

XV.—*Notes of a Voyage to New Guinea.* By ALFRED R. WALLACE, Esq., F.R.G.S.

Read, June 27, 1859.

HAVING been for three months the sole European inhabitant of the vast island of New Guinea, I trust a few notes of my visit may prove interesting, in the absence of much definite information as to that remote and imperfectly known country. Even at Macassar, Amboyna, and Ternate, whence a considerable trade is carried on with the north-western coasts and adjacent islands, I could learn nothing, except about one or two spots which had been visited by my informants; and even as regards them, the points on which I was most interested had seldom been inquired into. I was led to believe there were *several* places where the natives had been sufficiently in communication with Mahomedan and European traders to render it safe to reside among them. I have now ascertained, however, that there is on the main land only *one* such place, viz., *Dorey*; where more than thirty years ago the inhabitants were found by Lesson and Duperrey to be quiet and inoffensive. According to the best information I have been able to obtain, there are at the present time absolutely no other inhabitants than the native Papuans over the whole of this great island. Not a single Malay, or Bugis, or Ceramese settlement exists, though several are scattered over the outlying islands; the principal being at Salwatty, a large island, forming the apparent north-west extremity of New Guinea, from which it is separated by a very narrow strait. The statement often found on maps that New Guinea is “inhabited by Papuans and Malays,” is therefore incorrect.

The whole northern peninsula of New Guinea, as well as the islands of Wagion, Salwatty, and Balauta, are exceedingly rugged and mountainous. There is a continued succession of jagged and angular ranges of hills, and everywhere behind them, ridge beyond ridge stretch far away into the interior. Over the whole country spreads an unvarying forest, of a somewhat stunted appearance, broken only by the very widely-scattered clearings of the natives on the lower slopes. Near Dorey the loftier mountains retire a little backward, and seem to reach their greatest altitude in the Arfak range, which the officers of the *Coquille* ascertained to have an elevation of 9500 feet. Dorey harbour, or bay, is formed by a long, low promontory, curving round towards the Arfak range, which rises abruptly from the opposite side of the bay. Towards the extremity of this promontory is situated the village of Dorey, and opposite, at about a mile, is the inhabited island of Man-sinam, and a smaller one uninhabited. At the village of Dorey I built a rough jungle-house, in which I resided for three months,

occupying myself (in the intervals of fever) with exploring the natural history of the surrounding district.

The Dorey promontory is a raised coral reef, and, geologically speaking, a very recent one. The beach is a mass of dead and broken coral, not yet ground into sand, and quite impracticable for walking; and from this beach up into the jungle, and even on to the hill, to the height of 200 or 300 feet, there is scarcely a perceptible change in the coral rock, and the masses of coral and shells that everywhere strew the surface. In some of the gulleys, however, I found traces of a core of stratified rock. During my whole stay at this place rain was the rule, sunshine the exception. On half the days there was heavy rain, on half the remainder a continual drizzle, or intermitting showers, while even on fine days there was often a dull haziness in the atmosphere, very different from our usual notions of the sunshine of the tropics. The last month of my stay should have been the dry season, but, if there was any difference, it was rather wetter and cloudier than before. Neither were the winds any more to be depended on than the weather. According to *theory*, we went in the west moonsoon and came back in the east; but we found the winds directly opposite in both cases, whenever it was not a dead calm, and thus made seventeen and sixteen days' passages of a distance of 500 miles.

The inhabitants of Dorey live always on the coast, or more properly in the sea, as they always build their houses at or below low-water mark, raised on posts, and reached by a rough and tottering causeway from the beach. Of all houses I have yet met with, these are the most wretched. They are very low and long, and the roof is shaped like the bottom of a boat. Old mats, cocoa-nut leaves, broken boats, and bits of board, make a dwelling such as some shipwrecked sailors might hastily set up for a temporary night's shelter, but which it seems hardly credible that any people should contentedly live in. The natives of the interior do not differ perceptibly in physical character, but have a distinct language, and are called "Arfaki" by the Doreyans. Their houses are very similar, but are raised 12 or 15 feet high, on a perfect forest of thin poles, a few of which are put diagonally, and prevent the whole from falling with the first wind. It is singular that these people know the use of diagonal struts, whereas the comparatively civilized Bugis and Macassar-men are quite ignorant of it, their houses being invariably inclined to one side by the prevalent winds, and only kept from falling by the posts being pretty firmly set in the ground, and the building connected with them framed strongly of bamboos. The Doreyans are fishers and traders, the Arfakis are agriculturists. The former catch turtle and tripang, which they sell for beads, knives, and cloth, and purchase of the Arfakis their rice and yams, plantains and bread-

fruits, and numbers of tame cockatoos and lories, which they sell again to the Ternate and Tidore traders. All these natives have the characters of the Papuan race very strongly marked;—the flat forehead, heavy brows, and large nose, with the apex bent downwards, are almost universal, as well as the harsh curly hair, which often forms an enormous stiff mop, and is then highly esteemed. It has, in fact, a very grand and imposing effect. The colour of the skin varies greatly. In general it is a dirty black, or sooty colour, but varies to a fine brown, which is often quite as light as that of the pure Malay races. Skin disease is very common, and in the children scrofulous diseases abound, which are seldom seen in adults; it is probable, therefore, that the former die from neglect. The men wear the ordinary strip of bark cloth, the women generally a Bugis sarong, or any piece of cloth or matting they can obtain. Tattooing is generally practised; slightly by the men, but much more extensively by the women, who usually have the whole chest covered with elegant tracery, following the curves of the bosom. The females, however, are, without exception, the least engaging specimens of the fair sex it has yet been my fortune to meet.

In mental and moral characteristics the Papuans differ remarkably from the Malay races. They are much more impulsive, and do not conceal their emotions and passions. They are inquisitive, talk much and loudly, and laugh boisterously; reminding one of the negro character, as much as of the negro form and aspect. The natives of Dorey are not to be trusted in anything where payment is concerned. If they do not actually steal, it is, I am inclined to think, only from fear of consequences. They are, however, not a fair sample of the New Guinea tribes, having been too much in contact with the lowest class of Mahomedan traders, with whom they find it necessary to take every advantage in self-defence. They possess the rude artistic genius of so many of the Oceanic tribes, decorating their household utensils and the prows of their canoes with elaborate carving, and the posts of their council-house with obscene caryatides.

The language of the Doreyans resembles that of the Aru and Ke Islands in containing a large number of monosyllabic words, as well as others excessively polysyllabic, offering a remarkable contrast to the striking dissyllabic character of the whole Malayan group of languages. It exhibits also the Polynesian characteristic of several distinct terms for certain objects according to the prefixed pronoun; thus, "my head," "your head," "his head," are expressed by three distinct words. This language, or mutually intelligible forms of it, is spoken by the coast-dwellers over an extensive area—at Amberbaki, 100 miles west, in the islands of Wagion, Myfor, Jobie, and Mysory—and at Amberpoea and some

other islands in the great bay, the natives can converse with those of Dorey, and seem very similar to them in appearance and habits. They are evidently a wandering race, answering to the Bajees, or sea gipsies, of the Indian Archipelago.

I found Dorey very unhealthy, and altogether a very disagreeable place to stay at, but I was obliged to remain till a schooner trading farther east returned to Ternate. Fevers, remittent and intermittent, with dysentery, were very prevalent, and after the first fortnight I generally had two and often three of my servants ill at the same time. One died of dysentery, and I was myself ill at least half the time of my residence in New Guinea. Neither was I rewarded by great success in my researches; on the contrary I found Dorey a very bad locality; the low grounds a quagmire, the hills rugged and impracticable, while the principal objects of my search, the rarer species of Paradise-birds, were not to be found. M. Lesson had obtained quantities of native specimens, but now even of these none were to be obtained.

The principal article of trade on the northern coast of New Guinea is a fragrant aromatic bark, called *mussoey*, which is carried to Java, where the natives extract an oil of great reputed efficacy as a remedy for various disorders. This is obtained only at one locality, Wandammen, deep in the great bay. Besides this, tortoise-shell is an important article of trade, with a small quantity of beche-de-mer and sago. Wild nutmegs are also plentiful, and in the district about Macluer Inlet a small schooner obtains an annual cargo.

The Dutch Government have taken possession of New Guinea up to the meridian of 141° east of Greenwich. This claim is often looked upon in England as a kind of usurpation, but persons so viewing it are not probably aware, that along nearly the whole of the coasts included within the northern and southern extremities of this line, an extensive trade is carried on exclusively in vessels sailing from various ports of the Moluccas and carrying the Dutch flag. Considerable portions also of this extensive line of coast have been, or are being, surveyed by the Dutch Government; and instead of cavilling at their claiming so much, it seems more reasonable to admire their moderation in not claiming the whole of a country with which they are so intimately connected. Should the Royal Geographical Society's collection not yet contain them, I may take this opportunity of calling attention to a very beautiful series of maps of the Dutch possessions in the East, by Baron Melvill van Carnbée.

On the small island of Mansinaru, opposite Dorey, have been residing for about three years two German missionaries. I fear, however, that in the Doreyans they have very impracticable materials to work on, and I am afraid they neither have made nor

will make much impression. From the little I have seen of the Dutch missionary system in these countries, I am bound to declare my opinion that it is altogether wrong in principle. I allude to the custom of the missionaries being also *traders*. In the island of Lombeck, during my stay there, two gentlemen were employed in winding up the affairs of one of these trading missionaries, who had failed to the amount of some 20,000 dollars. He was despised for his ignorance and incapacity in business by the acute Chinese and native traders, and was therefore in a decidedly false position when attempting to teach them. It seems to me that a man in trade (especially in these countries) attempting to teach Christianity is in a terrible dilemma. To make his trade profitable, he must drive hard bargains, he must take little advantages even of the necessities of his customers and disciples, and thereby stultifies his own teaching of unselfishness and charity. If he does not do this, he cannot live. The best and most effective missionary system I have seen is certainly that of the French Jesuits in the Straits, in Siam and in China, because by living in poverty, and establishing an almost entire community of property between the teacher and his disciples, they prove convincingly that their sole object is the benefit of their flock. Whatever the doctrines taught may be, the method of teaching is certainly admirable.

When in Amboyna, in January last, I heard that an exploring expedition was decided on to fix upon some place on the coast of New Guinea for a settlement. A war steamer and a sailing vessel, carrying troops and stores, left that port in March, and commenced their exploration on the south-west coast, near the Utanata river, from which place to the island of Lakahia they made a detailed survey. They then came round to Dorey, where they arrived on the 5th of May. A few days before a coal-ship from Banjarmassin, in Borneo, had left for Amboyna, having stayed in Dorey harbour two months, waiting for the steamer's arrival. The captain told us his agreement was to return on a fixed day, which was some days past when he left. The steamer was nearly out of coal, and could neither go on nor go back. It lay a month in Dorey, and the soldiers, firemen, &c., were kept hard at work cutting down and sawing up huge trees for fire-wood. This was all done and all got on board, and the steamer was to leave for Amboyna the next day, when back came the coal-ship. Now out went the wood again, and the coal being taken in, the steamer went off to Humboldt Bay, where they stayed a few days, opening a communication with the natives, who are quite unsophisticated, but superior morally and physically to the Doreyans. The plan of the original expedition was to explore the whole coast on their return, but they were short of provisions, and went straight back to Amboyna. The results of this voyage were not very great, and

it may probably be resumed next year. The captain informed me that a recommendation would be given to establish a military post at Dorey, which he had no doubt would be done. As a place for a settlement it is in every respect bad; the soil is not good, there is little water, and the natives of the interior are few, scattered, and hostile. It is, however, the only harbour for whalers or China ships after passing Pitt Straits into the Pacific, and it is this circumstance which decided the recommendation for an establishment.

This is the latest news from New Guinea. I shall not probably myself visit the main land again, but hope in the next year or two to be able to reach Wagion, Salwatty, and the little-known island of Mysool.

XVI.—*Travels in Siam and Cambodia.* By D. O. KING, Esq.

Read, June 27, 1859.

To the Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society of London.

Newport, Rhode Island, February 7th, 1859.

SIR,—Six months ago I returned to the city of Bangkok, in Siam, after nearly a year spent in travelling the unknown lands of Eastern Siam and Cambodia; and, at the suggestion of Sir Robert Schomburgk, H. B. M.'s Consul, I beg to hand you herewith a copy of the map of my travels, sufficiently interesting, I trust, to warrant its reception at your hands.

With the exception of M. de Pallegoix's account of these countries, nothing has hitherto been published respecting them worthy of any confidence; and of the interior, beyond the city of Bangkok, the fanciful accounts of the natives served merely to excite a curiosity that a foreigner was unable to gratify. Permitted at last to investigate for ourselves, I became acquainted with Eastern Siam, and what is left of the old kingdom of Cambodia; and although the many reported marvels in botany and natural history were successively followed up until they were proved fables, still the geographical features of a new country are always of interest, and a few general remarks respecting them may not be unacceptable.

The eastern shore of the Gulf of Siam stretches from Bangkok to Chantiboon, and beyond Kampoot; but the lofty range of mountains along the coast impedes communication, and the Petrio canal is exclusively used by travellers to or from the eastern provinces. This canal, 55 miles long, connects the city of Bangkok with the Bang Pa Kong river, and is made through a flat, alluvial country, entirely devoted to the culture of rice. The natives, like