

Ephialtes Balli, Sp. Nov.

Of the pennatus type; but larger than either pennatus, Hodg., or spilocephalus, Blyth. *Terminal one-fourth of tarsus, bare; wing, 5.78; upper surface, with a few small, pale, rufous buff spots, more or less surrounded with a narrow blackish line.*

THIS fine species, which is certainly new to our Indian avifauna, is the one noticed, doubtfully, by Mr. Ball, as *E. spilocephalus*; (*vide ante*, p. 53.) It is, however, quite distinct from this species, of which I have now a large series, and which never assumes the rufous phase; moreover, the spottings on it are of a totally different character, and it has a greater extent of the tarsus bare. It is impossible to say whether this may, or may not, be *gymnopodus*, Gray, as I can find no detailed description of that species, nor does there appear to be any certainty as to where the type specimen was procured. Such Malayan specimens as I have seen, did not appear to me to differ from our Indian *pennatus*, and though I suspend my opinion on this point, I am inclined to doubt whether *P. malayensis*, Hay, is a good species, and anyhow there is no doubt, I think, that it differs quite as much from the present species as does *pennatus*.

Mr. Ball has already described this bird; but a fresh description may be useful.

We have as yet, unfortunately, only a single specimen, and this was not measured in the flesh, nor was the sex ascertained and recorded.

Dimensions.—Length, about 8; wing, 5.78; tarsus, 1.15; bare portion, 0.3.

Description.—The whole upper surface is a rich deep, somewhat ferruginous, rufous brown, a tint altogether different from that ever assumed by *pennatus*; it is faintly freckled, and vermiculated with black, and bears a few small pale rufous buff spots, more or less surrounded by a narrow blackish line; the primaries are hair brown, tinged rufous on the outer webs, which exhibit four or five conspicuous white bars, with traces of dark margins; the inner webs are unmarked, except quite at the base, where towards the margin there are three or four conspicuous yellowish white spots, or imperfect bars.

The ground color of the lower surface is a rusty buff, but little of this is seen, as the feathers are everywhere finely freckled and vermiculated, and bear the usual black and white spots, or dashes, though these are less conspicuous than in the allied species; the tarsal plumes are mingled rusty and blackish brown; the tail is like the upper surface; but rather more strongly

vermiculated, and with a few irregular paler bars, bounded by darker lines; the bars do not extend to the tips of the feathers. The toes and claws are particularly long.

Dissemuroides, Gen. Nov.

Bill resembling that of *Dissemurus*; metal bristles, feeble; no crest; a tuft of hair like feathers on the forehead, springing from each side of the base of culmen; tail much as in *Buchanga albirictus*, Hodg., and *longicaudatus*, Hay, but longer, and the exterior feathers more than proportionally elongated, with the tips curved over towards the centre of the tail, as in *Chibia hottentotta*.

AFTER comparing the king-crows of the Andamans and the Cocos, allied, but quite distinct, species, with all the dicrurine birds of our part of the world, I am unable to identify them with any genus of the family which is represented in India and its dependencies. The elongated, powerful, sharply carinated bill is that of *Dissemurus*; but there is no trace of a crest, the exterior tail feathers are only slightly lengthened, have no portion of the shaft bare, nor even of the webs narrowed; the tail, though longer, is much like that of our common king-crow; but the whole tips of the external pair are turned well over, as in *Chibia hottentotta*, and even more strongly so than in that species; besides all this, there is the peculiar tuft of re-curved frontal bustles, springing from either side of the base of the culmen, I have therefore separated these two birds* under the above generic name, and give the following species as the type:

Dissemuroides dicruriformis, Sp. Nov.

Length, 13.25-14.6; *wing*, 5.6-5.9; *bill, from gape*, 1.4-1.5; *tarsus*, 0.9-1.

It is only in size that this species differs from its congener *andamanensis*; but that difference is so great, so invariable, and so apparent to the eye even in the live bird, that I cannot avoid separating the birds from great Cocos and Table Island, from those of the Andaman group proper. It must not be supposed that I have assumed this difference of size from insufficient evidence. We shot a very large number of both species, and I have now before me nineteen of the present species, and thirty-

* *D. lophorinus* Vieill would also apparently be included in this genus.