39178—Continued.

Upper Burma, and is distributed westward to the Sutlej, though beyond Nepal it is doubtfully indigenous. The culms run from 40 to as much as 80 feet in height and from 4 to 6 inches in diameter; the nodes are marked with root scars, the internodes are 12 to 20 inches in length and the walls half an inch thick. It is the common bamboo of Darjiling, the Duars, and Assam, and is universally employed for all kinds of basket and mat work. For building purposes it is not much esteemed. The young shoots are eaten as a vegetable, and in Assam a specially prepared substance known as *gass-tenga* is eaten as a luxury. The inner layer of the culm sheath is utilized for covering Burmese cigarettes. Referring to its straggling habit, Mr. Oliver says: 'When they have no trees to support them, the main stems bend over, forming impenetrable thickets, and the lateral branches ascend vertically, often forming shoots nearly as long as the main stems.' Mr. Manson alludes to the value of this species to the tea planters of the Darjiling district in shading their plantations from hot and violent winds." (*Watt, Commercial Products of India.*)

39179. PHYSALIS PERUVIANA L. Solanaceæ. **Cape-gooseberry.**

From Tolga via Cairns, Australia. Presented by Mr. J. A. Hamilton. Received August 25, 1914.

39180 and 39181. RUBUS sp. Rosaceæ.

From Srinagar, Kashmir, India. Presented by the director, Department of Agriculture. Received August 26, 1914.

39182 and 39183. MADHUCA spp. Sapotaceæ. **Mahwa.**

From Sibpur, Calcutta, India. Presented by the superintendent, Royal Botanic Gardens. Received August 24, 1914.

"It may be said that there are two great products of these trees [formerly known as *Bassia latifolia*, *B. longifolia*, and *B. malabarica*], the edible flowers and the oil-bearing seeds. A gum or gutta (the milky sap hardened) flows from incisions or abrasions on the stem. In some parts of the country ringing of the stem is practiced just on the setting of the fruits. When this is done the gum may be obtained in abundance. The bark is employed as a dye. The flowers, the oil, the spirits distilled from the flowers, and the bark are all used medicinally. Lastly the timber has some merit, but the trees, as a rule, are too valuable to allow their being killed for this purpose. The mahua [mahwa] shows its leaves from February to April. The cream-colored flowers appear in great clusters (of 30 to 50) near the ends of the branches, from March to April, and are soon followed by the young leaves. Preparatory to the harvest of flowers, the people clear the ground below the trees by burning the weeds and smoothing the soil. About March the flowers begin to come to maturity, and every morning just after sunrise the succulent corolla tubes fall in showers to the ground. This continues till the end of April, each tree yielding from 2 to 4 maunds (2½ to 5 bushels) of flowers, but usually the fall from a single tree is complete in about 7 to 10 days. A drying floor is prepared in a position central to a selected batch of trees. The ground is smoothed and beaten; on this the flowers as collected day by day are spread out to dry in the sun. In a few days they shrink in size, change in color to a reddish brown, and their peculiar sweet smell becomes more concentrated and the resemblance to that of mice more intense. But the mahua that is intended for sale is not