NOTES.

Sesbania—a native fibre-producer.—There are thousands of acres of this plant in Queensland; and its fibre might be obtained of any length up to ten feet. By immersion in water for a few days the stems are readily peeled; by rubbing the fibre, as in washing, the cuticle becomes detached, and the result the specimen * now forwarded. It is remarkably strong, and I think, will in that respect, compare favourably with either Manilla or New Zealand fibre. The fruit when green is edible, and the seeds when dried might be used for many purposes. In insolating the fibre the only implements necessary would be a tomahawk, and a wooden mallet to bruise the stems either before or after their being placed in the water—but before would be better, as the water would more readily penetrate between the skin and the wood. Here is an industry to be developed, no cultivation required, no expensive machinery, merely labor of the lightest kind to render the fibre marketable. I believe the collection of this fibre would be highly remunerative to those engaged in collecting it.—C. W. De Burgh Birch.

[*The specimen of fibre alluded to was pronounced to be of good quality and, on the evidence of flower and foliage accompanying it, to be derived from one of the varieties of S. aculeata, Pers., a common plant in the Brisbane and other districts. It was elicited, in discussion, that this Sesbania had long been recognised as a source for marketable fibre, on which account it had been rather extensively cultivated in India. On Dr. W. Roxburgh’s authority (cf. Royle’s “Fibrous Plants of India”) it was stated that, in the market where it commanded a price of £40 per ton, this fibre bore a good character, on account of its durability when exposed to the action of water. Baron Mueller (“Select Plants,” s. v. Sesbania) was also quoted in corroboration of the views of these and other previous writers on the subject.—H. T.]*

—Perameles Bougainvillii, Q. & G.—A small bandicoot closely allied to if not identical with that described by Messrs. Quoy and Gaimard under this title has been received from Cape York. So far as can be concluded from the very brief description given by Mr. Waterhouse, the Cape York animal agrees in every essential point with those received by the French naturalists from Shark’s Bay, West Australia, and if the two be really the same, the species has a pretty wide range. The noteworthy point is that one of the specimens is an adult female 6.8 inches in length, with two

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