

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES.

No. I. Young Malayan Tapir.

The young Malayan Tapir depicted on Plate 7 was in the possession of Khun Panom Chanaraks, the Nai King of Panom, in Surat Province. The animal had been captured two or three months previously, and had become very tame and affectionate. It was fond of licking one's hand, like a puppy. The hinder part of the trunk was slightly paler than the rest of the body, though this is hardly seen in the plate, indicating the commencement of the change to the adult colouration. It is stated that the young tapir begins to change its colour at from four to six months of age, so this animal was probably within those limits.

A. KERR,

Bangkok, September 3rd. 1927.

No. II. A Strange Animal Reported from Roi Et.

In the "Sri Krung" of 23rd April last a strange animal was reported from the district of Pontawng in the province of Roi Et. A long and detailed description of the animal was accompanied by a sketch, based on that description. Briefly, the animal was said to be as big as an elephant, but to resemble a goat in form. According to the report a hunter came across three of these animals, two adults, one male the other female, and a young one. The hunter shot the female. The young one stayed by the dead female and was captured, but the male escaped.

It seemed worth while to make some enquiries about these strange beasts, though it was unlikely that such large animals could have remained so long unknown. Phya Indra Montri (Mr. F. H. Giles), Phra Anuwat Wanaraks and Major Eric Seidenfaden very kindly asked officials in that locality to make inquiries about these animals. Both the Governor of Roi Et and the Revenue Officer investigated the matter and reported that the animals were Serow (Lieng Pa) of the ordinary size. The Gendarmerie Officer of Sakon Nakon, however, wrote that the people living near the Phan Hills say that a strange animal does exist there, but more like a wild ox than a goat. Further information about this latter animal will be welcomed.

As far as the animals reported from Roi Et are concerned, it may be fairly safely concluded that they were Serow.

A. KERR,

Bangkok, September 3rd. 1927.

No. III. Note on a Camphor-yielding Tree from Kanburi Province.*

A tree, belonging to the genus *Cinnamomum*, and probably an undescribed species, has been found by the Botanical Section in

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the District of Wang Ka (อำเภอวังกะ), Kanburi province. It is known in Siamese as 'Krawan', in Karen as 'Ko Wawng'. It grows in evergreen forest on the hills, at an altitude of about 500 to 1,000 metres. It is not uncommon, but usually the trees occur singly and at some distance apart. There is a small trade in the leaves, which are dried and sent to Bangkok.

The leaves have been examined at the Government Laboratory, and found to contain an appreciable quantity of camphor, so that the trees may be of interest from the commercial view-point.

About 10 kg. of air-dried leaves were distilled, producing a total yield of 1.2% crude camphor. The yield of essential oil, after removing a portion of the camphor by cooling, was 1.42% by weight. Of the total yield of camphor, 0.66% was obtained direct in the distillation, 0.37% on cooling the essential oil, and 0.17% on distilling the essential oil. The re-sublimed camphor was of a pleasant odour, had a melting point of 172°C., and a Specific rotation of +44.2° for a 20% solution in alcohol at 30°C. The essential oil (after removal of camphor by cooling) had a Specific gravity at 18°C. of 0.934, and a Specific rotation of +23.9° at 25°C.

The oil was fractionally distilled:—

Fraction 160°–195°C. 47% of a colourless oil of ester value zero.

Fraction 195°–220°C. 22% containing 50% crude camphor.

Fraction 220°–260°C. 7% of a dark green oil, of a pleasant odour.

REVIEWS.

The Genus *Dioscorea* in Siam. BY D. PRAIN AND I. H. BURKILL.
Kew Bulletin, 1927, pp. 225–245.

Sir David Prain and Mr. Burkill have added another paper on yams to the series they began to publish many years ago. In the present one they record 32 species of *Dioscorea* from Siam.

The authors start their paper with a discussion, illustrated with maps, of the geographical distribution of the various species. They show that the species characteristic of the Shan States and Yunnan do not extend much further south than Chiangmai; while those typical of the Malayan flora find their northern limit at about Chumpawn. Those that may be called the Burmese species extend well into Northern and Central Siam. A fourth group are characteristic of the tract of hilly country, with heavy rainfall, extending along the eastern side of the Gulf of Siam and into Indo-China. Nine of the species are now described for the first time, and are, so far, known only from Siam. Two other species, described elsewhere, are also known only from Siam.

There is a very interesting account of *Dioscorea esculenta*, a yam now widely cultivated in the tropics. Hitherto there have been only the most inadequate indications as to its origin. The plant in cultivation very rarely flowers, but male flowers were known. In 1815 female flowers appeared on a plant, of unknown