

RAMBONG BEETLE.

From two localities in Selangor specimens of a common longicorn beetle *Batocera octomaculata* and its grub have been sent, as serious pests destroying the India-rubber tree, Rambong, *Ficus elastica*. The grub over two inches long bores up the stem of the tree, while the beetle itself gnaws the bark, bites off the buds and then proceeds to demolish the leaves, eating them quite voraciously. The grub is when full grown about two inches and a half long and a quarter of an inch wide, flattened soft and white except for its hard brown chitinous head and the upper surface of the first two segments. Like all longicorn grubs it has no feet. It makes the usual tunnels elliptic in section through the length of the larger boughs and trunk of the tree, and also attacks in the same way *Ficus indica* and the Waringin, *F. Benjamina*, and probably others of our wild figs. It pupates in the tube it has made, and eventually hatches out into a handsome large beetle, one and a half to two inches long, without the antennae. The head is brown, with large eyes and powerful jaws. The antennae, fairly stout, longer than the body, dark brown, and rough with short processes in the lower surface. The thorax, short and broad with a conic thorn on each side, is dark brown with two red crescents in the centre. The elytra three quarters to an inch and a quarter long, oblong, blunt, broadest at the shoulder, dark brown with black shining raised dots in the upper part near the shoulder, smooth below. There are four pair of white spots on the elytra, the uppermost pair small and round, the next larger and more or less oblong sometimes with an extra white spot near the upper edge, the next pair nearly as large, the lowest pair much smaller. The form and size of the spots vary, but appear to be always eight. The scutellum is also white. The under surface of the body is light brown and a broad white stripe runs on each side, from behind the eye to the tail. The legs are powerful, over an inch long, and brown. The beetle feeds during the day, and also moves about at night. It is attracted by light and often flies into the house after dark. Like most longicorn beetles it squeaks loudly when caught and it can also bite severely. The amount of injury a beetle of this kind could

do in a plantation of large sized trees would be very great. Fortunately it is easily caught and very conspicuous, and by abolishing all unnecessary fig trees from the neighbourhood of a plantation and carefully attending to the young plants, the pest out to be easily kept in check.

H. N. R.

In Memoriam

ALLAN MACLEAN SKINNER, C. M. G.

The death of Mr. Skinner will be deeply regretted by all who knew him, and as one of the original members of the Society it is fitting that some special notice of the loss the Society has sustained by his death should appear in the Journal. At the preliminary meeting held on 4th November 1877, it was Mr. Skinner who proposed that the gentlemen present should form themselves into a Society to promote the collection and record of information relating to the Straits Settlements and neighbouring countries. Of those present at the first meeting the majority have died and the Bishop of Singapore and Sarawak, the first President, is the only one still resident in the East.

At a meeting held in February 1878, was exhibited a skeleton map of the Malay Peninsula showing how little was then known of the Native States. Under the personal direction of Mr. Skinner the blank spaces were partially filled in and the first map of the Peninsula was published by the Society.

In the first number of the Journal is a valuable paper by Mr. Skinner on the Geography of the Peninsula, with maps.

In 1883 Mr. Skinner was Vice President and in the Journal published in December 1882, appeared his 'Outline History of the British Connection with Malaya,' a most useful compilation which is reproduced in the Singapore and Straits Directory.

Among his other contributions may be mentioned papers on 'The Java System' and 'Straits Meteorology'. In 1885 Mr. Skinner was elected President. He received the cordial thanks



Ridley, H. N. 1901. "Rambong Beetle." *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 36, 138–139.

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