
It is well known to the scientific world that Mr. Wallace, almost simultaneously with Mr. Darwin, arrived at similar conclusions respecting the origin of species, and that from the distant shores of the Malay Archipelago he communicated these conclusions to Mr. Darwin, at the very time when the latter was about to give to the world what is now known as the Darwinian theory.

Wandering amongst semi-civilised nations, closely noting their types, manners, and languages, making large collections of the hitherto almost unknown birds and insects of these regions, and recording their habits and geographical distribution, he accumulated during the space of eight years a vast number of observations bearing especially on the latter question, and, as such, of enormous value towards the elucidation of the difficult question of the former distribution of land and water over the surface of the globe. To obtain evidence bearing on this point, and on that of the origin of species, was Mr. Wallace's great aim, to which even the collecting of birds and insects was secondary; and while the "125,660 specimens of natural history," recorded in his preface, show his energy and industry in the latter department, the almost as numerous facts and observations gathered by him on physical subjects, and the clearness and accuracy with which he has arranged and utilised them, equally testify to a mind capable not only of seizing and accumulating the various points which bear upon his subject, but of so placing them before his readers as to bring irresistible conviction to their minds.

Knowing Mr. Wallace's high standing as a scientific collector and observer, and occasionally receiving instalments of his results in the shape of short papers in various periodicals, naturalists waited impatiently for a fuller account of his expedition; but unlike those travellers who rush into print immediately on their return home, simply publishing their journals as written, and consequently issuing bulky and but partially interesting volumes, Mr. Wallace waited six years before giving us, in two small volumes, the desired book of travels. The consequence is that he has digested and arranged his materials in such a way as to produce, not only a highly interesting, but a most valuable addition to our knowledge of that portion of the world in which he lived and worked so long.

He has followed a somewhat peculiar plan in his book; the best idea of which may perhaps be given by calling it a physico-geographical arrangement. Each group of islands, closely connected by its fauna and human inhabitants, is taken separately; his difference
journeys and collections in each island are first described, and a chapter is then devoted to the natural history of the adjacent islands, each portion of which Mr. Wallace has never described, and a chapter is then devoted to the natural history of the adjacent islands, each portion of which Mr. Wallace has never described.

The five portions thus formed are as follows: Asia, Borneo, Java, Sumatra, and New Guinea. Asia is divided into two main sections, the Indian Archipelago and the Australian Archipelago, and by following it out in detail I have arrived at the conclusion that at a very recent geological epoch the continent of Asia extended far beyond its present limits in a parallel line of subsidence, all lead irresistibly to the conclusion that at a very recent geological epoch the continent of Asia extended far beyond its present limits in a parallel line of subsidence, all lead irresistibly to the conclusion that at a very recent geological epoch the continent of Asia extended far beyond its present limits in a parallel line of subsidence, all lead irresistibly to the conclusion that at a very recent geological epoch.

The five divisions already mentioned; comprising the Indian Archipelago, and by following it out in detail I have arrived at the conclusion that at a very recent geological epoch the continent of Asia extended far beyond its present limits in a parallel line of subsidence, all lead irresistibly to the conclusion that at a very recent geological epoch the continent of Asia extended far beyond its present limits in a parallel line of subsidence, all lead irresistibly to the conclusion that at a very recent geological epoch.

Amidst the missions incident to collecting in a tropical country, insect plagues must certainly stand foremost. More than once Mr. Wallace was confined to his bed for some time with fever, an attack of dysentery, and the attacks of mosquitoes, sandflies, &c., and he speaks poignantly of the interruption thus caused to his work.

The stings and bites and countless irritation caused by these insects would be born unremittingly, but by whom? To be kept prisoner by them in so rich and uncultivated a country, where rare and beautiful creatures are to be met with in every forest, every country reached by such a long and tedious voyage, and which might not be visited again for a full hundred years, is a punishment too severe for a naturalist to pass over in silence. "It sometimes amused me to observe how, a few days after I have taken possession of a native, it seems to have cast off all its fear. My house at Wayford was a bare shed, with a large bamboo roof, but with no natural beauties. The number and variety of the topics discussed in these two volumes cannot be even touched on within the limits of a review; all bears evidence of careful observation and thought; and, in short, careful study and consideration. Mr. Wallace's work is by no means to be classed merely as an interesting book of travels; it will take its place on our library shelves, and will be referred to, as a standard authority regarding the countries he has so carefully studied, and so ably described.