

rushes, about five inches wide, and so long that, when tied together behind, the ends hang down for a foot or so. Some of them adorn this belt with a large white shell, placed exactly in the middle. Ear-rings of plaited rattan, necklaces and bracelets are worn by nearly all. Some of them have a very ingenious armlet, several inches wide. It is made of plaited rattan, and fitted so tightly to the limb that, when a native wishes to take it off for sale, he is obliged to smear his arm with mud, and have the ornament drawn off by another person.

The agility of these Papuans is really astonishing. Along the water's edge there run wide belts of mangroves, which extend for many miles in length with scarcely a break in them. The ground is a thick, deep and soft mud, from which the mangrove-roots spring in such numbers that no one could pass through them, even at low water, without the constant use of an axe, while at high water a passage is utterly impossible.

As the natives, who are essentially maritime in their mode of life, have to cross this belt several times daily in passing from their canoes to their houses, and *vice versa*, they prefer doing so by means of the upper branches, among which they run and leap, by constant practice from childhood, as easily as monkeys.

The familiarity of these people with the trees causes them to look upon a tree as a natural fortress, and as soon as explorers succeeded in reaching the villages, the natives invariably made off, and climbed into the trees that surrounded their miserable little huts. Seen among the branches, whither they had taken refuge, their resemblance to monkeys was so striking that they were given the very appropriate title of *Monkey-men*, by which they are now known among ethnologists.