



DEVOTED TO TEMPERANCE, SCIENCE, EDUCATION, AND LITERATURE.

VOLUME XXI., No. 21.

MONTREAL & NEW YORK, OCTOBER 8, 1886.

30 CTS. per An. Post-Paid.

**BORNEO AND ITS PEOPLE.**

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This great island—the largest in the world with the exception of Australia and Papua, or New Guinea—belongs by its location to the Indian Archipelago, lying between the China Sea on the north and the Sea of Java on the south, while the Sea of Celebes and the Straits of Macassar form the eastern boundary and the Gulf of Siam that of the west.

Borneo is about 800 miles long and 700 broad, and contains an area of something more than 300,000 square miles, a large proportion of which is rich in either vegetable or mineral products. The shores of the island are low and marshy, and in many parts are rendered dangerous for navigation by the frequent recurrence of rocky inlets. They are, however, thickly studded with fishing hamlets, the homes of hardy Malay pirates and fishermen, who busily ply their dangerous vocations and sing their merry boat-songs, unmindful alike of fatigue and danger. There are little settlements of Chinese also along the coasts, who, with their tidy shops and thrifty ways, make so pleasant a feature in the picture; and the less attractive Bugis people, whose filthy boats form their only homes, where people live and die, the infant is born, and the maiden is given in marriage.

In the interior, from northeast to southwest run nearly parallel two lofty ranges of mountains, between which are well-watered valleys and fertile plains. The Dyaks, the aboriginal inhabitants of the country, reside here, till the soil, dig in the mines, manufacture small arms, hunt, fish, and collect the valuable teak, camphor, and sandal woods for commerce. The houses are built on piles over the water. As the dwellings are nearly always on the shores of the rivers or lakes, liable to be overflowed, they must take the precaution of either raising their houses on posts or building them on rafts.

The dwellings have but one floor, with cane partitions, and

the roofs are covered with palmetto leaves, stitched together and laid on like tiles or shingles, the eaves reaching to within four or five feet of the bottom.

These houses are furnished with great

simplicity—only mats to serve as beds, with a quantity of triangular pillows with embroidered ends, and perhaps a simple netting or canopy of some sort to keep away the swarms of mosquitoes that fill the whole

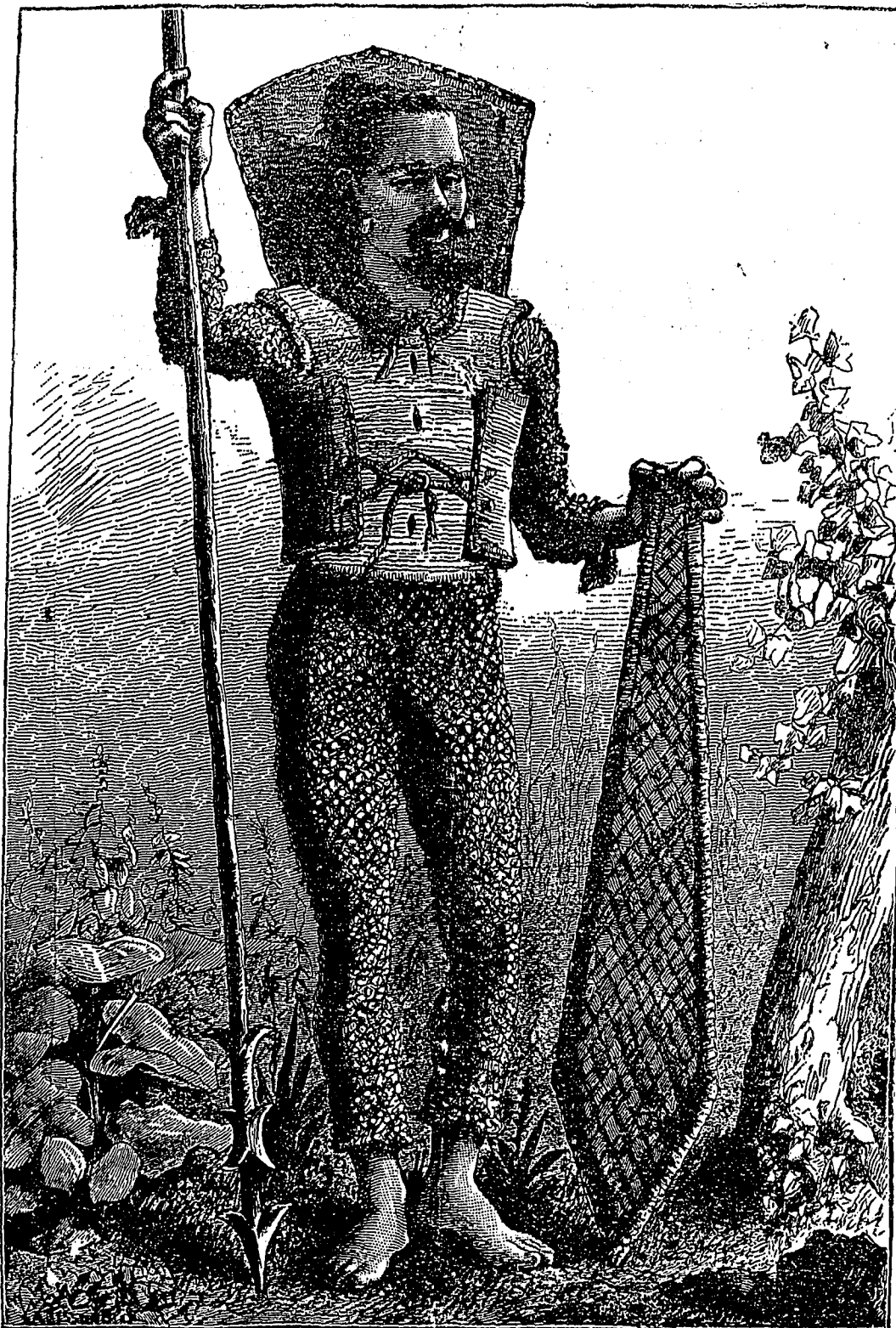
atmosphere as soon as it is dark, and would render sleep an absolute impossibility without some means of defence.

The images in the vicinity of the dwellings show the idols worshipped by the Dyaks;

and they have thus far shown little inclination to renounce their idolatry or to conform to the customs of civilized life. In habits the Dyaks are industrious and enterprising, and in disposition courteous to their friends but cruel and revengeful to enemies. In person they are rather short, with reddish brown complexion, dark eyes, and straight hair. The women, being less exposed to the sun are fairer than the men, and have smooth, clear complexions. They are fond of their children, but prefer out-of-doors diversions to the womanly avocations of weaving and sewing, and take little heed to household duties beyond the preparation of their simple meals of rice and curry, stewed fish, and the abundant fruits of their fertile island.

Among the products of the forests are guttapercha, resins, gums, camphor, and rattans, which large numbers of the men busy themselves in collecting and preparing for the market to be shipped to foreign ports. The mines yield diamonds, gold, antimony, coal, iron, nickel, sulphur, porcelain clay, petroleum, and many precious stones; and the Dyak men nearly all understand mining, smelting, and the manufacture of small arms. Their apparatus for smelting is said to be very simple. But they manufacture excellent small arms of considerable variety, as well as strong and durable armor, made sometimes of metal for the officers and of alligator skin for common soldiers.

The Dutch have held some general control over a portion of the island since 1643, when they concluded a treaty of commerce with the princes of Banjaruassin and erected their first fort and factory at Pontianak, followed since by others. At Sarawak the English have several times within the last quarter of a century succeeded



WAR COSTUME. BORNEO.

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