

It is not necessary for us to follow the further windings of the discussion. Our object has been only to give an idea of the latest aspect of biological science, and to indicate the probable tendency of future investigation.

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## NOTE ON MYRRH AND ITS ALLIED GUM RESINS.\*

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The gum resins I include under this head are, true African myrrh, Arabian myrrh, common African bdellium, scented African bdellium, Indian bdellium, and opaque bdellium. These drugs are brought to Bombay from Africa, Arabia, and different parts of India, for selection and dispatch to suitable markets in Europe, China, and other countries.

The merchants who deal in myrrh and the gums which come from the north-east of Africa and southern Arabia have their chief houses in Bombay, and employ partners or agents at Aden and Makulla; the Aden agents also attend the great annual fair at Berbera on the opposite coast, and exchange English and Indian goods for myrrh, bdellium and other African produce. The bags or bales which contain the myrrh, when opened in Bombay, are found to be made up of 1st, a large proportion of roundish masses of fine myrrh; 2nd, a considerable proportion of small semi-transparent pieces of myrrh of irregular shape; 3rd, numerous pieces of dark coloured myrrh, mixed with bark and other refuse; 4th, a small proportion of an opaque gum resin (*Bdellium opaque* of Guibourt?); occasionally pieces of resin (juniper?) are also met with. In Bombay the contents of the package are sorted; the best myrrh goes to Europe, the darker pieces form a second quality, and the refuse is exported to China, where it is probably used as incense. True myrrh is known in the local market, as karam. The opaque bdellium is called meena harma, and is used for the extraction of the Guinea worm; it is of a yellowish white colour, resembling ammoniacum, with hardly any odour, and a bitter taste.

From Berbera also comes bdellium. In the bales of this drug two distinct kinds are met with, viz., ordinary bdellium and a perfumed kind in small quantities. The latter occurs in irregularly shaped pieces, more or less flat, some of them having fragments of thick bark adherent, but not the birch like bark which adheres to common bdellium. The colour of the gum is dark reddish brown; but opaque yellowish white streaks are frequently met with in the semi-transparent reddish mass which forms the bulk of the drug.

\* From the Pharm. Jour. & Trans.