

**THROUGH THE
MALAY
ARCHIPELAGO**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649147724

Through the Malay Archipelago by Emily Richings

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EMILY RICHINGS

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Through the Malay Archipelago.

BY
EMILY RICHINGS.

Author of
"Sir Walter's Wife," "In Chaucer's Maytime," &c.

LONDON:
HENRY J. DRANE, LIMITED,
DANEGELD HOUSE, 82A, FARRINGTON STREET, E.C.

O HUNDRED shores of happy climes!
How swiftly streamed ye by the bark!
At times the whole sea burned—at times
With wakes of fire we tore the dark.

New stars all night above the brim
Of waters lightened into view;
They climbed as quickly, for the rim
Changed every moment as we flew.

We came to warmer waves, and deep
Across the boundless East we drove,
Where those long swells of breaker sweep
The nutmeg rocks, and isles of clove.

For one fair Vision ever fled
Down the waste waters day and night,
And still we followed where she led,
In hope to gain upon her flight.

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PROLOGUE.

THE traveller who reaches those enchanted gates of the Far East which swing open at the palm-girt shores of Ceylon, enters upon a new range of thought and feeling. The first sight of tropical scenery generally awakens a passionate desire for further experiences of the vast Archipelago in the Southern Seas which girdles the Equator with an emerald zone. Lured onward by the scented breeze in that eternal search for perfection destined to remain unsatisfied where every step marks a higher ideal than the one already attained, the pilgrim pursues his endless quest, for human aspiration has never yet touched the goal of desires and dreams. The cocconut woods of Ceylon and her equatorial vegetation lead fancy further afield, for the glassy straits of Malacca beckon the wanderer down their watery highways to mysterious Java, where vast forests of waving palms, blue chains of volcanic mountains, and mighty ruins of a vanished civilisation, loom before the imagination and invest the tropical paradise with ideal attractions. The island, seven hundred miles long, and described