some ship, as is often the case with foreign productions which we find cast up on our shores.

Polperro, 1856.

Notice of the "Borer," a Caterpillar very injurious to the Sugar-Cane. By J. O. WESTWOOD, Esq., F.L.S. &c.

[Read June 3rd, 1856.]

[Abstract.]

MR. WESTWOOD gave an account of the natural history of the "Borer," or caterpillar of a moth which is at the present time doing immense damage to the sugar-canes in the island of Mauritius. A committee had been formed in the island, composed of the chief planters and scientific individuals, for the purpose of investigating the subject, and from the able report which they had drawn up, it appears that the insects were in all probability imported with a cargo of new cane plants from the island of Ceylon several years ago, and that since that time the damage has been rapidly extending, and now threatens the entire destruction of the plantations. The female insect deposits her eggs in the axils of the young leaves, and the larvæ as soon as hatched bore into the stem, forming long galleries filled with the excrement of the insect, and which have the effect of bringing the stem into such a state of disease, that no crystallization will take place, and the plant becomes quite useless even for making rum. The entire transformations of the insect are effected in about six weeks, so that there are at least six successive generations in the course of a year. It appears that the chrysalis state is passed in a slight cocoon spun amongst the dead leaves of the plant; and the committee, after reviewing various proposals suggested for the destruction of the insect, had come to the conclusion that a well-organized system of burning the infested canes, as well as all loose rubbish and leaves in the plantation, was the only practicable means of getting rid of the enemy. Dr. Ulcoq, an extensive sugar-cane planter in the island, who was present at the meeting, confirmed the details contained in the report, and begged for any suggestions which could be offered by scientific men in this country for the purpose of remedying the evil. He had already been in communication with M. Guérin-Méneville and other naturalists in Paris.

Several of the members present took part in the discussion

upon the subject, and especially dwelt on the care necessary in the selection and treatment of the cuttings of the cane-tops for future plantations. The destruction of the eggs and young larvæ attached to such shoots would be effected if the latter were kept immersed in damp furrows, but the nature of the soil of the island prevented such a process; their immersion in a liquid capable of destroying the insect embryo without hurting the plant was also insisted upon; as well as the placing of the cuttings for a time in a close atmosphere saturated with the fumes of prussic acid arising from bruised laurel-leaves, which would certainly destroy the insect.

From the account given of this Mauritian borer, it appears identical with the borer of the West Indian plantations described by Fabricius under the name of *Phalæna saccharalis*, and by the Rev. L. Guilding under that of *Diatræa Sacchari* in a memoir published in the Transactions of the Society of Arts, for which he received the Gold Ceres Medal from the Society.

Notice of a Specimen of Insect-wax from China.

By DANIEL HANBURY, Esq., F.L.S. &c.

[Read April 15th, 1856.]

[Abstract.]

MR. D. HANBURY exhibited a specimen of Chinese Insect-wax in the crude state, attached to the branch on which it had been formed by the insect, *Coccus Pe-la*, Westw.* (*C. sinensis*, Westw. Pharm. Journ. xii. 478).

The specimen was obtained by Dr. M'Cartee of Ningpo, at a spot about fourteen miles N.E. of that city. The exact locality is described as "three miles from Chin-hae, southerly, behind the first range of hills across the river,—in the direction of Ling-fung," where the trees supporting the wax-insect occur on the banks of the canals.

Dr. M'Cartee procured specimens for Mr. Fortune, which that gentleman has taken to India with the view of introducing the insect into that country. He also sent specimens to William Lockhart, Esq., of Shanghai, through whose kindness that exhibited was received.

It may be remarked that, according to the Chinese accounts

* Gardener's Chronicle for Aug. 20, 1853 (p. 532).