, furnished with a central pillar, and partially free and apert; the cere behind them swollen semitubularly, and soft. Head very small and accipitrine, void of egrets, almost so of facial disc, and only strigine in the size and position of the eyes. Opening of the ears but $\frac{3}{16}$ of an inch long, nearly round, quite simple, and protected by a cross row of setaceous plumes. Tail equal to the body in length, composed of 12 firm and unbowed feathers, of nearly equal length, but tending to a rounded form at the end. Wings $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch less the tail; 3d quill decidedly longest; 1st but two inches, and 2d, only half an inch less the 3d; 1st to 4th inclusive sharply emarginated on the inner web, remotely from the tips; and 2d to 5th on the outer; all firm and nearly or quite void of strigine characteristics: tertiaries nearly two inches less the primaries: scapulars as much shorter again. Tarsi submedial, slender, moderately plumed. Toes rather long, cleft, void of plumes, covered by rigid hairs which become spinous laterally near the soles; lateral fores, equal; central, not elongated; hind, small; all cleft; soles of the fores, depressed, flat and papillose; of the hind, full. Talons long, slender, very acute, subequal; inner and central equal; outer fore, less; hind, least: inner process of the central one intire; fores, flat beneath—the hind, rounded. Plumage, generally, neither lax nor soft.

Colour and size.—Above, a medial earthy brown; beneath, sordid rusty from chin to breast, and white from breast downwards. Disc, towards the bill, hoary; towards the head, brown. Superior surface of the bird unmarked save on the tail, which has six, broad, regular bars equal to their paler intervals, and five of them apert: ground colour of the inferior surface, largely picked out with longitudinal central drops of brown, spreading as you descend the body, and changing into hearts on the flanks; tibiæ and tarsi sordid rufous, with vague cross bars of

* I regret I have no species of *Surnia* wherewith to compare our bird. *Surnia* may possibly dispute with it the honour of typifying the nobler races of the *Falconidæ*: but the thickly plumed toes and wedged tail of *Surnia*, sufficiently indicate that our bird is not of that genus.

brown: vent and under tail coverts, pure white: lining of the wings, impure rufous, like the breast, and bimaculate barwise with brown: the quills internally on the inner webs, barred with pale pure rufous. Feet, bright yellow; bill and nails blackish blue horn; cere greenish; iris golden yellow. Intire length of the bird (male) twelve inches; of the tail, six; of the bill, one; of the tarsus, $1\frac{6}{8}$; of the central toe, $1\frac{2}{8}$; of its nail (straight) $\frac{5}{8}$; of a closed wing, $8\frac{1}{2}$. Weight 7oz. Expanse of wings, 27 inches. Intestinal canal 16 inches long, of medial subequal caliber. Two inches from anal end, two cæca, each of $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length, and slender, with enlarged globose distad extremities. Stomach soft, large, spheroidal, distinctly solvent, but considerably thickened in the outer coat, and submuscular on the surface. Contents, large black beetles.

Comparing our bird with *Noctua*, to which it has the closest affinity, it may be observed that the accipitrine tendencies of the genus are here much more apparent, particularly in the decreased size of the head, the greatly superior development of the wings and tail, and the greater firmness and still closer set of the whole plumage. The tarsi are rather lower, and the bill is more compressed before the cere, than in *Noctua*; nor have the wings the same technical formula. But these distinctions are trivial in comparison to the high development of the general falconidine (family of Diurnal Raptores) structure in our bird; and which structure is, as it were, latent in *Noctua*.

Noctua approaches the Diurnal Raptores by its firm plumage, and the very small development of the ear conch and of the disc, not to mention the absence of egrets, and the small head. Our genus can scarcely be separated from the sub-family of the *Noctuinae*, which latter would appear to include the *Surnianae*. Or, if the latter be allowed a sub-family distinctness, I know of no genera fit to be ranged under it, as the analogical equivalent of the *Accipitrinae* and *Falconinae*, save *Surnia* and our *Ninox*, the genus *Surnium* of authors being much more strigine than the type of the *Noctuinae*. Our genus has wings less than the tail, but longer in proportion to it than *Accipiter*. It may be a question, therefore, whether *Ninox* symbolis *Accipiter* or *Falco*. Our bird at ten paces, would pass for a *Tinnunculus*, with which it agrees very much in structure and in habits (insectivorous). *But*, in *Tinnunculus* there is a wide deviation from the type of *Falco*: and the truth would seem to be the Diurnal as well as Nocturnal Raptores require to be reclassified.