

At Samboangan the extremity of Tigtauau Island in line with Mariqui Point is an excellent mark for the edge of the bank off Samboangan (between the extremities of the town). Outside this line of transit the water is deep; when on it, the soundings vary from 10 to 13 fathoms, whilst inside the water shoals rapidly. Vessels intending to remain at Samboangan for more than twenty-four hours should moor, as it is almost impossible to keep a clear anchor owing to the strong tide and frequent calms. It was noticed whilst lying at Samboangan that the stream did not turn at the time of high and low water by the shore, but from two to three hours after high or low water. The captain of the Spanish surveying vessel said that the tides in Basilan Strait were very irregular, and that the high water at full or change of the moon varies from seven to ten hours after the moon's transit. The diurnal inequality here follows the same law as over the whole of the China Sea, the day tide being highest when the sea is north of the Equator, and the night tide when it is south.

Samboangan is a small Spanish town at the southwest extremity of Mindanao Island. From the town a pier extends to the edge of the shallow water to facilitate landing; at the outer end of this pier is a lighthouse, and at its inner end the captain of the port's office; just behind which again is the church. Running parallel with the beach, between the office of the captain of the port and the church is a canal, which is used by the inhabitants as a bathing place. At low tide the water in the canal is fresh, but brackish at high water. At the eastern end of the town is a quadrangular fort with four bastions, founded in 1635. The town itself is small, but contains a few shops and a hotel.

At the cemetery at Samboangan there are a number of small niches built against the wall like ovens, into which the dead bodies are first placed and covered with quicklime. After remaining in these niches for three years, the bones are collected and thrown into a common receptacle.

A plain extends from Samboangan some three miles, to the foot of the hills, which is cultivated principally with rice; this tract of land is so low and swampy as to appear unhealthy, but the authorities do not give it that character. The traffic into the country is kept up by means of sledges, drawn by water buffaloes, probably the soft muddy road does not allow wheeled vehicles to be used. Small ponies can be hired at a moderate rate for a ride into the interior, but they are not up to more than about a dozen miles a day.

A Spanish surveying vessel was found here at anchor, engaged in the survey of the Tawi Tawi group; but as the Spaniards were at war with the Rajah or Sultan of Sulu they were not able to prosecute their work satisfactorily.

On landing at Samboangan on the way from Australia the naturalist could not fail to be reminded that the Expedition was nearing India, and scenes in Ceylon were recalled at once to memory. Swampy paddy fields stretched everywhere round the