

and *rotundifolia*), and is collected in June and July. The Sicilian manna is purgative, and it is clear that this manna is not that of the Hebrews.

But there are many other kinds of manna known; it is certain even, that this name has been extended to some sugary or resinous substances, and to true honeys. In Europe the larch (*Larix europæa*) yields a concrete juice called *manna of Briançon* or *manna of the larch*. The juniper also, and in Sweden the *Pinus picea*, yield some at the extremities of their highest branches.

The East also furnishes several kinds of manna, derived from several plants in Syria, Persia, and Arabia. These are obtained from the Cedar, from a leguminous plant (*Hedysarum Alhagi*), from the Oriental oak, (?) from the Tamarisk, and from several other undetermined species of plants.

All these masses are collected upon the branches and the leaves of the trees which produce them, or upon the ground beneath the same trees. They assume the form of little seeds like to coriander, sometimes as white as snow, which the inhabitants collect in June and August before the sun rises; for when the sun has risen, these little masses melt, and form a honey-coloured coating which does not separate spontaneously from the branches. Rauwolf, Gmelin, Niebuhr, and especially Burckardt, have given very correct descriptions of these mannas, and of the plants which produce them.

Burckardt, in the account of his travels in the deserts of Sinai, which were traversed by the Israelites, mentions the *tarfu* or tamarisk as being the plant which furnished the manna of the Hebrews. It is really strange, says he, that this should have remained unknown in Europe until it was indicated by M. Seetzen. This substance is called *manna* by the Arabs, and resembles, up to a certain point, the description of manna given in the Scriptures. It may be remarked further, that this manna is only found in very wet seasons; sometimes it is altogether wanting.

In the season during which the Arabs collect it, it never acquires that degree of firmness which will allow of its pulverization. The amount of tamarisk manna really collected even in the most favourable seasons, is insignificant, and does not exceed five hundred livres for the whole of the country. It is entirely consumed by the Bedouins, who regard it as the most delicate dainty which the country furnishes.

The cedars of Lebanon also yield a manna which resembles that of the larch, called *cedrine mastichina*; in Egypt, the *Asclepias procera* also produces a farinaceous manna, and in Syria the *Apocynum syriacum* is in the same estimation.

But all these mannas, and especially that of the tamarisk, differ very much from the manna of the Israelites. The manna of the Hebrews fell from heaven, and covered the camp on the ground; whilst the real Oriental mannas are obtained from the stems, branches, or leaves of the trees from which they exude, and cannot be dispersed into the atmosphere and then fall in the form of dew. It is true that, anciently, all the mannas were designated by the expressions of *dew of heaven*, *honey of the air*, *heavenly honey*, because the ancients imagined that the sugary drops suspended from the trees were produced by the dew which hardened upon those plants. Such was the opinion of Aristotle, Pliny, and Avicenna. Matthiæus regarded it as a sort of saliva or excrement from certain stars; and it was not till 1543 that these absurd beliefs were shown to be wrong by Angus Plæa, who demonstrated that Sicilian manna, did not fall from heaven in the form of dew; he proved that it was produced directly from the proper juice of the ash, by simply covering such trees with a white cloth, and thus isolating them from external influences.

Moreover, the supply of Eastern manna often fails for one or more years in succession; it is always anything but abundant, the trees only producing it for two or three months in the year. The manna of the Bible, on the contrary, fell all the year, and continued to do so for the long period of forty years without intermission. The real manna is only employed as a condiment or dainty—that of the Hebrews served for their daily bread. Moreover, until now, no travellers have related that the Arabs really use manna to replace their bread during meals.