THE WESTERN PACIFIC AND NEW GUINEA: NOTES ON THE NATIVES, CHRISTIAN AND CANNIBAL, WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF THE OLD LABOUR TRADE

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The Western Pacific and New Guinea: Notes on the Natives, Christian and Cannibal, with Some Account of the Old Labour Trade by Hugh Hastings Romilly

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HUGH HASTINGS ROMILLY

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NOTES ON THE

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THE OLD LABOUR TRADE.

BY

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AND ACTING SPECIAL COMMISSIONER FOR NEW GUINEA.

WITH A MAP.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
1886.

PREFACE.

THE following pages, which were sent home some months ago, were written while the writer was incapacitated by a tedious illness from active occupation.

They have been shown to a few friends at home, who have found so much of interest and of novelty in them, that they consider that the public would also read them with pleasure; and in the hope that the result of their publication will justify this opinion, it has been decided to print them for general circulation.

It is, perhaps, fair to the author to add that, in a letter which has been recently received

from him, he says "it was an occupation in the wet season in New Guinea, but I seriously doubt if it is worth publishing. It amused me to write, but it is very deficient in the matter of giving information."

E. R.

LONDON, *February*, 1886.

CONTENTS.

THE WESTERN PACIFIC

AND

NEW GUINEA.

INTRODUCTION.

In the following pages it is not intended to attempt to give any very thorough description of particular groups of islands or of their inhabitants. The duration of my stay in the places I write of never exceeded six months, whereas it would take fully that number of years to acquire even a moderately correct acquaintance with the various habits, languages, and dispositions of all the different races to be found there. It would take many years even to visit and land on every island in what is known as the Western Pacific, and there are some small islands about the north-east coast of New Guinea which remain to this day unvisited. It is, perhaps, not too much to say that there are probably some islands which have never even been sighted. In support of this statement, I may mention that, so late