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XXII.—Description of a new earth-snake of the genus *Silybura* from the Bombay Presidency, with remarks on other little-known Uropeltidæ

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- Fig. 3.* The same. Outline of the group of segments on the surface, nat. size. Drawn to measurement as if flat.
- Fig. 4.* The same. Portion of the yellow froth-like substance, greatly magnified. *a*, thread-like extension of the same branched and more or less charged with the opaque scarlet spherules in line; *b*, scarlet spherules dispersed. Diagrammatic.
- Fig. 5.* Discoid foraminiferal test, much magnified, showing scarlet spherules in the chambers. *a*, spherule. From a microscopic mounted longitudinal section of *Loftusia persica*. Nat. size of test 1-164th inch in diameter. Diagrammatic.
- Fig. 6.* *Millarella cantabrigiensis*. Microscopic slice from the centre of the specimen, nat. size, indicating the transverse diameter of the fossil. *a*, structure in the centre, composed of more or less circular divisions interuniting circumferentially by extensions of the same material; *b*, pits or vacuities indicating the intervals between the "extensions" where the "circular divisions" are not well-defined.
- Fig. 7.* The same. Portion of the centre, much magnified, to show the mode of union of the circular divisions by the intervening "extensions (reticulated structure)." *a*, circular division; *b*, intervening extensions. Diagrammatic.
- Fig. 8.* The same. Circular division, still more magnified, to show the character of the foraminiferal detritus with which it is charged. *a*, "intervening extensions (reticulated structure);" *b b*, foraminiferal tests; *c*, sponge-spicules; *d*, discoid test, whose chambers are filled with glauconite; *e*, amorphous portion of glauconite; *f*, test in whose chambers respectively there is a scarlet spherule; *g*, dispersed spherules.

XXII.—*Description of a new Earth-Snake of the Genus Silybura from the Bombay Presidency, with Remarks on other little-known Uropeltidæ.* By GEORGE E. MASON.

Silybura Phipsonii, sp. n.

Head smaller than in *S. nilgherriensis*; snout rather pointed, rostral shield nearly twice as long as the vertical and one third the length of the head, convex above, produced back but not separating the nasals; frontals somewhat smaller than nasals, broad below, very narrow upwards and only just meeting in front of the vertical; eye rather large, lying in the front of the ocular shield and occupying a third of its size; vertical diamond-shaped, longer than broad; caudal disk flat, not well defined, twice as long as broad; the terminal scute large, broad, and rough, moderately bicuspid, the caudal scales prominently 2-4-keeled; no chin-shields between the first pair of lower labials and the ventrals; scales in 17 rows round the middle of the body and

neck; ventrals twice as large as the scales of the adjoining series, from 146 to 148; subcaudals 11 pairs. Length 9-11 inches, girth $1\frac{1}{8}$ inch. Black above, iridescent, with small, irregular, much scattered, yellowish-white spots; upper and lower labials yellow, a very narrow bright yellow line commencing at the angle of the mouth and continued for $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch along the trunk, gradually diminishing to mere spots, which mingle with those scattered over the body; sometimes the presence of the line may be detected along the entire length of the body by an occasional group of confluent spots; belly uniform black, or with a few indistinct yellowish-white spots, a very perfect bright yellow band along each side of the tail and crossing the vent.

Hab. Bombay ghats.

For the series of specimens upon which the above description is founded I am indebted to my friend Mr. H. M. Phipson, Honorary Secretary of the Bombay Natural History Society. There are in the British Museum two snakes with 155 ventrals collected by Dr. Leith in the Bombay Presidency (the exact locality is not mentioned) which probably belong to the above species, but unfortunately they are in such indifferent condition that I cannot determine this point with certainty. I was inclined to endorse the opinion expressed by Col. Beddome (Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist. (5) xvii. p. 17) that the Bombay form was identical with *S. nilgherriensis*, though a very characteristic variety, but after much consideration and the comparison of the specimens at my disposal with an extensive series of that form and its varieties I have come to the conclusion that, according to the received notions of a species, this must be considered distinct and not merely a variety. Independently of the much smaller head, the rostral is convex above and pointed, and chin-shields are wanting between the lower labials and the ventrals. The caudal disk is also longer and proportionally narrower, while the scales contain a greater number of keels.

Silybura nilgherriensis, var. *picta*.

Silybura nilgherriensis, var. *picta*, Beddome, Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist. (5) xvii. p. 16.

This variety is founded on a single specimen collected at Peermaad, North Travancore, between 3000 and 4000 feet elevation. In collections I have recently received from the same locality this form is represented by numerous adult and young examples which tend to show that the coloration is very variable, many of the specimens differing greatly in this

respect from the type. In one instance it is orange-yellow above each scale, with a fine black margin; a few entirely black scales are scattered over the anterior and posterior portions of the trunk; other specimens present markings such as were described originally by Beddome, except that the black scales are in series of from two to four and form irregular spots distributed over the back; and again in another example the groups of spots flow into one another, thus showing a tendency to form cross bars. The coloration of the young is somewhat remarkable; a yellowish hue is predominant, the scales having a very minute black margin, each one of the central dorsal series black, forming a conspicuous line which extends from the head to the caudal disk; the line is occasionally interrupted by a scale wanting the black mark; an almost undistinguishable dark central spot on the five rows of scales on each side of the dorsal series. The colour of the belly differs little from the type in all my specimens, alternate jet-black and irregular, broad, orange-coloured blotches or cross bars always being more or less present. The ventrals vary from 146 to 156.

Rhinophis sanguineus.

Rhinophis sanguineus, Beddome, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1863, p. 227, and Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist. (5) xvii. p. 8; Günther, Rept. Brit. India, p. 186.
Rhinophis microlepis, Beddome, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1863, p. 227, cum icon. (young).

I have specimens in my collection from the Wullingy forests near Palghat which do not coincide with the diagnosis given by Beddome and Günther; the ventrals vary from 166 to 183 only and the caudal scales are somewhat prominently keeled on the upper surface of the tail. It is a matter of uncertainty whether they should be regarded as conspecific and I have refrained from doing so until I can characterize them more fully.

Melanophidium punctatum.

Melanophidium punctatum, Beddome, Madr. Journ. Med. Science, Dec. 1871.

In addition to the remarkable changes of the horny terminal scute of the tail noticed by Beddome (*l. c.*) and by Günther in the 'Proceedings of the Zoological Society,' 1875, p. 230, I have observed it furnished with three well-marked parallel ridges above, each terminating in a spine, side by side, the central one being of far greater length and the ridge more acute. The specimens, which were collected at Peermaad, North Travancore, 4000 feet elevation, are of unusually large size, adults being $23\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, with a girth of $2\frac{1}{8}$ inches.