

has more the character of a garden plant than of a tree. It is indeed a tree in thickness, having a stem as thick as an oak, but so soft that a strong man can punch a hole in it with his finger, and from such a hole water will flow. The leaves of those plantain trees are most beautiful, immensely long and broad, and of a bright emerald green; in fact, they use them for tablecloths, but serving only for a single dinner. Also new-born children, after being washed and salted, are wrapt up with aloes and roses in these leaves, without any swathing, and so placed in the sand. The leaves are some ten ells in length, more or less, and I do not know to what to compare them (in form) unless it be to elecampane. The tree produces its fruit only from the crown; but on one stem it will bear a good three hundred. At first they are not good to eat, but after they have been kept a while in the house they ripen of themselves, and are then of an excellent odour, and still better taste; and they are about the length of the longest of one's fingers. And this is a thing that I have seen with mine own eyes, that slice it across where you will, you will find on both sides of the cut the figure of a man crucified, as if one had graven it with a needle point.¹ And

is the subject of a genuine legend still existing. At the torrent of Seetlagunga on the way to the Peak, he tells us: "From the circumstance that various fruits have been occasionally carried down the stream, both the Moormen and Singalese believe, the former that Adam, the latter that Buddha had a fruit garden here, which still teems with the most splendid productions of the East, but that it is now inaccessible, and that its explorer would never return." (*Hist., Polit. and Stat. Acct. of Ceylon*, p. 613.)

¹ Mandeville gives a like account of the cross in the plantain or "apple of Paradise" as he calls it, and so do Frescobaldi and Simon Sigoli in their narratives of their pilgrimage in 1384; who also like Marignolli compare the leaves to elecampane (*Firenze*, 1862, pp. 32, 160). The circumstance is also alluded to by Paludanus in the notes to *Linschoten's Voyages* (p. 101). Padre F. Vincenzo Maria says that the appearance was in India that of a cross merely, but in Phoenicia an express image of the crucifix, on which account the Christians of that country never cut the fruit but broke it (*Viaggio, etc.*, p. 350). Old Gerarde observes on this subject: "The Crosse I might perceive, as the form of a Spred-Egle in the root of Ferne, but the Man I leave to be sought for by