

coral island, the pigeons alight in their passages upon these trees and drop the germs of more inland trees. I saw the pigeons thus resting on one of the two or three trees as yet growing on Observatory Island, a very small islet in Nares Bay. At Banda formerly the growth of the nutmegs was confined by the Dutch Government to one island of the group, Great Banda, and the trees on the other islands were destroyed. It was found necessary, however, to send a Commission every year to uproot the young nutmeg-trees sown on the other islands, especially Gunong Api, by the fruit-pigeons. Some of the wild nutmegs in the stomachs of the birds from Pigeon Island were soft and partially digested, and unfit for germination.

“The main island immediately opposite Pigeon Island consists of a low swampy flat of coral sandstone covered with a dense growth of high trees. Immediately at the water’s edge, along the sandy beach, are the usual littoral trees with banks of seaweeds thrown up at their roots, whilst a few yards inland a different set of trees, with tall straight trunks, grow, the trees being so closely set that it is very sensibly dark beneath them. Amongst these trees is one with a vermilion-red fruit,¹ which fruit was also found at Aru, and, lying thickly scattered on the mud beneath the tree, is a familiar object at both places, and which was further found on the sea-surface off the north coast of New Guinea amongst the driftwood from the Ambernoh river. Whilst the ground beneath is bare and muddy, and beset with the bare roots of the trees, the trunks of the trees and fallen logs in these dark swampy woods are covered with the most luxuriant growth of feathery mosses and *Jungermannia*. On one of these tree-trunks I found also a very curious fern, *Trichomanes peltatum*. The fronds of the fern are orbicular in form, and adhere in rows (as connected by the slender rhizome) to the bark. They are pressed absolutely flat against the bark, so as to look like an adhering crust, and have all the appearance of a *Riccia*, or some such form, for which, indeed, I took them when I gathered the specimens by cutting off flakes of the bark. At a few hundred yards inland are tracts covered with young sago palms, with several species of Zingiberaceæ and large swamp-ferns growing beneath them, and a *Sphagnum* in small quantities. On a collecting expedition to this part of the island I crossed the swamp, here about half a mile in width, and came to a steep rise in the land of about thirty feet or so. Here the rock appeared to be volcanic, and the soil, draining itself into the swamp below, was firm and comparatively dry. The vegetation here changed its aspect considerably; and a tree fern, about six feet in height, occurred at the verge of the rise, and also a *Melastoma*. The rising ground itself was covered with a dense growth of trees, with but little underwood. Beneath these trees grew in abundance isolated tufts of *Trichomanes javanicum*, the erect fern-like *Selaginella inæqualifolia* (so abundant in the Fijis, the Aru Islands, and the Moluccas), and a small zingiberaceous herb. I found many trees here which I had not met with in the swampy ground. They were covered with climbing Aroids, of only one species of which was I able to obtain fertile specimens.

“*Asplenium nidus*, and several epiphytic ferns of somewhat similar habit, were abundant; but I missed the large *Platyserium*, so abundant in the Aru Islands. The *Trichomanes javanicum* and all the low vegetation here was bound together by a horsehair-like *Rhizomorpha*, which was in such abundance as to be a hindrance in the securing of good specimens of the plants.

“Of palms I saw, on the whole, in the Admiralty Island, five species—the cocoa-nut, sago, and areca palms, a *Caryota*, and a small fan palm. I procured specimens of leaves only of the two latter. The fan palms appeared identical with one procured in the Aru Islands. I saw no rattans: but

¹ *Tabernamontana* sp.