

and got the bird and her 3 eggs. One egg goes to the Mission Museum at Samarai. Of course the natives have no appreciation of game laws, they thought I was quixotic when I refused to shoot the male bird, which has to feed the mother, fastened up in a hole in a tree." 93

Mr. MONEY writes from Uiaku under date Sept. 18th, 1906 :-

"For some weeks Beremu, the chief of Uiaku, has been bad with an abscess in his thigh; it is very deeply seated and will not come to a head. Of course he believes that some charm has been placed on him by an evil-wisher and he was quite convinced that he was going to die until he was assured that it was not very serious. His family all look upon it as a case of witchcraft and have been making sweeping accusations against other members of the tribe. Late last night one man heard that his name had been mentioned in connection with the affair, and without more ado he descended from his house and marched up and down the village shouting his innocence at the top of his voice, casting counter charges in the teeth of his accusers and telling them that they were afraid to accuse him to his face in open daylight and had therefore gone behind his back to do so. His wife, who still remained in the house, seconded his remarks very ably in a shrill, screeching voice, and between the pair of them they managed to upset the whole village. Finally they were persuaded to let the matter rest till the morrow but it was some time before they quite quietened down.

To-day a number of visitors from villages along the coast came to see the sick man, or rather to sit down before his house and set up a tremendous shouting. Married daughters and sisters also came along and these went up into his house to see him and to sit by him and make him miserable and downcast. Probably they only thought of the first mentioned but their long faces and woe-begone expressions were enough to depress even the most cheerfully disposed patient, and as the old chief is in mortal fear of sorcery he could not be considered as such.

Meanwhile the men, (including our friend of last night, who now seemed quite reconciled) began speech making, sometimes one at a time, sometimes two or three and then again a general uproar. Most of the speeches were to the effect that, although the speakers had been possessed of and had used charms at different times, they had now given them up altogether; some said they had thrown theirs away, others, that they had given them to the missionary to destroy. (An account of this was given in Missionary Notes some time back.) The chief's sons listened to all that was said and after a number of the men had spoken he, having charged his mouth with betel nut and lime, cleared his throat and addressed them thus:- "My father lies there and so I speak. He is the friend of you all. You have said there is sorcery about this affair and therefore you chiefs have come and opened your mouths and have shouted until they ache. Your father, your brother is ill; it is only one person who has cast this spell and placed this evil charm upon him; why should you all be brought here and have your mouths made to give you pain. Disperse this evening and go home. Go to your clearing and planting, to your digging and gathering in, to your catching of game and feasting; look upon the eyes of your wives and children and go and make sago and give them to eat for we are now in the time of scarcity and hunger; clear the places for your fences and burn off, cut timber and make fences for the rain is coming. We have come through the dry season and have left the greater part of it behind us, the last days of the dry weather are at hand, cultivate, fence, for we are slipping

' off the end of the dry season. My ancestor came up out of a  
+ hole in the ground, he came up with his lime gourd and stick and  
' his hair threaded through rings of shell: I, therefore, take  
' precedence of you all. I am your superior, for all other clans  
' came after him. I am their eldest brother, that is what they  
' call me. I am a great chief, why then should I meet with  
' sorcery? The priority is mine for I was the first to ascend and  
' therefore I became chief and this my chiefly dress was given me  
' to wear.'

' Your brother is a middle aged man, his days are shortening,  
' release him from this spell that he may grow old and die and when  
' he dies of old age his sons will take him and bury him in the  
' manner in which the aged <sup>1</sup> are treated.'

Towards sundown the men dispersed and went to their villages.  
They believed that by this conference the man who had bewitched the  
Chief would be frightened and throw away his charms and release the  
old man from the spell.

Superstition dark and degrading still reigns in New Guinea and  
yet pleas for more workers remain unanswered.

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+ The local idea of the origin of man.

1 Old people, instead of being buried full length, are doubled  
up, the head down to the knees, and arms stretched out along  
the legs.