Like the grous, they keep in ſmall picks ; but never, like thoſe birds, take ſhelter in the heath, but beneath loose ſtones. To the taſte they ſcarce differ from a grous.

Theſe birds are called by Pliny *lagopi,* their feet being clothed with feathers to the claws, as the hare’s are with fur : the nails are long, broad, and hollow. The firſt circumſtance guards them from the rigour of the winter; the latter enables them to form a lodge under the ſnow, where they lie in heaps to protect themſelves from the cold. The feet of the grous are clothed in the ſame manner ; but thoſe of the two firſt ſpecies here described, which perch upon trees, are naked, the legs only being feathered, not being in want of ſuch a protection.

II. Perdix, comprehends both the partridge and quail.

The common partridge is so well known that a descrip­tion of it is unnecessary, and we have not room to describe the foreign ſpecies. We refer thoſe who wiſh complete in­formation to the accurate and valuable Syſtem of Ornithology publiſhed by Dr Latham. The ſcientific ornithologiſt will find much satisfaction in his *Index Ornithologus,* publiſhed in 2 vols 4t0 ; and he who wiſhes to be acquainted with the nature and dispoſitions of birds, will read his *Synopsis* with pleaſure, publiſhed in 7 vols 4to.

The following general account of the partridge will ſuffice : “ Theſe birds (says Willughby) hold the principal place in the feaſts and entertainments of princes ; without which their feaſts are eſteemed ignoble, vulgar, and of no account. The Frenchmen do ſo highly value, and are so fond of the partridge, that if they be wanting, they utterly flight and deſpiſe the beſt ſpread tables ; as if there could be no feaſt without them.” But however this might be in the times of our hiſtorian, the partridge is now too common in France to be conſidered as a delicacy ; and this, as well as every other ſimple diſh, is exploded for luxuries of a more compound invention. In England, where the part­ridge is much ſcarcer, and a great deal dearer, it is ſtill a favourite delicacy at the tables of the rich ; and the deſire oſ keeping it to themſelves has induced them to make laws for its preservation, no way harmoniſing with the general ſpirit of Engliſh legiſlation.

The partridge ſeems to be a bird well known all over the world, as it is found in every country and in every climate ; as well in the frozen regions about the pole, as the torrid tracks under the equator. It even ſeems to adapt itſelf to the nature of the climate where it resides. In Greenland, the partridge, which is brown in summer, as ſoon as the icy winter lets in, begins to take a covering suited to the ſeason; it is then clothed with a warm down beneath ; and its out­ward plumage affirmes the colour of the ſnow among which it ſeeks its food. Thus it is doubly fitted for the place, by the warmth and the colour of its plumage ; the one to defend it from the cold, the other to prevent its being noticed by the enemy. Thoſe of Barakonda, on the other hand, are longer legged, much ſwifter of foot, and chooſe the higheſt rocks and precipices to reſide in.—They all, however, agree in one character, of being immoderately addicted to venery ; and, as ſome writers affirm, often to an unnatural degree. It is certain, the male will pursue the hen even to her neſt ; and will break her eggs rather than not indulge his incli­nations. Though the young ones have kept together in flocks during the winter, when they begin to pair in spring their ſociety dispenses. ; and combats, very terrible with respect to each other, enſue. Their manners in other circumſtances reſemble all thoſe of poultry in general ; but their cunning and instinct ſeem ſuperior to thoſe of the larger kinds. Perhaps, as they live in the very, neighbourhood of their enemies, they have more frequent occaſion to put their little arts in practice, and learn by habit the means of eva­sion or ſafety. Whenever therefore a dog or other formi­dable animal approaches their neſt, the female uſes every means to draw him away. She keeps juſt before him, pre­tends to be incapable of flying, juſt hops up, and then falls down before him, but never goes off ſo far as to diſcourage her purſuer. At length, when ſhe has drawn him entirely away from her ſecret treaſure, ſhe at once takes wing, and fairly leaves him to gaze after her in deſpair. After the danger is over, and the dog withdrawn, ſhe then calls her young, who aſſemble at once at her cry, and follow where ſhe leads them. There are generally from 10 to 15 in a covey ; and, if unmoleſted, they live from 15 to 17 years. There are ſeveral methods of taking them, as is well known; that by which they are taken in a net with a ſetting dog­is the moſt pleaſant, as well as the moſt ſecure. The dog, as every body knows, is trained to this exerciſe by a long courſe of education : by blows and caresses he is taught to lie down at the word of command ; a partridge is ſhown him, and he is then ordered to lie down ; he is brought into the field, and when the ſportſman perceives where the covey lies, he orders his dog to crouch : at length the dog, from habit, crouches wherever he aporoaches a covey ; and this is the signal which the ſportſman receives for unfolding and covering the birds with his net. A covey thus caught is ſometimes fed in a place proper for their reception ; but they can never be thoroughly tamed like our domeſtic poul­try. See Partridge and Shooting.

2. The *coturnix,* or common quail, is not above half the ſize of the partridge. The feathers of the head are black, edged with ruſty brown ; the breaſt is of a pale yellowiſh red, ſpotted with black ; the feathers on the back are marked with lines of pale yellow, and the legs are of a pale hue. Except in the colours thus deſcribed, and the ſize, it every way reſembles a partridge in ſhape, and, except that it is a bird of passage, it is like all others of the poultry kind in its habits and nature.

The quail ſeems to ſpread entirely throughout the old world, but does inhabit the new ; is ſeen from the Cape of Good Hope quite to Iceland, and is ſaid to be found in Falkland Iſles ; alſo in New Zealand, throughout Ruſſia, Tartary, and China@@\*; and in ſhort is mentioned by ſo many travellers, and in ſo many places, that we may almoſt call it an inhabitant of all. It is obſerved to ſhift quarters according to the ſeaſon, coming northward in ſpring, and departing ſouth in autumn, and in vaſt flocks, like other migra­ting birds. Twice in a year it comes in such vaſt quantities into Capri, that the biſhop of the iſland draws the chief part of his revenue from them ; hence he is called the *quail Biſhop.* But this does not stand alone ; almoſt all the iſlands in the Archipelago, on the oppoſite coaſts, are at times covered with theſe birds, and ſome of them obtain a name from this circumſtance@@. On the weſt coaſt of the kingdom of Naples, within the ſpace of four or five miles, an hundred thouſand have been taken in a day, which have been sold for eight livres *per* hundred to dealers v who carry them for ſale to Rome. Great quantities alſo ſometimes alight in ſpring on the coaſts of Provence, especially in the dioceseof the biſhop of Frejus, which is near the sea, and appear, at their firſt landing, ſo much fatigued that they are often taken by the hand. Theſe circumſtances then leave not a doubt of their being the same kind of birds which the divine hand of providence thought right to direct in ſuch quantities as to cover the camp of the murmuring Iſraelites.

“In the autumn, great quantities are frequently imported into England from France for the table ; which we have fre­quently ſeen (ſays Dr Latham) on their paſſage to London by the ſtage-coaches, about an hundred in a large ſquare box, divided into five or six partitions one above another, juſt high

@@@[m]\* See Forster's Obs. p. 199.

@@@[mu] Latham's Synopsis, vol iv.