

their boys are still young they take them and make a little cut in the arm and insert one of these stones, to be a safeguard against any wound by steel. And the little wound thus made in the boy's arm is speedily healed by applying to it the powder of a certain fish.¹

And thus through the great virtue of those stones the men who wear them become potent in battle and great corsairs at sea. But those who from being shipmen on that sea have suffered at their hands, have found out a remedy for the mischief. For they carry as weapons of offence sharp stakes of very hard wood, and arrows likewise that have no iron on the points; and as those corsairs are but poorly harnessed the shipmen are able to wound and pierce them through with these wooden weapons, and by this device they succeed in defending themselves most manfully.²

Of these canes called *Cassan* they make sails for their ships, dishes,³ houses, and a vast number of other things of the greatest utility to them. And many other matters there be in that country which it would cause great astonishment

¹ PAL. has an expansion about the fish not worth giving.

² The Burmese formerly used to insert pellets of gold under the skin in order to render them invulnerable. But Marco Polo specifically speaks of these "consecrated stones in the arm between the skin and the flesh," in a story about Japan; and Conti mentions the amulet so used in Java Major, as a piece of an iron rod which is found in the middle of certain rare trees. (*Mission to Ava*, 1855, p. 208; *Polo*, iii, 2; *Conti* (HAK. Soc.), p. 32.)

Dalton says the Dyaks of Borneo have a defensive armour of leather which is proof against arrow, spear, and sword. This may have to do with the story of these invulnerables. But we find St. John alluding to a belief among the Malays of Borneo that by certain ceremonies they can render themselves invulnerable, though he does not specify what the process is. There is such a class of invulnerables also in Fiji. The use in the Archipelago of lances, etc., of cane and wood hardened in the fire is mentioned by Pigafetta. Such arms were used by the islanders of Matan, in a fray with whom the great Magellan fell. (*Crawford's Desc. Dict.*, 139; *J. R. G. S.*, xxvii, 251; *Pigafetta* (Milan ed.), p. 97; *Life in the Forests of the Far East*, i, 134.)

³ *Sestoria*, perhaps for *sessoria*—either *seats* or *dishes*. Or it may be for *sextaria*—measures for corn (It. *sestieri*).