



The Native Races of the Indian Archipelago. Papuans

George Windsor Earl



This historic book may have numerous typos and missing text. Purchasers can download a free scanned copy of the original book (without typos) from the publisher. Not indexed. Not illustrated. 1853 Excerpt: ...feast, at which arrack forms a very necessary adjunct. It is not lawful for a man to enter the house of a neighbour during his absence and if any one offends in this particular, he is obliged to pay a piece of cloth, or some other goods, to the owner of the house. The sentence is passed by the elders, who openly call upon the offender to pay the fine, which makes him so ashamed that he either does so, or immediately leaves the village. This fine is called pakul dendeJ by the natives. Should any one even touch the wife of another, he must make a large atonement for the offence. The Macassar traders informed me that they were always obliged to watch their people narrowly, to keep them from approaching too near the married women, as the least touch would render them liable to a fine and unless this was paid, the Alfoers would not be satisfied. They pride themselves much in the possession of a number of elephants tusks, and brass gongs the value of the first being determined according to their length, and of the latter by their weight and circumference. They formerly obtained these articles from the Banda traders, who themselves procured them from Batavia, Malacca, and Singapore. # # The following occurrence gives a remarkable proof of the mildness of their laws. An Alfoer, who had gone out fishing, intending to be absent eight days, did not return and his wife, who had no more provisions at home than would last her for this period, requested assistance from a neighbour. Hence arose a mutual friendship, which, however, at first only showed itself in little attentions, the man drawing water, cutting wood, and providing fish for his fair neighbour, who could not avoid feeling grateful for the kindness and no one will be surprised at their...

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