

one another above, and partially covered with palm leaves and grass; these the blacks used occasionally.

“In the daytime the young women and the men were usually away searching for food, but two miserable old women, reduced nearly to skeletons, but with protuberant stomachs, with sores on their bodies and no clothing but a narrow bit of dirty mat, were always to be seen sitting huddled up in the camp. These hags looked up at a visitor with an apparently meaningless stare, but only to see if any tobacco or biscuit were going to be given them; they exhibited no curiosity, but only scratched themselves now and then with a pointed stick.

“The younger women had all of them a piece of some European stuff round their loins. Some of the men had tattered shirts, but one, who acted as my guide, was invariably absolutely without clothing, as was his son, who always accompanied him. The only property to be seen about the camp were a few baskets of plaited grass, in the making of which the old women were sometimes engaged, and which were used by the “gins” (women) for collecting food in. Two large *Cymbium* shells with the core smashed out had been used also to hold food or water, but were replaced for the latter purpose now by square gin bottles, of which there were plenty lying about the camp, brought from the settlement.

“The most prized possession of these blacks is, however, the bamboo pipe, of which there were several in the camp. The bamboos are procured by barter from the Murray Islanders, who visit Cape York from time to time, and the tobacco is smoked in them by the blacks in nearly the same curious manner as that in vogue amongst the Dalrymple Islanders. No doubt the Australians have learnt to smoke from the Murray Islanders.<sup>1</sup> The tobacco pipe is a large joint of bamboo as much as 2 feet in length and 3 inches in diameter. There is a small round hole on the side at one end and a larger hole in the extremity of the other end. A small cone of green leaf is inserted into the smaller round hole and filled with tobacco, which is lighted at the top as usual. A woman (sometimes a man performs the operation) then opening her mouth wide covers the cone and lighted tobacco with it and applies her lips to the bamboo all round it, having the leaf cone and burning tobacco thus entirely within her mouth. She then blows and forces the smoke into the cavity of the bamboo, keeping her hand over the hole at the other end, and closing the aperture as soon as the bamboo is full. The leaf cone is then withdrawn and the pipe handed to the smoker, who, putting his hand over the bottom hole to keep in the smoke, sucks at the hole in which the leaf was inserted, and uses his hand as a valve meanwhile to allow the requisite air to enter at the other end. The pipe being empty the leaf is replaced and the process repeated. The smoke is thus inhaled quite cold. The pipes are ornamented by the blacks with rude drawings. The bamboo pipes of Dalrymple Island are described as having bowls made of smaller bamboo tubes instead

<sup>1</sup> J. Beete Jukes, Narrative of the Surveying Voyage of H.M.S. “Fly,” vol. i. p. 65, London, 1847.