

ships. Within the lagoon are four great islands, each from twenty to thirty-five miles in circumference, and more than twenty smaller uninhabited *cays*, covered with cocoa-nut and other trees. There is still water and good anchorage everywhere inside the outer reef. The inhabitants are tall and strong, of light complexion, with long black hair. They have a bad name for treachery and ferocity; but whether this be their fault or that of the traders with whom they have been in the habit of dealing, it is not easy to say.

In judging of the character of the Caroline islanders, one must remember that there are always two sides to a question; and in connection with this matter I may refer to a fact which I regard as very significant. All Englishmen are familiar with the story of the wreck of the "Antelope," at the Palaos or Pelew Islands, in 1793, and of the Prince Lee Boo who accompanied Captain Wilson to England. Those same Pelew islanders who at that time treated the shipwrecked Englishmen with such generous hospitality for a period of four months, seeking no return for the same, are now regarded as piratical miscreants of the most atrocious type; and not without reason, for they have got into a bad habit of going out to sea in their fast-sailing proas, and attacking, off the coasts of their islands, such vessels as may be becalmed or entangled among the shoals, in which nefarious practice they have on several occasions so far succeeded as to have plundered the vessels and massacred their crews. This change of behaviour is easily to be accounted for. In some cases it has arisen from ill-treatment which they have experienced at the hands of strangers; but in most cases, it has been the result of evil example by a set of scoundrels who disgrace humanity, and are to be found strolling about these seas, making themselves at home among the simple-minded barbarians, and instructing them in every vice and villany.

No one knows with any approach to certainty how many inhabitants are on Hogoleu; some say 15,000, some 20,000; but they are very many. They are armed with good swords with hilts of brass, daggers, spears pointed with iron, bows of great strength, arrows headed with iron, and slings out of which they fling round stones with great certainty and with the force of a shot. The iron weapons they have purchased from traders of Manilla and elsewhere. They have had many combats with crews of ships, and display great courage. No white men have ever lived among them to any one's knowledge, though I have heard there is one there now, established by one Captain Hayes. Many men have been on shore, and they have been treated with hospitality. From what I have seen of them, they are a people I would have no fear of; but they have an ugly habit of attacking ships upon small grounds of offence. In 1870, they tried to board the "Vesta," belonging to Messrs. Godeffroy; but the German, although he lost his anchor and chain by having to slip it, was more than a match for them. He fired upon them with scrap iron, and killed a great many. Of course he was not to blame, but these unfortunate misunderstandings tend very much to perpetuate ill-feeling. As concerns the productions of this island, the great lagoon contains an immense deposit of pearl oyster of the largest and most valuable kind, and beche-de-mer in apparently inexhaustible quantity. The central islands are lofty, volcanic, and completely clothed with the most glorious vegetation. Besides many kinds of splendid timber trees, the cocoa-nut, sago, and other palms, there are wild oranges, citrons, mangoes, sassafras, nutmegs, massoy, and sandal wood. Of this last, there are to be seen in the hands of the natives paddles and weapons, which would lead to the inference that it is very plentiful.

That the first Europeans who can succeed in establishing a permanent agency upon Hogoleu will make their fortunes in a very short period, is an unquestionable fact. This island presents to the commercial adventurer such an opportunity as is scarcely to be found elsewhere in the world, not alone from the valuable products of the land itself, but from the possession of so magnificent a harbour for shipping, whence could be extended the ramifications of a trade on a large scale throughout the whole great Caroline Archipelago. That there is any risk in the attempt, I do not for a moment believe. All that is required is for one determined man, acquainted with the Caroline tongue, to secure by acceptable presents the protection of a chief; to marry into his family, as he would be required to do; and after a few months' diplomacy he might have it all his own way, so far as driving a trade for his owners was concerned. This island is called by the Spaniards San Estevan, and has long been a rendezvous of beche-de-mer and pearl fishers. The pearl shell lies so thick throughout this great lagoon, that it is visible wheresoever the bottom can be seen.

South-east of Hogoleu are the islands of *Nugwor* (or *Mortlock*) and *Lugunor* (or *Monteverde*). They are both very large coral atolls, containing lagoons very productive in pearl oysters and beche-de-mer. The lands are covered with cocoa-nut groves. The people are very numerous, of a simple disposition, and seemingly well disposed. Spaniards are said to have lived on Monteverde. The natives readily trade in pearl shell and tortoise-shell, of which they collect great quantities. Some missionaries who visited them about two years ago were refused permission to land. The natives said they were afraid of strange gods, and wished to have nothing to do with them. They have lately suffered very severely at the hands of the crew of the "Carl" and other piratical ruffians, who shot a number of them without any provocation. At both these islands, there is a great opening for trade.

The remaining islands of the Caroline Group are of the same distinctive character as those I have described; some, however, are uninhabited. At the western extremity of the archipelago is the Island of Yap. This land has a mountain in the centre, which slopes on every side towards the sea. There are dense groves of bread-fruit, cocoa-nut, and betel-nut. The people live in the midst of every kind of comfort and abundance. Their towns are very handsome; the roads and landing-places are paved with stone. They have good laws, and are peaceable. They have an oriental look; they chew betel and smoke cigarettes incessantly. It is here that the agents of Messrs. Godeffroy have a very considerable establishment, a cotton plantation, and a slip for repairing their vessels. There are about a dozen Europeans residing here; among them a Polish doctor, engaged in scientific research at the expense of the Messrs. Godeffroy. The origin of this settlement is somewhat singular. Several years ago, a sailor of Hamburg was wrecked in this neighbourhood. He found his way to Yap, and was well treated by the people; they took him to Palao, to which place they trade by sea; from thence he reached the Moluccas, and managed to return to Europe. He related his experience to Cæsar Godeffroy, who gave him charge of a vessel, and supplied him with means to purchase a tract of land from the chiefs of Yap,