

the group. It was, however, found necessary to send a commission every year to uproot the young nutmeg trees sown on these islands by the Fruit Pigeons (*Carpophaga concinna*), called "Nuterackers" by the Dutch residents.

The various Fruit Pigeons must have played a most important part in the dissemination of plants, and especially trees, over the wide region inhabited by them. Sir Charles Lyell,¹ referring to the transportation of seeds by the agency of birds, noted especially this transportation effected by pigeons, and quotes Captain Cook's Voyages to the effect that at Tanna "Mr. Forster shot a pigeon (obviously a *Carpophaga*) in whose craw was a wild nutmeg."² At the Admiralty Islands the officers of the Challenger shot very large numbers of a Fruit Pigeon (*Carpophaga rhodinolæma*), whose crops were full of fruits of various kinds. Amongst them were abundance of wild nutmegs and wild coffee-berries; many of the fruits were entirely uninjured, and the seeds quite fit for germination. No doubt, when frightened or wounded by accident, the pigeons eject the whole fruits, and they habitually eject the hard kernels, as I saw quantities of them lying about under the trees on a small island at the Admiralty Islands, on which the birds roost in vast numbers. As soon as a few littoral trees, such as *Barringtonia* and *Calophyllum inophyllum*, have established themselves by means of their drifting seeds on a freshly dry coral islet, the Fruit Pigeons alight in the branches in their flight from place to place, and drop the seeds of all kinds of other trees with succulent fruits. The pigeons were seen thus resting on two or three small littoral trees, which as yet form almost the only vegetation of Observatory Islet, a very small islet in Nares Harbour, Admiralty Islands.

The Resident or Governor at Banda, like all the Europeans, received the Expedition in a most friendly manner, and held a reception at his house in its honour, where nearly the whole community assembled. A very good Malay band performed a selection during the evening, which was spent by most of the guests in playing cards and smoking.

One day was devoted to a visit to the nutmeg plantation of Mr. Laws, called Laoetang, on Great Banda Island. The party started in the steam pinnace at 6 A.M., accompanied by the Resident, his Secretary, and Mr. de Borges. The Resident's large canoe with high pointed bow and stern, profusely decorated with banners, and paddled by eighteen Malays, who kept stroke to the beat of tom-toms and gongs, accompanied the party. The semi-savage appearance of the Malays, their mode of throwing their paddles straight up in the air in exact time and all together between each stroke, the song with which they accompanied their efforts, together with their decorated canoe, presented a most picturesque and pleasing effect. The speed of the canoe was considerable, but not sufficient to keep up with the steam pinnace (see fig. 186).

¹ Principles of Geology, 10th ed., vol. ii. p. 69.

² Cook's Second Voyage, London, 1877, vol. ii. p. 69.