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24.—*The Malay Archipelago: the land of the Orang-utan and the Bird of Paradise. A narrative of travel, with studies of man and nature. By Alfred Russel Wallace. New York: Harper & Bros. 1869. Octavo pp. 638.*

There is, probably, no portion of the world which is so imperfectly known as that group of islands, between Asia and Australia, which is known as "The Malay Archipelago." It extends some four thousand miles in length, from East to West, and some thirteen hundred in breadth, from North to South. It embraces three islands larger than Great Britain—one of them larger than all the British isles combined—three others about the size of Ireland; eighteen others, each as large as Jamaica; more than a hundred, each of which is as large as the Isle of Wight; and a very large number still smaller in extent. Situated under the equator, and bathed by the tepid waters of the great tropical oceans, this region enjoys a climate more uniformly hot and moist

than almost any other part of the globe; and teems with natural productions which are elsewhere unknown. The richest of fruits and the most precious of spices are here indigenous. It produces the gigantic flowers of the *Rafflesia*, the great green-winged *Ornithoptera*—princes among the butterfly tribes—the man-like *Orang-utan*, and the gorgeous *Birds of Paradise*.

Into this comparatively unknown country, the author seems to have cast himself in 1854; and there he seems to have remained during some eight years, studying, as he says, "man and nature." In this volume, he presents a synopsis of his observations, embracing descriptions of the countries, their inhabitants, and their natural history, without any attempt at marvellous adventures or hair-breadth escapes, to excite the curious and disgust the sober reader. In natural history, botany, ornithology, and ethnology, the author is remarkably minute; and his vocabularies of native tongues must be exceedingly welcome to scholars throughout the world.

The work is very neatly printed; and it is amply illustrated with very good wood-cuts and so-soish lithographic maps—the latter not good enough for so good a book.

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