

rubbish in such out-of-the-way places ; for it would seem the wildest romance to believe that it could have been done by birds that are not much larger than the ordinary turkey.

*Sept. 8th.*—This morning left the anchorage, steaming through Endeavour Straits, and so had our last sight of Australia. Later in the day we hove-to off Hammond Island. Several landed, all well-armed with rifles, &c., so as to be prepared for any treachery of the natives ; but they kept out of sight, and we walked about unmolested through the woods, collecting botanical specimens and shooting the few birds that were seen. While roaming about near the beach, we saw some of the natives' graves, and were informed that they have some peculiar ceremonies relating to the disposal of their dead. After death it seems the remains are kept with the tribe until decomposition sets in, when the bones are carefully removed, painted red, and wrapped in bark ; they are then, with some ceremony, deposited in the grave, which consists of a mound of sand around which a trench is dug. A stout post is fixed upright at each of the four corners, and the sides are usually ornamented with large shells, skulls, and bones of the dugong. Evidences were not wanting here that a camp of the natives had been but recently broken up ; and as the day advanced, it was decided to return on board, for the vessel had anchored a few miles off, after having had an afternoon's dredging.