

of floating vegetable matter to be met with in the Malay Archipelago and neighbourhood. Chamisso remarked on the quantity of floating seeds off Java, and the casting up of *Barringtonia*, *Aleurites triloba*, and Nipa palm-seeds on the shores in a germinating condition. These large drifts from the forests have a farther interest, in that they let drop their remains to the bottom of the deep sea, thereby not only serving as food to the deep-sea animals, but leaving their husks to be preserved as fossils in deep-sea deposits. I shall refer to this latter point in considering deep-sea questions in the sequel.

“ A very large species of screw-pine (*Pandanus*), with a fruit as big as a man's head, is common along the shore. *Pandanus* is a common East Indian littoral genus. The stem, though large, is soft and succulent, and hence with a small axe one can enjoy all the pleasure of felling a large tree without any fatigue. The deep cut made by a single blow is most gratifying to one's feelings of power, and having cut down one tree to obtain a specimen of the fruit, I found myself felling two or three others wantonly.

“ On the island of Wokan, not far from the anchorage, sago-palms abound in the swamps. Several parties of natives from the back country were living near the shore, having come from a distance in their boats, to prepare a store of sago to take home with them.

“ The trees are excessively high and large in the Aru (Arrou) forests. To a botanical collector, with no time to spare, such a forest is a hopeless problem. Only the few low-growing plants can be gathered, and the orchids and ferns that hang on the stems low down, especially along the coast. A few palms can be cut down. The flowers and fruits of the trees, the main feature of the vegetation, and those most likely to prove of special interest, are far out of reach. The trees cannot be cut down. It would take a day at least to fell one. The only hope is to lie on one's back and look for blossoms or fruit with a binocular glass, and then try and shoot a branch down. Very often, however, the trees are far too high for that, and then the matter must be given up altogether.

“ Growing on some of the high trees in Wokan Island, I saw most enormous stags'-horn ferns (*Platyserium*), which I imagined must be at least eight feet in the height of the fronds; I could only reach very small specimens.

“ A species of fig, a wide-spreading tree with large leaves, seemed to me remarkable, because the fruit was borne only on the pendent aerial roots. A tree of another species of fig amused me, because its pendent roots had wound spirally around the parent stem of the tree itself, and had nearly choked it. It seemed just that a fig, so accustomed to choking other trees, should thus once in a while choke itself; but no doubt the trees suffered little, the roots taking fully the place of the strangled trunk.

“ The rattans are a serious obstacle in excursions in the forests. The tendrils of these trailing and climbing palms are beset with rows of recurved hooks, which as they are drawn across one's flesh, in a dash made to get a shot at a bird, cut into it as readily as knives, but make a more unpleasant wound.

“ An immense tree, with a tall stem free from branches, until at a great height it spread out into a wide and evenly-shaped crown, was full of the nests of the metallic starling (*Calornis metallica*); a very beautiful small starling with dark plumage, which displays a brilliant purple metallic glance all over its surface. The birds breed thus gregariously. There must have been three or four hundred nests in the tree; every available branch was full of them. The birds were busy flying to and fro, and were quite safe, for the tree was so high that they were out of shot of my gun at least, which was not a choke-bore.