



BORNEO JUNGLE

*An Account of the Oxford Expedition
to Sarawak*

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3-62 Tom Harrisson, Remembered jungle.

229-230 A.W. Moore, A tribute: Ev: Katalang.



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The Punans have a quality of stillness. They melt into the shadows and that is their life.



The verandah of a long house. They were often several hundred yards in length.

A birds' nest cave with the slender poles up which men climb to collect the nests.



be eight feet across, and startling on the dark forest floor in wine-coloured, fleshy and thick squashy leaves; they stench like all the decay in the district.

Rare it is, a lure for all botanists along with the orchids, rhododendrons and pitcher plants of numerous sorts and many as yet unknown, eagerly awaited by growers in England.

TARSIERS.

The tiny little tarsier is close to humanity, too, something after the style of one of those tragic little fluff-monkeys of dark chocolate whose fate is everlastingly, or so long as the spring lasts, to go up and down, down and up, up and down the pink stick of the toy-vendor hard by the entrance to the London Pavilion in Piccadilly Circus. Tarsiers have huge round eyes and tiny heads, long prehensile toes and tail, move like an aged negus or a fœtus that has never been born. No one knows if the queer querulous squeakings heard at night are made by tarsiers: it is very difficult to find one at all. No one had so far succeeded in keeping one alive in captivity. They simply stare out and slowly die. This was a lure for the live animal-seeker. And in mammals, Borneo is the most interesting of all places, with the remarkable false-otter, the vile porty-looking proboscis monkey, tree-shrews, tiny tufted squirrels and magnificent fan-tailed squirrels, flying squirrels, blind Albino bats, pigmy rhinoceros, leopards, elephants, civets, the weird pangolin (scaly ant-eater) and, of course, orang-outangs. It's like that with everything, rich in life. But first there are riches of another sort—oil. Great finds of oil in Sarawak, and others very possible. More of this.

ORANG-OUTANG.

After the Rajah, the most interesting thing socially is orang-outang. The only place in the world you get these No. 1 Zoo attractions is Sarawak. Orangs really

of competition, co-operation and conflict, which will probably carry them through. While on the coast the Dyaks, the coastal people, who were involved in some of the Government's most bloody incidents, are, with the Government's agreement, extending their influence farther and farther inland, making long journeys into the interior to get sago, gum, rhinoceros, rubber, rattans, thus increasing the country's exports and favourable trade balance. The inland people are for the most part fully occupied with their own communal life, producing just sufficient surplus of goods to trade for Chinese ornaments or fine raiment. That is why they are amongst the most lively and pleasant of races, as we shall see; in our subsequent expeditions, to many lands, none of us has met with nicer people than the Kayans and Punans. As the Rajah's *Hints to Young Officers on Out-Stations* says, "the natives are not inferior, but different." It is worth seeing how this remarkable toleration and black-white friendliness, special to Sarawak, grew up. It is necessary to understand it, if one is to understand the accounts of the people we met and the things we did in the interior written by my fellow-members on the expedition.

Huxley saw a score or two of miniature Eiffel Towers as he rolled in the swell off Miri. But in a country which is said to be run for the natives, the question is, How did the oil fields come to be developed at all? In any other country this would be a silly question, and it just shows what Sarawak is like that you can ask this question there and no one thinks it silly at all. The official-unofficial answer is: "The Rajah decided to permit the exploitation of oil at Miri to cover the running expenses of the whole country." It is worth noting, however, that it was Official Hose who largely promoted the exploitation of the oil field, and that in recent years the oil companies have been allowed to carry out an extensive air survey of the jungle area inland from Miri, in conjunction with

careful ground prospecting as far as the *headwaters* of the great Baram River, at the mouth of which Miri is situated.

THE LAST 100 PER CENT. MONARCHY

The whole of Sarawak is around 50,000 square miles, and estimated at approximately half a million inhabitants. It is the only really functioning absolute monarchy left (Albania is nearly). The extraordinary history of this State began, from the white point of view, when a Mr. and Mrs. Brooke conceived (probably at Bath) a son, James, at the beginning of the nineteenth century. James entered the East India Company at age sixteen, and distinguished himself in the Company's extensive warrings. After six years he was invalided home, with a bullet through his lungs, but soon came back, this time to Malaya. (By accident he was stimulated to discontinue his service, for the vessel bringing him back from England was wrecked, causing him to overstay furlough.) Thence he drifted free-lance to Borneo, where in 1839 he found the Sultanate of Brunei in a chaos. The Dyaks had revolted against the Sultan, who sent his Uncle Hassim to beat them up. Brooke cashed in on Hassim. Hassim was tickled to death. The Dyaks were beaten. Hassim said to Brooke: "You'd make a swell Rajah." That's what Brooke thought. The Sultan of Brunei was not so sure, but fed up with that bit of territory. So Brooke got the job, and on 24th September 1841 he became the White Rajah of Sarawak, though of course at that time Sarawak only meant a small part of its present territory.

From then on, Brooke steadily expanded his influence. The Sultan of Brunei was a good deal of a damfool. He controlled Labuan Island, where there was trouble, so that Brooke took Sir Edward Belcher there in 1844, and in 1846 the Navy occupied it. In that year, or the end of the previous one, the Sultan of Brunei had Hassim and other pro-Brooke relatives murdered *en masse*. For

EV: KALULONG

WITH sixty native Borneans, Banks and Moore left our Base Camp on October 23, taking six days to get up the Dapoi River, which was partly in flood. Thence they carried on up a small rocky tributary stream in the headwaters—the Tehani. The canoes were dragged up this, filled with supplies, and abandoned when the water became too consistently shallow and swift. A two-day reconnaissance was then made, without any sight or sign of the mountain as result. Dense jungle and cloud formations, and the absence of any human beings over a great expanse of this hinterland, account for this difficulty in locating a whole mountain range.

By November 2, a camp had been made on a located ridge at 1750 feet. Here and higher, water was very scarce. A small peak was now located by Moore, and then a path which they believed had been used by a Dyak hunter following up a rhinoceros some months before—the Dyaks will hunt weeks after one rhino, for the horn is of great value to the Chinese, who use it as an aphrodisiac. This path stopped at 2500 feet. The natives expressed no enthusiasm for going any farther, saw a bad-omen bird, declared that there was a lake beside which ghosts dwelt in the saddle between the twin peaks of the mountain. After much delay and suitable sacrifices, they agreed to carry on.

Next day, Moore, with a small party, succeeded in reaching the smaller peak, and obtained a magnificent

4. METEOROLOGY. By DR. P. W. RICHARDS

IN Sarawak the south-west monsoon blows from April to October and the north-east for the rest of the year. The period of the north-east monsoon is usually considered the "wet season," but actually the rainfall is fairly evenly spread through the year. As we were at Mount Dulit from the beginning of August till nearly the end of November we were able to sample both types of weather.

Meteorological observations were made at both the Base Camp and the High Camp, but it was impossible, owing to pressure of other work, to keep continuous records at either for the whole period of the expedition.

At the Base Camp, temperature and humidity were constantly high. The daily maximum temperature averaged 88° F., but was 4-5° lower in rainy weather; the average minimum was very constant at 73° F. Humidity was always near saturation at night, but fell to about 60 per cent. on sunny days. At 4000 feet the climate was much cooler, the mean temperature being about 10° F. lower than at the Base Camp. The daily range of temperature was greater; the mean maximum was 79° F., the mean minimum 63° F. In spite of the general impression of extreme dampness, the humidity frequently fell to 90 per cent. at midday: on one very warm, dry day in September, 39 per cent. was reached. Though mist and rain are the characteristic features of the mountain climate, dry spells do occur and cause a considerable drying up of the moss forest.

5. ZOOLOGY. By HARRISSON

(i) MAMMALS.

MAMMALS were numerous, and about 350 specimens were collected, mainly from the peculiar faunal zones above 3000 feet. Squirrels are the dominant group, being represented by thirty-six species, including flying squirrels, tree-top squirrels and ground squirrels, the smallest 3 inches and the largest 3 feet long. Several new squirrels were obtained, among them a flying squirrel unlike anything previously known in Borneo. Special attention was paid to the exact distribution of *Sciurus prevosti*, which appears to be represented by distinct races in almost every river and mountain system in Borneo. Monkeys were abundant in numbers but not in species. Only gibbons, macaques and a leaf monkey were encountered; the leaf monkey provides a curious problem in that there are three closely allied *Pygathrix* species, which recent writers have attempted to prove are only dimorphic phases of *Pygathrix everetti*. Our evidence does not support this view and suggests that *Pygathrix hosei* and perhaps also *Pygathrix sabanus* are specifically distinct from *everetti*. The very interesting and primitive tree shrews (*Tupaiaidae*) were represented by thirteen mountain and lowland forms, feeding on or fairly near to the ground. Civet cats, including the rare *Hemigale hosei*, wild cats and mouse deer were caught in snare-line hedges. Wild pig were common in the forest, but buffalo and rhinoceros very rare and local within the area covered by the expedition. Hartley made large collections of bats in the Baram caves, and no doubt among them are a number of forms new to science. The soft parts, gonads and food contents were examined in all specimens collected, and parasites taken where possible. The general collections go to the British Museum of Natural History. Topotypes of any new forms that may be described (especially bats) will be sent to the Raffles Museum, Singapore, and a part of the collections to the Kuching Museum, Sarawak.

(ii) BIRDS. By HARRISSON and HARTLEY

INCIDENTAL to observational work, 1050 birds were collected, at all levels from the river to Igok Peak, and in many parts of the Baram and Tinjar River system. A number of new forms have been described by us, and we expect to describe others in the future. The habitat and mountain zonation were worked out in detail. Two species only