

A very peculiar ornament, carried by some of the islanders consists usually of a human humerus bound round with an investment of the wing feathers of a large bird, the vanes of which are notched to heighten their appearance. The whole is bound round with great care with fine twine in an ornamental manner, and sometimes decorated with colour and shell bead-work (Pl. L.). In one instance the humerus was replaced by four human ulnar and radial bones, and in another by the long bones of some large bird, probably the Eagle (*Pandion haliaëtus*); and curiously enough in one specimen the apparent human humerus was found to be an imitation carved in wood. One decorated humerus bound round and reddened, and with pendants of shell beads and seeds (Pl. L. fig. 3), was without any feather dress, but seemed to be of the same significance as the others. From Baron de Miklucho-Maclay it has been ascertained in conversation that these curious objects are badges of hereditary distinction which pass from father to son, corresponding somewhat to crests and coats of arms. It was noticed that one of the foremost men at D'Entrecasteaux Island, when he possibly wished to incite the natives to attack one of the ship's boats or to try and capture a much coveted bag of trade-gear in it, took this badge, usually worn hung round the neck, in his hand and flourished it about, dashed it on the ground and gesticulated with it during a violent harangue to his fellow islanders. Interesting details as to the meaning and use of the badge may be expected when Baron de Miklucho-Maclay's promised book appears.

The dead are buried in the ground. Two different natives, one on D'Entrecasteaux Island, and the other on Wild Island, explained 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 reasons why no marks of burial were seen; no mark is made, probably for fear of the bones being stolen. Professor Turner regards four at least of the skulls procured as 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. A hatchet was given to a guide at D'Entrecasteaux Island as pay, according to promise; he seemed grateful, presented his own shell adze unasked in return, and made signs that the others had got enough, and that more should not be given away.

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 quite independent of each other, and more or less under a chief, whose power seemed to depend on his fighting