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### XII.—Notes on the skull of *Balæna marginata*, the type of a new genus, *Neobalæna*

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Iris brownish yellow; rictus and eyelids bright yellow. Upper mandible and tip of lower black, rest of lower mandible light green; inside of mouth yellow. Legs orange-yellow; claws brown, with black ridges.

This species stands midway between the true cuckoos and *Hierococcyx*. We found it abundant at Szechuen (Western China) in May. It is very noisy, flying excitedly from tree to tree, uttering its loud notes, which may be syllabled *có-ló-tó-ló*.

To Mr. Alexander Michie of Shanghai, for the kind assistance he gave me in the pursuit of natural history on the Upper Yangtsze, I dedicate this species.

*Henicurus leucoschistus*, sp. nov.

Similar to the *H. schistaceus*, Hodgs., of India; differs in having the bill straighter along the culmen, and the gonys more ascending. In its markings it wants the white tips that adorn the first to the sixth primaries of the Indian bird; and its under wing, instead of having the bases of the primary quills white, commencing on the second quill and increasing inwards, has the basal third of the quills edged on the inner web with white, commencing with the fourth quill.

Inhabits the hills of Southern China.

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XII.—*Notes on the Skull of Balæna marginata, the type of a new Genus, Neobalæna.* By Dr. J. E. GRAY, F.R.S. &c.

IN the essay on Whales published in the 'Voyage of the Erebus and Terror' I established a species of true Whalebone-Whale on three examples of whalebone which I had received from Western Australia, believing it to belong to the same genus as the Greenland Whale (*Balæna*), as the whalebone was of long slender shape, and of a very fine texture, with a large quantity of enamel, which is a peculiarity of the baleen of that genus. Sir George Grey, the late Governor of New Zealand, has obtained the skull of *Balæna marginata* from the island of Kawan, New Zealand, and has presented it to the Museum at Wellington. Dr. Hector has given figures exhibiting four views of this skull in the 'Transactions and Proceedings of the New-Zealand Institute' for 1869, vol. ii., which was issued in April 1870. These figures show that the whale, which has long, slender, and fine-textured whalebone or baleen like that of the Greenland Right Whale, forms a very different genus from the restricted genus *Balæna*. The brain-cavity forms a much larger part of the skull; the beak is much

shorter and broad at the base, gradually tapering to a point in front; and the lower jaw bones are thin, compressed, and high, with the upper edge dilated and inflexed the greater part of their length, and the lower edge similarly dilated in the front part or chin.

I propose for this animal the name *Neobalæna*; and it may be thus characterized:—

NEOBALÆNA.

Skull rather depressed; brain-cavity nearly as long as the beak, depressed, much expanded on the sides, with a very deep notch on the middle of each side over the condyles of the lower jaw, and with a subtriangular crown-plate. The nose as broad as the expanded brain-cavity at the base, regularly attenuated to a fine point in front, and slightly arched downwards. Lower jaw laminar, compressed, high; the upper edge thin, and inflexed the greater part of its length, erect in

Fig. 1.

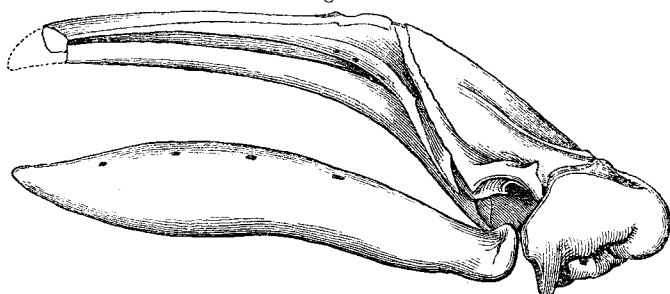
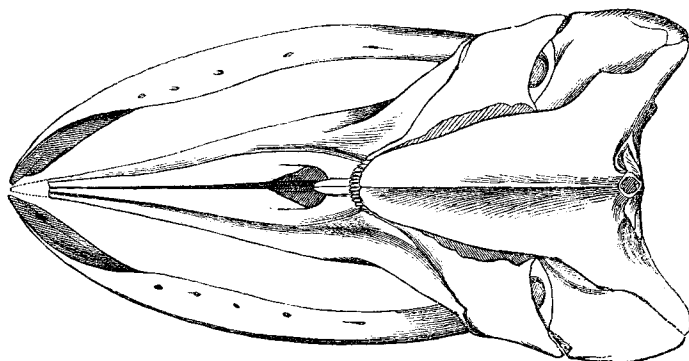


Fig. 2.



Figs. 1 & 2. Side view and top view of the skull of *Neobalæna marginata*, from Dr. Hector's figures.

front; the lower edge inflexed in front, the rest of the edge being simple. The baleen elongate, slender, several times as long as broad, with a fringe of a single series of fine fibres; enamelled surface smooth and polished, thick.

*Neobalæna marginata*.

*Balæna marginata*, Gray, Cat. Seals & Whales Brit. Mus. p. 90; Hector, Proc. & Trans. of the New-Zealand Institute, 1869, t. 2 b. f. 1-4; Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist. 1870, vol. v. p. 221.

*Hab.* New Zealand.

This is interesting, as showing that the true *Balæna* or Right Whale of the North Sea and that of the South Sea are each a peculiar genus.

The width and general form of the beak of the skull is somewhat like the beak of some of the Finner Whales; but it does not at all justify Mr. Knox's idea that *Balæna marginata* is a Finner. But this difference of skull makes us more anxious to have the description of the entire animal and its skeleton, as the animal may prove to be the type of a new family of Whales, between the true Whales and Finners.

This pigmy whale, which is not more than 15 or 16 feet long, is a representative in the Southern Ocean of the gigantic Right Whale of the Greenland seas. It has the most beautiful, the most flexible, most elastic, and the toughest whalebone or baleen yet discovered; and if it were of larger size, it would fetch a much higher price than the whalebone of the Greenland whale, the latter being three or four times the value of the brittle coarse whalebone of the *Eubalæna* or Right Whales of the Southern and Pacific Oceans. The trade of the Continental nations being chiefly confined to their colonies, or their merchants obtaining the whalebone that is used in their manufactures second-hand, there are not in the market the varieties of whalebone and finner-bone which we have in this country, where the whalebone and finner-bone from different localities bear each a different value. This perhaps explains why the Continental zoologists (as Eschricht) who have paid attention to the structure of whales have not paid sufficient attention to the characters afforded by the shape, structure, and colour of this substance, to which I called their attention more than twenty years ago, and showed its value as a character for distinguishing the genera and species. It has been a fertile subject of reproach to me that I established some species on the characters afforded by this substance; but I need only quote, as a proof of the little attention M. Gervais has paid to this part of my work, that, in his book on the anatomy of whales, now in progress, after saying that I have established

the species *Balæna marginata* on three blades of whalebone, he says I have called it *Eubalæna marginata*—thus confounding it with the whales with brittle and coarse whalebone, whereas the chief reason that induced me to consider the blades to belong to a distinct species was their very fine and tough structure. The accuracy of the determination is now proved by the very different form of its skull from that of any other known whale. In the same manner, the *Physalus antarcticus*, also established on finner-fins or baleen imported from New Zealand, has been proved to be a very distinct species of that genus, named Sulphur-bottoms by the whalers.

### XIII.—On a Collection of Birds from China and Japan.

By R. B. SHARPE, F.L.S., Libr. Z.S., &c. With Notes by the Collector, ROBERT H. BERGMAN.

I HAVE lately received from my friend Mr. Bergman a small collection of birds which he has formed during his leisure time in the course of his cruises between China and Japan. This is the first consignment he has transmitted to me; and although the birds sent are none of them very rare, I think it advisable to place on record the very interesting notes which Mr. Bergman has added on the habits of the species noticed by him; and for the trouble taken in this matter he deserves all praise. I shall hope from time to time to contribute further notes on Chinese birds as they are sent home to me by the present collector. The nomenclature employed is that adopted by Mr. Swinhoe in his 'Catalogue of the Birds of China' (Proc. Zool. Soc. 1863, p. 259); and I have availed myself of that gentleman's presence in England to obtain his assistance in the identification of some of the species.

#### 1. *Turdus Naumanni*.

*Turdus Naumanni*, Temm.; Swinh. P. Z. S. 1863, p. 280.

No. 15. Shot at Shanghai, Jan. 7, 1870. Legs, eyes, and beak black. Generally found in pairs in the villages.—*R. H. B.*

#### 2. *Turdus fuscatus*.

*Turdus fuscatus*, Pall.; Swinh. P. Z. S. 1863, p. 280.

No. 2. Thrush, caught in the rigging of the S.S. 'Cadiz,' going up the Yangtze river to Shanghai, Nov. 28th, 1869. Legs, beak, and eyes black. Common in North China and Japan.—*R. H. B.*