

symptoms and died an hour later. The local physicians reported that death was the direct result of eating the *mangda*, called *hera* by some people and characterized by having hairs on its tail.

HUGH M. SMITH.

Bangkok, October 7, 1932.

No. III. Yellow-banded Leaves in *Saccolabium giganteum*.

In the present possession of Phya Bhakdi Narong of Bangkok there is a specimen of the white-flowered variety of the orchid *Saccolabium giganteum* whose leaves have both the margins banded yellow, up to half a centimetre in width, and have in addition one or two narrow longitudinal stripes of similar colour next within either marginal band, the remaining stripes being pale green as in the leaves of ordinary specimens. This interesting sport is said to have been brought as a very young plant, with the variegation already plainly evident, from the forest of Wieng Chan, in the French Laos, about sixteen years ago.

As the specimen appears singular, it would be interesting if readers could cite other instances of the kind elsewhere.

PHYA WINIT WANANDORN.

Bangkok, 20th December 1932.

No. IV. A Reputed Rejuvenator.

It is interesting to note that in the last number of the Supplement Dr. A. Kerr has made some reference to a drug under the above title afforded by the root tubers of *kwao kua* (*Butea superba*), concluding with an appropriate remark that if the drug soon drops into oblivion, as most of such drugs do, we may take it that the claims made for it are baseless, and that on the other hand it may turn out a serious rival to monkey-glands.

The *kwao kua* drug, in its compound with honey, it may be said, has been used as a general tonic by some people in Northern Siam for some years. The issue in 1931 of Luang Anusarn's pamphlet, in which different ways of compounding the drug were prescribed and many miraculous virtues of it proclaimed, however, created a vogue in its use as a rejuvenator. Now the vogue has subsided and we do not hear much about this precious drug. The cause of the subsidence is of course obvious. But whatever the general opinion to the contrary as to its value may be, the drug is nevertheless known to have actually expressed the following powers:—developing the breasts, inducing menstruation (or something like it) in women of 60–80 years of age, causing a regrowth of hair on bald

head, ⁽¹⁾ turning grey hair black, ⁽²⁾ producing youthful or improved complexion, removing freckles, reducing the swelling of goitre, giving returned vigor to old and infirm people ⁽³⁾, and manifesting a few other things contributory to rejuvenescence—the rarest occurrence being that of causing a regrowth of hair and of turning grey hair black.

From the fact that only in certain cases has the drug been known to exhibit any of the powers above enumerated there would appear to be some conditions necessary for the development of such powers. The failure to realise any effect of the drug, I believe, has been in most cases due to irregular habit of taking the drug and to impatience for results.

Alcoholic drinks have also been known to render the system non-receptive to the beneficial influence of the drug: this is perhaps one of the reasons for the injunction to strictly observe during the period of treatment the five precepts of Buddha, of which abstinence from intoxicating drinks is one. There may be some other factors more important and direct, which I am not in a position to know, that have been the cause of failure to attain any good result.

Being one of those who have used the drug, the following is my own experience of its partial effect. After taking a medicine composed of the drug, honey and the three myrobalans (beleric, chebulic and emblic)⁽⁴⁾ daily for about a month swelling and soreness of the breasts were gradually brought on. About two weeks later, when this symptom had, I thought, become much more than that I had on attaining puberty some twenty five years ago, I left off the use of the medicine. After this the symptom remained stationary for about two weeks, and then gradually disappeared. To tell the

(1), (2) There has been a case of a bald-headed man of about 75, whose hair had been grey, getting a regrowth of completely black hair, with the small bordering fringe left of the grey hair also turning black at the same time, making up a crop quite that of a young man, after taking the drug for six or seven months. The old man, a widower, by the way, has become so much younger that he has had to be dissuaded with much difficulty by his people from a desire to contract another marriage—a thing which he had never thought of before. All this sounds unbelievable; but if any readers care to verify the truth of the statement, I shall be glad to supply the address of the old man.

(3) Instance of old people of sixty to eighty getting back lost energy and semi-youthful complexion through continual use of the drug are not infrequent, and Luang Anusarn, the issuer of the pamphlet, at present affords one of them.

(4) These three fruits—respectively *samaw pipek* (ส้มอพิเภา), *samaw tai* (ส้มอไทย), and *makham pawm* (มะขามป้อม)—are collectively known to native doctors as *tri-pala* (ตรีผลา).

truth, however, I do not think I felt appreciably younger then or at any time during the presence of the youthful symptom; but perhaps I ought to have continued taking the medicine longer to realize the full extent of its effect.

So far as the above-mentioned experience of mine goes, I shall only say that the drug has something extraordinarily potent in it; but with what I have heard or seen as to its marvellous effects on others I should feel inclined to believe that the drug is a possible rejuvenator. Of course it is well known that the *hwao kua* tubers contain a poisonous principle and several cases of poisoning have resulted from overdoses of the drug prepared from them. And this fact has led some to doubt the medicinal value of the drug so much as to believe that those symptoms now apparently of constructive character are nothing but morbid expressions of its poisoning effect which will sooner or later crystallise into a reaction directly harmful to the system, or something like that. This belief, though it may have some scientific ground to rest on and eventually prove correct, seems rather beyond the grasp of common sense—and I am afraid none of those who have long used the drug without any bad effect, or with only good results, will readily subscribe to it.

As the subject is of vital interest, it is to be hoped that some competent authorities will investigate it and see whether the drug given by the tubers of *Butea superba* is really worthy of its reputed value—at least as an ordinary efficacious tonic, if nothing more—or simply a delusive poison to be shunned at all times.

PHYA WINIT WANANDORN.

Bangkok, 26th December 1932.

No. V. Further Examples of the Schomburgk Deer.

Referring to the articles "A Search for Schomburgk's Deer" and "Notes on the Schomburgk Deer" which appeared in recent issues of the Natural History Supplement, I want to bring the following information to the notice of the Natural History Section of the Siam Society.

The nai amphur of Kanburi, Luang Visith, who was formerly the secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Rajburi, told me on November 14, 1932, that a police sergeant (Nai Sip Tamruat) shot a Schomburgk deer several months before. Although I expressed my doubts, having in mind the fruitless efforts of General Pigot and others, Luang Visith, who is himself a hunter, insisted on this deer being a genuine Schomburgk deer, which he called "Saman". He had seen the horns on the well preserved skull and he tried to buy the horns which were in possession of a Chinese in Kanburi, but the owner wanted 80 bahts for them, which price he declined to pay. Luang Visith stated that the police sergeant had fired at this deer