



## IN NEW GUINEA.

By HUME NISBET.

With Illustrations by the Author.



WAR CLUBS AND POISONED  
SPEARS, AND GARDENS OF  
KEREPUA.



WING amongst the long silky grasses, with the rustling tatters of shed banana leaves intermixing, within the gardens of Kerepuna, the native coast capital of New Guinea, it is an easy transition of the mind to let centuries slip away in this equatorial home of unobstructed nature, as we have already allowed the many thousands of miles to go from us with the bustle and roar of that vast throbbing heart of civilization, London.

Here I rest, afar from smoke and turmoil and all nerve torturing inventions, on this winter afternoon of August—if it can be called winter, in this land of perpetual heat, and glowing sun—under the deep shadow of a broad-leaved mammy-apple tree which is again overshadowed by the lofty up-shooting, feathery-topped betel and cocoa-nut palms that rub their bleached gray trunks against one another, and mingle their sap-green and sienna-tinted fronds together with a soft rustling whisper indescribably soothing, when it is joined to the distant murmuring of the ocean constantly fretting against the great barrier walls of coral.

The frayed ribbons of the nearly ripe bananas wave in front of me, and as they dip into the tall grasses and croton leaves, form delicious intersections of trellis work through which I can look towards the workers and loungers outside, some in cool shadow and others basking in the fierce

golden lustre of those fiery beams.

It is a working day at Kerepuna, as I walk along the streets, deserted by all save the young mothers nursing their dogs, pigs, and babies, for they are very impartial in their maternal duties, the sucking pigs and blind puppies getting equal share with the bronzy little cupids and cherubs; the very old females preparing the yams and taro for the home-coming of the workers; and here and there within small sheds, mourners, all blackened over with plumbago, waiting with appalling patience, over the thinly covered remains of the dead relative, and guarding it from the attacks of the older village pets, as they wander about sniffing or grunting aimlessly amongst a perfect dog and pig elysium of perfumes, until attracted by some odour more particularly powerful and grateful to their nostrils; overhead, within the shadow of the eaves, the tame cockatoos perch like specks of snow white upon the ivory tones of bleaching skulls—trophies of fierce battles and mementoes of more sickening feasts, there they hang over the doorways of bistre shadows, while the birds chatter and break the general silence with the language they have acquired, or their own original harsh screamings.

I feel glad to leave this almost deserted native city, with its five lofty spires and its



picturesque, pile-raised huts, quaint though it is, for the groves where the workers are, and exchange the mortality-laden air for the heavy yet sweet atmosphere of the gardens—glad to fling myself down amongst the moist verdure after my hot walk over the burning sands and imagine myself two thousand years younger than I really am, if there be any truth in the creed of Buddha, and surrounded by the originals of those splendid antiques which the Greeks have left us as a constant reminder and reproach of our own physical degeneracy.

Here I find the gods all represented, in the dusky crowd that have gathered about me, leaving their work to inspect the stranger and compare the unwholesome colour of his skin with their own rich satin limbs, completely nude gods, and nearly nude goddesses poising in unstudied and graceful attitudes like perfect works of art freshly cast in bronze.

I can see Hercules, leaning upon his club, in the form of a Kerepuna brave nearly seven feet high, with limbs splendidly developed, and rounded shoulders, as he carelessly slouches with his mighty weight supported by a huge gnarled branch of gleaming cotton-tree, and his grave, good-tempered face, surmounted by clustering locks, bent forward. As he lazily examines me, an amused light smoulders in his dark brown eyes, while a humorous smile parts his finely curved lips, and reveals the only defect which I can perceive about him (though to him a special mark of attraction), teeth blackened by the habit of lime and betel chewing.

Apollo Belvedere, minus his mantle, leans with a wanton abandonment against a palm trunk, a boy of about sixteen, his carefully frizzed hair standing out a foot round his comely face like a golden frame—the dandies dye their dark tresses yellow, and wreath them with scarlet blossoms of the hibiscus—he is ornamented with finely woven hair armlets, a necklet formed of polished human teeth, and a breast ornament made from carved black palm wood and decorated with boar's-tusks, red beads, coral, and small shells with an appendage, fashioned like a fringe, made from brown native-spun cloth, and the paradise bird feathers gathered at the base with links of minute shells. It is held round his neck by a braided and twisted hair band, linked at regular intervals by the same shells and with hollow nuts which dangle from the ends and rattle as he moves. This ornament signified him to be a lover, or on the hunt for a wife, a price-less breastplate which, as he lifts up the feather fringe and laughs to some young maiden while he reveals the tiny pocket behind, makes the brown cheeks glow with sudden crimson as she also laughs before darting away.

Pan is also represented with his reed-pipes in the form of a middle-aged and somewhat undersized musician—that is undersized when I leave my own proportions out of the question, and compare him with the models beside me. He sat half-hidden by the long grass, for he was a cripple, holding the pipes in one hand while the other rested a stick on the iguana-covered top of a native drum, but he was not then playing, for he like the others had paused to watch what my audacity would do next. I bought the reeds from him afterwards, with much tobacco, but the drum he would not part with.

I did not examine the female portion too closely, for jealous glances followed mine when they hovered too near to the vicinity of the "raumaus" or grass petticoats. The maidens were free enough themselves, and did not limit their curiosity to distant glances, but gathered about me, and some even ventured to touch my arms and face with the tips of their fingers, and this the fathers and brothers did not appear to mind so long as I lay carelessly looking skywards or at the warriors; but if at a bolder touch I turned about to see the face belonging to the fingers, then I observed a clutch made at clubs and spears, and a sudden wrinkling of brows which warned me, if I valued the juxtaposition of flesh and bones as they had been originally bequeathed to me, that I had better confine my attentions to the male portion only: yet I caught sufficient between these spear-clutchings and brow-bendings to satisfy myself that the women so jealously guarded, although possessing features and figures comely enough, are not to be compared to the exquisite proportions of their guardians. They are small and tattoo their bodies from the neck to the waist with so close a pattern that they appear as if clad in a tight-fitting jersey, woven in blue and brown, while their bunched double raumaus, worn about the hips like a kilt, entirely spoils the contour of their lines. The nose ornaments too, and the lobes of their ears weighed down nearly to the shoulders by heavy earrings of shells, require living up to from a New Guinea standpoint to regard as attractive. But they are lively and merry in their ways when



the first reserve has worn off, and leave all the decorum to their men folks who appear to be well under their control.

As I cool down after my walk we are becoming friendly, and by signs introducing ourselves, so that, by the time I have studied the group in detail, and they have satisfied their curiosity regarding me, and become content as to my intentions, Hercules is by my side with his massive arm encircling my neck, while the others are treating me like a friend and brother instead of having me trussed for the pot—offering me the betel nut and the lime from their calabashes, which I chew with the gravity the occasion demands, while some of the dandy friends of Apollo get ready the “bau-bau” or native pipe as the workers go back to their earth-scratching and taro-gathering, and we all prepare to spend a pleasant afternoon.

One youth spreads out a piece of native worked matting for my inspection, and as we trade for it with koko (tobacco), I cannot help admiring the variety and precision of the designs upon it as well as



PEACE ORNAMENTS OF NEW GUINEA.

1. Spearing fish among the coral. 2. Canoe paddles.  
3. Fishing spears. 4. Grass petticoat, or raama.  
5. Fishing net.

upon the lime calabashes and bau-baus—delicate designs and correct lines over which great skill and true art-taste is shown, as well as on the rich carvings of their canoe-prows, paddles, wooden maces, swords, arrows and axe handles, and I marvel where this nation of naked savages can have acquired their art education. These carvings are cut out entirely with sharpened flints and broken shells, for they have no iron instruments, or, at least, had none before the European traders ventured amongst them, and still prefer for ornamental work their original tools. I discover, as we become better able to understand each other, that great patience as well as great skill is required for the work. A vast amount of loving care is expended upon their weapons and particularly their war implements; those arrows which are poisoned being elaborated two and three feet from the fish or human bone tip. One bundle of arrows which I purchased from them, and which they carefully wrapped up for me so that I might not be scratched, being wonderful in variety, no two alike in design—dangerous treasures of savage art, as the poison is so virulent that the slightest piercing of the skin will cause a most painful and lingering death if not cauterized immediately. The poison with which they anoint the tips is procured from a decom-

posed corpse already poisoned, into which they dip their spears and arrows, while the idea for their designs is taken from animals or flowers as the ancients did. This, with the happy knack which they have of seizing chance effects, such as a twist or knuckle in the wood, and turning it adroitly into some object to which they may fancy it bears a slight resemblance, gives the infinite variety, and reveals them to be possessed in a very high degree of the gift of imagination and poetry, as well as artistic power of adaptation and imitation.

Some of the arrows have a natural bend and projection, these when the signs are studied present in some cases a hunchback, or a figure carrying a load, or a figure with arms akimbo or crossed, as the natural formation seized the artist's fancy or sense of the humorous or ridiculous. Some represent snakes with the markings of the body freely translated into ornamental scrollwork; the face and human figure are represented in a series of scrolls; the eyes, nose, mouth, nipples, knees, &c., so many points and terminations. There are no rude or grotesque imitations as we see in other savage carvings, but an idea caught and elevated, or mystified to bring out a hidden and significant

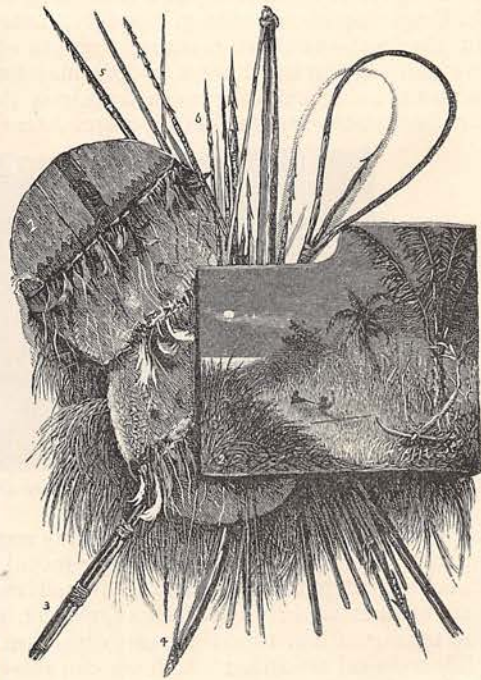


meaning which may be read only by the initiated : and all this is the more to be admired in a nation of so-called savages who prefer, while capable of ornamenting so highly and weaving so skilfully, to go entirely nude. They will not trade for the gaudy clothes which seem to attract the untutored eyes of other savage tribes, and make no attempt to cover themselves in any manner, except by ornament, and only seem to disfigure their women through the spirit of jealousy which they are more susceptible to than any other nation with whom I have mixed. The male portions decorate their heads, and at times their arms and necks, most lavishly, so that a full-dressed warrior with his ornamental hair-comb, flower-wreath, necklace, nose-bar, armlets and cassowary tufts, is both a splendid and formidable spectacle ; whereas the divine form of the woman is obscured by the tattooing, and rendered disproportionate by her bulging skirts. They also cut the tresses of the women close to the head, whereas the men are shown in the full perfection of nature, unconcealed and uncurbed. In their courtships beauty is not a question where the woman is concerned, but the man in that respect must be above reproach. He buys his wife only after she has chosen him, it may be from a dozen or two of other claimants, for though he may have wealth enough to satisfy the parents, if he has not beauty enough to please her he has no chance of succeeding ; and where the courted damsel can look for herself, and the suitor has no tailor to fall back upon for aid to conquer, her choice is no lottery ticket but a substantial reality.

I find also, as in the case of the matting, of which I give an illustration, that the inspiration was drawn from the cloud forms. They look about them for an idea and, failing earth subjects, they will seize upon the curve of a passing cloud and idealize it to suit the symbols they are working out ; for in all they do they have grades, hidden meanings or tales to tell, and they will not tell them more openly than they can avoid. If their meaning is significant enough to those whom they address they are content, but they strive very keenly after originality of treatment. I find also that their taste in colouring is subdued and refined on their houses, canoes and other articles. I saw no discordant or gaudy contrasts ; red not too glaring is a favourite colour, red inclining to brown or crimson, never raw ; black and white with perhaps touches of yellow. I saw no blue at all, and no green except the unavoidable bluish shade which the tattoo markings leave upon the skin—this with the rich copper-tint makes a most harmonious contrast in low tones. Gray I find to be the general tone over all houses, grasses, and foliage.

For the carvings upon their lime calabashes, war-shields, bau-baus, canoe-prows, and lakatois they use a pointed firebrand, burning in the design when the calabashes are green, and drying them afterwards. Their matting they indent with a simple sharp-pointed stick while the moisture is still in the fibre, by which operation after it dries it becomes arabesqued and embossed, the indented portions drying a shade darker or lighter as the rays fall upon them.

It seems to be a curious circumstance that they should spend so much labour on the arrows which they poison and only make use of on the rare occasions when the enemy is beyond their capture, and when, as a last resource, they throw those highly decorated shafts away without a hope of recovery. Certainly revenge is a passion which we weak mortals are apt to cherish as carefully as love, indeed in many cases the passion lasts longer, and instead of abating with the gratification seems rather to



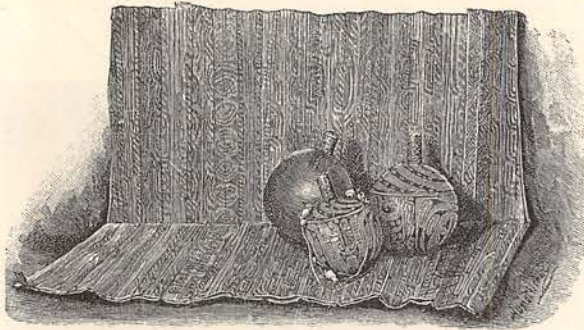
WAR ORNAMENTS OF NEW GUINEA.

- 1. Shield.
- 2. Mantrapping at Yule Island.
- 3. A man trap.
- 4. Bow.
- 5. Spears.
- 6. Arrows.



increase in strength the longer it is cherished and the more it is fed. This may be some explanation, another may be that these decorations mean curses indelibly carved in the black wood and picked out with white. From what I know of the character of these natives I incline to the opinion that where the figure of a man is designed it carries with it the anathema of the shooter and the doom of the receiver portrayed upon it; and where a snake is represented, as it is always depicted having its mouth open and the point emerging like a fang, it is a symbol of death; at any rate, with the deadly fluid with which the spear is anointed there can be no question as to the intention of its mission.

When they go out on an ordinary fighting expedition it is much in the same spirit as did our Border barons in the olden times—partly to avenge a death or return a raid from the rival tribe, and partly when their trading vessels come home unsuccessful, and they find their larder getting low. I dare say to outsiders the idea of a cannibal is inexpressibly shocking and revolting, but after living amongst them and discovering in them the same traits of honesty, honour, even chivalry, as might have been found in the beef-and-mutton-eating knights of old, this feeling of horror dies away; and we can understand how a people may be cannibal through long custom and tradition without being innately more ferocious than the peaceful citizen who buys his steak or chop at the humane-looking, good-tempered butcher round the corner. Personally,



LIME CALABASHES AND MATTING, NEW GUINEA.

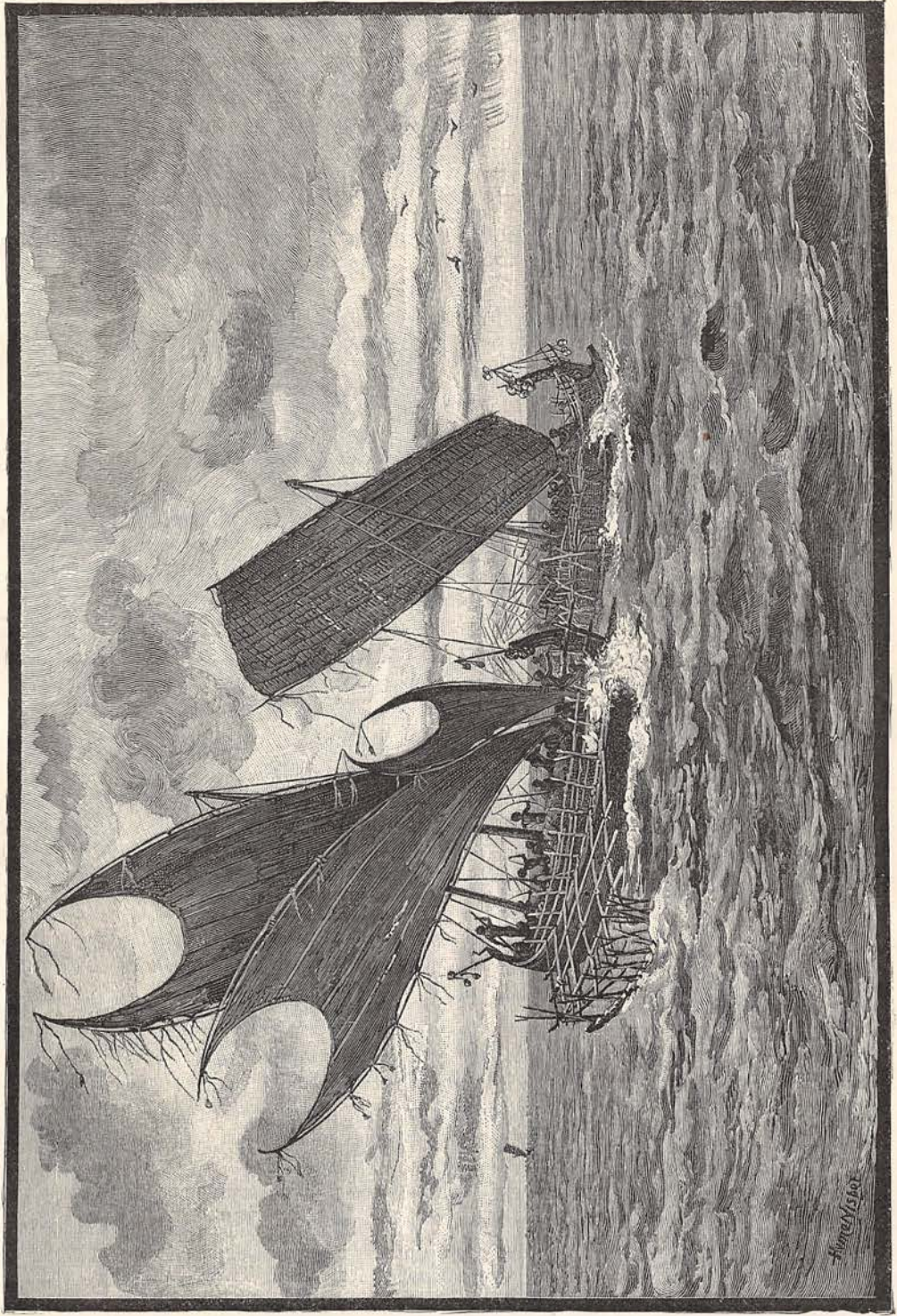
although out of a purely disinterested friendship, I have been offered a piece of human broil, I never tasted it, but this I regarded as a prejudice bred from custom entirely. As I might pause before I attempted beetle-pie, however delicately dressed up, also, if I could overcome this early prejudice, I would not, any more than the Papuan native cares to do, be induced to taste a European, knowing them and their failings as I do. Yet, except from that early prejudice, which will not

be overcome, I do not know of any more reasonable objections which can be set up against a good, simple-living, moral, and healthy-fed savage, or even an opium-flavoured Chinaman (which, they tell me, is very sweet), than can be set up by vegetarians against the flesh of the ox, sheep, or pig. Of course, when it comes to the taking of life, then the same objection applies all round, and that is about the only philosophical objection which we can raise on the subject.

The New Guinea native in his hours of peace and friendship is all that can be desired—faithful, humane, courteous; in his hours of wrath and revenge he is no more a demon than you will meet any day in civilized England. When he sets out on these expeditions of revenge and food-providing, he goes with the Border chief's set object of not risking more than he can avoid; he sets out on the war-trail secretly and silently, watches for his opportunity when he may find the enemy unprepared, then he pounces upon him, pithing him with his man-trap, plunging his spear into him, and felling him with his club, and afterwards, like a prudent hunter, cuts him up into serviceable pieces, and carries him straightway home to utilize. If they are forced into battle they will fight boldly and fiercely; there is no giving way or surrender, the termination of the battle meaning that he either will have food, or be food; his poisoned spears or arrows are not used here; the hunting weapons are ordinary arrows, clubs, axes, spears, and man-traps, and both sides fight on equal terms, and with similar intentions. After a man has lived amongst them for a time he begins to think it rather a compliment to be considered good enough to eat. I did not feel very highly flattered when, after asking a native who was leisurely feeling my muscles if I was good ki-ki (food), he replied with rather a wry face: "No, no; too salt; no good. Chinaman very good."

Although very patient in their art labour, and showing no object of ornament as being too trivial for their care, upon their lakatois, or trading vessels, they lavish their very choicest workmanship.





A SEA FIGHT, NEW GUINEA.



These lakatois, or large trading vessels, represent what man-of-war frigates do with us, or what an East Indiaman of the olden times was when there were pirates to be guarded against, as well as storms to encounter. For ordinary purposes, such as fishing, they use single, mat-sailed canoes, each family possessing one and sometimes more, for they are great sailors and fishermen, as well as industrious in their gardens; and these everyday canoes, or catamarans, are fashioned as simply as is consistent with utility: a tree-trunk adzed out, and with out-riggers composed of branches roped together, with a straight branch for the mast, and the matting stretched on to a frame of bamboo, and only a few fringes of dried palm fronds by way of streamers. The shape of these sails vary according to the particular fancy of each tribe—square-shaped, or on the upper edge, crescent-cut, with pointed horns. With these they can dash along at a great rate and with perfect safety, without danger of capsizing, even although appearing top-heavy, supported and held on to the water as they are by those wide-spreading out-riggers. The sail being a fixture to the



MOUNT OWEN STANLEY, NEW GUINEA.

framework has to be shifted bodily round when they want to tack, but this they manage with great dexterity.

But the lakatoi is the property of the tribe, over the building of which years are spent, each individual carpenter contributing his labour, and all lavishly assisting to embellish and enrich. When not required, it is safely placed high and dry in the most sheltered and shady spot, and carefully covered with matting. It is only brought out once a year, when the harvest is over and the long voyage westward is to be made for trading purposes; and when that time comes it is the excitement of the village.

These lakatois are very large, the most stately being at times one hundred to two hundred feet long, with lofty platforms above the hull, where the steersman can sit high and dry, and the cargo may be carried securely. They have three sails, the tops being cut like a divided swallow-tail, and the bottom terminating in a sharp point, while from the edges stream long ribbons of palm fronds, and hair-made ropes, from which swing human and dog skulls, shells and tufts of the dark cassowary, or gayer plumage of the parrots, kingfishers, and paradise-bird tails. These sails, although so immense as to spread, they are able to shift and veer about with the greatest rapidity, now upright, now broadways or upside-down, as they wish to catch or avoid the passing air-currents.

Along the upper edge of the hull is a line of rich carving of about two feet in width,



almost covered when they are sailing by fringes of shells and feathers, and the railings which they fasten to the frame of the outrigger, and to which they attach their cargo of taros, yams, bananas, cocoa-nuts, prepared fish, oyster shells, skull trophies, carvings and earthenware, the preparation and produce of a year, which they carry westward to the flat lands to barter for rice and sago.

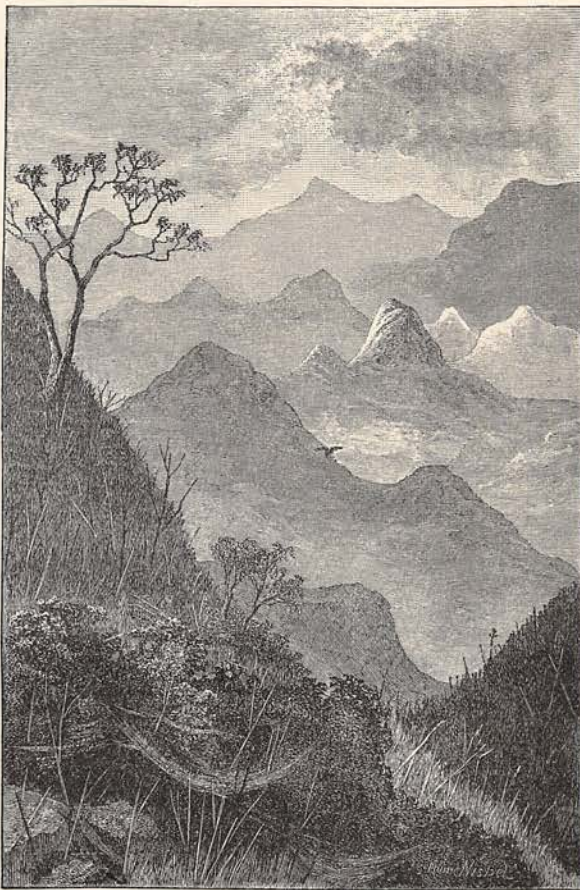
At both ends of the ship are raised highly decorated prows, with flagstuffs and plume-sticks attached, which project boldly into the air above the upper deck. They have also sharp prongs running out from narrow platforms beyond the prows, with hand-rails, fastened round these prongs to transfix the vessel they wish to board, and the narrow platform to be the gangway for the boarders. A complete lakatoi is capable of holding two or three hundred passengers; and when they go to sea the best fighting men are aboard, dressed in all their war accoutrements.

A brave sight it is when the sailing season has arrived, and the vessels from east and south capes, who are friendly with those of Kerepuna, come dashing through the reefs, and wait to pick up their consorts as they go along. Then there is to be seen some daring feats of seamanship and great competition in the get-up of the adventurers, while they show off their skill ashore with shooting and spear-throwing, engaging in friendly contests of wrestling on the sands, while the young women and old men look on and applaud or deride, the old women being too busily engaged cooking for the visitors to lift their eyes from the yam-plates.

Then the camp fires flare out at night and scare away the evil spirits, who fly back to the darkness of the close thickets, and the spirit mediums do a thriving trade with their grotesque masks and eerie performances; and young girls utter shrieks of pretended fright (for they don't believe a bit in these spirit manifestations), and rush into the shady by-lanes, with the young braves after them, getting mixed up and lost amidst the dewy leafage, much after the same unsophisticated manner that country nymphs are apt to do at the shows and fairs in Old England.

Next morning they are off by daybreak, with the loudly expressed well-wishes of those left behind following after them, their sharp points dashing the snowy foam on either side, and the flying fish and dolphins leading the way along the intersections of deep water between the coral reefs, their dark figures crowding the decks and platforms, some fishing with their many-pronged fishing-spears and nets as they go along, while others attend to the cargo or get ready their weapons for the chance enemy.

With eyes sharp as eagles few of the sea denizens who venture near the barges escape; a sudden jab downwards of the prongs as the fishers hang over the sides and up comes the wriggling fish, to be quickly pitched on the embers of their pot-fires, and broiled and devoured by those who are hungry. It is all a series of change, mirth,

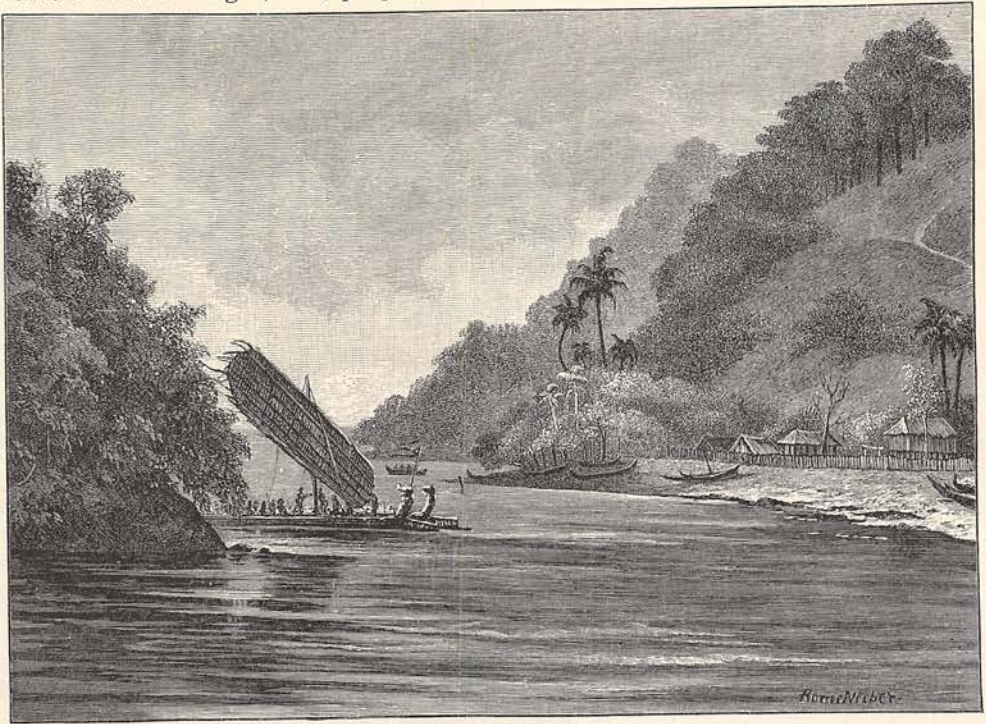


A LOOK INTO THE INTERIOR, NEW GUINEA.



and excitement, the swinging about of sails and sea manœuvres, the creaking of grass cordage, beating of the drums, and whistling of the reed-pipes. Time is not much object, for they know exactly how long it takes to travel, and how long that eastern simoom will last; so that as they pass along the shores they will bring to anchor anywhere that they see the volumes of smoke rising from behind the mangroves, to join in the walloby hunt if the natives are friends, or to challenge and fight the tribe who they think may be weakened by the absence of their warriors.

It is a freebooting expedition, a mercantile venture, and a pleasure trip all combined, and their lusty spirits are boisterous and ready for any feat. Past the lofty mountains of Cloudy Bay—the Astrolabe Ranges, and the Owen Stanley Giants, who rear up fourteen thousand feet among the clouds, like the Sierra Nevada mountains in summer, softly blue-gray, like a cobalt and Indian ink wash, with white clusters of vapour cumulus all about its precipitous sides, and breaking the harshness of the outlines, with the nearer ranges, dim, purple, and deliciously cool in colour and soft in aerial



SOUTH CAPE, NEW GUINEA.

effect; villages nestling on the sands, with valleys of shadow behind, and deep gorges down which water courses the torrents pour in the rainy season—now dry and velvety with the heat fumes, and broken sharply upon by the waving palm-groves.

From these villages dart vessels to join the fleet passing outside, gliding over waters only enough ruffled to blur the reflections of the hills, and blend them with the whites and purples of the clouds above; transparent water, through which the dazzling white and amber coral gleams emerald and brown with the rose tints sparkling like amethyst under the piercing sun-shafts—such a scene of prismatic flashes and movement as might have maddened Turner in his latter days, when his soul grew blind to all else in its frantic desire to create a pigment from light, a scene where the pulses throb with fierce pleasure, and the blood courses through the veins as if electric-charged, while we feel the necessity either to shout out, or else find an adversary to fight with. We cannot wait on the phlegmatic tenour of dull hatred; the spirits are too high, we can only close in and wrestle out of pure combative joyance.

On past Kapa-Kapa, Round Head, and Basilisk Bay the fleet rushes, anchoring when and where they like; past Yule Mountains, abrupt and table-topped; looking in for a night to exchange greetings with their friends at Arora Aremma, and get



intelligence of the enemies who have passed ; past Oiapu, Jokie, Lese, Deception Bay, to Motu-Motu, and so on to the rice-fields of the west, where they are expected, and where the foe lies sullenly at anchor, waiting for them until they discharge, re-load, and get once more to sea, with the stormy western monsoon behind and a favourable opportunity to attack and rob them of their cargo.

Oh, those olden sea-fights again revived ! before steam took the poetry from them, and the belching of guns covered them up and transformed them into mere thunderstorms, when the Greeks rushed with sharp prows into the hulls of the clumsy Persians, and the sun went down with a red eye glaring on an ocean covered with wreckage ; the moon half obscured behind banks of clouds, till it seems like a bleary watcher looking on the lakatois rushing, foam-mantled, past the canoe-inverted like houses of Motu-Motu, to join in the conflict waging in the solemn silence of the swiftly gathering twilight out in the rough waters of the Papuan Gulf.

The battle is going on fiercely there in the open sea, with the bars of gold and fragments of purple clouds hurrying on above ; showers of arrows raining from one deck to the other as the vessels rush along, clutching each other with their grapplings, and the flecks of froth leaping up and smiting the bare, brawny chests recklessly exposed to the flying shafts ; the sacks of sago and rice are drinking in the red flood which pours from gaping mouths as the wounded and the dead lie supinely upon them, while their brothers use their bodies as a platform or barricade, and with awful yells of defiance stab with the spear and bend the bow.

So the darkness gathers them in, and amidst the whistling of winging shafts, blowing of conch shells, creaking of massive sails, rustling of streamers, swishing of waters, and cracking of rails, the shrieks of agony, or yells of rage and moans of pain mingle as the chained ships fly like huge struggling birds out of sight.

After all, perhaps, it is better to be lying this golden afternoon under the shadow of fruit trees than to be upon the lakatois out there in the open, with Hercules and Apollo both waiting upon me, and the lame god Pan tuning his pipes to the monotonous accompaniment of the drum.

Better to be lying backwards and watching the thin wreaths of smoke from my own pipe, and the apertures of the bau-bau as they floated softly upward and spread like fine gossamer over the lush, broad leaves above me, while every now and then, as the palm fringes move aside before the soft, upper air-stream, a sun-ray darts in between the intersections and makes a splash of vivid colour, like a brilliant green-winged butterfly within the shadows.

Pleasant to lie with the crumpled, reed-like grasses for our pillow, and listen to those sounds of rustling leaves and distant surf-breaking, with the soothing sense that civilization and all its vapid ceremonies are left behind, as we look upon our silent companions, for they do not keep up the art of conversation in these parts, but talk only when the spirit moves them, and sit, when not disposed for conversation, in that delightful ease of silence which refreshes like slumber—savage companions whose presence we do not feel, who do not seek either to amuse or be amused, and therefore who never bore. My giant friend pats me gently on the back now and then, with a tender touch that is infinitely soothing, while Apollo softly kicks up his heels as they both wait (with the rare patience which *ennui* cannot lay hold of) upon my inclination.

Outside in the clearer spaces I can see the women bending down as they dig or hoe with these primitive tools, their lower limbs half hidden in the *débris* which they are casting about them as they labour, with their baskets standing near at hand, empty or being filled. The nude figures of the men glisten like satin where the sun-lustre strikes their limbs—smooth, soft, and polished through constant bathing, as they move about, helping the females, who appear to have more reality of purpose in their efforts than their assistants. To one of the cocoa-nut tree trunks I see a young man clinging, as he swiftly raises himself, with feet tied at the ankles, and embracing arms, to the laden top. He is climbing up to get me a young cocoa-nut, that I may drink. Behind the open patch, where the workers are filling in the afternoon with just sufficient exertions to make time pass pleasantly, spreads a sun-lighted intricacy of leafage and white trunks of palms. I look out from the shadow into the bewildering confusion of dancing lights, butterflies on the wing of every hue, like bright flowers ; floating insects with transparent pinions, catching on their translucent, delicately-veined surfaces the slanting ray in prismatic scintillations ; crotons with their speckled or varied striped leaves, orchids clinging to the dead branches of the eucalyptus and cotton trees,



and flinging out lovely strange shapes and colours too delicate to be observed in the general glare, except by the observant eye, some of them shedding subtle perfumes as they wave to and fro—tender suggestions of perfumes to which we can fix no name.

The figures of workers and idlers pass before me like the creatures of a dream as I look with half-closed eyes upon them—women stooping under loaded kits departing slowly, while some come forward with jaunty steps and deposit their emptied baskets on the ground which the others have abandoned; men pretending to help, yet ever pausing to prepare the pipe, or being attracted by some other aim; young girls with their water-pots going to the pond or wells, with the boy dandies strutting about them.

I have rested enough, and rise to return, for the sun rays have already begun to grow mellow, and the air feels cooler. My two friends rise as I do, and the giant, pointing to his back, lays hold of me as a boy might do a favourite kitten to hoist me



VILLAGE OF RIVRO AREMMA, YULE ISLAND, NEW GUINEA.

up; there is no use refusing this kindly offer, as before I can object I find myself sitting lady-fashion on one shoulder as comfortably as if I were on an easy chair, and then we set off towards the village, of which I now get an elevated view, with a dark-skinned, laughing crowd around us.

He slouches along leisurely, leaning on his club as if he had no weight upon his shoulders, and throwing a great shadow far behind, like a hunchbacked Titan, with the young dandies following after, and the basket and water-jar laden women and girls in the rear, along the long, narrow lanes with the high bamboo and twig-wickered pallsades which divide the different gardens from the unredeemed woods, where the dry tendrils interlace so closely that there is no getting through, except through the tunnels made by the wild boar when he comes from his darkened lair. Over behind the sands that divide the town from the thickets I can see the dark blue line of turbulent ocean outside the reefs, with the unbroken fringe of foam, giving the distinct line of demarcation between fathomless depths and shallow beds where one may bathe without fear of the sharks, who cannot leap over that mighty insect-built wall.



genial nature, which gives a lower and limited, but incisive and realistic view of what might or did happen, which stands in as strong contrast to the broad and luminous representations of Scott as the sharp gleam of a lantern does to the diffused and universal light of day. But it is picturesque, though nasty; and gives the vulgar conception of the scene as it struck an unrefined but exceedingly quick and keen intelligence with extraordinary force. But Smollett is an alien figure in those mirth-loving streets of Edinburgh where every man had his joke and there were high jinks in every tavern, and the most profane and reckless humour flourished under the very eaves of that kirk from which only grim bigots pronouncing anathemas are supposed to have come. Strange are the popular delusions on this subject, and on the general condition of the Scots metropolis, as of the Scots character in those days, when the fun was but too high-flavoured and the mirth too riotous.

To descend from the Old to the New Town is something like the descent from the manners and customs of an old world still full of individual character and keen nationality to the comparatively flat and cosmopolitan level of to-day. Edinburgh is no longer a distinct and individual centre with a social economy and a defined standard of her own. "We rub each other's angles down" too much for the picturesque and characteristic. A flavour of accent, a tone of idiom, a national tendency of thought may remain, but that is all that can be said. To go from London to Edinburgh is an affair of a day: it is scarcely so much to go from society in one to society in the other (the artificial excitement of the season which belongs but to one place being left out of the question). But so long as the Castle Rock springs out of the green valley below, and the high houses lift their twinkling lines of light half-way to the stars, and Salisbury Craggs lift up their giant shoulders, and the great sleeping lion in his green mantle lies at our door, so long will Edinburgh be unique among the royal cities of the world. None of the levelling influences of the day, the changes of feeling and ambition which have made so much moral difference and done away with so many national distinctions, can affect the aspect of nature or the treasures of tradition. Her recollections cannot be smoothed away in the blank of uniformity any more than her heights can be lowered and her hollows filled up.

