

tions of natives who build them for their common and exclusive use. The skulls with which the roof is decorated inside are mementos of successive feasts, a bone or the skull or some other relic of every animal feasted on being thus preserved and set up. The



FIG. 258.—Human hair supported in a rough bamboo basket from a club house, Admiralty Islands. A memento of a cannibal feast.

collection thus formed serves as a kind of chronicle and record of the flight of time, which is thus divided into feasts and intervals of low diet between them. The human skulls and the bunches of hair are equally relics of cannibal feasts, and it is possible, as suggested by Mr. Wilfred Powell, that the male and female carved wooden figures described above as forming the door-posts of one of the club houses represent a man and woman eaten at the inauguration feast of the club house itself. If so, the absence of the mop of hair in the male figure may be accounted for by supposing him to be represented as ready for the feast with his hair already removed for suspension in a net. The absence of ornaments and weapons from the figures may be similarly explained. The fish may represent part of the banquet. The club houses were considered more private than the dwellings. The one with the images for door-posts was frequently closed, and the natives objected to its being entered, though sometimes it was left freely open. When one of the naturalists of the Expedition began sounding the big drums in the other club house, the guides hastily drew him out in terror, and made signs that the consequences would be serious. Human skulls are kept stuck up in the thatch

of the houses. At D'Entrecasteaux Island, one having an ornament in the nose was suspended to the front of a house over the doorway by means of a stick thrust through holes in the squamous parts of the temporal bones. This skull the owner could not be



FIG. 259.—Human hair in a net of string, suspended from the roof of a club house at the Admiralty Islands.

induced to part with, but usually skulls were sold pretty freely, and were in considerable abundance about the houses, but often much shattered; about a dozen only were purchased, and their characters have been described and figured by Professor W. Turner.<sup>1</sup> They are all distinctly dolichocephalic. As with the crania of other Melanesians the height of the skull is almost always greater than the breadth, though the hypsistenocephalic character is not so strongly marked as in the mountaineers of Fiji or in the Loyalty Islanders.

The natives are very apprehensive, for when a group was being photographed, the old women put up two long poles transversely between themselves and the apparatus in order to protect themselves from its evil influence, and they could not be persuaded to sit until Captain Thomson seated himself in the centre of the group, and was taken with them.

<sup>1</sup> Report on the Human Crania, Zool. Chall. Exp., part xxix., 1884.