

No. 1 produces the Arabian olibanum, and Nos. 1 and 2 together the bulk of the olibanum exported from the Sumálí coast under the name *Lubán-Shehri*. Both are said to give an inferior kind besides, called *L. Bedawi*. No. 3 is, according to Birdwood, the same as Bruce's *Angoua*. No. 5 is distinctly a new species, and affords a highly fragrant resin sold under the name of *Lubán Méti*.

Bombay is now the great mart of frankincense. The quantity exported thence in 1872-1873 was 25,000 *cwt.*, of which nearly one quarter went to China.

Frankincense when it first exudes is milky white; whence the name "White Incense" by which Polo speaks of it. And the Arabic name *lúbán* apparently refers to milk. The Chinese have so translated, calling it *Ju-siang* or Milk-perfume.

Polo, we see, says the tree was like a fir tree; and it is remarkable that a Chinese Pharmacology quoted by Bretschneider says the like, which looks as if their information came from a common source. And yet I think Polo's must have been oral. One of the meanings of *Lubán*, from the *Kámús*, is *Pinus* (*Freytag*). This may have to do with the error. Dr. Birdwood, in a paper in *Cassell's Bible Educator*, has given a copy of a remarkable wood engraving from Thevet's *Cosmographie Universelle* (1575), representing the collection of Arabian olibanum, and this through his kind intervention I am able to reproduce here. The text (probably after Polo) speaks of the tree as resembling a fir, but in the cut the firs are in the background; the incense trees have some real suggestion of *Boswellia*, and the whole design has singular spirit and verisimilitude.

Dr. Birdwood thus speaks of the *B. Frereana*, the only species that he has seen in flower: "As I saw the plant in Playfair's garden at Aden . . . in young leaf and covered with bloom, I was much struck by its elegant singularity. The long racemes of green star-like flowers, tipped with the red anthers of the stamens (like aigrettes of little stars of emerald set with minute rubies), droop gracefully over the clusters of glossy, glaucous leaves; and every part of the plant (bark, leaves, and flowers) gives out the most refreshing lemon-like fragrance." (*Birdwood* in *Linnaean Transactions* for 1869, pp. 109 *seqq.*; *Hanbury and Flückiger's Pharmacographia*, pp. 120 *seqq.*; *Ritter*, xii. 356 *seqq.*; *Niebuhr, Desc. de l'Arabie*, I. p. 202, II. pp. 125-132.)

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## CHAPTER XXXIX.

### CONCERNING THE GULF OF CALATU AND THE CITY SO CALLED.

CALATU is a great city, within a gulf which bears the name of the Gulf of Calatu. It is a noble city, and lies 600 miles from Dufar towards the north-west, upon the sea-shore. The people are Saracens, and are subject to Hormos. And whenever the Melic of Hormos is at war with some prince more potent than himself, he betakes himself to this city of Calatu, because it is very strong, both from its position and its fortifications.<sup>1</sup>

They grow no corn here, but get it from abroad; for