

NOTE 1.—Mr. Blyth appears to consider that the only whale met with nowadays in the Indian Sea *north of the line* is a great Rorqual or *Balaenoptera*, to which he gives the specific name of *Indica*. (See *J. A. S. B.* XXVIII. 481.) The text, however (from Ramusio), clearly points to the Spermaceti whale; and Maury's Whale-Chart consists with this.

"The best ambergris," says Mas'udi, "is found on the islands and coasts of the Sea of Zinj (Eastern Africa); it is round, of a pale blue, and sometimes as big as an ostrich egg. . . . These are morsels which have been swallowed by the fish called *Awdl*. When the sea is much agitated it casts up fragments of amber almost like lumps of rock, and the fish swallowing these is choked thereby, and floats on the surface. The men of Zinj, or wherever it be, then come in their canoes, and fall on the creature with harpoons and cables, draw it ashore, cut it up, and extract the ambergris" (I. 134).

Kazwini speaks of whales as often imprisoned by the ebb tide in the channels about Basra. The people harpooned them, and got much oil *out of the brain*, which they used for lamps, and smearing their ships. This also is clearly the sperm whale. (*Ethé*, p. 268.)

After having been long doubted, scientific opinion seems to have come back to the opinion that ambergris is an excretion from the whale. "Ambergris is a morbid secretion in the intestines of the cachalot, deriving its origin either from the stomach or biliary ducts, and allied in its nature to gall-stones, . . . whilst the masses found floating on the sea are those that have been voided by the whale, or liberated from the dead animal by the process of putrefaction." (*Bennett, Whaling Voyage Round the Globe*, 1840, II. 326.)

["The *Pen ts'ao*, ch. xliii. fol. 5, mentions ambergris under the name *lung sien hiang* (dragon's saliva perfume), and describes it as a sweet-scented product, which is obtained from the south-western sea. It is greasy, and at first yellowish white; when dry, it forms pieces of a yellowish black colour. In spring whole herds of dragons swim in that sea, and vomit it out. Others say that it is found in the belly of a large fish. This description also doubtless points to ambergris, which in reality is a pathological secretion of the intestines of the spermaceti whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*), a large cetaceous animal. The best ambergris is collected on the Arabian coast. In the *Ming shi* (ch. cccxxvi.) *lung sien hiang* is mentioned as a product of *Bu-la-wa* (*Brava*, on the east coast of Africa), and *an-ba-rh* (evidently also ambergris) amongst the products of *Dsu-fa-rh* (*Dsahfar*, on the south coast of Arabia)." (*Bretschneider, Med. Res.* I. p. 152, note.)—H. C.]

NOTE 2.—*Scotra* probably represented the usual pronunciation of the name SOCOTRA, which has been hypothetically traced to a Sanskrit original, *Dvīpa-Sukhād-hāra*, "the Island Abode of Bliss," from which (contracted *Diuskadra*) the Greeks made "the island of *Dioscorides*."

So much painful interest attaches to the history of a people once Christian, but now degenerated almost to savagery, that some detail may be permitted on this subject.

The *Periplus* calls the island very large, but desolate; . . . the inhabitants were few, and dwelt on the north side. They were of foreign origin, being a mixture of Arabs, Indians, and Greeks, who had come thither in search of gain. . . . The island was under the king of the Incense Country. . . . Traders came from *Muza* (near Mocha) and sometimes from *Limyrice* and *Barygaza* (Malabar and Guzerat), bringing rice, wheat, and Indian muslins, with female slaves, which had a ready sale. Cosmas (6th century) says there was in the island a bishop, appointed from Persia. The inhabitants spoke Greek, having been originally settled there by the Ptolemies. "There are clergy there also, ordained and sent from Persia to minister among the people of the island, and a multitude of Christians. We sailed past the island, but did not land. I met, however, with people from it who were on their way to Ethiopia, and they spoke Greek."

The ecclesiastical historian Nicephorus Callistus seems to allude to the people of