

## Extract of the Journal of Théodore Leschenault



**Extract of the Journal de Théodore Leschenault**  
**Archives nationales de France, série Marine, 5JJ56**

**Period covered**

Prairial Year IX [May 1801] – Germinal Year X [April 1802]

**Notes on the text**

This translation is based on the extract from Leschenault's journal to be found in a notebook containing two documents written in the same hand (most likely that of a scribe). The first document in the notebook is the copy of Charles Bailly's catalogue of mineralogy. The page numbers of the original French manuscript are indicated in parentheses.

This extract comprises three chapters

- Chapter 3 : exploration of the west coast of New Holland
- Chapter 4 : observations on Timor, its inhabitants, its flora, its fauna, etc
- Chapter 5 : crossing from Timor to Van Diemen's Land ; sojourn on that island and explorations in Bass Strait

**Translation**

Paul Gibbard

**Validation**

John West-Sooby

# Sample Page from the Manuscript

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un grand nombre de Darniers; on en pris  
plusieurs avec des lignes aux qu'elles étoient  
attachés de petits morceaux de viande; Cet  
oiseau est vorace et s'éloigne à plusieurs  
centaines de lieux des côtes; il a la singulière  
faculté de dégorger une prodigieuse quantité  
de graisse, qui se refroidit, à la Constantine  
et la Coulure d'huile d'olive figée; elle  
a une odeur forte et désagréable, cette  
graisse sert-elle au Darnier pour amorcer  
les poissons dont il se nourrit? ou bien  
lui est-elle utile pour modérer autour  
de lui, l'action trop forte des flots, lors  
qu'il se repose? on s'en sert il seulement  
pour rendre ses plumes imprégnables

\* La  
d'adrague  
rapporta aussi  
une espèce de  
d'un rouge très  
qui teignoit les  
doigts, lorsqu'on  
la touchoit, le  
cit. de l'arg.  
Minéralogie  
et un grand  
ver d'arg.  
tant de cette  
couleur qu'on  
retrouvait plusieurs  
l'argente.

Le 7 Briméal nous eûmes connaissance  
du Cap de l'union que les observations  
du Cit. St. Cricq indiquent de Vaillean.  
Cit. de l'arg. —  
Minéralogie —  
et un grand  
ver d'arg.  
tant de cette  
couleur qu'on  
retrouvait plusieurs  
l'argente.

3

fourant nous dérober beaucoup à l'ouest;  
le 8 on se rapprocha de terre.

Le 9. Nous longeâmes de fort près la  
Côte qui s'étend depuis le Cap de l'union, jus-  
qu'à la pointe qui forme au Sud, un golfe  
qui a environ 15 lieues d'ouverture, comme il  
n'étoit point indiqué sur les cartes; le Cit.  
Baudin le nomma Golfe du Géographe,  
suivant les observations du Cit. St. Cricq.  
La pointe Sud de ce Golfe est placée par:  
55. 52. latit. et 112. 22. de long; la pointe  
Nord par: 55. 17. latit. et 111. 56. long; un  
rocher que l'on croit avoir vu entre les deux  
pointes et en dehors du Golfe, seroit situé  
par: 55. 20. de latit. et 111. 40. de long.

Jusqu'à lors nous avions visité des pays  
dont le climat, les productions, les animaux,  
étoient différents, il est vrai, de ce que nous  
connoissions en Europe, mais tout ces  
habitans avoient, à peu près nos mœurs, nos  
habitudes, nos passions, nos besoins; Main-  
tenant la scène alloit changer; ici nous  
devions observer un pays enfoncé en fait de la Nature,  
que l'industrie d'un peuple polaire n'avoit point  
de figures; ici nous devions reconnaître si la  
civilisation en ajoutant à nos jouissances,  
n'avoit point diminué notre bonheur.

Ce premier Aspect de la Nouvelle Hollande

(1)

**An Extract from the Account of the Expedition of Discovery  
Commanded by Citizen Baudin, Post Captain  
by Citizen Théodore Leschenault, Botanist**

**Chapter 3**

*Arrival on the coast of New Holland ; discoveries at Geographe Bay ;  
encounter with the natives ; wreck of our longboat ; gale ; sojourn at  
Shark Bay ; passage to Timor*

We left the Isle of France on the 5th of Floréal [25 April 1801] and had a very favourable passage to New Holland, enduring no discomfort apart from that occasioned by the absence of our friends who had remained in the Isle of France.

During our passage we saw (2) a great many Cape petrel. Several of them were caught on lines baited with morsels of meat. The Cape petrel is a voracious bird, and can be found several hundred leagues from land. It has a remarkable capacity to disgorge an enormous amount of fat which cools to the consistency and colour of congealed olive oil. The fat has a strong and unpleasant odour. Does the petrel use it to attract the fish it feeds on? or does it employ the fat to calm the turbulent motion of the waves when it rests on water? or does it simply use the fat to render its feathers impervious to water?

On the 7th of Prairial [27 May 1801] we sighted Cape Leeuwin, which the observations of Citizen Saint-Cricq, sub-lieutenant, placed in latitude  $34^{\circ} 7' 50''$  south and longitude  $112^{\circ} 26'$  east. In the evening we hove to and the Commander had the dredge lowered. Amongst several zoophytes, sponges and eschara brought up by the dredge I observed a very pretty green-fronded lithophyte. I kept one as a specimen.\* During the night the (3) currents drove us far to the west. On the 8th [28 May 1801] we drew near land again.

On the 9th [29 May 1801] we ran very close in along the coast that stretches from Cape Leeuwin to a headland which encloses to the south a gulf whose entrance is around thirteen leagues across. As it did not appear on the charts, Citizen Baudin named it Géographe Bay. According to the observations of Citizen Saint-Cricq, the southern headland of the gulf lies in latitude  $33^{\circ} 52'$  and longitude  $112^{\circ} 22'$ , while the northern headland lies in latitude  $33^{\circ} 17'$  and longitude  $111^{\circ} 50'$ . A rock which is thought to have been sighted between the two headlands, but outside the gulf, lies probably in latitude  $33^{\circ} 20'$  and longitude  $111^{\circ} 49'$ .

Until this point we had visited countries which, it is true, had different climates, crops and animals from those we were familiar with in Europe, but whose inhabitants had more or less the same morals, customs, passions and requirements as ourselves. Now the scene was set to change: we were going to observe a country that was still a child of Nature – and which had not yet been despoiled by the endeavours of a sophisticated people. Here we would be able to judge whether civilization, by multiplying our pleasures, has not diminished our happiness.

The first prospect of New Holland was not at all appealing: an escarpment of white sand sloping evenly to the shoreline occupies the foreground of the Leeuwin coast, apart from where a sterile and featureless white lagoon extends about a mile in length. The escarpment is

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\* [Marginal note] Nota. The dredge also brought up a species of sponge which was bright red in colour and stained the fingers of those who touched it. Citizen Depuch, mineralogist, was wearing nankeen trousers which were stained with red, and these stains resisted several attempts at washing.

completely covered with small bushes whose dark foliage is interrupted only by a number of landslides. Its crest is crowned with tall trees. I suspect that the sand of which it is composed contains large parts of marl<sup>1</sup> and lime. I attribute the abundance of its vegetation to this substance. Our soundings repeatedly brought up a bottom of sand mixed with fragments of shell and madrepore. Several large beds of bluish clay which I sighted along the beach have provided me with the grounds for a supposition: I believe that the fertility of the soil would increase the further inland one travelled. Wherever the escarpment had crumbled away, allowing our gaze to penetrate into the interior, we could see that the land was covered with tall trees. Along this coast the lead line always showed (5) thirty to sixty fathoms. During the day we did not see any natives, but in the evening several fires indicated to us that this barren coast was not without inhabitants.

On the 10th [30 May 1801] we entered the gulf, and anchored that evening about three miles from land.

On the 11th [31 May 1801] Citizen Freycinet, sub-lieutenant, took a boat with Citizens Depuch, mineralogist, and Riédlé, head gardener, to the southern margin of the gulf.

In the short amount of time they spent on land they were not able to travel very far from the shore. They did not encounter any fertile ground in the distance that they covered. They saw only a few small shrubs, or undershrubs, tough grasses and rushes; plant life did not seem to flourish here, but they observed that the interior of the country was much more thickly wooded. According to Citizen Depuch, the humus, or vegetable soil, along this part of the coast is a mixture of ochre, clay and mica and lies on a granitic basis. He brought back several samples of this granite and its soil covering. Although we saw several (6) fires in the interior, close to where they made their landing, they did not however see any natives.

Citizen Riédlé brought back rather a large quantity of plants, of which only a few were in fruit or flower. The advanced season did not offer the promise of a more abundant harvest. (In the southern hemisphere the month of Prairial [May–June] corresponds to the month of Frimaire [November–December] in our climate – a meagre period for plants in almost all European countries.)

I described several of the plants whose characteristics were pronounced enough for them to be classified.

I observed:

A species of *Scirpus* which could prove quite useful. Its elongated leaves are so strong that Citizen Riédlé by his efforts could not manage to break a single one. The merit of this grass is that it grows vigorously in a soil which, according to the two above-mentioned observers, is insubstantial.

The gum tree mentioned by Vancouver, and which Phillip observed on the east coast of New Holland.

(7)

The trunk of this tree grows to seven or eight feet in height and often bifurcates; from the top of each part issues a thick clump of very brittle leaves, filled with pith, and resembling a clump of grass. These leaves have the form of diamond-shaped quadrangular prisms, broadening markedly towards their base.

The bark, which resembles a mosaic of small diamond shapes all perfectly joined together, is made up of strips an inch and a half in length stacked one on top of the other, all of exactly the same size. These are the remnants of leaves.

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<sup>1</sup> [Leschenault's note]

Vancouver found beds of marl in King George's Sound (near the Leeuwin coast).

Between these strips or leaf remnants, gum oozes in great profusion – a reddish-brown resin that solidifies into teardrops, which are sometimes as large as an egg. From the centre of the clump emerges a single scape eight to ten feet in height, which is woody in consistency, and bears a spike thickly covered with capsules of three valves and three loculi. Citizen Riédle never saw it in flower, and observed that the capsules were always open and seedless. Phillip affirms that the gum of this tree is an excellent remedy for dysentery.

Like Labillardière, I believe that this tree is a species of *Dracaena*. I saw (8) one of these trees in flower in Port Jackson, and learned that it belonged to a new genus named *Xanthorrhoea* by the English.

I also observed the *Banksia nivea*. It was neither in flower nor in fruit.

A type of *Glycine* to which I gave the specific name *ilicifolia* because its tough leaves are armed with thorns, and serrated like those of the holly.

A small onion plant, and lastly a very pretty undershrub with beautiful red flowers which, as I believed that it had not yet been described, I named *Baudinia*, from the name of Commander Baudin.<sup>1(1)</sup> Nobody went on shore on the 12th [1 June 1801], but the Commander sent a boat to inspect the head of the bay. The midshipman who had charge of it reported that the whole stretch of the land he explored was covered with very fine trees right up to the shoreline. He did not see any natives.

On the 13th [2 June 1801], Citizen Péron and I landed on the eastern side of the gulf. A very fine, white sand, (9) possessing, I believe, the same vegetative qualities as that found along the Leeuwin coast, forms an escarpment forty to fifty feet high, and nearly twice that in width. The slope which faces the sea is quite steep, and the plants growing on it lack in vigour.

A species of creeping *Mesembryanthemum* with white flowers and thick triangular leaves grows there – might it be *edule*? Several species of undershrub are also found there, among which I observed one from the *Orache* family – an *Atriplex* whose leaves and stem are very downy, and which has a salty taste.

When I reached the top of the escarpment I gazed admiringly across a flat country which is covered with very large trees, forming a magnificent forest. A gentle slope leads down to the plain. Although it is also composed of sand, the far side of the escarpment possesses a fertility which is lacking on the seaward side. Part of the ground is covered with bushes, around twelve to fifteen feet tall. A beautiful species of *Genista* with dense, reddish wood grows there.

A *Leptospermum*, whose aspect resembles the (10) weeping willow.

There are a great many crab holes in the sand, but we did not see any crabs.

I found fertile soil at the foot of the escarpment – a thick blackish compost, several feet deep, formed by the débris of the plants which abundantly cover its surface. The plants growing there have much in common with our European plants.

I found celery in great profusion; a plant I judged, after inspecting its leaves, to be burnet; parsley; several species of sow thistle, geranium and plantain; and a very lovely species of *Gnaphalium* with white flowers.

The trees of the forest are very tall. I saw several which were thirty to forty feet in circumference. They belonged to the genus *Eucalyptus*.

I also observed a tall tree of the genus *Melaleuca*, which has a very thick, soft, pliable bark which is easily removed. As one proceeds inland, the vegetation grows denser and the (11) great number of herbaceous plants at times prevents one from moving forward with any ease.

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<sup>1</sup> [Leschenault's note]

This plant features among those whose drawings and descriptions I have sent back.

I killed a deranged but very beautiful red-bellied parrot. We saw several other small birds, but none was noteworthy for its song or the beauty of its plumage.

The footsteps of a man and a child freshly imprinted on the sand of the shore, trees burnt around their base, and trampled grass left us in no doubt that this coast was inhabited. Citizen Péron, having strayed a little way away from us, even came across traces of a recent fire, around which were scattered the remains of fish and shellfish. After so many signs, we were surprised not to see a single native.

We embarked at noon to return to the ship. Scarcely had we put to sea when we saw a thick cloud of smoke rise into the air close by to us, or so it seemed. We turned about and went on shore a second time, hoping to have the meeting we greatly desired; but when we reached the top of the escarpment we realised that the smoke was more than two miles distant. Had we set off into the (12) dense vegetation we would have run the risk of never finding our way back again. Besides, the ship was anchored three leagues from shore, and the winds were contrary. We returned on board.

When we got back we learned that the Commander had been on shore with several naturalists. They had seen a number of huts and one native. In vain had they offered him different gifts; he would accept nothing. His refusals were accompanied by threatening gestures, and he fled as soon as they tried to approach him.

Several officers from the *Naturaliste* had likewise been ashore, further to the south of where we had been. When they returned they reported that they had discovered a river – and that it looked to be navigable for a small boat. They had not reconnoitred the mouth. They added that it was fine country and the banks of the river were thronged with black swans and pelicans.

Accordingly, Citizen Baudin gave the order to Citizen Le Bas, commander, to take the longboat the following morning and reconnoitre (13) this river. The small boat from the *Naturaliste* was instructed to accompany it. It was to follow the coastline until it found the mouth, and then travel upriver as far as possible.

We left at three o'clock the next morning and landed at six o'clock. The *Naturaliste's* small boat was taken by Citizen Hamelin and the two officers who had reported their discovery the previous day. After consultation, it was decided that they would look for the mouth by sea and that we would follow the course of the river until we reached it. We began walking along the shore and covered around a league in a southerly direction. We came to the head of a salt lake which lay immediately behind the escarpment which, as it were, encloses the whole land. Beyond the hillock which holds back the waters of the lake we could make out the river around two hundred yards away. In these parts its banks are marshy and covered with samphire. We walked parallel to its course for an hour, until we could go no further, because at this point the lake and the river met. We had our luncheon while we waited for the boat, filled with high spirits by this little expedition. Across the river (14) lay pleasant country, and swans and many other aquatic birds flew on the water in great profusion.

Some time later the boat arrived. Thus far it had encountered a considerable depth of water. We embarked and the boat continued upstream against a very slight current, which may even have been caused by the ebb of the tide. After going about a league, the depth diminished so considerably that the boat kept touching bottom. We sought to gain the left bank of the river, where there appeared to be more water, but as the boat again touched bottom we had to turn about. This far up the river, the water was only slightly less salty than lower down. Very large tree trunks lay in the middle of the river, having apparently been borne there by the water. This suggests that floods occur here in the rainy season. Might it not be the case that this river is simply a portion of low ground onto which a lake discharges its waters in the rainy season?

We encountered a great many birds but they did not (15) let us approach close enough to shoot at them. The left bank is densely wooded and has a pleasant aspect; the other, by contrast, is marshy along its entire length.

As we were returning we saw a quantity of smoke rising above the trees on the left bank, appearing to come from five or six different fires situated close together. We tried again to steer the boat towards that side, but in vain. The bed of the river shallowed, and we had to continue on our way. When we judged that we had reached a place opposite where the longboat lay, we were landed on the right bank in order to cross by foot to the shoreline. But scarcely had we stepped from the boat when we heard shouting and saw five or six natives standing on the opposite bank making what were undoubtedly threatening gestures towards us. We embarked again and made a third attempt to bring the boat to their side. The bed of the river again shallowed, but we did not want to miss this opportunity to meet the natives, so Citizens Freycinet and Heirisson, officers, and Lharidon, surgeon, Depuch, mineralogist, and I all (16) entered the water. The natives drew together and watched us closely for some time; but when we came within gunshot of them they fled, calling out the word '*velou*', '*velou*', over and over. They were entirely naked, except for a sort of mantle of fur-covered skin which hung down behind from the shoulders to the middle of the back. Two of them carried long sticks. A russet-coloured dog, belonging to the dog-fox species, followed behind them. By the time we reached the bank they had disappeared into the woods. They continued to cry out '*velou*', '*velou*', and the dog howled in a similar way to them – the howl of a dog that has been encaged and restrained against its will. We advanced to the edge of the wood, but had no desire to go into it. Our guns were loaded only with small shot, and we could not have defended ourselves to advantage in a dense thicket against men whose numbers were unknown and who had shown a hostile disposition towards us. Besides, night was approaching and we had a long way to go before we arrived back at our longboat. It seemed unwise (17) to begin a course of action which might bring in its train disastrous consequences. On several branches we hung glass necklaces, a small mirror, and a knife – with which we made several notches in the branches in order to instruct the savages in its use. The shouting and howling had died down, and we presumed that they had withdrawn inland. We noticed a well-trodden path running alongside the river, which gave us reason to believe that this place was ordinarily inhabited. We were quietly withdrawing when we became aware that the savages were creeping silently through the brush, twenty yards behind us, doubtless with the aim of surprising us. They had removed that sort of mantle which covered their shoulders and had armed themselves with long spears and a type of dagger, a foot and a half in length, shaped like a spearhead. This weapon was so highly polished that several of us thought at first that it was made of iron. We immediately turned and aimed our guns at them. They began shouting at us again, and spoke heatedly amongst themselves whilst brandishing their spears and daggers at us – these being made (18) not of iron but of very dark, highly polished wood.

The spears they brandished in their left hands had shafts that were six or seven feet long. We could not discern the material from which their tips were made. Attached to the upper side is a piece of wood one foot long and two inches wide. This piece of wood doubtless serves to propel the spear with greater force. As they raise the spear they shake this piece of wood very vigorously. Understanding that these savages had made up their minds to attack us, we continued to face them as we slowly withdrew. Their gestures became more and more threatening. We entered the water and began to cross to the far side. The water came up around our waists, and we repeatedly sank into the mud. It had been agreed when we left the small boat that we would return on foot to the longboat; for this reason we assumed that the small boat must already have departed. Had this been the case, and the savages more numerous, our position would have been (19) critical indeed. As our guns were not fully



loaded, they would not have been capable of creating a sufficiently fearsome effect to cause the savages to flee.

But Citizens Hamelin and Le Bas had watched their withdrawal from the start, and had stopped in order to witness the outcome of our meeting. When they saw that we were being pursued they came immediately to our aid, accompanied by the crew of the boat.

At this place the river divides into two branches. Citizens Hamelin and Le Bas had got out of the boat onto the point formed between these branches. When we caught sight of them there we retreated in their direction. Seeing our numbers increase in this way, the savages stopped, but kept on making their threats and often repeated the word '*mouille*' as they pointed at the two different sides of the river.

Once we were together again, we made various gestures towards them to let them know that we were not their enemies. Citizen Depuch took a green branch and advanced alone and unarmed to the middle of the river, but as they continued to brandish their spears at him, he withdrew. When he (20) was back at our side, one of the natives then moved forward, still bearing his weapons, to the middle of the river. He made no attempt to cross to the bank we were on, so I untied the handkerchief I wore around my neck and I placed it on a branch. We then withdrew around fifteen paces, and I signalled to him to come forward and collect the present we had made him. We perceived that he mimicked very exactly and with great ease the words that he heard us utter. He approached, looked at the handkerchief, and put it back in the same place. Then he turned towards the savages who were on the other bank and said something to them. We wanted to come up to him, but he immediately renewed his threats. Citizen Hamelin threw him a red snuffbox which bore the image of a negro's head. He picked it up and gave a cry of delight as he showed it to his companions. Then he cast it onto the ground. I threw him a small mirror. He looked into the glass and started with surprise. He looked behind it, doubtless trying to find the figure who had startled him, and then threw it down again. Three more (21) natives decided to come across to him, but stayed always fifteen paces away from us. Each time we tried to approach them they resumed their threatening gestures. The sun had gone down and so we were obliged to withdraw. They made no attempt to follow us. They turned back the way they had come, but did not take away any of the items we had given them.

If we had had enough time, perhaps we might have managed to meet them at close quarters; but the entire scene that I have just related took only an hour – too short a time for us to gain the confidence of men who were ill-disposed towards us.

There were five of these savages. Two more came to join them afterwards, and perhaps still more of them remained hidden in the brush. They were of average height, and were pleasantly proportioned. Five were black, but two had red skin, which I consider to be an effect of drugs they consume, because their skin and their hair, which is long and straight, were of the same colour. The others wore their hair cut short, but it did not seem woolly. Only two or three (22) of them had tufts of beard on the lower part of their chins. Their teeth are very white, and none of these appeared to be missing, from what I could judge at that distance.<sup>1</sup> I make this observation because Dampier states that the savages from the western part of New Holland have the custom of pulling out two of their front teeth.

It seems that they dwell in small groups, and that each group has its own particular region whose borders it defends. They might perhaps have thought that we were a wandering band of men who had come to install ourselves there, and so took up arms to defend their territory. Indeed, the word '*mouille*' that they repeated as they pointed to different sides of the river was undoubtedly meant to indicate a separate region where we could remain without disturbing their equanimity. When we withdrew, they did not follow us; so their intention was

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<sup>1</sup> We remained always at a distance of about fifteen paces from them.

not to attack us, but simply to rid themselves of strangers whom they mistrusted. (23) It appears, however, that they wage war against each other, as their spears and their peculiar daggers seem more suited for doing battle against men than for killing animals which they would eat.

When we saw them initially they were unarmed and were wearing their mantles, which they removed when they took up their weapons. Their dwelling places must therefore have been nearby. It is unfortunate that they were so suspicious of us, as this deprived us of the opportunity of observing their domestic life.

During our absence Citizen Ronsard, sub-lieutenant, encountered a man and a woman on the shore. The man ran off, but the woman, overcome no doubt by fear, collapsed onto the sand. Citizen Ronsard went up to her, but was unable to allay her terror. She crouched there, completely naked except for one of those mantles of which I have spoken. It served as a sort of bag, and contained several roots which were fibrous and black and as big as hazelnuts. Citizen Ronsard took these roots, and replaced them with glass beads, knives and small mirrors. Taking advantage of a moment when she thought she was no longer being observed, this woman crept (24) behind a bush. She was allowed to go. She was around twenty years old, and she was pregnant, very ugly and very dirty. Her breasts hung down to her thighs.

Others who explored the area found several huts, but all were abandoned. They left behind glass beads, knives and mirrors. These huts are constructed in the crudest fashion possible, and are at most four feet high. I was told afterwards that larger ones had been seen, but that these were scarcely less rudimentary, and could barely provide shelter for two men. They consist of sticks pushed a short way into the ground and covered over with the bark of the *Melaleuca*, of which I have spoken above. The same type of bark is also spread across the ground inside the huts, and doubtless serves as bedding.

These people strike me as being as far from a state of civilization as it is possible to be. They do not display the slightest curiosity – curiosity being the mark of a desire to acquire knowledge. Their fear is like the fear one sees in wild beasts. Without risk of error, we may pass judgement on the level of enterprise (25) and enlightenment displayed by a people who have neither clothing, nor boats, nor even the bow and arrow – a weapon which has until now been found in almost all societies.<sup>1</sup> New Holland is fringed by the Moluccas, New Guinea, the Friendly Isles and New Zealand, and yet the customs of its people differ strikingly from those of its neighbours. Is it possible that the inhabitants of this vast land have their own separate genesis? It will be up to those who study the migration of (26) different peoples to resolve this question.

The winds were contrary. As the longboat lay far downwind of our ships, Citizen Le Bas ordered the skipper to beat across and anchor in a place that he indicated. In the meantime we walked there and lit a bonfire. We were all very hungry, and impatiently awaited the arrival of the longboat, which was carrying the provisions for our supper; but at this point one of the sailors came up and told us that the longboat had foundered a league further up the shore, and that it was only with difficulty that a few provisions had been saved – and even these had been spoiled by sea water. We went immediately to the scene of the wreck. The sea was very heavy, and the longboat had already filled with sand. The sailors waited until the following day to try and refloat it; and with the wet sails, masts and oars we built a small tent

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<sup>1</sup> Citizen Bailly, a mineralogist on board the *Naturaliste*, told me that he found several fish-traps at the edge of the river. These are tapering, semi-circular contraptions. Several are placed side by side, separated only by a small, narrow space through which the fish enter, but from which they cannot escape once they have done so. He maintained that these fish-traps, made with sticks driven into the ground, were constructed with great skill.

Dampier also records having encountered fish-traps in Shark Bay, on the western coast of New Holland.

(2) Having had the opportunity to study these people more closely, I have learnt that they draw their small boats up into the woods. Such is the skill with which they wield their spears, these become fearsome weapons in their hands, and are as deadly as the arrows used by other savage peoples.

under which we spent a very unpleasant night, each of us taking a turn on watch – so that we should not to be surprised if the natives decided to come and cause us trouble. (27)

Citizen Hamelin left that same evening in his boat to go and apprise the Commander of our calamity, and to send us the help we needed to get away.

The boat did not return the following day. To make matters worse, all our supplies had been spoiled by the sea, and our water had been lost or drunk. When nobody came, we grew extremely worried about Citizen Hamelin, particularly as the weather had been vile during the night, and we found on the shoreline a stocking which belonged to one of the officers who had gone with him, along with the blade of one of the oars from his boat. We were visited that day by several birds, among which I observed a red-billed oystercatcher, a small turtledove, a grey swift and a quail similar to our European ones. Several of us went to look for water. Some distance from our camp we found a hole dug in the sand which contained brackish water. We were driven by necessity to drink it, but it did not have any harmful effect on us. It appears that we should have sought around here in vain for better water, for the earth was trampled flat all around the hole and several pipes made out of (28) celery stalks were scattered around it. The natives undoubtedly used them to suck up the water when they came to quench their thirst, and they would not have bothered to come here if they had found better water elsewhere. We did not stray far from our camp as we were of a mind to stay together in case the order should come to embark immediately.

We spent the second night in the grip of profound apprehension. The following day, Citizens Depuch, Péron, a helmsman and I walked around two leagues along the shore until we reached a place abeam of the ships where we could try and signal them; we carried, as the only provisions for the four of us, one bottle of water and two ship's biscuits. We lit a large fire and fixed a boat hook to the crown of a tree, our handkerchiefs fluttering from the tip of this implement. Several moments later the ship began to move towards the coast, and a boat was sent out in the direction of our camp. We too headed towards our camp, and on our arrival learned that the delay to our rescue had been caused by the bad weather of the night before last, which had driven (29) Citizen Hamelin's boat out into the open sea, and that he had only got on board his ship, exhausted by hunger and fatigue, after battling the sea for twenty-four hours. We were sent provisions and equipment for righting the longboat, in case this were feasible, but, unable to do so, we returned on board ship the next day, having spent three days and three nights on land. Our small craft had much difficulty in reaching the ships, and as soon as we were on board, a very strong gale blew up, and we barely had time to get under way.

The *Naturaliste's* boat landed that same day. The swell was very heavy, and a sailor named Vasse was swept away by the waves as he tried to get aboard, and was drowned.

### **General reflections on Géographe Bay**

All the low, flat country we recently explored appears never to have been afflicted by the great destructive forces which have transformed the surface of the globe in several other regions. No peaks rise greatly above the general level of the land; there are no major inlets, nor (30) sudden breaks in the coastline: it is all quite uniform.

The mountains whose rounded summits we could make out in the distance are perhaps very ancient, and form the backbone of the continent; however, all the country which we explored in the vicinity of the coast appeared to consist of alluvial soil sitting on a layer of rock and covered over in variable degrees by vegetable detritus which has accumulated there over time – and in particularly large quantities due to the fact that an escarpment of sand which almost entirely encloses this region prevents it from being carried away by the rains.

The soil is very fertile, but is much more suitable for herbaceous plants than for tall trees; even though the former are smothered by the great number of the latter which grow there with astonishing vigour. If the land were cleared, the soil would quickly lose its fertility. The trees, it is true, grow to an extraordinary size, but they do not have the straight and slender trunks which we so commonly observe in our European forests. Several of the herbaceous plants are suitable for human consumption, but none of the trees appeared to bear (31) edible fruit.

The land lies in a latitude which betokens a climate of the mildest sort. Even though we were there in its winter season, the days were very warm. Its climate is comparable with that of the Cape of Good Hope, but it seems to enjoy a further advantage in that its shores are never visited by hurricanes. Indeed, one never encounters there gullies hollowed out by fast-flowing streams or trees toppled by violent gales.

It would be particularly easy to cultivate crops in this region, as the ground is not stony, the slopes are not steep, and the soil requires only a light turning. The land is especially suited for grazing. It is only a pity that water is not plentiful, as this will hinder any attempts by Europeans to transform it through their labours. In any case, further investigations must be undertaken before a judgement is made. A person who knew nothing about France would form a very false impression if he judged the country solely on the basis of a journey made across the moors of Bordeaux or along the coast of Brittany. The rains which water the mountains that we saw in New Holland must issue somewhere: if no river exists, is it not (32) reasonable to assume that these waters gather in vast lakes?<sup>1</sup>

We saw few insects and no quadrupeds apart from the dog which was following the natives whom we met. Citizen Levillain, a zoologist on board the *Naturaliste*, had a wire-haired hunting dog which he lost in New Holland.

Fish are not plentiful in the gulf. We caught very few, and these were small in size.

On the morning that we left the land we killed, on the shoreline, an amphibious quadruped which had the head of a cat. It bore a strong resemblance to the sea otter which appears in plate 43 of Cook's third voyage. But the animal had no tail, perhaps as a result of an accident. Two days beforehand, I had wounded another, (33) but it had had the strength to drag itself into the sea, where I watched it struggle for more than a quarter of an hour in the water, until it perished and the waves carried it away.

### **Passage to Shark Bay; sojourn on tiny Dorre Island, or Barren Island; passage to Timor**

When we weighed anchor on the 19th of Prairial [8 June 1801] we were at the head of the gulf, and the wind was blowing from the open sea. We were forced to tack and the ship made slow progress into the wind. For a moment during the night, as we rounded the southern headland, we faced very great danger. The gale lasted for three days, and we became separated from the *Naturaliste*. She did not rejoin us when the winds moderated, and we were filled with grave fears for her. It was only with great difficulty that the *Géographe* had escaped the head of the gulf, and she was a ship that held the wind much better than the *Naturaliste*. What then were we to make of the fate of our friends? The most appalling thoughts wearied our souls.

After tacking for a time at the entrance to the gulf, we headed north. The rendezvous, in case of separation, were, (34) firstly, Swan River, then Shark Bay, and finally Timor. The wind, or some other factor best understood by sailors, prevented the Commander from going

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<sup>1</sup> Having acquired greater experience in evaluating coastlines *from a distance*, I am of the view that the entrance to a harbour, or at least to a sizeable inlet, may lie at the northern end of the gulf. I have formed this view on the basis of a map of the coast which I sketched at the time.

to the first rendezvous. After passing within sight of Rottnest Island, which is only a short distance from the Swan River, we went directly to the second rendezvous.

We were accompanied by Cape petrel for the whole journey. From time to time we glimpsed the coast, though only, it is true, from a very great distance. It had the same appearance as Leeuwin Land, though at times its slope seemed more sheer.

I was gravely ill at this time, but as my friends tended me with great care, and I have a strong constitution, I was quickly restored to health.

Shark Bay is bounded on its eastern side by the mainland of New Holland, and on its western side by Dirk Hartog Island and the two Dorre Islands, or Barren Islands. There are two entrances, one between Dirk Hartog Island and the larger of the Dorre Islands; the other between the smaller of these islands and the mainland. (35) It was by the latter, northern, entrance that we came into the bay.

The headland on the mainland side is very broken, as the tide, running in against the rock, has caused many cave-ins. The brow of the land appears to be covered in scorched grass. We anchored firstly opposite the smaller of the Dorre Islands. The next day we went onto the island and gathered specimens for our collections of natural history. Then we sailed to the head of the bay, to a spit of land called Middle Island on the charts. Investigations undertaken by the officers of the *Naturaliste* have established that this so-called island is in fact attached to the mainland. The Commander anchored off this spit of land, but was driven away by bad weather before he had the opportunity to explore it. So we returned to the anchorage off tiny Barren Island, and again went on shore. Two tents were erected: one for the Commander, and another for the naturalists.

The name Barren Island aptly describes the island's appearance. As we came in to land we passed several lone rocks, some of which are joined to the island (36) at low tide. Coming closer, we saw the same unusual formation that we observed in Leeuwin Land and in Géographe Bay: that is to say, an escarpment shutting off the hinterland – although in this case it was composed solely of loose sand which appears to shift about in the passing storms. Low-growing plants and large clumps of tough, brittle grass of the genera *Cyperus* and *Spinifex* grow across the tops of the small mounds that take shape among the shifting sands. On the far side of the escarpment, the terrain rises almost imperceptibly towards the centre of the island, which is around two or three miles across. The ground is composed entirely of sand, which in several places has developed a hard crust. Nowhere on the island can one find a tree that is over eight feet tall. It is completely covered with small bushes which sport a dreary-looking foliage. They belong to a great many different varieties, and most of these seem to be new. I found *Damara* growing there in great abundance – a picture of it appears in volume 4 of Dampier's voyage<sup>1</sup> – along with the (37) plant shown in figure 3 of the same plate.

I had still not recovered completely from my illness, and every evening my legs swelled tremendously. I took moderate exercise during this period and was restored to full health.

An enormous number of kangaroos live on the island. Far from the realm of men, they dwell in undoubted peace. They have no enemies to fear apart from a few sea-eagles; by taking shelter under the impenetrable bushes, they brave the voracity of these birds. We came and brought strife and terror to their refuge, and killed a great many of them.

The creature is similar in size to a large rabbit, and is reddish-grey in colour. Its tail is covered with short hair, and resembles that of a rat. Its hind legs are very long, and are bigger than the forelegs. The hind legs have three toes, and one of these has two claws. The forelegs are short and slender and possess five short digits. The female has a pouch on the underside of

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<sup>1</sup> A species of *Melaleuca*.

her large belly;<sup>1</sup> inside this there is (38) a long teat which opens and closes by dilating and contracting. The pouch provides refuge for a single young one. During the first two days we killed only females. In the following days we killed a number of males as well – but always a greater number of females, all of which were carrying a young one in the pouch. No doubt this additional weight made it more difficult for them to flee. This creature ordinarily resides beneath the dense foliage of a species of *Mimosa* bush, whose spreading branches tightly intertwine and form an impenetrable shelter. We had to beat the bushes very vigorously to drive out the kangaroos, and then fire at them swiftly, for they leapt out from one bush and underneath another almost before we could take aim.

Each mother's pouch holds a single small kangaroo, which led me to believe that she does not carry her young for very long. Not all of the young were of the same age: we found some which had no fur, and had not opened their eyes; others, however, were quite large, and fled when the hunter came to fetch his kill. One of the young kangaroos, which was slower than the others in leaving its place of refuge, was captured, and, (39) rather than appearing frightened, licked the man who had just killed its mother, and accepted the food that it was offered. The Commander kept the creature for several months, until it died by accident in Timor. It grew perfectly tame, and was affectionate and easy to feed. It ate bread and was very fond of sugar water.

One day while out botanizing I came upon a lizard resting on a piece of vegetation. It was four or five inches long (including the tail) and was dirty grey in colour. It had a broad head and great bulging yellow eyes which were cold and sinister. Its stubby tail was about an inch and a half long and covered with tubercles. There were tubercles also at the ends of its toes. I approached it, and rather than hurrying away, it stared back at me. Knowing some lizards to be venomous, I wrapped the skirts of my cloth coat around my hand, and seized it. It made no movement to flee, but instead raised its tail and sprayed from all the tubercles along this a viscous liquid that was almost black in colour. I was glad then that I had acted with such prudence.

When I grasped the lizard its tail broke off; as happens with all lizard tails, it kept on twitching despite that fact that it was no longer attached to the trunk. (40) I preserved the creature in spirits. No mark could be seen on the dark brown cloth of my coat.

We also came across two large lizards. One was blackish in colour, with a short, truncated tail and broad scales, and moved slowly. The other was very agile, and had beautiful green skin and a very long and slender tail. It belongs to the genus *Gouanaca*.

There are also a great many land snails, but we found only their empty shells. There were two species of snail: one is half an inch long and has a pointed whorl; the other, however, has a flattened whorl and is about half an inch in diameter.

A great number of shellfish live along the shoreline: a species of oyster which clings to the rocks in great colonies (the same as is found in the Isle of France); the Ethiopian Crown; a species of small clam; a species of *Trochus* whose colouring was not particularly attractive (it was still covered by its epidermis) – Citizen Maugé, zoologist, believes it to be a new species; a species of (41) large Worm-shell.

Fish are plentiful in the bay. We caught great quantities of a large red-coloured fish, whose flesh had a very agreeable taste. Two thick bumps swell from its highly elongated occipital bone, giving it a 'hunchback' appearance (this was the name by which the sailors immediately began to call it).

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<sup>1</sup> The belly of the kangaroo is very large in proportion to the rest of its body; the intestinal canal is extremely long and greatly enlarged.

We also saw an enormous number of whales. I noticed that they always swam in pairs, which suggested that it was their mating season.<sup>1</sup>

Sea snakes are also very common in the bay.

The currents bring a great amount of driftwood to Dorre Island from nearby land. There is no fresh water. I observed that the dew was very heavy.

On the ... we finally brought our (42) dreary stay on Dorre Island to an end and sailed out of the bay. We continued on our way northwards, and encountered nothing of interest during our passage to Timor. We occasionally saw land, but from so great a distance that we were unable to make out even its most general features.

On the 3rd of Thermidor, Year IX [21 July 1801], we rounded the westernmost point of New Holland. It is here that Willem's River flows into the sea; its water is salty.

Several days later we sailed to within five or six leagues of an island, and the Commander sent Citizen Ronsard, sub-lieutenant, to reconnoitre it. He was not accompanied by any of the naturalists. He reported that the island was composed of bare reddish rocks. He found three fresh-water streams; it was easy to get ashore. The island lies three leagues at most from the coast of New Holland. Citizen Ronsard collected several plants, and I have classified some of them. He also found a number of beautiful shells: the most remarkable of these are the huge *Spirulas*, which turn in a regular spiral, and *Admirals*. (43) In appreciation of this beautiful shell, the Commander decided to name the island Admiral Island. Somebody else had proposed naming it Three Springs Island. This name would have signalled to navigators that fresh water was to be found there, a vital resource along a coast which until now had yielded no fresh water. Citizen Ronsard also caught sight of a scrawny dog which had probably been left behind by visitors from the mainland.

We continued exploring the north-west coast for some time, and passed within sight of an extensive archipelago. It is of vital importance that a detailed reconnaissance be undertaken among these islands, as such work may well cause the coast of the New Holland mainland to be redrawn far to the south of where it currently appears on the charts. I leave it to navigators and geographers to judge of the importance of an observation of this kind.

These islands present a remarkable sight, as they have the appearance of upturned bowls.

We saw a great many fires as we sailed along this vast stretch of coast, which is thought to form part of the mainland. We were further struck by the sight of a large area being consumed by a blaze of (44) astonishing intensity. We were of the view that this conflagration must have begun when the natives left one of their fires untended and it had spread to surrounding trees.<sup>2</sup>

On the ... the Commander set our course to the north. Several men on board were suffering from scurvy and we had a general need for fresh provisions. We had no idea that our stay in port, which we greatly looked forward to, would prove to be so deadly.

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<sup>1</sup> These whales were not of the type that supplies spermaceti. The latter species can be identified by the way in which it blows water through its spout at an oblique angle. The whales we saw in Shark Bay blew water directly upwards.

<sup>2</sup> Since then we have learnt that the natives of New Holland deliberately set fire to the great forests in which they live in order to clear away bushes and grasses that impede them.

## Chapter 4

*Arrival in Timor; a note on the political organisation and commerce of Kupang; morals and customs of the wealthy Malays of Kupang; morals and customs of the ordinary Malays; natural history; a note on the Malayan language*

We sighted the southern coast of Timor on the 3rd of Fructidor [21 August 1801]. (45) The coast is mountainous and tall trees grow right up to the summits.

On the 4th [22 August 1801] we entered the strait which lies between the island of Semau and the western tip of Timor, and dropped anchor there. The Commander sent a boat to Kupang to inform the Dutch governor of our arrival and to request the services of a pilot.

The strait is at most a league across, and has everywhere a considerable depth. It is highly picturesque: both shores are covered with trees, and appeared all the more pleasant to us because our gaze had for a long period traversed only the barren, sandy beaches of New Holland. Along the Timor coast we spied fisheries and small craft. A boat was sent out to make contact with the natives.

On the 5th [23 August 1801] the boat which had set out on the previous day returned with two pilots, one Malay and one French. The latter had served with the Dutch East India Company for seven years as master gunner at the fort. That evening we dropped anchor in Kupang roads, around a mile from land.

On the 6th [24 August 1801] the Commander went ashore. He paid a visit to the Governor, (46) and dined with him. He asked the Governor for three houses: one for himself, one for the naturalists and the officers, and one to be used as a hospital for the sick. Monsieur Lofstet (this was the Governor's name) granted the request. The house allocated to the Commander belonged to Madame Van Esten, widow of the governor before last – it was he who received the unfortunate Bligh with all due solicitude after the *Bounty* had been commandeered. The house allocated to the naturalists belonged to Monsieur Gabriel Wentz, a Malay of mixed race who was the civil lieutenant of Kupang. The Governor's former house was allocated to serve as a hospital. It had been reduced to a ruin four years previously when Malays from the island's interior came down to drive away the English who had seized the Dutch trading post – the Malays slaughtering a number of the English in the process. As the building had no roof, we soon fashioned one out of leaves of the *latania* palm.

On the 7th [25 August 1801] our belongings were brought ashore and we moved into our lodgings on dry land.

The Kupang roadstead is very extensive and has three entrances. One is very narrow and runs from south to north: this is the one by which (47) we entered. A broader one lies to the west of Kupang, between Semau and the small island of Kera, which is low, sandy, and uninhabited, and is around a quarter of a league in diameter and covered with trees. The last channel lies between Kera and Timor, and is little used.

The low-lying country around Kupang is lush and attractive. Vegetation crowds right down to the shoreline, and there are several groves of coconut trees whose majestic plumes sway gently in the breeze and shade the modest dwelling-places.

The town is situated in the north-west of Timor, and is overlooked by a fort which stands on a rocky eminence. A small stream flows around the foot of the rock. When the tide is high, small craft, and even Chinese junks, can enter the stream, making loading and unloading very easy. With minor expenditure, it could be made into a port that would be suitable and safe for small ships.



The river divides the town into two parts; a wooden bridge unites them. The fort and the Governor's house are on one side; the Chinese quarter lies on the other side, along the shore. The rest of the town is occupied\* (48) by Malays.

The town has a pleasing appearance. Its main streets are shaded by mango trees and Banyan fig trees, known also as 'spreading fig trees' because of the way their branches send roots towards the ground, which are capable of starting new trees if care is not taken to cut them back. This extraordinary tree is the same size as the walnut tree, and produces great quantities of figs that are eaten by a large species of bat (which Valmont de Bomare calls the '*roussette*'). The trunks of these trees have many crevices which shelter a large species of lizard which has light grey skin with red markings. It has a very harsh cry which could be rendered as the word '*oukou*' uttered loudly in the throat. I wonder if it is a type of gecko?

The houses lining the main streets are simple and regular in design, and are occupied by the richest members of the town.

In seizing the Dutch fort four years ago, the English, through the indignities they inflicted on the populace, and their\*\* (49) general lack of restraint, caused several families to flee, some to Batavia, and others to the island's interior. The families appealed to the Malays of the interior for help, who came down and slaughtered a number of the Englishmen, and caused the rest to depart hurriedly in their ships. However, as any people may, after wreaking revenge for their compatriots, the Malays became carried away; they looted and tore down the houses of the rich, and some of these have still not been rebuilt. As a result of these events, the inhabitants of Kupang grow anxious whenever they glimpse a European ship. They immediately take up arms and prepare to offer the sternest possible resistance. Our behaviour has taught them that not all Europeans are like the English. They hate the latter in the same degree that they appear disposed to love the French.

We were witness to the hatred that the Malays bear the English nation. During our stay an English frigate cruising the Timor coast received the news that two French ships lay at anchor in Kupang roads. They came by to ascertain our identity, and to make off with our vessels if it were possible. As they approached, (50) armed Malays gathered together and gestured at them with the utmost fury. Several of the Malays said that if they were lucky enough to kill some Englishmen they would 'eat their heads'. We sent one of our boats across to the English frigate and showed them the passports which their government had granted our expedition. The frigate departed, and harmony was restored.

This frigate was the *Virginie*, which had been captured from the French during the current war.

The Malay is distrustful, courageous, and strongly attached to his customs. He would have difficulty accepting a master who interfered with his traditional practices or oppressed him too strongly. However, being lazy and without ambition, he has all too readily grown accustomed to the Dutch yoke, as the Dutch demand of him neither direct payment of taxes nor his labour. Only when there are special works to be done, which exceed the capability of the slaves at the fort, do the tributary kings supply the Company with the men that it requires – and for each man the kings receive an amount of rice and arrack. But do the kings then pass this on to the men who do the work?\*\*\* (51) I suspect not. When, at the Governor's order, a group of Malays went with our carpenters to fetch the wood that we required for the construction of our longboat, they carried no provisions with them, and the French sergeant who accompanied them told me that they are not usually given any: they have to supply their own.

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\* [Marginal note opposite these last three paragraphs, in pencil] Description of Kupang.

\*\* [Marginal note, half-way down the page, in pencil] Description of Kupang.

\*\*\* [Marginal note half-way down the page, in pencil] The character of the Malays.

On Timor and its dependent islands there are five greater kings and fifteen lesser kings who pay tribute to the Company.

The first group is comprised of the raja Amari, who lives one league away from Kupang; the emperor or *keizer* Amarasi, one day's journey from Kupang (a great many sandalwood trees grow in his kingdom); the raja of Solor, who is Moslem; the raja of Savu; and the raja of Kupang. The latter does not live in Kupang, but resides for part of the year in Semau (the small island of which he is also the sovereign) and for the remainder of it in a dwelling around half a league from Kupang. The government is of course the true ruler of the region, but it calls on the raja from time to time to carry out formal duties, by which he retains the vestiges of his former power – but he is careful not\* (52) to oppose the Dutch governor in anything.

As a mark of their office the five greater rajas all possess a cane with a golden knob on which is engraved the company symbol  [VOC]. The Malays call these *raja rotang mas*. The lesser rajas instead have a cane with a silver knob bearing the company symbol. These rajas generally possess only limited authority, which the Governor constrains as he sees fit. In his dealings with these minor potentates the Governor always adopts a dignified manner, which greatly impresses them.

Malays seem very attached to their kings, but do not accord them the same respect which other peoples of the Indies so readily offer theirs. I visited several kings, and saw them always sitting among their subjects, surrounded on all sides. They seemed more like friends to their people than their masters. They are only to be distinguished from their people by the calico gowns they wear. When they leave their dwelling places with their retinue, they travel on foot, but their bags containing betel and their weapons are carried for them, and a Chinese parasol is held above their head.\*\*

(53) Each year the tributary rajas are required to offer the Company certain amounts of sandalwood and wax, and certain numbers of slaves and horses, in the form of gifts.<sup>1</sup> In return the Company gives them a few guns and a very small amount of powder, as well as knives, sabres and various European trinkets. It has to be said that this exchange is greatly to the advantage of the Dutch. Each year a brig transports these gifts to Batavia where the sandalwood is sold to the Chinese, who obtain from it an essential oil which they value highly. They also make idols and furniture from this wood, and burn it in their temples.

Sandalwood is harvested principally along the southern coast. Its price varies in proportion to its thickness: in Timor it ranges from 7 piastres up to 25 or 30 piastres per *picol* (125 pounds *poids de marc*), and I am told that what sells here for 20 piastres would fetch 50\*\*\* (54) piastres in Canton.

Trade is not solely the preserve of the Company. A number of Chinese junks come to Timor at the end of the western monsoon to buy a range of commodities from private traders: wax, slaves, sandalwood, birds' nests, trepangs, sharks' fins and horses.

The wax is of high quality and is obtained from the forests in the interior of the island.

Slaves are worth 20 to 40 piastres each; the ones from Roti are the most sought after.

The nests are those of the swiftlet *Hirundo esculenta*. There are two different types of nest: one is made entirely from mucilaginous material, and is eaten by the Chinese; the other is made from grass, and has no use.

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\* [Marginal note halfway down the page, in pencil] Royal government.

\*\* [Marginal note towards the top of the page, in pencil] Royal.

\*\*\* [Marginal note towards the top of the page, in pencil] Trade engaged in by the Company.

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<sup>1</sup> These gifts are transported to Concordia fort with great ceremony. The kings travel with them, and their subjects walk ahead and behind performing dances and battles which are accompanied by shouting and loud music.

The trepang is a species of *Mentula* which is fished on the Sahul bank.

The horses are small and closely resemble those of the department of Nièvre.

Birds' nests, trepangs and sharks' fins are accounted powerful aphrodisiacs, and the Chinese make them into \* (55) jellies which they consider a delicacy as well as a kind of panacea.

The Company imposes a duty of four percent on exported goods and a duty of six percent on imported goods. In addition, it levies a duty on each ship that leaves the roadstead. It also reserves the right to grant private citizens the authorisation to sell at retail arrack, meat, wax candles, etc.,\*\* and to keep gaming houses. It sells many licences, almost all of which are purchased by the Chinese.<sup>£</sup>

The Malays are exempt from all personal taxes, but each Chinese person aged more than twelve years must pay a charge. Together these different taxes provide the Company with an annual revenue of 7000 to 8000 piastres, which it uses to remunerate its employees and maintain the garrison. When the Dutch wish to construct public buildings they invite wealthy individuals to make a contribution – a voluntary payment imposed only to the extent of the giver's generosity.<sup>µ</sup>

The most profitable items to import into Kupang are iron, rope, grapnels for boats, long<sup>%</sup> (56) fine-bladed knives, sabre blades, guns, necklaces made of small glass beads, and assortments of the all metal items that we make in Europe.

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\* [Marginal note halfway down page 54, in pencil] Trade.

\*\* '&c' added in pencil.

£ [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Duties.

µ [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Tax.

% [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Trade.

All Malays who have a little money engage in trade, and do so skilfully. No doubt the Dutch have given them lessons in this, and they have turned them to their advantage.\*

When we arrived in Timor only a very small number of whites were working for the Company. The garrison was made up of Malays from Java. I do not know why these soldiers should have such poor physiques, but they did not appear very formidable to me. I wonder whether they make up in dexterity what they lack in strength.<sup>£</sup>

The Company has two stations which are run by white men. One of the stations lies in the interior of the island of Timor, the other on the island of Savu – the largest and most remote island in the Dutch dependency. This station is headed by a Frenchman who has worked for the Company for thirty-two years. The running of the stations requires little effort: they are in the nature of honorary positions given to men in their retirement after many years' service. These men spend their time settling disputes<sup>µ</sup> (57) between kings, administering justice, and looking after the interests of the Company, but their decisions may be appealed, and the Governor of Kupang may either overturn or ratify them.

Theft is punished by strokes of the rattan or by enslavement.

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\* *[Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil]* Chinese traders.

£ *[Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil]* Dutch garrison.

µ *[Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil]* Dutch base.

A number of Malays are Christian, and at the fort there is a church presided over by a Malay minister.\*

Until now the island of Timor has been of little interest to the European nations, but once they have established large settlements on the eastern coast of New Holland this island will become a port of call for vessels travelling through Torres Strait or Endeavour Strait, particularly as every sort of provision can be procured there, and it is not as unhealthy a place to stay as Batavia.<sup>£</sup>

At the present time all communications with Batavia are intercepted by the English. The brig that sails from here once a year has twice been forced to return to Kupang.

The great dominion that the Dutch established over the Moluccas appeared to be built on unshakeable foundations, but is now on the brink of being overturned; neither (58) the insalubrity of the climate, nor a sea bristling with reefs, nor the clever stratagems of the Dutch traders could protect it against the overweening ambitions of the English.

### **Morals, customs and habits of the wealthy Malays**

Their houses have only a single storey, and almost all have the same layout. They usually have a tree-lined courtyard out the front. Two open galleries, their roofs supported by posts, run along the front and the rear of the houses. These galleries are sometimes raised several steps off the ground, and have small rooms at either end which are used for storage. Inside the houses there are three rooms, the middle one being the largest.

The gallery along the front serves as the main room: it is there that visitors are received, that meals are taken, and the family gathers. It is the most ornate part of the house, if one may count as\*\* (59) ornaments a few cane armchairs which are varnished red, or sometimes painted gold, two pedestal tables placed either side of the entrance, and one or several lanterns hanging from the roof. However, immaculate whitewashed walls and a great concern for cleanliness do instead of elegant furnishings.

Cane sofas covered with matting stand around the edges of the central room, where the midday nap is taken. The master of the house sleeps in one of the side rooms. His bed consists of a mattress three or four inches thick, stuffed with wadding, a mat, several cushions which the sleeper arranges in the way he finds most comfortable, and a muslin mosquito net.

Household tasks are carried out in the rear gallery, which looks onto a courtyard or garden. This is where the slaves have their kitchens and their huts. The huts are made from bamboo and are covered in the leaves of the latania. The main house is built from stone up to a height of four feet; the remainder is built from timber. The roof is made from curved tiles, which are imported from Batavia along with the large baked clay tiles which are used for paving. It would be possible to set up tileries and\*\*\* (60) potteries in Timor. Citizen Depuch, mineralogist, told me that he found in the vicinity of Kupang a great deal of clay which was suitable for use in such industries. The tiles that are used in Timor have a double curve which makes the roofs lighter than French roofs (the tiles here are in fact made in the Dutch style).<sup>µ</sup>

\* [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Christians.

£ [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Importance of Timor.

\*\* [Marginal note opposite the final two paragraphs of page 58, in pencil] Houses.

\*\*\* [Marginal note half-way down the page, in pencil] Houses.

µ [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Houses, clay [accompanied by the ink drawing of a tile].



Such are the dwelling places of almost all the middle class inhabitants of Kupang. Their lives are as simple and as uniform as the roofs under which they reside. While the head of the house attends to his commercial affairs, the mistress and her children sit on mats, surrounded by their slaves, and engage in the preparation of tobacco leaves. The leaves are cut into very fine strands and are then dried in the sun. People chew them with betel. A wide variety of small items is made with great skill from rice straw or latania leaves. This sort of work requires patience but not tenacity: the heat of this country and the inherent laziness of the people incline them to avoid anything that might tax their strength.<sup>£</sup>

(61) They bathe two or three times a day, take three meals, sleep in the afternoon, and chew areca nuts all day long together with betel leaves, quicklime, tobacco and gambir.<sup>1</sup> They pay visits to one another in the evenings, drink tea together, and only take their leave in the middle of the night. At these gatherings the slaves sometimes sing in choirs, and accompany themselves on Malay drums<sup>2</sup> or Chinese tom-toms.<sup>3</sup> \*

When indoors at home the men wear drawers or a sarong which covers them from the waist to the knee. Over that they wear a sort of calico gown. They always oil their hair with<sup>¶</sup> (62) old copra, and wear it either tied in a tail or loose about their shoulders. When they go out they dress in the European style, and usually sport gold or silver buttons on their clothing.

The women dress very simply, and in a style rather like that of Chinese women. They oil their hair with coconut and gather it behind into a chignon, winding it into a coil which they hold in place with gold or silver pins. They wear sarongs that fall from the waist to the foot, and over that a long dress which covers from the neck down to the knee. The dress opens at the front and is fastened at the breast with gold pins. They usually wear a red handkerchief over one of their shoulders; the keys to their chests hang on a chain from a corner of the handkerchief. When their betel-stained saliva turns their lips red, they use their handkerchiefs to wipe them off. There are no pockets on their clothing.\*\* (63) Inside the house they go about barefoot, but when they go out to parties, and when they make or receive ceremonial visits, they wear stockings and heeled shoes. They are little used to wearing such shoes, and so walk in an ungainly manner; they divest themselves of these uncomfortable items as soon as they are able.

They adorn their chignons with sweet-smelling flowers of *Mogori*, *Uvaria cananga* and *Pergularia glabra*. When they wish to give somebody a great mark of their friendship, they will unpick these flowers – whose scent is delightful, if somewhat overpowering – and offer them to him or her as a garland. On these occasions, they wear garments of silk with gold brocade, or embroidered muslin; and to this attire add gold necklaces, bracelets, rings and earrings. They prefer fabrics which have a red-lacquer base. Some of the little boxes they use for holding betel and areca nuts are finely wrought in solid silver: these lovely objects come from Batavia.

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<sup>£</sup> [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Domestic chores.

<sup>\*</sup> [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Toilet, private customs.

<sup>¶</sup> [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Dress.

<sup>\*\*</sup> [Marginal note halfway down the page, in pencil] Dress.

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<sup>1</sup> Gambir is the concentrated sap of various plants. It is brought in from Batavia. The sap has the appearance of crumbly reddish-brown clay. It neutralizes the caustic action of the quicklime.

<sup>2</sup> The Malay drum is made from a cylinder of latania wood which is hollowed out and covered with animal skin. These drums are struck with the hand, producing a muffled sound which is not at all harmonious.

<sup>3</sup> The Chinese tom-tom is made from quite a large copper plate whose rim is three or four inches thick. In the middle of the plate, on its outer side, is a hemispherical boss which is struck with a short stick, the round head of which is wrapped in string. The instrument makes a harrowing sound.

Malay ladies are very reserved\* (64) in public, but, for all that, the warmth of the climate and the languid pace of life exert no less an influence on their temperaments. Here, as everywhere else, love affairs fill the hearts of pretty women and occupy their days. Their confidants are their faithful slaves, whose huts they use for their assignations. When they suspect that a planned tryst will be interrupted or prevented by some bore, a slave takes the lover chewed betel wrapped in a leaf, and the lover sends his mistress a similar present – which is undoubtedly little to a European's taste.\*\*

The wealthy are almost all of mixed race – their skin colour is lighter than that of other Malays, and is not far from that of a southern European. They are of medium height, their features are regular, and some of the women are even rather pretty. Ordinarily a pair of beautiful jet eyes filled with expression imparts liveliness to a face whose even brown hue is never brightened by a rosy tint. They generally appear to be younger than they are. Their simple dress<sup>£</sup> (65) is not at all unbecoming to them. They perspire continually, which prevents them from growing stout. Their feet have a pretty shape, which is not spoiled either by the customary wearing of shoes or by a great deal of walking about.

As everywhere across the Indies, cooked rice (which they call *nasi*) takes the place of bread for the Malays. Their dishes consist of different types of meat browned in animal fat and seasoned with spices and pickles; these dishes have a very strong, agreeable flavour, whetting the appetite and invigorating the stomach. The usual drink of the Malays is tea or fresh water. The water is good when drawn from particular springs, or from higher up the river. Tainted by mud, household waste, and the Malays' continual bathing, the water that that is drawn too close to the river mouth is insipid, unpleasant, and no doubt unhealthy.<sup>£</sup>

The wealthy play ombre and fifteen, which were introduced to them by the Dutch, along with *tabla*.<sup>1</sup> The latter game is played on a small board which is divided<sup>£µ</sup> into 48 squares. Each player takes turns throwing four bamboo sticks, which are white on one side and black on the other, and then moves his small black or white counters accordingly.

\* [Marginal note halfway down the page, in pencil] Dress.

\*\* [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Morals, love.

£ [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Physical qualities.

£ [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Food.

£µ [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Games.

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<sup>1</sup> I believe this game was introduced to them by the Chinese.

(66)

Is it not possible that *tabla* has some connection with a game that Captain King observed among the people of the Sandwich Islands? That game is played with small pebbles on a chequerboard divided into 238 squares. My remark may perhaps be of use to those who are trying to understand the migratory movements of different peoples (Cook's third voyage, volume 4, page 75).\*

Several women are able to pluck the guitar and the harp tolerably well.<sup>£</sup>

Many of the wealthy travel to Batavia, where they acquire some knowledge of commerce and arithmetic. Batavia is the Paris of the Moluccas.<sup>µ</sup>

When a private citizen is married or finishes building a house, each of his friends sends him a tree branch decorated with bunches of flowers and hung with presents that usually take the form of sarongs, handkerchiefs, cakes, areca nuts and betel leaves.<sup>#</sup>

\* [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Games.

£ [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Music.

µ [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Education.

# [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Marriage.



(67)

It is planted in front of the house to the accompaniment of music, and several different dances are performed around it. The recipient of these presents then holds a party: we witnessed one of these parties, which was held by a middle-class man who had just finished building a house. Some women arrived, dressed in all their finery, and several naturalists and officers attended; however, I believe that our presence made them uncomfortable, and the gathering was not suffused with gaiety.\*

In any case, Madame Van Esten was ill. She is the only person to have sent her slave musicians to Batavia for instruction. These slaves know how to play a number of Dutch quadrilles, to which the Malay women no doubt dance very badly, hampered as they are by shoes which they are unused to wearing.<sup>£</sup>

The slaves have quite agreeable conditions. It is a luxury to have a great number of them working in the house, and as a result they are not overburdened with chores. Other slaves are used for outdoor tasks – for the cultivation of rice and corn, and the tending of the buffalo herds.<sup>µ</sup>

Nota. The wealthy Malays display little concern [*Note continues at the foot of the following page.*]

\* [*Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil*] Marriage.

<sup>£</sup> [*Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil*] Madame Van Esten.

<sup>µ</sup> [*Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil*] Slaves.

(68)

At the time of our stay in Kupang, Madame Van Esten had more than two thousand slaves. Monsieur Tilman, civil captain in the town, and Monsieur Joannis, a wealthy\*

[*Note continues from page 67*] for the elegance of their houses or their furniture: such outward show seems to them too impersonal to constitute a source of pleasure. But they do take to extremes what I would call a lavish taste for comfort and finery. Indeed, a Malay possessing only a small, poorly furnished house will still be followed by a number of slaves and will have gold buttons on his clothes. Monsieur Joannis, a very rich man, had neglected to have the ceilings in his house completed, with the result that some of his rooms were covered only with roof tiles. The furniture consists solely of chests, cupboards and sofas, all of different sizes, ranged haphazardly and tastelessly along the walls, and yet while they sleep a young slave girl waves a large fan, which cools the air and keeps away mosquitoes and other insects that might disturb the sleeper. The same practice is put in place at meal times – to drive away the insects that would otherwise settle on the meat. In addition to their delicacy, the women have a love of scents: their beds are always perfumed with rose leaves and flowers of the *Mogori* and *Uvaria cananga*. When they attend<sup>£</sup> [*Note continues on the following page*]

\* [*Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil*] The rich.

£ [*Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil*] Luxury.

(69)

private citizen, also had a great many.

The areas which are suitable for the cultivation of rice rest in private hands. The land must be watered by streams; and not all positions are satisfactory. An individual wishing to grow corn, however, can simply send out his slaves to any portion of land he likes, and as the first occupier of the land, he is free to sow his crop and reap the harvest. The same piece of land is never harvested two years in a row. Each year a new section of land is cleared. There are never any disputes over these tracts of land, as there is enough uncultivated land for each individual to be able select his tract as he sees fit. While the harvests may be plentiful, it must be\* (70) said that nature does all the work: it is scarcely possible that these fields, which are farmed by slaves far from their master's gaze, should be tended assiduously.

There are a great many Chinese, who engage almost exclusively in retail trade. They have retained their national dress, and are easily recognisable by their long trousers and large jackets, and by that long plait woven from the hair that sprouts from the tip of their shaven heads. Their position here is the same as that of the Jews in Europe: they have the same love of money, and use the same tricks in their commercial dealings. They are despised by the Malays, whom they cheat of their money and their goods, and by the Dutch, who make them pay all the costs of the settlement. Their faces generally have that inscrutable quality which inspires mistrust.\*\*

[*Note continues from pages 67-68*] gatherings they are always careful to eat cashew nuts in order to give their breath a pleasant smell. And, even if the practice of chewing betel at first appears repulsive, it nevertheless sweetens their breath. Both sexes are sober, temperate and, as I said above, cleanly to an excessive degree.

Some believe it is attractive to let their nails grow to an extraordinary length. This custom, which is not widespread, has come to them from the Chinese.<sup>£</sup>

\* [*Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil*] Property rights.

£ [*Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil*] Luxury.

\*\* [*Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil*] Chinese.

### **Morals, customs and habits of the ordinary Malays**

Like the slaves, they wear their hair up, tying it back with a handkerchief that can be knotted or hitched in a variety of ways. Their clothing consists of a sarong, which falls from the waist to the knee, and another cotton garment which they wear over their shoulders, and which they wrap around themselves when they are cold, or when they want protection from the sun or rain. These clothes, like all the items that they wear, have a certain elegance. In addition, over their left shoulders they carry a bag fashioned from a handkerchief, the corners of which are passed through rings made from animal shells, or from the base of a shell belonging to the *Volute* genus. They carry their betel in this. They wear ivory and silver bands around their arms, often a great many of them at once (I saw one man who was wearing thirty-two of them). They sometimes walk about with their feet bare. Only when they have a journey to make along rocky paths do they wear a sort of sandal, which is made from the leaves of the *latania*, woven together, and held in place on the foot by cords made out of the same type of leaf. Some of them\* (72) carefully pluck their beards with small tweezers made from steel or bamboo.

The women have shy, gentle expressions. They wear their hair up at the back, winding it into a coil which they hold in place with combs made out of horn or shell. They wear sarongs that cover them from the top of the breast to midway down the leg. When they are at home they leave their breast uncovered. They also wear bracelets and necklaces. Some wear copper bands just above the ankle. It is the dancers who usually wear these latter items.\*\*

All alike grease their hair with coconut and scent it with the leaves of a species of *Pandanus*, whose odour strikes the European as strong and disagreeable.‡

They wash frequently, and keep their bodies very clean, as they do their huts, which are made from bamboo and roofed with straw. They sleep on simple mats which they spread across frames made from pieces of bamboo. On these they enjoy a sleep that is untroubled<sup>¶</sup> (73) by pride, ambition, or intrusive desires. They eat rice, poultry, pork, and pieces of buffalo meat which have been cut into strips, cured, and dried in the sun.<sup>1</sup> Out of a single *latania* leaf they can make buckets which hold ten to twelve pints.<sup>#</sup>

A few mats, a few bowls made out of clay or coconut shell: these are the sum of their possessions; with these small riches a Malay is happy. Having no ambition, he has only to satisfy his physical needs, and these diminish to a small number in a climate as temperate as this, and in a country where nature is so generous. If he possesses a small amount of rice, a few yards of cloth, a few betel leaves and a few areca nuts, he is content. He has no worries for the future. He can yield to his chief passion – which is sleeping. It is not that their desires are never aroused – they often coveted our European trinkets, but that their desires were never strong enough to compel them to perform any tasks for us, however heavy or light these might have been. Having such a<sup>§</sup> (74) predilection for repose, they always use the easiest means possible to obtain the things they want. This is the reason for the frequent thefts of

\* [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Dress.

\*\* [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Women's dress.

‡ [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Arrangement of the hair.

¶ [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Cleanliness.

# [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Food.

§ [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Belongings, needs, morals.

<sup>1</sup> The Malays from the interior of the island of Timor and from several surrounding islands eat the flesh of dogs.

which we had cause to complain. One could extend this inference to the inhabitants of all hot countries, who are generally lazy and given to thieving.\*

The Malays are small in size; I never saw one as tall as five feet ten inches. In general they have good physiques, an easy bearing, and an assured gait that at times may tend to arrogance. Their features are usually pleasing and lack that uniformity which one observes among several Negro peoples. A great many possess European countenances beneath their copper skin, and their expression is one of gaiety and candour. The Malays of the interior have a more savage expression, which perhaps derives from the fact that they are little accustomed to meeting foreigners. Due to their habit of not wearing shoes their feet are highly supple – and I have often seen them throw stones powerfully, and to a great distance, with their feet. They<sup>£</sup> (75) are able to climb trees without pressing their knees against the trunk. They cling on by their hands and the soles of their feet without encircling the tree with their limbs, and climb with surprising speed. Admittedly, almost all the trunks of the coconut trees are scored with notches, but these would be of no help to anybody wearing shoes.<sup>¶</sup>

I have seen very few deformities among the Malays (I do not think I have seen more than three or four of them who are lame, and these people appeared to have suffered accidents). They are highly susceptible however to skin diseases, and principally to a type of whitish scurf that sometimes covers a large part of the body. (This disease afflicted the leg of Monsieur Tilman, civil captain of the town.) They are also subject to scabies, and I saw several with deep wounds in the leg. They do not catch these diseases through a lack of cleanliness, for, as I have said before, they wash frequently. But is it not the case that these diseases, which afflict the inhabitants of Timor along with several other peoples of hot countries, arise from the fact that their skin is constantly in contact with the air?<sup>§</sup>

The Dutch doctor claimed (76) that venereal disease did not exist in Timor, but several men learnt to their cost that prudence is more valuable than a doctor's testimony.<sup>#</sup> The Malays were in general welcoming towards us, and they perhaps missed us after we left, but that was because we did not offend against their customs. They are very jealous and would look on unhappily if anyone acted too freely towards the women of the island. Certainly they offered women to our men, but always with an enigmatic air. Undoubtedly the men took advantage of these offers. It is very difficult for young sailors, long deprived of women, to restrain their desire and not to seek to satisfy it, but it reflects well on all involved that these liaisons were conducted with a strain of propriety which ensured that not the slightest dispute arose.\*\*

\* [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Morals [marked with a cross].

£ [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Physical qualities.

¶ [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Agility.

§ [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Physical qualities, diseases.

# [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Diseases.

\*\* [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Hospitality.

The Malays are timid sailors and unskilful fishermen. Using small, finely worked cotton nets, they content themselves with catching the small fish that are stranded by the falling tide<sup>u</sup> (77) in pools that they make with rocks along the shoreline.

They sometimes kill birds with blow-pipes and bamboo darts. I was told that they pluck the birds and preserve their bodies by stretching them out and carefully drying them, but I never managed to find out the exact process that they use.\*

They make very attractive items of furniture from latania leaves and rice straw. They fashion bowls, spoons and combs from coconuts, large-chambered nautiluses, shells, bamboo and buffalo horns.<sup>£</sup> The fabrics they make vary subtly. By the use of dyed thread and different weaves, they create patterns which differ from island to island. In Timor the sarongs are usually white with a red trim made sometimes of chiné. On Sava and Roti the sarongs have red, blue and white stripes and mottling. On the island of Indé the sarongs have<sup>u</sup>

Nota. It seems that the Malays have had some dealings with the inhabitants of New Holland, for they are quite familiar with them and call them *orang talandian* (naked men).<sup>#</sup>

\* [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Hunting.

£ [Marginal note opposite these lines, in pencil] Utensils.

<sup>u</sup> [Marginal note opposite these lines, in pencil] Fabrics.

<sup>#</sup> [Marginal note opposite this note, in pencil] Familiarity with New Holland.

(78)

narrower stripes of the same kind. On the island of Sumba the sarongs have yellow, white and red stripes on a blue background, and white fringing. The dyes are extracted from various types of bark.\*

Their music is piercing and discordant, and is not enhanced in the slightest by their favourite means of accompaniment —<sup>£</sup>

**Description of a celebration held for the Malay kings;  
this celebration takes place every year**

When the kings come to Kupang to make their customary gifts they are informed of the day on which they should return and present a list of the European items that they desire to have. This meeting takes place in a house belonging to one of the Dutchmen, who is responsible for receiving these requests. These gatherings are usually enlivened by various types of entertainment. I, along with several others, was present at one of these occasions.

A spacious courtyard in front of the house was illuminated by pinewood torches blazing in burnished candelabra, and the Malay kings occupied chairs arranged in a semi-circle. Officers and<sup>µ</sup> [*Note continues on the following page*]

\* [*Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil*] Fabrics.

<sup>£</sup> [*Marginal note opposite these lines, in pencil*] Music.

<sup>µ</sup> [*Marginal note opposite this note, in pencil*] Celebration for the Malay kings.

(79)

the Malay drum and the Chinese drum. One can only bear listening to it from a considerable distance away. They also have a small bamboo flute, each end of which is cut immediately above a knot. In the space between two knots, they prise up pieces of the bark and round them off without detaching them from the two ends. These pieces of bark\*

[*Note continues from page 78*] French naturalists attended. The kings wore calico gowns, and before each stood a small table bearing a box of betel and areca nuts. Behind each king's chair stood several of his subjects. The man standing directly behind the king held the cane with the golden or silver knob which is the distinctive symbol of the alliance contracted with the Dutch.

Before this illustrious gathering, Malays with heads, arms and legs decked with latania leaves performed various dances. To my mind the most striking was an exotic dance in which the dancers' movements followed the beat of two Malay drums. The dancers all held hands in a single line, and the lead dancer sang a song whose refrain was repeated by the other dancers. He set the tempo with his drum, and also dealt powerful blows with this drum against any dancers who strayed<sup>£</sup> [*note continues on the following page*]

\* [*Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil*] Music.

£ [*Marginal note opposite this note, in pencil*] Malay celebration.



(80)

serve as the strings of the instrument. They raise them to the tone they want by slipping small pieces of wood underneath. To both ends of the instrument they attach a piece of latania leaf which they spread into a suitably concave shape. Spread out like this\*

[*Note continues from pages 78-79*] from the rhythm. The line wound in different directions around the drums, which were at the centre. The slow steps of the dance were accompanied by strange and tortuous movements of the body and the arms, which were so exhausting for the dancers that they were soon covered in sweat and gasping for breath. The end of each dance was signalled by a shrill cry from all involved.

During the entertainment smartly-dressed young slaves offered the circle of spectators drinks and pastries of different kinds which were elegantly arranged in baskets or on varnished platters. Before partaking of his drink, each king would acknowledge his fellow rulers with a nod of his head, and they would respond with a similar gesture.

Each king, in turn, entered the house and presented a list of the items which he desired, which would be granted to him only insofar as their value<sup>£</sup>

\* [*Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil*] Music.

£ [*Marginal note opposite this note, in pencil*] Malay farandole.

(81)

underneath, the leaf serves to reflect the sounds produced, which are softer than those of a guitar – but the Malays prefer loud chords.\*

The dances they perform are more varied. They all involve different movements of the arms and body. Some represent aspects of life on the island: wars, hunts, etc., etc. The dances are very graceful and require a great deal of suppleness. Some are slow, and others very lively. Sometimes the dancers follow the cadence of a song that is being sung, and at other times that of the noisy drums and tom-toms.£

The Malays kiss by pressing noses together and breathing in deeply.µ

The inhabitants of Roti are more attractive, more shapely and lighter-skinned than those of Timor and neighbouring islands – and as a result they are more expensive to buy as slaves.

The inhabitants of Solor are more clever and more industrious. They work with metals, and devote themselves to agriculture and fishing.¶

[*Note continues from pages 78-80*] did not exceed the value of the presents which he had given the Company.

These revels lasted most of the night.

\* [*Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil*] Music.

£ [*Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil*] Dancing.

µ [*Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil*] Kissing.

¶ [*Marginal note opposite these two paragraphs, in pencil*] Roti; Solor.

(82)

I am told that on the island of Bali women still follow the barbarous custom of immolating themselves on the death of their husbands.\*

Although the Malays are not Christian, they recognise the existence of a Supreme Being. They do not worship him, but place great faith in spells and sorcerers. They view as such all foreigners having red hair. They attribute the greatest powers to them, as well as to old women who supply cures derived from plant matter. I don't know if it is the universal cantankerousness of old women which has led to their being associated with spells and incantations, but in all ages and among almost all peoples they have enjoyed the same fearsome reputation. The tales which the Malays tell about their sorcerers are very similar to those related by European peasants.<sup>£</sup>

*Nota.* A great many Malays have fetishes or tutelary gods to which they address their prayers. The objects of such cults are usually stones or trees, as has also been observed among a number of African tribes.

Some of the Malays wear a type<sup>µ</sup> [*note continues on the following page*]

\* [*Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil*] Island of Bali.

£ [*Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil*] Religions, superstitions.

µ [*Marginal note opposite this note, in pencil*] Superstition. [*marked with five crosses*]

(83)

They bury their dead in the countryside, raising over the body a small mound of earth in the shape of a diamond, which is enclosed by a low dry-stone wall. At either end of the mound,\*

[*Note continues from page 82*] of amulet, which they believe will protect them from misfortune. One such piece, which I saw a Malay from the interior wearing around his neck, was made from several pieces of cord to which were attached:

(1) three old pieces of cotton cloth, two inches square; one piece was red, and the others were so dirty I could not tell what colour they were;

(2) an old piece of iron which seemed to have once been part of the latch on a casket;

(3) the beaks of two parrots;

(4) the beak and the feet of a bird of prey;

(5) a small bone from a quadruped;

(6) a small wad of hair;

(7) a small cylindrical piece of wood, about an inch in length.

Glass beads hung from other cords. It appeared that he had been wearing this great relic for a long time, as it was very dirty. I asked whether he would sell it to me, and although I offered him many items that he seemed to desire very much, he refused to part with it. He gave me to understand that in battle it would protect him from the blows of the enemy.<sup>£</sup>

\* [*Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil*] Burial.

£ [*Marginal note opposite this note, in pencil*] Superstition, amulet.

(84)

a stick, around two feet in length, is driven into the ground. A bowl holding ashes usually sits on the grave: at certain times aromatic substances are burnt in it.\*

The Chinese tombs are made from a type of stucco. They are large, semi-circular, and built in a very strange style. They are usually situated on the side of a hill.†

The Malays from the interior wear certain necklaces which they prize very highly. They claim that such necklaces can only be obtained by running the gravest dangers. Their stories always mention spells and enchantments, but they can never agree among themselves. There are two types of necklace: one is called *Monti Sala*, the other *Monti Bouha*. Both are made from a reddish substance, which is neither beautiful nor valuable. I thought at first that they were pieces of fossilised coral, but the Governor, Monsieur Lofstet, told me that the Malays have now lost the secret of how to make this substance. A necklace two spans long sells for twelve to fifteen piastres. The Governor‡

\* [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Malay tombs.

† [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Chinese tombs.

‡ [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Superstitions.

(85)

gave one of these to Citizen Baudin.

I saw a Malay from the interior who had had a piece of gold set in each one of his teeth.\*

The offensive weapons used by the Malays are the sabre, the spear, the bow and the kris or dagger. Since meeting Europeans, they have also started using the gun. To defend themselves they use shields, of which there are two types: one is large, convex and round, and is made out of dried buffalo hide; the other has a convex diamond shape, and is made out of wood.

The hilts of their sabres are fashioned from buffalo horn, and are finely worked, but strange in shape and highly impractical. These, being attached to blades which are heavy at the tip, make for an unwieldy weapon.<sup>‡</sup> In battle, the Malays are implacable foes. Consumed by rage, some go as far as eating the heads of their enemies. To commemorate their victories, they wear silver bracelets, around an inch and a half thick, above the elbow, one bracelet for every enemy killed.

It is with some fear that the Dutch summon the Malays from the interior to help them. They have reason to fear the chaos that usually ensues when<sup>‡</sup>

\* *[Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil]* Teeth.

‡ *[Marginal note opposite these lines and the preceding paragraph, in pencil]* Weapons.

‡ *[Marginal note opposite this paragraph and the lower part of the preceding paragraph, in pencil]* War.

(86)

a large and unruly mob gathers. The alarm signal consists of three cannon shots.

When a raja dies, the Malays slaughter many animals. They gather together for several days, and their grief pours forth in funeral laments. They perform other ceremonies which they refused to explain to me. All the raja's subjects go into mourning for him – the colour of mourning here is black. The body is enclosed in a coffin, which is placed inside his house, where it sometimes remains for two to three years. During this time the wives of the deceased take turns in keeping watch over the body, until it is at last placed inside a stone tomb.\*

The Malays make two different types of boats: the larger sort are designed like our European craft, while the smaller ones are hollowed from a single tree trunk or made from several different pieces of wood. These are called *corcox*. They are very long, and have a high prow and stern, and commonly have an outrigger. The paddles they use have round or oval blades, and they wield these with great speed and coordinate their strokes by singing together. They caulk<sup>£</sup>

\* [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Burial.

£ [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Watercraft.

(87)

their watercraft with a bark similar to that of the *Melaleuca* which I saw in New Holland. This material arrives as an item of trade – it is not harvested in the vicinity of Kupang. (The Malays of the interior hunt wild buffalo.)\*

At Monsieur Tilman's I saw various ornaments worn by rajas from the interior of Timor – gold crescents twelve to fifteen inches wide<sup>1</sup> which they wear on the side of the head, disks of the same metal, eight to ten inches in diameter, which they wear on their chests, and gold filigree snakes which they wear on chains.<sup>£</sup>

We could only praise the hospitality of the Malays. Every time I went into the interior of the island of Timor, I stopped to visit the rajas whose houses I frequently passed by. They received me with the greatest warmth. The houses of the rajas are scarcely any different in appearance from those of their subjects.<sup>µ</sup>

The custom of continually chewing betel rapidly blackens the teeth of the Malays and the caustic action of the<sup>#</sup>

\* [*Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil*] Watercraft.

£ [*Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil*] Ornaments.

µ [*Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil*] Hospitality.

# [*Marginal note opposite these two paragraphs, in pencil*] Health.

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<sup>1</sup> I possess one of these golden crescents from Timor.



(88)

lime rots them away. It is my opinion however that during calls at tropical ports sailors could greatly benefit from the practice of chewing betel and all those suffering from scurvy should be advised to use it. In moderation, such mastication strengthens the gums, and the aromatic compounds present in areca nuts and betel must be beneficial to stomachs overloaded with fruit and drink. I speak here from experience. During the period that we stayed in Timor I chewed great amounts of betel and areca nut. At times I was compelled by the heat to drink inordinate quantities of fresh water – I even drank buffalo milk, which is considered almost fatal – but I did not suffer a single moment of ill-health. On the contrary, during this stay, which proved deleterious to so many of us, my health improved and I put on weight, even though I remained on shore the whole time. A longer trial is now required in order to confirm the efficacy of my observations.\*

\* [*Marginal note halfway down the page, in pencil*] Health.

## Natural History

### Botany

We arrived in Timor during the dry season, when almost all the annuals and grasses had been scorched by the heat. Very few trees were in fruit or flower. However, the great variety of plant life that I have managed to observe indicates that one might reap a rich, plentiful and fascinating harvest of botanical specimens during the more clement season. The coast in the vicinity of Kupang is not very fertile, being of a porous, calcareous stone, commonly composed from a species of stellated madrepore, whose surface has darkened and decomposed over time to form a shallow layer of vegetable matter, on which plant débris has accumulated. This layer is not thick enough to form a fertile base, and so, with the exception of a few fig trees (*Ficus indica*), only small, spindly trees, and creepers of the *Apocynaceae* family, are to be seen there; however, the ground is thickly covered with dried grass, which suggests that the soil, while not deep enough to sustain (90) large trees, must, in the rainy season, support an enormous variety of small annuals. Along the inlets and bays of the coast – where the layer of soil carried by the waters is thicker – the trees are taller, and dwelling places are common – these always being shaded by numerous coconut trees.

If one penetrates a mere half-league into the interior, the country changes markedly. Plants grow vigorously, and huge fields of rice, dotted with clumps of trees, bear witness to a land that is uniformly rich – and is deficient only in that it might be cultivated with greater skill and care. The landscape varies greatly; one comes across the most delightful spots. The straight and slender stem of the areca palm, the wide, jagged leaves of the breadfruit tree, the thin hanging leaves of the bamboo plant and the spreading crests of the latania palm form great clumps of greenery which I never wearied of admiring, especially when, nearby the river, they created a contrast with the dark rocks lining (91) the bank.

Here, as in all countries lying between the tropics, one finds a wide variety of delicious fruits, but a European must refrain from eating them in large quantities. When sailors, who have been deprived of vegetables for several months, unwisely gorge themselves on such fruit, fever and dysentery rapidly ensue.

Mangoes grow plentifully here – and are better than those which are found in the Isle of France – as do several types of banana, of which the tastiest is seven to eight inches long and reddish in colour, along with papayas, several types of *Eugenia*, pineapples, pomegranates, grapefruit, lemons, oranges, of which the best is the mandarin, or Chinese orange, carambolas, bilimbis, jacks, sugar-apples, breadfruit (*rima*), coconuts, and a type of fruit called *nam* (*Cynometra cauliflora*) during the same season that a large-pipped grape is picked, which is undoubtedly a type of chasselas.

There are two species of latania: one, with smaller leaves, has a thorny leafstalk and is used for roofing houses, while the other, which has larger leaves, is used<sup>u</sup>

\* [Marginal note halfway down the page, in pencil] Vegetation, agriculture.

<sup>u</sup> [Marginal note towards the top of the page, in pencil] Fruit.

(92)

for making mats for common areas, buckets, hats and various other items.

A drink called *tuak* is extracted from this tree. To obtain it, a leaf is cut off, and to the leafstalk is attached a bowl into which the liquid runs. The drink is agreeably sweet, but can cause fever and dysentery. It turns sour after twenty-four hours. When it is heated on a fire, the liquid reduces to a dark, pleasant-tasting syrup,\* and can even, by further boiling, be reduced to a sugar which has the consistency of clay and tastes like barley sugar. The fruit of the *latania* grows in bunches of six to eight fruit, each of which is around the size of a child's head. Inside each are three nuts which are eaten here but have quite an unpleasant taste. These nuts sit within a fibrous husk.†

The wood used for building comes from the coconut tree, the *latania* palm, several species of fig tree, the mahogany tree, the mango tree and the tamarind tree. There are several other types of wood which are of high quality and are used in construction, but these are not found in the‡

\* [Marginal note opposite these lines, in pencil] The drink called *tuak*.

† [Marginal note opposite these lines, in pencil] Fruit.

‡ [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Buildings.

(93)

vicinity of Kupang. They are fetched from places far along the coast – which is where we had to go to obtain wood suitable for building our longboat.

The wood of the *latania* is very hard and difficult to work. It is not prone to rotting, and insects rarely bore into it. The Malays make their tambourines from the trunks of these trees: they hollow out the inside, and shape the wood into the form of a flower bowl; the opening is then closed over with a piece of hide.

They make their canoes, or *corcora*, from the large trunks of the mango tree, fashioning them out of a single piece.\*

They grow very little in the way of vegetables – the main ones are turnip-cabbage, lettuce, a type of white radish which has an excellent flavour, celery, a very small quantity of onions (there are two types of these: the red ones rot very quickly, while the white ones are to be preferred by sailors for keeping at sea), shallots, garlic, sage, fennel, coriander, angelica, anise, potatoes, yams, gourds, and earth-peas (*Lathyrus amphicarpos*). Not long ago the Dutch introduced<sup>‡</sup>

\* [Marginal note opposite these two paragraphs, in pencil] Wood used for building.

‡ [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Vegetables.

(94)

a yellow potato, which is small and tasty. *Dolichos catianus* is grown in the interior, along with a species of pea whose compressed legume has two dentate valves. This has a very nice flavour and is eaten in its pod while green. Other plants are grown: saffron, which the Malays call *coni dinegri*; wild saffron, which is called *coni dion tani*; carthamine; *Canna indica*. Three species of plant from the *Apocynaceae* family grow plentifully here (I think two are *periploca*); their roots are used for making a pleasant-tasting drink,\* which is considered to be good for the health when drunk regularly. One of these plants has broad leaves, the other, narrow; both have milky sap, a climbing stem and thick, fissured bark, which is rather soft, like cork. I did not find them in flower or in fruit.

To make this drink, which the Malays call *laron*, the root is carefully peeled and cut into pieces three or four inches long. These are placed in a bowl<sup>£</sup>

\* [Marginal note opposite these lines, in pencil] Vegetables.

£ [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Pleasant drink.

(95)

which is then filled with water, and a sufficient amount of *tuak* syrup is added – molasses or sugar may be used instead. The mixture is then left to ferment for six to eight hours. The same root may be used for several months on end. Around two handfuls are needed for a bowl of seven or eight pints. For the first seven or eight days the drink is too strong and has a very unpleasant taste. This is usually thrown away. But then it develops a flavour which is like slightly bitter wine. The sailors preferred this drink to beer. Citizen Lharidon, surgeon of the *Géographe*, told me that it had a salutary effect upon his patients. He believes that if the recipe for this drink were improved it could become highly beneficial. In order to preserve this root for a long period after it has been extracted from the ground, it must be put into small packets and then aired or kept in a dry place. This drink could be a marvellous resource for any ship's crew, as I believe it to be a very good antiscorbutic. When left to ferment for more than seven or eight hours it turns sour.

The capsules of the latania supply a down that is used for stuffing\*

\* [*Marginal note halfway down the page, in pencil*] Beneficial drink.

(96)

mattresses and pillows. The down from a type of *Asclepias* is put to the same use. Its leaves are milky, sessile, and downy, and it has large flowers that look very much like those of the Syrian *Asclepias*. The Malays call this plant *daoun souzon*.<sup>\*</sup>

On rare occasions I came across a cotton plant which, after examining its leaves, I believe to be *Gossypium rubrum*. It is grown in the interior of the island.<sup>£</sup>

A large tree of the *Scrophularia* family, which is related to the genus *Dodartia*, has a bark which is reputed to be excellent for internal contusions. It has a bitter taste, and is said to have the same properties as cinchona. Citizen Bellefin, surgeon of the *Naturaliste*, had quite a large amount of this collected for him.

I encountered several species of cassia: the purging cassia; another with a pink flower and long, black, cylindrical pods, which did not contain succulent pulp;<sup>µ</sup>

<sup>\*</sup> [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Down.

<sup>£</sup> [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Cotton.

<sup>µ</sup> [Marginal note opposite these two paragraphs, in pencil] Medicines.

(97)

and a third species, whose fruit I did not see – its flowers are magnificent, each cluster having the colour, aspect and scent of a spray of gillyflowers. The tree which bears them is tall, straight and ornamental. Its timber would be suitable for use in building work.<sup>£</sup>

The *Jatropha globosa*, or physic nut. The Malays do not know how to extract its seed-germ. They make oil from it. It is widespread.<sup>µ</sup>

The *Aloe dichotoma*. Its sap is used in place of soap.<sup>#</sup>

A caper bush with large white flowers and round leaves. The Malays call it *boa api-api*.<sup>§</sup>

*Pergularia glabra*, *Uvaria cananga*, and *Mogorium* (*Nyctanthes sambac*) are also found here. Malay women use the sweet-smelling flowers of the latter to decorate their hair. They also use the flowers of the *kamouny* tree\* in this way – it does not grow in the vicinity of Kupang. In the past the inhabitants of Timor used the wood of the *kamouny* in the place of iron, I am told, when that valuable metal was unknown to them. The tree has a very hard, black wood. It has a large amount of sapwood, of a<sup>+</sup>

\* [Marginal note, in ink, in the same hand] A small species of orange tree having a red fruit which is the size of a filbert nut and has the aromatic flavour of orange peel. There is also another species of *kamouny*. (1)

(1) I believe this to be a species of *Guaiacum*.

<sup>£</sup> [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Medicines, lumber.

<sup>µ</sup> [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Medicines.

<sup>#</sup> [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Aromatic sap.

<sup>§</sup> [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Caper bush.

<sup>+</sup> [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Ironwood.



(98)

yellow colour similar to boxwood. The layers of the wood are so fine and close together that it is difficult to make them out. It would seem, from the samples I have been able to obtain, that this tree never attains a great size, and grows extremely slowly. Although slender, the trunks of these trees are often fissured and twisted.\*

A large tree, called the *falona* by the Malays, and having a whitish bark, heart-shaped leaves and capsular fruit, secretes a tasteless white transparent gum which is highly soluble in water. It could be used in the place of gum arabica. The seeds are eaten – they taste rather like hazelnuts.

*Tournefortia argentea* grows by the seashore. Its shiny, velvety leaves lend it a very attractive appearance. A species of *Gardenia* with sweet-smelling tubular white flowers is also found there.

*Dolichos pruriens*, *Dolichos cuneiformis*, the beautiful red-flowered poinciana, and a yellow-flowered variety,

\* [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Commercial timber.

(99)

along with several species of *Phyllanthus*, *Justicia*, *Sida*, *Malva* and *Hibiscus*, grow everywhere in great abundance.

And finally, from all sides, one's sense of smell is agreeably assailed by the scent of the flowers of the *Plumeria alba*, or frangipani, and one's sight by the beautiful purple crowns which grow from the tips of the branches of the *Erythrina corallodendron*.\*

I shall refrain here from providing a long list of the plants that I found in the vicinity of Kupang. Such a list would be better suited to a dedicated botanical journal.

Nota. Near the *negri* ruled by the raja of Amari I saw a fig tree (*Ficus indica*) of remarkable size. Its branches covered more than an acre of ground. It was located on the side of a gully, along which a very pretty stream ran. It is a very picturesque spot.<sup>£</sup>

The Dutch do not permit spices to be grown on the island of Timor, but this measure, which restricts their precious crop to a small number of islands in the Moluccas, will soon prove pointless, because the trees which supply the spices grow perfectly well in our colony the Isle of France, and from there the plants can be shipped to our other possessions in the Indies.<sup>µ</sup>

The growing of coffee is forbidden. A private citizen is permitted to keep two plants for<sup>#</sup> [*note continues on the following page*]

\* [*Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil*] Plants with scented flowers.

£ [*Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil*] Fig tree.

µ [*Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil*] Spices.

# [*Marginal note opposite these two paragraphs, in pencil*] Coffee.

(100)

*[Note continues from page 99]* for his own consumption.

Nota. I examined a small dense white stone which was round and milkily translucent. It had been found in a coconut. It was the size of a pea and had been given to Captain Hamelin by Monsieur Joannis, a citizen of Kupang. These stones are rare, and are found only in coconuts which lack the three holes which provide passage for the germ. Could it be the case that the germ hardens when it cannot find an exit? This seems all the more plausible as I am told that the stones are always located in the pulp of the nut, where the germ should be, around an inch from the openings.

### **Animals**

The most remarkable birds are: the white-throated frigate; the buzzard; the sparrowhawk, which closely resembles the French tercel; the crow; a species of hornbill, which is very common; the cockatoo; several species of parrot; several species of turtledove, one of which has a pink head and the most beautifully coloured plumage; a quail which has a white throat patterned with close-set black spots; a starling with feathers the colour of burnished steel; several species of shrike, one of which, I observed, has a forked tail with striking reflexed tips; a small species of waxbill which flies in flocks of several thousand and causes considerable damage to the rice crop; several small flycatchers, some of which have a very brilliant plumage; a green pigeon; a small swallow, whose mucilaginous nest is eaten by the Chinese; wild hens whose call resembles the first notes of that of the domestic hen – it could be rendered as the word *co-crick*.\*

\* [*Marginal note halfway down the page, in pencil*] Edible birds [*and below this*] Wild hens.

(102)

The domestic birds are hens and cocks, some of which are huge and fearless – the Malays often set them to fight against each other and bet on them. They love these fights. Ducks are very large and expensive because they are highly sought after by the Chinese. They usually sell for a rix-dollar (the rix-dollar is worth forty-eight sous). Hens sell for only five to six sous. The ducks' gait is somewhat similar to that of the penguin.\*

I saw a cock which had four legs. The two extra legs were short and thin, and were attached to the base of the joint which connects the thigh and the leg.

The quadrupeds are deer, which are abundant, buffalo (some are kept as livestock), horses, wild pigs, civet cats, red monkeys with trailing tails, a species of marmose opossum, *Simia aygula*, a creature the size of a grey marmot, with a large head and great bulging eyes, five digits on its forefeet and hind feet, a dangling tail, hairless from its tip to halfway along its length, carnivorous<sup>£</sup>

\* [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Cock-fighting.

£ [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Quadrupeds.

(103)

and frugivorous. Could this be the cuscus mentioned by Valmont de Bomare, who refers to Christoph Barchewitz's account? Goats, sheep, several species of dog, several species of lizard, the small flying dragon, the flying fox, several species of bat, great numbers of rats. Crocodiles are very common at the river mouth.\*

Several species of fish are found along the coast, some of the smallest in size displaying the most brilliant colours. A great many molluscs and madrepores, remarkable for the shape and colour, also occur there.<sup>£</sup>

There are a huge variety of shells, and some of them struck me as being extremely rare. Among those that were familiar, I observed the great chambered nautilus, which the Malays use for making spoons, the great turban shell, which supplies a very beautiful, shimmering nacre, the pearl oyster, which has very small pearls, is not very common, and is not fished there. The Polish saddle, the black hammer oyster, the lightning shell, the harlequin, the striped cone, a large striated green tusk shell, the egg cowry, the tiger cowry, the wrinkled cowry, the draught-board helmet shell, and several<sup>µ</sup>

\* *[Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil]* Quadrupeds, crocodiles.

£ *[Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil]* Fish.

µ *[Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil]* Nautilus.

(104)

other species of helmet shell, the clam, several specimens of which are so large that a single valve could serve as a drinking trough for livestock.\* I found only two land snails. The one is not at all attractive: it has a flattened whorl, and greatly resembles the common French snail; the other has a pointy whorl, its mouth is on the left, and it has yellow, brown and white stripes.

I saw only three types of snake. I killed one on the seashore which was around eighteen inches long, and grey with black markings. I preserved it in arrack, but it was spoilt by the heat. I encountered another, which was a delicate green colour, on the river bank. It was a snake of this species that bit Citizen Lesueur, artist, on the heel while he was out hunting. He was ill for several days, but alkali, administered externally and internally, neutralised the action of the venom. The third sort of snake was around four feet long, dark green, and thinner than one's little finger. I greatly desired to kill it, but it slid into the grass and I<sup>£</sup>

\* *[Marginal note opposite these lines, in pencil]* Enormous clam.

£ *[Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil]* Snakes.

(105)

lost it.

Mosquitoes cause a great deal of discomfort here, but the real scourge is a small red ant which has a very painful bite. It is the most common species of ant. Inside the house it devours everything that it comes across with astonishing speed. To keep food safe from them it is necessary to place it on tables or in cupboards whose feet stand in bowls of water. Scorpions are small, and are not highly venomous: they did not appear to me to be any different from those which are found in the southern regions of France.\*

A green mantis, about one foot in length, is very common.

Butterflies are very common, and there are many different kinds. Commander Baudin gathered a valuable collection of them.

When, at the end of a sweltering day, one breathes the cool air of evening under the gently swaying canopy of a tamarind tree or banyan fig, one always sees Thunberg's *Lampyrus japonica* flitting about in the shadows. In the darkness this insect resembles a miniature wandering star.<sup>‡</sup>

\* [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Insects, vexatious ants.

‡ [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Phosphorescent insect.



### **Mineral deposits**

The vast quantities of ore washed by the waters through deep gullies carved out by torrents in the rainy season indicate that rich deposits of iron are to be found in the interior of the island, near to the river – which would make their exploitation feasible and perhaps even profitable.\*

Gold is also found here – it is gathered mainly in a river at the head of the Kupang roads. This river flows through the territory of an emperor who no longer recognises Dutch rule. It is dangerous to travel through his lands because he is suspicious of Europeans, in spite of the fact that he has adopted their customs and habits. He is said to be an educated man. He is a cause of concern to the Company – he has a great many guns, but very little powder.‡

The gold is pale and of low quality. It is found as a dust and sometimes

\* *[Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil]* Iron.

‡ *[Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil]* Gold found locally.

(107)

in grains. I saw one which was the size of a pea. The emperor keeps a careful guard over the river, as it is a source of wealth for him, and is greedily coveted by the Europeans.

I have in my possession several pieces of jewellery which were fashioned from this gold by the inhabitants of Solor.

### **Reflections on the Malay language**

The Malay that is spoken in Kupang differs very little from that which is spoken in Batavia. In compiling this vocabulary (which I shall include at the end of my journal), I have tried to follow actual pronunciation as closely as possible – and so my spelling does not always match that which appears in the list compiled by Citizen Labillardière for his *Voyage in Search of La Pérouse* – a list which is in any case much fuller than mine and extremely useful for anyone travelling in the Moluccas.

Nota. As the list I have compiled could prove very useful to me if we visit the Moluccas, or  
[note continues on the following page]

(108)

The Malay language is soft and pleasant. For a Frenchman it is very easy to pronounce. It is not punctuated by any guttural or nasal inflections of the voice. It is an easy language to learn, as there is no inversion within sentences, no conjugation, and no declension, and there are no verb tenses, participles or noun genders. With a list of words it is very easy to make oneself understood and to understand common sentences. Another helpful thing is that a great many verbs are made by combining one word which indicates the action and another which indicates how the action is performed.

Example

to sharpen	<i>kria tayan</i>
to approach	<i>datan decat</i>
to kiss	<i>cassi tioum</i>
to remove one's footwear	<i>couar cos</i>

In these examples, the words *kria*, to make, *datan*, to come, *cassi*, to give, and *clouar*, to remove, indicate the action, and the words *tayan*,

[*Note continues from page 107*] several other parts of the Indies, I have not included it in the journal I am sending back to France.

(109)

sharp, *decat*, near, *tioum*, a kiss, *cos*, a stocking, indicate how the action is performed. These compound verbs, which are very common, reduce the number of words that must be learnt, and ease the burden on one's memory. In addition, a single word very often expresses both the verb and its substantive.

A verb used by itself always indicates the present; but when it is preceded by the word *nanti*, which means 'wait', it indicates the future. When it is preceded by the word *souda*, which means 'enough', it indicates the past. When it is preceded by the word *bolon*, 'not yet', there is negation of an action which is to be completed. And, finally, when it is preceded by the word *trada*, which means 'no', there is absolute negation of the action.

Example

<i>beta datan</i>	I come
<i>nanti beta datan</i>	I shall come
<i>beta souda datan</i>	I came
<i>beta bolon datan</i>	I have not yet come
<i>beta trada datan</i>	I have not come

The word *bole*, which means 'to be able', is used in certain instances instead of the word *nanti*, and also indicates the future.

(110)

The word *lebe*, 'more', used before an adjective, indicates the comparative of augmentation, the word *couran*, 'less', the comparative of diminution.

Elisions are frequently used in the Malay language, the most common being those of the words *trada* and *souda*.

Example

<i>itou tra-bagous</i>	it is not nice	instead of <i>trada bagoux</i>
<i>sou abis</i>	to be finished	instead of <i>souda abis</i>

Although the Malay language is used almost universally in the Indies, I do not think that it is extensive in its vocabulary or sophisticated. I am speaking here only of vulgar Malay, which differs greatly from high Malay, *Malayo bessor*, which is spoken by all educated Malays. The Bible and several prayer books have been translated into high Malay.

The Malay language has been enriched by foreign trade. Several words, which have come to them from the Chinese, the Portuguese and the Dutch, have since become established.

The Malays love poetry, and have songs for every (111) activity. They often improvise, and a line usually contains nine or ten feet, broken at the fourth or fifth foot with a caesura. They use alternate rhymes, which are very rhythmical. These songs mix high Malay with vulgar Malay, and the whole is governed by rules which I did not succeed in understanding.

The Malay that is spoken in Kupang is not the same as that which is spoken in the interior of the island of Timor; that which is spoken in Kupang is, as I said above, almost the same as that of Batavia. This conformity is the result of traditional ties and commercial relations; however, as soon as one travels a single league into the interior of the island, the language changes, and it often happens that a Malay from Kupang will not be understood by a Malay from a neighbouring *negri*.

It is the same for the islands of Timor, Roti, Solor and Savu. All of these islands, which are very close to Timor, and are dependencies of the Dutch trading post, have their own particular languages. In the *negris* which have a seaport, however, the Malay of Kupang is spoken.

(112)

Dili, a Portuguese trading post in the northern part of Timor, also has its own particular language – if I may rely on a short handwritten report which I read, and which contained a short list of vocabulary. This report is in the possession of Commander Baudin.

Such are the observations on the language that I was able to make during my two-month stay – a language which is all the more interesting because of its great utility to any who travel in those parts of the Indies where Malay is widely spoken.

### **Sequel of my stay in Timor**

Mother, my brothers, friends – you for whom I chiefly write this account while I am so far away – your affection is no doubt clouded with anxiety when you ponder my fate; but may your tender concern find reassurance five thousand leagues from my homeland, as I recall just a small part of the love you always showed me... Mother... at this word (113) my heart crosses the intervening distance and presses affectionately against your maternal breast.

Hospitality is not offered here with that affected and artificial courtesy which, among the civilized peoples of Europe, flatters one's pride but wearies one's heart more that it gives pleasure. Here, man, being closer to nature, offers what he wishes another to have with a candid friendship that indifference could never imitate. When I am returned among you again, and I relate the episodes of this long voyage, my heart will fill unfailingly with gratitude every time I mention the names of Monsieur Tilman and Monsieur Joannis, who have both overwhelmed me with their friendship. The latter, especially, insisted that I always dine with him, and each time my work obliged me to stay away for even half a day, a succession of slaves would come to find out what was keeping me. Citizen Hamelin enjoyed this hospitality with me, and when we left we were both offered food and drink of every kind. Our farewells left them in tears, and I sincerely shared their sorrow.

\* [*Marginal note halfway down the page, in pencil*] Hospitality.

(114)

Monsieur Tilman is the captain or leader of the citizens of Kupang. He is of mixed race, and is the brother of Madame Van Esten, of whom I have already spoken. This lady was ill for almost the entire length of our stay, and she met very few members of our expedition. Monsieur Tilman presented me to her twice during the final days of our stay in Kupang. I was received with the utmost courtesy. Madame Van Esten is a woman of fifty-five years, and has a very cheerful disposition. She is greatly loved by all around her. She is very rich, and offers help to many people. She does not have any children of her own, but she brings up several girls and boys in her home, who are the children of relatives of hers.\*

Monsieur Joannis is a wealthy private citizen of mixed race. He has amassed a considerable fortune through trading. I have rarely seen anyone as cheerful as his wife. Every evening she prepared a new form of entertainment for us, aided by her two young daughters. Sometimes she had her slaves perform dances from Java or Timor, led<sup>£</sup>

\* *[Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil]* Monsieur Tilman.

£ *[Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil]* Monsieur Joannis.

(115)

always by her younger daughter, and sometimes she staged concerts for us, which were always, it must be said, rather discordant. We were always made to listen to her songs, which she often improvised.

Two or three days before we left, Monsieur Joannis held a large supper, to which several members of the *Naturaliste*'s staff were invited. The meal was very merry and more elaborate than we had expected. More than forty carefully prepared dishes adorned the table. The master and mistress of the house did the honours with great style. At the end of the supper Monsieur Joannis raised a toast to each one of us in turn, wishing us farewell. It was through my frequent visits to this house that I was able to learn enough Malay in a short period to make myself easily understood.\*

Being so far removed from our way of life, the Malay does not experience the spurious desires which make it so difficult for us to achieve happiness. He is not tormented by an immoderate thirst for wealth, nor does he possess the dull-wittedness of the New Holland savages, who are so lacking in enterprise that they are barely able to satisfy their most urgent needs. The Malay<sup>£</sup>

\* [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Farewell party.

£ [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Ambitions.

(116)

dwells in an intermediate state of civilization, in which, although he cannot take pleasure in the glory, splendour and power of his nation, he may at least enjoy individual and domestic happiness. What he sees around him inspires in him neither pride, envy, or ambition, which are the offspring of degeneracy. A temperate climate readily supplies him with all he might desire to satisfy his physical needs, and the differences in living conditions are not so great as to sap the lower orders of their self-esteem. While it is true that there are slaves, there is a great difference between the way they are treated here and the systems that operate in our European colonies. There is no prejudice attached to skin colour, because all have the same colour. The slave feels affection for his master, and hastens to anticipate his smallest desire; while the master leads an equable life, and never yields to anger.\*

I was shown great kindness by Gabriel Wentz, Hendrick Tilman, Hendrick da Silva, Castor and Portiaia, a private citizen of Kupang, Tion Yanguan, a rich Chinaman [*Chinese characters*], the (117) raja Amari, Amandima, king of Savu, Miguel Albatu, king of Amanuban.

Since Geographe Bay we had been separated from the corvette the *Naturaliste*. A month had passed since our arrival in Timor. Every day we hoped to see her come into this last rendezvous. Her delay left us in almost no doubt that she had been wrecked. Our unfortunate comrades were often in our thoughts: we imagined the harrowing scene of our friends perishing among the waves, or wandering a wild shoreline. These gloomy, wearying thoughts finally gave way to gladder sentiments when on the fourth complementary day a ship appeared in the west. We hoped that it was the *Naturaliste*, and our hopes were not disappointed. On that same day we embraced our friends after three and a half months apart, and our hearts were filled to the brim with joy.

The *Naturaliste* had been to the first two rendezvous as planned. She had called at Rottnest Island and Shark Bay in turn, and had sailed much further (118) than we had done towards the head of this bay. As Citizens Michaud and Delisse had remained behind in the Isle of France, no botanical surveys were carried out during these two stops, despite the fact that conditions in these places were much more favourable for the study of natural history than those which we had encountered during our wretched stay on tiny Barren Island. Fearful lest the ships should once again become separated, and believing that Citizen Riédle by himself could fulfil all necessary responsibilities aboard the *Géographe*, I resolved to transfer to the *Naturaliste*. I felt obliged to sacrifice certain ties of friendship to the advantage that might be gained by my serving aboard this ship. Commander Baudin was ill. I wrote to him, setting out the reasons for my decision, and asked for his consent, which he granted me in the following letter dated the 15th of Vendémiaire, Year X [7 October 1801].

\* [Marginal note opposite this paragraph, in pencil] Ambitions, slaves.



Copy of the letter I wrote to Commander Baudin

Citizen,

There is no designated botanist on the corvette the *Naturaliste*. You, like myself, understand how important it is that (119) somebody should have responsibility for this splendid branch of natural history. Events have shown just how necessary this is, with the ships separated for two months, and two sojourns made in different places.

On the ship which you command, Citizen Riédle and I perform similar functions, which could be undertaken by one person. Consequently, Citizen Commander, I request your consent to continue the expedition aboard the *Naturaliste*.

In taking leave of you and several of my comrades for whom I feel great friendship and esteem, I shall, it is true, be making a large sacrifice; however, if, in the smallest way, my work may prove valuable to my country and contribute to the history of the science that I study, I shall feel that I have been recompensed.

Respectfully,

Th. Leschenault, chief botanist

Kupang

Commander-in-chief, Expedition of Discovery

To Citizen Leschenault, Botanist

My recent indisposition, of which you are aware, prevented me from replying at any earlier date to the letter which you were kind enough to send me, but I (120) gladly take advantage of these first moments of respite from the fever that has long wracked me to commend your decision to transfer to the *Naturaliste*.

The ship, as you well observe, having no botanist aboard, requires someone who is knowledgeable in this field, so that, in the various places where we shall call during the remainder of the expedition, we may turn to good account the circumstances we encounter, even should the ships become separated again. I must assure you that the government will greatly appreciate the sacrifice that you are making in leaving your friends, given that you do so solely with the aim of contributing to the expedition's greater success.

I shall advise Captain Hamelin of this new arrangement. You will find that he and his staff will readily furnish you with all that you require for your work, and, although we shall be separated, I hope that I shall never be so far from you that I shall not be able to render you all (121) the services that are in my power.

With friendly wishes, signed Nicolas Baudin

The Commander wrote commending me to Captain Hamelin, whom I had already met on many occasions in Kupang, at Monsieur Joannis's.

In transferring from the *Géographe* I left behind a number of friends to whom I was very attached, these ties being all the closer, based as they were on a high level of regard.

Those with whom I shared the closest bonds of friendship were:

Citizen Le Bas de Sainte-Croix, commander. This officer had already sailed a great deal in the Indies, and having also spent a long time in Paris, he possessed all the social graces, along with a very kind heart. When I fell ill as we sailed from Géographe Bay, he looked after me like a brother. He shared all he ate with me, and it is to his care and attention that I must partly attribute my recovery. The poor state of his health, and an unfortunate affair of honour

with another officer of the expedition, in which he was wounded in the left arm, forced him to remain behind in Kupang. The (122) Governor proposed that he stay at his residence, but he chose to stay at the fort. Before I left I was gratified to see that he was out of danger. I introduced him to Monsieur Joannis, and I hope that he may enjoy the same hospitality that I was offered by this good and kindly gentleman.

Citizen Freycinet, lieutenant commander, a young man who places his work above everything else, and who combines social accomplishment with a great desire for knowledge.

Citizen Depuch, mineralogist, an intelligent, well-bred young man. His father was in the Constituent Assembly, a deputy of the Nobility of Bordeaux.

Citizen Péron, zoologist, has far greater learning than is usual in someone aged just twenty-five. He works every day to expand his knowledge.

Citizen de Bougainville – in the future any son of his will be proud to acknowledge as his father this man who by means of his courage and his expertise has won for himself the highest repute as a (123) navigator and geographer.

During our stay in Kupang, dysentery carried off several of our sailors, and a great many more were assailed by this cruel illness as we left port. A great loss to the expedition was Citizen Riédélé, head gardener. Such was the zeal he brought to his researches into natural history, he often ignored the exhaustion and discomfort he suffered in these sweltering lands. He never listened to those who warned him, on several occasions, that his reckless behaviour might quickly prove fatal. Shortly after his arrival, he experienced a violent bout of dysentery, but he did not stop working, and perished as a result. Shortly before leaving Paris he had been honoured with a gold medal by the Society for Agriculture. Two years previously he had gone to America with Commander Baudin: in the course of that voyage he collected more than seven hundred living plants for the National Garden in Paris.

An English botanist named Nelson died some years before in Kupang – he had gone with Bligh to Tahiti, and remained with him when the ship he commanded, (124) the *Bounty*, was overtaken by mutineers. The lamented remains of Citizen Riédélé were placed alongside Nelson's, and over the tomb of these two men, who died in the service of humanity while far from their homelands, the Commander raised a small pyramid with an inscription bearing the names of those for whom this modest structure had been erected.

Desertions in the Isle of France and Kupang, along with the numbers of men carried away by disease, or left prostrate on their sickbeds, left the two ships short of hands, which was a source of great concern as we set off to explore an unknown coast lying in high latitudes. I hope I may be allowed here to make several observations about the deficiencies in the preparations made for this expedition. A sailor could perhaps offer more penetrating observations, but here are the opinions I formed.

The success of a voyage of discovery depends principally on the health of the crew. When a ship is in difficulties, it is often saved only by (125) the rapid actions of its crew. Consequently, only strong, healthy men with long experience of the sea should be recruited for our ships. Every possible measure should be taken to maintain the health of the crew, which, in the present case, has not been done.

Several young men from wealthy families hastily volunteered to join this expedition, which had excited their curiosity. They were accepted. They had not considered the hardships they would face, and soon abhorred their lot. Some remained behind in Tenerife, and some in the Isle of France. However, they had taken positions which should have been filled by expert sailors. A number of other men, who were sailors by profession, at least, although sickly and in poor health, had willingly joined, but did so only with the aim of collecting the first six months' of their wages. They calculated that they must necessarily be dismissed at the first port of call for reason of ill health. An enterprise of this magnitude should never have been

undertaken at Le Havre – during wartime it is too small a port to offer a wide selection of sailors, and so no real choice could be made.

(126)

I have frequently heard the surgeons of the two ships say that the medicines they obtained were poor in quality and of insufficient quantity.

The supplies of wine and flour laid in were so limited that six months into the expedition the ship's staff were reduced to eating biscuits and drinking brandy. Perhaps it was thought that we could obtain provisions in the ports we were to visit. But why should trust have been placed in such a conjecture, given that it is extremely difficult to ship out wine and wheat from France in this present time of war? As to the naturalists, the government instructed Baudin that the greatest consideration should be shown towards these men as *they were utterly unaccustomed to the sea*, and that they should be accorded everything they needed to alleviate discomfort in their new surroundings. However, we were reduced to eating food that is difficult to get used to even after one has been sailing for a long time. It is true that we (127) were each granted an extra 4 francs 10 sous per day for food and drink, but as we did not receive this money in the Isle of France we had no option other than to accept the provisions offered on board ship. For all that, I speak here simply as an observer, and not as a man deceived by false promises. If we have suffered as a result of this negligent provisioning, the crew have suffered much more. Most of these men were not accustomed to long passages. Few of them had left the shores of France for more than several months at a time. Hard work wears out a man quickly in the tropics if he is unable restore his strength with wholesome food. Into these unhealthy ports of call he drags his weary body, and the climate soon exerts its baleful influence. It is to just such privations that I attribute the losses we suffered in Kupang.

At the present time of writing, the poor state of our crews has not yet exposed us to danger, but we are heading towards regions where the sailing will be more hazardous. Who is to say whether circumstances will remain (128) propitious?

During our stay in Timor the Commander was afflicted by a virulent fever. For several days we even feared for his life. He eventually recovered.

According to the observations of Citizen Saint-Cricq, sub-lieutenant, during the month of Vendémiaire the thermometer on land rose during the day from 24° 4' to 25°, and during the night from 22° 5' to 23°. On one occasion only he observed it at 26° 3' and 23° 2'.

During the current month (Vendémiaire) the sun passed through the zenith of Timor.

Nota. The rainy season, which is the season of the western monsoon, is the most unhealthy.

(129)

## Chapter 5

*Passage from Timor to d'Entrecasteaux Channel; descriptions of this channel, its inhabitants, its plant-life and its soil; Maria Island, Banks Strait, Western Port*

On the 22nd of Brumaire [13 November 1801] we weighed anchor and sailed out through the channel which lies between Kera Island and Semau. We ran along very close to the latter island, which appeared to be thickly wooded.

On the 25th [16 November 1801] we passed within sight of the island of Savu, where Cook called in 1770, and which is described in volume four of his first voyage. The island is fertile and livestock are kept in great numbers there. On the same day we saw Raijua, an island which is a short distance from Savu.

On the 26th [17 November 1801] we sailed very close in to New Savu, a small, barren, uninhabited island.

Dysentery, which had proved so fatal to both crews during our stay in Kupang, continued to ravage us. Several of those afflicted by this cruel disease perished, and the remainder struggled greatly to recover even with the close attention of the surgeons.

(130)

Aboard the *Naturaliste*, we were greatly distressed to witness the death of Citizen Levillain. He was a trainee zoologist, a man gracious in his disposition, and an excellent companion. He had travelled as Commander Baudin's secretary on an earlier voyage to the Americas. During that trip he had devoted himself to the study of zoology. He died on the 1st of Nivose, Year X [22 December 1801], at the age of 29.

Citizen Milius, lieutenant commander, was ill for almost the entire passage. This officer had suffered from ill health since the time we were in Géographe Bay. He recovered a little in Kupang, but scarcely had we put to sea than he began to suffer as before.

During the first day of our passage the heat was considerable. The thermometer rose to 26° on the Réaumur scale, but when the wind got up from the south-west the heat rapidly declined, and we encountered here, in the torrid zone, the temperatures we experience during fine (131) spring days in our own country. I set out here a table summarising the temperatures observed during our passage.

From the 22nd of Brumaire [13 November 1801] to the 16th of Frimaire [7 December 1801] the thermometer varied from 26° to 19° 3'. The usual height was from 20 to 22°.

On the 17th of Frimaire [8 December 1801] it fell to 17° 5'.

Until the end of Frimaire [21 December 1801] it varied from 15° to 13°.

On the 4th of Nivose [25 December 1801], the sun being at our zenith, the thermometer rose only to 12° 5'. The 5th, being still in the tropics, 12°.

The 15th of Nivose [5 January 1801] 10°.

The 18th of Nivose [8 January 1801] it fell to 8° 8'. On this day it reached its lowest point during our passage.

From the 18th it rose, with some fluctuation, to 12°.

The westerly winds hindered us for a considerable period and our passage was very long. It was only on the morning of the 23rd of Nivose [13 January 1802] that we sighted the South Cape of Van Diemen's Land. We sailed in very close to it.

The land around this cape is very different to the western coast of New Holland. Everything is uniform there, while here, on the contrary, the coast is steep and broken: tall basalt columns, which rise in needles and complete, in this region of the world, the final pieces in the structure of the globe; great masses of granite, which time and the frequent storms (132) of these parts have only gently furrowed. (1) [*note absent*] The inaccessible forests that crown this region offer a sight that is worthy of treatment by a skilful artist's crayon. Gloomy weather, but calm. Masses of cloud vapour swirling through the trees, whose withered crowns attest to their vast age, increase the majesty of the scene. We were about to pass into the southern seas, that stage for the great discoveries made one after the other across half a century by illustrious European navigators. In recalling the achievements of these great men, however, I am chilled to my soul as I retrace the terrible and tragic ends which several of them met! ... The immortals, Cook, La Pérouse, de Langle, d'Entrecasteaux, Marion, Lamanon, died far from their homelands, laid low by their own virtuous natures and their love of science!...

As we approached d'Entrecasteaux Channel the land became flatter and offered prospects much less wild than those at the rocky extremity of the cape. On the southern headland of Recherche Bay we saw a (133) fire, around which we made out, with the aid of our glasses, five or six natives. While we were admiring the romantic vistas that the coast presented, the lookouts cried, 'Rocks ahead'. We were running before the wind and were no more than a cable's length<sup>1</sup> away from them. These are the rocks that lie to the east of Recherche Bay and barely protrude above the surface of the water. The sea was not breaking over them, and so they could not be seen from a distance. We left them to port and soon entered the channel, where we ran in very close along Bruny Island. That evening we anchored in Great Bay, around a quarter of a league from Partridge Island.

I hastened to go on board the *Géographe* – to call on the Commander and to embrace those good friends from whom I had been separated for more than two months. I was saddened to find that several were in poor health. Citizen Depuch was still recovering from dysentery, a disease which had long afflicted him. Citizen Maugé, zoologist, was very ill.

On the 24th [*of Nivose – 14 January 1802*] I went ashore on little Partridge Island, and walked the whole way around it. (134) The basis of this island is granitic. The soil is good, and is covered with very beautiful trees which have straight, slender trunks. These trees belong to the genus *Eucalyptus*. *Casuarina equisetifolia* and an undershrub of the genus *Banksia* also grow in great abundance, but the latter was not in fruit or flower. The shoreline is covered with a parsley named *Apium prostratum* by Citizen Labillardière. It tastes like a mixture of celery and European parsley. A species of *Orache* with smooth whitish leaves also grows along the shore. The interior of the island afforded me an abundant harvest of plants – those of the myrtle family are the most numerous. I found several species of *Philadelphus*, *Melaleuca* and *Leptospermum*, several aromatic plants of the *Compositae* family, a superb species of *Aletris* with red flowers, a species of *Xiris*, a *Clematis* and a pretty *Geranium*. Among the new genera recently named by the English botanist Smith, I observed a species of *Goodenia* (135) with yellow flowers, and several species of *Styphelia*.

This small island did not appear as though it was ordinarily inhabited, but the natives visit it for short periods to collect ear shells, or ormers, which adhere in great numbers to rocks along the shoreline. Some of these shells are up to eight inches in diameter. I noticed that the scorched remnants of these lay in great profusion around several native shelters or huts. These shelters are at most four feet in height, and are constructed in a crude and flimsy fashion. A branch one or two inches in diameter is bent into a bow-shape and driven into the ground at either end, forming a frame which supports several long sheets of thick bark. At one

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<sup>1</sup> 120 fathoms.

end, the sheets rest on the ground; at the other end, they rest on the bow or frame. The sheets of bark form an angle of around forty-five degrees with the ground, but are joined together very roughly, and so afford little protection against rain or strong winds to the savage who takes shelter beneath them. In front of these huts, whose entrances somewhat resemble the mouth of an oven,<sup>1</sup> I always came across the ashes (136) of old fires. The bark which is used in the building of these shelters comes from the *Eucalyptus resiniferus*.

As I was walking along the point which faces Bruny Island, and which is only separated from it by a channel around two hundred paces across, I caught sight of savages fleeing in several different places along the opposite shoreline. I immediately rushed to the edge of the water, held up the branches I was carrying, and shouted, at the top of my lungs, 'gougloua', a word meaning 'come here' in their language. They came back and looked across at me, shouting, and mimicking some of my gestures. As their fear seemed to have completely dissipated, I tried to attract them towards me by showing them pieces of white paper, small mirrors and knives, while I kept on repeating the word 'gougloua'. Two of them then made up their minds to cross the narrow strait at a place where the water came up only to their waists, holding their hands above their heads, in order, no doubt, to show me that they were not armed. I went over to meet them (137) and presented each with a necklace of large glass beads and a small knife, which they immediately held up, uttering cries of pleasure, to show the natives who had gathered in large numbers on the opposite shore. Several more then crossed the strait in order to take a share of the gifts I was offering. One of the latter group struck me as having a measure of authority over the others. This chief had a handsome face and a well-proportioned frame. He seemed to be around thirty years old, and he came up and presented me with a necklace he was wearing, which was made out of small shells of brightly shimmering mother-of-pearl threaded on a thin cord of bark or grass. He asked for a glass necklace in exchange, which I immediately gave him. They all received my presents with the liveliest displays of pleasure, but when I refused to give them something that they seemed to want, they did not repeat their request. When I had nothing left to give them I went away, and two of them walked with me. Before following me, however, they placed the presents I had given them in crevices in the rocks.

All these savages were entirely naked. The one who appeared to be a chief (138) was the only one who wore a necklace. The others did not wear any ornaments. Most of those I saw were young and well-proportioned. Only a few of them gave an appearance of frailty. These savages have woolly hair. The colour of their skin, while black, is not a deep black, and they take pains to darken several parts of their bodies, and especially the upper part of the face, with powdered charcoal. One young man had smeared his hair with ochre-coloured earth, and arranged it into small, separate locks, so that from a distance it resembled those oiled red wigs which French ladies wore a few years ago. (I apologise to the fair sex – whose charms embellish every fashion they adopt – for making such a comparison with the filthy hair of this savage, but it was impossible not to be struck by the similarity, and I could not find a comparison which conveyed the idea more aptly.)

The natives were not tattooed; all instead were covered with scars which had been (139) deliberately inflicted. By taking particular measures,<sup>2</sup> they cause the scars to protrude by half an inch sometimes. The parts of their bodies that they principally scar in this way are the shoulders, the shoulder blades, the lower back, the buttocks, stomach and chest. The scars form straight, circular and semi-circular lines.

The natives have fine, regular teeth, which are pure white in colour. They all had full sets, apart from a single old man who lacked one tooth in his upper front jaw. This could be attributed to old age; I don't think he had had it removed. He was also the only one to have a

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<sup>1</sup> These openings faced east.

<sup>2</sup> They reopen the lips of wounds when these are about to heal together.

long beard, which old age had touched with white. I was accompanied by two sailors who were carrying tin boxes in which I kept my botanical samples. One of the two men was black, and when I pointed this out to the savages they did not appear in the least surprised to see a man of their colour dressed like us and sharing our customs, but as this black man was young they wished to examine his chest, no doubt in order to (140) make sure that he was not a woman.

They are very nimble and have very keen eyesight. The two natives accompanied me only until we came across the Commander and several others. The natives saw them first, and, terrified by the possibility of this encounter, fled. I immediately ran after them, urging them to come back, but within a minute they had completely disappeared.

They seem acquainted with the power of firearms,<sup>1</sup> for when I saw a red-billed oystercatcher on the shore and conveyed to them that I could kill it with the gun I was holding, they immediately uttered, in a sharp tone, the word '*pegloua*', which I did not understand. Seeing that they did not appear frightened, I took aim at the bird, whereupon they immediately fled (141) in the greatest terror. I then put the gun on my shoulder again, and called them back, assuring them that I would not shoot, and they came.

The Commander had not seen any natives when I met him, but little by little they grew bolder, and came up to us in greater numbers.

There is no water on Partridge Island, but at its southern end there is a tract of damp, low-lying ground. I am convinced that fresh water could be obtained by digging there. A great many mussels can be found along the rocks which fringe the island. I saw several quail, some small, very pretty, parrots flying in flocks, and several other birds which I refrained from shooting in order not to frighten the natives, with whom I wished to have sustained contact. I also observed a species of very large black ant which is armed with a sting like that of the wasp in the rear section of its body, and which is just as poisonous. There is a considerable depth of water around the island. Two boat-lengths from shore one finds several fathoms of water, in which great masses of (142) *Fucus pyriferus* and *Fucus palmatus* grow.

On the 25th [of Nivose – 15 January 1802] I went ashore on Bruny Island at the spot where I had seen the natives the day before. By the time I arrived, a boat from the *Géographe* was already there. Those who had landed were warming themselves familiarly around several fires with a large number of natives, who were accompanied that day by their wives and children. The natives were all alike clad in ragged, foul-smelling kangaroo skins, but these skins did not conceal those parts which European modesty takes the greatest care to cover. In most cases the skins were tied around the natives' shoulders, and the entire lower section of the bodies of both sexes remained uncovered. Most of the women had shaven heads, and this had been done so skilfully that it appeared as though their hair had been cut with scissors. Like the men, they darkened parts of their body with powdered charcoal, but some, in order to enhance their beauty, had taken it into their heads to (143) apply a red chalk to the parts of the face immediately below the cheekbone. The red and the black, mixed together, gave their faces a truly hideous appearance. Among the children I observed one who was at most eight days old. His skin was reddish and hairy, and he had been wrapped in a kangaroo skin which covered both mother and child. Older children sat astride their mothers' necks. One of the women was blind, but was so well accustomed to walking in these forests that she moved just as nimbly as the others, whom she followed by the sound of their footsteps. One young girl was lame. This impairment seemed to have been caused by a dislocation of her left thigh.

The savages whom we saw gathered together here – men, women and children – numbered around sixty. These people have the following general facial characteristics: a sunken brow, deep-set eyes, a nose which is large but not flattened, a wide mouth filled with

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<sup>1</sup> They may have had contact with the crews of the ships commanded by Monsieur d'Entrecasteaux; moreover, the English have often visited this passage.

strong teeth, and a prominent square jaw. There are a great many exceptions however, and the facial features of some are quite European. The (144) children had cheerful natures, but the faces of the men were reflective of treachery and spite

They had very few belongings: bowls made from *Fucus palmatus*, which bear a resemblance to the bags in which we keep gaming counters (they are described in the *Voyage in Search of La Pérouse*), and a type of deep basket skilfully woven from a very strong and supple grass. These baskets usually contained one or two sharpened bones which are probably used to remove the meat from the shellfish which these people eat. Almost all of the women had a sort of hard cushion made out of kangaroo skin and stuffed with the fur of this creature. These oval-shaped cushions are around ten inches across and are probably used for supporting their heads when they sleep. I bought one in exchange for a small mirror. The woman to whom I proposed this exchange remained undecided for a long time. On acquiring it, I put it in a gamebag, but shortly afterwards the cushion was stolen from me without my realising it. (145) The natives stole several other trinkets from various people, but, fearing that we would take retribution when we became aware of their mischief, they suddenly ran away, despite the fact that we had not displayed the slightest sign of displeasure. At first we were surprised by their sudden withdrawal, but perceiving the true reason for this, we called them back with friendly gestures which set their minds at rest.

Accompanied by several others, I made an excursion inland. It was poor, sandy country, covered in ferns. I saw a great many *Eucalyptus globulus* and *Eucalyptus resiniferus*, along with smaller numbers of *Casuarina equisetifolia*. In several damp places, we encountered clumps of small straight shrubs of the genus *Philadelphus*. We made our way along several paths, which led us to areas of cleared, beaten earth. Here and there, around these areas, we made out dwelling places of a kind, which were only protected from the elements by the bushes. The aspect of these places and the trampled grass were a (146) clear enough indication that the natives used them as shelters. I was all the more convinced of this because I had not seen on this part of Bruny Island any of the bark shelters that I had encountered the day before on Partridge Island.

I added little to my collection that day. The same plants grow on both islands. Among the new plants that I gathered were Labillardière's *Mazeutoxeron rufum* (English botanists use the name *Correa* for the genus *Mazeutoxeron*), and a species of *Louchitis*.

By the time we returned to our boat, the natives had disappeared, without there having been any quarrel between us. We went back on board ship, but the *Géographe*'s boat remained ashore until evening.

Hereabouts, the shoreline consists of a sandy beach, which boats cannot run close enough into that one can land without getting one's feet wet.

On the next day, the 26th [of *Nivose* – 6 January 1802], we learned that, after we had left, the (147) natives had returned to the beach, and had remained there for some time on amicable terms with the crew from the *Géographe*, whom we had left on shore the previous day, as I mentioned before, because their boat had become grounded at low tide. While the sailors were engaged in refloating it, the natives went away once again. When everything had been made ready for departure, and while Citizen Bonnefoi, midshipman, was busy getting everyone aboard, a spear struck the shoulder of Citizen Maurouard, midshipman, who was beside him. The flesh of his shoulder was pierced right through. The spear had been thrown from behind the slope that borders the beach. Citizens Bonnefoi and Maurouard immediately ran over to try and find the aggressors and avenge themselves, but the natives were so well hidden that they could not be seen. So the midshipmen embarked, and, when the boat was a little way out to sea, they saw around ten natives armed with spears come down to the beach and hurl insults at them. The spear which wounded Citizen Maurouard had a shaft around half an inch in diameter, (148) and was eight or nine feet long. It was extremely sharp at one end,



and had a slit around half a foot long at the other end. It appears that this slit, which is made in the upper part of the spear, is used for attaching a light throwing device, which is left behind by the spear when it is thrown.

The natives committed these hostile acts without our having supplied them with the slightest provocation. On the contrary, we had showered them with presents, and we had none of us done anything which might have injured them. I admit that I am surprised, after all the instances of cruelty and betrayal reported in voyages of discovery, to hear sensible people say that men in their natural state are not in the least part malicious, and that they can be trusted, and will only become aggressive when roused to vengeance. Unfortunately, many travellers have fallen victim to this flawed reasoning. For my part, I believe that one cannot be too wary of men whose characters have never been moderated by civilization, and (149) I am convinced that one should land only with great caution on coasts inhabited by such men.

Today (the 26th), Captain Hamelin went to explore the head of the bay. He approached close enough to shore to be able to see what was happening there. It seems that the events of the previous day had filled the natives with concern, and that they planned to attack us if we landed on their shores, as the captain saw thirty-six natives walking along the shoreline in parties of five or six. In each group there was one man who carried a bundle of spears, and at the head of this small army a man holding a burning brand set fire at intervals to the scrub which fringed the shore. Did they take this measure so as to be able to observe us from a distance, or was it done in order to deprive us of any means of concealing ourselves, and so surprising them?

The longboats of the two ships, having set off to Port Cygnet on the 24th to look for water (those who saw the harbour declared that it was superb both with respect to the anchorage it afforded and to the fertility of the land that fringes it), returned without having fulfilled the aim of their mission.

(150)

On the 27th [*of Nivose – 17 January 1802*], we got under way with the object of dropping anchor in North-West Bay which is at the far end of the channel, but the wind was against us, and so we were forced to anchor outside Isthmus Bay.<sup>1</sup> I immediately went ashore on the mainland at a place where a stream of lovely fresh water flows down a steep incline. Although the stream is small in volume, it would be enough to supply the two ships with all their water if work was undertaken to build a small dam (twenty-five paces from shore), to which one could attach a tarpaulin sleeve which would carry the water as far as the longboats. Along the edge of the stream we saw paths, burnt trees and vestiges of shellfish, but none of the local inhabitants.

I walked a short distance inland, but encountered only (151) a poor, whitish soil, which was covered with ferns. The trees, however, grow to a considerable height there. I came across several plants that were unfamiliar to me, amongst others, a shrub from the *Labiatae* family which has a straight and slender stem. The sailors wanted to cut some of these shrubs to make shafts for boathooks, and yardarms for the masts of small boats, but the wood is so brittle that one man by himself could snap stems three inches in diameter without any problem. Being so flimsy, it was of no use at all. I collected several samples of Citizen Labillardière's *Exocarpus cupressiformis*, two other plants of the buckthorn family, another plant with black berries from the *Jasminum* family, and a species of creeping herb bennet.

From our anchorage we enjoyed one of those vistas which is occasionally created in a painter's imagination, but which nature is much more chary of granting. At this point the

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<sup>1</sup> This name has been given to the bay because a strip of land less than one hundred toises wide separates it from Adventure Bay.

channel is no more than three miles wide. The mountainous terrain of the mainland and the lower-lying ground of Bruny Island, (152) surmounted in the east by Fluted Cape, are alike covered with magnificent trees.

On the 28th [*of Nivose* – 18 January 1802] Captain Hamelin placed the large boat at my disposal. I first went ashore on Green Island, a small island situated in the middle of the channel. There I saw a fur seal which plunged into the waves as soon as it caught sight of me. On the shore I came across a sizeable nest which contained the broken shells of several large eggs, which I believe to be those of the biggest species of pelican. This island serves as a refuge for a great many seagulls, pelicans and gannets. I encountered an abundance of a plant of the genus *Dianella*, an undershrub of the *Rubiaceae* family, a species of *Pavetta*, and a small species of *Epilopium* which grows along the shoreline.

After Green Island, I went ashore on Bruny Island. I walked about three quarters of a league. The soil is sandy and infertile here. The only thing that grows beneath the tall trees which cover the island is a sparse, scraggy sort of grass. I did not find any fresh water, although I did come across the beds of several (153) dried-up streams.

On a small island close to shore I collected a plant of the genus *Indigofera*, which is very similar to the indigo plant from which dye is obtained.

After we got back in our boat the wind freshened considerably. It was accompanied by violent squalls from the south-west, which forced us to put in at little Green Island. These squalls strike a small craft with even greater force and danger when they arrive obliquely. Their direction is determined by the steep slope of the hills which border the channel. As soon as we arrived back on board the ship, we got under way. That evening we anchored in North-West Bay. We saw two canoes each containing three men who took fright at our approach and paddled rapidly towards land. When they reached it they hurriedly took their canoes out of the water and carried them into the woods. During the night we saw several fires along the coast.

On the 27th [*of Nivose* – 17 January 1802] I landed on the southern side of the eastern entrance to the channel. We saw several natives, but they (154) ran away at our approach. The headland which encloses the harbour in this area is composed of a sort of soft slate overlain with sandstone. The soil is sandy and just as poor as that which I had seen the day before. The new plants I found were a species of *Dodonaea*, one of *Bossiaea*, and the same *Spinifex* I had seen the previous year on the Barren Islands. The grass which grows in the sand at the sea's edge had a very large, upright, globular spike. It contains a seed of the same size and shape as that which is found in wheat. It also yields a flour, and I am convinced that if it could be cultivated it too could serve as a food for men. I was only able to find withered samples of this grass, and so collected a very small number of grains.<sup>1</sup>

On the sandy beach of this coast I found several shells of the *Solen*, (155) commonly called the razor shell, along with the separated halves of a very beautiful shell. These latter possess delicate, raised longitudinal bands which are slightly reflected backward.

On the 30th [*of Nivose* – 20 January 1802] the longboat was sent to Point Gicquel to procure wood. I went ashore at this place, but had no more luck than on the two previous days. The soil is a little better, but all the ground cover had recently been burnt by the natives. I found only a species of *Asplenium* which grows on the old trunks of fallen, rotting trees. I also collected several samples of a medium-sized tree of the genus *Eucalyptus*. *Casuarina* grow plentifully along the point. I saw a giant kangaroo, and observed that when it ran it used only its two hind legs.

On the 1st of Pluviose [21 January 1802] Citizen Hamelin received orders to explore the coastline of the mainland, with the aim of locating the rivers marked on the charts and

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<sup>1</sup> In the large number of spikes which I opened in an attempt to obtain the grain I managed to find only three seeds, which I have sent with several other types of grain to Madame Bonaparte, wife of the First Consul.

finding out whether water could be easily obtained there, as both ships were in short supply. He set out in the longboat and I went with him.

I first asked to be put ashore (156) close to our ships, and I walked along the edge of the water for a considerable distance. I found only a poor soil, which here and there supported a tough, unattractive fern, which is very common all along the channel. I came across several dry watercourses.

I reboarded the longboat, and we made our way to a place, at the edge of a bay, where a river was supposed to be located, according to d'Entrecasteaux's chart and a hand-drawn English chart. We did indeed find it, but it is only a small stream whose outlet is clogged with mud and blocked by tree trunks carried down during the rainy season. The soil here is excellent and there is a great density of plant life. Even though the area is not particularly well-watered, the vigour of the vegetation contrasts strikingly with the sterility of the land in several other parts of the channel. The banks of the stream are covered with ferns, among which there was one very beautiful species of tree-fern. Other plants I found are:

A species of creeper, which I believe (157) to belong to the genus *Bignonia*, a species of *Pteris*, a lovely species of *Mimosa* tree (*Mimosa decurrens*), which secretes a yellowish gum that is highly soluble in water, several other *Mimosas*, one species of *Tetratheca*, one of *Persoonia*, *Baueria* and *Styphelia*, and a lovely white-flowered species of veronica. In the marshy areas, I found a species of *Samolus* and a species of *Sida* growing in great abundance, the latter being a herbaceous succulent whose white sessile flowers are arranged in spikes on a scape around one foot tall. We came across tree trunks that had been felled by axes and saws, and noticed fresh droppings which looked like horse dung, and had the same brown colour as horse dung. We heard the shrill and plaintive cries of a creature which seemed to come from far away.

The water in this bay is shallow, and so the large oysters which grow plentifully there can be collected with ease. We observed that enormous piles of shells had been left on the shore by the natives, who use them for food.

From here we went to another, more distant, bay, where we found another fresh-water stream. As in the bay we had just (158) visited, the soil is good, and the plants are similar.

As we returned on board ship that evening we saw some natives crossing from the mainland to Bruny Island in a canoe.

Citizen Ronsard had received orders to reconnoitre the far end of the harbour. On his return, he reported that he had found a river where water could easily be procured. Consequently, on the 3rd of Pluviose [23 January 1802], the longboats of both ships set off, but only reached the watering-place after some difficulty. The head of the harbour is obstructed by a mudbank which becomes partially exposed at low tide, and which is only navigable at high tide through a narrow channel. And, furthermore, the sailors found they had to roll the barrels a long way.

I followed the river upstream for around five miles – it could more properly be called a wide brook, and has a rocky bed. On either side of it spreads a broad and fertile plain. The soil is composed mainly of vegetable matter. (159) I had occasion to admire the most splendid trees I had yet seen in these forests, which are as ancient as the soil they shade. I estimated that some of the trunks rose sixty feet or more from their base to their first branches. These superb stems are perfectly straight and appear very healthy.

The new plants I found are:

Two plants of the *Rubiaceae* family, three of the *Jasminum* family, one of the *Guttifer* family, several highly aromatic and very pretty species of the *Compositae* family. The remaining plants belonged to the genera *Rubus*, *Conchium*, *Pimelea*, *Billardiera*, *Embothrium* and *Mimosa*. The indigo tree which I had found elsewhere is very common here.

I saw two snakes which were about six feet long and coloured like burnished steel, several very large rats, and the droppings of a carnivorous animal – probably those of a dog.

As I walked back to the longboats I came across six or seven shelters on a hill not far from the left bank of the river, and they were exactly the same as those I had seen on (160) Partridge Island. Just as with those ones, the openings of these shelters faced east. They could only have been vacated a short time beforehand, as the ashes of a nearby fire were still warm. All around lay large numbers of crab shells and lobster shells, whose contents had been eaten by the natives. Several branches still bearing leaves lay in the shelters, along with a granite cutting stone which had been used to remove the bark used in the construction of the shelters. I could see the cuts that had been made with it on the surrounding trees.

On the 5th [*of Pluviose* – 25 January 1802] I returned to the watering place, and walked a very long distance up the river, but saw nothing of interest. I came across only species of plants that I had already collected on the 3rd.

On the banks of the river I found a spear and saw two giant kangaroos. On that previous day I had left some glass beads and small knives in the shelters which I mentioned above; when I came back I found that the objects had been taken away by the natives, who had no doubt been hiding very close by.

(161)

On the 7th [*of Pluviose* – 27 January 1802] I went ashore with Citizen Freycinet, lieutenant commander, abeam of the ships, on the eastern side of the harbour. We covered a distance of around two leagues. At first we encountered only burnt-out terrain with poor soil, until we reached a place where a small rivulet moistened the soil with a barely perceptible trickle of muddy water. Here débris deposited by the more abundant plant life had covered the ground with a substantial layer of vegetable matter.

In one eucalyptus we saw a very large eagle's nest. (Several days later I went walking in this area with Captain Hamelin, who instructed his men to fell the tree containing the nest. We estimated that an equivalent of twenty faggots of firewood had gone into its construction. The nest had been abandoned.)

On the same day, the 7th of Pluviose, the water was constantly brackish at the watering-place, and the barrels could not be filled. During the ebb tide, slight fluctuations in flow occur. Sometimes, after it has been falling for a mere hour, the tide suddenly rises again, or grows slack. I believe that these fluctuations can be attributed to the action of the winds outside the harbour, reversing the direction of the currents. (162) I walked once again along the banks of the river, which is the only area that supports any abundance of plant life, but I came across nothing that I had not already collected on previous days.

In spite of the fact that we had been in North-West Bay for a long period, we had still not managed to make contact with any of the natives. Those whom we had seen in the distance had hurriedly fled at our approach. When, on the ..., the Commander and Citizen Hamelin went ashore together on Bruny Island at the same place I had landed on the 29th of Nivose [19 January 1802], they saw around twenty natives who behaved in a very friendly manner towards them. Several allowed Citizen Petit to draw them. One of them snatched his own picture away, but then gave it back. They quite happily exchanged their spears for buttons and bottles. They particularly prized the bottles, not for their use as containers, but rather because they could smash them and use the shards to scrape and sharpen their spears – something that (163) is normally done with pieces of granite. The encounter appeared to have passed off harmoniously. However, as the Commander and his companions were embarking, the natives started hurling stones at them with great force, and continued to rain missiles on

them for a long while after they had put out from shore. The Commander was even slightly injured on the hip.

Two days later the Commander and Citizen Hamelin went ashore again at the same place. I went with them, and we saw the same natives who had attacked them on the previous occasion. Trusting in our benevolence, or our impotence, they approached us without displaying the slightest fear, or taking any precautions. They were not armed. I recognised them as the same men I had encountered that first time on Partridge Island, around fifteen leagues away from our present location. The man who had given me his necklace also recognised me, and made a friendly gesture. That day their behaviour gave us no cause for complaint, and they even helped the men who were fishing (164) draw their nets onto the shore. They do not seem to like fish, and refused to try those which the sailors had cooked up for their meal.

During our sojourn in the channel we had several other encounters with the natives. However, for reasons which I have set out in a letter to Citizen de Jussieu, professor of natural history, I shall conclude this entry with some reflections on the plant life of the channel.

While our stay in d'Entrecasteaux Channel coincided with the middle of summer, it was nevertheless a highly suitable time for carrying out botanical research because plants develop more slowly in a highly sheltered region, and the period between their flowering and the maturation of their fruits is longer than in an exposed region. However, the soil is generally sandy and insubstantial, and there is not a great variety of plant life.

If, from the middle of the channel, one surveys the coast on all (165) sides, one sees hills rising gently in several layers, their rolling forms blanketed in verdure whose uniform appearance mottles only as the angle of the light changes, brightening or darkening its hues. Several trees, still standing though they are withered to their crowns, attest to the vast age of these forests.

A student of nature might hope to discover an enormous field for his observation behind this curtain of verdure, but going ashore he finds only a sandy soil which reluctantly supports a scattering of scraggy plants. As well as being barren, this land is frequently swept by fires lit by the natives, whether to rid their forests of grasses and bushes that impede their movement, or to eradicate insects and especially that large species of venomous ant which, if its numbers were greatly to increase, could create great discomfort for men who do not wear clothes and who live in open dwelling places. However, from time to time one comes across spots where a regular covering of shade creates perpetually damp conditions, (166) sustaining a mass of plants whose detritus fertilises the soil in which they grow. But the naturalist faces another obstacle to his enquiries here: he is prevented by the density of the vegetation from entering these thickets, which, in any case, do not possess a great variety of plant life.

The most numerous plants along the channel are undoubtedly those of the *Compositae* and *Myrtle* families: its covering of vegetation is, as it were, parcelled out between them. These plants, and especially those of the *Compositae* family, are highly aromatic, and now that celebrated chemists are using chemical analysis to shed light on the historical development of plant life, I am convinced that no place is better suited for performing experiments on the *true sap* of plants, which is contained in great quantity by those found here.

A great many *Mimosa* grow here, some of which secrete a gum that could prove useful in the productive arts.

The red gum of the *Eucalyptus*, (167) which combines a styptic and astringent taste with a slightly bitter note, could, after proper study, furnish medical science with an extremely useful remedy.

The *Xanthorrhoea*, or gum tree (as it is called by Phillip), is not common along the strait. I found it only on Bruny Island (it is different from those which I later saw in the

vicinity of Sydney). Its trunk secretes great quantities of red resin, and its scape a highly soluble white gum.

I believe that d'Entrecasteaux Channel is subject to frequent and sudden fluctuations in temperature. I am of the view that the vast forests covering this region draw in cold weather and fogs with some force, but I do not believe that the cold is quite as extreme as others have so far maintained. In summer the temperature in this region is cooler than in our southern departments; however, in winter the temperatures must be quite similar here and in those same departments, to which this region corresponds in its southern latitude. In each of the natural kingdoms one comes across the analogues of entities that are found in warm climates. One piece of evidence for my supposition is that it takes more than a single season for the fruits of certain plants of the *Myrtle* family to ripen, (168) and if temperatures fell as low as has been assumed, how could the seeds survive?

When we sailed out from Port Jackson for the first time we rounded the South Cape of Van Diemen's Land. During the twelve days that we remained in that vicinity (although much further to the south) I carefully observed the thermometer. It was then the middle of the month of Prairial [*May/June*], corresponding in this hemisphere to what is the month of Brumaire [*October/November*] in the northern hemisphere. Every day terrible gales blew from the south, chilling the air even further. However, the temperature (on the Réaumur scale) stood at:

14th of Prairial [*3 June 1802*] Latitude at midday  $44^{\circ} 55'$ .  
at 5 o'clock in the evening Estimated longitude  $146^{\circ} 44'$ .  
 $9^{\circ} 2'$ . Observed longitude  $147^{\circ} 58'$ .

South-westerly winds. Cloudy weather all day. We ran at the rate of 8 or 9 knots.

15th of Prairial [*4 June 1802*] Estimated latitude  $45^{\circ} 56'$   
at 5 o'clock in the evening Estimated longitude  $142^{\circ} 15'$ .  
 $7^{\circ} 8'$ . Southerly winds. Cloudy weather in the morning, clear in the evening. We ran at the rate of 6 or 7 knots.

(169)

16th of Prairial [*5 June 1802*] Observed latitude  $44^{\circ} 55'$ .  
at 5 o'clock in the evening Estimated longitude  $140^{\circ} 3'$ .  
 $8^{\circ}$ . Westerly winds. Clear weather in the morning, cloudy in the evening. We ran at the rate of 3 knots in the morning, 5 knots in the evening.

17th of Prairial [*6 June 1802*] Observed latitude  $46^{\circ} 11'$ .  
at 5 o'clock Estimated longitude  $139^{\circ} 40'$ .  
 $8^{\circ} 6'$ . South-westerly winds. The previous night a strong gale from the west, in the morning a clear sky, cloudy in the evening.

18th of Prairial [*7 June 1802*] Observed latitude  $46^{\circ} 26'$ .  
at 5 o'clock in the evening Estimated longitude  $138^{\circ} 45'$ .  
 $8^{\circ}$ . North-north-westerly winds. Cloudy sky. Strong breeze.

19th of Prairial [*8 June 1802*] Estimated latitude  $46^{\circ} 84'$ .  
at 5 o'clock in the evening Estimated longitude  $135^{\circ} 27'$ .

8°. North-north-westerly winds in the morning. Cloudy sky. Storm. In the evening the winds turned westerly and the weather cleared. That day the mainsail was carried away by the strength of the wind.

20th of Prairial [9 June 1802] Estimated latitude 45° 55'.

at 5 o'clock in the evening Estimated longitude 138° 16'.

7° 4'. North-westerly and north-north-westerly winds. We ran at the rate of 7 or 8 knots. Clear sky in the evening.

21st of Prairial [10 June 1802] Observed latitude 44° 39'.

at 5 o'clock in the evening Estimated longitude 139° 14'.

8°. Variable winds, calm for part of the day. A light shower of rain in the evening.

(170)

22nd of Prairial [11 June 1802] Observed latitude 44° 42'.

at 5 o'clock in the evening Estimated longitude 140° 16'.

8° 4'. Variable winds, almost calm.

23rd of Prairial [12 June 1802] Observed latitude 44° 28'.

at 5 o'clock in the evening Estimated longitude 140° 28'.

8° 8'. Almost calm. Clear sky.

24th of Prairial [13 June 1802] Observed latitude 44° 50'.

at 5 o'clock in the evening Estimated longitude 140° 46'.

9° 8'. Clear sky, moderate breeze from the north-east.

26th of Prairial [15 June 1802] Observed latitude 43° 31'.

at 5 o'clock in the evening Observed longitude 143° 5'.

10°. Clear sky, moderate breeze from the south-south-east.

What I have written about d'Entrecasteaux Channel amounts only to a brief and incomplete description. As the government may wish to establish a settlement in this area, I consider it vital to include every observation that may shed light on the advantages and disadvantages it offers. That is why I have submitted this information. The long sojourn we made in Port Jackson supplied me with material for several important notes, but the comparative study I intend to make of these two regions can only be the fruit of longer meditation.

(171)

I offer no details either about Maria Island, which we visited after leaving the channel. The island is of little insignificance, and the same plants are found there as are found along the channel. We had several encounters with the natives, who appeared no different from those we had met previously: they have the same woolly hair,<sup>1</sup> and, like them, blacken their skin and scar several parts of their bodies.

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<sup>1</sup> There is a very remarkable difference between the inhabitants of New Holland and Van Diemen's Land in the matter of their hair. The former have long hair like the inhabitants of the Moluccas, while the latter, on the other

While we were anchored off this island we had the misfortune to lose Citizen Maugé, zoologist. He died on the 1st of Ventose [20 February 1802] from the effects of dysentery, which had afflicted him since Timor.

### Description of a grave I found on Maria Island

On the 29th of Pluviose [18 February 1802] I went ashore (172) on the western side of the island, and, at around one hundred paces from the shoreline, came across two joined huts. They seemed to be of very recent construction, and their entrances faced east. The strips of bark that served as a roof had been joined together skilfully. The pieces of wood that formed the frame were more deeply embedded in the ground than I had seen on previous occasions. Inside the huts were several bundles of a long supple grass that grows plentifully across the whole island, several branches of *Lexucarpus cupressiformus*, which were still green, and several stalks of *Mesembryanthemum edule*, from which the fruit had been removed. I placed several glass necklaces, a small knife and a mirror inside the huts. Fifteen paces from these huts I saw another which looked as though it had been knocked over. However, struck by the length and thickness of the strips of bark, I went over to examine it. I then realised that what I had taken for a shelter was in fact a collection of bark strips which had been carefully arranged over a hemispherical mound. When I turned over the strips I saw that they were covered in lines which had been purposely drawn, and whose patterns resembled (173) the tattoos worn by these people.

The mound was covered with a bundle of grass held in place by eight sticks which were bent into bows and their ends driven into the ground at equal spacings. Beneath the grass lay a heap of ashes which, I am in no doubt, contained the remains of a corpse, for the surgeon's assistant on the *Naturaliste*, who went with me, recognised an astragalus and part of a femur. These bones had been so thoroughly burnt that they crumbled to dust when touched. The tomb appeared to have been erected quite recently.

On the same island Citizen Péron came across another tomb very similar to the one I have described.

After we left Maria Island, we sailed for Banks Strait. During our passage we became separated from the *Géographe*.

On the 18th of Ventose [9 March 1802], the sky had a stormy appearance: large black clouds stood motionless, and the sun shone a lurid red, its beams spreading markedly at the horizon. In the curtain of cloud which hung above it I made out a well-defined tail (174) which I took to be a marine waterspout in the process of forming. I watched it for half an hour, and observing that it did not alter in shape, I went below deck, but had scarcely reached my cabin when I heard Captain Hamelin cry out: 'Waterspout! A waterspout!' I dashed back on deck. It was six o'clock in the evening. On the horizon I could see a black column stretching vertically down from the great curtain of clouds I mentioned. It was a long way away from us. It was regular in width along its lower two thirds, but where it touched the cloud it flared into a funnel-shape. After three minutes it tilted over, fractured, and vanished completely.

Some time before the waterspout appeared the wind had veered from west-north-westerly to south-easterly.

Accompanying the waterspout: a gentle gale; thermometer 13° 8' (Réaumur scale).

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hand, have woolly hair like the blacks of the African coast. This difference is all the more extraordinary because Van Diemen's Land is only separated from the coast of New Holland by Bass Strait, and there is no other land nearby.



On the morning of the 19th [*of Ventose – 10 March 1802*], we entered (175) Banks Strait. It lies between [Clarke Island and] the Van Diemen's Land mainland, which forms the southern side of the entrance to the strait, and is low-lying, rocky and barren in this area. From a distance the sharp, scattered rocks look like rubble, and lend this tongue of land the appearance of an old ruined town. Further along, the coast is wooded, but still low-lying, and foamy seas roll onto white sandy beaches. Inland, a few isolated rocks can be seen, which fancy lends the form of ancient monuments. Smoke rising through the trees from native fires, clear skies and a tranquil firmament compose a scene that is both charming and sublime.

During our sojourn in the strait I went ashore on Swan Island, Preservation Island and Clarke Island in turn. I was stranded for four days on the latter two islands by a violent gale in which the *Naturaliste* lost two anchors and was forced to get hastily under way. On these two islands we found a great deal of wreckage from various ships which had foundered there. On Clarke Island we came across a transom which the sailors (176) judged to have come from a ship the same size as our own. (We later learned in Port Jackson that some of this wreckage was from the *Sydney Town*, an English ship that had been wrecked on Preservation Island with the loss of a great many of its crew.)<sup>1</sup>

I also went ashore on Waterhouse Island and at several other points along the northern coast of Van Diemen's Land. All of the islands I have mentioned are small and uninhabited. They are however of interest due to (177) the large number of seals they accommodate. On Waterhouse Island I saw herds numbering several hundred, but the seals did not flee at my approach, no doubt because they have never been hunted. I observed several which were the size of an ox. In spite of their daunting appearance, these amphibious quadrupeds are not to be feared, nor are they difficult to kill. Nature has denied them both the means of defending themselves and of attacking their enemies. When they are surprised on land they have great difficulty in fleeing. Consequently the English, who tirelessly hunt the creatures for their oil and fur along these shores, use just a strong lead club to beat them to death. This uninterrupted slaughter will soon lead to a considerable reduction in the numbers of these animals.

We also came across an extraordinary number of penguins on these islands. They live in a location where there is nothing to disturb their peace, their mating or their breeding, and from which they can never migrate, being physically incapable of flight. They multiply endlessly. Having no enemies, (178) they know no fear, and seemed quite at ease amongst us. On Preservation Island, especially, where I stayed for three days, these birds would peck at us in an attempt to dislodge us from our place beside the fires which we had lit to dry our clothes, which were continually soaked by heavy rains. The sailors, who often behaved cruelly towards these creatures, without purpose or reason, abused their trust, and slaughtered a large number of them.

## Western Port

Across its breadth Western Port presents a pleasant prospect and displays a strong and vigorous covering of vegetation. The ground is generally low-lying, and, as a large part of it is

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<sup>1</sup> Shipwrecks are already common in Bass Strait. In addition to our discoveries, the English captain Flinders reported that he found several pieces of wreckage around King Island, and we have just learnt that the French schooner *L'Entreprise*, which left Port Jackson around a month before us and sailed to the strait for the purpose of seal hunting, was wrecked on the Two Sisters, a small island to the north-east of the Furneaux Islands. Captain Lecorre, whose acquaintance I made in Port Jackson, perished with five other men. The rest of the crew managed to reach the island, and a number of them were picked up by a small English schooner.

not usually inhabited, the lovely banks of greenery in which it is swathed have been much less afflicted by fire than the vegetation we observed in d'Entrecasteaux Channel.

The coastline is composed of white sandy beaches, and a red clay soil (179) overlaying ferruginous rock, which evidently contains an abundance of ore.

Having gone ashore on several occasions, I shall present my observations in their proper order.

On the 20th of Germinal, Year X [10 April 1802], we landed in the evening on the western side of the second channel. Lieutenant-commander Milius perceived that this portion of land, which is marked on the English chart as forming part of the mainland, is in fact an island. It appears to be inhabited only occasionally, as we came across just a few, very old, traces of fire, and the vegetation had already recovered from the ravages of the flames – with all the vigour that occurs where an excellent soil is kept damp by a perpetual cover of shade. When we looked for a place to spend the night, it was only with difficulty that we found a small area that was not entirely clogged with bushes and creepers. It was a rather unpleasant night, as we were attacked by swarms of mosquitoes. We slept around a large fire, which kept them at bay to some extent.

Along this section of coast, a hill slopes gently down to the edge of the sea. (180) I ventured inland on three separate occasions, and, after endless struggles with the dense plant growth that impeded my progress, reached the summit of the hill, which seemed to me to form a fairly large, level plateau. It was covered all over in a thick layer of rich compost, which was composed of large amounts of vegetable debris and a clay soil containing great quantities of iron oxide.

As we were leaving the channel on the 21st [of Germinal – 11 April 1802], we saw thick smoke rising up from the headland on the eastern side of the entrance, and heard the cries of several natives. Citizen Milius steered towards their side of the channel. As we approached we could only make out a single native, who was unarmed and completely naked, and who gestured with his hand that we should disembark on the other side of the headland. This headland, which has been named the Cape of Fires in the survey produced by Citizens Milius and Faure, has a strange and extraordinary shape. It looks (181) exactly like a square bastion whose walls slope outwards towards their base. The leading tip of the headland appears so uniform that it is as though it had been designed with the greatest art. The section of coast which forms the northern edge of the great basin presents a smooth sheer slope around a nautical mile in length, and has the appearance of a fortress wall. This cliff is fifty to sixty feet high, and is composed of layers of reddish soil containing different amounts of iron oxide which lie over rocks of the kind mentioned above. A few bushes grow out of the thickening base of the escarpment and help support the soil. When the tide is high, water washes the foot of the cliff, but when it withdraws it exposes around 150 paces (or 75 toises) of shoreline.

After we rounded the Cape of Fires we saw about a dozen natives on the heights who uttered loud cries as they ran over to meet our boats. They were unarmed. We greatly wished to meet them, but, so as to avoid frightening them with our numbers, Captain Milius (182) ordered everybody to remain in the boats. He and I went ashore alone.

The ebb-tide was beginning to slacken. We approached the natives unarmed. They sat down at the top of the cliff and spoke amongst themselves in a very lively fashion. We sat down on a rock and made friendly gestures towards them. I cried out '*Gougoula medi*' several times, words which, in the language of the inhabitants of d'Entrecasteaux Channel, mean 'Come and sit down'. They did not appear to understand me,<sup>1</sup> and they kept repeating these words and looking at one another, as though each were seeking an explanation from the other.

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<sup>1</sup> [Marginal note] I subsequently learned that these peoples do not share the same dialect; on the contrary, each region has its own.

Citizen Milius showed them pieces of white paper and glass necklaces, but our invitations were unsuccessful. We advanced to the foot of the cliff. We invited them once more to come down, but they again refused, gesturing that we should climb up once we had removed our clothes. (183) Citizen Milius agreed to show them this mark of trust. After partially undressing, he climbed up with great difficulty, having only a few bushes and tufts of grass with which to support himself. He nearly tumbled down when a tree trunk broke beneath him and fell away. When he reached the halfway point he signalled to a native to come over and hold out a hand to help him up. The savage refused – gesturing instead that he should hold onto the grass, and pointing out the easiest places. Eventually Citizen Milius reached the top of the cliff.

The first emotion the natives experienced was that of fear. They withdrew twenty paces. Citizen Milius thought that the natives might still be unsettled by the few remaining pieces of clothing he had on. He removed these completely and threw them towards the natives, who picked up the threadbare items and folded them carefully. Less mistrustful after this, the natives invited him to follow them inland, signalling that he could warm himself there and have something to eat. He explained with gestures that, as he was without shoes, the ground would hurt his feet. They understood this very well. However, they did not wish to return his shoes, and gave him to understand that he would only encounter (184) soft grasses, which would do him no injury.

I remained at the foot of the cliff all this time. Citizen Milius called down to me to climb up and bring with me the box containing glass beads and other trinkets. However, when I made it to the top of the cliff and held out the box of gifts to Citizen Milius, the natives were seized with panic and terror, and fled as though they were responding to cries of help from their compatriots. We sought in vain to calm their fear with gestures and calls. Fortunately, in their flight, they had abandoned the clothes belonging to Citizen Milius, who pursued the natives for some time longer, but was unable to regain their confidence.

They seemed even more timid than the inhabitants of d'Entrecasteaux Channel and Maria Island. It is possible that they have had reason to complain of previous encounters with Europeans? There were around twenty of them, and only two of us – (185) and we had given ourselves entirely into their hands, and had no line of retreat, and no weapons. And yet it was they who fled, displaying the utmost terror – which was entirely at odds with the welcoming cries they had uttered when they first saw us.<sup>1</sup>

These savages differ somewhat from those who live along d'Entrecasteaux Channel. They are much more similar to the inhabitants of New South Wales,<sup>2</sup> whom Monsieur Cook describes in volume four of his first voyage. They have pleasant features and are well-proportioned, and are of the same colour as those savages I had seen previously who blackened themselves with charcoal.<sup>3</sup> Their bodies bear fewer (186) scars, and are painted instead with strange markings.<sup>4</sup> Several had white rings around their eyes, and red or white stripes or crosses on their faces and other parts of their bodies. Several wore a thin piece of wood around six or seven inches long through the cartilage of their nose. Monsieur Cook observed this uncomfortable and extravagant ornament among the peoples of New Wales. One of them wore a white feather in his hair and a necklace made from small sections of bulrush which had been burnt at both ends. All were naked apart from one who appeared

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<sup>1</sup> Having gained a more profound understanding of the customs of these people, I have reason to believe that when they invited us to accompany them unarmed and unclothed into the depths of the forest they were instigating some piece of treachery, and fled when I appeared because they thought that we had discovered their intention, and I was giving Citizen Milius a box containing weapons.

<sup>2</sup> I recorded these observations before I arrived in Port Jackson.

<sup>3</sup> Unlike the inhabitants of d'Entrecasteaux Channel, they have long hair; [*note continues on the following page*] a very remarkable characteristic, as I have said before.

<sup>4</sup> They paint themselves like this when they are at war.

more serious than the others and wore over the upper part of his body a black fur, which had perhaps taken its colour from the smoke and the charcoal which are ever-present in the lives of these people. (187) Citizen Milius thinks that this man was a chief.<sup>1</sup> No women or children accompanied them, and they were followed by several dogs of the breed that in France we call the dog-fox. These have a larger, though slightly shorter, head. They have russet-coloured coats.

Citizen Milius, whose zeal to complete the mission with which he was charged compelled him not to waste a single moment of time, embarked as soon as he saw that the savages had taken fright, as the obstacle that now lay in the way of our communicating with them could only have been overcome with patience.

I encountered here the same type of soil that I had observed on the western side of the channel, but the ground (188) had been cleared of creepers and shrubs by the fires which the natives take care to relight at frequent intervals.

That night we slept on the western point of the first channel. Our sleeping-place was more comfortable than on the previous night because the ground was less thickly covered with vegetation. It looked as though it would be much easier to venture inland from here, and so I resolved that I would stay here all the while that Citizens Milius and Faure were reconnoitring the channel. Accordingly, I kept some provisions, and remained there alone. At low tide Citizen Milius had driven a graduated pole into the shore at the tip of the headland, and asked me to record the tides.

This section of the coastline is at first sandy, dry and insubstantial. *Banksias*, *Casuarinas*, and a species of *Leptospermum* with blue-green leaves are all that grow there. There are no *Eucalyptuses*. As one advances inland, one (189) finds that the sand starts to contain a greater amount of vegetable matter, and after travelling only a league, one encounters hills on which the soil is the same as that along the coast of the second channel. *Eucalyptuses* are the most common trees.

Before arriving at the higher ground, I noticed that the only traces of the natives were very old. But in the hills I found the ashes of fires that had only recently been extinguished. On the beach I saw the fresh prints of dogs' paws, and, a short distance away, two lit fires.

The tide I observed on the morning of the 23rd [*of Germinal – 13 April 1802*] rose six feet. It was high at seven o'clock. On the evening of the 22nd, the tide rose around seven feet (the tides last six hours).

The boat returned at midday on the 23rd. I embarked and Citizen Milius then went to examine the head of the second channel.

The land here (190) is a little higher than that which surrounds the great basin. It appeared to be similarly covered in vegetation. We did not go ashore that night.

It was while undertaking this last part of the reconnaissance that Citizen Milius began to suspect that, due to the shape and disposition of the land, this channel was connected to the first. He then sent out the small boat, which confirmed that the English chart was in error.

The 24th [*of Germinal – 14 April 1802*] was spent in sounding the great basin. We went ashore only for a short while, on a small island located on the eastern side. This island is merely a low rock covered with a little compost. It offered nothing of interest. I observed that most of the ferruginous and foliated rocks, which constitute the basis of the land around this harbour, have been formed from layers of silt hardening over time. The singular markings (191) which they bear are due to small purple crabs, which burrow into them. Water fills the cavities, and the small waves caused by the swirling tide create these markings. On the shore I

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<sup>1</sup> I now consider this conjecture to be false, because the natives who live in the vicinity of Port Jackson, and who must be very similar to these people, do not have chiefs, and pay heed only to their doctors, whom they view as sorcerers. The most renowned warriors enjoy certain marks of respect, but it is a homage that derives from fear and terror, and not from a sense of duty.

found rocks of this type ranging in state from the alluvial through to the final stone form. All displayed the same trait.

That night we slept in the boat once more. On the 25th [*of Germinal – 15 April 1802*], Citizens Milius and Faure took a number of bearings. The same day, we observed that the coast where we had had our encounter with the natives on the 21st [*of Germinal – 11 April 1802*] was on fire. We tried to land there, but the winds were against us. We went ashore on Western Island, which encloses the harbour to the south. This island is around four leagues long, from east to west, and one and a half leagues from north to south.

We landed on a sandy beach, and as far as I was able to venture inland I found only sand. However, the plants grew densely and vigorously, which (192) I attribute to the dampness of the ground and to the alluvial soil which, I believe, must lie beneath the sand.

That evening we returned to the headland where I had stayed alone, and we passed the night there. We remained there for the whole of the 26th [*of Germinal – 16 April 1802*] while Citizens Milius and Faure plotted all the hazards that lie in the main entrance to the harbour.

Finally, on the 27th [*of Germinal – 17 April 1802*], we left to go back to the ship. We passed out through the narrow entrance on the eastern side of the harbour, and, once again, went ashore briefly on the easternmost headland of Western Island, and climbed to its summit in order to check the position of the ship. We found several springs of water there which were large enough to be able to supply a ship's needs in an emergency. I went with Citizen Milius. We reached the summit of the headland only with great difficulty, as the vegetation is dense and tangled with creepers, which are a great hindrance to anyone trying to penetrate these uninhabited places. I found here a thick layer of light compost, which contained no iron oxide. A belt of granitic rock surrounds (193) this part of Western Island. Every time I have encountered these great masses of rounded granite, piled up haphazardly, and containing great quantities of feldspar crystals, I have observed<sup>1</sup> that there are always springs in the same area, or places where a considerable quantity of fresh water filters up through the ground. I believe that in a case of urgent need one could procure fresh water by digging holes in the areas where such piles of rock are found.

During this expedition I found only three plants that I had not seen before:

1° a shrub of the *Rhizophora* family which grows on muddy, inundated sea-shores;

2° a parasitic plant of the *Loranthus* family. I was unable to procure a sample of this plant because the trunks of the *Eucalyptus* on which they grow were too (194) tall;

3° a small undershrub around eighteen inches high which belongs to the *Rosaceae* family. It grows on the western headland of the first channel. *Oxalis acetosella* also grows plentifully on this headland. This plant, which tastes exactly like sorrel, might offer some relief to those afflicted by scurvy. We picked some and made a salad of it, which we ate with much pleasure.

I observed one *Eucalyptus* whose trunk was bathed by sea-water, and yet it grew no less vigorously than the others.

Most of the land at Western Port is excellent, and is highly suitable for the cultivation of European crops. It would be easy to farm this region as the compost lies in a thick layer, there are no steep slopes, and the underlying layer of rock does not protrude through the soil. If, in some places, the beaches consist solely of sand, I am convinced that these are no more than narrow strips, and once you go inland the soil is (195) substantial and fertile.

Along all this coast we saw a great many black swans, seagulls large and small, teals, cormorants, storks, curlews, oyster-catchers and large pelicans.

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<sup>1</sup> I have made such observations on Preservation Island, Clarke Island, and on the coast of the Van Diemen's Land mainland near Waterhouse Island.

Among the land birds, I observed a superb species of red parrot. I believe that it belongs to the variety of Tabuan parrot described by Monsieur Latham. I killed two of them, but as this was during the first few days of our arrival in the harbour, they were spoiled by the time I returned, and were impossible to skin. On Western Island, which is the most abundant of the islands in bird life, I also saw several species of flycatcher which were remarkable for the beauty of their plumage. They were so trusting of me that I was able to observe them very easily, as they came and perched on the small bushes around me without displaying the slightest fear. On several occasions I thought I might be able to seize one by thrusting out my hand, but my agility was as nothing to their nimble movement.

We came across large numbers of crows, and a great many quail of the same species that we had already seen (196) in Van Diemen's Land.

Shellfish are not common on this coast. The only interesting specimen I found was a species of *Pullet*, or *Terebratula*, which is perhaps the same as that on which Monsieur Lamanon wrote a learned essay in *The Voyage of La Pérouse*. The one I found had been cast up on shore and was dead.

At the head of the first channel the sailors caught a great number of large red fish of the genus *Sciaena*, which the English call *Ten Pound Fish*. This fish, which is remarkable for the dual bulges in its occipital bone, is excellent when eaten fresh, and when salted tastes like cod.

On the same day that we left Western Port we rejoined the *Naturaliste*. As soon as we were on board, the ship set sail for Port Jackson, where we arrived a few days later.

Signed Théodore Leschenault

*Chief botanist*

[3 blank pages, then, in pencil, in a different hand, which appears to be that of François Péron:]

Winter had just begun in the southern regions. This was made all too clear to us, during the final period of our visit to the Terre Napoléon, by the frequency with which storms blew up, the violent nature of the winds and the turbulence of the seas. The urgent circumstances combined [illegible] with the epidemic that ravaged the ship, made our need for repose all the more pressing [three words illegible]. It seemed highly prudent to take the shortest route to Port Jackson <[illegible] to find>: our commander thought differently, and by inexplicable logic, [illegible] who, when we left the Isle of France [illegible] to avoid rounding South Cape [illegible] was not afraid to [illegible] to go [illegible] braving tempests [illegible] and pointlessly extend our route when all our circumstances seemed encouraged him to [illegible] hasten as much as possible. This [illegible words] [illegible words] on board and these fatal [illegible words] [illegible words] justified by the most terrible disasters.