

The other letter contains a protest of Signor D'Albertis against my having "led the public to believe that he had claimed for himself the honour of crossing New Guinea from one coast to the other." Signor D'Albertis cites my paper in NATURE, vol. ix, p. 77, where he states he has read an assertion of mine concerning this point. But I look in vain through my whole article to find one single word to the purpose, and therefore I do not understand what induced that intrepid co-operator to publish his protest. I only mentioned (page 79) : "I need not say that this journey from one side of New Guinea to the other has never been made before, and I should hardly myself attribute any importance to the fact," &c.

A. B. MEYER

Dr. A. B. Meyer and his Critics

NOT until now have I found leisure to look through the pages of NATURE for the years 1873 and 1874, and therefore it was not till now that I became aware of two letters in your correspondence (December 11, 1873, p. 102, vol. ix., and April 23, 1874, p. 482, vol. ix.), which concern me, and in answer to which I beg leave to say a few words.

The first is written by Mr. Wallace, and is about a wrong opinion which I had formed on this author's notion as to the relation of the inhabitants of the Arfak Mountains on New Guinea to the inhabitants of the coast. I am glad to see that Mr. Wallace and I agree in the conviction of the identity of those two groups of Papoosas; but nevertheless I am anxious to show that my misunderstanding of Mr. Wallace's opinion was based upon an apparently clear expression in his valuable work on the "Malay Archipelago," which I took, as I believe, not in the restricted sense in which the author perhaps wished it to be understood. Mr. Wallace did not succeed in finding the passage in his work on which I had based my idea; but he just breaks off his quotation where the words begin to which I referred: "Their hair, though always more or less frizzly, was sometimes short and matted," &c.; so far Mr. Wallace cites his own words, but the sentence (page 310, 1st ed.) goes on, "instead of being long, loose, and woolly; and this seemed to be a constitutional difference, not the effect of care and cultivation." These last words then led me to the opinion in question. In a paper in the *Mittheilungen der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft zu Wien* ("Anthropologische Mittheilungen über die Papuas von Neu Guinea; I. Ausserer physischer Habitus"), 1874, page 92, I quoted myself the whole passage, and dealt with the object more in particular. That it is still the general opinion that a difference exists between the Arfakis and the Papoosas of the coast is proved, e.g., by a notice of that paper in M. Broc's "Revue d'Anthropologie," vol. iii., 1874, page 729: "Notre voyageur n'admet pas non plus qu'il y ait entre les tribus du bord de la mer et celles des montagnes—les Arfakis—les différences constitutionnelles observées cependant par la plupart des voyageurs," &c.