

The nutmeg trees on the island, about half a million in number, produced in 1870 1,022,207 lbs. of nutmegs, and 197,143 lbs. of mace.

The weather at Banda is rainy and moist throughout the year, August to November being the driest months. The northwest monsoon blows occasionally with violence, while the southeast monsoon seldom exceeds a moderate breeze. There is monthly mail communication with Banda from Batavia.

The Resident and some of the other gentlemen at Banda stated that in July and August the water was usually milky white, but during the Challenger's visit it was exceptionally clear; in connection with this it may be mentioned that on the 28th September, shortly before reaching Banda, Mr. Buchanan procured in the water-bottles from 400 and 600 fathoms a milky-white water, the appearance being due to an amorphous precipitate.

It having been ascertained from the Resident during the stay that a small steamer which had been for a cruise to Ceram had broken down on its return when within a few miles of Banda, and that the crew had no provisions on board, the steam pinnace was sent out to search. In the evening the pinnace returned, having found a small boat, containing the Dutch master and half a dozen Malays so exhausted from want of food as to be unable to reach the islands. They reported leaving the steamer two days previously, and that its crew had then no water left; under these circumstances the ship proceeded out in search of the steamer, and steamed nearly over to Ceram without seeing it or its crew, natives of that island, consequently it was concluded that they had reached a harbour there, and the Challenger returned to Banda. While the ship was away, the steam pinnace remained with some of the naturalists dredging in 20 to 30 fathoms, close to Banda, when along with other specimens numerous Monaxonid sponges were obtained. Mr. S. O. Ridley, F.L.S., of the British Museum, who is preparing a Report on this group, has furnished the following notes:—

“*The Monaxonida* (as it is proposed, in accordance with principles laid down by Professor Sollas¹ and advocated by Professor F. E. Schulze, to term that group of the Siliceous Sponges named Monactinellidæ by Professor Zittel) are, as the investigations of the ‘Lightning’ and ‘Porcupine’ in the North Atlantic, those of Dr. Bowerbank in the Shetland seas, and those of Professor Agassiz in the Gulf of Mexico would lead us to expect, well represented in the Challenger collections, viz., by about two hundred species, of which about seventy are new to science; and they are by no means confined to the more moderate depths. Representatives of the group were obtained at seventy-three distinct localities out of the total number of dredging and trawling Stations.

“Of the six marine families, Renieridæ, Chalinidæ, Desmacidinidæ, Ectyonidæ, Axinellidæ, and Suberitidæ, commonly recognised in this suborder, the Desmacidinidæ take unequivocally the first place in the collection, both from their abundance and

¹ See Cassell's Natural History, vol. vi. p. 326, 1883.