

residents. At the time of our visit there were also in the place others belonging to a small Mission Steamer intended for New Guinea, and the skippers of two vessels employed in the pearl shell trade.

The country is wooded in every direction, but with constantly recurring open patches covered with scattered acacias, gum trees, and Proteaceæ with grass only growing beneath. In the dense woods, with their tall forest trees and tangled masses of creepers, one might for a moment imagine oneself back in Fiji or Api, but the characteristic opens, with scattered Eucalypti, remind one at once that one is in Australia. The principal features of Australian and Indian vegetation, are, as it were, dovetailed into one another.

In the woods, the tree trunks are covered with climbing aroids, and often with orchids. Two palms, an Areca with a tall slender stem not thicker than a man's wrist, but fifty feet high, and a most beautiful Caryota, strong evidence of Indian affinities in the flora, are abundant. The Cocoanut Palm, as is well known, is not found anywhere growing naturally in Australia, though it is abundant in islands not far from Cape York. At Cape York some trees had been planted, but they appear not to thrive. One of these, already more than eight years old, at which age it ought to have been bearing fruit, had as yet a trunk only a few feet in height. A Rattan Palm, trailing everywhere between the underwood, is a terrible opponent, as one tries to creep through the forest in search of birds.

The number and variety of birds at Cape York is astonishing. Two species of Ptilotis (*P. crysotis* and *P. filigera*), different from those at Fiji, but closely resembling them, suck the honey from, or search for insects on, the scarlet blossoms of the same Erythrina tree as that at Fiji. With these are to be seen a Myzomela, and the gorgeous little brush-tongued Paroquet (*Trichoglossus Swainsonii*), which flies screaming about in small flocks, and gathers so much honey from the flowers, that it fairly pours out of the bird's beak when it falls shot to the ground. Amongst the same flowers is to be seen also a true Honey-bird (*Nectarinia frenata*), with brilliant metallic blue tints on its throat.

The common white-crested Cockatoo (*Cacatua galerita*) is here wary and difficult to get near, though not so much so as in the frequented parts of Victoria. The great black Cockatoo (*Microglossum aterrimum*) is to be found at Cape York, but I did not manage to see one. The Pheasant Cuckoo (*Centropus phasianus*) rises occasionally from the long grass in the opens, and though of the cuckoo tribe, has exactly the appearance of a pheasant when on the wing.