

Mr. A. R. Wallace's "Australasia"

ALTHOUGH somewhat late in the day, I beg to offer a few remarks on this work supplementary to the critique which appeared in the columns of NATURE, vol. xx. p. 598. The facts that "Australasia" is the only compendious work which we have in English on the subject of which it treats, and that the high authority of Mr. Wallace's name will be equivalent with the majority of readers to a guarantee for the accuracy of the maps and letter-press, render it important that such errors as exist in the book should be rectified at once. For this reason I venture to make the following brief observations on those sections of the work treating of the Philippines and Borneo, with which districts I chance to be personally familiar.

1. In the map of the Philippines the islands of Sulu and Balabac, and the halves of the islands of Palawan and Mindanao, are shown as Mahometan native states, whereas they are all as undoubtedly Spanish possessions as is the interior of Luzon. In Barilan the Spanish have long had a naval station and arsenal; at Port Royalist they have a naval station and penal settlement; and the same at Balabac; and they have within the last few years firmly possessed themselves of the chief Sulu island. They

have also the settlements of Pollok and Cota Batu in Ilana Bay. The whole of the above-named places are in regular steam-communication with Manila.

2. In the map of the Malay Archipelago the geography of the north-west coast of Borneo is so inaccurate as to be quite valueless. The great Rejang River should run to near the head of the Koti, and therefore the Sarawak Territory be prolonged much further eastwards. The Limbang is brought down far into the Sarawak territory; and the Baram, a river nearly as large as the Rejang (up which I have myself steamed 200 miles), is entirely omitted. The Brunei Territory should extend as far as Marudu Bay. All the old errors in nomenclature which have long been corrected appear afresh. Considering Mr. Wallace's local knowledge, it is surprising that he should have inserted a map of Borneo which is quite the most inaccurate as regards the physical geography of the island of any that have come under my notice.

3. In the summary of the mammalian fauna of the Philippines (p. 272) only three species of insectivora are enumerated, the two quite distinct species of *Tupaia* inhabiting Palawan and Mindanao respectively being unnoticed. Speaking of the avifauna (p. 273), Mr. Wallace mentions the absence of pheasants as one of its negative characteristics—but he includes the Palawan group in the Philippines, and this group has *Polyplectron*. Mr. Wallace also states that there are deer in Palawan. It would be interesting to know on what authority this statement is made, for I believe that Dr. Steere and myself are the only naturalists who have visited Palawan, and to myself both Spaniards and natives strenuously denied that any kind of deer existed on the island. With regard to the observation that the Malayan indigenes have more or less frizzled hair (p. 293), I may remark that the only tribe with which I came in contact—the Tagbenúa of Port Royalist—were straight-haired. I inquired about a Negrito race, but could hear nothing of any in that part of Palawan. The Spanish capital of Palawan and residence of the Governor is Puerto Princesa (Port Royalist of our charts), not the older settlement of Taitay (p. 274).

4. Tibang Mountain in Borneo (p. 349) is by common report of the natives the source of the Rejang, Kapuas, Banjar-Masin, and Koti rivers. It is said to have a *white* summit. The rhinoceros (p. 354) is by no means confined to the head of the Koti river. It is quite common on the east coast of Borneo, in the Kinabatañgan valley especially, and is found also in the upper waters of the Kapuas and Rejang. Wild cattle can hardly be said to be confined to the northern part of the island. They abound in the Upper Rejang, are found on the shore near Bintulu, and have been seen as far west as Batang Lupar. There are possibly two species. They are certainly *not* the descendants of Spanish cattle, though these exist, and they may have interbred locally. At p. 356 Mr. Wallace writes: "The Dusun or Idään tribes—the Kanowits and Pakatans—correspond to the Land-Dyaks of Sarawak, while the Milanows correspond to the Sea-Dyaks." This is a most extraordinary statement. Dusuns, Kanowits, and Land-Dyaks may correspond to one another—though this has yet to be demonstrated—but there are as radical differences in language, customs, and physical characters between Milanows and Sea-Dyaks as between any two tribes in North-west Borneo. Pakatan, by the way, should be written Bakatan (*bukit*, a hill).

5. I add a few notes on the Appendix. The Balow Dyaks (p. 629) people the Lower Batang, Lupar, and Liñga rivers. There are only a few immigrants in Simunjon. The Sea-Dyaks of Borneo (p. 634) are clearly distinct from the Kayan tribes, as much so as they are from Milanows, who are related to the Kayans. The Sea-Dyaks have within the last thirty years become the dominant race of North-west Borneo, but the Kayan tribes seem to be decaying. The correct spelling of Ilanun (p. 637) is, I believe, Iránun (cf. Maludu = Marudu). It is worthy of note (p. 638) that the indigenes of Basilan style themselves Jakuns. The Idään (p. 647) inhabit the vicinity of Kina Balu, but the Muruts the Padas and Limbang rivers, with intervening districts inland.

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