

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE ADMIRALTY ISLANDS.

History of Visits to the Island. Eagerness of the Natives for Iron. Trade Gear. Trading with the Natives. Geological Structure of the Islands. Orchids and Ferns overhanging the Sea. Fern resembling a Liverwort. Difficulties in Collecting Words of their Language from the Natives. Their Methods of Counting. Curious Mode of Expressing Negation. Physical Characteristics of the Natives. Hairiness of Races Compared. Possible Signification of Moles. Clothes, Hair Dressing and Ornaments of the Natives. Tattooing and Painting. Betel-Chewing and Food. Houses, Temples, and Canoes of the Natives. Their Implements and Weapons. Artistic Skill of the Natives. Their Musical Instruments, Dancing and Singing. Their Polygamy. Fortification of their Villages. Wooden Gods. Skulls and Hair in their Temples. Their Religion. Disposition of the Natives. Their Fear of Goats and Toys. Population of the Islands. Domestic Animals, Birds and other Animals at the Islands. Habits of Gar-Fish.

The Admiralty Islands, March 3rd to 10th, 1875.—The Admiralty Islands were sighted on the afternoon of March 3rd. As we sailed along the north coast of the main island, a Sword-fish was seen showing its fins above water. It moved rapidly with a darting motion but sinuous course. It was apparently about five feet long. The fins showed above water, very differently from those of any other fish. The broad dorsal fin projected from the water in front, and the upper sickle-shaped half of the tail fin projected at an interval behind, and seemed as the fish moved to be chasing the fin in front. The fish was seen to leap out of the water several times. It was probably a species of *Histiophorus*.

The Admiralty Islands are a group, consisting of one large island and numerous small ones. The group lies between latitudes $1^{\circ} 58'$ S., and $3^{\circ} 10'$ S., and longitudes 146° E. and $148^{\circ} 6'$ E. between 100 and 200 miles south of the equator. It is distant from New Hanover 130 miles, and from the nearest point of New Guinea about 150 miles.

The large island of the group is oblong in form, and has an area of about 550 square miles, being thus about twice as