

apparently to swear by during a violent harangue of one of the chief men of Dentrecaesteaux Island, who wanted possibly to incite the natives to attack our boat, or to try and capture a much coveted bag of trade gear in it. These feather and bone charms are sometimes made of four humar ulnar and radial bones, sometimes of hand bones, and one contained the bones of a large bird, probably the eagle (*Pandion haliaetus*). It is a curious fact that one such charm, which was purchased, contained an imitation head of a human humerus, cut in wood. Possibly the owner intended to deceive his enemies by this artifice. Some of the officers told me that they made the natives readily understand when they wanted to visit the temple by pointing upwards. It would appear thus that the gods or religious influence are supposed to reside above.

The only appearance which I saw of a religious ceremony was the chant of the old women. One man who came off to the ship often, invariably with his body blackened all over with peroxide of manganese, was thought to be a sort of priest; he wore a narrow fillet round his head, with an *ovulum ovum* shell suspended from it on one side.

The dead are buried in the ground. Two different natives, one on Dentrecaesteaux Island, and the other on Wild Island, explained to me by signs in an unmistakable way, that the skulls put up about the houses were obtained by burying bodies in the earth, and afterwards digging them up again. The value set upon the skulls and bones as ornaments, and probably also superstitious motives, are no doubt the reason why no marks of burial were seen; probably no mark is made for fear of the bones being stolen. Two at least of the skulls procured were those of females.

The fact that some of the men restrain themselves and abstain from the use of betel, seems to be a proof of considerable strength of character. I gave a hatchet to a guide at Dentrecaesteaux Island as pay, according to promise. He seemed grateful, and presented me with his own shell adze in return, unasked, and he made signs that the others had got enough, and that we were not to give more away; that we were being swindled.

The natives delighted in being towed along in their canoes by the steam pinnace, and clapped their hands with delight; but of course did not understand how the boat moved, nor apparently see in the fire the cause of motion. They came up to the cutter when sailing to get a tow for their canoes, and apparently expected to see the boat go off, head to wind, in the same style.

The inhabitants of each small island appeared to be under