

NOTE. Mr. Butler's remarks are very interesting, and speak for themselves, so I need only refer to the fighting quails. Since hearing from him, I have met several quail-catchers in Sungei Ujong, and examining the decoy birds find that all were females. The Malays too told me they always used the females for fighting, and the males did not fight.

H. N. R.

Bekin.

Regarding the Malay word "bikin" = to do, to make, etc., —the use of which is so strongly deprecated, and the bastard origin of which is insisted upon by all authorities on the language—has the probability of its Persian origin ever been seriously considered? The word bears a striking resemblance to "bikun," the imperative of the common Persian verb "to do, to make," etc. If this origin could be established it would raise the word from its present obloquious position to one of quite classical respectability.

W. C.

An insectivorous squirrel.

The swarming of a nest of termites is always interesting to watch on account of the numerous enemies which hasten to the spot to prey upon these helpless insects. Birds, chiefly bulbuls, robins, drongos and bee-eaters, are the usual assailants. Dragon-flies also dart to and fro through the swarm, and frogs and toads hasten from their retreats to devour those that fall on the ground. I was surprised, however, recently on one of these occasions to see a little squirrel (*Nanosciurus exilis*) creeping about on the ground and eagerly catching the insects. On my remaining quite motionless, it crept out of the bushes upon the road where it remained about two feet from me intent on its prey, which it ate wings and all, apparently with much enjoyment, and by the rustling in the bushes I judged there was at least one more, which I could not see, attacking the swarm.

H. N. R.



Ridley, H. N. 1899. "An insectivorous squirrel." *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 32, 217–217.

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