WALKS IN TEMPLER PARK

BY W. ADAMS
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with a map of Templer Park

50 cts.

A MALAYAN NATURE REPRINT
WALKS IN TEMPLER PARK AND PART OF THE KANCHING FOREST RESERVE

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Templer Park and the Kanching Ridge (Forest Reserve) extend from the summit of the Kanching Pass at the 11th milestone, Ipoh Road to the Rawang tin-fields at the 16th milestone and eastwards from one to two miles, with a small extension west of the Ipoh Road between the 14th and 15th milestones. This area is the right bank of the Sungai Kanching—S. Rawang (the S. Kanching becomes the S. Rawang after the confluence of the S. Chui Tinggi) and their eastern tributaries, the S. Chui Tinggi on which are the main waterfalls and the stream, unnamed on the map, which I have called the S. Bharu because it has been diverted by mining operations and flows through a new bed for most of its course in the Park. The bedrock is almost entirely granite, in which the two limestone hills of Bukit Takun and Anak Takun are set like teeth in a jawbone, although the limestone extends northward of Bukit Takun at ground level across the bed of the S. Bharu. The Kanching Ridge is a quartz dyke or vein intruded through the granite and cuts right across the natural drainage from east to west into the S. Rawang. The flat area south of Anak Takun is artificial, being tin-tailings and mining holes in the north and laterite in the south. Only two walks extending into the Kanching Forest Reserve are mentioned. There are, however, many pleasant walks here, all so clearly marked and signposted that description is unnecessary. The straight line of the Ridge and the absence of re-entrant valleys of any size make it impossible to get lost except, possibly, at the extreme northern end.

The Power line which traverses the Park from north to south has now been cleared. (Feb. 1956) This is of no interest as a walk but is useful for access to the smaller mining pools.

WALK NO. 1

From the Main Entrance Car Park to the falls of the S. Chui Tinggi. Distance one mile and about 800 feet vertical interval.

Route. The path descends from the road north-eastwards past the Mucuna arbour, crosses the S. Kanching and turns north to cross the Main Boundary path (Walk No. 2) near the west corner of the rubber estate, thence on the Forest Dept. contour path to a log bridge at the bottom of the lowest falls of the S. Chui Tinggi. From here upwards the path is a series of long zig-zags giving a very gentle ascent with many short-cuts for those able to
climb directly up the slope. There are several pools between the falls, some large enough to swim in. After crossing the log bridge at the bottom of the falls, the path remains on the north-west side of the stream until the bottom of the last 250 foot fall is reached. This point is easily recognised by the number of large jungle trees which have been swept down in storms and piled up at the bottom. The path crosses at this point to the south side and winds away east and north, climbing very steeply and, on reaching a contour path at the edge of the plateau, turns northwest to reach the head of the falls at the junction of two tributary streams. The view from a small pool twenty yards down the fall from this point is excellent after heavy rain, when the stream is in spate. The path now crosses the stream westward on the contour and a path comes in on the right (Walk No. 5A). It descends gently for fifty yards and then joins a steeply descending logging trail (deeply gullied) which, if followed, reaches the long valley east of the Kanching ridge but, by turning left (south) after descending 200 feet, the main ascending path may be reached near the top of the lower falls. Fairly easy and clearly marked, although the upper paths are slightly overgrown and there are a few fallen trees.

**Walk No. 2**

From the Main Entrance Car Park to rejoin the Main Road at the 13th mile stone. Distance one-and-a-half miles, flat.

**Route.** Follow either the Main Road or the west bank of the S. Kanching northwards to the road bridge over the S. Kanching—S. Rawang and then turn sharp right (eastwards) into the Park along the east bank of the S. Kanching, crossing the S. Chui Tinggi on a planked bridge and, crossing Walk No. 1., continue along the edge of the rubber estate for quarter of a mile. This path forms the boundary of the Park at this point. At the south-east corner of the rubber estate the path crosses a small stream on a tree bridge and then widens to a motorable road on tin-tailings with a mining pool on the right (west). It then continues to a large *Milletia* tree, where dense scrub reaches the east side of the road with bare sandy tin-tailings on the west, and a hundred yards further on cross the S. Bharu on rusty iron rails.* The road continues through tin-tailings with mining pools on both sides and turns south through an avenue of Angsana and Rain trees crossing the S. Kanching by a concrete bridge and thence to the Main Road at the 13th mile stone. Easy and clearly marked, and would be motorable but for the absence of bridges over some minor streams.

* The iron rails which bridged the S. Bharu have been removed and it is at present (19.2.56) crossed on two charred beams.
WALK NO. 3

From the Main Entrance Car Park along the banks of the S. Kanching to join Walk No. 2 at the avenue of Angsana trees. About one-and-a-quarter miles, flat.

Route. As Walk No. 1 to the banks of the S. Kanching where two alternative routes are available: the first takes the west bank in a southerly direction for 300 yards to the point where the path leaves the stream and climbs to the Main Road. Here the stream must be forded (it is deep and fast flowing after rain) to reach the east bank; the second alternative crosses the S. Kanching as on Walk No. 1, but then turns sharp right and follows the east bank crossing a minor tributary and turning south-east to the fording point mentioned in the first alternative. The path improves and continues south-east, crossing the S. Bharu which here joins the S. Kanching, and then widens into a motorable track and joins Walk No. 2. This is a very beautiful walk which is somewhat spoiled by the necessity of either fording a deep and powerful stream (first alternative) or ploughing through 200 yards of *Mimosa invisa* and *Saccharum arundinacium*, which, although cleared recently (Feb. 1956) may have grown up again.

WALK NO. 4

From the junction of Walks Nos. 2 and 3 (Angsana Avenue) to the larger limestone hill, Bukit Takun. Distance one mile and vertical interval 150 feet to the western tip of the limestone.

Route. From Angsana Avenue go north along the road (Walk No. 2) for 100 yards and then continue north-east, where Walk No. 2 turns off north, on a motorable track past a wooden power pylon to a broken shack and concrete engine-bed. About forty yards beyond this shack the motorable track turns left, north, (Walk No. 5) but our path continues mainly north-east along the side of a small artificial valley with a meagre sandy stream at the bottom, then crosses and recrosses the stream and climbs out to the right, south, up past another shack to the steep U-shaped valley leading to the foot of the larger limestone hill. The top of this valley is the boundary of the Park and the focal point of several projected avenues of trees from the Main Road. A good view of the southern half of the Park may be obtained from this point. Wet and steep; a parang is useful.

WALK NO. 4A

From the end of Walk No. 4 at the foot of the limestone it is possible to make a circuit of Bukit Takun, distance about one-and-a-quarter miles, although it is very steep, rocky and overgrown. There are several
alternative routes, none very clearly marked except on rock where the nailed boots of climbers have left scratches. In general, the path keeps close to the rock on the south and east sides, and as far as possible from the rock on the north-east side, where large granite buttresses and fallen trees and rocks make the going very difficult and tiring. Not recommended.

For rock climbers, the north face of Bukit Takun provides an Easy route to the top, and a point 200 yards round the north-west face from the end of Walk No. 4 provides a Very Easy route to the frontal spiral (Serow Ledge) and a Very Severe climb to the top. The frontal spiral has been unpopular recently because of the presence of small wasps (penyengat).

**Walk No. 5**

From the junction of Walks Nos. 2 and 3 (Angsana Avenue) to the upper falls of the S. Chui Tinggi. Distance two miles and 600 feet V.I.

**Route.** As Walk No. 4 to forty yards beyond the shack and engine bed, then turn north crossing the small stream mentioned in Walk No. 4, climb steeply out by the remains of a pipe-line through lallang and ford the S. Bharu at the dam and then continue up the pipe-line for half a mile to its origin at the head of the small waterfall, visible from the Main Road, on a tributary of the S. Bharu. The pipe-line crosses several ravines at thirty feet or more and as it is rather rickety it is safer to detour round the heads of the ravines rather than to cross on the trestle or the pipe. From this fall there is a splendid view to the west. Hereon, for 200 yards through thick Bertam and jungle, there is no path and a compass is useful to keep a line due north-west until a deep dry ditch and footpath are met (see Walks Nos. 5A and 5B below). Turn right, northwards, up the path until the dry ditch crosses the path, then leave the path and enter the dry ditch (difficult going) until a steep U-shaped valley is reached. This is impossible to cross at this point but by retracing your steps for a few yards a small detour north and then north-west avoids it and brings you to a broad path (the Forest Reserve rentis) here east and west. Leave this rentis at its highest point and continue north-west for 350 yards downhill to the Main Falls and Walk No. 1. This walk is fairly strenuous on the stretch between the two waterfalls, especially at the bottom of the dry ditch. A compass and a parang should be carried.

**Walk No. 5A**

A longer alternative to part of Walk No. 5 avoids the dry ditch and takes in part of the catchment of the S. Chui Tinggi (about one mile longer) by continuing on the path with the dry ditch after the ditch
crosses the path to be north-west. From this point onwards the path is much less clearly marked, mainly because there is no ditch to delimit it and, as the jungle is nearly pure Bertam, a keen eye is needed to follow it under the fallen fronds. The path continues in a general northerly direction with a swing to the east of fifty yards to cross a small valley coming in from the south, but when the path again turns east to cross a larger valley, a faint track will be found turning west over a flat watershed then north-west encircling the catchment area until the S. Chui Tinggi is reached. A walk of about 300 yards down-river, mainly in the stream bed, brings one to the Main Falls and Walk No. 1. A compass is essential here as the re-entrant valleys may be confusing.

Walk No. 5B

For the less energetic there is another alternative to Walk No. 5 from Angsana Avenue and returning to the Main Boundary Path by the rubber estate, from which part of Walk No. 2 returns to Angsana Avenue. The circular route is about two miles, hilly.

Route. As Walk No. 5 until the path and dry ditch is reached, then turn left, south, down into the rubber estate, past the smoke house onto the Main Boundary Path, then turn left, south-east along Walk No. 2 to Angsana Avenue. This avoids the difficult dry ditch of Walk No. 5 and the faint tracks in the high jungle of Walk No. 5A. However, as it includes the 200 yards of pathless jungle and Bertam between the head of the small waterfall and the path with dry ditch, a compass may still be necessary. There are many alternative paths within the rubber estate but as the rubber is still being tapped they are all open and all join up to the Main Path to the smoke house.

Walk No. 6

From the Main Road at the 12½ mile stone to the eastern boundary of the Park.

Route. This is an old mining and logging track which is still fairly clear. It runs north-west parallel to the Main Road for 100 yards before crossing the S. Kanching on a broken log bridge, thence almost due north-east for two miles, crossing swamps and beautiful clear streams and rising through bamboo forest. Unfortunately one must return by the same route.

Walk No. 7

From the Main Road at the 12½ mile stone to join Walk No. 4 at the shack and concrete engine bed.
Route. As for Walk No. 6 but 200 yards after crossing the Sungai Kanching watch for a very inconspicuous renti on the left, north. This crosses many streams and deep drainage channels (one more than waist deep) and passes a large mining pool on the right, east, under the shadow of the smaller limestone hill. This walk is difficult to follow for the last three hundred yards but the area is open tin-tailings and the general direction cannot be lost although the Mimosa and lallang are often thick enough to necessitate small deviations from the direct route to the shack.

WALK No. 8

From the Main Road at the 11½ mile stone. Distance two miles.

Route. This is a used logging track and care must be taken of loaded timber lorries.* It runs north-east over a low pass and drops to the valley of the S. Kanching, bifurcating on either side of it and continues eastward for about one mile before breaking up into a number of logging paths. This is a gently hilly walk following the next valley south of Walk No. 6 but as logging is still proceeding it is not recommended. Unfortunately one must return by the same route, but see Walk No. 8A below.

WALK No. 8A

From the Main Road at the 11½ mile stone. Distance one-and-a-half miles.

Route. As Walk No. 8 but on reaching the S. Kanching turn left, north, and follow the path by the stream down to the Main Road at the 12th mile stone. A very beautiful walk, gently hilly.

WALK No. 9

At the 11th mile stone (top of the Kanching Pass) there is an old and overgrown logging track which runs for two miles in a generally north-easterly direction and marks the southern boundary of the park. The path is gently undulating but is overgrown and fallen trees make deviations necessary. Not recommended.

The description of paths as “clear” or “overgrown” is as at 1.1.56. During the Emergency, Security Force patrols are liable to be met in the Park and Forest Reserve.

In the Table below I have indicated the flora corresponding to the various soils and types of rock and have added against each division

* Logging has now ceased (Feb. 1956) and the tracks are rapidly becoming overgrown.
the Walk numbers. This should enable those with botanical interests to identify many of the shrubs and trees but avoids mention of the exact position of any rare or edible plants and thus preserves them from those who cannot resist uprooting plants and depriving others of the opportunity to enjoy them. There are very few plants which are so exacting in their requirements that they are completely confined to one type of soil or rock: with the exception of some on limestone, most may be found elsewhere though in smaller numbers.

Walk Nos. Soil or rock type. Vegetation.
4, 6, and 7. Laterite, including areas from which the top soil has been removed by mining operations, thus exposing a lateritic pan (Note 1.) Pitcher plants (Nepenthes spp.)

2, 3, 4, 6 and 7. Tin-tailings: sandy (Note 2) Many herbaceous leguminoseae, all papilionaceae except Mimosa pudica.

1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, and 8A. Swamp and river-bed. (Note 3) Ardisia crispa. Vitex spp.

1, 5, 5A, 5B, 8, 8A and 9. Granite, and granite derived in situ. (Note 3) Arundina graminae folia. Bromheadia spp.

4A. Limestone: rock derived soil, heavy red clay. (Note 4) Spathoglottis spp.


180x192 Quartz Ridge: rock peat approach slopes (Note 5) Dischidia benghalensis.

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NOTES ON THE TABLE

(1) Few plants seem able to pierce the hardpan and penetrate the acid sub-soil, so much bare ground is visible. Pitcher plants flourish under these adverse conditions because they obtain food from the bodies of insects caught in the pitchers. *Ardisia crispa* with pink waxy flowers and scarlet to crimson berries is common. The orchids mentioned are plentiful and the more delicate *Thrixsperma* is not rare and extends to the tin-tailings.

(2) These range from coarse silver sands to impermeable clays. The sands are very deficient in plant foods, especially nitrogen. They are slowly colonised by recumbent grasses which root at each node, and by leguminous herbs. As these latter increase the fixed nitrogen in the soil, other small herbs (mainly mint-family) can grow, followed by lallang (*Imperata spp.*), *Melastoma*, and *Eupatorium* (Siam weed). These continue to increase until the area happens to be burnt, when only lallang remains as the dominant vegetation, owing to its deep rhizome permitting it to shoot up immediately, before anything else can become established. The sequence on the slimed areas is different. The clay is impervious so the area is likely to be swampy and then supports a rank growth of sedges and tall grasses. During the mining operations the bunds were planted with Tebrau and this has now spread over all the slimed areas and drainage channels. Where the slimed areas are thoroughly drained, however, they support very little vegetation as the fine clay shrinks in drying and cracks open.

(3) The soil derived from granite in situ supports a very rich and varied flora which covers 9/10ths of the Area of the Park.

(4) *Boea ceruleascens* is an unfailling indicator of limestone as I have never found it elsewhere. From a distance the tight rosettes of grey leaves resemble a lichen on the rock. In general the limestone has a very clearly distinguishable flora, a majority of which belong to the Araceae (Arum-lilly family).

(5) The limestone and the quartz share those plants which are not particular as regards soil but do prefer the absence of competition afforded by bare rock. Many of these are epiphytes: others are familiar sea-shore species where similar conditions prevail. The *Dryobalanops aromatica* (Kapur, Borneo Camphor tree) looking, from a distance like conifers, have been encouraged by the Forest Dept. from a few trees which were probably planted by aborigines, as this tree is otherwise absent from west of the Main Range, although it is a common tree in Pahang.