

Masses of closely-packed tree-stems, with dense foliage masses above, appeared lining the shore where it was flat. There were no cocoanut palms to be seen amongst them. After coasting during the whole night, Dobbo, the port of the islands, was reached in the morning. Dobbo lies on the small island of Wamma, which is separated opposite the town by a narrow channel from the large island of Wokan.

The striking feature in the vegetation of Wamma, as viewed by one who has just been amongst the Pacific Islands, is the very small proportion of palms showing amongst the general mass of foliage. There are only two small clumps of cocoanut trees near the town. The leafy masses rising above the white beach might almost be taken to be made up of elm trees, the tree tops being rounded in the same manner. The whole has a dull bluish tint.

As we neared Dobbo, turning up the passage between the two islands, we passed large quantities of leaves, fruits, flowers, and branches of trees which had floated off from the shores, and were now drifting about mingled with a floating seaweed (*Sargassum*). Off the Ke Islands we met with similar drifts of land vegetation and also amongst the Moluccas; and I was astonished at the large quantities of fresh vegetable matter thus seen floating on the sea.

The sea birds, especially terns, habitually resort to the floating logs as resting places, and it is curious to see them in the distance, appearing as if standing on the surface of the water, the logs themselves being often invisible. Not only are large quantities of fruits capable of germinating thus transported from island to island,\* but entire living plants, even trees, are washed from island to island and transplanted by the waves.

On the shores of Little Ke Island I found on the beach, above the ordinary reach of the waves, a large mass of the pseudo-bulbs of an epiphytic orchid with its roots complete. It was partly buried at the foot of a tree, and seemed quite lively. It had evidently been washed up in a storm. At Malanipa Island, off the coast of Mindanao in the Philippines, I found a young Sago Palm, which was just beginning to form a stem, washed up just above the ordinary beach line, and firmly rooted, though in an inclined position, and growing vigorously. Several authors have described the large quantities of floating vegetable matter to be met with in the Malay Archipelago and neighbourhood. Chamisso remarked on the

\* Mr. Darwin has recorded the experiments which he made in conjunction with Mr. Berkeley to determine the period of time during which various seeds will resist the action of sea-water, in the "Origin of Species," 6th Ed., 1876, pp. 324, 325.