

There is also a sacred tiger possessed by the fairy as her sole guardian of the mountain. It always sits half-way down the mountain. As most of the uneducated are superstitious, they believe that there is also a kind of plant grown near the house of the fairy, and any one who gets a leaf from that plant and eats it, besides being always young and beautiful, will never die. Many of the ancient people of Malacca attempted to get some of the leaves, and many lost their lives in the attempts because of their absurdity.

This story was first told by a Malay who accidentally reached the top of the mountain. One day while cutting wood with some of his companions he was accidentally separated from them and was left alone in the forests. What was his alarm when he saw a tiger; and being unable to get rid of the wild beast, he fell on the ground and fainted. He was carried to the fairy, and being a worshipper, as people were in those days, he was well treated. He stayed there for several hours, and was told to pick some of the largest lumps of saffron and take them home. While he was walking the bag became heavier, and he then threw some of the lumps away. When he reached home he found that the saffron turned into gold. This is the story which the Malays as well as the Straits Chinese believe about Mt. Ophir or Gunong Leydang."

*R. J. Wilkinson.*

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### Golden Flowers.

There was living in Singapore not many years ago a Chinaman in very poor circumstances, who possessed, however, a small garden, in which grew a plant of the Pandan Wangi (*Pandanus laevis*), a tree which is often cultivated for its scented leaves used for flavouring rice and for making a kind of *pot pourri* used at weddings. He supplied the tree liberally with manure, and one moonlight night he was surprised to see it bearing a red flower. Going to examine it next day, no flower was to be seen, but next night it was there again, and he climbed up and got it, and put it on a table in his house. On the

following morning he found it was changed into gold, and broke off a bit and took it off to sell. On returning, he found the bit he had broken off had grown again, and this continued till he became a very rich man. On his death the flower disappeared, and the family became comparatively poor again. The Pandan Wangi very rarely flowers (indeed I have never seen the flowers of it), and the male flowers are white and sweet-scented, like those of any other Pandanus.

Recently a Javanese who was in the Botanic gardens on a moonlight evening perceived on the stem of a wild fig-tree (*Ficus Miquelii*) at a height of about ten feet from the ground, a red flower about as big as a large marigold. Not knowing the peculiarity of the Gold flower, he went to call a companion to look at it, when it immediately vanished, nor has it reappeared. It seems that the gold flower objects to a crowd, and will only be visible to certain fortunate persons, and this cooly, by calling a companion to see it and not immediately seizing the flower, has missed his opportunity of becoming a wealthy man. It is hardly necessary to say that the flowers of the fig are enclosed in the fig itself, which is mistaken for the fruit by the natives, who imagine that fig-trees have no flowers at all but only fruits. And thus, as, like the Pandan, it has normally no flowers, it is just the kind of tree you would expect to find gold flowers on.

H. N. R.

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**Remarks on the  
Rhinoceros Hornbill (*Buceros Rhinoceros*),  
and some other species mentioned in Mr. Ridley's Paper on  
the Birds of the Botanical Gardens.**

Writing of the Rhinoceros Hornbill in his interesting paper on Singapore Birds, Mr. Ridley says, "The beak and casque are naturally white, but during life are coloured orange and red. This is done by the bird itself, which every morning rubs its beak against a gland beneath its tail, whence exudes an orange-red liquid which colours the beak."

The gland (uropygial) is *above* and not *below* the tail; below is of course a *lapsus calami*. In a letter to Mr. Ridley I told him that I thought the red colour on the bill, thoug



Ridley, H. N. 1899. "Golden Flowers." *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 32, 214–215.

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