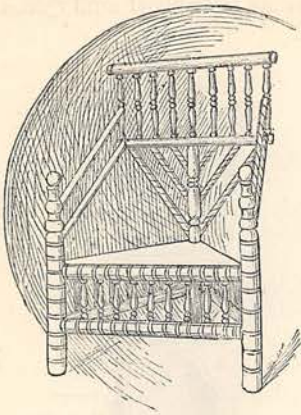


types were multiplied, and golden cloth of Spain and India, won from captured caracks, was employed to adorn the chairs of nobles and merchants. The most



JOINED CHAIR OF THE TIME OF HENRY VIII.

fantastic art in chairs, however, did not come to us until the *ancien régime* was in its glory in France, and the drawing-room had become the centre of a dazzling and artificial kind of existence, all fine sentiment and frippery.

It is clear that in early ages the double chair without arms, on which man and wife sat, each on the side, and not on the front, was the domestic chair. The chairs in Anglo-Saxon MSS., though not positively double, retain some features of the type, as they are long in the seat, with a back on which the sitter rested his arm, as he sat sideways on the bed-like structure, projecting knobs on the real front making the common plan of sitting uncomfortable. The couch without arms or back was Oriental. In old English families we may yet meet with huge double arm-chairs, in which man and wife used to sit. They are sometimes called "courting-chairs."

A description of varieties in modern arm-chairs from the early part of the last century downwards would be tedious and out of place. The throne type and the semi-reclining type are freely used and mixed, without

any regard for the fitness of things, though the first should be reserved for the dining-room, and the second for the drawing-room. The use of oak, English and foreign, has been extensively revived, though without any apparent reason; it is more costly than less common wood. Brass nails for ornamentation are being discarded, like very fantastic carving, because they tear the clothing. Chairs are much less massive in their woodwork—the seat is longer, the general design less ornate. Physicians do not recommend stuffed and spring chairs for habitual use. Artistic furniture is now lighter, more Flemish, with a tendency to follow squarer lines of structure. Combinations of lightness and strength, even with rush bottoms, are not uncommon. "The old arm-chair," in fact, has not only all Eliza Cook's tender memories about it, but it is clearly returning to older English types. A



SYDNEY SMITH'S CHAIR OF JUSTICE.

plain wooden chair with the golden-lettered inscription on it, "In this old chair my father sat," which the writer has met with in a quiet home, suggests that even in the most humble abodes there may be a domestic "throne," agreeable to the eye, convenient to use, and the centre of affectionate memories.

EDWIN GOADBY.

THE LARGEST ISLAND IN THE WORLD.

NOW that there are steamers on the Upper Congo, and a telegraph wire runs right across the middle of Australia, few parts of the world remain so unknown and mysterious as the great island of New Guinea, lying between the equator and the north of Australia, part of which has just been annexed to the British Empire. New Guinea, which is the largest island in the world, or at any rate in the habitable part of the world, is considered to be about as big as Great Britain and France put together. It owes its name

probably to the early Portuguese discoverers, who were struck with the resemblance of the black natives to the negroes of the West African coast; its other name of Papua is said to mean "frizzled hair." Though New Guinea has been known more or less to Europeans for three hundred and fifty years, and though the western half of it has for some time been claimed as Dutch territory, while within the last few years missionaries have settled on its shores, and much of its coast has been carefully surveyed, yet the vast interior is still almost untouched. Few of its inhabitants have ever

seen a white man, or perhaps know that such a being exists. What white men have heard of them is for the most part to their disadvantage; but this only makes the prospects of exploration more exciting.

Gold-fields may be discovered in New Guinea or not—according to the latest evidence, probably not—and those who see rich fortunes awaiting the planter there may perhaps, through unwholesomeness of climate or difficulties with the natives, be disappointed; but the lovers of science and adventure have every reason for confidence; the naturalist perhaps most of all. For New Guinea, which is separated from Australia only by a shallow strait not a hundred miles wide, has animals of the kind peculiar to the Australasian region, strange forms unlike almost anything else in the world, which have only become familiar to us since the settlement of Australia.

But the sandy deserts and scrubs and waterless plains of Australia are very different from the rivers and mountains and tropical forests of New Guinea, and we must expect to find the animals modified to suit these different conditions of climate. Already kangaroos have been found in New Guinea which, instead of hopping along the ground, live overhead among the branches.

New Guinea is a long island stretching from north-west to south-east some 1,500 miles, and it consists of a broad, solid mass of land in the middle, with narrower peninsulas at each end. Such explorations as have been made have for the most part been in these peninsulas, which are very mountainous and inaccessible. The English missionary settlement of Port Moresby is on what is now British territory, the south coast of the eastern peninsula, in long. 147°. No one has as yet been able to cross this peninsula except at the extreme end, nor even to reach the great chain of mountains running along its middle, one of which, Mount Owen Stanley, is more than 13,000 feet high.

In the great central portion of the island are mountains much higher than this. Glimpses have been had of great ranges which are believed to run right along the centre of this country, coming at their western end to the south coast at Cape Buru, in long. 135°, near which their summits have been seen out at sea, white apparently with snow, and rising to a height of nearly 17,000 feet—higher than anything in the Alps of Europe. They may join the Albert Mountains, which seem to run into the heart of the island west of Mount Owen Stanley, and the great Finisterre Mountains on the north coast, in long. 146°.

Almost all the north coast is very mountainous, with a steep shore and a deep sea; but at the western corner, east of the great opening called Geelvink Bay, there is flat country, with the mouths of what seem to be a mighty river. For ships many miles out at sea have sailed through masses of driftwood, swept down from the unknown forests.

South of the mountains there is a much wider expanse of level country; indeed, from Cape Buru eastward to the head of the Gulf of Papua, the coast is low and swampy, and there are many mouths of

large rivers, generally choked with timber. But the Fly River, which enters the sea on the western side of the Gulf of Papua, has been ascended for many miles, till the central mountains were seen at a great distance. Behind Port Moresby, and further east, the south coast is hilly.

Earthquakes are common in New Guinea, but no one has as yet discovered an active volcano there, though there are several in the islands to the north.

Several travellers have risked themselves alone, or almost alone, on New Guinea in the interests of natural history. One of them, Meyer, has actually crossed the island, though only at the head of Geelvink Bay, where it is but a few miles broad. The famous English naturalist, Wallace, lived alone at Doreh in the north-west; and the Russian, Maclay, at Astrolabe Bay. Neither of these penetrated far from the coast; but the Italian, D'Albertis, who devoted several years to travel in New Guinea, wound up by ascending the Fly River to lat. 5° 30', and is thus the only person who can claim to have really gone far into the heart of the country. But he saw little of it beyond the banks of the river on either excursion, and being in continual conflict with the natives wherever he met them, he has probably not improved the chances of future explorers who may wish to travel that way.

Since the establishment of the missionaries at Port Moresby, a great deal more has been known of the adjacent coast-lands. A search has been made for gold; but the gold-diggers have as yet got little but fever for their pains. In 1883 two expeditions from Australia left Port Moresby to explore the interior. One was unlucky enough to fall out with the natives, by whom it was driven back with loss. The other and more successful party got on well enough with the natives, whom the leader declares to be "no more savages than we are;" but it encountered a still worse enemy in the fever, which killed one man, and drove back the rest before the Owen Stanley range had been reached.

Another expedition is now being organised, to start from the same part of the coast; and we have every right to hope for at least a stirring tale of adventure when it returns.

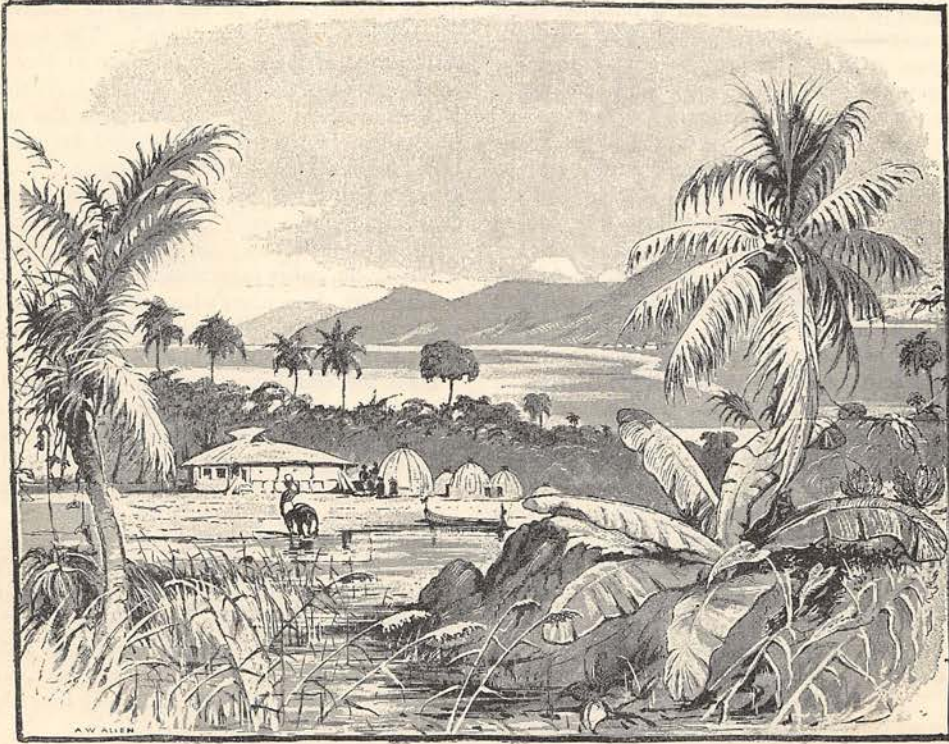
Some few years ago an ingenious writer produced a fictitious tale of adventure, wherein New Guinea was made the home of various strange beasts, including a very fearful new kind of tiger. This was fiction; but there are really local legends of unknown monsters existing in New Guinea; rumours of prodigious foot-prints at the edge of the forest, and of a huge bird like the roc of Marco Polo's Madagascar, which can hide the sky with its wings. These stories are not entirely drawn from natives or uneducated sailors, since Captain Moresby, of H.M.S. *Basilisk*, has reported that he found traces apparently of a rhinoceros.

Now tigers and rhinoceroses have no right to exist in New Guinea, which belongs, as has already been said, to the region of Australasian animals. In this region four-footed beasts are comparatively scarce; and those that there are belong, as a rule, to the order of marsupials, creatures like the kangaroo, which carry

their young in a pocket: an ancient and old-fashioned race, only found as fossils in other parts of the world. Australia has no big marsupial beasts of prey, though such existed at an earlier epoch; but there still survive in Tasmania two curious animals of the kind. One is a big beast, somewhat like a wolf, with brindled flanks; the other is the stumpy diabolical-looking creature which is best known as the "Tasmanian devil."

In Australia the only big animal which is not marsupial is the dog, and this was probably first brought

the extreme: some of them have been known longer than their country; for hence come the wonderful birds of paradise, which were brought long ago to Europe, though living specimens, such as those now in the Zoological Gardens, have been seen there but seldom. The skins were sent to the West with the legs cut off, whence arose the fable that these lovely creatures were inhabitants of the air alone, and never settled on this dull earth at all. The splendid crowned pigeons, great blue birds with the stateliest crests,



DISCOVERY BAY, NEW GUINEA.

over by man. New Guinea has not only dogs, but pigs; and it seems to us an odd thing that the natives, though they have dogs, should make pets of pigs. Papuan women will nurse and fondle a pig as an English lady caresses her dog—though the dog, too, has been considered an unclean animal. Dogs are sometimes sacrificed in New Guinea.

Australasia has another kind of strange beasts, lowly organised, and ranking even below the marsupials. Of these the best known is the famous "*Ornithorhynchus paradoxus*," the platypus or duck-mole, which its first discoverers hardly knew whether to class as a beast or a bird. After a time another animal of the same order was found, a kind of prickly ant-eater, and two species of this creature are found in New Guinea. There is, therefore, every hope of finding new and strange beasts, to say nothing of other animals. The birds of New Guinea are beautiful in

several of which may be seen at the Zoological Gardens, also come from New Guinea, where they were first noticed by the famous English navigator, Dampier.

The natives of New Guinea have for centuries had a bad name; and it is certain that they are not feeble savages like the Australians. Some are undoubtedly cannibals; but the examples of the Fiji Islanders and New Zealanders teach us that a cannibal race must not by any means be assumed to be utterly barbarous and incapable of improvement. The Papuans are divided into a number of tribes, mostly at war with each other, and differing much in customs. Some cultivate the land with very great skill; most of them have weapons and ornaments of great beauty. Some of them live in houses resting on piles at a distance from the shore, like the ancient inhabitants of Switzerland; others have been found dwelling in houses 50 feet from the

ground, among the branches of trees. They are not all of the same race: there is an admixture of Malayan blood at one end of the island, and of Polynesian at the other. It is by no means certain that the purer Papuans are all one people. Throughout Melanesia there are legends, among the natives, of another race of men, or creatures like men, which inhabited, or do still inhabit, the islands; and these stories, like those of dwarfs and fairies in Northern Europe, may perhaps refer to the real existence of aboriginal peoples in out-of-the-way places. In New Britain, close to the eastern end of New Guinea, there was recently a superstition that men with tails exist somewhere in the neighbourhood. This legend has been encountered in several parts of the world before now, but the subjects of it hitherto have not; nor need we expect to find it true in New Guinea.

But that a strange race may be found in the mountains is probable enough. Already some observers have fancied they saw proofs that a dwarfish race of Papuans either lives or has lived; though, perhaps, no pure specimen of it has yet been seen. Such a race would no doubt find its last refuge in the hills, as the little black Negritos of the Philippine Islands have

done. Perhaps we may find in New Guinea relations of the now extinct Tasmanians, who were a peculiar people, differing from any known Papuans, but still more from the native Australians. These Australians themselves are a race unique both in appearance and to some extent in customs, and it has been thought that the nearest relations to them hitherto discovered are some of the aboriginal hill tribes in the mountains of India. Whether we find any new races or not in New Guinea, we shall certainly have much that is interesting to learn of the strange customs known to prevail among the peoples which do exist there. Concerning the disposition of these peoples there is much disagreement among travellers, arising partly, no doubt, from the differing character of the tribes, but partly, also, from the varying habits of the visitors themselves. One cannot expect a Papuan to distinguish at sight between a missionary and a kidnapper. As has been seen, the latest account is the happiest, that in Eastern New Guinea, at any rate, the people are no more savages than we are. And if, according to the saying, that nation is happiest which has no history, then New Guinea, the home of the paradise birds, must be a paradise indeed.

SWEET CHRISTABEL.

By ARABELLA M. HOPKINSON, Author of "The Probation of Dorothy Travers," "Pardoned,"
"In a Minor Key," &c. &c.

CHAPTER THE NINTH. MYLES.



SUMMER—if summer is to be called the three months that go by that name—has passed away, and a cold, bright October is drawing autumn to a close. Round about Morselands the woods are brilliant with gold, red, and green; the sky is gloriously blue, flecked with fleecy white clouds; and day after day the sun goes down in jewelled splen-

dour, promising fresh loveliness for the morrow.

During these three months Christabel has loyally fulfilled her promise to Piers.

Hardly a day has gone by but Myles has been at Morselands. All the resources of the grounds have been placed at his disposal; he may shoot the game,

fish the lake, ride the horses: in short, he may do what he likes there, so long as he turns his footsteps thither in preference to Hawbury—the neighbouring county town—where hitherto he has spent most of his spare time in amusements worthy of Grenville Vanstone's son.

The girl has set her whole heart, and her strong will, on the hope of awakening any gleams of a higher nature that may lurk in this cousin of hers, who is also Piers' brother. It is an effort to her, for she does not like the boy; when with him, she understands and sympathises with her father's detestation of Grenville Vanstone, of whom Myles is an inferior reproduction. Nevertheless she holds on steadily to the course she firmly believes to be the only one to win him to better ways, and, whilst supplying him with innocent amusements, is always the same to him—always sweet, sympathetic, and generous, in spite of his many vicious qualities, which are as repugnant to her nature as were ever Grenville Vanstone's to her father's. And she has her reward. In a short time she has gained an ascendancy over him, such as no one has ever acquired before, which is rendered none the less complete that he has quickly discovered that, though generous, she is not less clear-sighted than Piers, and in her own sweet womanly way almost as firm. Many a lecture, many an admonition does she give him, for he will bear from her what he will not from any one else, and his love of physical