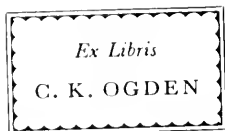


AN OUTPOST IN PAPUA

A. K. CHIGNELL



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AN OUTPOST IN PAPUA



TUFI HARBOUR.

AN OUTPOST IN PAPUA

BY

ARTHUR KENT CHIGNELL

PRIEST OF THE NEW GUINEA MISSION

WITH A PREFACE BY THE
ARCHBISHOP OF BRISBANE

METROPOLITAN OF THE PROVINCE OF QUEENSLAND

ILLUSTRATED

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TO
MAUD LISTON

“ For Remembrance ”

AUTHOR'S NOTE

THANKS are due to my friend, Percy J. Money, for the series of photographs, taken, for the most part, specially to illustrate this book; to the Rev. F. W. Ramsay, of Samarai, for the photograph of a Doriri prisoner; to the Rev. S. R. M. Gill, of Dogura, for the portraits of Louis and Paul; to the Editor of the *Treasury*, for permission to reprint the chapter entitled "Mr. Tomlinson"; and most of all to my brother Philip, of Hessele, East Yorks, without whose help these pages could not have been prepared for the press.

PREFACE

THERE are two ways of studying the work of the Church abroad. On the one hand, bearing in mind the great Final Object, we can master the annual reports, compare the statistics, register gain or loss, and grapple in earnest with the problems which present themselves. And indeed we want much more of this kind of conscientious study. Our missionaries at the front have a right to the very best wisdom and experience and knowledge which the Home Church can offer, for the problems of the Mission Field go down to the roots of Christianity itself.

But there is another and easier kind of study. There is the work of the Imagination, whereby we seek to grasp the everyday facts of Mission Work, and make them live before our eyes as we sit at home. We sadly lack imagination, and the average Churchman's conception of the circumstances of the Mission Field, based upon a few crude facts, is often ludicrously beside the mark. The consequence is that we fail to offer the intelligent sympathy which might often give the lonely Missionary the consoling knowledge that at least we understand his difficulties. He wants stronger meat to support him in his work than a sentimental admiration based upon ignorance of the facts.

The book presented herewith is of the latter kind. Mr. Chignell describes his daily life, and the people who form part of it, just as it strikes him. And the freshness and humour, the varying moods, and the flavour of personal experience pervading the whole, make together a picture

which grips the imagination. We see how the days pass upon a Mission Station, we learn how much routine there is, and yet how often perplexing situations arise; we find, to our illumination, how much of a Missionary's time and thought must necessarily be given to the subject of his dinner! To myself, the chapters recall incidents of a memorable visit paid to New Guinea in 1907. On that occasion Mr. Chignell was making his first appearance in the diocese, and we travelled together from the Queensland coast as far as Mukawa. So I can vouch for the accuracy of his portraits, many of which present acquaintances of my own.

It is with something more than goodwill, therefore, that I commend this book to all who care for Missions. Thoughtful readers will learn from what it tells, and even more from what it leaves unsaid, something of the joys and something of the trials of a Missionary's life: how incurable the loneliness may be, how great the nervous strain, how intolerable the hard fare when health fails, how hard to keep the Great Object always in view: and yet how strong is the tie which binds the worker to the work, and how deep and satisfying is the peace which they know who are seeking in the greater things of life to do God's will.

ST. CLAIR BRISBANE.

EPIPHANY,
1911.

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Note on Pronunciation.

Vowels in native words and names should receive their Continental values, consonants being sounded as in English (*G* always hard); *e.g.*—*Add-ôh-ray* (Adore, p. 214); *Oo-ee-âh-koo*, or *Oo-yâh-koo* (Uiaku, p. 2); *You-âh-you* (Yuayu, p. 2); *Moh-tay* (Mote, p. 215); *Kec-keé-kee-sôw-kay* (Kikikisauke, p. 168); *Wanny-gây-rah*, or more nearly *Wanny-gây-r* (Wanigera).

Papuans can rarely sound two consonants together, or end a word without a vowel, hence the forms *sit-teem-er*, *si'-tation* (steamer, station, p. 254); *Kent-ah* (Kent); *along-ah* (along).

The natives in Collingwood Bay have no “L” in their alphabet, so that the forms *Wanigera* and *Rakwa* (p. 2) are better than *Wanigela* and *Lakwa*, as the names have sometimes been written.

AN OUTPOST IN PAPUA

CHAPTER I

ON MANEAO

I BEGIN to write on Thursday, December 9, 1909, soon after sunrise. I am sitting on the very top of Maneao, a mountain range in Papua, nine thousand feet and more above the opalescent waters of Collingwood Bay. Although this lofty spot is well within the bounds of my own parish, and not more than thirty miles, as a bird might fly, from the place where I live, I had not known of Maneao's existence, nor so much as heard the name, until a week ago. And even now, it seems to be the merest chance that I am enjoying this wide and splendid prospect, sunning myself far above the clouds, upon a soft carpet of grass and yellow buttercups and pink and white daisies, instead of going about my ordinary business in Wanigera, away there at the foot of Mount Victory, which the natives call Keroro.

It is not every man who can boast of an active volcano in his backyard, but there it is, eight or ten miles behind my station, red and gold in the early morning, and purple or grey towards evening, always with white steam, or spirals of darker smoke ascending from a dozen fissures in its rugged crown. The elder men in Wanigera will tell you of a time when the "burning mountain" burst asunder, and sent flaming streams of lava flowing down to the sea, and they remember how the people dwelling on the higher ground made haste to build new and safer homes more near to the

shore, and how from that time onwards travellers and hunters have been careful to keep away from the slopes of Keroro. This all happened when Nonis and Mr. Tomlinson were young men, and when Kukiaus was a little boy, and that was anything between twenty and thirty years ago.

Farther off, and not less than fifty miles away across the water, nearly due north from here, is Tufi, where the Resident Magistrate of the North-Eastern Division of Papua has his headquarters. His station and mine are a short day's journey apart, and when he called at Wanigera last week, on his way down the coast to visit some rubber people, who have just taken up land near the Moibira villages, at the foot of Maneao, I was glad to come on with him in the Government whaleboat. We have been travelling for ten days already; and though, with a fair wind, you might sail in ten hours from Wanigera to Moibira, we are still nearly as many miles from the new plantation as on the day that we started.

Business and pleasure are often tangled up together in New Guinea, and it was natural for the R.M. to call in at Yuayu and Uiaku and Sinapa and Rakwa and Mokoru and half-a-dozen other places, to explain to the natives a new regulation which obliges them to clear away all trees and rubbish heaps and undergrowth, and to fill up all swamps and pools within fifty yards of their villages. It is not enough to give an order in New Guinea, but you must yourself see that it is carried out; and so we waited while the police measured out the distances, and cut an open track round each village; and, after that, the R.M. must needs explain, gently enough, but with admirable decision, what would happen to that particular village if there was a stick, or a pile of coconut husks and taro parings, or even a single puddle, left within the appointed area at the time of the next full moon.



COLLINGWOOD BAY, NEAR MUKAWA.

In one of these villages, where we had halted for lunch, an earthquake shook the house under which our table was set up, and sent everybody reeling. The natives seemed quite unconcerned, and merely remarked that "the earth was shaking itself," as you or I might say that it was a fine day, or that it looked rather like rain.

We heard, as we came along the coast, of a raid that was supposed to have been made by Doriri upon the village of Moitu. The rumour, as we came farther south, grew more and more definite, though it was a varying number of men that were said to have been killed. Such rumours are common enough along this coast, for the wild men from behind the mountains have still a name of terror among the more settled and peaceful tribes near the seashore.

In this particular instance, though we were quite prepared to find no more than one of the frequent sorcery cases, in which the bewitched men had already been counted as completely done for, we yet remembered that it is not more than five years since the Doriri tribesmen came down and burnt three parts of this same village of Moitu, killing three-and-twenty of its inhabitants, and mutilating the dead bodies very shamefully afterwards. And so, though we came last Saturday within full sight of the small wharf which the Mombiri Rubber Company have built among the mangroves, the R.M. was obliged to turn aside, and take his boat up the creek to Uaiuan, where he could hope for a plain unvarnished account of the matter. Some years back the Mission was prepared to put a teacher in this village, and to open a school, but the old men of the place were positive that there were so many mosquitoes that no stranger could live at Uaiuan in any sort of comfort, which was their polite way of saying that they really did not want us. The offer was repeated twelve months ago, and we were told that the river sometimes rises high enough to cover the verandahs of the houses,

which of course was their delicate way of trying to dissuade us from building any houses there. Even now, when "Government" had come to avenge them of their adversaries, the men of Uaiuan, who are related to those of Moitu, protested that no one could go to Moitu at this time of the year. The track, they said, was a shocking one, with mud over your knees, and water at least up to your neck.

We spent the night there, however, and announced, in the morning, that we were going on by boat. Some extra carriers were engaged, and all the heavy baggage was sent on overland, while we two white men, with a double crew of twelve strong fellows, went up the river in an unencumbered whale-boat. Even so it was hard work, and often the whole dozen had to throw themselves all together over the big oars, and labour long before they could gain the few painful yards that carried us safely round some difficult corner. The current was swift, and in many places choked by fallen trees, and once we had to wait while the police cut away a tall trunk that had fallen sheer across the stream. The banks were high, with reed grass or bushwood coming right to the edge, so that we could see little of the country through which we passed. Squadrons of flying foxes, disturbed in their trees, went wheeling about over our heads, and more than once we saw the tracks of alligators on the sand-banks which here and there rose a few feet above the muddy waters. A policeman, who had gone down to the river for water on the previous night, had been frightened by an alligator that came up and snapped, so he said, at his billycan. After five hours of rowing, we came to a narrow corner, past which even our double crew could not carry us, and we dropped down stream again till we came to a place where the whale-boat could be safely stowed. A couple of police were sent off to find out where we were, and by the time we had eaten our lunch, and rice had been cooked for the boat's crew, they

came back to tell us that we were not more than two or three miles from Uaiuan, whence we had started out in the morning. So we marched on, over a rough track that led through some old and long-abandoned gardens, finding it no worse or wetter than one would expect anywhere in New Guinea in the rainy month of December. We lost our way repeatedly, and had to wait while the police quartered the ground till they picked up the track again, and it was late in the day when we reached Moitu.

The village was strongly stockaded. Thick bush grew all round the open space where the houses stood, except just where narrow paths led away to the river, or towards the garden track by which we had come. These paths, as they approached the village, were knee-deep in liquid mud, and each entry was protected by a stout wooden palisade, twelve or fourteen feet high. The doorway was a low opening of perhaps two feet square, and the door itself was a slab of tough and heavy timber, shaped from the aerial roots of a particular tree. Even when we had stooped to this difficult entry, we were confronted by an inner and exactly similar palisade and doorway, five or six yards removed from the first. I pity the man, besieger or besieged, who should find himself obliged to fight, single-handed, within those narrow limits—mud and filth about his feet, impenetrable walls of rank vegetation on either hand, and high wooden stockades behind him and before! The double palisades must have been mere death-traps in the olden days, and the bravest warrior would have found it hard to make much use of his spear or his long-handled stone-headed club.

Inside, in the village, the people sat silent under their houses. I have been to perhaps a hundred native villages, but I have never seen one which could rival Moitu for its dreadful dampness, and its pervading dirtiness, and its general depression. Perhaps any community, five years

after such a massacre as these people had experienced, and within a month of this more recent raid, would be dull and unenthusiastic ; but no raids or massacres could quite account for, or excuse, the size and vivid greenness of the stagnant pools around and under the houses, or the overpowering smell—like the smell of an ill-kept beer-house, where all the beer had gone bad—which hung like a pall about the place.

Three men had been killed, and one of them was buried in the middle of the village, close to his own house, and the widow had been sitting ever since on her verandah, contemplating the oblong box-like arrangement of pandanus mats by which the grave was hidden. The other two were buried a little way off in the bush. A fourth man had been speared in the lower part of his back ; and though he was an old fellow, the wound was doing rather well, with no treatment but poultices made from the fire-charred leaves of an indigenous and inedible fig.

Our kitchen furniture had not yet been brought, and we dined somewhat dolefully in that gloomy place, upon sweet biscuits and Jordan almonds and cheese, with a police ration of unusually pungent tea, that knew no mitigation of sugar or milk. In the midst of our rather unsatisfactory meal a votive pig, tied head downwards to a pole, was brought and laid at the R.M.'s feet, a not uncommon mark, on such occasions, of friendly disposition to the Government, and an ever welcome addition to the commissariat for police and carriers. After a decent interval, that we might not seem too eager, and to avoid all appearance of mere vulgar buying and selling, the trade box was opened, and a brand new tomahawk, the accepted equivalent for a medium-sized pig, was solemnly presented to the chief man of the village. The pig was carried off, protesting shrilly, and after a few thuds and squeals from behind the tent the incident seemed to be closed, and I prepared for bed. Just then another batch of

carriers came straggling in, and we found ourselves again possessed of most of the machinery and material for an ordinary meal. I was all but a vegetarian before I came to New Guinea, and I had eaten abundantly of the Huntley and Palmer biscuit and the tinned Dutch cheese, but there was a frying-pan among the newly recovered cooking implements, and in half-an-hour or so we were having dinner all over again, with pig's liver and bacon as the most considerable dish. It all seemed very sudden and cannibalistic, and certainly three years ago I could not have ventured two dinners within an hour, nor sat down, hungry or otherwise, to eat portions of a large animal that had been alive only a few minutes before; but in New Guinea you must eat exactly when you can and what you can, since you never know when your next chance will come, nor can any man afford to be squeamish about his food, even though in other and more civilised lands he may have trifled delicately with various "diets" and food crazes and other such like sweet but now impossible ideals.

In the morning we were taken to the place where the three men had been killed. Our guides had first to unbar the double gates, which had been wedged up as usual at night time with an elaborate arrangement of wooden joists, and they led us to a quiet spot under the trees, about a mile away. Seven men had set out to hunt wild pigs, and suddenly they were opposed by a party of the dreaded Doriri, who carried shields and fighting spears, and whose faces, under the feather head-dress, were painted as for war. Two of the survivors were with us, but their account of things was confused, nor could they do much more than point to the thicket where the enemy first appeared, and to the tree under which the three unfortunate fellows were surrounded and done to death, and where they were found in the evening when the whole village came out in force to

recover the bodies. These guides of ours had been walking in the rear, immediately behind the wounded man whom we had seen in the village, and they explained to us that on the first alarm they had rushed back along the path, with no thought but of their own safety. I, for one, cannot blame them, for I have seen the Doriri, both in peace and in war, and I know that those warriors, in their paint, and with their hideous yells, might well upset the nerve even of a brave man who, unarmed and unprepared, should come suddenly upon them. The old man who was merely wounded had received the spear as he turned to run, nor did he stay to pluck it out, but fled until he reached his village, trailing the twelve-foot weapon behind him. No one knew exactly where the Doriri had come from, nor by what path they came, but it seemed worth while to try to follow up their track a little way. Some police, with long butcher's knives, were sent on to improve the road, while we returned to Moitu to break camp, and re-arrange the baggage in convenient loads for our forty or fifty carriers. Even for the brief hour of our absence the village gateways had been wedged and bolted up, and while we waited for them to be opened I tried to imagine the feelings of the wounded man and his fellows, who had waited on that same spot a few weeks before, not knowing but what the painted faces and murderous spears were close behind.

For the rest of that day we followed random trails which looked like those of a party of men, though equally well they might have been the tracks of wild pigs. The advance party had made the way easy, felling logs to serve as bridges, and even pegging rough wooden steps into steep or slippery river banks. Sometimes, for an hour on end, we followed a stony water-course, clambering over or round the boulders, and being carried backwards and forwards by the police across the stream. I had put a new set of aluminium hob-nails into

my boots the day before, but when we camped that night, in pouring rain, a matter of 1600 feet up on the lower slopes of the range, they had nearly all been dragged out, while the few that remained were beaten flat, and worn almost to a wafer.

The men who had been sent higher to reconnoitre came back towards dusk, and reported that the track went steadily up an easy spur, and that there was a large bread-fruit tree not far away. The R.M. gave permission for the tree to be felled, and nearly a hundredweight of food was thus obtained. We came steadily on next day for five hours, but were then stopped by heavy rain, and our camp was made, about 5000 feet above sea-level, close to a magnificent waterfall. Once again the advance party reported indications of recent human passage, and we went on next morning, encouraged not only by the frequent occurrence of broken twigs, such as travellers snap off for future reference when they pass through unknown bush, but also by the remains of a roughly constructed house, such as a hunting party might build in a place where they meant to stay for a week or two. The roof was made of strips of bark, and it was evident that the posts of the house had been cut and trimmed with stone axes.

We were now above the cloud-level, and there was less likelihood of troublesome rain. The going was easy, and the ascent so steady that it seemed certain we must be on the main spur of the range. We only made one mistake, and that delayed us no more than an hour or two. We were never far from water, and at about 7000 feet we found ourselves well beyond the belt in which everything is covered with moss, and scarlet and purple and orange fungus, and where your feet crash through the solid-seeming crusts of fallen logs, and anything you grasp comes away softly in your hand, and where the high trees, pushing up out of the breathless darkness into the open air far above, and throwing

down ever new and vagrant roots from incredible heights, are laced together and interlaced by fathom upon fathom of moss-covered, creeping, crawling, vegetable parasites.

In the early afternoon of this third day we reached the grass country, where the only trees are crowded together in narrow gulleys that run up close to the very summit of each peak, or on the sheltered side of the sharp ridges that join height to height, and we were glad to see clearly where we were going, after three days steering by the compass, and to exchange the chilly dampness of the shaded undergrowth for the blazing heat of high land where the giant bracken fern grows crisp and brown under the unclouded rays of a tropical sun. At each step we disturbed wallabies, to the distraction of the armed police, and the despair of my small dog, who has the zealous heart of a mighty hunter, but whose legs are not long enough for the pursuit of anything faster than a corpulent and sedentary village pig. And once a small grey owl fluttered heavily across our path, and I found her single chick lying beside a mottled broken egg, right in the fairway, where it would inevitably be crushed by some unheeding carrier. The tiny thing was fully fledged, and open-eyed, and as talkative and friendly as any new-born, civilised farmyard fowl. I lifted it out of harm's way, and wondered where, far from these mountain solitudes, the mother bird had struck acquaintance with Fear, of which the little yellow untravelled thing knew nothing.

We camped for the night on the inside of what we thought was a well sheltered ridge, but a cold wind began to blow soon after sunset, and all night long we shivered beneath our blankets, and pitied the poor carriers who wore no clothes worth speaking of, and had nothing warmer than a pandanus mat apiece to protect them from the searching wind which came down from the mountain top, a thousand feet above us, and ceased only at the rising of the next day's sun.

Yesterday morning, being so near the summit, and seeing clearly what appeared to be a possible path to the very top, the R.M. decided to come on. He did not even pretend to hope that he might find his Doriri raiders encamped upon the topmost peak of Maneao, or picking buttercups among the bracken, but he desired to turn his theodolite upon the other mountains, and to verify, or expand, or correct, with hypsometer and compass, the rough details of the antiquated official map which is useful enough in its way, but yet so inevitably inaccurate and incomplete as to need careful and frequent "alterations and repairs."

But there was difficulty about food, and we could not be sure of finding water farther up. So a policeman and some carriers were sent back to Moitu and ordered to meet us with supplies of native food on our return journey to-night or to-morrow. Most of the party and all the heavy gear have been left at the lower camp, and we two, with a minimum of baggage and two single flies and a few police and carriers, came on the rest of the way: slowly, with many halts to watch the unfolding panorama all around and below us, and to argue the identity of some great mountain that loomed up suddenly out of the clouds: and carefully, since our track led us sometimes along narrow ridges where a slip might not have been necessarily fatal, but where the world on both sides seemed to be rushing by, as the landscape rushes past a man in an express train, and where one would have rolled hundreds of feet down a steep grass slope on the one side, or rattled among stones and dead tree-trunks even farther on the other.

We brought some water for our own use, and ready-cooked rice for the others; but to-day, for the first time in many months, I have had to go unshorn, for sheer lack of water for my shaving.

I know not how the natives of our party got through

last night. It rained for an hour or so, and most of them had refused to sleep in the open under their fly, preferring the scanty shelter of a clump of shrivelled trees. For myself, I have not been so cold since my last winter in England, just eleven years ago. In New Guinea, at sea-level, a thin woollen shirt and a pair of cotton trousers is all one needs on the coldest day, and not even any warmer garment at night. But until the sun rose soon after 5.30 this morning I was wearing three Jaeger shirts, and a suit of pyjamas, and a heavy woollen jersey, and an old cricket blazer, and a pair of thick flannel trousers, and a pair of blue dungaree trousers, and three pairs of Jaeger socks, and I was rolled in a couple of light blankets and a very solid travelling rug, and yet my teeth chattered and my whole body shook so with the cold that I could hardly sleep. As for the fox-terrier, he has shivered unceasingly for these last two days and nights, in spite of uncommon allowances in the way of food, and the unprecedented privilege of sleeping in the very warmest corner of my camp bed. But it was worth it! I do not mean to go up any more mountains in New Guinea, unless it be the volcano "in my backyard," which is less than 6000 feet high, and on whose summit one would surely find warmth of whatever subterranean origin.

But to-day it is well worth it!

We breakfasted at sunrise, while the lower world was still shrouded in mist; but as we climbed the few hundred feet hither from our camp, the mists evaporated, and the long coast-line unfolded itself, and now it lies before us like a huge and carefully coloured map. Behind, and about us, are dark mountain peaks, slashed with great yellow sunlit chasms, where land has slipped away into the valleys, or where a torrent, now diverted, once found a path. Between the pointed peaks, which rise like purple islands out of a silver sea, great masses of very solid-looking clouds are

rolling, billow upon billow. Immediately behind us, to the south, is a wide valley, dark and green with fir trees, and alive with the movement of a broad white river, too far beneath us for any sound of running water to break the silence of this high solitude. We cannot see far to the south, but if Mount Dayman were removed, we might surely catch a glimpse, across the upper valleys of the Moni and Adaua Rivers, of the Coral Sea, near Glasgow Harbour or Cloudy Bay.

To the north and the east and the west there is nothing to interrupt our view, and with the glasses I can clearly see Cape Nelson, and away past Tufi to Okein and Spear Island. Mount Trafalgar and Mount Britannia and Mount Victory stand up clearly on the peninsula, along the western edge of the bay, but, though each of them is between 5000 and 6000 feet high, they are dwarfed by our superior height, and though they appear more beautiful to-day than I have ever known them, even their familiar beauty cannot save them from comparative insignificance in the company of these nearer and more tremendous hills. Mount Suckling, near at hand on the left, and Mount Macgregor, are both over 11,000 feet, and between them and Cape Nelson and behind my own Wanigera, shine the waters of Dyke Acland Bay, with what seems to be Mount Victoria (13,000 feet) or perhaps Mount Albert Edward, as a dimly detailed background. On our right, eastward, and springing sheer out of the sea, are Goodenough and Fergusson Islands, lavender coloured, and looking more important than they have any right to look, for all their eight thousand foot mountain tops. Lighter lavender still, and as unsubstantial-seeming as the mountains that one climbs in dreams, but unmistakable, is the huge bulk of Cape Frere, dropping, with curves like the head of a buffalo, into Goodenough Bay not far from Dogura, where Maclaren and Copland King landed

on August 10, 1891, when they came to establish the New Guinea Mission. Maclaren died before the end of the year, but King is still working in the farthest limit of the diocese, near the German boundary, which is within sight now, if only I knew exactly where to look.

And there is Mukawa, on Cape Vogel, the eastern end of our bay, where the missionaries came eleven years ago.

It was in July of that same year (1898) that some of them pushed on along the seventy miles of coast to Wanigera, past the islands and lagoons and river mouths and villages that are so well known to me now, but which must have seemed so strange to them ; and it is of that place, Wanigera, and the Mission Station and the people in and about it, that I mean to write.

CHAPTER II

WANIGERA

YOU may come direct from Sydney to Samarai by way of the Solomon Islands, or you may go up past Brisbane and Townsville to Cooktown, and there get one of B.P.'s boats (Burns Philp) to New Guinea.

The latter is the quicker, and the route by which the monthly mail is forwarded, and it was the way by which I came in July 1907. Travelling slowly for nearly a fortnight up the coast of Queensland, I felt that I was going farther and farther into country that was foreign indeed. The vegetation at Cairns and Townsville was tropical, even to the extent of pineapples and bananas and coconuts ; the weather-board houses, lifted high on wooden piles, were quite unlike those in the southern parts of Australia ; and at Cooktown every second man or woman in the streets was coloured. It was with some surprise, therefore, that, after seeing the last of a new and unfamiliar Australia one morning, I landed next day at Port Moresby amid surroundings that seemed quite ordinary and disappointing.

The hills and the vegetation round the Government capital of Papua might well belong to nearly any part of the coast of South Australia, and they reminded me instantly of the country near Brighton and Glenelg, within ten miles of Adelaide. Years ago, I was struck by the similarity of that same Australian coast-line to some parts of Northern Palestine, and now here was a third country, which in configura-

tion and colouring seemed altogether familiar by reason of its likeness to the other two.

Nor at Samarai, the commercial capital, did I find any wondrous novelty, such as one naturally expects in a new and almost unknown land. It was just a piece of Scotland over again. Neglecting the unobtrusive details of a few scattered coconut palms and native villages on the mainland and on the multitudinous islands amongst which we passed, and attending only to the great misty blue-green mountains, and the glimmering waterfalls, and the dark grey foam-flecked sea, it might have been Loch Katrine over which we were steaming, and the hills behind the island of Samarai were not unlike Ben Lomond. After a day or two in Samarai, with its short mile of circumference, its fifty or sixty white people, and its two or three hundred natives, we came on up the coast to Dogura, travelling uncomfortably for a day and a night through the rain in the small Mission launch, whose cabin overflowed with stores, and whose deck was cumbered by cases of petrol and kerosine, so that there was hardly room for the passengers, among whom was our Metropolitan, the Archbishop of Brisbane.

I stayed at Dogura for a month, and then set out for my own station in the *Bulldog*, a little trading oil launch, which dropped us at Mukawa, where the whaleboat and a native crew were waiting. With me came the layman who had been in charge of the Collingwood Bay district for seven years past, and another layman, who knew something about plumbing, and was to put up new water-tanks and help with any building that might be necessary.

We landed at Uiaku late in the afternoon of the second day, and for the first time in New Guinea I saw what I had hoped and expected to see—large villages and crowds of natives, dressed beautifully in native fashion, and with nothing of the semi-civilised shabbiness that had offended me



UIAKU BEACH.



OLD WANIGERA.

in Samarai; tropical jungle behind the houses, betel-nut palms and granadillas and crotons and dracænas and limes all about the station; and, as background to everything, and not so very far away, the splendour of the mountains, towering golden against the sky, and such as I had never seen before except in picture-books or dreams.

Almost at the same time as ourselves, there arrived a large whaleboat from the opposite direction, with a crew of ten native police, very smart in dark blue uniforms with scarlet facings, and with uncountable Lee-Metford cartridges slung across their chests. A message from the magistrate at Tufi. He had sent no letter, but the corporal explained matters. "Am I well," his master had cried, "that I can sit up and write to the missionary? Go to him and tell him that I am sick, and ask him to come to me."

I would have gone at once, for I knew the man. He was new to the country, and had come up in the same B.P. boat with me, and been sent at once to the North-Eastern Division, while I had waited at Dogura. But I should have been of little use, and my more experienced comrade was certainly the man to send. We set out soon afterwards for Wanigera, and landed here a little after midnight. Before daybreak we were up again, and my "Better Half," as I soon came to call this very capable layman, was on his way to Tufi, in our own whaleboat, with four police and four Mission boys as crew. But the sick man was dead and buried by that time, and though I had known that Death finds white men very suddenly sometimes in Papua, it was a tragic entry to my new parish, and I can never see the tall white wooden cross which marks Captain M——'s grave on the headland at Tufi without thinking of the sad circumstances of his death—in a strange country, and alone, but for a few native police—in the very prime of life, and on the threshold of what promised to be a successful career.

I had heard, before I came, that Wanigera was by way of being one of the show stations of the New Guinea Mission, but no one had prepared me for the ordered beauty of the place. In a new country, on an out-station, one might hope for beautiful surroundings of land and sea and sky, but the house and the Church and the poor beginnings of civilisation would surely be very common and plain. Yet here were ten acres of level, fenced-in land, with a frontage of a hundred yards eastward to the sea ; a great Church, beautiful and dignified by sheer size and comely proportion ; a schoolroom, less lofty but nearly as fine ; a dwelling-house that might be small but was certainly convenient ; a row of other houses for teachers and boy boarders ; hedges of carefully-pruned lime-trees, and red and yellow crotons ; broad lawns of well-trimmed grass ; paths which looked as if an army of gardeners, rakes in hand, had but just passed over them ; many young coconuts ; clumps of bright, green-leaved hibiscus, with flaming scarlet flowers ; and row upon row of native houses coming close up to the station fence on either hand. Most grateful of all, perhaps, was the indescribable harmony of the colouring—soft rich greens and browns everywhere, with now and then a splash of brilliant colour, but never a jarring note in building or village or in the dress or decoration of the thronging crowds that for a few days accompanied me wherever I turned. The Church and the school and the villages deserve, and shall have, chapters to themselves, and now I need but explain how and when the Station began to be.

When the missionaries first entered the Bay in 1898, they camped at Sinapa, and from there they came one day to a large stockaded village near the mouth of the Wanigera River. Most of the houses were built in the swamps that stretch for miles behind the narrow sea-beach, and the people were sickly and saturated with malaria. A Brisbane clergyman had just been consecrated in Sydney as the first Bishop

of New Guinea, and he sent his chaplain to establish a mission station close to this village. The natives still remember that white man, and his two dozen starched shirts, and his tall hat, and his bicycle, and how he wore the hat and a very long black coat "as a mark of respect" at the burial of an old chief who died just at that time; and the legend goes on to relate how this pioneer missionary, in his silk and his broadcloth, caught up a native drum and danced with the best of them at the feast of mourning, though I am inclined to regard this and other details, and perhaps even the hat and the coat and the shirts, as apocryphal accretions, due to the unscrupulous but ingenious humour of later missionaries. It is certain, however, that this pastoral predecessor of mine, who was a muscular Christian, made lasting impressions on many of the wild sheep who formed his flock, and that he opened the way for the milder methods of the no less enthusiastic layman who succeeded him. The site of that old village, and of the adjoining Mission Station, is now marked only by clumps of feathery coconuts, and by a rusty old water-tank which lies on an open space near the beach. Five years ago the Government and the missionaries between them persuaded the people to move a mile or so farther up the coast, to a spot where their villages would be at least a few inches above high-water mark, and where, by filling in a creek and a few acres of swamp, an open and level place could be made for a new and more healthy settlement.

After weeks of labour, in which the women and children joined with the men in carrying sand and felling trees, and with the expenditure of a few cases of trade tobacco, the ground was ready for the builders, and the Mission Station of Wanigera sprang up, with a native village close on either flank. Every creek and point along the coast has its proper name, and so exactly is the distinction understood that I,

and the fowls, and the South Sea Island teachers, who live a few yards south of the Church, are said to dwell in Oreresan, while my Better Half, and the boy boarders and the goats, not fifty yards away, but north of the church, are counted as inhabitants of Rainu. While the ground was being levelled, a series of mounds, ten or twelve feet high, and from fifty to a hundred feet in length, were cleared away, and used for filling up the swamps. Within these mounds, which must have been the kitchen middens of an earlier and much larger settlement, were found quantities of broken pottery and engraved bones and shells. The potsherds, of which specimens were sent to the British Museum, are of a very different design from anything that is now made in the district; but it has to be remembered that a thing may have happened, or a people lived, not more than half a century ago, and yet, in New Guinea, be prehistoric. Nothing is known of these earlier inhabitants, whence they came, or how long they lived here, or whither they went. Half a mile away, to the north, and across a river, are the large villages of Kumarbun and the few houses of Aiafi; a mile inland, the villages of Aieram, which still has its stockade, and Murin and Nonof; four miles to the south, along the beach, the village of Yuayu; and five miles farther, Uiaku, with Sinapa three or four miles farther still.

Twelve or fourteen dialects are spoken at different points of the two hundred miles of coast which are included in the diocese, and a man would need to know at least half of them if he would speak to the different tribes of this one district of Collingwood Bay in the tongue that is most familiar to each of them. For practical purposes of daily life, and within the limits of mere "travel talk," Ubir will carry you all along the coast from Cape Nelson to Mukawa, but it is the vulgar tongue only of the people of Rainu. In Oreresan, on the other side of the station, Oyan is spoken as a general



OLD WANIGERA STATION.



WANIGERA CHURCH, 1904.

rule, though every one understands and often uses Ubir. At Aieram, a mile away, they speak Onjob. At Uiaku and Yuayu nothing but Maisin is of any use, since the old folk know little, and the younger people not much more, of Ubir.

In school, and at most of the Church services, we have to use Wedauan, the nearest that the Mission has to a *lingua franca*. Wedau is a village at the foot of Dogura Hill, and the language of the people living there is perhaps the only New Guinea language that the Anglican missionaries have completely explored. Into it the Book of Common Prayer, and the entire Lectionary, and about a hundred hymns have been translated. It is spoken on our schooner and cutter, and by the pupil-teachers who have been trained at Dogura.

Government native business at Tufi is carried on in Motuan, which is the tongue of Port Moresby; and when the R.M. comes to Wanigera he and his police speak that language in the village. There is constant traffic between here and Tufi, and many of our men have served as Government carriers, so that most of us know a little, and the local constable is obliged to know more than a little, of that very musical tongue. At Okein, on the other side of Cape Nelson, Binandere is spoken, and that language carries, with certain local variations, right up to the German boundary. Roughly speaking, Wedauan, in some form or other, is spoken in Goodenough Bay, Ubir in Collingwood Bay, and Binandere north of that. At Mukawa, on Cape Vogel, between the two bays, the language is a perplexing mixture of Wedauan and Ubir.

As an example of the Babel hereabouts, take the sentence "I am hungry; bring me some food." The Ubir people, at Rainu, would say "Bitanan egigieu; siu ebenat." Their neighbours, a hundred yards away at Oreresan, would phrase it "Au emoromorob; hiu kubai kua." At Aieram and the

villages thereabout, distant no more than a mile, it is "Memara bonife; tami waragana." The Maisin folk, at Uiaku, and the school children who come to us each day from Yuayu, say "Vitoroweng amamati; ruang kuveng kurai." The schooner boys, or our pupil-teachers when they come back from Dogura, use Wedauan, "Am a irage; lam ma neiai." Reuben, our teacher at Okein, must speak Binandere, and say "Na beji eira; rorae kudo pu." At Tufi, where they speak "Hanua Bada," it is "Lau hitolo, aniani maile." Our neighbours at Mukawa, with whom we have fairly frequent intercourse, say "Soya a raborabobo; kam ke botuvei." Practically, the natives are *bi-* or *tri-*lingual, and many of the younger folk are beginning to understand, though not to speak, English, so that there is never much difficulty.

In school, this quarter, however, there is a new boy who is something of a problem. He is Maisin, from Uiaku, and his mother, being widowed, has returned to her old home at Aieram. His vulgar tongue, of course, is Maisin, and he has learned the Onjob talk of his new village, but the Ubir and the Wedauan, which he hears each day in school, might as well be Chinese and Hindustani, for all that he can make of them as yet.

Besides the two white men, there are a couple of South Sea Island teachers living on the station, and five-and-twenty boarders. At Uiaku we have two more of these imported coloured teachers, and a dozen boarders. There are South Sea Island teachers also at Okein and Sinapa.

The priest-in-charge of this district, with the help of a layman, supervises the work on these four stations, which are spread over more than fifty miles of coast. There are villages between these extremes, which the Mission has hardly touched, and you would go sixty miles in one direction, and more than a hundred in the other, before you found

another missionary or a Mission Station. Inland, the natives are "under Government control," which means little more than that the R.M. makes a patrol and visits the villages every year or two, but almost nothing is known about the people or their languages.

The Anglican Church alone works on this North-East Coast of Papua. The Roman Catholic and Protestant Missions have their separate spheres in other parts of the country, and it is no small part of the joy of a New Guinea missionary's life, that he is not hindered, nor his people perplexed, by any of the confusions and controversies by which the "seamless Robe of Christ" is elsewhere stained and marred.

This is only an outpost. The people are of no particular importance, nor the missionaries of any special capacity. But things are happening here which will count for a good deal eternally if the world is really God's, and these people His, and we His ministers; and missionaries know, perhaps beyond most other men, and in a sense that was not intended by a great writer who has lately died, that "it is on the margin, where the conquering light meets the receding darkness, that love finds its inspiration."

CHAPTER III

IN THE VILLAGE

ONE fine morning in December, two years ago, when I had been in Wanigera only a few months, I was sitting on the verandah, after breakfast, attending to the score or so of sick folk who had come to see what the new missionary could do for their sores and their skin diseases. My Better Half had done his best to put me into the way of things during the six or eight weeks we were together here, but he had gone off at the end of October for medical treatment, and it was nearly a year before he returned. I was swabbing away busily at an old man's leg, and trying to make head or tail of the talk that clamoured and jangled round me, when suddenly there were loud shouts in the Oreresan village, a few yards away on the other side of the station fence. I was already beginning to understand that sudden shouts, however startling and terrible, need not necessarily mean very much in New Guinea; but this was evidently something out of the common, for my patients began to shout too, and then they scattered and disappeared. Even my old man, who had hobbled up painfully and with a stick ten minutes before, had no more thought for me or my medicines, but bolted away as hard as he could go, over the fence and into his house, and my dog and I were left absolutely alone. In the villages on both sides of me I saw men climbing up into their houses, and coming down again with spears, and then hurrying away along the winding tracks that lead westward through the bush to the gardens.



WANGERI MEN IN WAR PAINT.

All the women had run up into the houses, and stopped there, and in five minutes there was not a soul to be seen. The very pigs and dogs seemed to know that something extraordinary was happening, for they had ceased their rooting and fighting and squealing, and crept quietly away behind the bushes or crawled stealthily up into a house. I got my pipe and helmet and stick, and went to see what it was all about. An old lady in the village, one of my fugitive patients, was very voluble and dramatic, but all I could understand was that the Doriri were attacking Wanigera, and that we were all going to be killed. I had heard before of these Doriri, the notorious raiders from beyond the mountains, but no one had warned me that they were still in the habit of paying warlike visits to this part of the coast, and for the moment I failed to see exactly what I could do in the matter. My patients had either hidden themselves in the houses, or scattered away into the bush, and there would certainly be no school while all this was going on, and of course I could not stay at home, with the women and the children, so I went off along the track after the men, whose shouting I could hear faintly in the distance.

As I came nearer to them, the shouting naturally sounded louder and louder, and I imagined, in my innocence, that actual fighting had begun, and that in a moment or two I should see a real New Guinea battle, which, I had been told, consists of very much jumping and shouting and dodging behind trees, but very little bloodshed. When at last I caught up with my noisy parishioners, they were still going in single file through the gardens, brandishing their spears, dancing from side to side of the path, wearing their war gear—feathers, large shells, boars' tusks, and so on—and shouting, every few seconds, all together, and in a loud insulting way, which reminded me of the booing at a football match where the referee is unpopular. Now and then

we met groups of women, making back from the gardens, withdrawn, while we passed, to the side of the track, with firewood and food and babies on their backs, not looking frightened, or as if anything rather dreadful were happening, but very quiet, and intent on getting back to their homes and their children.

We went on like this for a matter of about five miles, and then we halted in the shade of some trees. There were about two hundred men in the party, including some quite old fellows, and a few boys. "Mr. Tomlinson" had a sort of pre-eminence among them, on the strength of his ancient reputation as a man of war, but nobody seemed to be in general command, nor could any one explain why they had come to that particular spot, or where they were to go to next, or what they were to do when they got there.

Every one was perfectly happy—the New Guinea man is only terrified when he has to stand alone against his foes, real or imaginary—and every one was ready to talk, though no one cared to listen—and after half-an-hour of noise and confusion, punctuated each minute by an outburst of defiant shouting and shaking of two hundred spears towards the mountains, the warriors with one consent turned homewards, cheerful and well content, like men who had borne themselves bravely through a hard day's fighting, and done, or suffered, mighty things for Wanigera, "home and beauty." So many and various accounts were afterwards current as to the genesis of this little expedition, that I am chary of attempting an authoritative version in these pages; but it appears that some man, wandering farther a-field than usual after wild pig, saw footprints in a place where footprints had no business to be, and rushed back home to tell his friends about them. As he ran, the bush was thronged with unseen terrors, and by the time that he burst, panic-stricken, into the midst of the village street, he was ready to proclaim,

in all good faith, that he had seen a war party of Doriri, and that they were already marching in force upon Wanigera.

It was all very ludicrous, and savoured strongly, like much that happens hereabouts, of comic opera; but yet there was a touch of heroism about it too. These men certainly took the thing quite seriously, and when they rushed for their spears and out into the bush, they really thought they were going to meet the Doriri. The elder men, who remember earlier days, are quite content to live quietly under the *Pax Britannica*; but the young bloods, who have heard about those "good old times," but never realised what they were like, sometimes think they would be happier if their lives might be as warlike as were those of their fathers: but, old or young, there was certainly no single coward in all the party. Every one of them accepted it as part of the day's work, and turned out instantly and enthusiastically to the defence of his home and his belongings. Perhaps they were just a little too showy and boastful about it, but at least there were no signs of the degenerate spirit that was lately satirised in *An Englishman's Home*. The prospect of such alarms promised a new interest to life in Wanigera, and obliged me for a while to qualify my first impressions of the village life. But nothing quite of the same heroic kind has happened again, though we have had more than one Doriri scare since then, and so I may return to those first impressions, which have only been confirmed in the course of the last two years.

Two things, especially, cannot fail to strike one who enters these villages—on almost any day in the year—the leisurely industry of the people, and their simple cheerfulness. Here and there you may see a man sit by the hour, doing nothing at all; and now and then a noisy quarrel flames up quickly, and quickly dies away again; but, on the whole, every one has plenty to do, and plenty of time in which to do it, and it is done with abundant laughter and talk.

Certain seasons are appointed for different kinds of work—the hollowing out of canoes, the making of nets, the building and repairing of houses, the shaping of paddles and sharpening of spears, the making of pots and native cloth, the getting and preparing of sago, the clearing off of new land for gardens—certain seasons for fishing and hunting, and for making ventures along the coast for trade with other tribes. But there is almost no idleness. The New Guinea man, from time to time, like every one else in the world, enjoys his little breaks and dissipations, his dancings all through the night, or his feasting all through the day, but for fifty weeks in the year he is at his work, and he attends to it for six days out of every seven. I speak only of this particular part, where the Mission has gradually introduced the observance of Sunday, but where the native habits of work and play have not otherwise been affected by the white man's coming.

There cannot be many loafers where each man works for himself, and where every one knows, without thinking twice about it, that if he does not attend sufficiently to his own necessities, he himself will have to suffer, since all the other men are too busy with their own concerns to care about doing *his* work as well as their own. The New Guinea man, as I know him, does not overwork, since he is driven by no hard necessity to labour for another man's enrichment, nor hampered by the difficult circumstances of civilisation. His wants are few and simple, and he has "free access" to the sources at which these wants find easy satisfaction—a few hours' work each day will supply him with a good house and sufficient food and all the clothing that he needs in this gentle climate. In a "Review of Foreign Missions," published by the United Boards of Missions of the Provinces of Canterbury and York, in 1908, I read that in the Anglican Mission in New Guinea "there are some hundreds of converts, and they are taught to work for their living." Was

ever such nonsense? As if the native had ever done, or dreamed of doing, or ever had the chance to do, anything else but "work for his living." There is not much that we can teach him in *that* line, for Mother Earth is most kind to him, and he has so exactly succeeded in "adapting himself to his environment." We can show him the use of iron tools, and let him earn a tomahawk as wages for a few weeks' work, and give him a few seeds now and then, but he needs nothing more from us on the temporal side. He is a rich man, indeed, in that respect, not as having many and complicated luxuries to his hand, but in the enjoyment of simple wants, which are easily and naturally satisfied by his own reasonably industrious efforts. There are no rich men in our village, no men who have more than they really need, nor any poor who have not enough. Perhaps Awatu possesses one more pig than Babaiuen, and Yagur's garden may be a shade more fertile than his neighbour's; and it may even happen that Kenuwe has more than his fair share of old women dependent on him for protection and the comfort of a settled home; but these inequalities do not matter much, for it will naturally be Awatu's turn to provide a pig for the next feast, and when all is said and done Kenuwe's old aunts and grandmothers do their full share of work in his gardens and about his house.

This, surely, is the "Golden Age" for the people of Wani-gera. Apart from the things a missionary cares most about, these men and women and children are probably happier now than they have ever been, or than they will ever be again. Fifteen years ago, or even less, they went through the bush or along the beach by day, or slept in their villages or in the gardens by night, always in fear of their lives. That is all over now, and there has not yet been time for them to grow soft and weak and easy-going as the result of deliverance from the fear of sudden death at the hand of an enemy, and from the need of constant readiness for self-defence.

The missionaries have brought new interest into their lives, and not yet has the inevitable reaction taken place which will make even the Good News of Jesus Christ seem unprofitable to some of them, and stale. Sooner or later, I suppose, the recruiters will come here regularly, seeking labourers whom they may hand over to white employers at the rate of £4 or so a head ; and they will go away and curse these men for worthless idle dogs, because they will not leave their pleasant villages and their wives and little children, and go and work on schooners or in gold mines. Or a company will take up land, and the manager be driven to distraction because the people of Rainu and Kumarbun refuse to neglect their own gardens, and their fishing and their hunting, in order that they may plant coconuts or Para rubber for the enrichment of the company's shareholders in Australia or London. This is not a political pamphlet, and very likely I have never really seen the other side of the question, but my sympathies are rather with the brown man than with his go-ahead, civilised, enterprising white brother. Civilisation, and enterprise, and go-aheadedness may be good enough things in their way, though I do not care very much about them myself, but I shall be sorry when these people of mine are forced into contact with them, by the inevitable overflow of white races into Papua. At present, the native here is better off (in temporal things) than the white man in England or Australia. Every one has enough, and perhaps a little to spare. He has plenty of business of his own to attend to, and there is no very obvious reason why he should of his own free will leave any of it to wait upon the foreigners. But granting that he does not work very hard at present, and that "work" is a fine thing in itself (I am thinking of the sort of work that you and I do so steadily, because it is our pleasure, or our duty, or simply because we cannot help it, rather than of the sort of work that the white man wants

the Papuan to do), and supposing a considerable number of New Guinea men to be persuaded or compelled to work very hard indeed at some productive undertaking: for whose benefit is that work to be done? Hardly for his own, since his needs are already supplied by his own labour, and there is really no reason why he should work any more for himself than he does already. He could not eat more, or live in more houses, and he would be worse off with more clothes than he has at present. Even a supply of mouth organs and cheap jewellery and ugly calico and other vulgar trash from the trader's box would possibly seem to him, as it assuredly seems to me, an insufficient reason for changing his entire manner of life, and leaving the things and the persons he loves for a new manner of life in which, for the most part, he is not inclined to take even the faintest interest. Is he to work, then, for the benefit of the white man, whose social conditions certainly make him want all that he can get? There is plenty to be got in New Guinea, if we can only persuade some one to get it for us. In a few years, as the country gets opened up, and white men come here in crowds to escape from the overstocked labour market which sometimes makes it so difficult to get a living at home, or are attracted by the promising openings for enterprise and capital in an unused, fertile country where there seem to be plenty of "hands," there will inevitably be difficulties about land and about labour, and the white man will be irritated when he sees these natives apparently doing very little, and yet coolly refusing to labour for him. This irritation may easily pass into a disposition to enslave, and the settlers here, or the shareholders in Australia, may begin to talk, as the Natal colonists were talking sixty years ago (and as I have already heard men talk in Papua), as though this whole question could be settled at once and satisfactorily by a "Law," compelling the coloured folk to work for the white man.

“What inducements”—to quote the first Bishop (Callaway) of Kaffraria—“what inducements, I wonder, can the white man offer to make them quit their present position for one resembling his own, for one so full of care, anxiety, and expense?”

But let us come back to these villages and people, as they are to-day. The houses on either side of the Station are not all that they might be. When the natives actually left their old village and settled here, the white missionary was away on furlough, and Jimmie Nogar, the South Sea Islander in charge, unfortunately had architectural ideas of his own. He was a man of forcible character, and his word was law. Any man who really wants a thing done, and can express his will with brevity and plainness, finds ready obedience waiting for him from these childlike folk. And at Jimmie's bidding they built their new houses all in a row, like some suburban terrace, and brought the platforms near to the ground, instead of lifting them well up, away from the water and the mud (and the evil spirits), and tied the thatch to make the walls look neat outside, instead of thinking first of all about interior convenience. And so it came about that the new villages, instead of blending naturally with the close surrounding trees, each house according to the owner's particular fancy, almost a part of nature, and not a blot upon it, are full of the obtrusiveness of human handiwork and efforts after such impossible straightness of line as is rarely found even in Nature. And the new Government regulation, which has cleared away all trees and bush within fifty yards of the houses, though it will make for cleanliness and health in the long run, has at first only revealed the filthy swamp, and cumbered the face of the land with fallen timber, and scarred it with cuts and burns, and for the time destroyed the unwholesome beauty that was there two years ago. Happily, many of the houses are falling into disrepair,

and though this adds to the present unseemliness of things, there is hope that the reconstructed Wanigera may be more "native," and less reminiscent of the domestic arrangements with which Jimmie was familiar when he lived "along-a-Queensland."

Early in the morning, almost before it is light, the women begin to sweep under and about their houses, using bundles of twigs that look remarkably like birch rods. At odd times, during the day, a woman may go all over the ground again, or the little girls may take a turn, and for dustpan and broom they have a couple of long flat pieces of wood, broken out of an old canoe, between which they scoop up the rubbish and carry it away down to the sea, or out into the bush. Even so, the street never looks really clean, unless when the Government whaleboat suddenly comes in sight, and all hands turn out to put things straight, even as I hurry my cook-boys along at such times, to make quite sure there is plenty of kerosine in the lamps, and no too obvious litter about the floor.

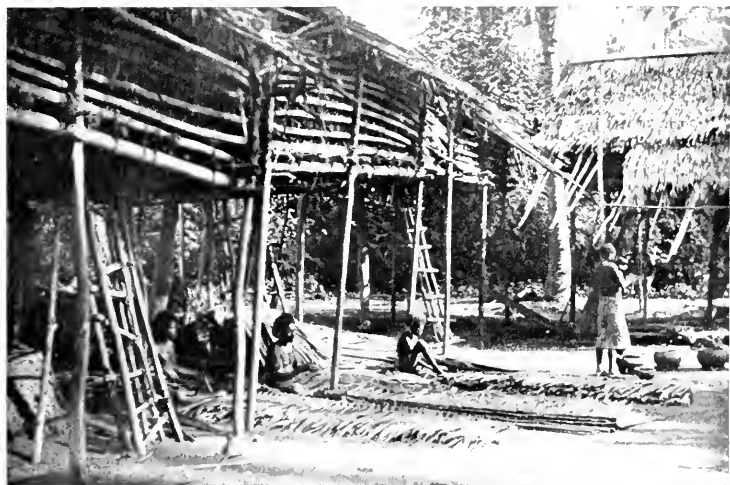
While the women are tidying up, and getting ready for the gardens, the men sit about round blazing fires, warming their backs, and perhaps nibbling a piece of uninteresting looking taro, if there was any left over from last night's meal. Some one or other is sure to have a few shreds of tobacco, and the bamboo pipe is passed from hand to hand, just a whiff or two apiece. Soon after sunrise, unless the morning be unusually wet and dark, all the men and most of the women will be off to their work, walking along the beach, or crowding together in canoes. From then until after mid-day, if you go into the village, you may find an old fellow scraping himself, like Job, with a potsherd, or a sick man huddled up against a hot fire and looking very dirty and disgruntled, but the place is given over to the women and a few children, and innumerable mangy dogs and black pigs.

The New Guinea pig is a creature apart, more active than his civilised cousins, and with an incredibly long, pointed snout and wicked eyes, and a monstrous mane of bristles along his back. The dogs are the merest curs, quite undenominational as to breed; but they, like the pigs, have their usefulness as the public scavengers of the place. Some of the women sit on the verandahs or on the ground, beating out mulberry bark with short wooden clubs, and making it into the native cloth which is their only wear, or colouring it with conventional native patterns in red and black, holding the "paint-stick" awkwardly between their first and second fingers. Others are fashioning pots from the clay which is found in a creek not far away, and marking them, in relief, with the traditional designs of their particular clan, with now and then a rare novelty of their own invention, but always getting them wonderfully true and round as they build and twist and pat them up from the bottom, sometimes sitting under their houses, but generally stooping over their work out in the open street, hour upon hour, inelegantly, but with admirable results in the finished pots.

The children, unless they are of school-going age, play in the sunshine on the beach, clambering in and out of an old canoe, or splashing in the warm clear water, or playing wonderful and endless games of their own with bits of string, or coconut shell or flowers, or pieces of broken pots, or bones. The babies sleep peacefully in their string bags, hung up under the verandah, where a gentle push now and then will set their simple cradle rocking for a long, long time. It has always seemed to me that New Guinea babies are better behaved than the little white children I used to know. They rarely cry unless they are ill, and I have yet to meet the Papuan child who has been "spoiled." I have spent a week in Reuben's house at Okein, since Miriam was born, and in all that time she cried but once, and that was when her



ORERESAN VILLAGE.



IN RAINU VILLAGE.

mother put her into the string bag on top of some knives and forks which had been forgotten.

Early in the afternoon people begin to come home again, and by about four o'clock they are all in or about the village. This is the pleasantest time to meet my parishioners. In the morning they were rather dirty, after spending the night round a wood fire, on the floor, and perhaps ending it almost on top of the very ashes. They were mentally inert then, and inclined to grumble, and raucously resentful of any attempt at laughter or feeble early-morning jokes. But they have spent the day in the sunshine and on the water, and have been masters of themselves for many hours, and most of them fished and bathed as they came back from the gardens, and they are now clean and contented and cheerful, with near prospect of the chief meal of the day.

The women have brought bundles of firewood and food from the gardens, and water from the creek, and each family has its fire in the open, on the ground, and its large earthen pots filled with taro and bananas and sweet potatoes and yams, and covered with fresh green leaves. The taro, when it was growing, looked like a large arum lily, and now the boiled roots have the appearance of lumps of rather dirty ink-eraser. Roasted, in the ashes, it tastes like something between a chestnut and a very floury potato. The men may have brought in some fish, or perhaps there is a piece of smoke-dried wallaby or wild pig in store, and the children have probably dug a few tiny crabs out of the sand, or found a bagful of coarse shell-fish in the swamps and creeks and rivers where they have been wandering since school.

It seems, to a stranger, that these people will eat anything—spawn of flying fish, which sometimes floats on the surface of the sea hereabouts, in yellow masses, like seaweed; or alligators' eggs; or the alligator himself; or flying foxes; and once I rescued and released a glittering little golden-

crested kingfisher from a boy who was about to wring its neck and put it in the pot. A little before dark, the families gather together for the one formal and substantial meal of the day. They need not hurry over it, for there is very little cleaning up to be done afterwards. The cooking pots will just be rinsed in the sea, and rubbed out with sand, and the green leaves which serve for plates to-night can be replaced by other leaves to-morrow. After dark, the people visit up and down the village, while the children go on with their games, and now and then a man will kindle a flaming torch, made of dry grass, to look for his pig, or to see where he dropped that piece of tobacco. Bedtime, which depends very much upon the weather, seems to overtake children and grown-ups simultaneously. If there is a moon, or on a still, warm night, there may be talking and laughing, and perhaps a little dancing, until nine or ten o'clock, or even later; but if it is cold or the night rainy, silence falls as early as eight o'clock.

It is not very often that the peace of the place is disturbed, when once the village has made up its mind to turn in, but sometimes there is excitement. A neighbour of mine, not long ago, just as every one was going to bed, began to make night hideous with his shrieks and groans. It was such a noise as would not often be heard in civilised lands, unless within the walls of an asylum—shouting, like some midnight roysterer in the chorus of a comic song, and then a blood-curdling wail, as of a dog that bays the moon. There was nothing particular the matter with the man, as far as anybody knew. People feel that way sometimes, and they must let off steam somehow. In older, and more sophisticated lands, there are various ways of letting off steam—some respectable, and others quite the reverse. In New Guinea we are denied the means of excitement, or the consolations, or the narcotics, or the dissipations, of cultured

and civilised men and women, and we must just let ourselves go, and howl, and sing and shout, and then howl again. And nobody takes much notice, and nobody minds.

In the small morning hours of that same night, a child died in the next house to this man, and there was wailing in the village all the day. Peter, in the afternoon, when he came to me with a cut finger, explained that it was all the fault of a *Dau* (devil, ghost, spirit, spook, hobgoblin, what-you-please). I thought, at first, he meant his finger, but he was speaking of the dead child and the howling man. The *Dau*, according to Peter (who quoted excellent village authority for his information) had been attracted by the nasty midnight noises of the restless man, and had killed the child before it left the neighbourhood. Yes, certainly, the baby *had* been sick for some time, but not sick enough to die! It was the *Dau!* According to another theory, to which Peter himself seemed rather to incline, though he was not prepared to accept either to the entire exclusion of the other, the *Dau* had been merely "messaging about" (Peter's own phrase), and the man frightened it away, but it came back again, and made some mistake or other about the house, and slipped in and killed the child.

The point to be noted is, that Peter, who, for lack of a better, is head teacher in our school and an occasional preacher in Church, really believes all this rubbish, and insists that such things very often happen "along-a *his* country." And the moral is, that it takes more than one generation to draw free from heathen superstition about the Unseen World—which, of course, we have known all along.

CHAPTER IV

REUBEN

ON large sheep stations in Australia, where hundreds of square miles are sometimes in one holding, it is the work of boundary riders, as the name implies, to go their rounds, repairing such fences as there are, killing wild dogs when they can, and giving as much attention as they may to flocks that, for the most part, shift for themselves.

And many priests of the Colonial Churches, or on such a Mission as this, because they are few in number and there are many hundreds of square miles and many thousands of souls in their single holding, must be content to live as ecclesiastical boundary riders—with a nominal home, perhaps, but going their rounds, week after week and day after day, doing what they can to repair “gaps,” and to kill “dogs,” and giving sacramental nourishment to flocks that for most of the time must shift for themselves.

Nothing more is possible in New Guinea where the villages are widely scattered, and the population in a given place so small, any more than in Australia, where a priest may have a parish half as large as the whole of England, with a total population not as large as that of a fair-sized country town. Villages, or groups of villages, with many hundreds of inhabitants, as at Wanigera and Uiaku, are the exception on this North-East Coast of New Guinea. There is no other part of the diocese, with the possible exception of the inland untouched Numba district, where comparatively large numbers of people live in one village, or in a group of villages that are close together.

Away in the south, on the other side of Dogura, where there are long sandy beaches and a rocky shore, I have walked for a week with the priest-in-charge. He spends a Sunday now and then at his headquarters, but on the Monday he starts off along the coast, walking twelve or fifteen miles a day, gathering together the Christians of the village where he is to pass the night, preaching to them first in the Church, and then dealing with them individually, celebrating the Holy Eucharist next morning, visiting the school, and then off again along the coast to do the same in some other village. Here and there he finds a South Sea Islander in charge. In some of the smaller villages it will be a Papuan teacher who manages the school and keeps the people together, and holds service on Sunday, and receives his food and a little tobacco by way of a stipend.

Here also, in the Collingwood Bay district, where there are many scattered villages along the coast, the priest goes constantly up and down, but most of his travelling must be done by sea, until an overland route can be found behind the swamps and along the lower slopes of the mountains to Tufi and the villages beyond.

As yet, there are only a handful of native Christians at Wanigera, with Peter and William and the white layman and his wife, and the South Sea Island teachers at Sinapa and Uiaku and Okein, who need the special ministrations that only a priest can give.

The Okein station was opened a year ago, and Reuben was put in charge—Reuben Motlav, as his name appears in the Mission books, Reuben Sukulman as he prefers to call himself. “Motlav” is but the name of his island in the New Hebrides, while “Sukulman” seems to be a phonetic rendering of “Schoolman,” and Reuben has some right to bear the more pretentious name of his own choosing, for he is well educated, and an altogether more capable person than

the other South Sea Islanders who work hereabouts. None of the other five is ever likely to read what I write, or to understand it if he should read, or to mind very much even if he should understand, but without any disloyalty or unkindness to these black fellow-missionaries of mine, I may be allowed to call them very poorly educated men. They, and others like them, have done good work in the Mission, and they are doing it still. In the early days, before the white man had even begun to know and understand the nature of the New Guinea natives, the South Sea Islanders served as a bridge by which the strangers could approach each other. But these Melanesians, hardly emerged from savagery themselves, came to New Guinea from Queensland, and it would be unreasonable to expect much on the intellectual side from men whose only book-learning was picked up in the Kanaka Mission schools at the end of long days of labour on the sugar plantations. Reuben has something more than the miscellaneous smatterings of a night-school education, and he really accomplished a good deal during the couple of years that he was in charge of Wanigera school. He was a disciplinarian of sorts, which is more than any man would dare to say of the others. He was energetic and enthusiastic, in an outward and visible way that distinguished him at once from such men as Peter or Samuel. Let him once get hold of an idea, and he would run it for all it was worth. He had a wonderful sense of vocation to the work of a missionary, and he ran *that* for all it was worth, "walking worthily of the vocation wherewith he was called." But none the less was he a true South Sea Islander!

Once upon a time the "wild boars out of the wood" had been rooting up our fence, and repairs were necessary. It was good fun for our boarders, chasing the grunting, galloping herds of pigs each morning, but it was very bad for the taro and tomatoes, and the sugar-cane and cucumbers



AT OKEIN.

in our garden. So Reuben and I took counsel together, and schemed to make a splendid new mangrove fence before the dry season ended. I was away next day to Uiaku, and when I returned I found that Reuben had instantly prepared for a new fence by pulling down the old. The work of destruction had been the pleasant pastime of a single afternoon for him and his score of boys, but it took them more than a month to cut and carry and trim and tie the new material, and through all that noisy time the pigs had their wicked way with us. It is only fair to Reuben to add that when the fence was finished and the last pig permanently expelled, it was as straight and true a piece of work as was ever done in Papua; but to this day I have not been able to persuade him that it would have been wiser to get the new material ready before he began to chop down the old.

He simply *cannot* see it. "How can you possibly put up a new fence until the old one is out of the way? So come along, away with the old stuff, and then hurry up and cut your mangrove poles for the new." If the work were to be done again, I am sure, knowing Reuben as I do, that he would go about it exactly as he did two years ago.

It happened, at another time, that a new arrangement was to be made of the children as they came to school. The old plan, which allowed them to escape the master's eye while they marched into their places, cried every day for improvement. Without dwelling on the fact that in these sago-thatch buildings a new door could be cut anywhere in five minutes, and the old one blocked up in ten, it is worth recording that Reuben had no independent means of discovering that his children might be taught to "fall in" as easily on one spot as on another, and that his eyes sparkled with somewhat tardy intelligence when he realised there

would be no need to pull the whole place down and rebuild it, in order to get the door where he could stand and see what was happening simultaneously on both sides of the schoolroom wall.

The new parade ground was cleared and levelled with such speed and enthusiasm as would be natural in any man who had made a really astonishing discovery.

Reuben came to New Guinea a year or two before the other coloured teachers who work in this district, and he was also the first to find himself a wife.

Mary is a Kumarbun girl, and she had been married to Jimmie Nogar, the South Sea Islander who helped to build the old Wanigera Mission Station. When Jimmie had chosen her, and persuaded her friends that he was not, after all, "too black" for Mary, she was sent for a year to Dogura, to be taught, and prepared for Baptism, and to learn how to keep house in the relatively civilised style to which these imported teachers are accustomed. Mary had been a widow for more than a year when first I met her, and she was the mother of Japhet and Josephine. Widows are quite as much of a responsibility in New Guinea in A.D. 1910, as they seem to have been in Ephesus when Timothy was bishop there. Mary had returned in due course to her father's house, since there was none of Jimmie's people to claim her, and she worked in her dead husband's garden, and cared for his children; but she was still young and attractive, and it soon became a question for the whole community of who should take her *en secondes nocces*.

We have no single middle-aged women hereabouts, no "odd women" of any sort, nor does any personable widow remain a widow very long—I am still writing of New Guinea—but the question was complicated in the case of this particular widow. Many of our experiences and difficulties run

parallel with those of the early Church, and though it may not be said that here, as in Ephesus, "the relatives of widows try to shift their responsibilities on to the shoulders of the Church," yet she was vaguely regarded as Mission property, and I, as the "Big Missionary," and the "Father of all the Christians," was consulted again and again as to the disposal of this quite charming lady.

In my ignorance of the language and of native customs, Reuben had to serve as interpreter and general go-between, and it was he who pointed out and explained to me the ever-changing patterns of Mary's matrimonial kaleidoscope.

She was a Christian, and her children had been baptized, and no proposal could be entertained for her marriage with a heathen. And yet there were no Christian men within three-score miles and ten, except only our poor half-dozen South Sea Islanders.

When a marriage is to be made in Papua, the contracting parties, whether Christian or heathen, have but little say in the matter. It is their friends who represent them and attend to everything, and so it came about quite naturally that through all the tangled negotiations, I was held to be the guardian of Mary, while Reuben acted as advocate of the various suitors who for longer or shorter periods aspired to marry her. At one time, she was to become the wife of Samuel of Sinapa; permission was obtained for him from Dogura, and the very wedding day was fixed. And then, at the last moment, Mary jibbed, and I had to carry a whole canoe load of cooking-pots and red Turkey twill and trade tobacco and tomahawks back to Sinapa. Never was jilted man more philosophic than Samuel when he saw his love tokens come back to him on what should have been the very eve of his marriage. It was I who stuttered and blushed, and was embarrassed, while he only grinned and stowed the things away (for future use, as it afterwards proved), and

then told me some foolish tale about a kangaroo he had once killed in Australia. He may have thought his stomach was broken—our emotional anatomy is different here, and we do not think it decent to talk as English people do, about our “ hearts ”—and his smile may have been but a bravely worn cloak for the unseen wound, or perhaps he felt relieved and light-hearted, as other rejected ones have felt before him, since Mary, like her fairer sisters in other lands, is something of a huntress, and poor Samuel, with sudden insight, may have realised that he had had a narrow escape.

It seemed, later, that some of Mary's own people had sought to hinder her from re-marrying into the Mission by jockeying her into a hasty marriage with a heathen native of her own village.

The marriage of a widow is simplicity itself in these parts. When you have quite made up your mind who is to marry her, you have but to take your widow and put her up in the man's house ; she prepares and cooks food with her own hand, and offers it to the man, and, though it may be many months before the thing goes any further, the two are held by native custom to be man and wife from the moment of their eating together.

It was announced, within four-and-twenty hours of her jilting of Samuel, that Mary was married to Rauref of Rainu, who had been a boarder on the Mission Station what time Mary came back from Dogura as the bride of James Nogar. She had been “ taken,” surely enough, and “ put ” into the house of this astonished young man, and she had cooked most appetising food and offered it to him when he came back from the gardens and found, to his confusion, that he was all but a married man. But he pulled himself together, and clicked his tongue, as men do hereabouts when they would refuse a proffered gift, and he went off to eat his dinner elsewhere, and not again did he enter his father's

house until the superfluous widow had been bestowed and accepted elsewhere.

Days and nights grew into weeks, and the weeks into a full month, and this poor modern Mariana wept and was weary, and cooked many double portions of food, and ate her meals in solitude, while people pitied her, and Rauref fed and slept at random wherever he might, and neglected his garden, which happened to be perilously near to Mary's, and at last took a long trip down the coast, away from the weeping widow and her compromising pots of boiled taro prepared so deliciously with rich milk of coconuts.

It was romantic enough, though very near to tragedy ; and then, in a moment, without warning, in the middle of one night, suddenly it changed to boisterous farce. Reuben stumbled breathless into my house, hours after every one had gone to bed, and gasped out that " Mary wanted to marry *him!*" I had often thought of this as a possible key-move to the problem, but I could only invite him, sleepily, to drop in again in the morning, so that we might talk it over. He startled me into complete and terrified wakefulness by explaining that Mary, and her babies, and a few discreet friends who had helped to carry her household goods, tied up in a couple of string bags, were at that moment seated on his verandah, and that she was unpacking her incriminating cooking-pots, and what was he to do ?

The situation was so rich in dreadful possibilities that I dared not say, offhand, at that time of night, what he, or I, or anybody " was to do." A missionary often needs to be something of an impromptu casuist, but this was for the moment far and far beyond me. I could only, for safety's sake, and to gain time, and because nothing of a more active and courageous sort suggested itself, leave Mary on the verandah and keep Reuben for the night in my house ; but it was a shivering, ashen-faced black teacher and a very much

puzzled white priest who unlocked the front door and went forth into the sunshine on the morrow morn.

In the event, I packed Mary and her too significant pots and her babies off to stay with Kukiaus, who was somewhat related to her, and sent an urgent message to headquarters asking for guidance. Posts go not quickly in Papua, and even when the word of authority reached me it helped things hardly at all. Soon afterwards, however, the Vicar-General himself came up, and we spent an entire night discussing Canon Law and the native theories of marriage, and the whole of the next morning in holding a rough-and-ready ecclesiastical court to inquire into the practical question of whether Mary was wife or widow, whether she belonged to the heathen youth who had got himself off across the bay, or whether she was free to finish her matrimonial ventures in the arms of the expectant but rather frightened Reuben. I need not speak of the theological aspect of the matter, which seemed to me, though not to the Vicar-General, simple enough; but, in the end, two points of certainty emerged from the confusion. First, that on the testimony of the elders of the village, and according to the well-known custom of the community, it was the formal eating of the food together, and nothing else, that would in this case constitute a marriage. And second, that the youthful Rauref had not only refused the food, but had even fled from the presence of the woman who was offered him as wife, and openly announced that he would not come home until she and her ominous cooking-pots had been taken out of the way. The elders would have gone still further, and shown that by her midnight deposition on the verandah of the Mission teacher's house she was much more likely at that moment to be the wife of Reuben than of Rauref, or of any one else in the village. But there we were content to stop, for we did not want them to prove too much, and it was quite enough for

the moment that Mary and Reuben should become " engaged " that afternoon.

The Vicar-General was to leave next day, and he thought the wedding might take place with all seemliness in about a week. I would have none of that ! I hope I am no more cowardly than my peers, but I felt that my nerve was going, and that I might become hysterical and fall a-gibbering before the end of seven more days and nights of further unimaginable happenings. And so the word went forth that they twain should be wedded at break of day. Even then, and after sunset, there was more to come, for Mary urged postponement. She had no wedding-dress, and must wait until a trousseau could be sent up from Dogura ! In my desperation, I protested that her pink calico print dress became her mightily, and that I would wash and iron it with my own hands that very night, if only she would go home and get to bed and send the thing along to me without delay.

I waited up and boiled the pink calico in an old kerosine tin over my study lamp, and the Vicar-General himself helped me wring it out at midnight, and together in the small hours we struggled with some awful brown spots that would not out, and together we ironed-over that wedding garment in the early morning, and at the very earliest legal moment we solemnised the marriage of Mary Nogar and Reuben Sukulman.

It was not till long afterwards that I knew the meaning of those ineradicable dark brown spots. Little Josephine had died some months before the wedding, and, though the child was buried with Christian burial, Mary had joined in the native " keening " over her baby's death, and had gashed her temples with bits of broken glass until the blood flowed down.

Poor Mary ! She has had her adventures, and many

sorrows have been mingled with her joys, but she is a good girl, and her life with Reuben is a happy one. A little while ago I baptized her new baby, by the name of Miriam, after Reuben's own mother.

I go to Okein to see this family, and to minister to them, every month or six weeks. Once I nearly starved in their house, where a room is always ready for visiting missionaries. It was after Easter, and the R.M. from Tufi had promised to join me there, and we were to go on a long expedition together. But he was delayed, and I had no means of getting away, and my small supply of food gave out, and for nearly a fortnight my dog and I lived on crabs and sugar-cane, with bananas and boiled rice as a special treat on Sundays.

Among my pleasant recollections of Reuben will always be that of his success as a sportsman. He had only a single cartridge, but when it was clear that I had not yet learned to eat the never-ending boiled taro on which he and Mary and Japhet flourish so exceedingly, he spent a whole afternoon stalking a pair of ducks that were feeding in a creek near by, and he bagged the two at the one shot. Mary wanted to *boil* my bird, but I roasted it myself, over the embers of a wood fire, turning it on a stick thrust through the poor little plump body, and never have I eaten, nor ever hope to eat, such a satisfying and luxurious meal again. If only for the sake of that one roast duck, I should scorn to tell at any further length of Reuben's pleasant weaknesses. Of how he is inclined to over-estimate the buying power of five-and-twenty pounds per annum, paid monthly, and would fain fall head over heels into debt if I did not juggle with his orders on Samarai, so that the Jaeger shirts and the hammerless guns, and other expensive things that he desires, seem nearly always "out of stock": or of how he has been known to get up in the middle of the night and fire off guns on his verandah, to scare away the *Daus* ("Spirits") that

most Melanesians, as well as every Papuan, dreads: nor must I tell how he and Mary, a few days after their marriage, came weeping to tell me that it was a huge mistake, and that they didn't want each other after all, and how I dosed them both with *Ammonium Bromide* and then talked to them very plainly indeed, as one talks in this country to the grown-up men and women who are really only children after all.

Reuben has his work cut out for him at Okein, where the people are not gentle and naturally well-disposed, as they are at Wanigera, and where the Binandere language is a difficulty even for the man who has mastered Wedauan and Ubir and has a working knowledge of Maisin. But he is making headway. He gets on well with his neighbours, who visit him in troops; and with a piece of chalk and the outer surface of his front door for rough language notes, which he copies laboriously every night into a huge foolscap MS. book, Reuben is compiling a vocabulary that will enable him, very soon, to tackle his real work among the folk to whom he has been sent.

CHAPTER V

PETER

PETER SEEVO is the fattest man in our village. He was born in the New Hebrides, and knows enough of politics to call himself a Frenchman. He came to New Guinea, as did most of the South Sea Island teachers, from Queensland, accepting an offer of work from the Bishop when the coloured labourers were being turned wholesale out of Australia; and he was sent straight up to Wanigera and got there half a year before I came. I found him quiet enough in those early days, when he was supposed to be learning the language; but when Reuben went away to Okein, Peter took his place as headmaster in the village school, and since the day of his promotion he has been in some ways the most prominent and popular person in the neighbourhood as well as in many other ways the most provoking.

It might be said of him, as was said of the "poor schoolmaster" in *Tom Jones*, that "though he has undertaken a profession to which learning must be allowed necessary, this is the least of his commendations," and that "he is one of the best-natured fellows in the world," and "at the same time master of so much pleasantry and humour that he is reputed the wit of the country, and all the neighbouring gentlemen are desirous of his company." These same "neighbouring gentlemen" do indeed spend "much of their time" with Peter, and you may find them, at almost any hour of the day or night, seated in rows upon his verandah, or round about his table while he sits at meals.

Peter is perhaps no more than two- or three-and-thirty years of age, and yet I always think of him as an older man than myself. His bulk may have something to do with it. If you were to reckon his inches from head to foot, you would find him a small man ; but he has all a small man's self-assertion, and he is very large about the waist, and his legs and arms are tremendous, and though he comes hardly up to my shoulder and may really weigh no more than I do, he is so solid that one is obliged to think of him as a big man for whom the scale would not turn at less than fifteen or sixteen stone.

I make no complaint against his fatness, for there is nothing unpleasant about it. He is the very pink of sweet cleanliness, from the top of his close-cropped bullet head to the tips of his bulbous bare toes, and an altogether cheerful and wholesome human creature, with all the genial manner of corpulence.

His moustache is half an inch wide, and not more than an inch and a half long from end to end, for he shaves it away except over the very middle of his big mouth, and clips it before it can hang low enough to hide the dusky purple of his upper lip. The rest of his round face is always beautifully shaven. He uses no toothbrush, and yet his teeth are as perfect and regular as those of the lovely ladies on the picture postcards. They are so prominent a feature in Peter's pleasant countenance that I am obliged to speak thus particularly. Whenever he grins, these gleaming teeth in the middle of a coal black countenance shine out with startling whiteness. And Peter is very nearly always grinning. You would never know, by merely looking at his face, whether he was pleased or angry, sick or in perfect health, happy or discontented. For always, except when he is on his knees, this man laughs, or seems to be laughing, and always his teeth glitter, whether he is preaching in church or being

noisy and strenuous in school, or painfully working the grass mower, or feebly trying to escape his routine doses of quinine.

He is quite handsome enough in other ways, for everyday use; but his imperturbable hilarity is so noticeable that I have come to think of Peter as one of the most comfortable and pleasant-looking fellows I have ever known.

There is no need to pretend that he is a saint; but if resolute cheerfulness that never varies is to count for anything, and if transparent cleanliness of soul and mind and body comes really, as well as proverbially, next to godliness, then Peter has all the outward appearance of a very godly man.

His general build is so like that of an operatic tenor that it would be surprising if he could not sing, and he has, indeed, a fine voice. In the early morning, when every other throat in Wanigera is hoarse and raspy, Peter's notes come ringing clear from where he is singing a hymn with the drowsy, husky boys on their verandah, and he is never happier than when he can snatch the chance to give a singing lesson in school. We are careful that such chances come but seldom, for he spends the time in teaching the children to sing psalms to what he can remember of double Anglican chants. The general effect is rather fine, at a distance, though the particular melodies themselves are no more than very faintly reminiscent of the *Cathedral Psalter*. In our Wedauan book of hymns, the National Anthem, in English, is printed as an appendix. It was sung to me by the assembled children soon after I came, and I have since been very resolute to discourage its use, in the hope that when the present generation has had time to forget what it knows of the words and the music, some far-off spectral successor of mine may be able to begin all over again, and rescue our village from the perpetration of this standing outrage upon patriotism and musical taste. And yet Peter, undetected until a few days



MARY AND MIRIAM.



PETER SEEVO.

ago, has been trying, for not less than a month past, to teach the children to sing " God save the King " to a revolutionary and brand-new tune, which he professes to have learned " along-a-Queensland ! "

In spite of his fine voice, and although he is perhaps the only man in Wanigera who can sing three verses of a hymn without falling flat, Peter, more than any other, must be held responsible for our invariably bad singing in Church and in school. He cannot read properly, and he has only very hazy notions of the meanings of native words, and he possesses, moreover, a notable gift for improvising " variations " on any tune he hears. And so, after I have spent a fortnight in teaching the school-children a new hymn, some metrical translation, perhaps, into their own language from *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, set to the music that has come to belong to the English words, Peter, by the sheer volume and beauty of his voice, and in the absence of any musical instrument or any power of mine to drown his rich tenor, Peter, within a very little while will achieve a divorce of the words from the music, rendering the former almost meaningless by his omissions and additions and ingenious mispronunciations, and changing the latter into a melody that might be all very well in its way if one could but forget the original of which it ever tends to become a more and more preposterous caricature.

I have wondered, sometimes, why it is that Peter can so easily lead everybody else astray ? I am no very accomplished musician myself, but I know that the native songs and chants are pitched in different keys from ours, and that certain musical scales are simply impossible to any native singer on this coast. It may be that Melanesian Peter, like the Papuan men and women of Wanigera, simply cannot hear or reproduce some of the tones and semi-tones and phrases that come easily enough to an Englishman, and

that he and they are only following the line of least resistance in adapting our chants and hymns to the nearest musical equivalents that are natural to their differently tuned ears and voices.

I tried for a whole year to make my boys play cricket after the manner of Marylebone, and then I gave it up, as better men have done before me, and left them to play the game in their own way. I have tried for more than two years, and I am trying still, to have the hymns and chants sung as they are sung elsewhere. But I know quite well that, *Petro duce*, the congregation and the children have completely conquered me, and that the music in our church and school is like to nothing else in, or out of, Christendom.

Of Peter's general teaching, the less that is said the better. His writing is of an Anglo-Saxon character. His arithmetic is positively misleading. When first I knew him, and before I began to interfere with his work, his reading lessons were a daily joy to me, although each of them was a wicked insult to the whole theory and practice of education.

Peter had a class of some forty children, no longer babies, though yet not high up in the school, and just of an age to learn the three R's with ease and rapidity. But he got hold of some printed syllable cards, which the children had long known by heart and could recite from end to end, backwards or forwards, and upwards or downwards; and he would go stumbling round his class, consulting each disciple separately, like some negro waiter with a bill of fare among the customers of a cheap American restaurant, but so slowly that he scarce could go twice round his class in half-an-hour. And as the fat old fellow halted for an interview, with feet planted firmly and far apart beneath a vast expanse of blue dungaree trouser, he would point with his forefinger at some random syllable, and wait, with no impatient hint of another engagement just ahead of him,

while the child ran up or down the well-known columns and arrived by a process of exhaustion at the symbol of Peter's haphazard choice. And then with a grunt or a sigh, and a glance along the room, and a sailor-like hitch at his capacious trousers, he would wheel and stump along to the next small victim of his solemn incompetence. It took some months to abolish this curious custom—almost as long as it took to cure him of that other vicious habit of teaching “19 times” to little children who had just begun to come to school. In the latter case, the children were too young and innocent to suffer any serious intellectual injury from the contemplation of Peter's astounding arithmetical conclusions; and I was able, moreover, to confiscate and destroy the old diary in which he had compiled, by night, beside a smoky hurricane lamp, and with a stumpy black-lead pencil, his atrocious collection of private and quite hopelessly heretical mathematical tables.

In those same far-off days it sometimes fell to Peter, in the absence of any substitute, competent or otherwise, to manage the school himself from its bright beginning till its bitter and too long delayed end. When Reuben happened to be down with fever, or if I was over long with sick folk on my verandah and in the village, Peter would ring the bell, and then go up and down and round about the station, heavily and at the gallop, chasing his children into school, like a sleepy carthorse trying to drive a lot of very lively rabbits into one particular burrow. No one in Wanigera has ever taken Peter seriously, and there was no ill-feeling on either side on these occasions. It is even probable that the children themselves welcomed such days for the sake of this preliminary canter with him who was their schoolmaster. The station buildings are many, and widely scattered, and never, surely, did mortal children play such splendid games of hide-and-peek, or care so little for a perspiring fat man with a big stick, who, when he caught one of the hundred, would

only laugh and flourish his cane, and then start off again to try and catch the other ninety-nine. It is not to be thought from this that Peter was a lazy man, or one who would shirk his work, or mean to do it badly. It is not only in Papua that round men have been jammed into square holes, or that unfortunate fellows have found themselves trying to "keep school" without any sort of qualification for the task.

The stories of Peter, as pedagogue, are simply endless. One morning, a sudden gust of wind set him sneezing, as surely no one but Peter can sneeze, and the same gust of wind upset two of the blackboards from their rickety home-made mangrove easels. The only connection between these simultaneous happenings was their common cause; but many of the children certainly thought that Peter, in the midst, had sneezed so mightily as to overturn a blackboard at either end of the big room, and there was the usual chorus of "*Ma! Peter!*" No written words can reproduce the infinity of expression they put into the monosyllable, but it meant: "Well, I never!" or "Just look at that, now!"

Peter, with his noise and his noises, his coughing and sneezing and throat-clearing, and his loud puffing, which reminds you of a dugong coming to the surface every minute or two to breathe, is the centre of gravity for any disorder that ever happens in our school. There are days when he is sluggish and inclined to let things drift, and one is thankful for these rare intervals of comparative peace and quiet; but he has an unaccountable and quite unwarranted fondness for figures, and he invariably comes wide awake when it is time for an arithmetic lesson. He bustles up and down his class, like an old hen in the midst of her chickens, and gesticulates and shouts and uses his pocket-handkerchief as a duster, and at other times he certainly appears to be using the school duster as a handkerchief; he loses his chalk, and then finds

it between his teeth, or stuck into his ring-pierced ear ; he perspires dreadfully, and is generally willing to accept almost anything in the way of an answer that anybody cares to offer. I have sometimes tried, though without much success, to get a proper copy of some of his blackboard work, but I fancy he fears everything is not quite as it should be, for he flourishes the pocket duster when I draw near, and the figures disappear from the blackboard in a cloud of white dust, and the children call out " Right oh," and Peter looks at me rather cunningly from the corner of one eye, and then we all start off on something else. But I have caught Peter chanting, with the children after him, " Four fundle one penny," " Ten fardles t'ree penny," each formula repeated ten or twelve times over, as if to impress some foundation truths on those infant minds, and I have heard them go on " Fourteen fartles seven peness," " Fifteen bartles eight penny," and I wrote the very words down at the time, that there should be no mistake.

Peter, as you see, is a man of infinite variety, though, arithmetically speaking, I do not believe he could say, off-hand, how many ha'pennies or farthings there are in two-pence, or in three-ha'pence, and I am positive he could not work it out with slate and pencil and " prove it," though he might manage something, native fashion, with fingers and toes.

In common with other men of his class, he is very apt to let his sermons and his lessons run on far beyond all reasonable limits, and but for outside interference he would keep his victims, day after day, long past the convenient time, not as a punishment, but because he likes his work : he has come all this way for the express purpose of teaching and preaching, and so he desires to teach and to preach as much as ever he can, without regard to times and seasons, and by fair means or foul. Peter is not the sort of workman to throw down

his tools directly the bell rings. Rather is it difficult to stop him when once he has got into the swing. Set him to cut grass, and you will very likely hear the whir of the mowing machine all through the dinner hour. If he is allowed to preach in church on a Sunday afternoon he will go on and on until the bolder members of the congregation begin to remind him, without any circumlocution, that the sun is going down, and it is time for him to stop. I have sometimes been obliged, when these downright methods of the congregation failed, to seize an opportunity of giving out and starting a hymn, while poor Peter has but paused to pant for breath. He bears no malice, but when he sees that he has lost his chance for the time being, he collapses, very wet and breathless, into his seat, and fans himself furiously with a blue hymn-book and a red cotton handkerchief in either hand, with surplice gathered like an Elizabethan ruffle in a white bunch about his neck, and his eyes still glittering with fine enthusiasm.

Every Sunday morning Peter tramps four miles along the beach to Yuayu to hold service. He walks sturdily, with head up and arms well squared, and is attended by a deaf-and-dumb boy named Kokok, who carries the inevitable hymn-book and smoking tackle tied up in an old flour-bag. There are creeks to be waded through or swum, and a hot sun overhead, but the old chap puts on his best clothes, and his newest soft felt hat, just as he did "along-a-Queensland," and starts off directly after "breksbust." He comes back, hot and blowing, about one o'clock, soaked, when the tide and the creeks have been high, up to the very armpits, but still marching resolutely, like a man who has done a morning's work strenuously for God. Heaven only knows what he preaches about, or what those Maisin folk make of his pidgin Ubir. I do what I can to help him beforehand, pouring into him week by week what he is afterwards to

give out on his evangelical expeditions, and he reproduces fairly well; but it is of his original expositions and no less original additions that I am obliged to be suspicious. One of his most effective and orthodox preachings in the Wanigera Church was on the Parable of the Pharisee and the Publican. Archbishop Trench himself could have found no fault either with the manner or the matter of that particular discourse. But instead of sitting down when he had told the story, with many appropriate local references and adaptations, expressed ingeniously in native idiom and with much employment of dramatic native gesture, he seemed suddenly to remember something about the "scribes," and so he told the story all over again, but with everything mixed up, and the exhausted congregation, if it remembered anything at all, must have gone away with a fixed impression that the R.M. at Tufi is a Publican, and my lay colleague a "Skripe," and that I am a fairly typical Pharisee.

It is not easy, as I have already suggested, to give Peter a hint; and yet his imitative faculty is strongly developed. Again and again I find him doing little things in school, and on the station, that he thinks he has copied from "boss belong him." He watched me making brown scones, with baking powder, and straightway bought some "killy matata" and tried to do the same himself with a mixture of flour and native sago, flavoured with onions. There is nothing very admirable about my drill, but he has sought to improve on all my manœuvres, and such words of command as "Hands up!" and "As you were!" become, in his mouth, "Arnimupp!" and "Ev'ryw'ere!"

For nine-tenths of his time, Peter is only an incompetent nuisance, and ludicrous withal. For an hour or two each day he is altogether admirable. All these Christian South Sea Islanders have a gift for devotion, and when I see the reverent old fellow in Church, I forget his foolishness, or remember it

only to be ashamed of my own fancied wisdom. Day after day he tends the flowers upon the altar ; and, though there is not much material for his art, the vases are always arranged in perfect taste and beauty, for Peter has that gift which belongs to many women, but to only a few men, by which the flowers that he has handled look lovely where he has placed them.

Peter is a well-feathered old bird, and has nearly £100 in a bank in Australia, saved while he was working in Queensland. He gets £25 a year in New Guinea, paid monthly, but he lives well on that, and manages to put money by. Rent and wood and water cost him nothing. A four-gallon tin of kerosine will fill his hurricane lamp for the greater part of a year, especially now that I have destroyed the diary in which he was wont to record the impossible mathematical calculations which he loved to make while other men slept. He wears no boots, and his tailor's bill is less than mine, which is very nearly next to nothing. He is handy with his gun, and very seldom needs to spend his money on "bula-makau." For a stick of tobacco he can buy ten or twelve pounds of native sago, or thirty pounds of taro or bananas or yams. As much tobacco as would fill a clay pipe will purchase several crabs, or as many prawns as even Peter would care to eat at a single sitting. He is not a miser, for he spends freely upon himself, and is generous to other people ; and yet, although he is fond of cigarettes—trade tobacco rolled in a bit of newspaper—he will not smoke them, because that would mean a waste of tobacco on the scavengers who, even in New Guinea, lie in wait for "fags." He will nevertheless give the equivalent of half-a-dozen cigarette ends to almost any man who comes to ask him for a smoke. He is secretive as a magpie when money is concerned. I share his dislike, though not his suspicion, of the dirty tattered one pound notes that circulate in Papua, but he would rather

have twenty silver shillings in his box than one golden sovereign, and a double handful of pence and ha'pence more readily than either. There is only a very limited amount of money circulating in the district, and I am compelled, every two or three months, to make a raid on Peter's cash box, and to confiscate his accumulations of small change, giving him gold for three or four pounds' worth of shillings and sixpences, and hundreds of copper coins.

He is a man of large ideas, and orders new shirts and dungaree trousers by the half-dozen. He will not pay for good articles, but prefers something cheap that will wear out before he has time to get tired of it. He would rather buy a dozen ninepenny pipes than two at three or four shillings. He has a good pair of braces in his box, which he used to wear on Sundays "along-a-Queensland," but he once asked me to order six cheap pairs from Samarai.

Like other ex-kanakas, he is fond of talking-machines, but will not buy a new one. Anybody who wants to dispose of a fifth or sixth hand gramophone with a few broken records can be sure of selling it to Peter for a sovereign, and he will sit up late at night, winding and re-winding his machine, and listening to the clicks and scratchings that emerge from the trumpet, a mystified and almost mournful look upon his face the while.

Brief mention of a maiden named Melita will supply the necessary love interest for this slender outline of Peter's capacious life at Wanigera.

Melita is an orphan who was "mandated" or made over by the Government to the Mission years ago, when her parents died, and it seemed unlikely that she would have much of a chance in her own village. She was taken from Kumarbun to Mukawa, and lived there with the white missionary's wife. She came back, lately, to Wanigera, and though the etiquette of our village would allow Peter no convenient

opportunity of speaking to her, he looked upon her, nevertheless, with eyes of love, and found means to write to her. The girl is by no means beautiful, but she is very fat, and it may have been that Peter, when first he saw her, was attracted by some mysterious sense of physical kinship or geometrical similarity. He has consulted me at each stage of his young romance, but his suit has not prospered. He strikes me as rather apologetic than amorous, and perhaps he has been too faint-hearted for the winning of this fair lady. I should like him to marry, and I should like him to marry this relatively civilised Melita. Fat and unlovely though she be, she would make a good wife to Peter, and deliver him from several village fathers, who would fain have this popular and wealthy man for son-in-law, though the prospective wives are still in the lower classes of the village school. I know not how it will all end, but Melita has a mind of her own, and she has never wavered in her rather contemptuous rejection of Peter.

The wretched man has wilted in the last few weeks, and sits solitary under his verandah, musing darkly, as others have mused before him, on the waywardness of womankind.

CHAPTER VI

SAMUEL

SAMUEL SIRU lives at Sinapa, with the sea on three sides of him; and all the land within five miles of his house is no better than one big swamp. And he has very wisely tried to adapt himself to his environment. To visit him in his own house, you must climb three or four feet from the verandah into the front and only door; and because there is no ladder, nor any steps, you will really have to hoist yourself with elbows and knees over his lofty threshold.

Once inside the house, and by such light as comes through the door and from a six-inch pentagonal window high up in an end wall, you see all round you raised platforms and broad shelves, where Samuel keeps his collection of native earthenware cooking-pots, and his mat of rice, and his trade tobacco in a Chinese camphor box with a musical lock, and his supply of sleeping mats and sago. Right up over your head, and close to the very ridgepole of the roof, is the largest shelf of all, and that is where Samuel sleeps. There is no particular way of getting up to that strange roosting-place, but I have watched him swarm up and round the side walls at night, and I have heard him come down again more quickly in the morning, with a heavy flop, as of some enormous and ungainly bird.

There is method in all this, however, as in very much of Samuel's madness. At Sinapa the early morning mists are damp and depressing; and the mosquitoes, of a peculiarly voracious variety, are ravenous from sunset till sunrise,

and a man is not therefore merely crazy because he chooses to climb some eighteen or twenty feet up into his bed. It was not only because of the Doriri, who raided Sinapa village twelve or fifteen years ago, that most of the natives left the mainland, and went to live on a tiny sand island a couple of hundred yards from the shore. The Doriri, terrible as they are, come down to the coast only now and then, but the mosquitoes are there always!

Working in water half his time, and having to climb about in canoes and up and down the walls of his house, Samuel has wisely fashioned for himself a sort of home-made tropical bathing costume. He wears a light woollen singlet, and a wisp of cloth about his loins, and he wears very little else. The singlet is sometimes white—conventionally speaking—but then the waist-cloth will be high cerulean blue, with a broad band of red Turkey twill to hide, or possibly to make, the connection between the two garments. Sometimes a crimson braid is tacked along the edge of the cloth, or the thing itself may be of scarlet, and the band of peacock blue; and once it was a checkered football jersey of white and blue with the rest vermilion. The man is well built, and carries himself erect; but, in whatever various order, his clothing is always an arrangement of the patriotic red, white, and blue, so that he looks something like a Roman gladiator wrapped in a Union Jack. His hair, moreover, as the result of many applications of well-slaked lime, for which he will give you very frank and unæsthetic reasons which I do not choose to repeat, is of a red so deliberate that the politest man in Papua, whoever he be, could not dare to call it auburn; and you can understand why he arouses in me an obscure feeling of patriotism, and makes me want to whistle “Rule Britannia” whenever I see him.

I really do not know very much about Samuel, though we have spent whole days and nights together. He does



SINAPA ISLAND.



DOGURA

not understand my speech, nor I his. I am not expert in Jargon English, while he, on the other hand, is fatally facile in the use of what certainly *seem* to be English words, in quite other than their usual sense, and with that complete elimination of mood and tense and number and concord, with over-generous compensation in the way of scattered particles, and personal suffixes to nouns and adjectives and verbs, which is characteristic of the right "pidgin" English. And he grins and giggles when he talks to you, and screws up his eyes, and is so very happy about you, and about himself and about everything else, that you forget to try and listen to what he is saying, and are content just to look at him and his parti-coloured contortions, and to let all intelligent thought and understanding be lost in contemplation of the fantasy of polychromatic clothing and vermilion hair.

He has picked up the language of the Sinapa people quickly, and talks with rapid volubility whenever any of them are about. It is only now and then that some demon of critical disbelief suggests that he may be talking "pidgin" Sinapese, as unmeaning and dreadful as most of his English.

Samuel has built a beautiful schoolroom and filled it with children. He possesses nothing but a blackboard in the way of appliances, no books, nor slates, nor pencils, nor pictures; but he is intensely "native," and perhaps does more in his way, and with his slender equipment, than many a less enthusiastic teacher in the midst of the very latest educational paraphernalia.

This young man's adventures with Mary are recorded in another place, but his fancy has lately (and not lightly) turned once more to thoughts of love, and he hopes to be married next year.

He was more unintelligible, and more than ever disposed to screw up his eyes, and squirm and giggle, when he came

to tell us that he had found some people who were ready to give him their daughter to wife. He seemed to think that an apology was needed, and made haste to explain that she was "only a leetle one: he no big-fellow girl." Herein he spoke truly, and we have sent Manua to Dogura, to grow a year older, as well as to learn some of the arts and graces that make for domestic comfort, before she is married to our teacher. She was as wild as a rabbit when she went away, but she is now reported as well-behaved and bright and altogether the right sort of girl to be a helpmeet for Samuel, who, with all his peculiar foolishness, is very far indeed from being a fool. He is not willing to talk about his hopes of conjugated happiness; and when he went to Dogura for the annual gathering of South Sea Islanders, he was not seen even to speak to his lady-love, though they had been six months separated. He appears to have done his best to prove his affection, nevertheless, in other and quite characteristically unorthodox fashion, by squandering his money on Chinese crackers, which he exploded by the hundred at his sweetheart's feet, to her amazement, and his own delight, and to the very evident satisfaction of all beholders.

At Sinapa, Samuel grows fabulous crops of tapioca and taro and sweet potatoes, which he sends over to feed the boy boarders at Uiaku. He clears the ground, and tries to drain it, and plants many coconut palms. Years ago, before Wanigera was ever heard of, the Bishop thought to make Sinapa the Mission headquarters for Collingwood Bay, and all the imported materials for a fine European house were carried up there in a specially chartered steamboat. But the post holes filled with water and silted up as fast as they were sunk, and by the time the natives had stolen all the nails and ironwork it was so obviously impossible to build that the timber was taken back to Mukawa, where the house, built on no shifting sands, but

founded firmly on a rock, has withstood all the assaults of tempests that thunder round Dog's Hill, though white ants seem likely to accomplish the destruction which wind and weather could not compass.

Samuel is no marvel of beauty or of intellectual strength, and he has his faults, like other men. But he is simple-hearted and sincere, as are nearly all the Melaneseans who have come to help in the earlier efforts of the Missionary Church in Papua, and his influence has begun to tell on the villages round about him. He means to settle at Sinapa for the rest of his life, and when he is married, and become something more than a mere foreigner, he will have no inducement ever to want to go away, unless, indeed, his relatives by marriage should prove too much for him.

He sometimes makes trouble for himself, as do the rest of us. The swamp waters drown his crops ; and he no more than other gardeners can quite understand the meaning of the thorns and thistles of Adam's curse.

He is indignant and hurt when the price of trade tobacco goes up, as it has done very steadily since Mr. Lloyd George produced his Budget. He is inclined to expostulate, every year, when he has to pay two-and-sixpence for a gun licence. He growls at the rough seas when they break over his canoe, or wash away another bit of his garden. Samuel has all the essentials of happiness in his simple, if narrow, life, with just enough of the vexations to make the other worth the having.

Perhaps his chief and only serious sorrow is that the men and women of Sinapa are not so bent on church-going as he would like them to be. Not long ago, some young men set out for Mukawa in canoes. They caught and cooked and ate a strange fish on the way, and three of them died within a few minutes, while two more were brought back moribund. It is not often that the natives make such mistakes, and the sudden tragedy filled the survivors with terror. They called

in on Samuel as they came home, to tell him of their trouble, and he improved the occasion by explaining, in the spirit, though probably not in the exact words of the indictment against Bunyan, that all this had come about because they had "devilishly and perniciously abstained from coming to church to hear divine service."

We must not be harder on Samuel than on any other man whose zeal is not always according to knowledge. I have seen the entry in the vestry-book of Clovelly Church, which records that in 1844 there was "a bad herring fishery," as there had been "every year since the tithe of fish was refused to the rector." Major Ross has known men who were sure to get fever if they breathed those "malarial mists" which uninstructed persons still believe in, or ate pineapples in the early morning, or "forgot" to say their prayers over night. I would not laugh at any man who sought to link up the details of daily life with spiritual things: and neither will I blame the single-hearted, unphilosophic, semi-civilised and very ignorant Samuel for opinions that were common enough, not so very long ago, even in enlightened Christian England—but perhaps this fire-and-brimstone theology of his may be one of the reasons why his still more ignorant and altogether uncivilised flock are not so keen on Samuel's sermons as he thinks they ought to be. I should not care very much for that sort of preaching myself.

CHAPTER VII

WILLIAM

It is a lonely life that the missionary must live in Wanigera. Men of his own race are few and far between, and friendship is not possible with the coloured folk. Impossible: not because of their colour, for you could not live here very long without coming to think of the pleasant chocolate-coloured, silken-textured skin of these people as the really beautiful and appropriate covering for a human body. It took me but a little while to become conscious of my own physical inappropriateness and failure to fit in with the general scheme of nature hereabouts, just as a black man looks, and I daresay feels, out of place and inappropriate in a country that is inhabited by what H. G. Wells calls "dirty pink" men and women. If I had to choose, and if the choice implied nothing but the mere colour of my skin, I would rather be brown than "dirty pink." Such pictures as hang in some of our schoolrooms, with their ostentatiously Saxon Adams and Eves, may be well enough for English children, if we want to teach them, as early as possible, the immense superiority of their own to any other race in the world, but in New Guinea they seem to beg the question of the "first man's" colour rather unfairly, and sometimes they irritate the missionary by their British prejudice and presumption. Perhaps the Papuan, if he sees any meaning at all in these ugly oleographs, really thinks that Adam was a rather well-trimmed, well-washed and manicured muscular white man, who, for some strange and unknown reason wore

no clothes; and that Eve was a "dim-dim" woman with yellow hair indecently long for a married woman, and artificially coloured, no doubt by frequent applications of lime, after the manner of the police at Tufi: but if I had had to live in the face of the weather, in a Paradise such as the Sunday School artists portray—something between the bush near Uiaku and a corner of the Botanic Gardens in Regent's Park—I should certainly have wished to be brown, like my Wanigera neighbours—a good, clean, healthy-looking average sort of colour, rather than possess a skin as hot and black as Peter's, or as pink and unsuited to a tropical sun as my own happens to be. It is not colour-prejudice, then, which stands in the way of friendship, since, other things being equal (which they never are), I have learned to like brown skins better than white.

Nor is it, altogether, the necessity of standing deliberately apart from a people who have to be managed and controlled by much the same methods that a sensible schoolmaster uses with his boys.

It is, rather, the inevitable and ever-present difference between the civilised man, whose ancestors have been more or less outwardly "respectable" for centuries, breaking out into savagery merely in places, and only now and then, and the real savage whose "respectability" and enforced conformity to some of the ways of civilisation have been adopted very lately and rather unwillingly, and maintained only with difficulty. These men were cannibals twenty years ago; and if the Government and the missionaries went away to-morrow it would not be long before some of them would begin spearing the people and burning the villages up and down the coast, as they and their fathers used to do in days of old.

The very fact that I have books, and read them, while the villagers, and even the South Sea Island teachers, can see no more meaning or value in them than I can see in the



NORA.

wallaby jaw-bones and pig tusks that are hung so carefully round the walls of native houses—that a copy of the *Times* or *Punch* can mean so much to me, and yet be nothing more than useful wrapping for cigarettes to every one else in the place—here is the real hindrance to familiar friendship.

Some of the people are Christians, and I really love them as fellow-members in Christ's Body, nor can I pass David or Barnabas on the beach, or see baby Mark carried struggling to the river by his old heathen grandmother for a bath, or meet Doreas or Nora coming back from the gardens with a load of wood, or carrying water from the creek, without a thrill of happy wonder at the miracle of our fellowship, and a remembrance of the great Sacrament of their Regeneration, of which I was the joyful minister. But Christianity means one thing to an educated Englishman, and something else, though very likely something quite as great, to a Papuan, who is, naturally, "as a little child," and even our common Faith, and the "means of grace" and the "hope of glory" which we share, cannot bring us intellectually much nearer. In fundamentals, we believe alike in God the Father, Who created us, and God the Son, Who redeemed us, and God the Holy Ghost, Who sanctifies us; but beyond the brief terms of a few theological definitions which both they and I probably "understand" as much, or as little, as the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Pope of Rome, even our religion is not a thing, intellectually, which can help us to be "friends."

My dog and I have much more in common, in the realms of familiarity and friendship, as far as the things of daily life are concerned—the eating, and walking, and talking together, the understanding of each other's moods—than the Wanigera people and I, though they like me in a way, I think, while I, if it came to me, as their priest, to die for them, should be very ready and thankful.

But friendship? In the sense that one had a chum at

school, or cared for other men or women in later life? That is surely not possible for an Englishman who is called to outpost duty in such a place as this. Men differ, and some would be more troubled or even terrified by loneliness than others; but though I have never minded, and have indeed enjoyed, the months of solitude, I have nevertheless been very glad and thankful for the constant presence and companionship of William.

If it came to me to die suddenly, as it does sometimes come to men in the tropics, there would be wailing enough for a few hours, but I think that William is the only human being, hereabouts, who would really grieve, and remember me often, and for as long as he lived. If I were to go away from Wanigera, though the names and personalities of many of these people would be printed always in my remembrance, it is of William that I should think most often, and William only that I should really desire to see again.

It would be hard to analyse my feeling towards this coloured man, who was born some thirty years back in semi-heathen surroundings, and did rough work with his hands until he was turned out of Australia with hundreds of other "kanakas," a few years ago: but I know that I care for him. Perhaps this is the reason why I do not find it easy to write about him. There seems to be so little that I can offer other folk to read, without almost a breach of confidence. If I had cared more about Peter, perhaps I should have been less sensible of his ludicrous ineffectiveness, and less willing to tell anybody what an old duffer he is.

The classic poet could not "tell" the "reason why" he disliked Dr. Fell; nor can I explain, intelligibly, why I am fond of William.

It may be for the same reason that I care so very much for the fox-terrier that lies sleeping now at my feet. The dog, for nearly three years past, has never been many yards

away from me, and Wanigera, where I have surely been as near to complete happiness as ever any man anywhere on earth, would have been a more lonely and less pleasant place without him ; and William's almost dog-like devotion and faithful affection may have drawn me to him in somewhat the same way. From the day I came here, he accepted me as his " boss." He knows that I do not like the word, and when he can remember (which is not often) he calls me " you-my-priest " instead, but " you-my-master," or in the pidgin English of Northern Queensland, " you-my-boss " represents his attitude to me.

William, no more than Peter, is intellectually brilliant, or well-informed, or reasonable, but whereas Peter is notoriously and always foolish, William is very often remarkably wise. Peter is certainly a fool, in a moderate way of speaking, and now and then he is a very disobedient and obstinate and unmanageable sort of fool : but William, foolish fellow though he is, according to our educated, impatient ideas, is nevertheless a very obedient, and sensible, and useful, simple sort of man. He is, within his own well-defined limits, absolutely reliable. Tell Peter to do a thing, and explain or even show him how to do it, and you may be quite sure that he will do something else, or invent some wrong and crazy way of doing the appointed thing ; but give your order to William, and make certain that he understands you, and knows how to set about his task, and you can be certain that the thing will be done if it is anyhow possible for William to do it,—and done, moreover, to the utmost limit of William's powers.

None of these South Sea Islanders knows much about his age. Each of them has to count backwards—so many years in New Guinea ; so many, more or less, in Queensland ; and he was as big as so-and-so when he first left his own village. William, who looks like a very old man sometimes, but a mere youth at others, has a more varied record than most.

He came, originally, from Palmer Island in the New Hebrides, and was a sailor for about twelve years, working in schooners about the Islands and on the Queensland coast. He has a few lurid stories of his seafaring life, though they are too confused to be very interesting, and he can talk of Sydney, and George Street, and of Brisbane, where he worked as a gardener-coachman for three months, and of Maryborough, where he was baptized, and enlisted for the New Guinea Mission. It is probably this wider knowledge of the world, with the habits of discipline learned on board ship, that makes him more easily adaptable to the white man's ways. He catches your idea more quickly than do the other South Sea Islanders; and even if he does not always see what you are driving at, his natural or acquired impulse towards exact obedience makes him anxious only to do what he is told as well as he can and as quickly as he can. He is the best man we have had for handling New Guinea boys, and for getting results out of them. He works tremendously himself, without making any particular fuss about it; and though he rarely speaks to his boys while work is going on, there are no shirkers in William's gang. Peter makes so much blustering noise that the whole neighbourhood is obliged to take notice of the job he is supposed to have in hand, and he sits down under a shady tree, and lights his pipe, and laughs, and shows his white teeth, and sneezes, and welcomes any passer-by who cares for a gossip, and jokes with the boys, who take him not a bit more seriously than I do; and though they all the time, and Peter briefly now and then, keep up an easy-going pretence of digging, or planting, or whatever it is, there is not much visible result of their hour or two of "work" under Peter's leadership. And in school, though I have tried, almost daily for a year, to improve Peter's methods, I do not think he does his work any bit the better for all those twelve months of my explanations, and protests, and encouragements, and abuse, and despair.

But William is the one person, out of a dozen or more, whom I have persuaded that a "reading lesson" does not mean the teacher gabbling strings of words and sentences out of a book, and the pupils repeating them after him until the whole book is pretty well learned by heart.

Beginning with the smaller children and the simplest syllables, he has acquired, in the course of a year, the knack of a very clever teacher for little children who are learning to read, using book and printed sheet and blackboard with much discretion. Batch after batch of babies, drafted into school at the beginning of each quarter, has learned to read by William's guidance; and by keeping him to reading lessons for much of his time, I have enabled him to follow them up into higher sets and classes, and it is certain that real work goes on in any reading class of which he is in charge. More than this—much more, since it is harder to make other people work properly than to work yourself—he has picked out a few bright boys from higher classes, and got them into his own excellent method, so that there is promise, for some time to come, of efficient teaching in at least one department of this school, where there is so very much still left to be desired.

Peter and William were both shocking writers when they came here, judging them for the moment as schoolmasters, which they will never really become, rather than as Queensland coloured labourers, which they had only lately ceased to be, and Peter's queer cuneiform fist seems to have gone from bad to worse. William, on the contrary, chiefly by watching and copying the careful upright letters that he has seen me put on the board, has become a very "painful writer" (in the sense that he takes very great pains), and though his writing is still far inferior to that of most of the Dogura trained pupil-teachers, he is quite a safe model for children who are only beginning to learn to write. At figures William

is hopeless, but he knows it, and never tangles himself up with chalk and duster and blackboard, as Peter loves to do. Even when I pay him his monthly wage of £2, 1s. 8d., I think William is unable to check the coins, but he turns his disability into matter for a pretty compliment: "You my boss; you not make mistake; what for I count my money?" He is hardly a good disciplinarian—he is too quiet and self-possessed—for these children, like babies all over the world, are conscious only of loud sounds, and bright colours, and sudden movements. If you try to attract the attention of a schoolroom full of children, or of a church full of their elders, quietly and without excited movement, they simply are not aware that anything is going on. You must give your orders with something of the loud curtness of a drill-sergeant, and begin your sermon with the unmistakable pantomime of the Papuan, who is always rather noisy and dramatic when he is really in earnest. And yet William gets things done in school, and the children know, as they do not generally know where South Sea Islander teachers are concerned, that he has to be obeyed.

With the one exception of an incorrigible habit of singing a translation of "Now the day is over" at the opening of morning school, William is a good schoolmaster, in that he does what he is told, and does it without friction. This is all the more to his credit, since a strong disposition to evil temper lurks somewhere in the silent depths of his nature. I have only known it break out twice. Once, two years ago, he cruelly flogged a little chap in school for some trifling offence. And once again, a year back, while he and some village men were working together on a new house, he assaulted Yafarab in a way that would have got him some months of hard labour at Tufi if the matter had gone before the magistrate. I could imagine William, in the heat of some such outburst, losing all control of himself, and doing mortal injury to a man. But the sudden flame, as often happens, dies down as suddenly.

I know something of William's temptations in these ways, and of the constant struggle he has to go peacefully and humbly about his work, and I like him all the better on that account. The short informal speech he made to the crowd after the matter of Yafarab had been settled by a public apology and the gift of tobacco and a new tomahawk, only raised him higher in the estimation of at least one man who listened to him. His outward quietness and self-possession are the result of careful and constant watch over himself by a Christian man who has marked his own weak points, and is beware of them ; and there is a look on his face that you would not see on the face of a man who has tried and failed.

William has always been methodical and dexterous. When I first began to go into the school, William was teaching a jolly class of half a hundred very small children. If I happened to be giving a lesson to another class, William would sometimes fancy that his noisy little mob was disturbing me, and he would then go quietly along the rows, cutting each child lightly and very neatly with his cane, as a man might "run the chromatic scale up" upon a xylophone, and dealing faithfully with the whole fifty inside of half-a-minute. The children took this business, which went on nearly every morning, as they take everything that happens to them at their teachers' hands, and I did not interfere until months afterwards, when it seemed time to begin to show William the more excellent way. I knew that it was good for him to rule in his own kingdom, and that if he could not find out for himself the way to be king, no one else would ever really teach him. And the gentle exercise did no hurt to any one, in body or mind. The children seemed to think it was just part of a game they were expected to play, for when one small urchin, new to the school and rather scared, cried out, "Oh, Bada," there was an instant chorus of shocked voices telling him to "*Agugum*" ("Be quiet"), and then, when that

particular boy had been attended to, another chorus of “*Ma!*” with an intonation that made it mean “There you are, you see!”

William goes nearly every Sunday morning to preach to the people at Aieram ; but it sometimes happens that we have to send one of our younger Papuan teachers to the village, and keep the South Sea Islander to help here. Peter had been allowed to preach in Church for at least a year before I asked William to begin. I had expected to find him nervous and shy, but he was as keen and earnest about that as about all his other work, and confided to me afterwards, while he was struggling out of a cassock that had got beyond the stage of mere ancient greenness and passed into pink, that he had long been wanting to preach to the big congregation at Wanigera, but would not ask. “You my boss ; you tell me when I preach ; you know ; what for I come and ask you ? ”

I shall remember some of his sermons as long as I can remember anything. Not for their substance, which is but a fairly accurate reproduction of the lesson that I have given him in preparation a day or two before, but for the simple earnestness of the preacher. He is generally nervous when he begins, and his tongue seems too big for his mouth, and the sweat runs down his face, and falls from his chin, as water drips from a tap that has not been turned off properly, and he speaks very quietly, and hardly lifts his eyes from the ground ; but by the time he has pulled himself together the people have begun to listen, and soon there is almost perfect silence in the church that not a word may be missed. And then William quite forgets to be nervous any longer, and faces the congregation, and delivers his message in a very solemn, level voice, sometimes saying an important sentence over and over again. And the people listen, and attend to what he says, because they respect the preacher, and know that, besides preaching on Sundays, he is trying all the week to practise the things

he teaches in Church. His whole life, and not only his stammering Sunday morning sermon, is eloquent with "the rhetoric of a good example."

But William can be eloquent in actual speech, too, on occasion. One Easter Day morning he was speaking of death, and particularly of several deaths which had lately taken place in the village. When he went on to speak of the Resurrection of the dead, every one in the Church was looking straight at him. "We Christians do not *weep*," he said, using the native word for the long-continued wailing of mourners; and with the compelling eloquence that springs from deep feeling and earnest conviction, he proclaimed the Christian hope which reaches beyond "the grave, and gate of death." It was an easy subject for a preacher who wished to touch the hearts of his hearers, but yet I count that Easter sermon of William's to a couple of hundred heathen men and women as among the really great sermons I have ever listened to; and I felt, not for the first time or the last, that with all their obvious failings as teachers, these Christian South Sea Islanders, at their best, as William surely was that day, are able to come, somehow and sometimes, more near to the heart of the childlike Papuans, than we more sophisticated English missionaries, with all our civilisation and our book-learning, can ever hope to do.

CHAPTER VIII

THOMASIKO

THE object of the missionary Church in Papua is, of course, to preach Christ to the people who have not heard His name ; and to bring individuals into union with Him by Holy Baptism ; and to watch over them and to feed them, spiritually, in His name, and for His sake, afterwards, as shepherds tend their sheep and lead them beside the still waters ; and to try and prepare the minds and hearts of the children, so that many of them, some day, may find their way into Christ's fold.

But along with these things, which are her work for the present and for the near future, she has to try to raise up a native ministry, so that some day the work of the Church in Papua may be done by Papuan pastors. The native priest, other things being equal, would be better qualified by habits of thought and manner of life, to minister to natives than is the foreigner ; and as the number of native congregations grow it will become more and more difficult to provide and maintain foreign priests to serve them. The English missionary, with his education and his experience and his traditions, and very largely just because he possesses these things, and for all his self-devotion and his love, can never cease to be a foreigner, nor will it ever be possible for an English priest to live in Papua except at a cost which, though a bare third of the minimum " clerical wage " elsewhere, would yet provide the means of living for a dozen or more of Papuan priests or deacons, while they " gave themselves to the work of the ministry."

Older missions have already reached the stage of native Ordinations, though Melanesia is not the only diocese which realises that for a very long while to come the "black net" must be sustained by "white corks."

It may well be centuries even, as far as human understanding can see into the future, before the older Churches, which sent these missions out, can dare to withdraw their white men, and leave the native dioceses to be administered by native bishops and priests. But though this is all so far in the future that it seems waste of time to think, and certainly quite premature to talk, very much about it, the New Guinea Mission, in common with all missionary Churches, has had to try and keep that far distant object always in view, sometimes at the expense of pressing and apparently more productive work which even now lies close at hand. If the Church were like the Empires of this world, which grow great and then pass away, or if her Foreign Missions had to be run on the lines of limited liability companies, with periodic balance-sheets and statistics to show what good value the shareholders were getting for their money, we missionaries could not afford to cast our bread upon the waters, for we should be obliged to spend our energies on things that would show well in the Annual Reports, and sound well on platforms and in pulpits; and the plain man who has a general notion that missions are "poor business" would perhaps change his mind, and begin to patronise us, instead of thinking that we are possibly mischievous but certainly rather foolish fellows; and the stay-at-home Christians would talk often to one another about the missionary campaigns of the Church, as the stay-at-home patriots are proud of their soldiers, and boast and "Maffick" about them and their victories when there is a big war on; and it would no longer be a reproach that the Church was only "playing at Missions,"

for there would be plenty of money flowing in and out of the missionary offices, and with a little business enterprise some of the Missions might be able to pay their own way quite handsomely ; and it would all be very splendid and exciting, and the reaping would go on apace, though unfortunately no one would have time to sow, and by-and-by the Church at home would be so empty of Faith and Love and Hope that she would have no power to save, even if her Foreign Missions were any longer worth the saving.

In the twenty years, or thereabouts, since this Mission was founded, the missionaries have done what they could to prepare the way for a native ministry. And the result ? There are two men, Papuans, who may or may not be made deacons in the lifetime of any of the present staff, and that is almost the only " result " that can as yet be tabulated.

A London man, who knows or cares little about missions, but who is rather fond of me, wandered into the Church House for some New Guinea Meeting at the time of the Pan-Anglican Congress. He heard the Bishop speak with thankful gladness, almost with triumph, of these two men ; and his next letter to me was full of the " wretched failure " and " miserable result," and the stock arguments about wasting one's time away among people, &c. &c.,—plenty of heathen at home, &c. &c. I wonder what my friend would have thought if he had known that one of those two men is possibly too weak in body and in moral character, and the other probably too obstinate and difficult for any bishop to admit either of them even to the lower order of the diaconate ? Twenty years, after all, is not very long in the history of Christ's Church, nor could any one who remembers that " God is Eternal, and can afford to wait," have dared to hope for much more in these early beginnings of the Church in Papua. Children must be allowed to grow up before they



PAUL.

DOGURA SCHOOLBOYS.



LOUIS

can be set to their life's work. All that you can do in the meantime is to try and prepare them, or rather help them to prepare themselves, for that work. These people of ours are men and women in body, but they have never learned to put away childish things—they are children in understanding, with the child's keen and simple, but often puzzled and timid, outlook on life. And we must wait for them to grow up, and in the meantime try to prepare them—help them to prepare and fit themselves—for the time when, as grown men, they may be ready to do man's work, and “follow the Christ, the King.”

The New Guinea Mission tries to do this at Dogura, where there is a school for the further education of the most promising boys that can be picked out of the village schools up and down the country—the University, as it were, of this part of Papua. Theoretically, the best of these Dogura boys are taken and trained as pupil-teachers, or lay evangelists, or catechists; and then the best of those, once more, after standing the test of actual work, would be recalled for yet further preparation for Holy Orders.

Practically, a hundred and one hindrances interrupt the progress of this simple pen-and-paper scheme for the preparation of Papuan boys to go forth as ministers of Christ to their own countrymen. This is not an account of the New Guinea Mission as a whole, nor has it been my privilege to have any share in the work at the head station, and so I need not attempt any analysis of the difficulties that are met with there. Briefly, they seem to arise from the smallness of the white staff, which compels every one to attempt another man's work besides his own, and gives the boys a constant and distracting series of changes in method and discipline, since no one man can be spared to spend his whole time with the boys: and from the undeveloped characters of the boys themselves, who are happy enough at Dogura,

but yet are always wanting to get back to their villages and to village life, much as an English schoolboy looks forward to the time when he will leave school and go out into what he thinks is the real life of grown-up men and women.

It is too soon, perhaps, to look for " vocations " among these boys, though the ideal, and that a very lofty one, is quietly kept before them. If the authorities had been content to ask for less in the way of self-sacrifice, they might have got boys more easily; but the boys, like other things got easily, would have been less worth the having. I was familiar with Father Kelly's work in the early days at Mildenhall, and I saw something of the way in which the majority of those who applied to him were frightened away, and a good many more rejected. The system at Dogura seems to result in a similar thorough sifting of material. It means patience, and apparent slowness; but it is sure, and the results, when they come, will be worth having.

I met, when first I came to Dogura, a small party of Wanigera natives. Mary Nogar, now the wife of Reuben, who had been spending the year of her widowhood with her old schoolfellows, and her little Japhet and Josephine; John Dogio, a young but quaintly old-fashioned person, with pleasant, prim, old-maidish manners, and such a light in his gentle eyes as shines sometimes from the face of a nun or a Salvation Army lass; Peter Bitanan (which means " Hungry Peter "), with only one eye, because he used to misbehave himself when a small boy, as little puppies misbehave, and his father had kicked him out of the house one dark night, to teach him to mend his manners, and though he is a well-conducted and self-respecting youth in these days, he has never recovered the sight of the eye that was damaged then. Every one knows the story, but none thinks any the worse of Peter, because it is the sort of thing that might have

happened to any one who chanced to be born in Rainu. John and Peter were old Dogura boys, who had come down for the yearly gathering of Christian representatives from all the out-stations, and they and Mary made a mighty fuss over me, because I had come to be the priest of their own people. "Hungry Peter" wept every time he caught sight of me for the first few days, though I have never seen him weep since. And there were some younger boys—Colin, a Christian, but an ugly, evil-faced youth, with an awkward ill-shaped body, and a scar across his cheek; and four or five others, still heathen, of whom only Bagiau and Kasiko come into this story. The latter was a wonderful boy in those days, very handsome and the pink of cleanliness: you notice that sort of person at once in New Guinea, where the general are neither very comely nor clean, and he had charming manners and attached himself at once particularly to me. It was not much that we could say to one another during those first few weeks, but he fetched and carried for me, and greased my boots, and in the evening he sat cross-legged on the floor and cut up my tobacco, and tried to teach me Ubir, so that I might begin to "preach to his people" as soon as I got to Wanigera. Three months afterwards, in November 1907, he wrote me a letter, and this is the translation of parts of it:—

I greet you, Father, you are at Wanigera, and I at Dogura. Have you been ill? I have not been ill, but I will tell you something else. I have been baptized on Sunday and my name is Thomas, and I tell it you. . . . There were baptized on Sunday twenty-six persons. . . . Greet my Father and my Mother. . . . On Sunday, at night, Mr. Newton went to Samarai, and on Friday he came back, and that Sunday he baptized, I thank God. . . . Now my letter is finished. I think of you every day, and you think of me, do you not? Good-bye, my Father, I am your son.

THOMAS KASIKO.

And when I answered this letter, I carelessly gave him the portmanteau name of Thomasiko, and it pleased him, and has stuck to him, more or less, to this day. He and the other Wanigera boys, who had all been baptized in the meantime, came home a year afterwards, at the end of the period for which they had originally gone to Dogura, because two of them were unwilling, and the others were judged unfit, to be kept there for further training.

Soon after they returned, these youths went through the native initiation ceremony which marked for them the end of boyhood, and their public admission to some sort of standing in the tribe. Until the Mission was begun here, these ceremonies, both for boys and for girls, were spread over several months; but though it has not been found necessary to discourage the customs altogether, our influence has been used to reduce the period of seclusion to a week or two, and even during that short time it is usual for the retreatant to come to the services in Church, or even to school.

I am too ignorant of the whole matter to give any description of the details, or of their significance, but we are well assured that there is nothing necessarily connected with these puberty ceremonies which is inconsistent, for example, with the profession that Thomas and the other boys had made and the vows which they had taken, at the time of their baptism, a few months previously. Some of the more experienced missionaries, indeed, would be ready to encourage some connection in point of time between the Christian Sacrament of Confirmation and these native ceremonies which mark the young man or woman's entrance upon adult life. The grandmothers in the village, like grandmothers all over the world, wish well of the children, though they may not always know exactly what is good for them; and these old ladies, with excellent but mistaken motives, are very keen on retaining certain details of the initiation, which the mis-

sionary can only discourage absolutely. There has been no difficulty about this, as no particular stress is laid upon these objectionable features, which are generally dispensed with in deference to the desire of the Mission, and invariably omitted in the case of Christian boys like Thomas. Outwardly it meant that Thomas and the others disappeared from public life for a time, though they might be seen sitting in absolute silence on the platforms of their houses. They were elaborately dressed, many of the ornaments being such as are usually worn only by girls, and if they came abroad at all, as to Church or to my house, they walked very slowly, with eyes cast downwards, and waving a short stick in front of them as they walked, to clear away any cobwebs that might blow across their path and cause conventional defilement. When they spoke, which was only in answer to a question, it was very gravely, and hardly above a whisper. The girls at such times are covered from head to foot with native cloth, and creep along under the shelter of houses and fences, as if to avoid observance. When they emerge from their retirement their faces are seen to be elaborately tattooed, and they are then counted as of marriageable age, though for their own welfare the practice of the Mission in keeping them as long as possible at school has resulted in their marriages taking place when they are fourteen or fifteen years old instead of a year or two earlier.

Two of the Christian boys went back to their villages (Kumarbun and Aieram). They come in very regularly for the Christian service on Sunday, but we do not see much of them, and they are not to be distinguished, outwardly, from other village youths. They lost, within a very few weeks, the well fed, well groomed look that was so noticeable while they were living the orderly disciplined life at Dogura. The other three, Thomas (Kasiko), Colin (Masikok), and Geoffrey (Bagiau) came to live and work on the Station,

helping in the school as pupil-teachers, and receiving the wage of fourpence or sixpence a week, in addition to their food. Insignificant as it seems, this nevertheless means more to them than a pound a week would mean to a pupil-teacher in Australia, or in any other country where money is a necessity, and not a mere luxury.

There is not much to be said of Colin and Geoffrey. The former is a big, lanky fellow, uglier than ever, with a rasping voice, and an unpleasant manner, and although he hardly realises that he is supposed to be a junior master rather than an overgrown schoolboy, he works well, and does his awkward, noisy best, in school. Geoffrey is small and quiet, disfigured rather dreadfully about the face in a way that suggests possibilities of leprosy or cancer, but a good little soul, and useful, though he is too gentle and polite to be much of a success as a schoolmaster.

And Thomasiko is my peculiar treasure. For one thing he understands anything I say to him in English, and he answers me in English. He is quick at picking up new words and phrases, and his unexpected use of appropriate colloquialisms is a constant joy in a country where one hardly hears English spoken at all. For months past, on his own initiative, he has been attending the English services in Church, and his reading of psalms and hymns is altogether better than either Peter's or William's. He can read English, and they simply cannot; and he understands very much of what he reads, while they do not. He is inclined to be very sharp with people who speak pidgin English, and even tries to reform Peter, though that is a thankless task. I have liked Thomasiko especially ever since he fell ill, and came crawling over to me once in every two or three days, to beg a piece of soap and a jug of hot water, and the loan of a tin basin. It was not much, and he looked abominably sooty and dirty as he crawled away again; but no other native that I know has ever even pretended to

wash until he was well enough to go along to the creek or into the sea.

You are not to suppose from all this, however, that Thomas is a prig. He is, naturally, one of the most intellectual persons hereabouts, and he has had more of an education than any of the others, and he is making use of what he knows, and adding to it every day. Some one gave him a school atlas last Christmas, and my life was a burden to me until the thing fell to pieces and became too grimy for further use, or for Thomas to dog me day and night for geography lessons. These are only little things, and the lad would be put to shame by any dunce in Australia, but "in the kingdom of the blind the one-eyed man is king," and Thomas is the scholar of Wanigera.

He has not been civilised or spoiled, for he is still native of the natives. He sleeps at night with his head on a carved wooden pillow, and eats his taro from a banana leaf plate like everybody else. He puts on a red, or a white, "calico" for school or Church, or when he is "on duty" of any sort, as Nonis puts on his blue uniform on Sundays and on official occasions, and as the London policeman wears, or used to wear, the striped cuff while he is on his beat; but at other times he looks and dresses just like any other well-built young man of the neighbourhood—a shade cleaner than is customary in Wanigera, though he is becoming covered again with the disfiguring skin disease of which they cured him, temporarily, at Dogura. He has, perhaps, the slightest tendency—the result, maybe, of his comparative wealth—to overdo it in the matter of paint on his face and flowers or cut paper decorations in his hair. He lives in the Boys' House, and is a sort of prefect among the smaller fry. He and they are the best of friends, but the smallest or the rowdiest of them understands with nice precision the difference between Thomas on, and Thomas off, duty. In school, or at drill, he has more assurance than the rest of the coloured staff put together,

because he knows exactly what to do, and how to do it ; and William could hardly keep order, or call the roll correctly, without Thomas at his elbow to help him with eye and brain and self-confident voice. Poor William gets so muddled up sometimes, and Thomas has to explain the time-table to him again and again, and even remind him sometimes, in the middle of drill, which is his left hand and which his right. But they work remarkably well together. In school, nowadays, Thomas is headmaster *de facto*, whatever William or Peter may be *de jure*. It is Thomas who gives the Giu (religious instruction) on Thursdays, when no white man is there, and Thomas who deals with the occasional not very difficult questions of discipline. As a general thing, he teaches the top class of about thirty-five big boys and girls, with constant appeals to me for the meaning of some foreign reference in the arithmetic book, or for the exact pronunciation (about which he is most pedantic and particular) of some English word or Biblical proper name. His class has read and re-read all the printed matter that is available, and now he has got them translating from Ubir into Wedauan and back again into Ubir, with a running commentary of his own in the English which he so persistently affects and so intelligently uses. Out of school he is a hard worker, and does his four hours a day cutting mangrove or fencing, and there is always plenty of noise and also plenty of busy-ness round about the place where he is working. "Now den ! All togeder ! *Up* a little bit, all togeder boys ! Dat's more like it ! " And then a shout, and a burst of native song, and on to the next part of the job.

On Sundays, Thomasiko is useful, sharing with John Dogio and "Hungry Peter" the responsibilities of morning open-air preachings in each of the neighbouring villages ; and lately he has had charge, for half-an-hour each week, of some forty or fifty "hearers,"—children who are preparing for the catechumenate. He is a good teacher already, for he pos-

sesses the gift, and he promises to become a first-rate speaker. His homilies to the children, or at the open-air services, are very simple, but interesting and practical and logical, and informed by well arranged and well digested knowledge. It has been Thomasiko's expressed intention, for more than a year past, to "be a missionary," and he has many evident qualifications for the work. But the way is not yet quite plainly open for him. He is the eldest of five or six children, an unusually large family here, and a domestic trouble of the last week or two may end in his having to withdraw, at least for a time, from much of the useful missionary work which he is doing already, or may cause him to miss altogether the vocation which, till quite lately, seemed so clear before him.

The father and mother of Thomas, who probably have names of their own, though no one ever uses them, are a handsome and dignified couple: quite the sort of parents that a fellow would be proud of when they came to visit him at school, if only they were dressed differently, or dressed a little more. *Thomas Ayon*, "The Mother of Thomas," is gentle and sweet-looking; but *Thomas Taman*, "The Father of Thomas," has a strained and weary look in his face, as though life were not for him all that he thinks it might have been. They live in a large house, according to our village ideas, but that means nothing more than that there are many mothers and fathers and sisters and brothers of Thomas. Relationships in New Guinea are hopelessly confusing for the stranger. Every man of the family, of an elder generation than your own, is your "father," and every elder woman your "mother." Your cousins, though "removed" to the *n*th, are your "brothers" and your "sisters." And though you are still a boy at school it may be possible for you to count your "sons" and your "daughters" by the dozen.

The native has rarely any chance to be alone, even if he desired it. No man has any business that calls for privacy—

no reading, or writing, or thinking, or casting-up accounts, or worrying about ways and means. He would much rather talk about a thing with some one else than try to think about it by himself, and he falls to moping if by some accident he is obliged to be alone. The grown man or woman in Papua is, in this matter also, much like the little child elsewhere, that cries if its companion makes to go away, except that the natives have their definite fears of "the Black Man" who will "get them" if they go anywhere by themselves. Call a boy, and tell him that he is to take a message along the beach to Uiaku, and, before you have time to tell him what the message is, he will have asked "Who is to go with him?" The women fetch water in couples, and will not go alone to the creek, certainly not because they need fear assault from man or beast, and perhaps not altogether for propriety's sake, but assuredly because they dare not venture, solitary, beyond sight and sound of their own homes. They have a name for these unknown terrors, and call them "*Daus*"—goblins, ghosts, evil spirits; but it is just fear of the unknown, common to all but a very few people, civilised or simple: and to these particularly simple folk nearly everything is unknown.

And so the Father of Thomas is probably quite content to live and work and eat and sleep, and when his time comes, to die, in the midst of a crowd of other men and women and children, whom he counts his mothers and brothers and fathers and sons. Life in a large native village, from the standpoint of the individual, must be very much like a perpetual Bank Holiday on Hampstead Heath, or a Barnet Fair, or the old Warwick Mop, or New Year's Day at Glenelg: it is a noisy crowd from which there is no real escape, from the moment a man is born, until the day that he lies a-dying. There must be partially civilised people who like that sort of thing now and then, or Bank Holiday crowds would be

impossible; but it would surely pall, even on them, if it went on day and night, and day after day, and all day long.

The Father of Thomas may have felt that it was really too much for him a week ago, when he was the cause of a vigorous sensation at Oresan. At nine o'clock in the evening, when it was quite dark, without moon or stars, and the village was dropping quietly off to sleep, he was missed, and every one jumped up and began to talk about it, especially Nonis. By ten o'clock they had decided that he was lost; and, while the men went on talking, the women began to wail as when a neighbour is at the point of death. There was not much for the men to say, but they said it all together, and they said it very loudly. The man was missing, and that was all that anybody knew, but they said it over and over again; and then, lest there should be any misunderstanding, Nonis put on his uniform and marched up and down the street, shouting out in his cracked voice that the Father of Thomas was gone, and then everybody agreed that something very dreadful had happened to him. This sort of thing went on, and sleep was impossible until nearly midnight, when heavy rain began. I was sorry for Thomas's Father; but I knew it would be foolish to send any one to look for him in the dark, though Thomas himself had borrowed a lantern from me when the alarm was first raised, and had been wandering fearfully in close familiar spots ever since. I was glad, nevertheless, for my own sake, when the rain drove the people back into their houses, where, if they still went on talking, the pleasant rattle upon my roof was loud enough to drown their less musical noises.

At four o'clock in the morning the rain ceased, and the men got ready to go out and search. They painted themselves up, and donned their finery, their head and breast ornaments of wild boars' tusks and their shell necklaces and cassowary

plumes, and their elbow streamers of yellow cuscus fur, and took their spears, and at the first coming of dawn they were off, returning at mid-day to protest that they had searched every inch of ground within twenty or thirty miles—one party was even understood to say that it had climbed very nearly to the top of Mount Victory—but that the Father of Thomas was simply “gone.” The general opinion was still that the “*Daus*” had “got him,” though a few of the younger and more blood-thirsty men were sure that he had been speared by the Doriri. It was at this stage that the women got hold of pieces of shell and broken bottles and obsidian, and slashed their temples and breasts repeatedly as they wailed. The men set out again, hardly waiting or seeming to care for any food, and at four o’clock in the afternoon, while I was in the midst of a crowd of sick folk on the back verandah, a man came rushing into the village, shouting out again and again that they had found him, and another came rushing in half-a-minute afterwards, yelling out that he was only partly dead, and the two of them went tearing up and down the street, each delivering his own half of the message. Every one from Rainu, and all the people about the station and my patients and I, went into the village, where the women had now begun to wail and cut themselves as if there were several dead men in every house. For myself, it was a relief to know the man was found, and that he was at least alive; but the general opinion, if one might judge by the behaviour of the natives, was that things were getting worse than ever. People seemed to think not at all of the two things that made me glad, but rather of the “*Daus*” and the awful thing that was just going to happen. In about ten minutes, and before I had realised that they were approaching, the whole body of the men had burst into the main street, old Tomlinson prancing magnificently at the head of the noisy, yelling, dancing mob. He looked twice

his proper size, and only half his real age, as he leaped, and grimaced, and galloped, and shook his spear at some invisible imaginary foe, and then leaped again. All the other men were leaping and grimacing and yelling too, and shaking spears at *their* imaginary foes, and stamping on the ground. I had not known what to expect, or what to look for, and everything happened so quickly that I do not know whether the Father of Thomas entered on his own feet, or whether he walked or ran or hung back, or whether he was carried in the arms of others. As soon as I could get through the whirling crowd of spearmen, who were thrusting at the ground or into the soft stems of banana palms with their spears, or making furious charges up and down the street, three or four of them abreast, or dancing in rings, while all shouted their loudest, I saw the hero of the day, prone in the midst of a group of women. He was lying on the ground near his house—lying rather, on the knees of a dozen women, who were chafing his body, and stroking his hair, and patting his hands, and the whole score or so of “his sisters and his cousins and his aunts” were wailing and striking their breasts, and a few had barely stopped the gashing of their temples, so that the man was spattered with blood and tears as the women swayed backwards and forwards above him. He himself looked rather tired—rather bored—he was the only really quiet creature in the village just then, for the dogs and pigs always take their share in the excitement at such times. I felt sorry for him—I should have been horribly bored myself in his position ; but it surprised me that he did not seem to mind the mauling and the racket, but appeared to take it all as a recognised part of the drama in which he was playing the leading rôle.

For my part, I do not wonder that any man who lives in Oresan village, and especially a man who has so many and such demonstrative mothers and daughters and wives,

should now and then desire, as did this poor wretch, a little peace and quietness. I might doubt whether the twenty hours of silent solitude were not dearly bought at the price of the family *réunion* which followed, but I think I should have to get me away far off into the wilderness now and then, whatever happened when Mr. Tomlinson found me and brought me back.

This man's own later account of the matter was, that he had gone away to make sago, and had not bothered to come home. And, indeed, they had found him in a sago swamp where the men have been working lately, not more than half a mile away from his own house.

Everybody was very happy when the evening food had been cooked and eaten, and there was plenty to talk about round the fires that night, and old Tomlinson strolled from one group to another, and retold the story from beginning to end to any one who would listen, with dramatic illustrations of the way he peeped through the bushes, and of the way Thomas Taman looked up at him as a man who sees nothing; and in a couple of days the Father of Thomas seemed none the worse for his little outing, nor for the affectionate "doing" he received from his women-folk when they fetched him home again.

Peter had many visitors next day, for he is *the* local authority on the supernatural. His brief comment on the whole affair, which I am neither wise enough to accept, nor foolish enough to deny, was simply, "Satan, he *very* strong"; and I heard him improving the occasion, a few days afterwards, to a group of men on his verandah. He spoke pidgin English, and he said, "You New-Ginn men, *you* no look out that Fellow Man along-top. Suppose you no look out, you too much sick. Suppose you look out along Him, He look out along you." Peter is a queer old bird, and he expresses himself queerly, but I am not always sure that he may not have the root of the matter in him, after all.

CHAPTER IX

THE VILLAGE SCHOOL

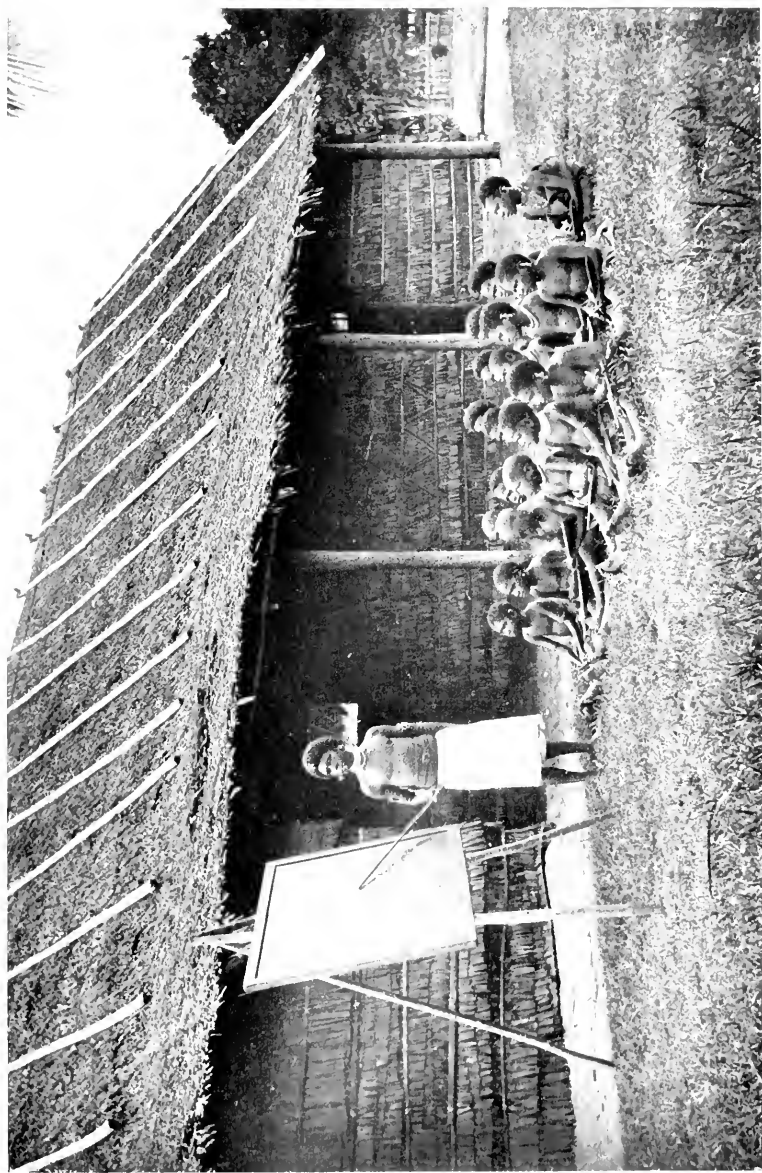
TEN o'clock on Monday morning, and long past the time that the bells should have rung for school. But the rain is pouring down so solidly that I am minded to let the children of Wanigera stay in their houses, as their fathers and mothers are doing, and as I myself am well content to do.

It must be heavy rain indeed to keep your Papuan "in-doors." (I put the word in commas, because the village houses have no doors, only a square hole in the floor, like the entrance to a stable loft; and the people only go *inside*, as a rule, at night time, but spend the hours of daylight on the open platform that is built beneath the floor of nearly every house.)

In anything less tremendous than a tropical downpour, such as this, the men will go a-fishing, if it is really too wet to do any good in the gardens; and by nothing less than really heavy rain can the children be hindered from their games. All through the month of February, the worst and wettest time of the year, the rain begins each afternoon, and continues, with more or less persistency, throughout the night into the early hours of the next morning; and then the sun shines out, and we can generally get our school work comfortably finished before the clouds begin to gather again soon after mid-day. Yesterday, it began to rain very early in the afternoon, and it has hardly ceased, since then, for ten consecutive minutes. "When with drowsy brain," as

some one said very long ago, "we hear 'neath shelter the thick-falling rain," it does not much distress us; but whenever I stirred in the course of last night I heard it pelting down, to the accompaniment of thunder and lightning; and this morning, two hours after sunrise, the sky was still so dark and overclouded that day seemed hardly to have begun, and even the early-rising Peter was almost an hour late with his matutinal solo under the boys' verandah; and now, though it is past ten o'clock, the whole business of the neighbourhood is strangely at a standstill. Every one has a cold, or a cough, and I do not care to bring the children out through the rain, or to keep them shivering all the morning in a dismal schoolroom. New Guinea buildings are designed for bright weather, and on such a day as this even our big well-lighted schoolroom is dark and depressing. It scarcely seems that there can be any school at all now, and I am sitting down instead to write some account of what we are generally doing at this time of day, over there in the schoolroom, with its benches roughly hewn from the broken hulls of old canoes, and its high master's table knocked together with pieces of a Sydney meat company's packing-case.

I did not spend much time in the school during my first few months in Wanigera. Reuben seemed to know his business, and there were many other things for me to learn. For one thing, I was very new to the dispensary work, and it often took me from early morning until long after mid-day to deal with the sick folk. I could not bandage a leg, according to the pretty patterns in the picture-books, in less than a quarter of an hour, and it took at least ten minutes to wash and dress an ulcer in the way I thought it should be done, until I learned that the only test of good bandaging is whether it "stays on" or not, and that while lecturers in the schools unanimously insist on the need of care in seeing which side of a piece of lint



THOMAS KASHO AT WORK.

goes next to the skin, they are about equally divided as to whether that side should be the fluffy or the smooth.

But when I had cut down the five or six hours which I was accustomed to spend each day in attending to twenty patients, and could deal, if necessary, with twice the number in less than half the time, and when Reuben went down with fever and had to leave Peter in charge, it seemed well that I should go into the school, and stop there, and see what was really going on. Peter, who is fat and stolid at ordinary times, becomes alert and strenuous in an emergency, and he began his first morning of magisterial authority by ringing all the school bells half-an-hour before the proper time. He explained to me, afterwards, that "Deese children he no come quick—me make him come quicker," which quite sounded at the moment as if it might mean something. I had just managed to hurry over to the school-room as Peter chased the last and most active of the children into their places, and with a polite bow he invited me to "open de school." I recited the accustomed prayers in Wedauan, which was the only native language of which I knew anything then; but directly I had finished, and the children had all settled on their seats, Peter, to my amazement, got them on their knees again, and began to repeat the same prayers a second time in what he meant for the local dialect. There was nothing for it but that I, too, should kneel down once more. I managed to look, and I tried very hard to feel, properly devout, but Peter took a very long time over his prayers, and I confess that I peered out through my fingers to see how the children were taking it. Australian children perhaps, and English public school boys most certainly, would have seen the humorous side of the thing, and some of them would have rejoiced openly at my discomfiture, but not those little brown ladies and gentlemen, who may have their unpleasant habits like other children,

or like their own uncivilised elders, but would be only concerned and sympathetic for a foreigner, even though he were a schoolmaster and a tyrant, if they saw him in a false position.

But apart from that, I daresay they hardly realised that anything was amiss. Their experience of white men has been so limited and peculiar, and they do not seem to guess that Peter is a duffer, and they may have accepted this "duplication" as a part of my new and queer régime. Then came the "Scripture Lesson," and it was suddenly revealed to me that not every South Sea Island mission teacher in New Guinea, any more than some of the far more important white schoolmasters one has met elsewhere, is completely qualified for his position. Peter sat down and smiled, and then he stood up and smiled again, and then he sat down once more. He arranged and re-arranged the books and chalk and inkpot upon the table, and then he stood up very suddenly and cleared his throat very noisily, and the children watched for the thing that was about to happen, and—then Peter sat down again. I asked him, with a perfectly legitimate curiosity, what the dickens he thought he was doing? He replied, at considerable length, and speaking very quickly, in pidgin English, which was as strange and incomprehensible to me, in those days, as any other of the unfamiliar tongues heard hereabouts. I could only reply by telling him to get on with the lesson. He then "taught" the children the words of a hymn, the Wedauan translation of "Glory be to Jesus," which they had known by heart probably for years past, though it might easily have seemed something new and strange to them, since Peter changed and mis-read and mis-pronounced nearly every word in each verse that morning. It was then that I began to harbour a suspicion, which afterwards grew to certainty, that Peter Seevo simply could not read. I had known that he could not read English, and that Ubir was still an unknown

tongue to him, but it now seemed that his Wedauan was equally shaky. What language, I wondered, did he really know? What language did he think in, or dream in, supposing that he ever thought or dreamed at all? He had assured me that he had all but forgotten the speech of Santo, in the New Hebrides, that was his when he was "all-a-same piccaninny." When he had gone through and through that hymn three times, with various renderings, I told him to "shut up" and "get on with the Scripture lesson." It was not polite or even very reverent of me, but Peter is not the sort of man to make you feel reverent when you have close dealings with him, and you must speak to him with extreme plainness if you really want him to understand. He mowed and chattered at me, as he had done before, in his unintelligible pidgin, while I tried to remember that the fault of our misunderstanding was more largely mine than his, and then he began to "teach" those unfortunate children the Ten Commandments in Ubir, which they had known by heart ever since they began to know anything, for it is a custom of the Mission for the Decalogue to be recited every Sunday morning by the whole congregation, so that every man and woman and child, who comes to service at all, knows at least the letter of the Ancient Law. These children in Wanigera and the neighbourhood could most certainly repeat the Ten Commandments in their own language, or in Wedauan, backwards or forwards, or any way you pleased. But Peter must needs personally conduct those six-score patient creatures right through from beginning to end, twice, and he was just ready to begin a third time, when I again interfered and made him stop. And then it was that Peter really started. I have never known, to this day, what it was all about, but he preached a sort of sermon at them for forty solid minutes by my watch: a mixture of English and Wedauan, which I understood, and of Ubir, which I did not, with occasional outbursts of what I

took to be his own more than half-forgotten mother-tongue, and there was simply no stopping him. It came pouring out, like water from a very wide-mouthed pipe, and he hardly ever made any perceptible pause for breath. The children stared, as well they might, and so did I, but Peter was wound up, and we others had to sit still and keep quiet until he should run down. Perhaps my interjections of disgust in the earlier part of the proceedings had spurred him on to this overwhelming endeavour. At 10.20 he stopped, suddenly as when a spring snaps, or when the petrol supply is cut off from a motor, and sank exhausted on the kerosine box which does duty for a chair in the schoolroom.

That was the beginning of my first day's experience of our village school, and I do nobody an injustice when I add that it was very much of a piece with everything else that went on that day and for many days afterwards. I have spent hundreds of mornings in school since then, and I had the good fortune to be sent, at the end of 1908, on a tour of inspection round the whole diocese, with instructions to report carefully on what I found in the schools, so that I have been able to compare one place with another, and have gained, besides, a fair knowledge of the whole work of the Mission. This is not the place to record any general impressions, as I am writing only about my own district; but it was a relief, as well as a disappointment, to know that the Wanigera school, apart from its pride of numbers, and the unique possession of Peter, was neither very much better, nor very much worse, than the other five-and-twenty or thirty village schools maintained by the New Guinea Mission.

There are Mission schools, directed by white women teachers, at Samarai, for white children and half-castes, and at Dogura for the pick of the boys gathered in from the outstations, and at Ganuganuana for thirty or forty half-caste boys and girls, which stand quite apart; and there is a village

school at Mukawa, under a white woman teacher, which almost deserves to be known as a secondary school, and another at Hioge under a white man, and another near Mukawa with a thoroughly well-trained Papuan headmaster, and another at Menapi, in the same district, where the admirable work of a South Sea Islander teacher is having wonderful results; and all of these schools show what can be done with, and for, Papuan children by efficient teachers: and there are others which only by extreme courtesy can properly be called "schools" at all. But I found that the peculiarities which I had noticed in Wanigera were only typical of those that occur, and probably always must occur, wherever the educational problem is not so much to devise a system as to find men capable of working it.

It seems to have been recognised from the first that this Mission could accomplish great things by the establishment of schools, and no one in these days could hope to argue with much success against that policy, considered in the abstract. But, in the concrete, the establishment of schools is no easy matter. We have taken it for granted, apparently, that what is supposed to be good for English children must also of course be suitable for children in Papua, and so we have been trying to give, everywhere along this coast, a sort of European primary education, consisting of the "three R's," with the addition of a fourth "R"—Religion.

Supposing European knowledge, to the extent of the three "R's," to be a good basis of education for the Papuan, it is obvious that, until a capable staff of Papuan teachers has been trained, only Europeans could be relied on to teach it. But the Europeans have not been forthcoming. The New Guinea Mission has never had more than a few priests, and fewer laymen, and never much money for the maintenance of more; and so the "schools" have had to be entrusted to such South Sea Islanders as could be obtained from Australia.

These men, with a few notable exceptions, had received but the very scantiest formal education, and they knew no more about teaching children, when they came here, than they did about running a steam laundry or making boots. Some of them had been to school for a year or two, as children, and others to night-schools in Queensland, and all were supposed to have been intellectually "brushed up" at Dogura, before being sent out to teach; but they had spent the greater part of their lives on the sugar plantations, and when their time of service expired, instead of going back to their own islands, they had come to New Guinea to teach the Papuans what they themselves had learned of Christianity. The marvel is not that they know so little, or that many of them do so badly as schoolmasters, but rather that they know so much, or do even as well as our own particular Peter. They are good men, in the Christian sense, and many of them are very full of true missionary ardour, so that the chief purpose for which they came to New Guinea—to help in the Christianizing of the natives—is admirably fulfilled; but, as schoolmasters, it is no reproach to them, or to those who brought them here, to say that on the whole they are probably as ill-instructed and incapable as any body of men who ever handled a piece of chalk or flourished a duster.

In New Guinea it seems to be agreed that the Mission must have as many schools as possible, though by sheer stress of circumstances we have been obliged to catch our teachers wherever we could find them; and as long as we are under no illusions about it, there is no reason to complain of the results of this part of our work. As a means of getting hold of the children, of coming into contact with them and their parents, of gradually learning to know them better and better, and accustoming them to some sort of discipline and regularity, giving them something new to think about, and a good many things that they must do at certain times

and in certain ways, whether they like it or not, as a means of gathering them together to learn the first elements of the Christian Faith, and accustoming them to the atmosphere of Christianity—for these purposes, our schools accomplish nearly all that we could hope for them. Educationally, as civilised people are coming to understand the thing, they are of very little value at all. This hardly matters very much, perhaps, in the present condition of Papua. Even if every child learnt to read perfectly (as many of them do), there is no literature on which they may afterwards exercise their gift. Even if they learnt (as many of them do) to write very fairly, it is an art which few of them will need to use when their school days are over. And as for arithmetic, no one has tried yet, in this part of New Guinea, to use the subject as a means of intellectual training for small children, or has even understood that it can be so used, but the little ones are everywhere busily making believe to add up impossible abstract thousands and tens of thousands and millions, which neither they nor their South Sea Island teachers could ever comprehend, or juggling with figures that are supposed to represent English coins which few of them have ever seen, or will ever have any need to use.

The Commonwealth Government, through its representatives in Papua, have rather half-heartedly urged that we should teach English in the Mission schools, and the missionaries are willing enough, and do what they can, for English to be taught; but what the Government really desires, and what the country, in view of the white man's coming, really needs, is an easy means of communication between the magistrates and planters and miners and traders and the natives, and a very moderate vocabulary of pidgin English would satisfy these requirements. It is not that the official and commercial classes care much about the education of the Papuan, but that they are constantly hampered

by the confusion of tongues which makes it difficult for magistrates to do their work, or for employers of labour to get their work done, when there is no general and reliable means of communication between the whites and the coloured folk. Now, in Papua, as a thousand, or five hundred, or perhaps fifty years ago in England, it is still the Church, and the Church alone, which finds teachers and bears the cost of the teaching. Some day, perhaps, the Commonwealth will undertake the universal establishment of schools in New Guinea, as throughout Australia, or the Church—which cared for education long centuries before the State began to realise that the education of the people was for its own corporate welfare, just as the Church cared for the sick and maintained hospitals long before they were dreamed of as public institutions—may take the matter in hand seriously, and supply and maintain capable white teachers for these fellow-subjects of King Edward, and these fellow-members in the Body of Christ. In the meantime, and without pretending to explain the standing miracle by which the children learn so much, even in spite of their incompetent teachers, I feel that the schools are a valuable arrangement by which we Christian Missionaries are able to gather the children together for training in the ways of Christ, with such incidental instruction in “reading and writing and ’rithmetic” as is possible with teachers who themselves can barely read or reckon, and with the merest minimum of books and other educational machinery. If the primary object of the Mission is to make Christians of the Papuans, we can be so far content with our Mission schools; nor shall we forget that in the schools of the Middle Ages and for long afterwards, religion formed the basis and object of all education.

It would not be a gain, from the missionary’s standpoint, if what are called the secular subjects should be as well taught here as in the model schools of Australia,

while the Church would have to try, as she must sometimes try elsewhere, to put in the religion afterwards as a sort of extra subject.

And when all is said and done, I do not know that our South Sea Islanders fail, as teachers of reading and writing and arithmetic, more lamentably than the average miscellaneous untrained Sunday School teachers fail elsewhere as teachers of the Catholic Faith. Peter's arithmetic is heretical enough; but it is not more wild, and it is, under the circumstances, less mischievous than the sort of thing that is too often taught in Sunday Schools. There is abundant enthusiasm in both cases: it is a better knowledge of what they try to teach, that both need.

A score of children walk up to school here, day by day, from Yuayu, four miles away along the beach, wading or swimming through the rivers and creeks, and some of them have been doing this for years. As many more come half the distance from the bush villages across the swamps. Unpunctuality, which is of rare occurrence, means extra work after school, cutting grass or carrying sand, and the children quite see that if they come late they cannot expect to go away early. They also understand that when, as has happened more than once, a boy from a distance has taken his chances and played truant too often, he should be hunted up and handed over to the Secular Arm, which, though merciful enough, happens in this case to be particularly muscular and dexterous with a leather strap. The execution takes place in public, and the victims make a great fuss about taking their gruel, though I fear the wretched little spectators enjoy themselves thoroughly, and wish that sort of thing might happen (to somebody else, of course) every week, instead of only once or twice a year. It is not a pleasant business, but it certainly encourages the others; and if reformation of the offender be one purpose of punishment,

it is also good for the truants themselves, since out of the three little wild men of the woods who have been thus faithfully dealt with in recent times by my Better Half, two are now well-washed and merry-hearted Mission boarders, and as unnaturally clean in their habits and regular in their lives as it is possible for small brown savages to be. Some day, they will go back to their wallowing, but it is good for them to have been trim and well-disciplined even for a part of their lives. The parents of such boys do not seem to mind. Perhaps they fear that if they protested against the grass-cutting and sand-lumping or the infrequent strappings, the strong Secular Arm might reach out even to them, and they might find themselves pulling weeds or making up the station paths in company with their children. Such methods would be impossible in civilisation, and it is more than doubtful whether they are according to the letter of the law in Papua; but a benevolent despotism is very likely the kindest, as well as the only efficient, means of guiding and controlling a people who are but just emerging from savagery.

There is, by the way, a Government regulation that obliges people to send the children to any Mission school within two miles of their own village, provided that English is taught in the school. We teach English, and most of our children come from within the prescribed limits; but even if we needed Government support in keeping up our attendance, a magistrate who lives twenty miles away, and comes here only four or five times in the year, would not, even though he is locally represented by Nonis, V.C., be of much real use.

One day last week I sent urgent messages to a score of absentees. Several were sick, and a few elder children had gone off to the gardens. One girl was absent because she was going to be married that evening. Another, living at Yuayu, who had been missing for a month or two, was

about to become a mother, and she had not been married at all. I found, on inquiry, that the supposed father of the expected child had already been lodged in gaol. According to accepted native custom, the relations between the younger people are of the most free and casual, but with a logical inconsistency, that could nevertheless be matched in other lands, a girl is held to be altogether disgraced if the natural result of her indiscretions should follow. And Government is accustomed to step in at that stage, in the person of the local V.C., and carry the young man, and sometimes also the girl, to Tufi. At first, it seemed to me a sheer impertinence that the white man's Government, which does not worry overmuch about the private morals of the natives, should thus presume to interfere with matters which, in the white man's own country, are generally allowed to be settled by the men and women themselves. Why should New Guinea natives be punished by imprisonment in the white man's gaol for offences which are not legally recognised as such in Sydney or London? But the answer to the question is obvious enough. In olden days, some one or other, probably the promised husband of the girl, would have tried to kill the other man, and the child, and possibly the mother likewise. Government has put an end to the spearing and clubbing that was the native way of settling these matters; but an alternative had to be provided for the old rough-and-ready methods, and so our Lotharios are handcuffed and carried to Cape Nelson. I am not sure that the more modern and peaceful plan, as applied by a civilised Government, is really so effective, judged by its results as a deterrent; but herein it is of a piece with many other changes that civilisation, for good or for evil, is obliged to make in the habits of these natives. We force upon them what we have fixed on as the higher ideal, and we compel them to conform to it outwardly, and they gradually forget or lose sight of

their lower ideals, which at least they were willing enough to practise faithfully, without succeeding, much better than the white men themselves, in reaching the higher level of conduct. It is here that the missionary must come in, unless the natives are to be ruined altogether. The white certainly professes to have a high ideal, though he very often falls far short of it; while the Papuan has a far lower ideal, which he nevertheless reaches and maintains. If the white man, for his own convenience and protection, decides to force his own high ideals upon the Papuan, he must take care at the same time to give those religious sanctions on which the whole scheme of Christian civilisation is founded.

The gunpowder and the gaols, which are necessary parts of the apparatus of Government everywhere, cannot do their work in Papua without the schools and the teachers of the Christian religion, since they can only enforce an outward conformity to civilised customs which are meaningless and even mischievous for natives unless they know something of the principles that underlie those customs.

I might fill page after page with stories of the Wanigera school as I first knew it, and almost as many with accounts of the endeavours and experiments which have really brought it, once again, to a condition of order and discipline, and to a fair pitch of educational efficiency. But a few random recollections must suffice.

Among the miscellaneous Christmas presents which came up here two years ago was a box of unassorted school material, and next day I found the top class very busy with new copy-books. A score of maidens of marriageable age were laboriously transcribing such edifying if inelegant sentiments as "Withstand every Inducement to Iniquity," or such gems of commercial wisdom as "Quotations come from all the Atlantic ports, and I advise you to forward your orders by the first mail," or "Previous to my

ship being consigned to you, I require to know the charges to which she will be subject." All this, and very much more of equally inappropriate character, in the most pointed, sloping Italian penmanship, such as our grandmothers were taught to write in the days when Queen Victoria was newly crowned. Some large-hearted schoolmistress in Australia, whose humour was as keen as her missionary enthusiasm, or whose common sense, perhaps, was inferior to her generosity, would seem to have sent her old stock to Dogura, and the people there had been too grateful (as proper missionaries always ought to be) to destroy the rubbish, and had passed it on to us.

We missionaries in New Guinea have to thank the folk "down South" for many kindnesses, but I sometimes wonder what they think we do with some of the funny things they send us at Christmas—the scrap-books, full of pictures that did well enough in the almanacs and illustrated papers from which they were cut, but are quite meaningless and uninteresting to Papuans; the yards of good linen that would have done well for bandages, had they not been worked with inartistic designs in coloured wool or silks into tablecloths for our honest packing-case tables, or curtains for our unglazed windows; the terrible cushions of crimson plush, peppered with yellow fluffy tufts that are supposed to represent wattle-blossom; the still more dreadful writing-cases tacked together out of yellow satin and silver braid; the "leatherette" match-boxes; the "Pigs in clover" advertisements of somebody's tea; the tattered refuse from Sunday-school libraries; and all the other queer and useless things that nobody in or out of Papua ought to be allowed to see or to possess. One has to write conventional letters of thanks to the senders (though one's pen goes cross-nibbed with the suppressed excitement of doing it), but one wishes that foolish folk who encourage Bazaars would send these things to the next that

is held in their own parish, and not to New Guinea ; and that wise people, who will have nothing to do with " Fancy Fairs " and " Sales of Work " would just quietly burn them, or bury them in the back yard under shadow of night. I have a private place of sepulture in Wanigera, from which if the ghosts of inanimate things could rise and walk, some good friends of the New Guinea Mission would write me down a most ungrateful and wicked man. Pictures, by the way, that mean something to civilised people, are often quite meaningless, and therefore uninteresting here. Show a New Guinea man a photograph of an ocean liner or of a big city, and he will yawn, and ask you if you want to buy some coconuts ? Point out to him the size and magnificence of the " big canoe " and the " big village," and tell him that they are made of iron and stone, and he will probably ask whether there are no trees in *your* country, since wood is so surely the proper material to use when you build houses and canoes. It takes a good deal to surprise a Papuan. If an aeroplane could alight on this station to-morrow, just as the children were coming out of school, I doubt whether many of them would wait to look at it, unless they happened to think it was an improved kind of canoe, or a monstrous bird that might perchance have stopped to lay a giant egg ; and if it shot skyward again and sailed over Mount Victory, the Mission boarders would only remark that it flew rather badly, though they would certainly be pleased by any queer noises it had to make before it could lift itself from the ground.

The rain is still pouring down, and there will be no school at all to-day. I cannot end this chapter, long though it is already, until I have dragged in a few more odds and ends about the Village School.

The children are all excellently well-behaved. The

“manners” of people who have never been accustomed, for example, to use pocket-handkerchiefs, are sometimes rather trying, if you have to live constantly in their company, as a missionary does, and this sort of thing is especially a trial on a hot morning in school, or when there is an epidemic of coughs and colds. But you have to remember that it is, after all, just a question of what one has been used to, and that the natives, on the other hand, have their own opinions about many of our more civilised ways of doing things. They certainly think our habit of carrying handkerchiefs in our pockets is a nasty one, and that some of our domestic arrangements, in the matter of lavatories and so on, are altogether less desirable and seemly than their own primitive use of the sea-beach or the bush. And so the irritable civilised man must sometimes force himself to be blind and deaf and altogether gorgeless in the presence of a hundred and fifty children who are not much more “refined” than their fathers were, though they are certainly less unpleasant than the hulking fellows who sometimes hawk and spit and reek of drink and blasphemy round the lanes and public-houses in English-speaking lands.

But for good order and instant obedience to commands, if only they are given sharply and loudly enough, it would not be very easy to show anything better than one of our Mission schools. While outbreaks of disorder are unknown, and deliberate disobedience so rare as to be almost negligible, it is nevertheless even harder for Papuan children to be quiet than it is for white boys and girls. At first they hardly seem to understand what “silence” means. Even when the whole 150 were really trying to be still, one or two would be sure to talk, and fifty others would at once shout out to them to be quiet, “*Agugum, Agugum*”; just as all the children in Church will sometimes call out in chorus to an old man who may assent too loudly to some point that a preacher has made in his sermon. Comparative stillness, once again, and then a

whisper from some corner, and another loud protesting chorus of "*Agugum, Agugum*"—"Be quiet! Oh, *do* be quiet!"

Nowadays, since we have come to understand each other, these children and I, there is absolute silence at a few special times, as when we are falling in, or marking the roll, or changing classes, or marching in or out of school; but at other times, and even while lessons are going on, no one minds a little gentle talking: it is probably only one child explaining some puzzle to her neighbour, or the boys of the top class arguing among themselves the exact meaning of some Wedauan word that Thomas Kasiko used a moment before.

Very little punishment is given, or needed, in the school. There are plenty of canes lying handy, cut by the dozen from the bush, and stuck into the schoolroom wall near my table; but they are rarely used, except as pointers, or when Peter wants to emphasise some heretical proposition, theological or arithmetical, by loud rapping on table or blackboard. When a boy has to be punished, he accepts it quite sensibly if he is persuaded of its justice, and with such good temper that I am often half ashamed of making such a fuss. Naturally, and all the more after a year or two in New Guinea, one is disposed to take things with philosophic quietness, but you have to work yourself into an excitement now and then, if you are to make an impression on these easy-going people, and it is only by keeping the ideal always a little way up over their heads that you can hope to move, and take them with you, steadily forward.

There was a girl, in the top class, who did not read very well, and I used to stand beside her, pointing out the words. One morning, when my feathers were ruffled by something or other—a broken night, or the after effects of quinine, perhaps—I said, impatiently, "Oh! *You* can't read. You had better go and sit with the little children in Class One." She

smiled, as if I really had managed to say something quite funny at last, and got up, and sighed, and wrapped her petticoat more tightly round her, and went quietly over, and settled down on the sand among the baby boys and girls of three or four, who were being taught the very beginnings of things by a young tyrant of eight or nine, a boy with a wizened countenance and a small skin-diseased body, and a tremendous manner of boundless energy and authority. I was struck by the good temper with which the girl accepted what I, in my foolishness, had meant as a disgrace to her, but I was still more impressed by the way in which, within a very few minutes, she had taken charge of the class, putting the spluttering little tyrant of a teacher among the pupils, and doing some excellent work herself with the small fry. Ten minutes later she had got hold of a dainty little cane and was mistress of her world, and I was reproaching myself and wondering by what witchcraft she had made such a success of things directly she escaped from my blundering control.

There are some queer names in our roll book. *Yenjejeu* at first sight looks almost unpronounceable, but it is the musical name of a jolly little fat maiden who has just begun to come to school. *Masis* (for so she writes herself) is a Jewish-looking girl of seven or eight, the handsomest child in the school, and it was her father, thankful for what he knows of the blessings of civilisation, who decided to call her *Matches*. *Rais* was so named because she was born while her father was away as a carrier, and much enjoying the generous daily Government rations of bulamakau and rice. *Rusi* is a small boy, and his name means "a gun," and he is so called because he came into the world while his father was on patrol with Government and carrying, along with his share of baggage, the R.M.'s shot-gun. *Yangagamin* means "big belly," and *Yagur* means "shivery," and it is easy enough to guess how these boys got their names.

At Uiaku, some of the school children bear names that would be counted obscene elsewhere, though nobody notices them here. Once again, it is just a question of what people are used to. The European poet may write about his lady's eyes or hair or dainty feet, and even Mrs. Grundy does not mind talking about her "heart" as the seat of her frigid emotions. Our girls shave their heads when they marry, and scrape away their eyebrows with the same chip of obsidian or edge of broken bottle, and it would never occur to a Papuan to wax sentimental over a woman's hair, or to praise the scarred feet that are so flattened with much work in the gardens, and daily tramping under heavy loads; but a man talks freely about his belly, or any one else's belly, which he regards as the seat of all the passions and emotions, just as a European talks about his heart. It all depends upon the point of view. *Yangagamin*, "Big Belly," sounds ridiculous as a name to you or me, but the boy in our fourth class who bears it, or even the boys at Uiaku with the indecent names, would fail to see anything that was not merely comical in the splendid English name of "Great Heart." Other names of children in our school, musical enough on the whole, though sometimes unpronounceable still to my stupid foreign tongue, are *Aimore*, *Babaiuen*, *Atomo*, *Borita*, *Diriba*, *Fanito*, *Furaire* (who was born on a Friday, and named accordingly), *Genembo*, *Ikoni*, *Siok* (native attempt at "chalk"), *Keia* (sugar-cane), *Serara*, *Saveveg* ("a fly"), *Taragan*, *Yuayuteiti* ("the boy from Yuayu") and *Yakayak*.

For a long time the children had difficulty with my name, and my Better Half assures me that many of them still speak of me as "Mistah Stiggins."

I have always believed that it was Boso, from Aieram, who invented the "Sum-bod-dee-torkin" song, which is

recorded elsewhere. The other day he had a new jingle about the "Priest with the looking-glass eye," which he, or some fellow-conspirator, had set to a tune in *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. Boso, too, though he has never heard of Oliver Goldsmith, invented a long story about Kaufe and her bandages, at the end of which Kaufe herself recovered because the man with the looking-glass eyes got tired of putting nasty medicines on her leg, while "the dog it was," after eating the bandages, "that died." Boso, one of the jolliest boys in the school, is an ingenious youth, and though his keen-edged witticisms seem to fly most freely when he can have me for a target, I forgive him easily, for the sake of his brilliant good looks.

I had the fearful joy of introducing the first pens and inkpots to the Wanigera School, and though many of the children went on trying for weeks to use the pens upside down, and most of them got their nibs hopelessly crossed, and all of them were smeared as to face and hands with ink, the two top classes now understand how to manage, and their writing is as good as you would see in an average school elsewhere.

All through the Mission schools, I found they had difficulties about slates and pencils. The slates were always getting broken and the pencils lost. For a year or so we have made the children the responsible owners of the things, and there is never any trouble. Every one was supplied with a new slate and pencil, or penholder and pen, and newcomers get slates of their very own at the end of their first morning's school. Children can buy new pencils or nibs any morning, just before school, in exchange for coconuts, or taro, or orchids in bloom, or caterpillars, or pretty well anything else they care to bring. And a broken slate—though not more than five were broken in the year—can be replaced

by a few afternoons' easy work on the Station, at the current rate of wages. Wherever you go, you see children with slatepencils or penholders stuck into their armlets—the badges, of higher or lower degree, of our one local secular guild or club—and you may meet them on the beach cleaning their slates with lumps of waterlogged drift wood, or pointing and polishing their pencils with the sharp edges of shells. Apart from the convenience, and the saving of time, and the economy of the plan, it is good for the children to have the responsibility of taking care of something, even if it is only a slatepencil—something which must be produced in good condition at appointed times.

We have one or two dunces: Garita, who comes from Murin, and is less than half-witted; and Embaki, who somehow escaped school-going until his fingers were too big and stiff to fold round a pencil; and Basira, who always sleeps peacefully in his corner most of schooltime, and a few others.

I have noticed no tendency to left-handedness among the two or three hundred children I have watched in this school, except in the case of these otherwise mentally deficient youths, who are all, it seems, naturally "left-handed." And there is Suka, the cripple boy, who walks on his kneecaps with his feet stuck up in the air behind him, like a tiger mosquito. Suka is not merely left-handed, but he tries to write backwards, as Hebrew is written, and if he has to copy anything from the blackboard he actually manages to get everything upside down as well. I have never understood how he can do it, unless there is an arrangement of lenses and looking-glasses inside his misshapen head, which makes him see the whole world upside down and inside out.

They are all lovable, these children, in spite of their snufflings, and their spittings, and their habit of not washing

until the afternoon, and perhaps not even then if the sky is overcast. It is easy enough to hunt half-a-dozen of them out of the schoolroom now and then, in charge of a pupil-teacher, who is charged to escort them to the beach, and bring them back in ten minutes reasonably clean.

It has been one of my disappointments that I have not yet learned to speak well enough to know much about the children, any more than about their elders, or to let them understand me, so that we might be friends together, as one has had the rare privilege, sometimes, of being friends with children of one's own race.

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This is a poor account of Wanigera School, after all, in spite of its length. I have spent so many hours there with the children, and it has been such uncommonly good fun, and there are so many worse ways of putting in a morning than trying to teach small Papuans how many beans make five, and the schoolroom is generally so bright and sunny, and the children themselves so charming, and so much more quick and capable than their teachers, that I had hoped the bright reflection of some of these things would be thrown upon my paper as I wrote about them. I fear I may not have made it plain that the work that is being done in New Guinea by such duffers as William and Peter, even in the muddling and incompetent way they do it, is nevertheless well worth the doing; and that the first half-hour of each morning, when these hundred and more of young things learn about Jesus Christ, Who loves little children, and about their Father in Heaven and the Holy Spirit—that even that single lesson makes it worth their coming miles along the beach or through the swamps each day, even though they do not learn much else, and though Peter actually does his best to mislead them with his queer fancies about matters physical and spiritual and mathematical.

Whatever else in the missionary's day's work is depressing, or sometimes seems sheer empty futility, the schools at any rate are well worth while ; and in them he may learn, if he be not, with all his wisdom, an altogether foolish person, far more than he can ever hope to teach.

There are not half-a-dozen in the Wanigera School who have yet been baptized, but there is a future full of hope and happiness for whoever, myself or another, is to be allowed to be the shepherd of these lambs and lead them on the rest of the way ; and in the meantime I would borrow the words of Colet's prayer to the " Lytel Chyldren " who should study his " Accidence," and say " Lyfte up your lytel . . . handes for me, whiche prayeth for you to God."

CHAPTER X

“MR. TOMLINSON”

MR. TOMLINSON and I have lived for two years in houses that are not fifty yards apart, and yet I am not sure that I have ever heard his real name. Everybody calls him “Mr. Tomlinson.” In New Guinea, when two people strike a compact of friendship, they exchange names, as lovers might exchange rings. Years ago, the real Mr. Tomlinson, who is now a priest on the Mission, was working in Collingwood Bay as a carpenter, and he paid a visit to the old village of Wanigera. The place was palisaded, and the narrow gateway blocked at night time by a huge slab of peculiarly tough timber. There were tree houses, and large supplies of spears, and the men of Wanigera in those days lived in constant readiness for offence or defence.

I have never heard the story in its completeness, for these old missionaries are too modest to talk very much about their own adventures, and the native memory is apt to confuse one detail with another, but the real Mr. Tomlinson, on entering the low gateway, was certainly in peril of his life. Public opinion is quite clear on that point; and everybody in Wanigera knows that it was this other “Mr. Tomlinson” who saved him, and that he was the first of the Ubir tribe to be friendly with the white man. It was in token of that friendship that he took the white man’s name.

And now, when the missionaries have been established in the place for ten years and more, Mr. Tomlinson is among the patriarchs of the village. He is not a Christian, and, as far as any one knows, it has never occurred to him to be baptized.

He is a polygamist, and many a time I have met him coming back from the gardens, marching slowly with a bundle of spears in his hand at the head of a little string of wives, all stooping under heavy burdens of taro and cut firewood. I do not know how many wives there are, nor how many children he has, but I know that the old man is one of the most straightforward and upright gentlemen it has ever been my happiness to meet, and that I would take his word as readily as that of an honourable Englishman.

I compare him, inevitably, to such men as one has known in civilisation, respectable and honest and lovable farmers or tradespeople, who seem to be, and who are, in the outward aspect of their lives, all that you could wish a man to be, but who, by simple lack of real opportunity, have never learned to value, or even begun to understand, the more definite and decisive details of the Christian life. Such men are sometimes churchwardens, and parish councillors, and all the rest of it, and they are admirable and splendid in their lives, though they do not conform to the particular rule of life that I, or any other priest or missionary, would be bound to lay down for them.

Mr. Tomlinson comes to church. Saving some rare time of sickness, I should think he has hardly ever missed a service to which non-Christians were admitted. He has listened, mouth and ears wide open, to hundreds of sermons, and he has come to understand very much of what he hears, though he can neither read nor write, nor reckon numbers beyond the limit of his own fingers and toes. But this old savage, who was once the most famous fighting man of the district, believes in God the Father Who created him, and in Jesus Christ the Son Who died for him, and he lives the life of one who tries to keep the commandments of God, and who knows that only by God's own help can he ever hope to do this.



"MR. TOMLINSON."



A TREE HOUSE.

Mr. Tomlinson is a good father, and two of his children were among the first of those who in this place received baptism a year or two ago. He has more influence, perhaps, than any other man in his village, and what he does not know about the customs of the community, and the daily life of its members, is simply not worth the knowing. He has had his lurid intervals, even since he became the friend of the missionaries. Once, at night time, here in the village, a sorcerer got under the house where Mr. Tomlinson was sitting with his friends. They knew he was a sorcerer, for who else would want to come and crawl about beneath a house that did not belong to him? And they heard him, and they hunted him—out of the village and across the river, and into the swamps by which we are surrounded. Mr. Tomlinson was foremost in the chase, and he came so near to the fugitive that he was able to set fire to his hair with a flaming torch that he had snatched up when the hunt began.

The stranger may perhaps have had ability of sorts, or he would not have entered the mysterious and close profession of sorcery; but he was an indifferent runner, and fell off a log into the muddy stream. Tomlinson plunged, and made him prisoner. But the man began to cry out that an alligator had got him. Mr. Tomlinson only laughed, and set fire once more to his hair, and kept his hold until the others came up, and then they found that an alligator really had "got him." The alligator happened to be a mere baby, and so the wound in the man's thigh was nothing very serious. They brought him back to the village, and because this happened in the days before Government began to deal with evildoers, they empanelled a jury to settle the case there and then. Seeing that the man had been bitten by an alligator, and that his back hair was all burnt off, they let him down gently, gave him food and a place to sleep in, and in the morning they escorted him part of

the way towards his own village, and dismissed him with tremendous threats of what would certainly happen if he ever did it again.

Mr. Tomlinson has been in gaol himself. A good many of the nobility and gentry of Papua are "old hands," and no particular stigma attaches to the fact, since missionaries and Government officials are few and far between, and a month or two at Tufi, or a year at Samarai, are among the most efficacious of civilising influences. Many a man has returned from gaol to become the policeman of his own village, and to teach his neighbours some of the lessons of law and order that he has learned while he was in the white man's prison.

I have never heard what my friend had done to deserve his punishment; but it must have been rather bad, since he was leg-ironed, and kept always under special supervision. And yet he got away somehow, and down into the water of Tufi harbour, and he managed to swim to the other side, all hampered as he was, only to be re-captured by the police, who had gone over in their boat and were waiting for him.

Good old Tomlinson! Your picture hardly does you justice! You are generally splendid as to head-dress, and long as to the hair; but an old man died the other day, and you have cut your hair and put away your ornaments in sign of mourning. You rarely wash—perhaps appearances are not, in your case, deceptive, and it may really be that you never wash at all! Your mouth is ever scarlet with the juice of betel-nut, and your teeth are dreadful, and surely you are altogether one of the dirtiest-looking old gentlemen in all the wide world; but I am proud to call you by the name of friend. You are in no way beautiful to look upon, but I love you and I honour you. You have been a good neighbour here, and I shall count myself a happy

man if in the hereafter we may be neighbours once again ; for you are of the number of those who, with little guidance and with almost no real opportunity, have found a way that has led you to the very borderland of the Kingdom of Heaven !

CHAPTER XI

THE BOARDERS

I KNEW, before leaving Sydney, that the Bishop was going to send me to Collingwood Bay, and I had gathered from various sources, that neither Wanigera nor Uiaku was just an ordinary mission station of a commonplace kind. The annual printed reports, and the people in the head office, and two or three returned missionaries, were positive that the tribes living in these villages were larger than any others between Cape Ducie and the German boundary, and that the Wanigera garden was finer than any other in the Mission—pineapples, and paw-paws, and custard-apples, and guavas, and cavendish bananas, and mangoes, and tomatoes, and cabbages, and cauliflowers, and broad beans, and cucumbers, and scarlet-runners as plentiful there as blackberries in England, or muscatels in South Australia—and that Uiaku, where I expected to live (or, according to my less encouraging friends, to do the other thing), was out and away the most unhealthy station in the diocese, though Wanigera, where I might sometimes go for a change, was certainly very nearly as bad.

This threefold pre-eminence of my future district—largest population, best garden, worst climate—was not altogether unattractive to one who was just beginning his missionary life.

If it were a good thing to be a missionary to the heathen at all, then of course the more heathen the better.

After the magnificent but rather expensive fruit shops of Sydney, this prospect of bananas and pineapples in pro-

fusion was captivating enough, though one might feel a little uncertain about "paw-paws." And if duty called one to come and live in an indifferent climate, then the more indifferent the better, thought I. I had already begun to hope that it might be possible for a careful man to live in New Guinea without losing his health, and had even dared to talk to incredulous friends about the possibility. If the experiment was to be made at all, let it be in a place where everything was against me, so that success, if it came, could not be lightly explained away as the mere result of sheer good luck or exceptionally favourable surroundings; while, on the other hand, if I was going to be ill, like everybody else, it would be just as well, after all that reckless preliminary talk, to have been knocked over in a fever-infested district where no white men, let alone a new chum, could be expected to go very strong, or for very long. It might prove convenient if I were able to explain, when I came back to Sydney, if I ever did come back, that really the whole thing was so exceptional, &c. &c. &c. But I knew another thing about Wanigera, which from the very first had caused me deep concern.

In the monthly *Missionary Notes*, which I had been reading very carefully, as well as in the Annual Reports, were various references to the "boarders" on the Mission Station. No exact details were given, but it appeared that I should find a number of boys, actually living on the premises, whom I should have to feed and clothe and teach and watch over day and night. I knew that it could hardly be quite like the boarding schools one had known in England, though after a little while I persuaded myself that it would probably be much worse, since I was certainly not cut out to be a sort of house-master, with never a wife to interview and entertain the parents, nor any well-trained housekeeper to look after the boys and attend to their feeding and their

washing and their mending—for of course they would want as much food as the boys of other countries, though they might wear fewer clothes.

It was very good indeed to feel that I was going at last on foreign service, and to look forward to a “solitude cure,” after living too long in cities and crowds; and as I came up the Australian coast, and on the day that I saw New Guinea for the first time, and when I landed at Samarai, and as I met one after another of the Mission staff, it all seemed more delightfully interesting and more worth while than I had ever expected it to be; and not for a long while had I felt so buoyant and exhilarated; but behind it all, and never absent very long from my anxious thoughts, was the awful shadow of those abominable “Boarders.” What would the creatures be like? What sort of food would they eat? Who would cook it for them, and wash up afterwards? Who would nurse them and rub their little chests and give them treacle posset when they fell ill? What about their sleeping arrangements, and their washing and their mending? Was I to become bear-leader to twenty or thirty wild and perhaps very rowdy little heathens, for whom I was to be held wholly responsible? Would not this be a man’s work in itself, and could I hope to have any time or energy to do or think about anything else? If I must tell all the truth, I gradually worked myself, with very little difficulty, into the state of being thoroughly scared of those “Boarders,” and all that they implied.

And then, when I got close up to this thing, it proved to be the simplest and most natural and the easiest and pleasantest arrangement imaginable; and once again I had done what some of us spend so much of our lives in doing—I had made up my mind, in spite of past experience, that the Unknown was sure to be something tremendous, and perhaps rather terrible (*Omne ignotum, &c.*).

As a matter of fact, these "Boarders" are mere ordinary human boys of a particularly delightful brand, of any age from six or seven to fifteen or sixteen. It is quite true that they live and board on the station, and that I am their father and their mother and all their relations, and that to me they look day by day for food, and night by night for a place in which to sleep, and now and then for a new suit of clothes, and that I alone must tend them when they are sick, and superintend their education and their exercise and their recreation and look after them generally; but though this truly sounds as though it might be some great matter, in actual practice the Boys' House almost runs itself, and the boarders who live in it are far more easy to manage than dogs or guinea-pigs or white mice, or any other domestic pets. They are little wild creatures of the bush to begin with, but we catch them, and teach them all manner of beautiful tricks, and after a few years we let them go again, and for the rest of their lives they are the intimate friends of the missionaries, and most of them, sooner or later, begin to attend one or other of the preparation classes for Baptism.

If any one cares to keep pets, or domestic animals at all, I can recommend these boys of mine as being far more interesting and useful, and far less trouble than the ordinary run of living things. They do not break down the fences, like the goats, but rather mend them; or get carried away by hawks, like the fowls; they don't stray, or need to have everything done for them; they do almost everything for themselves; they are always good company, and keep the station very lively, and do all the necessary work; and they are learning lessons, meanwhile, that will be useful to them as long as they live. But let us begin at the beginning.

Anything between twenty and thirty boarders is a convenient muster for this station, though some day, for the boys' own sake, it may be worth while to take twice as many.

When the numbers fall below about twenty, we look round the village, or through the lower classes at school, and pick out a few likely youngsters. We announce that we want more "Mission boys," and tell the chosen ones that they had better ask their fathers and mothers to give them to us for a few years. Sometimes the first move is made by a boy himself, though this does not commonly happen until he is old enough for many mixed motives to have begun their work in him. It rarely happens that any boy, on whom the vocation falls, is unwilling to come, nor do the parents ever put obstacles in the way of their coming. At the middle and end of each year there are some leaving, and a fresh draft of boys soon afterwards takes their place. Newcomers undertake to stay for two or three years. Until lately, boys pledged themselves for no particular time, and many of them lived on the station for six or seven years, until they left school. That was certainly the better plan, as it gave longer for the forming of their characters, and there was a more continuous corporate life in the Boys' House; but we are becoming more sophisticated, and no longer care to commit ourselves except for short and exactly limited periods.

These boarders have a large house of their own, built of native materials, with a high roof, and a wide open floor. There are no windows, and only one door, which opens on to a small verandah. Round the walls, on three sides, run broad shelves, upper and lower, like open berths in a ship's cabin. On these shelves the boys sleep, and keep their little treasures, and their cooking pots. Each has a blanket of his own, as well as a native sleeping-mat. In New Guinea houses a fire is kept burning through the night, for warmth, and for light, and in readiness for the next morning; but on most of our Mission Stations, after the boys' dormitory has been burnt down once or twice, it is found cheaper and

less distracting to forbid the all-night fire, and to provide the boys, instead, with blankets and an old hurricane lamp. Soon after daybreak—at any time, that is, later than about half-past five—Peter knocks noisily upon their heavily barred door, and tells them to “Gedd upp.” No one hears him, and he sits heavily down on the verandah and puffs away at his pipe. After a little while he hammers on the door again, and bids them “Wa-kupp.” It may be ten minutes or so before any one bothers to take any notice of him, and a quarter of an hour before the boys drag themselves out of the house and sit shivering round on the verandah, still wrapped in their blankets. But Peter does not mind. He is patience personified, and perhaps that is why he is, on the whole, better qualified to deal with slow-going Papuans in the minor matters of daily routine than an average Englishman would ever be.

I have tried the experiment, from time to time, of ringing the bell myself at six o'clock precisely, and leaving it to the boys to wake each other and get themselves over to the Church by five minutes past six. They managed it somehow, after the first morning or two, and we had the short service in a decent, orderly manner, but it was not a success. The boys hated the new arrangement heartily, as they hate everything that savours of violence or energy or levity in the very early morning. At night time they are as lively and bright as opossums, especially if there is a full moon, but in the early morning they are as drowsy and blinky as owls or opossums in the daylight.

And I, too, disliked this early parade in public quite as much as did my victims. No man, whatever his colour or his profession, is at his best in Papua at the beginning of the day; and, though I really love these boys well enough as a general thing, I used to find them altogether unpleasant as they staggered dismally and only half awake over the wet grass to

the Church. I stood at the door as they went in, to keep tally, and again as they came out, to say "Good-morning," but they were hoarse-voiced, and they coughed and sneezed, and had bleary eyes, and gaped all through the service, and smelt like a badly kept Zoological Gardens. Altogether, the effort has been such a daily shock to them, and such a trial to me, that we have generally dropped back, very soon, to the more peaceful and haphazard ways of earlier times, and though Peter's open-air service is far from edifying, there is much to be said for the plan which prevents me from meeting my boarders officially until they have been cleansed and sweetened by an hour or two in the air and sunshine, or even, if the day is reasonably warm, by a bath in the bright sea-water. And old Peter, who never hurries himself, nor cares that other people should hurry, goes his own way, and begins his leisurely business so much earlier than any one else would do, and carols his morning hymn with such lark-like freshness and energy, that he and the boys have finished *taparoro* and begun their field work half-an-hour or so earlier than they would do under my methodical, and civilised, and seemly, and altogether unsuitable plan.

From sunrise until eight o'clock, or perhaps a quarter-past, if any urgent work is being done, the boys are at work under the direction of the South Sea Islanders. There is always plenty to be done in the garden and about the station, wood (and sometimes water) to be got in, buildings to be repaired, fences mended, grass cut, and food cooked.

At eight o'clock, *bagi-bagi* ends, and they break their fast. Children in the village, like their parents, can never be sure of a regular meal in the morning. It all depends on whether anything was left over from the night before. Our station boys get two full meals, morning and evening, with a lighter meal in the middle of the day. They need this, by reason of their longer hours and harder work; and the immediate

improvement in their physical condition, and rapid healthy growth, compared with that of village children at the same stage, is full justification, if any were needed, for the fuller and more varied diet we give our boarders. It is quite possible, of course, that this may be one of several reasons which make the boys so willing to come to us. And yet it is a very simple and inexpensive diet after all. Food is good and abundant in this district—in striking contrast to Mukawa, where the people are always on the verge of famine, and obliged to go away in their canoes very often to look for food. Nothing seems to grow well there, except bananas, and the boarders (boys and girls) at the Mission Station have to be fed chiefly on imported, and therefore comparatively expensive, rice.

The current price of everything in Wanigera is exactly what we like to give. The people bring the food, and we give the tobacco, and it would never occur to any one that the missionaries had paid more or less than precisely the proper price in every instance. Roughly, we give a stick of tobacco, which costs about a penny halfpenny, for twenty-five to thirty pounds of taro or yams, and the same for fifteen coconuts, or for eight or ten pounds of sago, though when sago is very plentiful, and the supply everywhere greater than the demand, we expect to get half as much again for our tobacco. A turtle is worth four or five sticks, though I once gave ten for a huge creature that had been caught in a creek not far away. It was in the jaws of an alligator when the men first saw it, but they frightened the alligator off, and brought the turtle to me with one of its fins eaten right away. A wallaby fetches two or three sticks at ordinary times, but much less when the big hunts are going on, and game is plentiful. A pig is worth a trade tomahawk, which costs us something over two shillings.

It would be safe to say that the boys, like all their countrymen, will eat almost anything. If a fowl begins to mope, they

watch it, and when it has died of some unspecified disease, they want to eat it. If William shoots a hawk that has been hovering over the chickens, or if a small live alligator is offered to me for sale (three sticks), or a basketful of alligator's eggs, the cook-boys are sure to be on hand in eager readiness to carry off the spoil. If my dog were to die in a fit, I know quite well that the boys, and indeed the whole population of Wanigera, would think it a wicked waste of good food when I should insist on burying him, and keeping him buried. Last night, as we came out of Church, a large green frog was clinging to one of the door-posts. Its body was six or seven inches long, by three or four broad, and the creature, with legs extended to crawl, must have been at least twelve inches long. Wanigera people do not eat frogs, but some of the boys, who came from Aieram, wanted to take this green monster and roast him on the coals, and they were disappointed when I claimed the right of sanctuary on his behalf. The Aieram boys will eat alligators, which the Wanigera villagers will not touch. On the other hand, the latter enjoy turtle, which is taboo to the people of Aieram. The Kumarbun folk will not touch eggs, and a cook-boy from Kumarbun will generally refuse to eat any sort of cake or pudding, since he knows that eggs are often used in the making of such foreign food. But somebody, in the mixed community of our Boarders' House, can always be found to eat anything. The cannibalism, which not so long ago was common all over New Guinea, may have been due to this unwillingness to waste anything that was edible, from the Papuan point of view, as well as to various other more obscure causes. Most of the older men here have eaten human flesh at some time or other, and "Mr. Tomlinson" has told me that it is "as good as pig" (with the advantage of not causing sickness, as pork sometimes does), but that none of the people would touch it now, for they know they "must not."

One more digression before we go on with the story of the boarders and their daily life.

A Maisin man brought me an emu egg one morning. I drilled a small hole in the shell, and as it was very far gone I gave but a small piece of tobacco in exchange, and put it where I thought the ants would soon clean it out for me. Taubad was my head cook at the time, and he found this egg and offered to empty it very carefully, but he brought it back with a hole nearly as large as the egg itself, and explained that the bird was too "hard" and big to have come through anything smaller.

Half-an-hour afterwards I saw him, with a chosen band of special friends, cooking the dreadful little rainbow-coloured corpse, that would surely have hatched out in a day or two. Taubad was toasting it on a stick over the fire in which some taro was being roasted for me, and Sinapa, his chief assistant, with one of my best forks, was mixing an awful mess in the cookie-house frying-pan. Taubad, with his charming smile, and fanning himself with the loose end of his waist-cloth, assured me that everything would be cleaned up beautifully afterwards, and scrubbed with sand, and well washed in salt water, but is it any wonder that for nearly two years, and ever since that day, I have been in the habit of rinsing my own spoons and forks before using them, in addition to anything the cook-boys may have done to clean them. It was rather disgusting, though many worse and really unprintable things have happened in the precincts of my cook-house; but, as a set-off to the story of the half-hatched emu chick, take the following incident, which befell that very same night, at dinner. I opened, for dessert, a tin of preserved ginger, which some one had sent by post as a Christmas present. I offered some to Taubad and Sinapa, feeling very warm and generous as I did so, but the two boys started back together, as you and I might draw back if some one offered us a piece of toasted cat, and as

I should have done had they invited me to a share in the parti-coloured emu, and “*Bada, yau men a sagob,*” they said instantly and with emphasis—“Master, I don’t know what that is !” They did not like the look of the stuff ; it was not what they were accustomed to, and so they would not dream of eating it. The boys on this station will eat dead fowls, or mangy dogs, or unhatched emus, or lizards, or alligators, but they will not eat jam, or blancmange, or macaroni, or anything else they are not used to ; and I do not doubt they are sometimes as much shocked by my food habits as I am by theirs.

Some girls at Uiaku once offered me three or four pounds of fat ivory-coloured wriggling grubs which they had taken out of the sago-palms in the swamps. I was disgusted, and all the more so when the best-looking girl of the lot began to “head and tail” these grubs and eat them, alive and kicking. It was a nasty sight, and I only remembered, afterwards, that the Maisin people think our English habit of eating raw oysters is a very filthy one. It all depends, of course, upon the point of view—upon what one is accustomed to.

The boys—to come back to our station—are their own cooks, taking it in turns, two of them at a time, and month about. The taro and other roots are boiled in kerosine tins, or roasted in the embers of the wood fire. Sago is boiled in a native pot, and mixed with grated coconut or with rich coconut oil. Fish, when they come in any quantity, are smoked on an open wooden platform built over a fire on the ground. We supply our boarders with no table furniture, and some of the good folk who help to maintain these boys would very likely be shocked by the absence of tables and cloths and chairs and dishes and plates and forks and spoons in the boys’ houses ; but it is no part of the Mission policy to civilise the natives. The boys never used these things before they came to us, nor will they have any chance



MAISEN GIRLS AT UAKU.

of using them when they go away ; and, in any case, a big fresh leaf is more sweet and seemly than a dirty, battered, chipped enamelled plate would be, and fingers, which were made before forks, are sure to be cleaned after each meal, if not before.

Between eight o'clock and school, the Boys' House will be swept out, and blankets put in the sun, and the boys themselves will generally have bathed in the sea, or gone along to one of the fresh-water creeks. From soon after mid-day, when school ends, and until three o'clock, through the hottest part of the day, the boys are free again. Some of them sleep, and others go fishing with many-pronged spears or nets. From three o'clock till five, more work about the station, cutting mangrove posts for fencing, or weeding, or getting building material, or making sections of sago-palm thatch, or clearing up the ground round the coconuts. From five till seven, more freedom, and towards sundown the chief meal of the day. At seven, a short service in Church, *taperoro*, just a psalm and an Old Testament lesson, and a hymn, and a few prayers, and then a talk round the fire in their houses, and much making of fishing nets, and stringing of necklaces, and weaving of grass ornaments for arms and legs, and perhaps a puff or two at a bamboo pipe, if any one has a few shreds of tobacco, for every one smokes in New Guinea, except the little children. Our station boys must get permission before they begin, but the privilege is granted to them as soon as they are of an age when they would be allowed to smoke if they had still been living at home in the village. Perhaps it would not please some of the stricter sort in England or Australia, to see a group of boys and girls smoking a newspaper-rolled cigarette, passing it from one to another, just before they go into school. We might make and enforce a rule that no child should smoke on the Mission premises, just as a schoolmaster in Sydney might

forbid his boys to bring peppermints or white mice into the playground ; but we should have no more power to prevent the boys and girls of our top classes from smoking cigarettes with their fathers at a quarter to nine, or pipes with their mothers at half-past twelve, than the schoolmaster in Sydney would have authority to forbid bacon and eggs for the children's breakfast, if he were a vegetarian, or Irish stew for their dinner if he happened to be an Orangeman.

And so, in matters which neither concern us, nor are necessarily immoral in themselves, we leave the natives to manage things for themselves.

And it should be remembered that the Sydney schoolmaster, if he happens to be a smoker, probably consumes more tobacco in a week than the average Papuan has any chance of smoking in a year, since the amount of tobacco which would comfortably fill a briar-root pipe is made into at least half-a-dozen cigarettes, and each of these cigarettes is passed from hand to hand, so that no man gets more than a couple of puffs. Even if there were any possible or convenient substitute for trade tobacco in districts where there is no money, you would be depriving the Papuan of almost his only luxury if you managed to take away his tobacco.

New Guinea men get no alcohol, unless they steal it ; New Guinea women have no tea, unless they happen to marry South Sea Island teachers, or one of the armed native constables ; New Guinea children get no sweets, unless they are lucky enough to be boarders on a Mission Station at Christmas time. Their diet may be nourishing, but it is supremely uninteresting ; and though it would be easy enough to set forth convincing economical arguments against the use of tobacco for trade purposes, especially by the missionaries, I, for one, am glad to have a share in its distribution to the natives, in small quantities, and strictly in return for " value received," since I believe, with Spurgeon, that

tobacco is one of God's gifts to man, along with tea and coffee and sugar and quinine, and all the other good things that grow out of the earth; and I feel that these people of mine, and even the elder boys who board on the station, are all the better and happier, as I am myself, for the occasional cheering and soothing companionship of "My Lady Nicotine."

If the night is fine, there will be games in the open space in front of the Boys' House; or, if there is a moon, much dancing and singing on the beach. At nine o'clock they are supposed to turn in; but the rule is elastic, since on dark or rainy nights, or in the colder weather, the boys will often be asleep in their blankets by eight o'clock, and at other times they may have special leave to be noisy, or to race about over the lawns, or to go fishing with torches or by moonlight until ten o'clock, or even later.

Now and then, if the fence happens to be broken, as it generally is, or if food is scarce in the villages, you would find the boys prowling about with spears after pigs and dogs, which come and root up our Indian corn and newly-planted pineapples, or try to break in among the fowls. Once the dogs killed a rooster, and at intervals all through the next day I was disturbed by deputations of excited boys, who came to exhibit newly-discovered fragments of the unlucky fowl on my verandah, and to make angry speeches to any one who would listen. It was only one fowl, though found in many pieces, but the boys were so noisy and indignant about it, and so insisted that I must share their emotion, that I was very thankful when the evening came, and the tattered corpse had gone the way of most dead things in Wanigera. But for hours and hours that night the boys were stalking imaginary dogs, and hunting phantom pigs round the houses and among the palms in the moonlight, armed, each of them, with bundles of twelve-foot spears which they had borrowed

from uncles or elder brothers, and sharpened to needle fineness with a piece of shell. Nothing happened to any dogs, and I have never heard that these boy scouts do any damage even to themselves or one another, and it is good healthy exercise after all, and a sort of national pastime for boys who will some day largely depend for food upon their quickness of hand and eye, and their skill with the long wooden spear.

They have many quaint little customs of their own, these boys. When the new moon is first seen, a great shout goes up, "*Roke kaita!*"—"A moon, a moon!" Sometimes, when the moon is near the full, they pay mysterious and very solemn visits of courtesy to their friends in Kumarbun or one of the other villages, carrying with them presents of glass beads and jew's-harps and small looking-glasses and other trifles which they have saved up for and bought with their pocket-money, if coatless, trouserless creatures may be said to possess pocket-money. And a few weeks afterwards, with much grave and courteous ceremonial, the young gentlemen of Kumarbun return the visit, and leave behind them, not useless bits of pasteboard, but such sensible tokens as cooking pots, and canoe paddles, or bundles of smoked fish and boiled taro.

Once a quarter, or so, we supply our boys with new suits—strips of the tapa cloth, four or five feet long by ten or twelve inches broad, beaten out from the bark of wild mulberries, and bought locally at the rate of "one piece, one stick." Sometimes we give them lengths of red Turkey twill instead, of about the same size. On Saturdays there is no school, and the boys tidy up the station in the morning, sweeping and raking paths, burying or burning rubbish, gathering up leaves, and trimming the shrubs and the edges of the lawns. Work ends somewhere between eleven and twelve: they receive their weekly pence, buy anything they want out of the store, and are then free for the rest of the

day. Some game or other is always in season. We have no tops or marbles, but now and then some one sends us a new cricket ball, and we hunt out the old bats and stumps and try once more to "play the game." But all our bowlers throw, and we have never yet cared about playing sides or even counting our runs. The main thing is to get your turn as soon as you can with the bat ; and, while you are waiting, of course you can shout whenever anything happens, or even when nothing happens at all. If you want to get a man out you must clean bowl him. Any but the most high flying catch is contemptuously dismissed as a "bump ball" by the batsman, and not even the catcher objects, since it will be his turn to go in presently, and he would not care about being caught out himself ; and stumping a man, or running him out, is counted rather mean.

The boys play what they call football, with mangrove sticks for goalposts, and an old tennis ball, or failing that, a small green lemon. This is always a popular game, since it is an opportunity for unlimited noise. Rain, or blazing sun, makes no difference. Getting wet does not matter, when there are no clothes to be changed, and they will not stop their games and their shouting for any moderate amount of rain, and nobody minds the blazing mid-day sun, even though he may have shaved his head as smooth as an egg the day before.

The boys have various native games, and all of them are noisy. Sometimes they get a hard round fruit like a melon, or else a young coconut, and somebody sends it spinning along the ground between a double line of boys with small wooden spears, and they pretend it is a wallaby, and take pot shots at it as it trundles by, shouting their applause or their derision at each hit or miss. Another day they will line up on the beach, and go hopping along on their haunches, pretending to be wallabies on the edge of a feeding-patch ;

or they interlace their hands, and a couple of the smallest boys are set to dance along the line—but anything will do as a game for these boys of ours, as long as there is no need for any one to keep quiet while it is being played.

If they suddenly fall silent in the middle of a game, something has gone wrong ; or, if no loud sounds come from the Boys' House, you will find that one of them is ill, and the others nervous and frightened, or that Colin has played the tyrant and a small boy is whimpering in a corner, or that the cookie-boys have boiled the taro in bad water, or the sago has gone sour, or there is no coconut to squeeze over it, or they may have quarrelled with William on some other question of food supply. Whatever it is, it is easily put right, as a rule, for they are intensely reasonable creatures, as far as they go. If there has been a misunderstanding about the sago, as happened not so long ago, when a whole fortnight's supply vanished in less than a week, the boys willingly accept the imposition of an all-round levy upon their Saturday pence to make things square again.

I called one boy "Ginger" directly I saw him, and the name caught on, though nobody guessed what it meant, and the boy himself has preferred it to his proper name, Dosar, ever since. Another boy, Imaiawa, an awkward and very bony chap, with swollen knees and elbows, was coming every day for medical treatment, and I told him, as he lurched up on to the verandah one morning, that he was like a camel, and "Kamul" he has called himself ever since. Another, with frizzy hair and audacious eyes and fair complexion, is queerly like the Adrienne Lecouvreur of Sarah Bernhardt, two- or three-and-twenty years ago ; while yet another, with dark complexion, and rolling eyes, and deep tragic voice, is a remarkable and ridiculous caricature of Mr. H. B. Irving. The relationships of these boys are sometimes puzzling. I had always understood that Sembako and Mandasur, who

came from Aieram, were really brothers, until Reuben explained to me that "Sembako had a different father, and Mandasur a different mother," which sounded sensible enough, and may even have exact meaning for sharper wits than my own.

I do not ever remember a quarrel among the boys, and they are naturally generous to each other. One will always share anything he has with his friend; and, if the thing is big enough to be broken in more than two, it gets divided and subdivided almost down to infinity. I have seen a boy, at Christmas time, "lend" a half-sucked sweet to his chum for a few seconds, and then go on with it again himself. There is some physiological reason, doubtless, for making a noise over food that one enjoys, though most of us have somehow learned to take things quietly; but Papuans are children of nature, and the noise that half-a-dozen of our boarders can make when they are chewing sugar-cane together is like the sea as it beats on a pebble beach or breaks against rocks in a high wind.

If I have any general fault to find with these boys, it is that nearly every one of them seems naturally disposed to be what English schoolboys call a "beastly sneak." This cannot be entirely due to fear, or cowardice, or ill-will, but rather, perhaps, to the absence of any *esprit de corps* or sense of personal honour. When one of our boarders, from Yuayu, ran away home at the end of his first month on the station, it was the older Yuayu boys who were ready with diabolical plots for his re-capture, and wanted me to lend them a dog-collar and chain so that they might drag their brother back with ignominy. They all understand a good deal of English, and some of them try to speak it. Last Saturday morning a small person came trundling past my house with a squeaking wheelbarrow, and as he came to the corner I heard him break off his song and say, very quietly to himself, "Oh,

'bout ship," and then the boy and the wheelbarrow fell over with a rattle and a grunt, and as he picked himself up and went off again he was saying, quietly and still to himself, "De-ah, De-ah. Dear, dear, de-ah," in the affected fashion that is locally supposed to be an imitation of my own commonplace speech.

Sometimes we all go stark-staring mad, even without the provocation of the full moon. There was the time when a nurse had been living here for a month or two, in a little house that was run up in three days for her reception. If it takes but a short time to build a house in New Guinea, it needs hardly any time at all to pull one down. Our visitor went away in the schooner early one morning, and word had been given over-night that as soon as she was out of sight and hearing her temporary home was to be cleared away. There is no game a Papuan boy loves better than "house-breaking," and our youngsters made a dash at that poor little house, shaking it to pieces in half-an-hour, while a cat and kitten shot out of the window and went sailing over the lawns and up the nearest trees, as if they thought that all the dogs in Papua were after them. Such a noise that morning! but by nine o'clock the useless sago thatch had all been burned, and the mangrove posts all carefully stacked away, and the ground raked over, so that but for the oblong patch of anæmic yellow grass you would scarcely guess that a house had ever stood there at all.

And then there was that delirious fortnight, when my Better Half had gone away to be married, and Peter was in charge, with general directions to have the station looking spick and span against the coming of the "foreign woman." Peter lost his head before the first day had well begun, and was so furiously excited all through the fortnight that he could do nothing himself, nor leave other people alone long enough for them to do very much. He was not satisfied with the five-

and-twenty boarders, but must beat up another fifty or sixty boys and girls to help in the great work. And then, bursting with importance, and armed with a bundle of brand new canes, he strutted about the station and gobbled at the children, who dodged him round the houses and behind the bushes, and enjoyed themselves tremendously. I failed to gather any clear idea of the general scheme of Peter's operations at that time, but it was like a fortnight of continuous Bank holiday, for everybody shouted and ran about from daylight until the rain came on at night; and Peter came many times into my house each day, sometimes to quarter the place like a dog that hunts for a mislaid bone, muttering something about a "Big fellow nipey" (? knife); sometimes asking for "Kallywax" (? tomahawks), and "Owes" (? hoes); sometimes to say that "Mr. Money give him no stick tobacco, and no shoes hop (? Jew's-harp), and no matchesey" (? matches), and how was he to pay his noisy crowd of holiday-makers? And would I please give him a great deal of tobacco and shoes hop and matchesey? And no, I certainly wouldn't. And what was he to do then? And I was sure I didn't know. And Peter would begin again all at the beginning about "Mr. Money give him no stick tobacco," and I would have to try to pitch him out, no easy task, since the man was very heavy, and the children would hear the noise, and come crowding round, until I sprang out among them with a shout, when the whole place would fall silent, as when Alice told them to stop throwing pebbles in at the window, and then some one would whisper *Ma*—"There, you see!" And they would go in the shade of a house, bubbling over with quiet laughter, until Peter, with his trousers tied up at the knees, came trotting round the corner like a well-fed cart-horse, when they would scatter all over the grass, and Peter would turn back and try to get into my house again, to look for that imaginary "big fellow nipey" of his.

Oh, it was a merry time when we were getting ready for the bride and the bridegroom !

But that sort of thing does not happen every day, nor do we often have excuse for going stark, staring mad. We have our milder excitements now and then, when the schooner comes, or at Christmas when we all go off into the bush for a week, and camp, and hunt wallabies ; and sometimes conjurers come down from Winiafi, and puzzle the poor ignorant villagers by fetching real hard stones out of swollen legs, and the stones are as hard and round as if they had been just common stones, picked up on the beach, and the village folk say *Ma!* But the conjurers get wild when we station boys bring our lantern, so that they can't do their tricks in the dark, and wilder still when we say it's all rubbish, and they had it in their hands all the time—and so they had. And we are sometimes badly scared at night, when Baiborot, who is not a proper boarder at all, but only Peter's cook boy, falls a-howling, and makes us think there are evil spirits about, and if William won't come and fire his gun two or three times on the verandah we have to make all the noise we can with kerosine tins to frighten the goblins away ; and we have our sudden sorrows, too, as when Kainawu, who had only been a week on the station, died suddenly of heart disease, one Sunday, just as we came out of Church ; and every few months there is bitter weeping and wailing in the Boys' House, for some of the boarders have finished their time, and are going home.

But these special things, these joys and sorrows, only come now and then, and for nine-tenths of our time we are just an orderly little community, with no particular history that is worth recording, though all day and every day, if good order and discipline and obedience and hard work and plenty of fun are really things to be desired, useful work is done among the boarders at Wanigera, as on a dozen other stations of the New Guinea Mission.

CHAPTER XII

THE MAN IN BLUE

NONIS lives in Oresesan, in the next house to Mr. Tomlinson. In private life he is not to be distinguished from the other men of his village. He fishes, and works in his garden, and hunts, and gossips on the platform under his house, as do his neighbours. On state occasions he puts on a uniform, and at once becomes the local representative of law and order. He is the Village Constable of Wanigera, and when "Gov'ment" comes here, or if there is an evil-doer to be arrested, or while he is travelling or entertaining travellers, or even when he climbs over the mangrove fence to consult the missionaries, he is clad in dark blue serge, with a scarlet sash; and if something quite out of the ordinary is to be done, he hangs a big brass token round his neck, a shining disc as large as a saucer, with a crown and the letters "V. C." in *alto relievo*.

There are hundreds of him scattered up and down the country, and he is a considerable factor in the gradual settlement of Papua. He stands, in the place where he lives, and in the parts thereto adjoining, for British justice and freedom, and although he knows little more about the Civil Code than other men, and may very possibly have as bad a personal record as the worst of them, yet he has the Commonwealth Government of Australia, and that I suppose means the whole force of the Empire, behind him.

I am so constituted as to recognise even in this uneducated Papuan some shadow of the authority of His Gracious Majesty King George the Fifth, and if this counts for less with the

others of our V.C.'s clients than it does with me, Nonis possesses a practical and potent argument in the ever-ready pair of regulation handcuffs, which hangs on the inner wall of his house, among the pig nets and hunting spears. All the village knows that in certain circumstances, of which the V.C. must himself be judge, it is his duty to clap these handcuffs on to any outrageous disturber of the peace, or notorious offender against public morals, and carry him straightway to the presence-chamber of the Resident Magistrate at Tufi.

Village Constables are not allowed to have keys to the handcuffs. The regulations provide that when once a prisoner has been formally arrested, he shall not fail of due appearance before a magistrate. Bribery and blackmail are not unknown in New Guinea, and even members of the police force have not always been above suspicion. An enterprising V.C., in possession of a key, might drive a very thriving trade with his handcuffs, snapping them upon one after another, and releasing his prisoners only on the payment of whole herds of pigs. Handcuffed prisoners have sometimes to be brought from distant villages, down from the hills, or many miles along the coast. I do not envy their experience in rickety canoes on rough seas, or marching over some of the mountain tracks, and yet one has never heard of accidents at such times.

I was once a witness of the investiture of a village constable. The R.M. had gone into the Doriri country, and to some villages that had not yet "made peace with the Government." On entering one of these villages towards dusk, the advance guard of police were threatened by half-a-dozen old men, who were armed with long wooden spears. All the women and children and younger men had disappeared, and there was something admirable in the attitude of these grey-headed, wicked-looking old chaps who were gathered, half-hesitating, half-defiant, on the lower platform of a lofty house. They were wise enough to put away their spears and shields



JUKUK.



NONIS, V.C.

when the main body came up, and they spent that night handcuffed together, sitting round a fire, and fraternising with the police.

Some younger men came creeping back out of the bush next morning, and while a tame hornbill flapped up and down over the houses, the magistrate made a long and spirited speech to the little audience of ten or twelve. They watched him out of the corners of their cunning eyes, and seemed to be listening to every word of that elaborate oration. Full understanding could not have been possible, for the speech was a complete and masterly exposition of the whole policy of the Administration in relation to native affairs, seasoned with judicious promises of much tobacco for wise and peaceable folk, and terrible threats of ragged ropes' ends for the murderous and recalcitrant.

All this indigestible mass of mingled politics and poetry had to be passed from one interpreter to another. The magistrate himself was an Irishman, and an orderly rendered his master's eloquence into pidgin English. An armed native constable translated it from that into a South Coast Papuan dialect, and then it filtered through a third interpreter who had learned something of "Hanua Bada Talk" in prison at Port Moresby, and who also professed to speak a language with which the Doriri were not quite unfamiliar.

The six old men gave full attention to the very end, and when it was all over they wagged their heads vigorously and protested most willing agreement, and accepted very joyfully the little present of tobacco and matches that was offered as an earnest of larger favours to come. And straightway the R.M. picked out the likeliest looking of the younger men, and turned him into a policeman then and there. The trade box was brought into the midst and unlocked, and a brand new uniform produced. A V.C. from the coast, who had come inland with us, saw his chance, and whipped off his own dis-

coloured garments before the bright new jumper and tunic could be wasted upon a poor ignorant bushman. No one interfered, and the recruit, radiant, if somewhat ragged, had no time to realise the imposition before his hands were busy with an incomprehensible advance of a month's wages,—the King's Shilling, expressed in terms of trade tobacco. The ceremony was haphazard enough, and fragrant, like so much of Papuan life, with the spirit of comic opera, but it sufficed, and the thing has worked well. There has been no more trouble in that group of villages, and more than once I have been honoured by a visit from that particular policeman, as he goes backwards and forwards on his periodical pilgrimage to headquarters at Tufi.

It is by this man and his like, under careful magisterial supervision, that many out-of-the-way places have been pacified. The average Papuan has no strongly marked individuality, and the average V.C. is no better than the rest, but yet, as an ever-present embodiment of the unlimited power that comes now and then to look him up in his own village, a power that can always be counted on to back him up in his work of putting down murder and theft and all violent wickedness, he is having a very considerable share in the patient civilisation of the country. Man for man, the missionaries and the magistrates and some of the more decent miners and traders may have done more, but because they are few while he is very many it is chiefly due to the V.C. that life and property are on the whole more safe in Papua to-day, wherever "Gov'ment walks about," than they are in Manchester or Melbourne. It is not necessary, as a general thing, to bolt your door at night, or to go armed, in New Guinea. The same is hardly true of the Australian colonies, or of some countries in civilised Europe.

Nonis is growing old and grey. The long years of responsibility have cut hard lines round his mouth, and he sometimes talks of resigning in favour of Kainori, his son.

The Papuan policeman's lot, like that of his London brother, is not an altogether happy one. It is no well paid sinecure, this office of his. He draws the magnificent wage of ten shillings a year, taking it out in "trade" at Tufi. And he spends, I suppose, two or three times the amount of his official income, after the manner of the Lord Mayor of London, in the semi-official entertainment of passing guests. Every policeman, every chance traveller with business at Tufi, makes naturally for the V.C.'s house, and (in this village at any rate) hospitality is not lacking. Besides the no light task of keeping an eye ever open upon the public morals of the village, there is special work to do now and then—sago to be made to the order of Government, trees to be felled and wrought into canoes for transportation, bridges built, and roads repaired. But the men of the village may have their own affairs on hand just then, and may shut their ears against the policeman's invitation to works of public usefulness. And it is at such times that the burdens of office lie heavy on the shoulders of Nonis. He nevertheless rises up like a man, and stands out in the midst of the crowd to deliver his message, like Peter the Hermit or some orator of Hyde Park, waving his strong arms and wagging his woolly head, and choking and shouting until the very dogs of the village are scared and forget to howl. He must have had a strong voice once, but it has become cracked and broken with over much use, and now, even in his private talk, he is husky and asthmatic. He comes to Church, and croaks out all that he has been able to learn of the hymns; he does not catch the melody of plainchant, but he is rather great on Moody and Sankey.

Nonis is popular in the village, and enjoys his little joke along with the best of us; but he has his sorrows like other men. Sobu, whose story is written elsewhere, is his eldest son, and often, in the night, I hear him wailing, hour after hour, for the worthless fellow who has been taken away. And

sometimes I meet him, solitary upon the beach, gazing towards the hills behind which he fondly supposes Port Moresby to lie. Sobo, as far as I have known him, is no fit object for such persevering love; but, as with many another father, white or copper coloured, civilised or half savage, it is to the far-distant prodigal, more than to the other sons and the daughter yet at home, that his heart goes out most longingly.

Once, on a Saturday afternoon, two young men fell foul of each other in the village—Kainori, the policeman's second son, and Simon Berem, an old Mission boarder and a Christian. Kainori is well built and muscular, but Simon is weedy, and all but blind with cataract upon both eyes. Kainori was the aggressor, but when Simon returned the blow as well as his imperfect sight would let him, the big fellow tumbled down and shammed unconsciousness, a well-known trick of his. Nonis heard the noise—it is part of his duty to hear all noises hereabouts, as well as to make so much himself—and hurried up, to find his son fallen prone, and Simon shaping round him in a blundering warlike way. Papuan village policemen do not carry truncheons, but they have their fists, and Simon went down in a moment beside Kainori. We are all content to recognise in Nonis two distinct personalities, the public and the private, and I should not like to think that it was the father, more than the policeman, who hit out then. Some one ran to tell me of the fight, and that Simon had been killed. Rain was just beginning, and my macintosh had melted long ago, but I slipped a flask of brandy into my pocket, and put a native sleeping-mat over my head, and walked into the village. Every one had gathered round the house where Simon was stretched unconscious on the platform. And every one was talking, except the mother and grandmother and other ladies of the house of Simon, and they—but especially the grand-

mothers—were already working up to the wailing that begins when a man is about to die. I could not at the moment recall, from among my schoolboy recollections, the proper treatment for a pugilist who had been knocked out, perhaps because I was generally the patient in those far-off days, though I seemed to remember some vague thing about sitting on his head, or loosening his shirt collar. The rain was coming down in torrents by this time, and many dog fights were going on under the feet of the crowd. The women, in their intervals of wailing, swabbed the body of Simon with hot water, from earthenware pots, and one of the old grandmothers shrieked out that his extremities were already cold.

I administered some brandy, and broke away the several yards of white bead necklace from the young man's neck. Beyond giving him this chance to breathe, and keeping the crowd at a distance, and snubbing the old women, it was not much that I could do for Simon.

When the night closed in, and rain fell more heavily than ever, they carried Simon up into his house. Knowing something of our village interiors, I should have been more disposed to plant him out in the rain till he recovered. I said that the mob must keep outside, and not more than twenty climbed into the house, where the women had made up the fire so that it flamed brightly on the circular flat hearth of stones and earth and ashes. Simon's mother warmed her hands with smooth stones plucked out of the fire, and then chafed the body from head to foot. The old grandmother rattled about in a dark corner, and before I knew what she would be at, she had pulled out a sharpened flake of obsidian, and gashed Simon's swollen cheek until the blood flowed freely. A new and heroic prescription, surely, for quite an ordinary sort of black eye. Though I was not anxious about the patient, whose pulse and breathing were

all right, I stayed on in the house for some time, watching the people and listening to their talk. There was no room for any one to stand upright, and the smoke hung heavy under the blackened roof, and the flames lit up the faces of a very moist, perspiring crowd, and showed the dogs lying in the corners and the big fish nets hanging along the walls. Some one produced a bit of tobacco, and another fetched the bamboo pipe and a piece of old newspaper, and the cigarette was rolled and stuck into the pipe and kindled, and Nonis was heard under the house, bidding the crowd to go away about their proper business. The inopportune Peter had summoned him to stop the dog fights, and to send all the people away, but before he had time to do this, and directly the old grandmother heard the policeman's voice, she slipped down the wooden ladder very nimbly, and talked to him very loudly and terribly in the purest Papuan Billingsgate, and not till he had gone home again did the old dame come back to her hot stones and her obsidian chips and her "dead" grandson. It was nine o'clock before the young man came "alive" again, as they called it; but, long before that, every one except the old woman was ready to agree with me that it was rather a good joke after all.

On the Sunday morning, just after the Christian service, a deputation came to me before I had taken off the vestments, and reported that Simon was much better, and that he thought he could sit up and manage a smoke if I had any tobacco that I did not want. I was obliged to be deaf to this vicariously charitable hint, though later in the day I gave Simon the thread which he desired for the restringing of his beads. Let it stand to the credit of Nonis that when the R.M. was here a few days afterwards, and Kainori did his best to press home a charge of assault and battery against the unfortunate Simon, the old man spoke up stoutly, and proclaimed in open court that if any one was to go to

gaol over the matter it should be his own son and no other. If he seemed to forget that it was his own hand which had "killed" Simon, it was also clear that he had forgiven the old grandmother for her noisy insults; and whatever his private and professional failings, the V.C. of our village showed himself once again a better sportsman than either of his sons.

CHAPTER XIII

BERNARD AND THE BRAT

WHEN we landed that first time at Wanigera in the middle of the night, I made acquaintance with a youth whose name I had never heard before; who soon established himself as the leader and chief of my many guides, philosophers, and friends; who remains, and will have place always in my remembrance, as the most perfect and gentle Papuan I have ever known.

It was a rough sort of landing. The night was black; with no moon and never a star to guide us, and though the deep sea-water was marked with phosphorescent streaks where fish moved beneath us, and the oars sparkled and left swirling patches of liquid fire in the places where they had been dipped, and the wake of our whaleboat, as we came from Uiaku, shone dimly luminous far behind us, the shore was dark and no landmark could be seen, except a small red fire under a house in the mid-way village of Yuayu.

My Better Half, who, amongst his various qualifications as a New Guinea missionary, knows how to sail a boat, and can feel his way safely over the reefs even on the darkest night, suddenly whistled a few bars from the *Mikado*, and explained that the refrain was warranted to rouse the sleeping station. In a few minutes we saw lights being carried along the beach, and the boat was turned inshore behind a small reef. The tide was high, and there was enough sea to have swamped our boat if the entire crew had not tumbled instantly overboard as we grounded, and kept her "stern on" to the

breakers. Four of the boys, without warning given, seized me as I staggered ineffectually over the seats and boxes towards the bows, and landed me in the boat-house with as little ceremony as if I had been a sack of potatoes, breathless, dishevelled, and indignant, and bewailing the loss of my extra special non-actinic sun helmet, which for some unknown reason, and until Arari sat on it, I was accustomed to wear by night as well as by day. Before I had finished shaking myself together, and wondering whether it was now too late to protest against this last indignity, a quiet youth came up out of the darkness, with a particularly brilliant hurricane lamp in one hand, and my helmet in the other. He called me "Bada," and with a courtly bow invited me to "come along sitation." This was my introduction to Bernard, or Jukuk as he was called in those days, and the shadowy smile, nothing more than a flicker, with which he watched me pounding along through the loose sand and getting twisted up in the tangling creepers, and stumbling over the lumps of coral and dead timber, was, I afterwards came to know, entirely characteristic of his quiet and humorous outlook on life.

It was too dark to see anything of the village through which we passed, or of the station, so that nothing dulled the edge of my amazement next morning. We came straight into this house, then not more than half its present size, and Jukuk (it sounded like "You Cook") busied himself with lamps, which struck me at the time as strangely well trimmed and cared for, and with a tablecloth which might be somewhat ragged along the edge, but was yet surprisingly white and clean. He produced a pineapple and a jug of steaming hot cocoa. Although fruit, more especially in the tropics, has a way of proving that it really deserves to be described as "leaden at night," and though cocoa was not the thing I should have chosen at one o'clock in the morning,

we were glad enough to feed on what this capable cook boy had provided, and I found, when I was ushered round the corner into my room, that he had already unpacked my bag and rigged up the mosquito net in a style that Major Ross himself could have found no fault with.

Next day, my Better Half hurried off to Tufi, as is related elsewhere, and I was left for a few days to manage for myself. It was then that I learned what a New Guinea cookie-boy, at his best, may be. Jukuk had been trained for several years by my Better Half, and though he always made decent formal pretence of consulting me as to whether it should be "korfee" or "tsee," and "bulamakau" or "feesh," he was in sole charge of the storeroom and the commissariat until his "Father" came home; and for two months thereafter he produced wonderful meals, and kept the lamps perfectly trim, which is not as simple as it sounds, and attended to the weekly wash, and preserved the house, by day and by night, in apple-pie order.

Bernard's name stands first in the Wanigera Register of Baptisms, which was opened on Easter Eve in 1908, but though a whole chapter might be written about Jukuk, the son of Guruguru of Kumarbun in the Diocese of New Guinea and in the State of Papua, I really have no right to number him among the cook-boys of whom I am now to write. He was invented by my Better Half, and belongs to him, and must stand only to his credit. This was so well understood, that, when that Better Half went away invalided, it seemed quite natural for me to look about for a new cook-boy of my own.

The feudal system is strong on Mission Stations in Papua, and though Bernard still comes back to attend to his old master now and then, or to go with him on a journey to Okein or Dogura or Samarai and back, and though he would never come on the station without making a ceremonious



BERNARD.

call on me, it would not have been easy for him to transfer his loyalty and his manifold capacity to the service of another lord and master.

I had not to look far for my own cook. New Guinea boys do everything in couples, and there is a sort of culinary succession in the Mission cook-houses. Every Papuan must have somebody to help and fetch and carry for him, and the helpers must have others to help them, "and so on *ad infinitum*." Bernard's understrapper was a handsome small boy named Sembako, from Aieram. When I gave an order to Bernard, even if it was only to ring the bell or to fetch my puttees, he passed it on to Sembako, reserving himself for his own master's single service, and so this other boy had come, almost without design (unless it was a deep-laid plot on the part of the far-seeing Bernard) to count himself as my special property.

Dear little Sembako! He looked after me well for about six months. He simply had no other object in life but to satisfy my wants and attend to my comfort, and see that all my goods and chattels were kept safe from harm. He was never happier than when oiling my big boots, and he was always at hand to interpret for me when some outlandish visitor called on whatever incomprehensible business. Sembako was a linguist in his way, but modest withal, and his favourite formula, when we sometimes failed of mutual comprehension, was "Oh, me bush boy, me no savvy nothing." It was quite true that he knew nothing about cooking; and in those early days I knew even less, but we blundered along together somehow, and I grew to care for him in the easy way one cares for anything or anybody that has become necessary to his comfort. If I was bound for Uiaku, it was he who hired the canoe, and hunted up paddles, and pressed for me a crew, and brought pineapples and paw-paws for my refreshment by the way. And when I came back next day,

as we cleared the sandy point near Old Wanigera, it was always Sembako who sat watching on a fallen tree stump, with flames of scarlet hibiscus in his hair, and the jolliest smile a home-coming traveller could desire on his handsome face ; and Sembako, too, who had got a fire blazing in the middle of the iron scrap heap which did duty as a stove, and more pineapples and more paw-paws on the table ready for the traveller's breakfast.

Dear little Sembako ! Of course I spoiled him. He would have been a better cook if I had known how to be a better master—better, even, than Bernard, if only I had known how to teach him ; but I was as ignorant of the duties of a cook-boy's owner as he was of those of a white man's slave, and at last the inevitable thing befell, and I had to fire him out of the front door one Sunday afternoon when he had been mildly impudent about some extra dish that I had ordered for dinner. I had no sufficient vocabulary available for the summing up of the situation, and so I had to do it with the inner edge of my boot. Sembako was surprised, as well he might be, remembering the way he rose and fell, and the distance he went before he landed among the crotons, but he bore no resentment. He never cooked for me again, though I found, on returning from my walk that afternoon, that he had left a splendid fire in the cookie-house, and set the table, and put his official bunch of keys on my plate, so that everything might be in order for his successor. We have never spoken of the tragedy, but we are the best of friends, and I think we both know that we were an incapable couple two years ago, and that we both made hopeless fools of ourselves that Sunday afternoon. To this day, I have had no boy who could cook rice or open up a soft-shelled crab with such skill as Sembako.

He has been back on the station this last week or two,

with a spear-thrust through the upper arm, and I have prodded him, and bandaged him, and hurt him horribly. He is as tall, now, as I am myself, and his hair is all tangled and matted together, and his whole person as filthy and unfragrant as it could possibly be ; but his eyes are as soft and bright as ever, and his sudden smile as sweet and brilliant, and the muscles on his arms and chest still race and tighten as in the jolly days when he sat in the dirty cook-house and chopped wood, or with ensanguined fingers pulled the works out of a wallaby or a wild duck.¹

His under-study at the moment was Taubad, who thereupon succeeded to the office of chief of the cook-boys, and afterwards entered the kitchen of the newer and grander establishment over the way, and at last served, until his time on the station was up, as head table boy, in a white and green livery, in the elaborate *ménage* that for a few months filled the whole of Wanigera with amazement.

Once, during those later and marvellous months, " Government " called here unexpectedly while the other people were at Uiaku ; but Taubad and his staff broke into the big house through a window, and, with no reference to me, engineered a splendid dinner, and rang the bell at six o'clock, and waited as usual at a perfectly appointed table, and never turned a hair, though it was the first time they had done these things without the " foreign woman's " supervision. They were admirably calm and collected, with a wonderful eye for what wanted doing. Remembering the maid-servant in middle-

¹ Sembako, alas, was killed by the Doriri, on Friday, July 1, 1910. He was one of a dozen boys whose school days ended on Thursday, June 30, and who were formally dismissed at ten o'clock on Friday morning, after the catechism lesson. He and another boy hurried back to their village, Aieram, and joined a party of ten men who were going to hunt on the slopes of Mount Victory. About mid-day, and while yet within two or three miles of this station, they were surprised by a war party of Doriri, and a man and a boy were clubbed and speared and killed. The boy was Sembako.

class households at home, and her little airs and graces, and her wicked habit of going all to pieces when there is anything very special to be done, I was thankful for the temporary proprietorship of these little naked heathen boys, with their quietness and dignity and self-respect and their remarkable self-possession and efficiency. At another time I had a chance guest for an hour or two, whom it was neither seemly nor convenient for a lady to entertain. My own cookie-house was out of commission, but Taubad and Sinapa played the part of hired caterers, coming over with a small army of underlings, setting a table and decorating it, and then, at the appointed time, whisking the covers off an array of well-cooked dishes, and falling into place behind the chairs of my disreputable visitor and myself.

But these wonders happened in quite recent times, during the few months that Wanigera boasted a well-managed house run on European lines by a white mistress. That was just an experiment, and though it succeeded magnificently for a little while, it soon came to an end, and is remembered only as an interlude in the history of the station. The natural man, still smouldering within the missionary, as the red coals sparkle and glow beneath the dull grey ashes on a hearth, still rejoices in the recollection of those dinners and the pleasant society, and his own escape from domestic responsibility; but it is rather of the older and the present arrangements that I must write now, the normal cooking, and the average cook-boys on an out-station, if one has any right to use such words as "average" and "normal" in such a primitive connection. All these boys have been specially fond of greasing leather boots. The neat's-foot oil has irresistible attraction for human creatures who love to smear themselves with anything that is smooth and greasy. I caught Taubad, one day, scraping the mud off my best pair of boots with an eighteen-inch butcher's knife, and pushing

the sharp point into all the holes and corners. I threatened dreadful things if he did it again, and next morning I found him forcing the blade of the kitchen tomahawk in between the soles and the uppers, working havoc with the hand-sewn welts. He smiled angelically when I threw up my hands and roared to him to stop, and then he shuffled gently away into the cook-house, with the tomahawk in one hand and the boots in the other, to puzzle over the unaccountable ways and tempers of the noisy white man.

I can hardly, without effort, recall even the names of all my cooks. Not that there is any domestic servant difficulty in New Guinea, but because labour, of a sort, is so plentiful, that one uses two or three boys for work that might quite properly be done by one, and so the histories of the cook-boys often overlap.

There was Maiorot, who is now called Stephen. He it was whose unwholesome ingenuity cost me two separate half-crowns. I had come across an old gun-metal watch, that had "stopped short never (as I thought) to go again," and I gave it, along with other rubbish, to Stephen, and laughed when I saw him in the cook-house, pulling the thing slowly to pieces with a tin-opener and a three-pronged fork. I laughed still more when he told me he meant to make it go. But somehow or other he did it, and when it had been keeping good time for a whole week I bought it in at the cost of two-and-sixpence, which was an extra six month's pocket-money for the boy, and the cheapest bit of watch repairing I had enjoyed for many years. And two hours afterwards the wretched watch "died" again, as they say here, and I sold it back to Stephen for sixpence, and he made it go once more, and when he had kept it going, under my close and very careful supervision, for another week, I bought it from him, once again, for another half-crown. I forget what happened to the watch in the end, but I have remem-

bered Stephen and his tin-opener and his fork when I have been tempted to exclaim against the muddle-headed incompetence and stupidity of New Guinea folk in general.

It was Stephen who set fire to the cook-house one Maundy Thursday morning, when I had cooked my mid-day breakfast, and was having a hot sea-water bath. The boy had to boil rice for the curry and lay the table, and I expect his enthusiasm was too much for the kerosine tin chimney that was supposed to carry off the smoke from our tumble-down stove, for he shrieked out to me that the place was on fire, and when I poked my head out of the bathroom I saw him dancing round the cook-house, with a long spoon in one hand and a piece of toast in the other. I dressed, to the extent of a towel and a pith helmet, and went out, but Stephen's yells had already brought half the village over the fence, and Reuben came, at the double, round a corner of the schoolroom, followed by his 120 children. Men brought poles and swarmed up on to the roof, and ripped out handfuls of burning thatch, and the thing was over, and I was giving sticks of tobacco to the fire brigade, with an extra bit to a fat fellow who had trodden in the curry and was limping about and groaning because he had found it so hot. It was quickly over, and beyond the loss of my breakfast, no great harm was done, since the cook-house was very old, and we had already talked of re-roofing it. But it might have been ever so serious. If the place had once got fairly aflame, or if there had not been heavy rain the night before, or if any wind had been stirring, sparks would have fallen on my house, and from that on to the Church, and perhaps the schoolroom and the South Sea Islanders' house would have gone too, and there was no limit to the damage that might have been done. Mr. Tomlinson, who had been one of the first to scramble on to the roof, gave me, as I sat in my bath towel and sun helmet among the blackened ruins, a glowing account of how Old Wanigera station, church, school-

room and all, had once been burnt down in much the same way.

In those first months, I knew simply nothing of cookery, and was miserably dependent on the boys for everything, except such food as could be eaten straight out of the bottle or the tin. Latterly, I have let them do everything for me—except cook. I managed, for a time, to shut my eyes, so that it might be easier, when meal-time came, to open my mouth without disgust, but as I have come to know more of the natives and their little ways, I have been more and more unwilling to let them have the handling of my food. None of them knows much more about European cooking than you yourself have taught him, and by the time he has learnt to make a curry or to mix bread and manage a camp oven, his period on the station is at an end, and you have to catch another boy and begin your teaching all over again.

After all, with some one to tidy up behind you, cooking is not bad fun, and I have found it at least as interesting and useful as the other hobbies which I have ridden, on principle, in this rather lonely place. It would be wearisome and monotonous if I tried to tell all the stories about all the cook-boys who have ministered to me in these three years. There was Mamato, at Uiaku, who was growing rapidly, and always very hungry, and in whose care nothing was safe. He had a passion, strong as a drunkard's craving, for bula-makau and cheese and milk, and if I could have believed his account of all that happened during our weekly visits to Uiaku, I should have thought that my dog lived chiefly, at such times, on pickles and tinned apricots, and tomato ketchup and tea.

Of course no New Guinea boy can be taught to make tea properly. They will do what you tell them, if you stand there and watch them do it, but at other times they share the easy-going belief of so many of my own country-women, that any sort of teapot, and any kind of tea, and a variable quantity of

water that is more or less boiling, or that has even lately been on the boil, will do—it is simpler to have a small kettle handy, and an arrangement for hanging it over one's big study-lamp, where with a double saucepan, and a few French fireproof china pots and frying-pans, a bachelor in New Guinea, who has two or three cookery books and regularly reads the "Hints to Housekeepers" in the *Guardian*, may do as well as any gourmet in a London flat. In a city, among civilised folk, you are conventionally at the mercy of your servants, but here it is easier and quicker and simpler to spend a few minutes in getting excellent coffee, or an omelet, or whatever it is, than to whistle for the boys and wait indefinitely while they prepare something which may or may not be what you ordered, and fit or unfit for human consumption, but which will probably look, and quite certainly be, horribly dirty. There are some missionaries and Government officers who take some trouble to teach their boys, or pay high wages to those who have already been taught, but I have yet to sit at a table in New Guinea where the glass and the forks, more especially the forks, are *invariably* beyond suspicion, and I very much fear that if I ever find myself again in the haunts of civilised men, I shall have trouble in curing myself of the white man's habit in Papua of rubbing every fork and plate with what well-bred Australians are accustomed to call "a serviette."

One of my cook-boys, Borum, a son of "Mr. Tomlinson," was chosen first of all because of his extreme filthiness. He had six months still to go, and I meant to try and send him away from the station cleaner than he had ever been in all his life before. He was scaly with skin disease, which is so common in Wanigera that no one takes any particular notice of it, with a bristly sprouting moustache and bushy eyebrows, that he loved to emphasise with soot from the kitchen chimney. He was fat and unshapely, and very awkward, but as strong as a horse, and he loved chopping wood and keeping a big blaze

in the cook-house, and until the time came for his baptism by the name of Philip, I always called him Caliban. If he had to fill a couple of pails from the tank, he would place them side by side, and while water ran from the tap into one he would try to hasten matters by catching half-pints in a tin mug and pouring them carefully into the other. I often tried, but was never able, to make him see what was wrong with this plan of his. Nor could I ever persuade him to keep a supply of water in the kitchen. He would much rather go backwards and forwards to the tank for each quantity, even a cupful, at the moment it was wanted, much as the women in the village bring home each day from the gardens only enough food and wood for that one night's use. It was some years before they learned to get in two days' supply on Saturdays, and the general theory seems to be that if they bring back more of anything than is just enough for to-day's needs, it will only be eaten or burned, and more will have to be got in to-morrow, so why not live from hand to mouth and always know exactly how things stand?

In Wedau village I have watched boys get a flame by rubbing pieces of hard and soft wood together, but this is not often necessary in daily life, since people in New Guinea are rarely without fire. In the houses, it is covered up with ashes each night, to be ready for the morning; and on canoes, or at work, or travelling, men always have their smouldering fire-sticks. Sometimes, in the gardens or on the beach, a log will burn for weeks, and be the common match-box of the community until it has burnt right away. Early each morning, the station cookie-boys run about after fire-sticks, getting them most often from Peter's famous fire, which can generally supply the whole neighbourhood at any hour of the day or night, or from the village, and then they set big fires going in the cookie-houses. Nominally, in my house, it is for the sake of the early tea or coffee which may be a luxury elsewhere,

but is almost a necessity here. Actually, the blaze is for the toasting of their own little bodies, which they hitch up close to the roaring flames, and by eight o'clock they will sometimes have burned up the supply of firewood which they had got in yesterday, and be obliged to struggle painfully for the rest of the day with damp sticks which they find in the bush, or with rotten timbers pulled furtively from a condemned section of the station fence. Peter is the only man who always has plenty of well-dried firewood in his kitchen. It lies there, in neatly cut lengths, piled from floor to roof, sometimes as much as half a ton together, and cheerfully suggestive of the regular and frequent cookings which this valiant trencherman demands. No one could, or would, resolve the mystery, until I met a gang of school-girls on the beach, all heavily laden with excellent wood from the gardens, which they told me was a present for Peter. Old Peter knows how to take care of himself, and though I was reminded of the stale old jokes about unmarried curates and lady parishioners and worked slippers, the cunning old chap somehow manages to keep up the supply of firewood, though everybody knows he has made up his mind, if perseverance counts for anything, to marry Melita from Mukawa.

I sympathise with the boys in their craving for early morning warmth, for though it is never really cold in New Guinea, I, too, love to sit near the hot flame of a monstrous Miller lamp until my limbs unstiffen and my brain begins to work smoothly, like the piston in a petrol engine that only moves properly when the cylinder has warmed up a bit.

It was Philip who allowed Kikikisauke to help him spread all my clothes out on the grass one day for their monthly airing and sunning. She was a lazy, sluggish person, but even she, it seemed, had grown tired of doing nothing all through the long morning hours; or perhaps her meditations on my doorstep had wakened in her some desire to do noble things,

and not just dream them all day long ; but I found her spreading out my " calicoes," as they call clothing in general in New Guinea. The girl was in mourning, and there was black defilement on every handkerchief and surplice she had touched. She had got her legs twisted up in a silk girdle, and torn away half the sleeve of a black lustre coat which she had tried to put on when she thought no one was looking.

Philip, besides his dreadful skin, was naturally a very dirty chap, and he always gave me the impression, which was quite possibly correct, that he spent most of his spare time " lying among the pots." If he had been a small boy, I could have soaped and scrubbed him like a dirty saucepan, but he was almost a man, and I had to use milder measures. One night, after *taparoro*, I rounded on him and Joseph, Peter's cook-boy at the time, who ran him very close indeed for general grubbiness. I said all the nasty insulting things I could think of in English, and Reuben translated them into very dramatic Ubir. Joseph gazed with fixed eyes, as if he had been hypnotised, but Philip swore most wickedly under his breath. Joseph turned up next day looking remarkably spruce, and even Philip had done the best he could, though that did not amount to very much. Later in the day, when he had straightened things up, I found him anointing himself from head to foot with the kerosine and chrysophanic acid mixture which was kept on tap for skin diseases, and when that was finished he came, all yellow and glistening, to say that he would like to take some quinine if I would give it to him. Quinine is the one thing that any one in Wanigera may have for the asking, and Philip swallowed his five grains, and was at once violently sick. That killed his new-born enthusiasm, and I could never see that he even tried to be clean afterwards, though I insisted on a fresh-water bath on the day of his Baptism ; but one likes to remember that even Philip, in the days when he was a

cookie-boy, caught at least one brief and passing glimpse of better things.

Poor chap! It is easy and natural enough for an Englishman to be clean, but these people have no tradition of cleanliness, personal or domestic—there is not even a word in their language to express the idea—and for some, such as Philip, the notion is perhaps as hard to grasp as I have always found it hard to understand the binomial theorem or the differential calculus. And now, leaving out all other boys, we come to Awui, commonly called “The Brat.” The name suggested itself on the day that he entered my service, and he prefers it to his own, just as his understrapper, the little pot-bellied, big-headed Kaikas, will hardly answer if I call him anything but “Nipper.”

I was away from Wanigera, travelling with “Government” somewhere in the mountains behind Pongani, when my Better Half came back from his wedding, and it was more than a month before I got home. It was the happy couple, as some one hinted at the time, who had the wedding, and I who enjoyed the honeymoon. On my return, I cheerfully handed over the whole current collection of cooks and table boys, broken and unbroken, including Dawe, the youth with the magnificent velvet skin and the carriage of a young deer, and looked about for some fresh victim, raw and unspoiled, upon whom I might begin from the very beginning, and train up as he should go, or at least as I wanted him to go. There was a large new draft of boarders, taken in from the villages to replace the half-dozen big boys whose time expired last Easter. They were all small and rat-like, and very scraggy, but there was one, whom I had never seen before, a ridiculously small child from Kumarbun, who had somehow managed to avoid the truant inspector and had not yet begun to come to school. His height was perhaps three feet, and his body very delicate and beautifully formed, with a curious raised scar on one

shoulder-blade, got from a bad burn when he was a baby. His eyes were the blackest, brightest living things I had ever seen, though the long curved lashes, which fell at once if you spoke to him, generally veiled their shining. His hair was very long and frizzy, so that his head seemed twice as big as even a Papuan's has any right to be, and there were musical bird notes in his voice, when one could persuade him to speak, which took my fancy from the very first. And so he became my cookie-boy, and people wondered what use he could possibly be, just as they had marvelled that any one could care to have the notoriously filthy Philip in and about a house.

But Awui has been the best cook-boy of them all. He had only held office a week when he asked if Kaikas might come and help. Kaikas is shorter by some inches than Awui (and they are both small enough to be still in the nursery if they had happened to be born white), but he is so round and plump that he looks twice the size of The Brat, and might possibly weigh nearly twice as much. I have felt, for this year past, much as a man might feel who has sold his big horse, and bought a pair of very small ponies instead. These little chaps are hardly strong enough to carry a half-filled pail of water between them, but they get the work done somehow, and bustle along, in their miniature way, though one would no more demand great feats of endurance from them, or abuse them for not going faster, than one would expect a pair of Shetland ponies to drag a road roller up Highgate Hill, or keep pace with some winner of the Melbourne Cup.

In the morning, my one desire is to delay the opening of my doors as long as possible, for there is not much peace when The Nipper and The Brat at last get in. Sooner or later I go out to pluck the scarlet hibiscus blooms and dewy yellow flags of the cannas before any other hand can take them, or to look at the smoke over Mount Victory, or to try and get the time by the rising sun, or to send a message

to my Better Half, or to tell Peter to keep his boys quiet for goodness' sake,—and then they get in. One will have been sweeping the sand in front of the house, and the other trying to coax a pile of damp firewood into a cheerful blaze. There are three doors to the house, but, whichever I use, these little chaps are sure to see me, and then they swoop down on me, and salute in imitation of the armed native constables (we are all fond of pretending to be policemen), and I have to pull myself together, and issue the orders for the day.

The routine is very simple. I tell Awui what is to be done, theoretically ignoring Kaikas, who is not supposed to have any official existence, and then the two of them go away into a corner where their whispers will not disturb me, and arrange between themselves who is to do it, and how and when and where it must be done. It very rarely happens that anything is forgotten, though it took me some time to understand that any given series of commands is nearly sure to be carried out in exactly inverse order to what I should have expected. They must have good notice of everything, so that if I mean to bake bread to-morrow I am obliged to tell them early to-day, and give them plenty of time to talk the thing over and get the wood in and chop it up. One or the other of them sweeps the house every morning from end to end, and fills the water pails, and rubs the bottoms of saucepans and kettles with clean sand, and tidies up my bedroom, and puts the blankets out in the sun, and collects the things that have got on to the floor, and fills the bath, and boils a gallon or two of water, and empties the waste-paper basket, and attends to the fowls, and scrapes up a coconut for the dog and the cat, and oils the boots, and smears blanco on the canvas shoes, and answers my whistle when I have lost something—Awui, I believe, knew the exact whereabouts of everything in the house, from cups and saucers to spare collar studs and paper fasteners, before he

had been with me for one week—or if I want to send a message to any one on the station or in the villages. They are both so small and one is so slender that they can creep into corners and under bookshelves where even a long-handled broom or a walking-stick will scarcely go; and they never seem to get tired of sweeping and dusting and scraping and picking up, so that the house is always spotlessly clean; and it is one of the joys of their daily life to take anything to the beach and scrub it, though it be only a newly emptied kerosine tin, and then make it sweet by much scouring with fresh leaves and yellow fruit from the freely bearing lime-trees.

If sudden rain comes on, as it sometimes does, before we come out of school, I am sure to remember my blankets just half-an-hour too late, but I always find that The Brat has slipped out from under my very eyes, and dragged the things indoors, and made my bed, and got back to his place again unnoticed and not missed, even though I was supposed to be teaching him to read, or write, all the time. When I was ministering to Sogen's father, and going every day to Kumarbun, these two children used to come and carry my bag and my bottles; and one day, when no one else was handy, they loosened a canoe, and put me, half incredulous and wholly terrified, on board, and ferried me over the Kumarbun Creek, just at the point where the salt water meets the fresh, handling the long poles, and twisting the unwieldy forty-foot canoe through the swift-running stream and the incoming waves with a confident precision that left me breathless, and wondering whether, after all, it was so very certain that I was the capable, well-educated teacher, knowing everything, and they the poor ignorant creatures, with everything to learn. "Good gracious," I said, though not till I was safely landed, "if any one had put me in a flat-bottomed punt on a mill pond when I was their age, I should have screamed for my mother and probably

have drowned myself, and this microscopic Brat and this podgy little Nipper. . . .”

Two small cookie-boys, I think, are better than one big one, even though he be as brutally strong as Philip, or a fine animal like Dawe, or a tactful, polished gentleman like Bernard. And this, for many reasons. For one thing, they keep an eye on each other. “Set a cookie-boy to watch a cookie-boy” is, or ought to be, the missionary’s favourite household maxim. Nothing much goes wrong if you deal with them in couples, for they have no civilised powers of combination, and, even if they are inclined to go astray, neither could be quite sure how far it would be safe to depend on the other. And each makes professional life easier for the other. When I whistle in the evening, it may happen that The Brat is already asleep, or, in the morning, that the fat little Nipper feels lazy. I never mind, or seem to notice, which of them comes, as long as one or the other comes promptly, and I fancy they have some rather complicated system of shifts, of their own devising, by which one is always within call from sunrise until every one has gone to bed at night, except for the couple of hours in the middle of the day, when I shut my doors and trouble nobody nor allow any one to trouble me, and then they go off together and play about in the water and fish, and come back as clean and shiny as a couple of new pins.

When they had whooping-cough, this last wet season, The Brat and The Nipper took care to catch it simultaneously ; but yet they managed somehow that one was always well enough to do the really necessary things for me. In their convalescence, they still kept much together, in point of place and time, but if one gasped out that “it was coming on again,” and dived out at the front door, the other would make an instant bolt for the back, and there they would whoop and pant and whoop again, and laugh, and cry, a

comical little duet in canon which made you laugh in spite of yourself, and then back they came together from opposite sides, both laughing through the tears, and both very much exhausted, but unanimously certain that they were all right again, and well able to go bravely on with the work in hand.

Every three or four months, Awui has a hair-cut and shave. He goes home to Kumarbun some Sunday afternoon, and comes back with a head as smooth and bare as a billiard ball. He looks positively hideous at such times, and the shaven eyebrows make his dark eyes shine out more boldly and brightly than ever. I compel him, rather to his disgust, to wear a sort of calico turban until the stubble sprouts again, and he is kept at outside jobs, which he does not love, until his beauty comes back to him with his eyebrows and his soft comely hair. Beloved little Brat! And jolly little Nipper!

One of the hens hatched out a solitary chick the other day, the first for months and months. I do not think Awui had ever seen a newly-hatched "kokorek" before, and we went together early in the morning to see the miracle. He fell, instantly, on his knees in the wet grass, like some pilgrim who has reached the shrine, and, careless of the furious frightened rushes of the mother hen, he apostrophised the bewitching little yellow thing—talking to it, and singing about it, in a language which had no meaning at all for me, except that I was sure it was pure poetry; and I stood there and watched him, and listened to the new and various tones of his voice, which is beautiful at all times, but indescribably rich and thrilling then. Only a little Brat of a Papuan boy, and a baby barndoor fowl, in an overgrown patch of wet grass on the edge of a swamp!—but they were held close, for a passing moment, in the very heart of beauty and poetry and wonder and music, until I locked up the fowl-house, and the distracted mother clattered off with her chick, and

Awui got hold of a broom and swept the rubbish off the back verandah, and I remembered that he was not really an angel with stars instead of eyes, and unimaginable harp notes in his voice, but only a brat of a boy who must be kept hard at work for his soul's health, and for my own body's comfort and cleanliness.

Awui and Kaikas! The Nipper and The Brat! They are always doing so much for me, and I so little for them. I am always dissatisfied with something or somebody, and these little beggars only squabble for the privilege of making my bed, and arranging my blankets in such cunning wise that when the cool wind comes down from the mountains in the very early morning I can pull one up over me without the trouble of waking. They are mine—the boys, I mean, not the blankets—body and soul for the time being, though they will soon forget their unreasoning slavish allegiance of to-day, and though they do not guess, even now, how much I love them. And there is nothing I can give them, except the cigarette ends and pipe scrapings which they carry so triumphantly to their respective fathers, and nothing I can do for them, except show them how to write and prove on their slates, as well as on their brown fingers and toes, that 2 and 2 really do make 4, and not 5, or 22.

But if I live in Wanigera long enough, I hope to baptize them, as I have baptized Bernard and Stephen and Philip, their predecessors. And then The Brat must be called Gregory, for the sake of his bright eyes, or even Chrysostom, because of his golden voice. And The Nipper? I should like to call him Brother Juniper, not for the sake of the shadowy pun, but because, with his fatness and his upside-down way of doing things, and his perennial funniness, he really is, in spite of his smallness, such a huge and perpetual joke.

CHAPTER XIV

SOBO

THE South Sea Island teachers write many letters, and messengers come frequently in canoes, or along the beach, at the cost of much tobacco to Ambrose or Samuel. The men write to each other about cartridges, and guns, and sol-fa hymn-books, and they often write to me. It took some time to persuade Ambrose of Uiaku that he must not write independent letters to "Government" at Tufi whenever he mislaid his sheath knife and thought a Maisin man had stolen it.

I have not always found it easy to understand from these letters what my correspondents want to tell me. They have no sense of the artistic unities, and they confuse business with sentiment, and mix jargon English with idioms from some local dialect, leaving out a word if they cannot think of it at the moment; if a matter is important, they will repeat it over and over again; and in the middle of a store order for kerosine or baking powder (which is generally described as "killy matata"), they will break off abruptly with a benediction.

I came back to Tufi once, after some weeks of travel, and found a letter from Reuben, who had been left in charge of Wanigera while I was away. It was only a small half sheet of lined note-paper, and the writing was eloquent of haste and perturbation. Out of consideration for my linguistic weakness, Reuben had written the greater part of

his letter in pidgin English, but it needed to be read and re-read a many times before any clear meaning could emerge. There had been a burning of some kind ; and in, or of, my house. According to one possible reading the place had been burnt to the ground five days after I came away. Or it might mean that five of my houses had been burned. The evident agitation of the writer, no less than the fact of his having sent a special canoe with that single letter, pointed to something really unusual. But I had not got five houses, and after close consideration the R.M. and I agreed that either my house had been burnt down five times, or that one-fifth of it was destroyed by fire. The former alternative was a manifest impossibility, and so we inclined to the latter, though I knew enough about Reuben's arithmetic to make me doubtful of this sudden easy familiarity with vulgar fractions.

I left Tufi in much trepidation next day, for I remembered the burning of my cook-house a few months before, and how the sago-palm walls and roof had flamed up and left nothing but a smoking black skeleton before I had even time to leap from the bathroom to the rescue of my half-cooked breakfast, and I was thankful at least to find the house standing when I got back to Wanigera.

It had been a near thing, nevertheless. Some one had pushed a fire-stick under the thatch of the empty house at dead of night, and if it had not happened that a Mission boarder had come out of the boys' dormitory just in time to see the blaze begin, I should have suffered, as more than one New Guinea missionary before me, the destruction of nearly everything that I possessed.

That most opportunely wakeful boy set the bell ringing, and an independent alarm was raised with almost suspicious celerity in the village, and Reuben and all the five-and-twenty



SOBO.



KUMARBUN CREEK.

boarders rushed over to the house, and began to haul things out into the open, while a score or two of men climbed up on to the roof, and dragged out the burning sections of thatch. In the morning, when Reuben came to take stock, he found that a case of tobacco was missing. I suppose if I had been there myself when the house caught fire, I should first have seized my box of papers, and a few books and my fountain pens, and perhaps a mosquito net and a pair of boots—money if I had any—but the natives would always hold such things as these of very small account as long as there was any tobacco to be saved from the burning. And so, though every one remembered it afterwards, there was nothing remarkable in the fact that Sobo, the policeman's son, had made himself conspicuous in the work of salvage, shouldering forty and fifty-pound cases of tobacco, and carrying them well out of the danger zone.

This Sobo had always been eminent in Wanigera as a youth who, though good for nothing, was notoriously bad for very much.

If a Mission boy lost his necklaces mysteriously, or if one of my pipes disappeared, it simply needed a message to Sobo, and the thing that was missed would soon come back. We do not explain away theft in New Guinea by calling the thief a kleptomaniac, but if ever a man deserved that evil-sounding name it was this Sobo.

Long before I came to Wanigera he had been known to gather bananas and pineapples from the Mission garden and sell them to the missionaries. He had sold taro at the white man's front door, and then carried it off and tried to sell the same stuff over again five minutes afterwards at the back. He had feasted his friends at my expense, and in all simplicity sought to persuade them that I had generously given him six tins of "bulamakau," and had, moreover, promised to give him, every now and then, some more. The ordinary thief, I

imagine, is thankful to find a plausible explanation of past misdoings, but Sobo (the provident knave!), must go further than that, rolling his dishonest eye far into the future. He stole my finest and strongest thread for the making of an exquisite fish net, and then came and offered it to me for sale. His manner was hang-dog rather than humorous, and yet he was a sort of Robin Hood, stealing but to give away again. Old fat Peter dropped his only pipe into the swamp water while he was cutting mangrove posts, but the magnificent Sobo, when he heard of the loss, straightway promised him another, and two days afterwards fulfilled his promise by presenting Peter with a Barling pipe that I have smoked for five years past, every dint on the blackened bowl, and every scratch on the well-bitten amber as familiar to me as the wrinkles on an old friend's face.

These happenings, in all their details, were known to every one in the village. Sobo had the reputation of an expert thief, as another might be counted the cleverest fisherman or the best house-builder on the coast, and so it was only natural that he began to be talked about when news of the robbery went abroad. When, in that same evening, Sobo went up one side of the main street of Oresan, and came back along the other, giving a stick or two of tobacco to every man and girl he saw, people very naturally began to talk about him more than ever. Reuben heard of this, and made a house to house collection next morning, recovering several pounds of trade tobacco, at twenty-six sticks to the pound.

It is here that Kukiaus comes into the story. To him belonged the honour of bringing the criminal to justice. Kukiaus is not among the very oldest men of the village, but yet he is a man of influence. He was guide, philosopher, and friend to the first priest who lived here—helped him, indeed, to build his house, and for a while presided over his kitchen, his “cookie-

house " as we call it in New Guinea, and he has been *Kukiaus* ever since. He has the dreamy eyes of a poet, and is rather fine-looking, though he differs little from the other men of the place. If he were my own countryman I should think he was a man of five and forty ; but I suppose he is not really more than two or three and thirty. To say that he is clean-shaven would convey a false impression, but he twists out the hairs from his face with a piece of string, and lets his back hair grow long, as do his neighbours. His knowledge of the past and most intimate history of those neighbours, and of their wives and families, is encyclopædic, and he generally has a child, his own or another, in his arms, and two or three more at his heels.

Kukiaus and I have always been chums ; and moved, as he afterwards explained, by friendship for his priest as well as by jealousy for the good name of his village, he undertook the recovery of the lost tobacco. Under cover of night, this copper-coloured Sherlock Holmes went to Sobo, and before the youth was more than half awake he had him out in the open, and on the way to the place of hiding. Kukiaus had been so certain of success that he had an old sugar bag in readiness, and within a quarter of an hour he was knocking Reuben up to give him seven or eight hundred sticks of tobacco.

In reply to a formal complaint to the Magistrate, a native sergeant came quickly down from Tufi with a crew of armed native constables. This sergeant knew his work and did not ask for Sobo, or talk about anything in particular, but hinted that he was bound on some urgent business down the coast. He soon went off again, but landed his crew when they had pulled out of sight, and brought them back through the swamps to Wanigera. Sobo, who had made off to the gardens directly the boat was sighted, came creeping back into the village at about the same time, and he was caught and hurried

away to Tufi, and we have not seen him since. When the trial in the Magistrate's Court was over, and the witnesses returned, I bestowed a whole pound of tobacco upon the delighted detective, by way of bonus, and though I am a careful man with my tobacco, as a rule, I fancy Kukiaus knows that he can count on me for a smoke, now and then, when he comes to welcome me, as he is careful to do, on my return from a journey, or when there is a more than ordinarily grievous tobacco famine in the village. There was nothing to prove that Sobo had set fire to my house, but he got six months over the matter of the tobacco.

Before he had been two days in gaol he escaped, leg-irons and all, robbing the police quarters of tobacco and money and a roll of calico before he went. It was some days before he was brought back by the head man of an inland village, who was anxious to stand well with the Government, but in that time Sobo had somehow managed to get rid of his fetters. The gaol at Tufi is not much more than a large native house, with a high wooden fence round it, and though a guard is set each night when the prisoners are locked up, a man could easily escape either then, or in the day-time, if he really set his mind to it. Such escapes are rarely attempted by prisoners, who, on the whole, are better off in prison than ever they were in their lives before, and who know that even if they got away from Tufi, they would have small chance of getting back to their own part of the country, through unfriendly villages, or through bush where there is no food.

I have sometimes noticed a podgy and pleasant military-looking person at Tufi, marching up and down, or sitting under a tree near a gang of prisoners at work. He is clad in the regulation blue serge, with a splash of scarlet about his waist, and he carries a carbine and wears a pouch on his belt. I thought at first that he must be the head warder, but I found that "Bob" was not even a policeman. He is merely

a prisoner like the rest of them, serving a sentence of some years for a long series of particularly bloodthirsty murders. It has been his life's ambition, ever since he settled at Tufi, to enter the force, and he protests that he will "sign on" as a policeman when his time expires. In the meanwhile he marches up and down with an unloaded gun and an empty leather cartridge pouch, pretending that he already is what he so longs some day to be, and incidentally doing quite useful work for the Government.

This régime was too easy for Sobo, and he was sent, under escort, to Samarai. Thence, once again, he escaped, plundering the police barracks of more money and more tobacco before he went, and swimming out from the island to our Mission launch at the anchorage, the one familiar home-like thing he could see, and there he was recaptured, ignominiously huddled into a wooden packing-case that was several sizes too small for him. Poor Sobo! I wish it had been within my power to help you (for perhaps you needed help more than any one in our village), to do more for you than charge you in the Magistrate's Court with theft and arson. But there was nothing else for it, nor any doubt that you really did set fire to my house, as well as steal some five or six pounds' worth of trade tobacco; and though I could, and did, forgive you for stealing my most precious briar and presenting it to the pipeless Peter, and though I did, and do, laugh at the sheer cheek of many another ingenious enterprise of yours, it was going rather too far when you tried to burn my house, with all my belongings, because you wanted a big smoke for yourself and lavish handfuls of tobacco for your lady friends. Here, you would only have gone from bad to worse, and at Samarai you are at least without the opportunity of further mischief. I am sorry for you, and still more sorry for your old father, who cries his heart out in the night time, thinking of you; yet with all my sympathy I cannot but rejoice that the punishment for

your accumulated evil deeds does at least ensure your absence from this village for a couple of years, and that though I often think of you, and miss you, I would rather miss *you* than the unconsidered trifles which you were so apt to pick up. It is pleasant to let my door stand open, once again, by night and by day, as in the old times, before I had reason to be anxious about you and your everlasting schemes against my little properties.

My story of this village in Papua would be incomplete without some further mention of Nundi, the son of Kukiaus. When I was quite new to the place, and very useless, I chose the day-school as an outlet for my inexperienced ardour. I could not speak ten words of any language that the children understood, but I was voluble enough in English, and could at least improve such little details as attendance and punctuality and behaviour in school. Nundi was one of the biggest boys, and perhaps that was how I came to single him out and learn his name, and use him as a means of striking terror into the other and smaller fry. Some sort of punishment for evil-doers had to be invented, and for an hour or so after school I had squads of boys working about the place. There was plenty of long grass to be pulled out, and old broken potsherds to be picked up and brought for my inspection, and a few particularly huge and heavy logs, left from some recent building operations, to be carried out of the way. One day, I turned a gang of small boys on to the moving of these logs from the middle of a lawn to a less conspicuous spot. The handy little men lifted the great things shoulder high and trotted off with them, singing and laughing all the while, and looking like a monstrous crocodile or centipede with quick-moving legs.

Their song was very musical, but I was only half pleased to hear again the air of a monotonous native chant that had been

used to my distraction all through the previous night at a village dance. After a while I began to catch the words of the song, which also had seemed familiar, and at last it dawned on me that the whole affair was a rather brilliant impromptu joke at my expense. This is what they sang—

“ *Pirist I Au* (The Priest he says)
Sum Boddee Torkin !
Sum Boddee Torkin !
Pirist I Au,
Sum Boddee Torkin !
Nundi Tork ?
Kumm 'Ere ! ”

and they managed always to reach the last line, which was sung *fortissimo*, just at the moment when every one had to jump from under, and let the log fall with an earth-shaking thump into its appointed place. It was all very funny, and very musical, and rather clever, and altogether good-tempered ; and I had been a schoolmaster long enough to know that there would be no difficulty in a school where a punishment could be worked off thus pleasantly.

The other children caught up this song, and then it was sung in the village, and if there had been a hurdy-gurdy in Wanigera we should have been having it to this day.

A little joke goes a long way in New Guinea. I must never meet Nundi, who has shot up into a great lump of a man and taken a wife of his own since then, without going solemnly up to him and whispering in his ear “ *Sum boddee torkin* ” ; and then I laugh, and the big chap rolls his eyes and giggles and twists, and the spectators take up the chorus and everybody is pleased.

The song and the joke bid fair to become traditional in the tribe, and perhaps long hence, when Nundi and I have been

quite forgotten, some wandering philologist will produce a learned monograph in explanation of a popular song, and its accompanying ritual, which is certainly native and peculiar to Collingwood Bay, and yet bears no trace of a Papuan or a Melanesian origin.

CHAPTER XV

LE MÉDECIN MALGRÉ LUI

ON my second or third morning in Wanigera I was shown where the bottles were, and invited to "have a shot at ministering to the sick." I was surprised by the suddenness, not to say the absurdity, of the suggestion, for I had never so much as bound up a cut finger, or administered a pill, in all my life before; but in spite of some natural and seemly hesitation, I dimly felt that an honour was being offered me, and I rolled up my sleeves and got to work.

I have noticed, since, that new hands on our staff are generally set very soon to this task, though I have not been able to make up my mind whether it is merely to keep them out of mischief and make them think they are being useful, in spite of the certain fact that "no missionary in New Guinea is any good at all for his first year, and barely worth his tucker the second"; or because it may enable them to know something about the people, of whom, perhaps, the older hands already know too much; or even because the newly arrived are sure to send home glowing accounts of the magnificent work the Mission is doing, ministering to the bodies of the Papuans as well as to their souls, and ending up each private letter and contribution to *Missionary Notes* with an impassioned appeal for bandages and such like, which in a month or two will come in boxfuls to the address of each young enthusiast, whereas the old hands, who have for their part long ago exhausted all such sources of supply, must needs hunt about for a torn tablecloth or the shreds of some obsolete shirt when they happen to have a serious bit of bandaging to do.

This is not a Medical Mission, and we have never had a medical man of our own, or nearly enough trained nurses to go round, but every white member of the staff, whether he likes it or not, and whether he knows much about it or little, is obliged to attempt something now and then in the way of medical treatment for the natives in his district. A boarder falls upstairs into the dormitory, and cuts his chin against the doorstep; another runs a rusty nail into the sole of his foot as he comes out; a man in the village hobbles back one afternoon from the gardens with a nasty gash from a tomahawk across his instep: you see an old woman limping along with sores all over her shin, or find a man sitting miserable and dirty under his house, with his big toe in an awful condition—he had tripped while he was clearing some land, and a splinter had entered the flesh, and the wound festered, and it is months, now, since he has done any work, or been able to get about, and he wishes he knew for certain who it was that bewitched him, though he rather suspects one of those Winiafi men who were down here for the big hunt in October: and, in school, two or three children out of every ten have ulcers on their legs or feet, and twice as many are scaly and dirty-looking with skin disease. There are epidemics of colds and coughs every rainy season; men who work much in the swamps get bad feet and painful swellings in the groin; sores on the soles of the feet and between the toes are common; and there is always some one you know who is suffering from a boil on his knee or arm, or from an infectious crop of irritating pimples which makes his life a burden to himself and a menace to other people. The missionary in New Guinea simply *has* to play the doctor for part of his time, though, in spite of the comfortable sense of sureness and confidence of success which constant practice in the simple treatment of common ailments soon brings, he can never hope to escape, nor would it perhaps be good for him ever to lose, the haunting remembrance that he



FISH SPEARING.

really is rather a quack to dabble thus with difficult matters of which he knows next to nothing.

It is fortunate for everybody in New Guinea, and not least for *le médecin malgré lui*, that the country is free from some of the worst scourges common enough in other lands. Malaria is our only serious trouble, and, as I have tried to explain in another place, the natives do not suffer much inconvenience from this disease. We have no typhoid ; no diphtheria ; no consumption ; no chicken-pox or measles ; very little dysentery ; not much pneumonia or pleurisy, except sometimes in the case of natives who have been persuaded to leave their village, and live a semi-civilised life that is not yet natural to them ; very seldom any trouble at the time of child-birth or afterwards ; very little rheumatism or toothache or neuralgia ; and of course none of the special modern diseases of civilisation, and happily next to none of the foul things that a certain class of white man carries about with him in his travels. I am speaking, let it be always understood, only of this particular neighbourhood, where the white man has not yet interfered with the simple, natural village life, nor introduced modern fashions of working, and eating, and dressing, but where the natives still live healthily and easily in the open air, with sufficient active employment to keep them from laziness, and enough leisure to save them from the physical and mental injuries which follow upon driving and worry and over-work. Our illnesses, apart from occasional accidents—which, by the way, are much rarer and less serious than in countries where people travel in steamboats and electric trams, and where other people amuse themselves with motor cars on the public highways, or pea rifles in their own backyards—are almost entirely the result of dirty houses and villages, and neglect of personal cleanliness : especially when a man has been slightly wounded, or where the trivial bite of an insect has opened the way for the growth of the common New Guinea sores. When

a man has anything at all the matter with him, he does not dream of washing, even his hands or his face, until he feels quite well again.

We suffer very seldom from the results of over-feeding, as do so many well-to-do English folk, and the large majority of people in Australia, and not at all from the results of under-nourishment, as unhappily so many thousands of civilised men and their families are obliged to do ; we are not poisoned by bad whisky or impoverished and degraded by the use of alcohol of any kind, as are some other races subject to the white man ; we know too much about what is fit for human food to suffer from the use of diseased meat or stale vegetables ; and we do not breathe foul smoke-laden air in overcrowded cities, or spend our days in stuffy offices, or our evenings in badly ventilated theatres or concert rooms, or churches or chapels. We take plenty of exercise ourselves, men and women alike, instead of vicariously watching " flannelled oafs " play cricket or football ; our " holidays " are not cut down to six weeks or a month or a fortnight in each year, but our whole life is a glorified picnic, and we get our hunting and our fishing and our gardening in the course of each day's work ; and that " work " is not so many hours per day for so many shillings per week of quill-driving, or brick-laying, or counter-jumping, or book-keeping for other men, but interesting and sensible labour to supply the actual needs of ourselves and those who are dependent on us ; we never strain our eyes by working in artificial light or reading badly printed newspapers or cheap editions of worse printed novels ; nor do we strain our hearts by running to catch railway trains. There are no fancy foods to weaken our digestion ; no glaring advertisements of patent medicines to set us thinking about our symptoms and ruining our constitutions if we are fools enough to swallow the medicines themselves, or to distress and annoy the man who is satisfied with the beauties of sea and mountain and forest and

sky, unadorned with such impertinent recommendations of somebody's pills and somebody else's, plasters as you may see to-day on the foreshores of Sydney harbour, or in many another lovely spot which has been defiled by the vulgarity of civilised man. And yet, for all their admirable simplicity and happy freedom from the less desirable features of civilisation, these New Guinea men and women are undoubtedly very dirty people ; and dirt, like other forms of ungodliness, often brings its own punishment.

I have found, by my own experience, that the slightest breaking of the skin, by the scratch of a knife, or the rubbing of an insect bite, if not at once cleansed and attended to, may lead to trouble, and I believe that the ulcers on feet and legs, which form a good half of the cases that come to us, generally originate in this way, though the patient may often have forgotten everything about it, and be unable to give any account at all of how it began. " It just came," is the usual answer to one's question. " Does it hurt ? " " No." Use is second nature in these matters, and the people do not seem to mind these sores on themselves or others, but go about their work as usual, with open ulcers as large as the palm of your hand, and they will hardly take the trouble to come and get the thing dressed now and then. On this station, the younger people and the children are more careful, and come in crowds at the appointed hour, or thereabouts, for *fi*o, women bringing their babies, who suffer constantly from these ulcers ; and, while they are about it, the mothers seem to think they may as well have something done for themselves.

Perhaps the best way will be to give an account of yesterday, Thursday, February 9, 1910, as it happens to have been fairly typical of an average day's medical doings at Wanigera. On Wednesday, after school, a girl had asked me to send some *fi*o (medicine) out to her mother, who lives at Murin, a mile or so beyond Aieram. Mangiti could give no clear account of

what was the matter, except that her mother was very ill, and thought she was going to die. Not even a missionary quack would dare to prescribe on such scanty information, and I promised to walk out and see the invalid. Yesterday morning we had service an hour earlier than usual, and I was on the road, with two boys, before seven o'clock. I had put together a bagful of bandages, boracic acid and so on, but one of the boys assured me that it was not a "sore," but "something inside her chest," so we left the bag behind. As we passed through Aieram I noticed, to my sorrow, that the wooden stockade—the last of its kind in the neighbourhood—had been cleared away, in accordance with the new Government regulation as interpreted and enforced by Nonis, V.C.

It was past eight when we reached Murin, though the distance is no more than a short three miles. An assistant R.M. had gone over the track eighteen months ago, and ordered the natives to build long wooden causeways through the mud, and to bridge the streams. The work was done promptly, and it was all fine enough while it lasted, but the bridges and the elaborate causeways have now rotted and fallen into dangerous disrepair, and it may be another eighteen months before a magistrate goes that way again, and walking, in the meantime, is both difficult and slow.

I found the old lady on her verandah, crouching down over her knees, her forehead resting on a wooden pillow, and her hands clasped round the back of her neck. Some pandanus mats were propped up to protect her from the sun or the rain. She was thin and wasted, but not feverish, and could only say that her chest hurt her, and she could not sleep at nights, and she thought she was going to die. A medical man, or a trained nurse, would probably have known all about it in five minutes—her very attitude, I doubt not, would have been eloquent to the educated eye—but I could only be sympathetic and promise to send out some of the *fi'o* for which she persisted

in asking. The boys persuaded me to come back by another way, through Kumarbun. We thus avoided the wreckage of the A.R.M.'s made road, but had to wade through a narrow stream of such cold water that my breath came in gasps, and I resolved to take an extra dose of quinine when I got home.

On the beach near Kumarbun was a miserable-looking elderly woman, nursing a swollen face, and I promised to give her something to ease the pain if she cared to come along presently. She came, and very soon, and was willing enough to smear herself with some ointment that I offered, but refused a couple of sedative tabloids with the blunt excuse that "she did not understand"—*i.e.* she did not like the look of it, it was not in her line, she was not going to make a fool of herself at her time of life, swallowing things like *that*—as if a couple of little white stones could be any good for neuralgia or a swollen face! I assured her it was a free country, and she could do exactly as she pleased; and later in the day I saw her washing her face again and again with sea-water, which, for all I know, may have been quite as good for the purpose as my harmless but despised tabloids. We were home again just as school was beginning, and two of the Mission boarders came to know whether they must "write," or might they stay in the house, for they were sick? *Gigira* was their trouble, the general name for a pimple, but these were cases of the particularly obnoxious affection already mentioned. The R.M. has shown me how to treat it, and Kiso and Sinapa were allowed to stay away from school, though not till they had swallowed a fair dose of Epsom salts, and been painted as to their pimply parts with a weak solution of copper sulphate in water.

After school, a string of boys and girls applied for cough mixture. There is an epidemic of coughs and colds among the children just now, and within five days two babies have died of what seems uncommonly like whooping-cough. I know nothing, unhappily, of what should be done for them, and so I

do nothing, hoping indeed that the parents know a little, but thankful that they do not bring the babies to me for help which I am unqualified to give. It is in such cases that a capable nurse on the spot could be so useful, especially if she were backed up by the occasional visits and skilled advice of a medical man.

This particular brand of cough mixture happens to be pleasant, and therefore popular, and I went on dealing it out in teaspoonful doses until the bottle was empty. Three times a day, just now, the stuff is on tap, but mid-day is the fashionable time for drinking these medicinal waters, and the children themselves take care that only bona fide applicants are allowed to come within reach of my bottle and measuring glass.

At three o'clock, after the mid-day rest, the station bell goes for the afternoon's work, and I am at home, for medical purposes, to any who care to come. The cook-boys put a few things out on the back verandah, and a basin and piece of soap near the tank, and for a couple of hours, sometimes more, sometimes less, it is the liveliest spot in Wanigera. Each patient is escorted by friends, for propriety's sake sometimes, or as civilised maidens will go to hold each other's hands while teeth are pulled out, or from fear of the *Daus* (goblins) which lie in wait for reckless folk who walk by themselves through the bush or along the beach; and they all sit about on the ground, or edge up on to the verandah for a front view of what is going on, and discuss their own and other people's ailments, as Thackeray's ladies were accustomed to do in the drawing-room after dinner, and argue as to the improvement or otherwise of particular sores, and now and then a woman from Kumarbun combines business with pleasure, and offers for sale some native pot of specially fine design, or a sick man, who has hobbled up with a bunch of coconuts in one hand and his washed bandages in the other, hobbles off again with soiled bandages, and the price of his coconuts in trade tobacco. Since I learned to know

the names and conditions of most of the folk, I have given up keeping a roll of patients, but yesterday there must have been at least twenty who came during the afternoon for treatment. Four or five tiny children lying in their mothers' arms, very big-eyed and placid, with poor little festered toes, or cruel sores on their tender skin. A man with a series of ulcers, each as big as a florin, all down the front of his leg, from knee to instep—another with ulcers all round his wrist and up his arm—another with an almost healed wound on his foot, where he all but cut the big toe off, a few weeks ago—Peter's cook-boy, an over-worked person named Geremus, with what I believe is a form of *yaw* on the sole of his foot (bluestone for this)—a woman with a comparatively small ulcer, which yet goes so deep that the bone of her leg is exposed in an oval the size of a pigeon's egg—another woman with a group of ulcers as red and round as a bunch of cherries—and Sogen's father.

But Sogen's father, whose proper name I do not know, must have a few sentences to himself. A fortnight ago last Sunday, after service, a youth told me that Sogen's father was very ill, and would I "cross over" and see him. The man lives at Kumarbun, across the river, and I found him looking very dirty and emaciated, with a festered swollen foot. He had hurt himself while working in the gardens some months ago, and had been laid up ever since. But the filthy wound responded promptly to simple treatment—soap and water and boracic acid, and later on a little vaseline, and careful bandaging. I "crossed over" every evening for a fortnight, except one day, which alarmed *Sogen Taman* so much that Sogen himself turned up next morning with a present of coconuts—a sort of "refresher," I suppose—and an exhortation to me not to forget his father's foot. Such offerings from one's patients, even though they denote "a lively expectation of further favours to come," rather than any grateful sense of past indebtedness, are rare enough to be very welcome; and

I continued my evening visits to Kumarbun, with the happy result that yesterday afternoon, into the midst of the lame and the ulcerated and the pimply, burst Sogen's father himself, smiling gladly through his five months' grime, and puffing somewhat, after the unaccustomed exercise and excitement of a half-mile walk. His appearance was the signal for much sensation and noisy speech, for every one knew that the man had been lying helpless in his house for months past. I was glad of the evidence of his cure, and thankful to be released from the necessity of daily visits to his village, and felt the occasion demanded something out of the common on my part. In a more enlightened country, and if I had not been a parson as well as a quack doctor, I daresay I should have invited him to have a drink; but I did the best I could, and presented him with tobacco, a sort of complimentary return for his prompt present of coconuts, what time he fancied my enthusiasm was flagging. He was delighted, and embarrassed me by the things he said in the presence of all those other patients, though he rather spoiled his speech, as a work of art, by winding up with a hint that he would very much like some matches, just to go along with the tobacco. It is simple and easy cures like this which give the missionaries a certain reputation as healers of the body; and I have told the story, not boastfully as an indication of my amazing skill, but yet fully, as a proof that our work, of this unavoidable sort, is not always mere wasted endeavour. But for this timely help, at the cost of a pennyworth of soap and boracic acid and vaseline, and a few bandages rolled by some "Missionary Circle" in Australia, and a few hours of a missionary's time, Sogen's father might easily have gone from bad to worse, and become an old man prematurely, and a nuisance to himself and to Sogen and to a good many others, instead of a witness, for years to come, that some at least of the white men in New Guinea do really care for the coloured people, and that they know more about

these things than the native medicine men who charge so extortionately for exorcising the evil spirits that play up with a fellow's toes, making him so that he cannot eat or sleep or work with any comfort. Sogen's father is a happy man to-day. He will be back in his garden in another week, and ready for the hunting when October comes, and we have got to know each other rather well, and he will always remember that he was generous to me in the matter of the coconuts, though perhaps he will not forget how mean I was about the matches on that great day when he "crossed over" for the first time in many moons.

My other visitors, yesterday, were boys and girls from the school, most of them with ulcers on their legs—Adin, with the blackest, brightest eyes, and longest lashes imaginable in a small girl—Denys, a baby Christian boy, covered with skin disease, like Martin his father and Kate his mother—Kapiri, a little chap with a big sore on his "tummy"—Semelek, a girl of two or three, whose toes are all twisted and shrunk by a long-neglected sore—and of course Kaufe and Koat, the chronics of Wanigera.

I was formally introduced to this couple when first I came here, and we have been on intimate terms ever since. That is to say, they have come to see me on two out of every three days that I have been on the station. Kaufe is thin, and tall, and misshapen, with protruding eyes, and an awful fixed smile, and a more or less permanent ulcer on one of her shins. As long as the Mission has been here, I gather, she has received intermittent treatment for that ulcer. She has grown, I suppose, though I cannot imagine that Kaufe was ever otherwise than tall and thin, from small girlhood to almost a marriageable age, and the sore has grown with her. Two or three besides myself have had goes at it, and each of us has "cured" it. More than once, I have called my Better Half to come and admire the miracle of healing, and two months ago he sum-

moned me to see what a Mission nurse, who had been here for a few weeks, had accomplished. But I knew Kaufe aforetime, and it seemed quite natural and in accordance with the eternal ordering of things, that when I had to take up the forceps again, a few weeks ago, Kaufe should be the very first to shuffle up on to my verandah when the three o'clock bell rang. And so once more she smiles on me with that awful smile of hers, and I feel that she and her ulcer are as much a part of each day's work as having my bath or seeing that the fowls are properly fed. We are on very good terms with each other, and neither of us seems to get tired. The trouble was nearly healed, for the twentieth or the fiftieth time, early in the week, but she came with it as bad as ever yesterday, and explained that a dog had bitten her when she got up in the morning, and that, moreover, he had wickedly eaten the bandages.

Everything else changes in Wanigera, and changes so quickly that no one else can ever hope to see the place quite as I have seen it during these few years. But Kaufe changes not. Other children shoot up with confusing suddenness into men and women, and the young men get old, and the old men die—but Kaufe and her ulcer have a touch of perpetuity about them, and if I spend the rest of my life here, I know I must go on to the very end, swabbing that leg of hers, and supplying new bandages in place of those the dogs have eaten; and my successor, who may be an innocent babe in his cradle to-day, will have to come and sit on my verandah (unless there is a proper hospital and doctors and nurses by then) and minister to a tottering grey-headed old woman, with a terrifying smile, and an oval, purple-coloured ulcer half-way up her left leg.

And Koat will be there, too, unless he manages to break his neck in one of his very constant falls. He is now a boy of twelve or thirteen with a tremendous paunch, the sign of an enlarged spleen as the after-result of malaria, they tell me. He is a masculine version of Kaufe, with the same ungainly

limbs, and the same overflowing sickly smile, and the same persistent trouble with his legs. Yesterday, he happened to have three ulcers on one leg, and two on the other. There were five when he came to me a fortnight back, and one of them healed up quickly, but he fell over a log, and barked his shin, and there was a new and lively looking ulcer in a fresh place when he came to me next day. I have dealt with many ulcers on many legs, and the improvement has generally been in exact proportion to the trouble which the patients were prepared to take, coming regularly, keeping out of the swamps and away from the gardens for a time, but I should be sorry to assert that the apparent cure had in any single case been permanent. Sooner or later the same people seem to come back to me or to whoever is attending to the *fió*, and when these sores have been healed up in one spot, especially if the treatment has been too hurried, they tend to break out in another. That was my own experience last year with some small ulcers that became established on my feet in the course of an inland trip. With much care and constant dressing, I checked and at last dried them up, but for months afterwards the slightest injury to the foot, or even a longer walk than usual, was followed by a beginning again of the old trouble.

I do not believe that even the sternest, most punctilious man of medicine could disapprove of the things we do, though he could certainly show us better ways of doing them. If it is not enough to plead that, ignorant and incompetent as we are, we yet do the best we can for these people, in the absence of any qualified physician or surgeon, or that our only hope, like that of the profession itself is that "in some cases, and in some cases only, relief or healing can be achieved by the means which we employ," then let me urge, what surely goes without the saying, that we attempt only the very simplest and safest of treatment, trusting greatly to the *Vis Medicatrix Naturæ*, and only trying to give Nature a fair chance by teaching these

people to be clean and to keep their wounds and sores from developing into more serious injuries.

On this station we use a good deal of soap and water every day, and though one goes on to apply whatever antiseptic may be on hand—generally borax powder, as it is rarely possible to use wet bandages for people who can only come to us once a day, and would not do the right thing at home—it is to the clean water out of our tank, and the generous application therewith of soap, rather than to any drugs, that the steady improvement of most of the cases is due. And one goes very slowly, picking up hints, and studying cases carefully, and acting always on the rule, “When in doubt, don’t do it.”

It is sad to see little children, as I have seen several to-day, lying panting in some elder sister’s arms, disgustingly dirty, and shaken now and then by terrible fits of coughing. Papuans will not go near water when they are sick, and though the children are amphibious and fairly clean in health, they become shockingly dirty when they fall ill, and I dare not even advise that these babies be washed now and then, for if one should die afterwards, I should be held, and perhaps I might really be, accountable. One goes through a village and catches sight of children rotten with disease, but despairs of doing anything, and from sheer ignorance and incapacity one can only pass by on the other side; or one looks up in the middle of dressing an old man’s leg, on his verandah, and sees some poor little wizened creature, hardly human, and covered from head to foot with filth and terrifying sores, and one can but turn back to the simpler work in hand, dreading to see the wretched changeling again, lest one’s nerve should fail in the presence of a horror one is powerless to help.

It is sad to have a trader put in here, as happened a year ago, with a dying “signed on” native from down the coast, and to take the man in, in Christ’s Name, but yet, though his sickness was probably pneumonia or pleurisy, or something of the sort,

which skilled nursing might have cured, to dread to do anything at all, except to give him a place to die in, for fear of doing the wrong thing. It is at such times that one wants to cry out for the Church or the Government, or some other Christian or civilised body, to give these people a share in the good and merciful things of civilisation. But when the man has died and been buried, one remembers that the gifts of civilisation are of many kinds, and that along with what is good and merciful would come much that the natives are better without, and so one concludes that it is probably "as broad as it is long," and passes quietly to the next piece of work. Even when Mongobe died, the Taupota friend who had stayed with him provided some necessary comic relief. He was all broken up, and wailed for a day and a night, but every now and then he would knock off for five minutes to roll and smoke a cigarette, and then fall again to his wailing. I sympathised with him, both in his mourning and in his methodical use of tobacco. I could not have shown my sorrow in such noisy fashion as his, but I know that good tobacco in a well-bitten pipe can help a man to pull through some of the bad moments that come now and then to most of us.

There is plenty of interest and humour on the back verandah in "consulting hours," if you keep your eyes and ears open. Mrs. McGinty (her name sounded like that) was brought here from Tufi. She had been attacked by her husband in the gardens and nearly killed with a tomahawk, because she planted the taro crookedly, or would not pull up the weeds, or something of that sort. The A.R.M. had been doing his best for her, but he had gone on patrol, and advised her friends to bring her down to us. One ear was hanging by a mere strip of flesh, and the scalp was nearly gone. But things mended somehow in a few weeks, and Mrs. McGinty, while they were loading up the canoe that was to carry her home, called on me and brought back a remarkable collection of things that had

been used on her, which she had treasured carefully—scraps of stained lint, rusty and bent safety pins, pads of cotton wool, torn bandages, and other articles which I prefer not to particularise. She was delighted when I made her a present of the safety pins, which she immediately stuck into her ears, though when I told her to throw everything else into the fire she seemed reluctant to waste so much good material.

One giddy old grandmother with a damaged forefinger needed teaching to be properly dignified when she paid her daily visits to the doctor. It was her agile but ungraceful way to come skipping over the mangrove fence, close by my house, to my confusion but to the delight of the other patients, and it took some time to persuade her that it would be more seemly, as well as in accordance with the custom of the station, if she would be at pains to walk a little way round and come in by the gate.

There was another old woman from Aiafi, as tall as I am, and as benevolent looking as an Archdeacon. The sore on her leg when first she came would have turned me sick if I had stopped to think about it. We made her stay with friends in Rainu for a week or two, and then allowed her to go home again, on condition that she would come in every other day to have her leg attended to. But, somehow, she never would, or could, come at the proper time. *Fio* had to be in the early morning, from seven to nine, in those days. This old woman could, and sometimes did, get here before the sun was up, or she would come just as all the bottles and other gear had been put away and the bell had begun to ring for school. She would rather get up in the middle of the night, it seemed, and come through the swamps in the dark, or sit on my doorstep all the morning, with a chubby little chaperone aged five or six, until school was over, than come with other less distinguished looking patients at the appointed time. And she was quite content to go on waiting after mid-day, while I had a meal and

an ostentatiously leisurely smoke ; but if I pretended to refuse to *fio* at that hour of the day, she would throw her arms over her head, and shed real tears, and appeal to the skies, and to the mountains, and to the whole world of the living and the dead, until I got out my tackle and attended to her. She is the one patient who has often and always been too much for me : but whether by the emotional violence of her methods, or by her indefatigable patience, or merely by her wholesome bigness and mellow archidiaconal benevolence, somehow or other, and sooner or later, that woman alway contrived to take her own time and have her own way, and she used her knowledge and her power, and played havoc with my poor little efforts at methodical time-tables and dispensary rules.

And such another, though less overwhelming, was Kikiki-sauke, a sulky-looking Maisin girl from Yuayu, covered with skin disease, her matted hair always reddened with ochre, and dripping with oil, and the upper parts of her body smeared, in sign of mourning, with black filth from the underneath of cooking pots. This wretched girl, likewise, came to live with friends for a few weeks, so that I might attend to her ulcerated leg. And she, too, simply would not come at my times, though she was living not many yards away, and had nothing else in the world to do. Perhaps it was for that very reason that she used to wait till 9.15, and then come squirming round the corner to sit on my front doorstep all the morning, and through the mid-day heat, until I " did " her leg, as the only chance of persuading her to get up and go away. If I abused and drove her away from the front, she would but squirm round to the back, where I should find her and stumble over her when next I went out that way. She would sometimes promise, in voluble Maisin, full of hard K's and G's, to come early next day, but the chances were that she turned up as usual at 9.15, when the day's doctoring was supposed to be

over; or else she would come and sniff under my window before the sun was fairly up, and go on sniffing, not patiently, but with much ostentation, until it was time for her to fall into line with the others at seven o'clock.

A little girl fell from an overhanging branch into the creek some months ago, just as we were going into school, and she was taken out for drowned and carried to her home. But her grandmother rushed up, and lifted the child, by the legs, face downwards, over her head, and held her so that the child's stomach was pressing against her head, and the child's face hanging close to her back, and then she worked away vigorously, digging her smooth-shaven head into the pit of the child's stomach, until all the water was expelled. The little one was very cold, but they made a big fire, and she lay by that for some hours, and was playing about as usual in the afternoon. The old woman could not tell us where she learned her Sylvester's method; it was, she said, just "New Guinea way."

The South Sea Islanders, when they fall sick, are as much of a nuisance as anybody. Peter, before he learned to use quinine regularly, was always getting sores on his legs, and making them worse by the use of native remedies, or applications of his own compounding. Once he had a touch of skin disease which I treated with iodine, leaving him a small bottle when I went away to Dogura for my first rainy season. Months afterwards I found that the stock bottle of benzoin tincture was empty, and I discovered, after a rather tangled investigation, that Peter had used all his iodine, persuaded Reuben to let him into the house in my absence, found the benzoin, decided that as it was the same colour and had a pleasant smell it would do for him, and so had been smearing himself from head to foot with Friar's Balsam as long as the supply lasted. Things have been locked up since that, as Peter is quite capable of swallowing corrosive sublimate instead

of quinine. He would never attach any meaning to such trifles as difference in size or shape or colour of the bottles or the tabloids.

I found Samuel, once, at Sinapa, very seedy with a cold, and brought him back to Wanigera for a rest and some physic. At night time I gave him a couple of Dover's powders and a hot drink, and bade him cover himself with blankets to get up a good sweat, and half-an-hour afterwards I caught him sitting on the verandah, wearing nothing but a loin cloth, trying "to get cool again." It is hard—I sometimes find it quite impossible—to make these people understand. A man will come to you with a bad ulcer, and you dress and bandage it, and tell him to be sure to come again to-morrow, and he forgets all about it, or turns up at the end of a week to say that he does not fancy the *fi'o* is doing much good. Perhaps they think the medicine is a sort of charm, and ought to work instantaneously.

An old man, at one of the hunts, fell over a tree into some flaming bushes, and was burned about the shoulders and back and loins. I spent an hour and more in fixing him up when we got home, and I met him, next day, coming back from another hunt, with his burns in a filthy condition, all smeared with red clay and charcoal. He had left the "calicoes" at home, so that they would not get dirty, and though he was careful to get them all tied on again before he came for further treatment, he had no notion, nor could I make him understand, why bandages had been put on at all.

Reuben, when he is off colour, is a peculiarly trying person. He sits in a dark corner singing hymns in a loud falsetto voice. He was at this game, hour after hour, during my last visit to his house at Okein, and I have rarely heard any sounds that were more penetrating. He said, on that occasion, that he had been poisoned by eating fish, but that is a favourite theory of Reuben's, and I took no notice until he showed me some of the

fish, when I instantly agreed with him that, if colour had anything to do with it, he was, or ought to be, very ill indeed, since the creatures were spotted and striped with all the colours of the rainbow.

When I was very new and raw, men would sometimes stop me on the beach, or come up in the gardens, and say that so-and-so was sick and could not eat, and would like some rice or biscuits. I always told them to bring taro, or sago, or coconuts to my house, and I would give rice or biscuits in exchange. The invariable answer was that there *was* no taro, no sago, no coconuts—and it was easy enough to reply that neither was there any rice nor any biscuits. On all our Mission stations, probably, they could tell you stories of patients who have been nursed and treated and discharged cured, and then have asked what the missionaries were going to give them (*i.e.* in the way of tobacco) in return for their having taken all that foreign medicine or come such a long way to the missionary's house for so many days ?

If it were not that these Papuans are so absolutely poor in things that have a money value, and that we missionaries, though really as poverty-stricken as mortal men and women could possibly be, according to English standards, yet, with our comfortable houses, and beautiful clothes, and stores of tinned food, and incredible quantities of tobacco, seem infinitely rich to the natives—if it were not for this, and for some haunting remembrance about “Freely ye have received, freely give,” one would be inclined to make these people pay for their medicines and their bandages: not, of course, for the sake of getting anything out of them, but on the principle that most people, and Papuans among the number, generally value a thing at perhaps a little less than it has cost them. What has cost him much, the average man is apt to value highly; and what he gets for nothing he is inclined to rate at a little less than it cost

him. Nothing for nothing—and very little for sixpence—is the native rule in dealing with others than their own immediate friends, and though one tries hard to avoid any approach to pauperising them, it often seems, while one sits on the back verandah, that it is very bad for the natives to be able to “get something for nothing,” even if it is only a farthing’s worth of Epsom salts, or a pinch of red permanganate crystals. This may be one of the matters to which the Mission, after a little more experience, and perhaps a little more thought, will certainly need to give careful attention.

It would be easy enough to make rules, though not always easy to keep them. Witness the following story of Sawaia, a comical rascal at all times, and a sort of local Autolykus. One afternoon, towards dusk, when the medicine bottles had all been put away, and I was pottering about at a carpenter’s bench, a man shot suddenly out from behind the cook-house, and fell to scratching himself, and twisting his body into what I should previously have thought were quite impossible shapes, keeping one eye fixed upon me, as if to watch the effect, all the time. He howled and scratched and twisted, and then howled again. He was covered from head to foot with *morobe* (skin disease), and he gave me to understand that it was simply driving him crazy, and that he wanted some of the yellow stuff out of my bottle (kerosine and chrysophanic acid). I told him to bring some taro, and he should have a whole bottleful. “He’d got no taro, but would I buy a cassowary’s egg?” Certainly I would, if it was a good one. Sawaia bolted behind the cook-house, and was back again in a moment with his egg, which I tested by drilling a small hole in the shell. Did he want *fio* for it? *No!* He wanted tobacco—“*Bukur mes a rarabob.*” He vowed he was simply *dying* for a smoke! I gave him a stick, and, in the excitement of haggling for two, he forgot to scratch and twist about any more. When he saw that he would get no more than the current price, he fell again to

begging for some *fi*, saying he could not buy it, as he had now sold his egg, and had nothing left to offer. He went off at last, somewhat dejected, but good-tempered, and, as far as I could see in the gathering darkness, with no sign of irritation, either mental or physical.

CHAPTER XVI

ON THE BEACH

WHAT George Street is to Sydney, or Collins Street to Melbourne, or Rundle Street to Adelaide, and what the Strand is (or was, twenty years ago) to London, that is our narrow strip of sea-beach to us ; for there you may surprise Wanigera in all its various and most characteristic moods, and there you will see, sooner or later, nearly every man and woman and child, and meet all the visitors, and hear most of the news, and yourself become, almost without knowing it, an intimate part of the common life of the place.

There really is not much of it, for the whole stretch of sand between Kumarbun Creek and the Maramapen Water, half-way to Old Wanigera, is something shorter than the distance between Charing Cross and the spot where Temple Bar used to stand, though if you care to wade out over several sand bars and to swim a few chilly creeks, and are not too much afraid of alligators, you can walk, at low tide, all the way to Uiaku.

If the tide is high, and yet you choose or are obliged to go along the beach, you will have to plunge and stumble through hot, loose sand, and trip among tangled creepers, and scramble here and there through clumps of nipa palm, or over the arched roots of mangrove trees that are up to their knees in mud and water. At all times this beach of ours is strewn and obstructed, and after the cyclone of three years ago it was almost hidden, by huge water-logged trunks of trees that were washed down the great rivers by some flood, and then flung high up on the sand to rot away and make one's daily walking

exercise as strenuous as a hurdle handicap and as full of excitement as an obstacle race.

The tides are hopelessly irregular, and though a wise man might find some method in their movements, it is not possible for any of us to reckon, more than a few hours ahead, what time of day the beach will be pleasant for walking on, and when nearly impossible. Some of us, who are invincibly prejudiced in the matter, still believe that the moon has something to do with it, but here at the head of the Bay there are so many reefs and cross currents and prevailing winds of the season and sudden unexpected storms from off the mountains, that we can only watch and wonder and make the most of the moment when it comes.

Up and down, up and down, three times a day along the whole length from creek to creek, if you are to get the minimum three or four miles that a man needs every day of his life, if he is to live in New Guinea, and yet be always fit. It is not wasted time by any means, nor is your walking ever likely to seem monotonous, though you know every rock and fallen tree trunk so well that you could walk blindfold; for you meet everybody and hear the very latest talk of the town, and you can do all your business and satisfy your curiosity even while your every sense is stimulated and charmed by the sounds and colours and scents of the land and the sea and the sky.

It is just as well to keep a dog, not only because he will always remember to give you no peace when it is time for the walk, though you may yourself be busy or tired or lazy and willing to forget, but also because he and his juggling with sticks and stones will provide some sort of explanation for the native mind, which could never believe that a white man, or any man of any colour whatever, "walks about" just because he likes it, or because he knows it is a good thing to do, but would put him down as *Orot ojin*, a man with a screw loose, a hopeless silly fellow, if they saw him walking motiveless, as



MARAMAPEN WATER.



THE WHALEBOAT

they else would see me walking, once or twice a day, on Wanigera beach.

Best of all, in the early morning, when the air, like that of the land of Beulah, is "very sweet and pleasant": especially if the tide be low, so that one can begin to walk towards Old Wanigera a little while before the sun is up. There is rain nearly every day of the year, but it comes generally towards evening, or in the night, and on nine mornings out of ten, or nineteen out of twenty, the world is all pink and yellow and green and gold, and the glory of the sunrise settles on the land and on the sea, and stays there till the sun has climbed right up into the heavens. The sea is nearly always clear and smooth as glass until mid-day, except where it foams quietly over a reef; and the surrounding mountains which tower above us are all blue and beautiful until the solid-looking white clouds gather and roll and rest upon them.

The people come out of their houses early, and as soon as the sun has fairly risen they leave the fires in the village, to sit for a little while in long rows on the sand, all with their backs to the sunshine. Most of them are quickly up again, and off in parties of five or six along the beach southward towards the gardens. Three years ago they were cultivating the land that lies in behind the modern villages, but that is nearly deserted now, and the paths that used to lead thither are overgrown, and men have gone back to the older and more fertile and extensive gardens a mile or so beyond Old Wanigera, and close to the sea. The women take their babies with them, and big bags full of taro tops for planting, and the men have their spears and tomahawks. They go in single file, according to the fashion of the country; and the women, because it is still cold, are wrapped from heel to shoulder in great stiff squares of decorated tapa cloth.

Again and again I have been reminded of some slow procession of tonsured priests, as these women with their shaven

heads and their bent backs and upright rigid figures, and their bright red and yellow garments worn and looking much like gorgeous copes, go winding silently through the sunlit aisles of the trees. The smouldering fire-sticks which they carry do very well for censers, and the small children, sometimes wrapped in Turkey twill and toddling by their sides or hanging on to the hem of their copes, might pass for acolytes, while the blue smoke winding up and hovering above them, and the fragrant odours from the bush, help the pleasing illusion.

There is not much vivid colour, though here and there a tall tree is all aflame with great scarlet blossoms, gorgeous against the green, and still more beautiful when there is a background of shining mountain top; and there are golden-crested kingfishers that flash in and out of the bush, and gay parrots, and big bright blue or yellow butterflies, and the ground is sometimes brilliant with the flowers of the "Morning Glory" convolvulus. Besides the steady traffic of pedestrians on the beach, there are the noisier canoe parties on the water, whole families or groups of families together, six or eight coming smoothly along, one behind the other, poling or paddling close to the shore, sometimes a dozen men on the one platform, going to their work like so many London clerks on top of a 'bus, passing bamboo pipes backwards and forwards as other men might exchange newspapers; and now and then some laggard will rush along the beach and splash into the last canoe with his tobacco pipe and his lime gourd in a small string bag, and his tomahawk under his arm, for all the world like a City man who hurls himself hot and breathless into the penultimate second-class carriage with his leather bag and his umbrella and his halfpenny newspaper.

Again and again one is reminded of the essential sameness of life all over the world, and really these comical brown fellows, for all their nakedness and outward dissimilarity and light hearts, are much to be compared, "under the glaze,"

with the white and beautifully decorated creatures who wear stuffy clothes, and live in houses which smell of dust, and smoke cigars and briar pipes in taxicabs and twopenny tubes and railway trains, instead of newspaper cigarettes on the platforms of catamarans.

Later in the day, but yet early in the afternoon, the folk begin to come home. They trooped out all together in the morning, but they come back in twos and threes when their own work in the gardens is done, some of them with the first canoes at half-past two or three o'clock, and others when it is almost dark, poling a canoe up the creek to the back of the village, or wading breast high through the water at Maramapen, the women with their tremendous loads of fuel and food, and the men with babies on their shoulders and perhaps a small boy or two tucked under their arms.

All day long there is some one on the beach. It may be only an old man, who is past all work ; or a few youths under a rough shelter of palm leaves, fashioning a canoe from the straight trunk of a splendid tree that has been dragged out of the bush and floated up to Wanigera ; or a group of tiny children, playing wonderful games that no grown-up could ever hope to understand, and then dancing off to dash about in the warm bright water ; or some small girls digging little crabs out of their holes in the sand ; or a travelling V.C. in his blue serge uniform, with prisoners for Tufi, and a keen eye for the stick of tobacco which he will get if I happen to have any " paper " to send to " Government."

Always there is something happening. The Mission schooner may be sighted early in the day, beating up from Sinapa or Dark Hill Point ; or the R.M.'s whaleboat coming heavily round Keppel Point about four o'clock in the afternoon ; or a shoal of fish comes close inshore, and every one must go out with the long seine nets, and splash about and shout, and then bring the canoes back, laden to

the brim with fat, shining, silvery *kumur*, a fish not unlike, though much finer than, the English mackerel. Sometimes, in the afternoon, when the children are out from school, everything may be propitious for damming up one of the smaller creeks, and fishing it with hand nets, and then the girls catch quantities of queer creatures of no particular shape or colour, and I buy a hundred or so for a couple of sticks of tobacco, and for many days afterwards the Mission boarders reek abominably of stale fish. Up and down the beach, as the afternoon draws on, numbers of tiny fires spring up, and round them the children gather, to play cat's cradle, or to cook shell-fish that they have found in the swamps. A string of laughing girls comes by, carrying bundles of fire-wood nearly as big as themselves, free-will offerings for Peter, or for some other fortunate or far-seeing man. The men sit about on the canoes, which have now been drawn up high on the beach, and talk about to-day and to-morrow, and chew betel-nut, which has its uses as a mild narcotic, and a prophylactic for malaria, and a preservative for the teeth, but is not much used hereabouts. The young men will have had a bath, and now they are finishing their toilets, gathered into several Mutual Ornamentation Societies, of which the members squirt coconut milk in fine spray from their mouths (as seconds in a prize-ring squirt water and spirits over the principals) upon other members' heads and shoulders, and then tease the hair with long tortoiseshell combs and smooth it with potsherds taken hot from the fire.

Julia has just left school to get ready for her marriage, and you meet her on the beach, very splendid in her ornaments and shining all over with oil, but as calm and self-possessed as usual. Three years ago we knew her as Jarum, and she and Adore were inseparable friends in the top class of the school, but now Adore has become Barbara, and her head is shaven, and she looks ten years older, and she has a baby of her own ;



JULIA.

and Julia has found a new girl friend, a rowdy person who has led her into more than one scrape already ; but in a week or two they will both be married, and they will shave their pretty heads and put away their ornaments, and work very hard in the gardens, and before long daughters of their own may be the belles of the village, as Julia and Barbara and Gobur have been for two or three years past.

Old Mr. Tomlinson and his wives and his children are always up and down the beach. Philip splutters and coughs and talks pidgin English, and chops aimlessly with a tomahawk of his own at the piled-up logs, and the wives come back from the gardens with their heavy loads, and Aunt Polly, who is Mr. Tomlinson's step-daughter, and has had nearly as many matrimonial adventures as Mary Motlaf herself, but has gone on smiling and joking through them all, stops me on the beach to ask whether I can do anything to make her present husband behave himself, or to confide to me, in a portentous whisper, that she almost wishes she was a widow again, or to assure me that things are beginning to look brighter, or to wonder whether she had better be called Susan or Theresa when the time for her Baptism comes. Aunt Polly, whose real name is Foru, is counted as a woman of Maisin, though Mr. Tomlinson married her mother years and years ago, when a little colony from Uiaku settled at Aieram. That mother is still alive and hard at work, though she is wrinkled and grey. She is cheerful enough, but now and then she goes off her head and rushes out into the bush at night time, and has to be brought back by men who seek for her in peril of their lives, since she is cunning and knows how to use the wooden club which she has the sense to carry with her at such times.

A year or two ago the chief of the Aisora tribe died at Aieram, and his women-folk, among whom were Aunt Polly and her mother, dressed themselves as men, with spears and shields and all, according to the custom, and danced at his

burial feast. When Aunt Polly's first husband died, she had to behave and dress as the Maisin widows do, crawling about on all fours, and being treated as an outcast thing, and then, for months afterwards, passing through slow degrees of elaborated mourning and half-mourning, until the time that she could properly look about and find a new husband. She is a good sort is Aunt Polly, and as fat and jolly as if she had always lived a sheltered life in one place, and if she can go on managing Bussi, her rather ill-tempered second husband, as cleverly as she has managed him hitherto, and if God gives her the child which has been hitherto denied, and if, after several years of interrupted preparation, she can be at last baptized, she will not have had a bad time of it on the whole, while she will always be to me the type of a brave woman who has played the game, and kept her balance and her good spirits in the midst of misadventures that would have driven many of her white sisters to drink and their husbands to the divorce courts.

Always on the beach, too, is Kokok, the deaf-and-dumb boy, with whom I found easy means of intimacy in the early days when the language of signs was the only language I could speak ; and Mote, the little deaf-and-dumb girl, so young and tiny that she still runs stark naked, who waits and goes beside me when I walk, and swims the creeks while I wade, and thinks she is being useful when she carries the walking-stick which it would suit me so much better to carry myself.

It is Mote who sometimes brings the old blind woman, Kaf, who is Agnes' grandmother, to sell taro on the station. How the blind woman can tell Mote what is to be done, or how Mote understands what the old blind woman wants her to do, is still a mystery to me ; but the blessed law of compensation is at work even here, and the deaf-and-dumb girl



KAF.



AISORA DEATH DANCE.

"AUNT POLLY,"

"MRS. TOMLINSON."

is the brightest, sharpest baby in the place, while the poor old woman, who has lived a hard life, and suffered many things, knowing little of this world and less of any world that is to come, is as patient and happy in her old age as are any of the dear old souls one has known in the towns and up-country farmhouses of Australia, or in quiet villages at home.

CHAPTER XVII

THE LAZY NIGGERS

IN all sorts of queer and unsuitable places, and at most odd and inappropriate times, these chapters are getting themselves written. The book, as a whole, was first conceived on a Sunday afternoon in the deserted inland village of Kinjaki, where "Government" had mercifully called a two days' halt for the restoration of his fevered and footsore police and carriers and camp followers.

The psychic moment for its real beginning came suddenly, six months after, on a mountain top; and it has been brooded over and scribbled for on the platforms of canoes between Wanigera and Uiaku, by the side of waterfalls close to Reuben's house, in a crowded and uncomfortable whale-boat on a four days' journey up the Mamba River, on the deck of the Mission schooner becalmed in Buna Bay, and in quiet hours in my own house—early in the morning before any one else is awake, or late at night, long after the village has gone to sleep again, when the white man, as often happens in New Guinea, must find some refuge from the despair of sleeplessness.

To-day, I am writing in a little native village named Uwe, about half-way between Wanigera and Tufi. It is a Monday, and mid-day, and twenty-four hours ago I had no plans for any travelling, but rather for a few quiet weeks at home, busy with teaching and translation, in preparation for Easter and the Easter Baptisms. The coal strike in Australia has affected even this out-of-the-way corner, and

we had no mail for many weeks. Our store of trade tobacco and foreign food was falling low, but at a pinch we, more easily perhaps than other men in New Guinea, could manage for a time without supplies. The nurse who came up here in December was to have gone away again this week, travelling by the *Kiaora* from Tufi. Even professional ladies and gentlemen travel wondrous light in Papua, but our whale-boat is small, and it seemed worth while to send most of the baggage on ahead last Saturday by canoe, and our visitor would have found it again, to-morrow or next day, when she got to Tufi to join the little mail boat as it came in leisurely fashion, with no silly affectation of dignified importance and with no undignified haste, down the coast from Mamba Mouth on the way to Mukawa and Samarai.

But yesterday, in the casual, unexpected way that such things happen here, the Mission schooner arrived at Wanigera, coming into sight as we finished the morning service, and dropping anchor just as we were ready to ring the bell again in the afternoon. It is not the custom of the Mission boats to travel on Sunday, and so we guessed at once that something unusual was toward, and were not at all surprised to hear that the mail service has been finally shaken out of such little organisation as it ever boasted, and that the schooner had been sent up to carry our nurse to the work that is waiting her elsewhere. The mail boat is to run no more, since there is no coal left in the country. And even if she ran, it would not be up this coast, for every white man has rushed away to a new gold-field near Port Moresby, and the Government and the missionaries hereabouts must manage for themselves.

This would have mattered little to us, but for the express baggage that had already gone on. You may travel light, but not even in New Guinea can you travel without any luggage at all. And so the schooner must go to Tufi,

or else wait till the boxes and bundles could be brought back to Wanigera. And there was a still further complication! The post-office people at Samarai had made use of our schooner, and had consigned two bulging mail bags to Wanigera, with a polite request that we would be so very good as to forward them at our earliest convenience to the R.M. at Tufi.

We missionaries in Papua owe so much to the unofficial kindness of His Majesty's servants of the military police and the post-office, that we welcome such small opportunities of return service as chance to come our way. A message was sent at once to Uiaku, and before daylight this morning four youths, famous among oarsmen, and already retained for the nurse's journey, reported themselves for an earlier and hurried trip to Tufi and back.

It was a doleful experience, last night, to see those two mail bags lying at my feet, and to know that one of them contained the long overdue allowance of letters for which we had been waiting since Christmas; and yet to remember that the ungainly awkward masses of paper and soiled canvas were as sacred and inviolable as if George the Fifth himself had melted the wax for the untidy black seals, and tied the ragged bits of string round their mouths and entrusted them to us with his own kingly hands!

"Confound all civilised Sanctions and Conventions and Make-Believe!" say I: but I am keeping as close to those bags as may be, and they form quite a comfortable back rest at this moment on the flat unwallled platform of the native house where we have taken refuge from the rain.

It is not more than five-and-twenty miles from Wanigera to Tufi, but my boys must pull every inch of the way. There is seldom any wind for sailing in this north-west season, and the bay is so peppered with reefs and sandbanks that it is safer and more sure to rely simply on our oars.

Four Maisin boys and four others from Kumarbun make our double crew, and the small boat comes along at a good steady four or five miles an hour. At the last moment, and after he had packed my swag, Awui jumped at the offered chance of coming to Tufi. This pocket edition of a cook-boy, neatly bound in a strip of red Turkey twill, is lordly enough and altogether self-possessed and confident as he moves familiarly about my house, but he is timid and shy to-day, for he has never been so far away from home before. He feels safe enough, however, even on the great waters and in this strange village, with these Kumarbun friends of his, and he is bent on seeing the splendid place where "Government" lives, and where his own uncle was once kept for a whole month because he had been impudent to Nonis.

It was pleasant to see the care with which the bigger fellows treated this tiny chap when the rain came on an hour ago, packing him away under the boat seat, and covering him with mats, lest he should be chilled, and giving him choice pieces of food to comfort his little heart.

If consideration and kindness for small feeble things is any part of a gentleman's outfit, these Papuans are, so far, very perfect gentlemen.

Awui will carry my leather satchel, and run messages at Tufi, and sleep on my doorstep to-night, rolled in the dingy blanket which is his only personal luggage. And I am glad to have him with me, much as I am glad that the dog should be curled up on this verandah, wearied with the effort of showing the Uwe children something of what a foreign dog can do in the way of retrieving sticks, and of setting the village dogs and pigs more or less exactly in their proper places.

We put in here to escape the rain which came down from the slopes of Trafalgar. It is useless to hope that we shall keep dry all the way to Tufi; and we should have gone

straight on, rain or no rain, but that I had never been to Uwe before, and this was a chance to see the homes of the men who sometimes bring loads of sago and bananas down to Wanigera. I have been making better acquaintance with the twelve or fifteen Maisin families, while the crew has cooked a kerosine tin full of taro and sweet potatoes.

There is nothing particular going on in the village. It is no day for fishing, or for burning off new ground, and the women have already brought in their loads of food and firewood from the gardens, which are close at hand.

Our visit is an event nevertheless, as exciting to these simple villagers as the coming of a circus or a cheapjack or a quack dentist elsewhere. It means, too, a few scraps of tobacco in exchange for native food, and as much as half a stick by way of unearned increment for the fortunate man under whose house we first rushed for refuge from the driving rain. The village dogs do not share in the general good fellowship and contentment, but they are quite able to take care of themselves. The houses are built high above the ground, and the wooden staircases up to the doors are as steep and difficult as builders' ladders set up against the sides of a London house; but these dogs run up and down into the houses, carrying their favourite bones, and other particular treasures, as easily as the hodmen carry their loads of brick.

These eight boys of mine are just average young men of the district. Once again, I protest that I am writing only of Collingwood Bay, which I know, and not of other places where the Papuan has, perhaps, been more influenced for good, as well as for evil, by my own countrymen. All of these lads have passed through the Mission schools at Uiaku or Wanigera, and absorbed some small share of the mingled wisdom and foolishness of their South Sea Island teachers. Half of them have been "boarders" for longer or



HALF MOURNING.



FULL MOURNING

A MAISON WIDOW.

shorter periods on one or other of our stations. Two are Christians of more than a year's standing ; one was baptized a month ago on Christmas Eve ; and two more are to be christened when Easter comes. They are not very clean to look at, in spite of the heavy rain through which we have passed. There have been several deaths this wet season, and most of these youths have been more or less in mourning of late, and the greasy black stuff has worked into their skin, so that they have just now a black-and-tan appearance rather than the pleasant colour of dull copper which is naturally theirs. Their dress consists of a piece of tapa cloth, marked with curious conventional designs in red and black vegetable dyes, and necklaces of shell or glass beads, and a few garters and belts and armlets of coloured grass or carved coconut shell. They are clear eyed and healthy looking, with well-developed bodies, and an easy knack of picking up a white man's way of doing things, if once they see any reason or meaning in the thing, so that they are good labourers on the station, or oarsmen in the whaleboat ; and they make fair sailors in the schooner, if they have a really capable white captain. If their master did not know his business, or were unfit to have the control of human beings, they would very likely be failures at whatever he set them to do.

As soon as these lads left school they began to go about with the grown-up men, beginning in sober earnest, and for themselves, the garden work and the canoe building, and the fishing and hunting with spears and nets with which they have been more or less familiar since they were quite small boys. Each of them, long before he began to grow up, was betrothed to some girl in the village : for native marriages, as a general thing, are pre-arranged by the parents, and depend rather upon complicated calculations of pigs and canoes and tomahawks, than upon any first-hand sentimental adventures of the younger folk themselves. The plans of the old people

do not always reach their full accomplishment, though oftener here, perhaps, than in older lands, but the young men generally claim their brides as soon as they are ready for them—ready, that is, to pay the appointed price—and after the native marriage ceremony in the village street the girl will be taken to live in her father-in-law's house, though it may still be some considerable time before the young couple actually live together as man and wife, or even before the husband thinks about building a house of his own.

But the wife must begin, at once, to work in the piece of garden that has been assigned to her husband, and he is expected to busy himself with clearing and fencing the ground and preparing it for taro, and with the getting for himself of a canoe. When the house is to be built, or a canoe hollowed out, the young man's friends must come and help him; and though most of them know and appreciate the use of many of the white man's tools, it is still common on Wanigera beach, and in the village, to see a log being hollowed out, or the posts shaped for a new house, with native adzes and chisels, the stone blades of which are tightly bound into cleft sticks with tough twisted strands of home-made twine.

The young man, married or about to marry, has quite as much necessary occupation as is good for him, though he need never over-work or worry about ways and means, or be anxious for the future, like civilised men, who can never be quite sure that house room and sufficient supplies of food and clothing will always be forthcoming as the result of moderate and varied and interesting labour; but he will always re-arrange things, and come and work for us for a day, or a week, or a month, if we have any special job on hand and are careful to give him fair notice; and he will be well content if we give him his food, and an occasional smoke while he is working, and payment, when the job is finished, at the rate of a stick of tobacco a day.

He is not so keen on working "along Gov'ment"; and he simply refuses, point blank, to go away and work at a distance and over a long period for planters or miners or miscellaneous traders.

Recruiters have looked in here now and then—men who pick up "labour," and get anything from three to six pounds a head for every "boy" they deliver into the hands of the white employers; but it is so evident that the youths of Wanigera and Uiaku are not to be tempted away from home, that we rarely receive such visits now. The recruiters, who have their living to make like the rest of us (though they have never had the chance to make it so easily and so simply as these natives), doubtless go away from the villages where no one seems particularly busy, or ever in a hurry, and curse the Papuans for a lot of good-for-nothing loafers, and the missionaries for encouraging them in their idleness; and there is another mark set against us, and the story will be told once again, on schooner deck, or over the bars of the Samarai hotels, of "the lazy niggers," and the dashed missionaries who are "spoiling the natives." The recruiters, individually, like the miners and the planters, are well enough in their way, just as they probably would admit that we missionaries, taken one by one, are not such bad chaps after all; and I understand their difficulty and almost forgive their exasperation. But "their way" is simply not "the way" of these people; and though I sympathise with my unhappy countrymen, who need such a lot of money for their drink, and their ugly clothes, and their stuffy houses, and their extravagant pleasures, and could get it so easily out of New Guinea if only the "lazy niggers" could be persuaded to work hard and unpleasantly for the foreigner instead of lightly and easily for themselves, my sympathies are nevertheless more entirely with the coloured men, and I should have been very sorry indeed if any of these eight youths, or of the others at Wanigera, had accepted the invita-

tion of a planter, an ex-magistrate and a gentleman, who was here the other day in search of sixty boys. They would have been fairly treated, without a doubt, over and above the stringent regulations which the Government is careful to enforce for the protection of the natives, and they would have come back a year or two hence, wearing hideous coloured calicoes and cast-off straw hats, and bristling with cheap knives and leather pouches and jew's-harps and strings of coloured beads, and with enough tobacco to keep the whole village happy and excited for many days, but they would have lost their share in the settled village life. The rubbishy "trade" which represented their wages, though it cost the white man only a few shillings for each month that they had worked for him, would seem boundless wealth to these unsophisticated folk, but the tobacco would soon be gone, and the tin whistles and cheap German concertinas and Chinese camphor-wood boxes would be poor substitutes for the wives and gardens which they had lost or forfeited in the meantime. They would have got some good, in the way of widened views and greater understanding of the world and the white man's wonderful ways; but they would inevitably have got some harm also—the sort of harm that a simple, country-bred lad so easily gets in England, along with the wider experience and the greater good that he finds when he goes to seek his fortune in Manchester or Birmingham. Even if these chaps had not learned, as so many Papuans have already learned, to despise the undignified, ill-tempered, irreligious, hard-drinking, impatient white man who sometimes loafs about in the larger centres, they would have come back quite unfitted for the quiet steady-going life that they are now living, so contentedly, among their own people. Birmingham or Manchester may be the making of the country lad, if he has any real grit in him, or it may be the sheer ruin of him if he is of the weaker sort. And these Papuans have no particular character or grit or

moral strength ; and three years on a plantation, or in a mining camp, or at Port Moresby is, more often than not, enough for their complete undoing.

Where "Government" is concerned, it is not so easy to arrange one's sympathies. The magistrates must do their work, and to do their work they must get up and down the country ; and to get about in Papua, where there are no roads or wheeled carriages, or four-footed beasts of burden, they must have two-legged carriers. A native regulation very wisely empowers a magistrate, if necessary, to press the adult men of any village for his service, within certain limits of time and space, and in proportion to the whole population of the place. Sometimes there is no difficulty, and at certain seasons of the year the young men are glad enough to go away, in a spirit of adventure, for a week or two, though the work is uncomfortable and rough, and rather unmeaning to them, and the reward at the end of it all rather grudging and small. But the R.M. cannot always appoint his own time for travel, and he never has much time to spare, and cannot wait to pick up and choose and persuade and sift his porters ; and so it sometimes happens that a young man finds himself with sudden orders to go off, at a few hours' notice, or even without any notice at all, and for an indefinite time, and to an unknown and therefore undesirable place, to carry bags of rice, and typewriters, and canvas tents, and tins of kerosine, and wooden boxes for "Government," with the alternative of being taken to Tufi under magisterial displeasure, for a yet more indefinite time, and for still less comfortable or pleasant work.

Is it really any wonder that the "lazy niggers" sometimes do their best to keep out of the way of "Government," who has means of force behind him which no trader or missionary can use ?

The magistrate does not know, or if he knew he might be

too pre-occupied or hurried or indifferent to care, that Aivin has only been married a few weeks, or that Ayamidi is not long recovered from an illness which did him no permanent hurt, but yet threw all his own foolish but most important private affairs into confusion ; or that the pigs have begun to break down Visira's fence, so that six months' clearing and planting will be wasted if he is hindered from spending the next fortnight in necessary repairs ; or that Sarobir has lately been more regular at the catechumens' class in the hope that he may be baptized before very long ; or that David's old father died last night, and there are all sorts of visits to be made and family matters to be settled up ; or that little Mark, baptized a month ago, has been lying for nearly a fortnight at the very point of death, and may not live till his father comes home again ; or that Fanifani's wife has been rather queer of late, and wants watching.

“ Government ” is reasonable enough, and would listen if any one cared to tell him of these insignificant things, but the missionary must not always be interfering over trifles, or he would lose his privilege of putting in an effective word or two, privately, when there is some really big matter on hand ; and, though Aivin or Fanifani has perfect liberty to speak for himself, “ Government ” seems always impatient and sometimes unreasonable, like all these bustling, hurried white men, who never understand the true proportions of things, and even if he listened, he would not understand ; and if he could be persuaded that Frank or Ayamidi was not merely shamming, he would only tell them they might stay at home on condition of finding volunteers to go in their place, and that is no help at all, since all the other men have affairs of their own, and are as unwilling to go away as Ayamidi or Frank himself. And, from the native point of view, even if the man has no extra special reason for wanting to stay in his own place, why should he ever want to go away and carry boxes and bundles for

“ Government ” at all ? There is no consciousness of obligation to the officials, or sense of gratitude to the system which really does a very great deal for these villagers, any more than civilised householders are explicitly grateful to the system which supplies gas and empties dust-bins, or really love the officials who enforce the payment of rates and taxes. The taxes must be paid and the dust-bins emptied in Brixton and Balmain, but the men of Balmain and Brixton do not love to part with their money. And the men of Wanigera and Yuayu and Uiaku must get up, now and then, and “ walk about along Gov'ment,” and there's an end of it ; but they would much rather look after their own affairs by day, and sleep warm in their own homes at night, just as the average Britisher could find plenty of other uses for the money which he is obliged to spend on income-tax ; and for all my sympathy with the hard-working, poorly-paid magistrates, several of whom I am proud to have counted among my friends, I do not wonder that my parishioners have a nasty trick of clearing out into the bush when the Tufi whaleboat comes in sight ; nor do I wonder that “ Government,” when he lands, and learns from Nonis what has happened, says wicked things under his breath, and is somewhat ruffled, or that he is more disposed than he might otherwise have been to enforce with some degree of vigour the almost unlimited powers which are very rightly his.

It is just one of the dilemmas that are perhaps inevitable in the present stage of transition, when the trader is too anxious to get rich, and the magistrate too overwhelmed with impossibly large districts, to have any time or inclination to look at things from the native point of view, and when the native is not yet persuaded of what he may or may not come to believe some day, that the magistrates, and the miners, and the planters, as well as the missionaries, have come to New Guinea, simply and solely for his welfare, and not for the sake of what they can get out of him and his fertile country.

I do not pretend to know all about the natives, though I certainly know a hundred times more about these particular natives than all the magistrates and traders in Papua, nor have I any short and easy way for dealing with this inevitable clash of interests and affections and duties and inclinations ; but I know that these villagers have their home duties and their personal interests every whit as strong and as sacred as those of the magistrate or the manager of a plantation or the missionary ; and that they are no more “ lazy ” than they are “ niggers ” ; and that their motives for preferring to stay quietly at home and attend to their own affairs are no less straightforward and honourable than those of the recruiter, who primarily, I suppose, wants to get £3 per head for himself, and, incidentally, a sufficient supply of labour for his employers ; or of the magistrate who is obliged, somehow, to make his patrols up and down the coast, through the dirty swamps and over the difficult mountains ; or of the missionary, who, whatever his motives, has certainly not come here to get rich ; or of the miner, who wants to have a score of natives working for him for a year or two, so that he may have a few hundred pounds to spend, wisely or unwisely, next time he can get down to Sydney for a holiday. In the abstract, a little more work, and a little harder work, might not be bad for these copper-coloured friends of mine, but I do not want to “ see the lazy nigger *made* to work ” (as the white man sometimes puts it) for the enriching of men who really do not care twopence about the native here—or hereafter ; nor should I care to see my own countrymen attempt to teach the Papuan how to re-arrange his times for work and play, and his methods, nearly perfect at present, of supplying the needs of himself and his family, until they have solved the problem of the unemployed in London and the rest of England, and the other problem of the loafers in Sydney and other parts of Australia.

These young men all smoke, but they do not buy cheap

cigarettes, and loaf and spit at street corners while they smoke them ; nor do they get drunk, like so many of their contemporaries among mine own people, for the Government, whatever faults it may share with other human institutions, has at least protected the Papuan from any contact with the drink which is one of the curses of the enlightened Briton. If a man wants to eat in New Guinea, he must work for his food ; and if he cares to smoke, he must grow a certain number of coconuts and roots of taro, and work for so many extra hours, or wash so many pounds of sago, for each stick of tobacco that comes his way. And when these fellows have tobacco, it belongs not much more to them than to their friends, for the supply is shared out, by men who are too generous to keep anything to themselves, and among men who are too honourable to accept anything which they will not return in kind when they have the chance. Even if it is only the half-ounce or so of tobacco that each stick contains, it will be spread over several days, and broken up into the substance of very many newspaper-rolled cigarettes, and even the little bit that a man keeps for himself will be shared with any one who is within reach when the bamboo pipe is lighted, and passed from hand to hand. They are generous to a degree, these " lazy niggers " of ours, and whatever any one has, or earns, or catches, or finds, or—it must be added, remembering Sobo—steals, is shared with every one else as far as it can possibly be made to go.

They are reliable, in the sense that what they undertake they will certainly do, if they understand what is wanted, and if the thing is within their powers of accomplishment. They are scrupulously fair and loyal to one another, and faithful to any white man whom they trust ; and they are altogether honest, so that, now Sobo has been taken away, I leave my house open day and night, as no sane man would dream of doing in a civilised country. The only other thief I have met

was a Government cook-boy, who emptied my spirit flask once, while I was his master's guest. That proved nothing at all, of course ; though, if I were disposed to think and to speak as the less reputable traders are accustomed to do, I might elaborate an argument to prove that this particular boy, who had never been under Mission influence, had been spoiled by his master, and that the natives are all right as long as the Government leaves them alone, and does not give them foolish notions about—cookery.

These chaps have their own queer ways of doing things, of course. You would never, for instance, persuade a Papuan to dig a hole in the ground in the place where he wants to set up a wooden post. He prefers to sharpen the end of the wood and then drive it by sheer force, with repeated thumps as of a battering ram, farther and farther into the soil. The cook-boy on the schooner habitually opens meat tins with his teeth, and any of these eight boys of mine would rather do the same than take the trouble to look very far for the proper key. On a Government rest-house, not many miles from here, you may see a three-pronged lightning-conductor of *wood*, topping a very fair imitation, allowing for the difference of material, of the Government offices at Tufi.

Now and then, in the dancing season, when the hunts are all over, and the heavier garden work not yet well begun, the young men feel the need of exercise, and then you get rather tired of them. They line up in the village close against your house, and the monotonous *tom-tom, tom-tom* goes on all through the night. It starts about the time of sunset, with a few gentle but impatient tappings of the drum, as when the fiddlers in an orchestra make sure of their instruments just before the overture ; and soon there will be fifty or a hundred men, with lusty voices, and most of them with drums, moving backwards and forwards, in

double line, along the middle of the street. A slow dance it is, oblong rather than square, and more like Sir Roger de Coverley reduced to the measure and spirit of a funeral dirge than any quadrille or barn dance or waltz; and it goes on for five or ten minutes at a time, pausing for a few seconds, and then on again, with *tom-tom, tom-tom* on the lizard-skin heads of the drums as a constant accompaniment, and a few bars, over and over again, of some traditional native song, whose words no longer have any clear meaning for those who sing, set to rather mournful music in a minor key.

These songs are the only trace that I have found in the country of the all-pervading mournfulness that I was led to expect. Men, who know much more than I do, assure me that the native is always unhappy and haunted by fears of the unknown which make his whole life a burden to him. I can only say that I have seen nothing of this, and though even a Papuan with a bad toothache is never a cheerful man, and though my friends and neighbours are no more sprightly in the early morning than I am myself, and though troubles and sorrows overshadow their lives sometimes as they overshadow mine, the impression that I have gathered in these three years is that no community of grown-up human beings could be more brightly cheerful or more happy with the unfailing level happiness of healthy children than these few hundreds of men and women in and about Wanigera. By the Grace of God I have ever been an irrepressible optimist, and it may be that my optimism has found too ready reflection in the outward surface life of these merry folk, and that there may be black depths of dissatisfaction and disappointment and discontent under the surface, of which I know nothing: but even if they have deceived me, they are at least, or they appear to be, as completely successful in the deception of themselves, and though they be not as happy as they seem to be, it is at least a point in favour of these

parishioners of mine, that they are able to make such perfect pretence of buoyancy and unfailing contentment.

There are always two young girls in the dances at Wanigera, and they move very solemnly, with eyes cast down and bodies stiffly bent, and little cylinder-shaped rattles in their hands, which they shake in time with the music of the drums.

There are lights up and down the village all through the night, torches of dry grass, and big fires at which the women are cooking food. A man may drop out now and then to get his breath, or to straighten his head-dress or to put more paint on his face; but it is almost a point of honour, especially with the younger men, to go on to the bitter end. If you go over to the village, early in the morning, after a troubled night, you will be surprised to find the dancers still unnaturally fresh, and you wonder whether you will ever forget the mournful chant or the strange meaningless words which have hammered themselves so many hundreds and thousands of times into your ears during the last twelve hours, to the never-ceasing accompaniment of the *tom-tom, tom-tom, tom-tom-tom*. Outside the chief's house there is sure to be a pig, and a horrible tangle of dogs, tied together like a bunch of carrots, with their heads bashed in—some strange ritual offering from the visitors who have come over from Kumarbun or from Aieram for this all-night social function. And you will be sure to notice that several young men, who have lately gone through the ceremonies of initiation, are here making their public *début*. Until now they have been counted as boys, and have worn no decorations but a simple necklace and an armlet or two; but now they are splendid in their first head-dress of hornbill beaks and feathers, and cassowary plumes, and as pleased with themselves and with the world in general as any English girl of sweet seventeen at her first ball.

At first, and after I had recovered from the irritation of

the long succession of broken nights (for when an epidemic of dancing once begins, it may last for several weeks, all through each night and well into the day, with only brief interruptions for food and a longer pause for sleep in the afternoon), and when the thing had lost its novelty for me, I used to think that if I were a dancing man, which somehow I never was, I might have cared to dance, intimately and joyously, with a series of different girls, or even very often with one particular girl, but that I could never have settled myself, deliberately, to spend whole nights hopping backwards and forwards in a long row with a hundred other men, up and down the main street of my village, painted and decorated like a Jack in the Green, hitting the end of a wooden drum shaped like a diabolo double cone, and singing some five or six bars of music, with words that neither I nor any one else now understands, over and over and over again.

But I am not so sure. Most of one's first impressions of Papua need revision after a year or two. In this case, you have, on the one hand, stuffy rooms, and exciting colours, and an exaggeration of lights, and luxurious unwholesome suppers, and enervating music and perfumes, and beautiful, but gradually more and more unpleasant clothes, and dances that may, or may not, be very good for the dancers. And here, on the other hand, there is the fresh, soft, open air, with the full round moon and all the stars, and no music but that of your own making and such as is traditional in your tribe, and only the scent of the bush and the sea breezes, and nothing to eat but plenty of boiled taro presently, when the hard work of the dance is over, and perhaps a mouthful or two of roasted dog and a piece of pig, and no miscellaneous girl partners who may, or may not, be much the better for having such intimate doings with you, but only a lot of other chaps who are as keen as you yourself on keeping their bodies in first-rate condition through the slack season, that

they may be ready for the hunting (or, as not so very long ago, the hand-to-hand fighting) when it comes, though neither you nor they bother to think of that, but simply dance because you like it, and because it is the proper and jolly thing to do.

There has been no dancing in Wanigera this season, and though I have been thankful for the silent nights, I was sorry for the cause of this unaccustomed quietness. There have been many deaths in the village, and we all feel that the chiefs have done quite well in refusing permission to dance; and, whether we are disappointed or not, we know that when once the chiefs have spoken in such a matter, that is the end of it, and there is no more to be said.

And now the rain is over, and the food is cooked, and these bulging mail bags are burning my back and assailing my vast contentment more badly than ever, so heigh-ho! for Tufi and the end of the temptation, when we can have them properly opened, and learn, without dishonour or High Treason, what the rest of the big world is doing and saying and thinking.

CHAPTER XVIII

AGNES

SAWO was top girl in the school when first I began to teach, and I remember her as the best scholar in the school, as scholarship goes in New Guinea. She was fourteen or fifteen at the time, and may have been coming to school for six or seven years. She wrote well, could read perfectly and at sight anything that was written or printed in one of the phonetically written languages, and she was expert in her dealings with the utterly useless abstract hundreds of millions in which the South Sea Island schoolmaster delights. Her education was not so much, perhaps, an evidence of good teaching as it was an instance of the standing miracle of our schools, which turn out scores of children who are able to read and write and reckon admirably well, even in spite of their incompetent teachers.

Our schoolboys expect to leave school when they have spent a few terms in the top class, and are grown bigger than all but a few of their fellows, so that eight or ten boys disappear at the end of each term. We keep the girls until their husbands are ready for them. The boys and the girls are promised to each other from very tender years, and they would be married, in the ordinary course, when the girls are about thirteen and the husbands five or six years older. The natives themselves know that this is rather too soon, and parents are generally willing enough for the girls to stay on at school for an extra year or so. They leave when everything is arranged for their marriage, and they

become married women, and shave their heads, and put away their ornaments, and go off every day to work in their husband's gardens directly their last school term ends.

Not long ago, a family at Yuayu took the matter into their own hands, and Rafi, which means "Sago," a girl not much more than twelve years old, came to school on the first day of a new quarter, but came no more. Instead of the familiar excuse of "sickness," or that "her father was sick and she was working in his garden," I heard quite simply that she "was married." Peter, who sometimes calls the roll, went on calling for "Rafi" to the end of that quarter, and the other children from Yuayu told him, every time, and very simply, that she "was married."

I was one of many spectators at Sawo's wedding two years ago. It took place in the late afternoon in the main street of Rainu village, and there was gathered a great crowd on the platforms and between the houses. At one end of the street the bridegroom and a few of his friends sat cross-legged on the ground. They were all gorgeous with feather head-dresses, and faces patterned strikingly in red and white, and many shell and wooden ornaments. Each of these men had his lime gourd and carved lime stick, and they chewed betel-nut and ate its proper accompaniments of pepper stalk and lime, and feigned to have no slightest interest in what was going forward. Towards them, from the other end of the village, moved a procession, headed by a young man shaking a spear. This was the elder brother of the bride; and behind him walked her other brothers, and then the bride herself, weeping bitterly, and supported by a few girl friends. She and they were decked out with all their necklaces and other ornaments, and their hair was elaborately dressed with coconut oil and red ochre. Behind this central group, again, was a rabble of relatives and school children—any young persons, indeed,



AGNES AND PHEBE.

who could claim something more than just a friendly interest in the girl who was now to be wedded to Futin.

It was the very slowest procession I had ever seen, for it moved not more than a step or two at a time, with very lengthy pauses in between. The dramatic idea seemed to be, that the bride was quite unwilling to be married, and that her friends had really not yet altogether made up their minds about it. From the bridegroom's end were certain concrete arguments advanced, to hasten the happy decision, and to draw the girl and her lingering escort nearer to the desired goal. A man stepped out into the midst and made a speech, shouting out his words for all to hear. He would bring two very large string bags next day, full of taro and sweet potatoes, and he would put them under the bridegroom's house, and his friend should do exactly as he liked with them. A pause, and then another, with similar vehemence and elaborate gesture, promised so many bundles of firewood. A third pledged himself to spend a day and a night upon the water, and he would bring a great many fish—oh, ever so many fish, and such big ones!—to Futin. None of these promises takes long to write or read about, but they needed several minutes in the making, and as each orator fell back into the crowd, a murmur of applause went round, and the procession moved a few steps forward. Both the applause and the onward movement were calculated in nice proportion to the size and value of the latest gift. When one man, at last, in an extremely noisy and excited speech, poured scorn on such as hesitate over long in coming to the point, and urged everybody to make up their minds and have done with it—when this man ended with the promise of a pig, than which there is no more desirable property in our village, the enthusiasm of the spectators was wild and vigorous. It seemed that the matter was almost settled, and the man with the spear and the bride and her attendants moved very near

to their journey's end. It was something like a charity dinner, with the crowd applauding each announcement of impromptu subscriptions by folk who had probably determined beforehand the exact amount of their generosity; and it reminded me, too, of the exhibition of wedding presents at the time of a fashionable marriage in civilised life between more sophisticated folk than Sawo and Futin. There was the groom, with his best men, and the bride with her maids, and the man who was to give her away, and there were the spectators, and the public interest in the presents, and generous provision of all imaginable kinds of food.

In this case, the gifts came all from the bridegroom's side, and the taro and the fish and the pig would presently be shared out among the relatives of the bride and cooked with the firewood that was mentioned among the other gifts. When it was all over, and after a decent interval had been given to any man who wanted to make his speech—the procession hurried no man out of his opportunity—the spear was lowered, and they led the weeping Sawo to the house of the chief of Rainu village, where she was attended by her maidens, and whence she would be taken, next morning, to her husband's home. Sawo was one of the earliest to be baptized in Wanigera. She and Adore, and Beb, and Jarum, and Kakan were christened by the names of Agnes, and Barbara, and Clara, and Julia, and Ruth.

It was not altogether easy to find names for these first Christians of ours. I read over to them long lists of names; and whenever anybody seemed to take interest in one of the names, I wrote it on the blackboard, and from the score or two thus written the boys and girls chose Christian names for themselves. Jukuk, and Maiorot, and Bererum, and Marareu, and Bogege, and Borum, and Baroro, and Berem, and Gerab, and Sosor became Bernard, and Stephen, and Joseph, and Abraham, and James, and Philip, and Matthew,

and Simon, and George, and Luke ; and the whole village accepted the new names quite naturally, though the older people have some difficulty in compassing "Ruth" and "Matthew," which tend rather towards "Roots" and "Massyew."

This was at Easter 1908. Classes for catechumens had been held for a year or two previously, and out of some thirty or forty candidates these five girls were accepted, and twice the number of boys. They were station boys and school girls whom I knew very well already, and of whom I might hope to see a good deal in the two or three years before their Confirmation. The others, older people, and villagers of whom I knew less, had to wait for at least another year.

These first baptisms were as simple as they were beautiful. The village Church was decorated from end to end, not only as to its walls and round about the altar, but great palm branches were fastened across the beams of the roof, and small trees planted in the sandy floor itself, so that we moved about as in a forest of dark and shining green, surrounded by a wall of richest brown. A font was built near the door—just a large new native earthenware pot, resting on mangrove posts, which were hidden under variegated croton leaves, and the bloom of frangipani and scarlet hibiscus. The baptisms took place at Evensong, a little while before dark, and the service was in Wedauan, a musical language sufficiently familiar to all the younger folk.

Strictly, the service should have been for Christians only ; but when nearly the whole population of these villages crowded about the Church that Easter Even, I neither invited them to come in, nor bade them depart when once they had entered, and the Church was filled by a silent congregation, except for just the little open space about the font.

This is not the place to write more about that service, nor to speak of all that may follow that first beginning of a

native Christian Church in Wanigera. These few Christians, living in the midst of hundreds of heathen, get little direct support, even if they meet with no special discouragement from their friends.

The warfare of the Christian life is in many ways far harder for them than for any who are likely to read this book; but I have never had reason to suppose that these young men and women have repented of their resolution, or that they have been anything but brave and consistent in their Christian life.

A baby was born to Agnes and Futin a few months ago, and christened by the name of Phœbe; the mother, of course, would spell it "Fibi." This child was the first of her tribe to be baptized in infancy.

Agnes, the wife of Futin, is as quiet and gentle as was Sawo the school girl; and she lives, in the main, the ordinary life of married women in the village. Soon after sunrise, she and her husband go off to their garden, he walking first, with spear and tomahawk, and she with her baby slung over her shoulder in a coloured string bag, and perhaps a heavy bundle of taro tops for planting. Out in the garden, Futin works with his tomahawk, clearing new land and burning it off, or mending his fence, while Agnes plants row after row of taro, or clears away the weeds from a growing crop. Phœbe sleeps in the string bag, hanging from the roof of the "garden house," where the man and woman rest a little while in the middle of the day, and where they sometimes spend the night if there is more garden work than usual to be done next day. When the sun begins to go down they come home again, Futin still marching in front with his spear in one hand, and perhaps his daughter on the other arm, Agnes bent double beneath the heavy weight of her string bag, which is full of taro and bananas. There will, most likely, be a big bundle of chopped firewood on top of all,

and she staggers along, taking most of the strain of her load upon her forehead, where the string handle of the bag is held. It used to hurt me when I met these labouring women, though I had never seen them anything but cheerful in their work, and I used to feel that I ought to turn back and offer to help them with their parcels, though I knew, ever since I tried to lift one of these loads, that it would be almost more than I could manage. It angered me, at first, to see the husband walking so easily in front, with nothing to carry but a spear or two. But it is not so long since the man needed to have his hands free, and to go first along a path that might be ambushed by an enemy. It is the way of the country, and no one complains. A woman of our village would no more wish her husband to carry the string bag than the average woman in England would care to see her husband wheel the perambulator or hang out the washing.

It would be a mistake to think of Futin as an idle man, though he certainly seems to be having the best of it if you meet him and Agnes as they are coming back from the garden. He does a man's work on six days out of every seven. He does it easily and slowly, as things are wont to be done in New Guinea, where no one has ever yet discovered that nothing can be done properly except by a man in a violent hurry. But from sunrise to sunset he is pleasantly occupied. When he and his wife come back from the garden, he will go down to the sea and bathe, while Agnes takes an earthenware pot and goes, with a string of other women, for water. She makes up the fire and cooks the chief and only really important meal of the day; and her husband potters about with his nets, repairing them, or doing something to his house, or twisting up new fibre into hanks of strong white string. When the Mission bell rings at five o'clock, Agnes will probably come with the other women to barter a little native food for tobacco. In the evening there is plenty of

laughter and talk up and down the village, and by nine o'clock, or earlier if it is a rainy night, and much later near the time of the full moon, everything is quiet.

Through the night there is wonderful silence, broken now and then by the cries of a baby, or the grunting of a pig, or by a few melancholy flute notes from the house of some man who has eaten too much taro, or is otherwise distressed in body or mind.

Early in the morning, when the light begins, you see the blue smoke curling out from under the eaves and through the thatch of every house, and then bright fires blaze up in the street, and the men gather round to pass the time of day, and to toast their backs, and the sun rises, and the world becomes noisy again, and another day's work begins.

CHAPTER XIX

HIS MAJESTY'S MAIL

JUST as in "The Natural History of Iceland" the famous chapter on Snakes consisted of the bald and brief statement that "There are no snakes to be met with throughout the whole island," so I must beg leave to begin my account of the Postman in Papua by saying, comprehensively, that "there isn't one." We get letters, and answer them, but there are no particular or precise means of getting them, nor any appointed special opportunities for sending off the replies when they have been written. Letters come at random, anyhow and anywhen; and they go away, somehow, and sometime, with similar lack of any postal prearrangement of times and seasons. This is the sort of thing that happens:—

A year or so ago, at three o'clock one afternoon, just as it was beginning to rain, a small cutter came round Keppel Point, and made for the anchorage behind the reef, where a piece of old railway iron, topped by an inverted oil-drum, marks the channel. A couple of shots were fired from the cutter as she anchored, and our whaleboat was at once sent out to her. I could not stay to see what it was all about, for there was a sick man at Aieram whom I had promised to visit that day. The village was not far, and the track was fairly dry, though here and there one is obliged, even at the best of times, to cross a stream, or to get through or round some yards of stagnant swamp.

Just as I stooped under the narrow doorway of the Aieram stockade the sky became as black as it was when Tweedledee

and Tweedledum were interrupted in their famous duel, and the gentle rain of the earlier afternoon changed to a heavy downpour. Water was beating in upon the platforms of the houses, and it was too dark to do anything in the upstairs windowless room, but I got my man right in under his house, and the brilliant succession of lightning flashes gave us all the light we needed to see what we were doing. The storm had burst exactly over the village, and the thunder was deafening. Not merely loud claps, or distinct and separate peals, but a continuous clattering series of explosions, as of unlimited sky-rockets and squibs and Chinese crackers. The pigs went crazy with excitement or fear, and charged and fought, wild-eyed and bare-tusked, under the houses ; and the dogs, up on the platforms, joined in and howled ; and the lightning glittered along the ground, and there was water everywhere. They brought me down a palm-leaf sleeping mat from the house to use as an umbrella, and then I turned home. I could not wait for the rain to stop, for it hardly ever does stop at that time of day in New Guinea, and if once darkness had fallen I should not have found my way back to Wanigera that night at all.

Apart from the look of the thing, which simply does not matter in New Guinea, no one could desire better protection from rain than is afforded by a large pandanus sleeping mat. This one was seven or eight feet long, by four or five broad, and the natural fold along the middle made it fall easily into the shape of a gable roof.

The lightning flickered along the footpath, in gorgeous colours of violet and crimson and red. The fox-terrier trotted in front, with his head low down, looking white no longer, but taking on the scarlet or the purple of the lightning ; and whenever he stopped to shake himself, which happened every few yards, he seemed, by some queer cinematographic illusion, to have at least a dozen ears and tails, and as many twirling legs as a centipede. Soon there was no path that one could see



FUTIN AND AGNES.



A MAIL FROM TUFU

—only a running stream between two walls of high grass and ferns and trees. The narrow world on either side of the flooded track, and the falling raindrops, were coloured violet or crimson by the lightning, but the upward vertical splashes from the ground were always sparkling and crystal clear. It would have been terrifying, all this noise and clatter of thunder and falling and running water, and the continuous blaze of the lightning, if one had stopped or cared to think much about it; but it was fairly in the day's work, and I said over and over again a verse or two of St. Columba's "Hymn of Trust," and something out of the Ninety-first Psalm, and there was an end of it. I remember a popular preacher in London who could hardly keep Alpine sunrises out of his sermons. If ever I have to preach again in an English church, and it should chance to be at Michaelmas, that thunderstorm near Aieram, with certain practical reflections on the Ministry of Angels, will find its way into my sermon. "*He shall give His Angels charge over thee . . .*"

And still the rain poured down, and at last I was wading in water up to my knees. Papuan footpaths are always beaten like a broad cart-rut deep into the ground—it would never occur to anybody to raise them above the general level—and water was running swiftly where the track had been, and it reached, in places, up to my belt. The palm mat caught in a trailing piece of Lawyer cane, and was ripped in halves. Over one stream there lay a single log which served as a bridge, with a span of some twenty feet. The yellow water underneath, which commonly ran not more than three or four feet deep, had risen within the hour to nine or ten, and was now swirling within a few inches of this makeshift bridge. Coming, I had walked this log, and hardly noticed how narrow and round it was. But now, going back again, whether it was the tumult of the water, or the beating of the rain, or the dazzling flashes of lightning, or the sudden realisation that both the bridge

and my boots were sodden and slippery, I stopped in the middle, and could only shuffle the rest of the way, sidelong and by painful inches.

The homeward journey was so slow that it was quite dark before I got near the station. The lightning was still frequent enough to show the way, or I might have missed the flooded track, and at each flash I saw the scarlet dog, with the cinematographic legs, always two or three yards in front of me. In the very worst of the storm, when we did once light upon a spot where solid ground was showing, the extraordinary animal hunted up a bit of stick, and importuned me to throw it for him. I was altogether incapable of playing up to him, but I appreciated the little beggar's plucky attempt to make the best of things, as being both cheerful and characteristic, if a trifle inopportune. And a few minutes after I had got home a trader came in, looking as waterlogged as I was myself, and followed by a native boy who carried a mail bag. This good man had been to Tufi, where he heard that we had been waiting some weeks for our mail, and as he had a day or two to spare, he had sailed the little *Banjo* down into the bay on purpose to bring us our bag. We found him some clothes, and fed him, and he and my Better Half played chess while I opened the letters, and at half-past ten he turned out again into the pouring rain and was off to his cutter in readiness for an early start back to Tufi in the morning.

The thunderstorm, and the old man's leg, and the flooded track and the dog, have little enough to do with the postal affairs of Papua; but the happy ending to that day's adventure was typical of the splendid unexpectedness of everything that happens here—an unexpectedness which is never more noticeable, to some of us, than where our letters are concerned.

There is an annual published list of mail-boat sailings between Samarai and Sydney, but the printed slip means

little to us on the out-stations. The regular monthly mails which the Burns Philp steamers pick up at Cooktown, in North Queensland, and the smaller supplementary mails which the same steamers bring direct from Brisbane as they return to New Guinea, can be delayed indefinitely before a chance occurs to send them up the coast from Samarai. The Mission schooner comes out with stores early in every second month, and to some stations that is almost the only way that letters can be carried, now that the launch, the *A. A. Lowe*, which was given to us, through the S.P.G., eight years ago, is laid up. Until a year back, she was constantly running, though to no fixed plan, and there was always a delightful possibility that on any afternoon we might hear sudden cheering on the beach, followed by a domestic invasion of breathless small boys to tell me that "launch *he* come"; and half-an-hour afterwards, a northern missionary bound for Ambasi, or some other, doing the round trip after a bout of fever, or a distinguished visitor from the South, or the Vicar-General himself, would come ashore, and bring the mail with him. Sometimes it would be just good old Captain Syd Amos himself, the half-caste aboriginal Australian native, who could neither read nor write, but understood his engines perfectly, and was never known to get excited or be in a hurry, even when the launch caught fire. Syd Amos was the best barber in Papua, and always brought a pair of seissors in his pocket when he came ashore, and a full supply of the most lurid and latest news for your entertainment while he operated on you. But Amos died last August, after an attack of blackwater fever, and no one has yet been found to take his place. We miss him, for he was a good launch captain, and a faithful servant of the Mission, and we on the out-stations miss the sudden surprises of his comings, and the various visitors he brought, and the wonderful launch mails, only a day and a half out from Samarai, which meant that the English letters

and papers were no more than two months old, and those from Australia often even less than a month.

Once upon a time the schooner had a white captain, one of the best seamen on the coast of Papua, and for some years she was proverbially clean and bright as a new pin. But the Mission fell on evil days, and since there was no money for a white man's wages, she had to be put in charge of a series of native captains, who were always finding new reefs and bumping on to old ones; and the native crews, with no white man to lead them, discussed everything in committee, and each man decided what the others ought to do; and paint was scarce; and no one dared to order a new suit of sails; and though she is still as sound as when she was so faithfully built, and ranks to-day among the prettiest craft that sail these waters, and though missionaries are used and quite content to rough it, a voyage in the Mission schooner *Albert Maclaren* is not at all an experience to be desired.

The mails that she delivers now and then to Wanigera, after calling in at all the Mission stations between East Cape and Mukawa, are anything from ten days to a month older than they were when they reached Samarai. Once or twice in a year, a trading launch, hurrying north with stores, or carrying signed-on labour to the miners on the Gira or the Yodda gold-fields, will turn twenty miles out of the direct course, and come right in here, to the head of the bay, some morning, instead of going straight across from Mukawa to Cape Nelson, and the skipper will bring our letters ashore, and stop half-an-hour for a cigarette and a cup of coffee, and give us all the news, and then bustle away to the harbour at Okein, where he will wait a few hours, and then up anchor again at midnight, in order to make the reef-infested bay at Buna just as the sun is rising out of the sea behind him. Relations between the missionaries and other white men all through New Guinea are of the most friendly and pleasant.

Men of the same race draw naturally near to each other in such a land as this, but it is something more than the call of the blood which makes us glad to meet and to serve, and to be served, by our own countrymen here. The miners and the storekeepers and the traders and the Government officers in New Guinea are not all angels and saints, but just ordinary men—like the missionaries themselves. That is to say, they have their obvious faults, like the rest of us ; but, with very few exceptions indeed, they are honest, clean fellows, who work hard for their living, and deal honourably with their fellows, and fairly with the natives. We missionaries, who in some sort are unofficial protectors of the natives, and professional moralists, are always glad to meet these other white men who have come to the country, frankly, to make money, or to find adventure ; and we are always willing to be of use to them in such ways as are sometimes possible, since we live on the spot and know the natives thoroughly ; and we are constantly having cause to be grateful to these non-missionary countrymen of ours for little acts of hospitality or thoughtful kindness. If they do comparatively little to help, at least they do nothing intentionally to hinder, our religious work ; and though we dream, sometimes, of what might happen in Papua if Christ were openly confessed and followed by the magistrates and the traders, we are thankful always that our fellow-countrymen, on the whole, do no shameful and notorious discredit to the religion which we missionaries offer to the natives as the best thing that the white man has to give them. Here and there you meet disreputable little drunken unclean microbes, and inferior uneducated characterless white men, who despise the natives without trying to understand them, and who are instinctively hated and distrusted by them in return—men who are a curse to the natives of New Guinea, and no good at all to any one else, and not much good, it would seem, to themselves ; but the Government has made things

so vexatious and difficult for "mean whites" that the worst of them have found that it suited them better to go back to Australia, or England, or wherever it was they came from, and the stragglers have to mind, though they be not much inclined to mend, their manner of dealing with the natives.

If we had to depend only on the Mission boats, or on the friendly traders whom we see too seldom in Collingwood Bay, we should be badly off indeed for mails. But there is "Government"; and, thanks to the magistrates at Tufi, Wanigera is really as well off, in this matter, as any Mission station in the country.

Regularly, for two years past, a small steamboat, belonging to a storekeeper in Samarai, has run up and down the coast of Papua, carrying passengers and cargo, and under mail contract for a monthly service between Samarai and the German boundary. The captain is bound to leave Samarai within so many hours of the arrival of the Cooktown mail, and to call at Tufi as he goes and as he returns from the mouth of the Mamba River, and the R.M. of the Division allows our letters to be sent as far as Tufi in his own bag. I have seen the *Kiaora* more than once in Tufi harbour, and it has been almost a shock to meet a real steamboat, with real engines and smoke-stack, burning real coal, and under the direction of real white men, so near to our own desolate waters, where nothing floats but native canoes and our Mission boats, and once or twice in the year some trading schooner or cutter. There is constant going backwards and forwards between Wanigera and Tufi, and our letters come and go, frequently, if irregularly, and by queer carriers and queerer craft. Sometimes it is a party of armed native constables travelling in a canoe, or in the Government whaleboat, in response to "information received" from somewhere down the coast; or a mob of discharged prisoners are being sent home in a wonderful double canoe that looks like a cross between the old twin Calais-Dover

steamboat and a Chinese scow ; or Nonis, having failed to persuade us to explain his duty to him, has decided to run somebody in, provisionally, as it were, and take him up to Tufi to find out whether he ought to be handcuffed or not, and he takes our letters with him, and perhaps brings back a mail a few days later ; or we have sent our own whaleboat, with a South Sea Islander in charge, or chartered a canoe with its crew of five natives, to meet the *Kiaora* ; or else timed our own periodic visits to Okein so as to pass Tufi on about the day the mail should arrive.

At irregular intervals the *Merrie England*, the Government steam yacht, calls in at Tufi, and soon thereafter police will be scattering in all directions on the King's business ; and though, even in tropical and easy-going Papua, that business " requireth haste," there is generally time for one of them to call in here as he passes, and leave our letters, with the R.M.'s compliments. And the natives go backwards and forwards on their own business. A man has joined the police force, and word comes that he is to be sent away to Port Moresby for training, and his relatives must go and bid him good-bye, and take a present of food to cheer him on the way. Some of the Rainu men have been imprisoned for a fortnight, for some breach of the " roads regulations," and their friends count the days and then make up a party to go and bring them home. The Uiaku people have made sago, and are taking it to sell to " Government " ; Mr. Tomlinson and the other men of Oeresan have hollowed out a huge canoe to the R.M.'s order, and they must deliver it to him at Tufi ; a child has died in Kumarbun while its father is serving a short sentence for petty theft, and the man's relatives think that if they go and talk to the magistrate he may let the father come home at once, to cheer his wife. Hardly a week passes but what we can send our letters on, somehow, as far as Tufi, where, although there is no post office, the R.M. is nevertheless good enough to

include our packets and parcels in the bag which the *Kiaora* picks up on her way back to Samarai.

And yet, with all these strings to our bow, it is nearly always the unforeseen that happens. The special messengers whom we had hired at the cost of a pound of trade tobacco, and sufficient food for the double journey, come back without the bag, and no one is the better for their continuous labour by day and night, except that each man has earned five of the precious "sit-ticks." The "sit-teemer" had come to Tufi on the appointed day, and they had been there to meet her, but the R.M. writes hurriedly to say that something had gone wrong farther south, and that the mail from Cooktown had not reached Samarai when the *Kiaora* left. We go to Tufi, and the R.M. entertains us royally, and hospitably shows no sign of weariness though we dawdle about on his verandah for two or three days, and then go on to Okein without our letters after all, to hear afterwards that the coal strike in Australia has thrown the whole mail service into disorder. We go backwards and forwards to the beach watching for a canoe to come swiftly round Keppel Point, bringing the things that should have been here a week ago, and nothing comes, and we turn in night after night wondering what has gone wrong, or whether the rest of the world has come to an end, and only Wanigera is left alive. And then, at midnight, there are lights and voices on the verandah, and the station boys are shouting out that "Po-leeceyman, *he* come," and I rush out, barefooted and excited, careless of mosquitoes, anopheles or otherwise, to receive a miserable little parcel of three letters from Samarai—my quarterly allowance of £5 "for personal expenses," three lines of thanks from a relieving officer in the post office for telling him where to buy a good dog when he goes south, and a picture postcard addressed to my Better Half. And then I go slowly back into my mosquito-proof room, and rub my

ankles, and wonder why I was such an ass as to stand out there and get bitten all for nothing, and it is two o'clock in the morning—too late to have another supper, too early to think about breakfast, too hopeless and unmeaning an hour to do anything at all but sleep, and sleep now seems impossible. The neighbours have been disturbed by the noise, and a sick baby has begun to cry, and Nonis has been knocked up by the travelling policeman, and I can hear people discussing the baby, and the policeman, and the missionary who gets papers from Government in the middle of the night. And then a desperate, loud-voiced rascal shouts “Shur-rup-p-p !” and there is a smothered laugh, and some whispering, and then silence. And I wonder whether the exclamation was meant for the baby, or for the policeman, or for me ; and I reflect that even if I am not learning much Ubir myself, I am at least doing something to widen the limits of the British Empire by teaching a little King's English to my parishioners, though I do not think I have often told anybody to “shut-up.” And so, at last, and probably sooner than it seems, I drop off to sleep again, and wake in the morning to wonder, instantly, once again, what has become of that mail ? It is only six o'clock, and there is nothing particular to get up for—what is the use of getting up when the mails have stopped coming—what's the use of anything ? But I go out into the lovely sunny morning, all mixed of silver and gold, and the coco-palms and bananas are a magnificent green, though the bananas look more than ever as if they had been cut out of zinc and painted ; and grey and purple smoke is rising slowly out of the houses and hanging about the roofs, and there are little white puffs of steam round the top of Mount Victory ; and the cook-boy brings me a pineapple, and I breakfast on that and some tea, and go into church, and as I come out I find Bisari, the V.C. of Uiaku, just returned from Tufi, and bringing a huge mail bag, with

a second note from the R.M., written an hour or two after the other, to explain that a ketch had brought letters up from Samarai, but passed Tufi, with a fair wind, six days ago, without calling, and that the skipper had looked in on his way back, with many apologies for the delay, and he hoped there was no harm done.

It is certain that mails have gone astray sometimes. There was the *Seestern*, the German Government boat which left Sydney for Samarai last year and was never heard of again. We missed a mail altogether about that time, though I have never learned, officially, that the undelivered letters had actually been put on board that boat at Sydney, or whether, as was brilliantly suggested at the time, they had been overcarried to Samarang (wherever that may be), in mistake for Samarai. And I learned, nearly a year afterwards, that letters which were sent away from Wanigera in February 1909, and others that were written in the following May, never reached the persons to whom they were addressed in England and Australia. It is unpleasant to know that one may undeservedly have been held guilty of leaving letters unanswered, but, on the whole, it is remarkable that more such misadventures do not overtake our letters in their difficult journeyings from place to place. One learns in New Guinea, if anywhere, to be thankful for small mercies, and to wonder, not that letters sometimes go astray, but that they ever get delivered at all.

Sometimes it has happened that the R.M. has been single-handed, and away on patrol when the incoming mail arrived, and then the bags just have to be locked away in his office, and I have passed the place in my whaleboat, knowing the letters were there—once I even watched the mail bags landed—but quite uncertain as to when I might hope to handle them.

“Every action has an equal and contrary reaction,” and

it is just because some of us are undisciplined enough to look forward to these mails more eagerly than to anything else that ever happens to us here, that our worst and most frequent disappointments overtake us in connection with them. Reuben came briskly into my room one day, and I sprang up with a shout and seized him by the hand when he muttered something about a mail. But he was busy then with his new fence, and it was a special kind of *nail* that he wanted! Once, on my birthday, when the curtain of silence had been hanging for five full weeks between us and the outer world, I was busy with the making of an extra special cake. If we could not hear from home, at least we could have a cake "like Mother used to make it." And suddenly the cook-house was surrounded and invaded by a crowd of police and natives, and I left my birthday cake and everything else to the care of the unthrifty knave who chanced to call himself my cook-boy just then, and hurried out to receive the mail which they had surely brought. What luck! On that day of all the days in the year! But it was only a gang of prisoners that had been gathered in from the hills behind Mukawa, and the police who had captured and were taking them to Tufi. I did not even trouble to ask why they had all come trooping into my kitchen, and I forgot all about the cake until it was too badly burned to be of use even to the heathen cookie-boy, and I kept the rest of my feast day cakeless and mail-less, and was unpardonably rude to a deputation of police who came to remind me that they had nothing to smoke. I sat up late that night, I remember, writing letters for these men to take on with them in the morning, and was wakened by a rooster which began to crow vociferously at a quarter to three in the morning. There was a good big moon, and the foolish bird behaved as if he had quite made up his mind that it was the sun, rising just once in a way at the wrong end of the world. He crowed

for all he was worth, and woke all the babies of Wanigera, and of course the babies cried, and the patient mothers of Wanigera talked to them, and I could hear the impatient fathers of Wanigera grumbling and growling just as if they had been white fellows living in some respectable suburb and protesting that they simply *must* get a good night's rest, or they would never be fit for their day's work in the city next morning. And the crowing and the crying and the grumbling woke the priest all shaven and shorn, and he jumped out of bed in a hurry, thinking that he was late for something or other. He had been busy, a moment before, buying air-tight trunks and birthday cakes at some Army and Navy Stores in Dreamland—for the coming of a mail in Papua, or even any special failure in its coming, nearly always sets at least one exiled white man dreaming, not of this country, or of these people, but of his own folk, and of London town.

What with the moonlight, which filters in through roof and walls, and up through the chinks in the floor, as well as through the uncurtained windows and open doors, and the rooster, and the village noises, and the shock of the broken dream, and the hungry craving for a mail, I could not get to sleep again, so I wrote another half-dozen letters before five o'clock, and breakfasted on a delicate custard apple—than which there is surely none more delicious among all the fruits that grow—and went out at six o'clock, with “The House That Jack Built” still running in my head, to wake the boys, who had gone mad as usual in the moonshine until very late the night before. The sun had just risen, and the policemen were escorting their prisoners to the canoes which were still lying on the beach. An armed native constable came up to me and saluted, and I gave him my mail, sewn up in a native string bag, and some tobacco, and an old newspaper, and matches. And then I rang the bell, which

used to hang, in those days, high on the verandah of Reuben's house, and I could see the shimmering sea, with its fringe of foam, and a filigree of native houses and palms in the foreground, and the string of wretched shivering prisoners handcuffed together in threes, and the policemen, and the odds and ends of camp followers. Poor creatures! The policemen doing blindly what they had been told to do, and the prisoners submitting quietly to this unpleasant experience which was so far beyond their understanding. And that is one of the pictures of New Guinea that has bitten itself very deeply into my memory, because that is the sort of thing that makes the heart of a priest to ache, and sets him vowing all over again, in spite of his dreams of London town, and mails or no mails, that he must stay here for the rest of his life, even if it is only on the off chance of doing something, now and then, to ease the burdens of such poor souls.

The mails, when at last they come, are an event in life, and I can remember the circumstances, I think, of nearly every arrival in these past three years. I used to be afraid of the soiled, thick, canvas bags at first, not knowing what evil thing might leap out upon me—every one was so far away, and there were limitless possibilities of terror, as well as of joy, in letters that came by such strange accidents from the ends of the earth. But one got into the way of remembering something, at such times, about not being "afraid of any evil tidings," and about one's "heart standing fast and believing in the Lord"; and now it is with thankfulness, in place of fear, that I cut the string and break the seal. If Charles Lamb said grace when he opened his Shakespeare, and if some men say grace when they sit down to a plateful of boiled beef and carrots, why should not a missionary be devoutly thankful, why should he not say grace, when a mail bag comes, as one came this very afternoon,

with forty-four letters and sixty-two newspapers and a negligible number of postcards and printed circulars and packets?

I can be thankful even for the rubbish that has to be thrown away, the catalogues from the clerical tailors, full of superfine curates in "library coats" and with lovely folds down the front of their trouser legs, and portly well-fed dignitaries in aprons and gaiters and silk hats and slender umbrellas—the prospectuses from company promoters and outside brokers—the pious and poetical little tracts, full of split infinitives and bad grammar, which some one sends me regularly from Scotland—these things are useless to a man who is not a dignitary, and who seldom wears a coat at all, or has money enough for more than plenty of postage stamps and a limited supply of third-rate tobacco, but they help to make a mail bag notable, with their quaint reminders of the strangeness of civilisation, and they serve to keep the cook-boy in kindling for his kitchen fire until another batch of illustrated curates and printed bucket-shop lies comes and sets him up again.

A sister in England used to put primroses into her letters sometimes, until I persuaded her to send penny packets of needles instead. A primrose that was growing by an English "river's brink" not many weeks ago is so much more than just a "yellow primrose" when it finds its way to Peter Bell in Papua, and falls out upon his desk, and adds needlessly to the upheaval and special stimulus which every mail brings with it, and also to the inevitable reaction that must follow a few hours afterwards. And the brand new needles are so much more useful in a country where everything goes rusty, and where missionaries and magistrates and miners are always on the look-out for "sharps." People write to us from all over the world, inviting us to collect all sorts of things for them. One man wants "decorated skulls," for

which he is prepared to pay handsomely ; and a philologist in the south of France desires comparative vocabularies of the local dialects ; and a philatelist is seeking for a postage stamp with some incomprehensible peculiarity about the perforation ; and there are friendly strangers who are ready to exchange picture postcards with me, and please will I send them pictures of the various " churches and public buildings " in my town ; and an entomologist is after a remarkable beetle that is not really a beetle at all ; and now here is somebody who wants me to catch specimens of all the flying-foxes in my district, and he tells me I am to slit the poor creatures' stomachs, and then solder them up in methylated spirits and send them at once to him. We do what we can for all these good people, except the postcard maniacs ; but my courage is shy of those flying-foxes, though one comes nearly every night and flaps about under my verandah, looking for fruit. Perhaps a curious entanglement of fish hooks might capture him, but I do not like the idea of slitting the stomach, even of a thief, and I do not know how to solder, and I have no methylated spirits.

Nonis was in here the other day, warning me that he would be starting for Tufi early in the morning. I was glad of the opportunity to send letters away, but sorry for the cause which was to take our policeman to Cape Nelson. He had just arrested one of my neighbours for wife-beating, and though the girl was one of those whom I baptized two years ago, my sympathies were altogether with the heathen husband, who had chosen this quick and easy method of punishing his wife for accepting a decidedly compromising present from a youth in the village. I should not have been sorry if the V.C. had failed to arrest the offender before he had had time to hammer the youth as well, as he had proposed to do. If this man is acquitted at Tufi, it will mean that natives may, under certain conditions, beat their wives—which, of course,

they mustn't! and if he is imprisoned, as he probably will be, it will seem to the other husbands hereabouts that "Government" will not allow them to keep their wives in order—or, more precisely, that they have no right, under the white man's law, to nip the growing mischief in the bud, but must wait till it has blossomed into some real and undeniable wrong-doing, of which "Government" will be ready to take notice. A magistrate can interfere when adultery is committed, it seems, provided the erring wife is prepared to support her husband in his prosecution of the other man; but who could expect a magistrate who knows nothing of the language, and next to nothing of the customs of these particular people, to acquit a man who had beaten his wife because she merely allowed a young man to give her a present? Such dilemmas are, unfortunately, common enough, and perhaps inevitable, in this transition stage. The native customs were summary, but effective, and the natives naturally understood them. The white man's ways work slowly, and they do not work very effectively, and the natives can make neither head nor tail of them. But "Government" is "very strong," and they must do as they are told, and this neighbour of mine will probably spend the next six months in the Government gardens at Tufi, and we must see to it that no more complications arise in his absence. But I wish, in spite of it all, that he had found time, before he went away, to hammer that other man!

Nonis returned early this afternoon, but the case is undecided, and he will have to go back with some more witnesses. His journey was not wasted time, in my opinion, for he brought back a mail. It has needed all the leisure hours of the day just to skim the cream off that mail. I have tried as usual—and as usual I have failed—to be reasonable and take it calmly, and to spread it out, and go slow, and not get excited. But, as

always, I have scorned to think of such gross things as common food, and I have brewed tea in the last six hours more often than was proper, and smoked more than was good for me, and I am dripping with perspiration; and what with the tangle of string and newspaper wrappers on the table, and the dregs of the mail bag all over the floor, and one's amazement at the latest matrimonial engagements and episcopal appointments, and one's deep, deep thankfulness that, once again, all is well "at home"—it is no longer a steady-going missionary priest in his quiet room at the close of another day of happy, methodical, plodding work, but an excited, over-stimulated, uncontrollably effusive creature, who has been shaken once again, thank God, out of the comfortable servitude of regular habits, to find himself once more in serious doubt as to whether he is at this moment more thankful to be so far away from the big world "which is so full of a number of things," or more desirous of getting back into the thick of it all again, among real men and women whom he can understand, with their round, full-blooded life, and their joys and sorrows so much more delirious and sharply coloured than anything that can touch us here.

In New Guinea, where a man lives much alone, it is generally time, when he begins to moralise, for him to get on with his work; or, if the mood comes on at night time, he will be wise to light a candle and get him away to bed. A little child died in Rainu village early this morning—the fifth or sixth death in a fortnight—and the wailing, which began before dawn, went on, with brief intervals, all day until sunset, when the child was buried. Then, for a little while, there was silence, but now it has begun again. And here, in the other village, the policeman and his clan are wailing for Sobo. Always, after a visit to Tufi, the V.C. comes back and wails for his worthless son in gaol at Port Moresby. Nonis himself leads the wailing and emits a sudden,

hoarse, outrageous howl when the other mourners show signs of flagging. It is a weird noise that they make, though if it were not so sad I could shout with laughter whenever the V.C. really lets himself go. It is raining heavily, and the wind is blowing, and the sea roaring loudly, and now and then a mighty clap of thunder swallows up all other sounds. Even the dogs are doing their little best to chime in with the popular mood, for they too break out into howls whenever some especially dismal effort on the policeman's part disturbs their dreams. The fox terrier is dozing at my feet, but he jumps up now and then, and rushes out through his particular hole in the wall, as if he really must go and see what it is that is making the thunder. Two little lemon-coloured lizards are playing hide-and-seek among the papers on my table, and hunting the winged things that have been driven by the rain to seek the warm brightness round my lamp. It is past nine o'clock, and I ought to blow the bugle for the boys to put out their light; but that would mean that I should have to go paddling through the wet grass presently, to make sure that my command had been obeyed. These boys are reasonable enough, and vastly more obedient than ever I was at their age, but they are only boys after all, and ready to take their chances now and then, as I was once proud to do. They know I have no liking for the rainy lawns at night time, and I think they have noticed that I am apt to be preoccupied, and also more merciful, on the days that "papers, *he* come."

Bang! Bang-g-g!! That clap of thunder settles it, and here comes more rain! The world round about is not so riotously cheerful just now that one need grudge the little chaps a few extra spoonfuls of kerosine for their battered rusty old hurricane lamp. Perhaps I may just as well leave the bugle hanging on its nail, and then there will have been no order for them to disobey: and I can gather up the

choicest of my letters, and go with them into my mosquito-proof room, secure alike from flying ants and anopheles mosquitoes, and from any imminent probability of human interruption, and lose myself, completely, for a little while, in the wider world that is not so very far away from Wani-gera after all.

CHAPTER XX

A DOG'S LIFE IN PAPUA ¹

(TOLD BY THE DOG)

HE *is* a queer chap ! I've lived with him, day and night, ever since we came here, but even now I never know what he'll do next. He never tells me beforehand what it's going to be, and so I have to keep my eye open, and be ready. As for instance, milk tins and baths. There's nothing better than a milk tin, unless it's bulamakau, when he's done with it, but the tin-opener is rusty, and that makes the edges all jaggy, and that's rough on a hungry little dog's tongue ; and there's nothing much worse than a bath in warm water, unless it's a tanning, with some of that patent soap he's got. It gets into your eyes, and the taste is awful—the soap I mean. When I come back from the village, it is only natural that I should scratch myself a bit, and he always catches me, because the floor is all wobbly and you can hear everything, except the cat, and then he always wants to wash me, and he half rubs the hair off my back. Generally, it's just after he's had his own bath, and the water is out there all ready. I get under the house, where other people are too big to come after me, except fellows like

¹ [It seems better to print this chapter, which was sent with the others to England, just as it was received, although the style and grammar leave much to be desired, and several references are decidedly obscure. Although, from internal evidence, there can be no doubt that it was written by some one who has an intimate and up-to-date knowledge of Wanigera, this chapter will not be taken too seriously by the judicious reader.]

Kaikas and Awui, and of course I would not hurt them, any more than I would really bite a kitten, but I growl terribly at them, something like thunder, and then they squeak and go away. And sometimes, while I am under the house, he pretends not to know where I am, and he whistles, and for the life of me I don't know whether it's a tin or the soap. If I had stayed in the house, I should have seen what he was doing, but then he would have got me directly if it was going to be a bath. If I go up, as like as not he'll take and wash me. And if I pretend not to hear him, old Tom will get the milk tin, and there's not much left for me when that fellow has finished with it. If I go slowly, so as to keep a good look-out ahead, the chances are I'll run into the cat, because he's always creeping round dark corners, and he's such a funny colour you can't even see him properly. It makes me all creepy and nervous. I like proper fighting, and I can lick any dog in the place, easy, but that Tom has got sort of fish-hooks on his fingers. My fingers are all blunt, because I have to do such a lot of digging. I used to live with a butcher man in North Sydney, and he said I was a terror for cats. They used to come into the yard, and I used to watch for them. I tried it on the first day I saw this Tom, but he didn't seem to understand that I was a dog and he was just a cat. Cats are always supposed to be frightened and run away when they see a dog coming, but this creature just turns round and looks at you, and if you are running rather hard with your head down, of course you can't pull up in time, and then he gets you all along both sides of your nose, and I'm afraid he'll do something to my eyes, one of these days.

Sometimes this house is all shut up, at night time and after school, and then you can only get out one way, but you can't get in at all. That cat just goes in and out of the windows. He can jump anywhere. There's no glass in the windows, that's why. And there is a hole under the step

down into the room where we generally sit. And if I push very hard, I can get through that hole, but I can't get in again. Sometimes I have to go out to see about the pigs under the house, and Tom waits till I am nearly out, and then he jumps on to me, and I am so flurried that I get stuck, and my master only laughs, he doesn't help me. It isn't my nose that gets hurt then. We were very happy before Tom came, but it's hardly the same place now—not for me, at any rate. They say that Tom has been “on the staff,” whatever that is, for twelve years, and he came here with Jimmie Nogar, and when Jimmie Nogar died they sent him to Uiaku. I wish *he* had died as well as Jimmie, because he's no use, he can't even hunt pigs; or else why didn't they let him stay there, but this man of mine said he didn't get enough to eat, as if a cat can't always look after himself, 'specially *this* cat, and so he brought him up here in a string bag, in the whaleboat one day, and I was glad at first because I thought we were going to have some fun, but we didn't. I tried to be funny, same as with the Sydney cats, but it isn't really funny at all.

The butcher man had a lot of dogs, and one night he took me to a grand house, with a garden, and a carpet, and a fluffy little fat dog sitting near the fire, and he took no notice of me, and my master came in, and a great big lady asked him if he thought I'd do? He looked as if I wasn't quite what he expected, but he said some rather nice things about me, and I thought he'd do all right. He took me away in a cab, and the grand lady said she'd be sure and send us presents at Christmas, and she always sends him a lot of books, and a piece of soap for me; and next day we walked round the Domain very early, and he seemed pleased when I followed him properly, and he tied me up again under the church, and Bill Lewis gave me a good dinner, and some boys came to see me, and they called me “Towzer,” and late that afternoon he came in another cab, and we all went on a long boat, and came to New



THE PRESBYTERY.



THE NEW HOUSE.

Guinea, and I saw the cook throw a lot of lovely things into the sea that I could have eaten. We stopped at Brisbane, and we went to another big house, where there weren't any grand ladies or carpets, and he answered a lot of questions, and I wondered how he could, because he didn't know anything about my family, and he pretended he did, and then he paid some more money and they gave him "permission to travel stock," and it was all right. There was a butcher-man on the ship, and he was all right. But he said I had only a quarter dog-power bark. Barking never was my strong point. And I've never really bitten anybody. But I should like to. I bark much better than the other dogs, because they don't bark at all. They only howl, and they're always howling, and when they begin, they seem like they can't stop. And I tried to learn to howl, but he used to chain me up in the cook-house whenever I started, so now I don't, but I should like to. The people in Sydney, and the men in the boat, all said you shouldn't bring a dog to New Guinea. But it is just the place for a dog like me. There are no carts here and no sheep, so I can't get into trouble for running after them; and there are no trams and no motor cars, so they don't run after me; and there are always plenty of sticks everywhere, and nobody's in too much of a hurry to stop and throw them for me. There's always plenty to do, and there's always plenty of time to do it in, and that's what I *do* like about New Guinea. And once I caught a cuscus and killed it. The other dogs don't know about sticks. They can't swim, only run up little ladders into the houses when they see me coming. I can't climb ladders, but I don't want to. We're not afraid of bogies, and so we put our houses low down so we can just walk in and out. When old Money came to Dogura, he said the village dogs would kill me if they took me to Wanigera. I'd like to see 'em try. That's all. Why, they run away from me, always, and their masters don't mind, because they laugh, and say I'm

Sosorin maiau, and that means I know a thing or two. The dogs don't know anything. They have no manners. I tried to be civil at first, but they only stared at me, as if I wasn't a dog at all, and when I walked slowly round them, same as dogs do in Sydney, they stuck out their teeth, so I used to grab them then, and now they always run away. They're not dogs, they're dingoes. And they've all got mange. I got something once, and he gave me a lot of arsenic, until I guessed why he was so free with his milk, three times a day, after meals. And once he gave me some quinine, and I couldn't walk straight. I rolled about. It was all right when I got going, but directly I stopped, when I tried to go on again, I rolled about. And it made all the sticks very heavy to carry, and when they threw them into the bush, they didn't make any noise, and I couldn't find them again. I had a fit once. It was very hot, and of course it had been raining. It nearly always does. And all the air had sort of blown away. I don't remember, but we were walking to Aieram, and I fell down. And then I was all over mud, and my mouth was dry, and he looking very sorry, and I could not walk straight, and then he was looking very glad, and I noticed he never hit me after that. I think he was just going to, once, but I pretended I was going to have another fit, and then he didn't. Before, he used to hit me when I went in the village, or if I went to church at the wrong time, or if I didn't remember which was my water and which was his, but now he ties me up instead, and that takes longer, but I like it much better. I always stay close beside him, but I have to be pretty lively when he moves his chair, or else it comes on top of me. He might be a bit more careful. The coolest place is just at the door. He could just as well step over me, but he doesn't, and I have to be quick and lively and jump when he's coming. I go to church every day. I like going to church, because it doesn't last long, and there's things to eat afterwards. I lie down in the little

place where they keep all the white calicoes, and it's nice and sunny in the mornings, and at night I can jump out and bark when any one goes by. But some days they go to church nearly all day long, and I don't understand why, and then I always sneak in and sit beside him, except early in the morning and when it's dark. He's all covered up with the white calicoes, and that's the only time he really isn't pleased to see me. Other times he talks, but then he only makes faces to me.

Tufi is a good place. There are goats there, and a lot of policemen. Not the same as policemen in Sydney, you know, because those policemen were always walking about, and the Tufi policemen are always sitting down, but they like to get up and throw limes for me, and they laugh all the time. There are limes lying about everywhere. Quite a hundred, I think.

There was a steamboat at Tufi one day, and we went on it. And a dog jumped out and bit me, and I bit him, and we got under the table while they were having dinner, and the other man pulled us both out, in one piece, and my man said, "Yes, pitch 'em into the water," and the other man pitched, and then the other dog let go. He'd got hold of my throat, and it was his hind-leg the other man pulled when we were under the table. That's what people mean when they talk about pulling somebody's leg, I suppose. I met that dog again when we went in the steamboat to see Reuben, and he didn't see me, and I got hold of his throat that time, and so it was a draw. I haven't met that dog again, but I should like to. The policeman who does the boots at Tufi got our tin of coacholine, and it was nearly a full one, and he only gave us the old one, and there wasn't anything in it. Government never loses anything, because so many policemen sit all round and take care of him. When Philip was cook-boy, he used to steal the tobacco, and I saw him, and he said "Lay down," and my man

came in then, and Philip dropped the sticks on to the floor, and he didn't see them, but he kept Philip there a long time, talking, and he was very frightened, and he was white, and then at last he told Philip to sweep the floor, and he found the sticks and gave them to him, and he said, "Thank you, Philip," and Philip got all white, and stuttered and couldn't talk, and he kept on being frightened because he didn't know if he knew or didn't. But he thought he did, and that made him frightened.

I don't like phonographs. One night they were having them over in the big house, and it was a violin, and he jumped up and said he couldn't stand it, and then he came home, and smoked an awful lot, and blew a lot of rings, and didn't go to bed for a long time, but he was very kind to me, and I thought the violin noise made him feel like it makes me feel, as if I must howl, because I'm so miserable. The dogs can't do any parlour tricks. It nearly always thunders in the afternoon, and then I growl, and go and look for it under the chairs, and he laughs. I know exactly what it is, because the butcher used to keep some in Sydney, but he didn't let it out so often.

He hasn't been laughing much just lately, and it's that "blooming book" of his, as he calls it. He's always sand-papering it, and trying to think of what he will call it. If he would try and find a proper name for me, first, that would be something like. Sometimes he calls me "Gigadibs," but generally its just "Poodle" or "Pups." And the children call me "Poupee," like as if I were a Frenchman, same as Peter. He can't sort of get a name for that book of his. Sometimes he tells me it will be "Autolyeus in Papua," and he says it's a poor thing, but his own, and I don't know what he means. And then he says *I* ought to be called "Autolyeus," because I'm a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles. And next day it's going to be "A Peripatetic Parson in Papua," or

“Purple Pictures of Papua for Pink People,” or “Papua through a Parson’s Pince-nez,” and all sorts of rubbish like that, and he puts his head on one side to see how it looks, same as if he were watching for a rat, and then he says it out loud to see how it sounds, and I jump up quick and look at him, and he laughs, and pulls my ear, and talks a lot more nonsense, and then we go for a walk. I have a pretty good sort of a corner under his table—matter of fact, it’s an old onion box, but the table hasn’t got any legs, so it’s on onion boxes. And at night time I’ve got another box, with “Stow away from boilers, keep in a cool dry place” printed all over it. That’s a silly thing to put on a box, because it’s always hot in the day and wet in the night. My box is close up against the thing he sleeps in himself. It’s a sort of meat-safe, like the butcher had in Sydney, only it’s much larger, like a fowl-house. And he jumps in quickly and bangs the door after him, as if some one was after him. That’s how the natives do, only it’s devils then. Even if he left the door open, no one would go in except mosquitoes, and surely he isn’t afraid of them? If he is, why doesn’t he wash himself with a bit of my soap? It smells strong enough to kill mosquitoes as well as other things. Old Tom wouldn’t go in, because he’s off into the village directly after dinner each night, and he comes back, looking pretty cheap, in the morning, and sleeps behind the medicine bottles. Little dogs get the shivers here, at night, but he doesn’t half like it if I go and lie even on a towel. Newspapers are very good to lie on, but the cookie-boys take them away. I think they’ll kill some of the babies soon. The mothers are very cruel to them. Mrs. Butcher had a lot of babies, and she always picked them up very carefully, so they wouldn’t break. But these women catch hold of them by their forelegs and hoist them up with a twist. And that’s the way they do me, when I can’t get into the boat, or when I’ve got to go inside a house. They don’t seem to know about my scruff. What

for do little dogs have scruffs at the back of their head, if it isn't for them to be lifted up with? And I suppose it's the same with babies, and it would be much nicer for them than to be got hold of by the front leg and jerked up. I know, because it hurts when they do it to me, and the scruff doesn't hurt at all.

I don't like Dogura. Sometimes they kill a bullock. They shoot him, and once they hit the wrong one. Now, when my Sydney butcher wanted to kill a beast, he used to . . . (*a few paragraphs omitted, as the details are hardly suitable to these pages*). And I like the big lady there, because she always takes such a lot of trouble about my dinner. But the house is all boardy, like the floor of a ship, it's like being on board ship, with a good many other people in the same cabin. He's not good-tempered when he goes to Dogura, but he's pretty fair other times. He's proud of his bamboo floor, but I don't like it, because it's bad for little dogs' toes. He's not very polite to me in the mornings. The minute I hear him come out of his meat-safe, I get out of my box and go to say good morning. I can't wag my tail, because the butcher's brother bit it off, and perhaps that's why the other dogs don't like me. I suppose they're jealous. But I twitch the stump as hard as I can, and waggle about, and put my nose down close to the bamboo. And he's so busy with his kettle, he hardly troubles to pat me, and if he says anything at all, it sounds like only a grunt. And then he sits close up against the big lamp, and reads a long time in one of his big books, and drinks an awful lot of tea, and by-and-by he puts his boots on, and I know it's all right then. And we go and see about the sticks along the beach, and I sort of pretend to bite his heels, but of course I don't really, and he pretends to be angry, and that's the best fun in the day, but I think he ought to try and be more civil at first. I know about my manners, and it isn't always easy

to be polite very early in the morning, but I never forget to try, and he doesn't even try, sometimes.

He buries all the rubbish in holes, and the cook-boys make a new hole every Saturday morning, and when there's nothing else to do I go and dig up some of the old tins, to have another look at them. And then there's the pigs. I should be a very happy dog, if it wasn't for the soap and old Tom. I like the man that lives in the other house, because he's always very kind and polite to me. He seems to know that little dogs have got intellects and feelings, and he's always got something for me, even if it's only a beak. I can eat anything, except cockatoo. I sometimes get a bad craving for something complicated. I can't always be satisfied with the simple life, me that used to live with a butcher and go down to the slaughter-yards where . . . (*another paragraph omitted*). When I feel like that, I go and have a look round the village, and some of the things you find there are very complicated indeed. They are even things I don't know what they are, though when I was in Sydney . . . (*omission*). But if they are really too dreadful to eat, I can roll in them, but that always means a bath, even if I can manage not to scratch. This is all about me, but if the rest of the book is all about him, why shouldn't I talk about me?

I had a good advertisement soon after we came here. You never know where he's going, and if I don't watch him he might be off to Uiaku along the beach, or to Tufi in the boat. Once the man from Dogura, with a white collar, came here in the launch. And they sat up all night talking, and kept me awake, and early in the morning they went away and I didn't see them go. But I woke up and smelt them, and they were in the whaleboat, and I began to swim after them, and some boys drove me back to the house, and I pretended I was going to bite them, and then they left me alone, and then I went out the other way and ran along the

beach, and then I swam out to the launch, and got there nearly as soon as they did. It was a very long way to swim, but I didn't mind, and when I got there they pulled me up, by my scruff, and seemed to think I'd done rather a good thing, because everybody talked about it, and he opened a tin of sausages when we got back, and let me eat all I could. But there was one too many for me, and I had swallowed too much water, because it was rather rough.

I like Government. He doesn't take any notice of me, except when I walk just in front of him, and then he dabs at me with his umbrella ; but he has very good food, and he's generous with what he doesn't want. But his cook-boy isn't. I heard Government say I could go and live there when he went to England. I hope this doesn't mean I'm going to be left behind. Tom wouldn't miss him, but little dogs aren't like that. And these people won't miss him very much, but I should. It isn't only the sticks, and the things to eat, or some one to talk to, but you can't live day and night with a living creature that you love, whether it's a dog or a man, and not be sorry when it's over. That's how I feel about it. He doesn't let on, but I know pretty well what he means, without him talking, and I think that's how he feels too. So why can't I go with him ? And what does he want to go away at all for ? I'm sure nobody could be happier than he and I have been together these three years.

CHAPTER XXI

“WITH PRECAUTION—”

THE man in the street cannot tell you much about Papua. A few Australians, and still fewer Englishmen, who hold shares in New Guinea gold or copper mines, or rubber plantations, or copra concerns—and a few more, though still only a very few, who care about one or other of the Missions, or who have friends in the Government service—may have picked up some geographical scraps, or heard the names of one or two missionaries and traders and magistrates; but beyond this, and an occasional newspaper report of “Another massacre in the Islands” (which are for some reason always associated in the popular mind with New Guinea), or a casual question in the Federal Parliament about the Administration, you could not learn much about this great island from the man in the street.

And yet every one who has ever heard of it at all knows, perfectly well, that it is a very unhealthy country indeed. There can surely be no question about that? Any one could tell you that if you come to New Guinea you must be prepared to die, very suddenly and soon, of some awful disease, probably “the fever,” even if you are not killed and eaten by “the blacks” within a week of landing.

This, more or less, though perhaps a little less, was my own impression up to the time, about four years ago, when I began to think of coming here, and was obliged to see what could be done by way of precaution against the various ills that anxious friends and self-appointed critics foretold for me in this “dreadful climate.”

I knew, vaguely, that some men had died here, and that more had come home invalided. Maclaren, the founder of the Mission, had died on board the *Merrie England* within four or five months of his landing at Dogura. There was a clerical neighbour of my own in South Australia, too, who gave up parish work to become the first Organising Secretary of the Australian Board of Missions, and he had returned, after only a month or two in New Guinea, shattered in health, shaking with fever, and so deaf (the result of quinine) that it is difficult, even to this day, to make him hear what you say.

I had been in the Melbourne Chapter House when a crowd of clergymen and ladies were saying good-bye to a priest who was about to spend something less than a year in this missionary diocese ; and I had listened to the speakers, who all agreed that the heroic man was doing a noble but very perilous thing, in thus adventuring himself, even for a few months, into what the Archbishop of Melbourne described as " the more than treacherous climate of New Guinea."

There really seemed to be no doubt about it. I knew, vaguely, that malaria was the great enemy ; and more vaguely still, that in spite of its misleading name, malaria had more to do with mosquitoes than with " bad air " ; and, most vaguely of all, I knew, as any reader of magazines and newspapers can hardly fail of knowing, that science had gone very far of late in the investigation of tropical diseases, and I hoped there might be a way, if I could but find it, of keeping one's health even in New Guinea. There was not much help to be had in Sydney. I managed to meet a few missionaries who were on furlough, and one or two others who had given up their work, and I talked to the people in the Sydney office, and all I could learn was, that I really was coming to a very dreadful climate, and that everybody in New Guinea was sure to have fever, sooner or later, though some had it

worse than others, and they hoped I'd get on all right, but it was just one of the things you had to put up with, and I was to be sure to take plenty of quinine, and not neglect any of the necessary precautions. What, exactly, those necessary precautions were, or how and when I was to use the quinine, no one seemed to know; nor was any information available about such practical matters as outfit, clothes, headgear, &c.

One man assured me that it was no good packing my things in tin boxes, because the boxes would be sure to rust; or in leather bags, because the bags would only rot; or in wooden boxes, because wood was so heavy and awkward, and, besides, the white ants would get at it; and really, though he had just come from New Guinea, and hoped to go back soon, he didn't know what was the best way of stowing one's gear. Another man told me that only one sort of boot could stand the damp and the rough usage, and he gave me the maker's name and address. I ordered a pair, and they were very beautiful boots, but a village dog ate the greater part of one of them during my first week in New Guinea, and a cookie-boy dried what was left, on top of a hot stove, and I had to decide that I could not afford any more boots at 47s. 6d. a pair on the missionary's annual allowance of £20, “paid quarterly in advance, for clothes and small personal expenses.” Mosquito nets? Yes—most of the staff used them, but I could get them as cheaply in Samarai as in Sydney.

Quinine? Of course I should have to take quinine; people could not get on without it; it was the only “cure” for fever, but it was such horrible stuff that no one took more than he could help! Filters? Oh no! The water was all right in New Guinea. And so on, and so on.

The only really useful advice that I collected in Sydney was from a lady, who had been a missionary here for many

years. I was consulting her about clothes, and asked whether I might not just as well leave such things as overcoats and dressing-gowns behind me. But she advised me to take all the warm things I had, and her reason was—that I should want them what time I had the fever, and of course I should get a good deal of fever—"new missionaries always did." This good lady's advice was sound, and I have found the thick dressing-gown very grateful and comforting instead of a cassock, on chilly mornings in Church, but her reasons were faulty; and I have never forgotten the long recital of her own and other people's sufferings by which she all but upset my half-formed hopes of happiness and health in New Guinea.

I make no apology for the personal character of this or any other chapter in the book, since short accounts of one's own experiences may easily be worth more, for practical purposes, than any careful essays written in the "detached impersonal mood of science." Nor do I lay claim to any knowledge that would qualify me to write authoritatively, with learned reference to chapter and verse.

But I should much have liked to print this and the following chapter all in italics, since they are out and away the most important things in the book. One sentence, at any rate, shall be put in as large capitals as the printer can allow, and it is this:—

THE COMMON TALK ABOUT THE "MORE THAN TREACHEROUS CLIMATE" OF NEW GUINEA IS MOSTLY RUBBISH; WHITE MEN CAN LIVE HERE, AND BE AS WELL AS EVER THEY WERE IN SYDNEY, OR MELBOURNE, OR LONDON, OR ANYWHERE ELSE, IF ONLY THEY WILL TAKE THE TROUBLE TO LEARN HOW TO DO IT, AND HAVE PATIENCE TO GO ON PRACTISING WHAT THEY KNOW.

If I could find words to put this more strongly, I would

use them ; for I have taken the trouble to read all that a layman can understand of what the men of science have written on the subject, and the still greater trouble to practise what they preach, as far as I can follow their teaching, and I know that it is true, and well worth while. I have lived nearly three years in New Guinea, on a Station hitherto notorious for its unhealthiness, through wet seasons and dry seasons (though the adjectives “ wet ” and “ rainy ” would more exactly describe my experience of the changes of the seasons in Wanigera, where it is never really “ dry ”), and from the day I landed until this moment, I have had better health than was ever mine in England, or South Australia, or Sydney, or at odd times of miscellaneous travel in a dozen other countries.

One has had a few bad headaches, and a crippled foot, and more than one bout of neuralgia, and at least two genuine attacks of fever (of which, more presently), but I have not missed a day’s work through illness, or been unable to attend to anything that needed attention in all these three years, which is more than I could say of any continuous period, even of three months, in civilisation, where I was never particularly robust.

And now, for the sake of missionaries who may come after me, and for their needlessly anxious friends, I want to explain, if I can, “ how to do it.” The ill-health, and the deaths, and the consequent evil reputation of the country, were inevitable in the past, just as any other results of ignorance and carelessness are inevitable as long as the ignorance, or the carelessness, continues ; but thanks to medical men of science like Ross and Manson (to mention only two most distinguished English doctors who have specialised in this direction), and the easily accessible publications of the several schools of Tropical Medicine, there is no longer any reason for the ignorance, and there should be no longer any excuse

for the carelessness, that have caused so much suffering and waste of energy and life in the past, among missionaries, and among white folk generally, in New Guinea.

When Mrs. Jellyby wondered that Miss Summerson had "never turned her thoughts to Africa," and Esther, in some confusion, replied that the climate was not all that one could desire, the missionary woman insisted that it was "the finest climate in the world"—though, as she went on to explain, "precaution was needed." "You may go into Holborn," said she, "without precaution, and be run over. You may go into Holborn, with precaution, and never be run over. Just so with Africa."

Bleak House was not written for the glorification of Foreign Missions, but Dickens made his outrageous Mrs. Jellyby speak more truly than he knew. In all seriousness, I protest that New Guinea has a very fine climate indeed. A man may come here indeed, "without precaution," and die very quickly and unpleasantly; but "with precaution" he can not only go on living, but he may enjoy as good health here, and be more fit for each day's work, and sleep far more sweetly at night, than he ever did or could in the heat and dust of an Australian summer, or amid the fogs and frosts of an English winter.

Rummaging in the Sydney book-shops, I found a ten-year-old copy of the first edition of Manson's *Tropical Diseases*. This was altogether too technical to be of much use to a layman, and it was also naturally rather out of date, but it gave me my direction. With further searching I discovered, and bought for ninepence, a second-hand copy of a little book that had been issued only two years before—*The Maintenance of Health in the Tropics*, written by W. J. Simpson, M.D., and published under the auspices of the London School of Tropical Medicine by John Bale, Sons & Danielsson, of Great Tichfield Street, in London.

I give the details fully, not only because that book was the very best ninepenny-worth I ever bought, but because a copy should come to New Guinea with every one who enters the country. More than that, and because a book is but a lifeless thing until it is read and understood, it would be very well if every volunteer for the New Guinea Mission could be examined as to its contents before he is accepted, and catechised as to his willingness to live up to its teaching, before he is allowed to sail. Here and there one might be found who would neither catch the idea, nor be disposed to attend to the score of trivial details which are important, for all their seeming insignificance ; but such a man is not the man for a malarial country. There are many white men in New Guinea to-day, and some of them are missionaries, who laugh at the whole business, and in these three years I have heard fun poked, by one or another, at every single “ precaution ” that these medical men recommend. People “ just can’t be bothered.” “ Life isn’t long enough,” &c. It *is* a bother, at first, and until your precautions become so habitual that they are second nature, and you hardly need to think any more about them—just as many things in civilisation are a bother, though I hardly realised how many, until I came out of Egypt to live in the wilderness. But any one who “ can’t be bothered ” with health precautions had better stay in a country where they are not needed, instead of coming to New Guinea, where he will certainly fall ill and very often be incapable of doing his work, or else go off his head, and in either case be a nuisance to himself and those who have to do his work as well as their own, and perhaps help to nurse him, and an expense to a Mission which has no money to spare for long journeys and medical treatment and extra furloughs. Prevention of ill-health is not only much better than cure—it is also, in New Guinea, far cheaper ; and besides all this, there is often no one to take the place or to do the work of a man who falls sick, and so the work suffers ; and

no particular chance of "treatment" or nursing for those who are ill; nor is the daily work of such a character that it can be done efficiently by those who are often laid up, or even frequently "off colour."

"*Sanitas sanitatum, et omnia sanitas,*" said the irreverent Beaconsfield, and it is very nearly true of the missionary's life in New Guinea. He should be a healthy man to begin with, and he must keep his body healthy, not merely as the dwelling-place for a healthy mind, but because he needs to work as constantly and as hard with his body as with his mind. One may surely urge, without falling to the level of the dismal valetudinarian cranks at home, that the New Guinea missionary's very first thought should be for his bodily health, since, if that goes, he can neither do his own work properly, nor leave others free to do theirs, nor keep his own soul and spirit bright and keen.

There are other, and very much more important things for him to think about afterwards, but he must attend to this first of all. A missionary, however devoted and enthusiastic, is really not much use if he has to spend every other day shivering between the blankets, or if his digestion is so bad that it is not safe to let him go into the school, or his liver so enlarged that he has to pack up in a hurry and go south on furlough. Dead and buried in the little cemetery at Dogura, he would be an asset, of a sort; but just now the Mission rather needs living workers who are alive and active, healthy in body and spirit and soul.

There come times, all over the world, though perhaps they do not come very often, or to all of us, when a man must throw his precautions and everything else to the winds, and take his chance of success or failure, and of life or death, in order to try and do the thing that has to be done—his duty—whatever comes of it. But, as a general thing, on 364 days in every year, and for ninety-nine people out of a hundred, it seems to

me that one's first duty, as a missionary in “ a more than treacherous climate,” is to keep the machinery, if one can, in perfect working order ; for what is the use, as far as the work is concerned, of a damaged machine which cannot do that work, or cannot go on doing it for very long, since it keeps on breaking down, or wears out so quickly that it is fit only for the scrap-heap, ten, or twenty years before the inevitable time ? Please remember that I am speaking (1) of missionaries, who, like other soldiers, can have no *personal* care whether they live or die, so long as their duty is done, but who naturally desire to be as good and useful missionaries as they can while they do live, and also to go on living as long as they can, since there is so much work for them to do ; and (2) of missionaries in New Guinea, where the work of the Mission has been much hindered hitherto by the ill-health of the workers, but where, as the Wise Men teach, it is now possible, and not particularly difficult, to be in the very best of health. It was hardly possible ten years ago, simply because the Wise Men had not spoken, or because their new teachings had not filtered down to the level of common people like ourselves ; but it cannot be proclaimed too often, or too loudly, that good health is now no longer an interesting possibility for the lucky few in New Guinea, but something actually within the reach of all reasonably intelligent and painstaking people. And how is it to be had ?

I. The *Climate* is excellent. I have only once been really cold in this country, and that was on the top of a mountain which I need not have climbed unless I liked. And I have never been unpleasantly hot, except when I was obliged to break the rule against exposing one's-self to the sun during the heat of the day. You do not need many clothes in New Guinea. The ordinary wear even of Australians in the summer-time would be too much. Just a pair of kharki or dungaree or thin flannel trousers, with a leathern belt, and a

light Jaeger or Aertex non-actinic shirt, and a cork helmet, with a collar and light coat at meal-time, if there happen to be ladies about.

It has been my fortune—I had almost written, my good fortune—to spend these three years on an out-station, and I should be very sorry for a man who was obliged to live in New Guinea and yet keep up any sort of style in the matter of dress, except for an hour or two, perhaps, in the evening. A black cassock, even of the thinnest, is oppressive in church, and I have always used a white one. Once upon a time, I am told, it was a tradition in the New Guinea Mission that the staff should wear only dark clothes, and this for the incredible reason that the laundry expenses must be cut down. But we know better than that now!

Exercise is even more necessary in the tropics than elsewhere, though the tendency, of course, in hot climates, is towards a languid and sedentary life. And yet I know of stations in our Mission where the arrangement of the timetable makes it almost impossible to get a game of tennis or a brisk walk soon after sunrise, or within an hour or two of sunset. Regular meals, such as they are, are provided for; but no one seems to realise that regular and sufficient exercise is at least as necessary as regular and sufficient food. Every one makes time, somehow, to eat once or twice a day. Every one should be at least as careful to make time for the other bodily need of exercise once or twice a day. Lord Stowell is said to have taken “no exercise but eating and drinking,” but that will not do in the tropics. Most of the white folk hereabouts, though not all, are fortunately obliged to move about a good deal in the course of their ordinary work; but movement in a crowded schoolroom, or about a house, is only a poor substitute for free exercise in the open air. Failing anything more violent, a walk of three or four miles every day of the year should be the rule. I preached this doctrine when I

came, and was met with the reply that I should find it impossible “ when the fever was on me.” But I have not been hindered by “ the fever,” or anything else, largely because I have kept to this rule. There are materials for lawn-tennis on several of the stations, but they are rarely used. In Wanigera we regard a couple of sets in the afternoon as part of the white man’s regular daily work. The few ladies who have ever been here either could not, or would not, play tennis. The bush tracks are always muddy, and the beach is broken by rivers and creeks, so that a woman simply cannot get walking exercise, and it seems to be agreed, now, that white women cannot live in Wanigera.

Prickly heat is an annoyance in New Guinea, as in other countries where excessive perspiration sets up irritation of the skin, and where large quantities of liquid must be swallowed to replace the loss of moisture. But it can be avoided by wearing clothes that do not irritate, and by changing them frequently ; and it is easy enough to get into the habit of drinking as much as you can before the sun is high, and as much more as you want after it has gone down at night, and next to nothing at all during the heat of the day.

Chills are specially dangerous in such a climate as this, where one’s skin is always active and sensitive, and where they may lead to all manner of internal complications. I have had one bad chill here, but that was on such an exceptional occasion as I have hinted at, when I was obliged to be exposed to the weather for hours, without a chance of moving about, or getting food or shelter, or dry clothes. As a general thing, it is simple enough to wear a cholera belt night and day, to change one’s wet clothes at the first opportunity, even if the next piece of work has to wait while you do it, and to bathe not more than once a day, and then only after exercise, and in water that is neither very cold nor very hot. Regular habits, and especially fixed and early hours for turning in and turning out,

are necessary, and easy enough where people take their time from the sun, and where you have the absolute arrangement of all work.

It is only too easy, as I have found, when a big mail tempted me to keep my lamp burning too late, or when I have been obliged to sit up all night, to acquire habits of insomnia, which soon lead on to broken health.

II. The ordinary *Food* on most of the stations that I have visited is tinned meat and biscuits three times a day, at the conventional Australian hours of 8 A.M., 1 P.M., and 6 P.M. There may be a dish or two of badly cooked and worse served native vegetables, and some sodden rice, and some jam, and there is sure to be a big pot full of carelessly made and over-drawn tea, with the leaves still soaking at the bottom of the pot; but bulamakau and biscuits, biscuits and bulamakau, seem to be the staple food of most of the white folk in New Guinea. I am not writing, now, of larger centres like Samarai, or of our head station at Dogura, but of our own out-stations, and of the *ménage* of such traders and planters and miners and Government officers as I have met. There are exceptions, of course, and you will find everywhere the true hospitality which offers you all there is to offer, but I am quite sure that much of our ill-health is due to poor and unsuitable food.

I once spent the greater part of a week on a station where there was plenty of tea and tinned meat in the store-room, and some bottles of chow-chow, but literally nothing else. It was "stew" at every meal, three times a day. On the second day I put in a plea for taro, and got it, though only once; and for the rest of my visit I had to be content with unripe bananas, in place of bread or vegetables, as an accompaniment to that everlasting "stew." No wonder the two men on that station were always falling ill, and that one of them has since died. They were not missionaries, and their manner of life was rather due to carelessness or to an unintelligent attempt to

continue the food habits which they had brought with them from Australia, than to any striving after false ideals of economy. Sometimes, it is true, I have noticed attempts at bread-making, but I have learned to be thankful when my hosts are content to offer me biscuits.

Here, at Wanigera, we are well supplied with food, and hardly ever need to open a tin of meat, since there is plenty of game, and the Ubir boys are good shots. It costs only two half-crowns a year for the gun licences, and a few sticks of tobacco a week, and the price of the cartridges, to keep our tables supplied with as many pigeons and wild duck as we care to eat. By sending the boys further a-field, wallabies and wild turkeys and herons can be got. There is always a large variety of good fish, which the natives are glad to exchange for infinitesimal scraps of tobacco. And in the Mission garden there are sometimes more pineapples and paw-paws and limes than we can use, and anything we care to plant seems to grow—cabbages and cauliflowers and cucumbers and French beans, and melons and onions and tomatoes. It is hardly worth the trouble though, since the natives now have some of these things in their gardens, and bring them to us, with a large variety of native fruits and roots and nuts, in their season. All this plenty is in pleasant contrast to the scarcity at Mukawa, only seventy or eighty miles away, where the Mission boarders have to be fed for the greater part of the year on imported rice, and the missionaries get little to eat but what comes out of tins and bottles.

It is not a particularly interesting subject, and a few more sentences must serve. I have been almost a vegetarian in New Guinea, except when travelling, or in other houses than my own. I have lived chiefly on such foods as are indicated in Mrs. Earle's *Pot Pourri* books, and by Dr. Haig. Eggs, milk, butter, cheese, honey, rice, macaroni, oatmeal, sago, bread and biscuit, and plenty of vegetables and fruit, with all

the nuts I could get, not forgetting an occasional coconut, which white people in New Guinea seem to neglect, even as Australians despise the rabbit as an article of food. I suppose I have not opened twenty tins of "bulamakau" in the three years, though I have used a good many tins of cheese and butter and milk. These things used to be regarded in the Mission as extravagant luxuries, but I have persuaded a few of my fellows, sometimes by the help of a rough pencilled calculation, that the man who can live on these foods, perhaps costs the Mission funds a little less, in the course of the year, than the man who is still hampered by mistaken ideas about "keeping his strength up" on tinned meat three times a day. And this quite apart from any question of health.

I suppose a crank is one who not only has queer ideas, but also desires to impose those ideas on every one else. I should be sorry if I were obliged to draw up schemes of diet for my neighbours, since men differ so much; but I know what suits me, and to these simple, almost vegetarian, habits of eating, I largely attribute my exceptionally good health in New Guinea. When an anonymous admirer sent Thackeray a half-dozen of brandy, he exclaimed, "This is true fame!" Ten minutes before I sailed from Sydney, a good lady rushed on board the boat with a similar present for me from her husband. This was no anonymous tribute to my fame, but just a friendly farewell present from a jovial friend of my own. Nevertheless, I have only used one of those bottles myself since they were given to me. Two I gave away, and two more have gone in the course of my unauthorised but unavoidable medical practice; the sixth bottle is still unopened. In other words, you do not need alcohol in New Guinea, except as the very rarest medicine.

And you do not need three full meals a day, or even two. Some tea and fruit, and bread and butter, as early in the morning as you can get it. Tiffin, or lunch, or *déjeuner à la*

fourchette, or whatever you like to call it, so long as it is light and simple and well cooked, about mid-day; and dinner, the only serious or formal meal, in the evening.

III. No *Dwelling-house* could be more unhealthily situated than this, since it lies low in the midst of native villages, and very close to them, and it and they are surrounded by filthy swamps that could only be drained by an impossible expenditure of engineering skill and labour. It is not even a European house, and no imported material was used in its construction except half-a-dozen long nails in the roof, and a few feet of sawn timber and some hinges for the doors. The general impression seems to be that imported weatherboard and iron houses, costing anything from £150 to £200, would mean better health and greater comfort for Europeans in New Guinea than such a barn-like native structure as this, which could be pulled down in a couple of hours, and rebuilt of new local materials, from top to bottom, in a fortnight, for considerably less than a five-pound note. It has its disadvantages, and its imperfections, this native house of mine, like every other thing of human invention; but it is cooler in the daytime and warmer at night, and it is always more perfectly ventilated, than any weatherboard house could be, and it is as beautiful, inside and out, in its own appropriate ways of line and colour, as the other things are inappropriate and hideous.

IV. *Illness*, as far as the white man in the tropics is concerned, “centres very largely in the digestive organs.” But, generally speaking, with a good filter, and the boiling of all drinking water, with wholesome food and constant personal attention to the cleanliness of its cooking, and the avoidance of chills, “digestive troubles and bowel complaints, to which there is so much tendency in the tropics, and which form, next to malaria, the most frequent cause of ill-health, will as a rule be prevented.” Of certain special diseases, which are preventible, there is only one which has attacked the white

man in New Guinea. We have, as yet, no yellow fever, or cholera, or plague, though these things are promised to us when the Panama Canal is opened. It is only malaria, *the fever*, that we have to fear, and seeing that it is "perhaps the most important disease of the tropics," and because it has been, beyond everything else, responsible for New Guinea's evil name, malaria shall have a chapter all to itself.

CHAPTER XXII

THE WORTHLESS ONE

WHILE I was at Dogura for the first time, staying there a few weeks to get into the way of things before coming on to my own station, the Archbishop of Brisbane, our Metropolitan, was visiting the Mission. He was to go on from Dogura to Mukawa, and we all went down the hill to the Wedau beach early one afternoon to see him off. When the archiepiscopal swag had been put on board, and he himself was already in the dinghy and half-way out to the launch, one of the ladies cried out that it was a shame to have let the dear Archbishop go away like that all by himself! The Vicar-General agreed with her, as (gallant man that he is) he always tries to agree with a lady when he possibly can, and confessed that he had really never thought about it; and then he turned to me and asked if *I* would like to go?

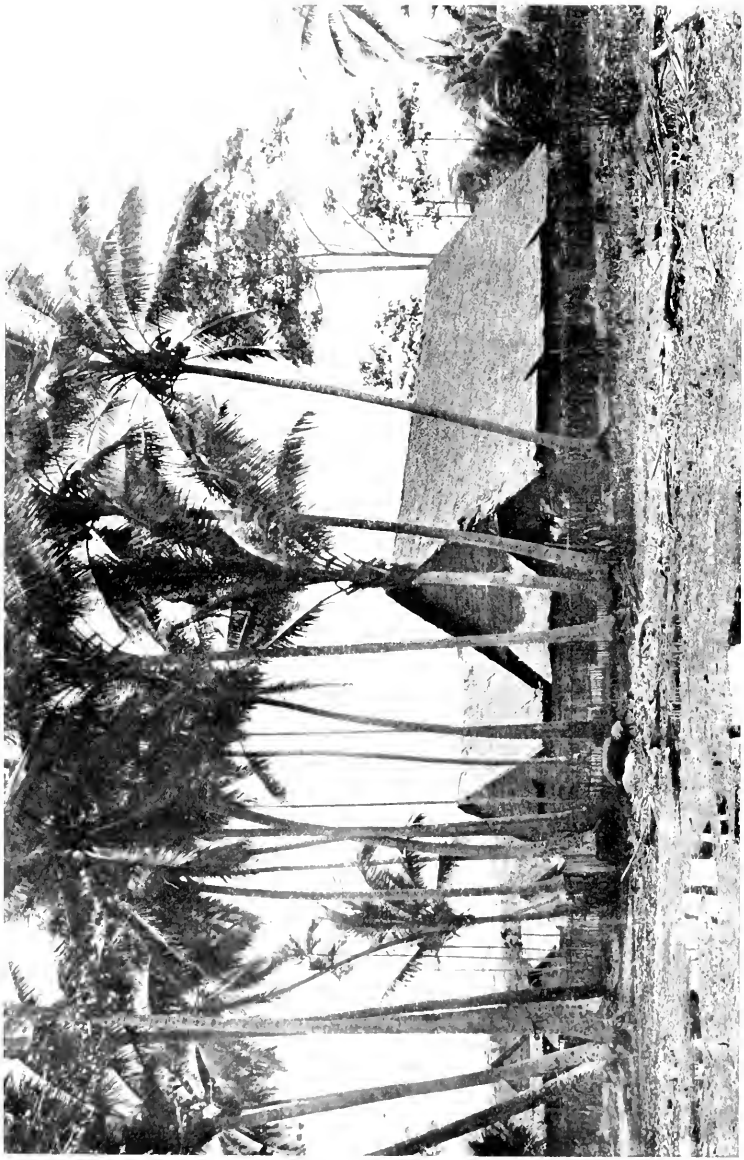
There was no time to send up the hill for any apparatus of travel, and I was not even wearing a coat, but it seemed a sporting thing to do, and in five minutes I and my dog were on the launch, with the Archbishop, and the anchor was up, and we were heading straight across Goodenough Bay with poor old Syd Amos at the helm. It is a nasty passage towards the last, for cross seas rush and swirl about Cape Vogel. The dog, as always on the water, was disgustingly sick, and the Archbishop and I lay on opposite sides of the deck, maintaining our self-respect as far as the letter of the law was concerned, but looking unspeakable things at each other when some sudden lurch shook us into nearer company.

Rain, if I remember rightly, came on at dusk, and we were thankful indeed when at last we saw the light on Dog's Hill, erected and maintained by the Mission with the help of an annual grant of kerosine from the Government. Mukawa Station stands on the top of a high and difficult hill, and the twisting track up which the two strangers made their way that night, by the light of a smoky hurricane lamp, seemed to one of them, at any rate, the muddiest and the steepest, and the slipperiest piece of travelling that he had ever undertaken. The other man, being an Anglican Archbishop and a Metropolitan, though travel-stained and very much in mufti, was apparently unable to find canonical language in which to express what he thought about it all.

I have begun an important chapter with this insignificant little story, because it explains how I came to sleep, for the first and only time in New Guinea, without a mosquito net; although, even if I had been able to bring any baggage with me, the same thing would probably have happened. I should no more have dreamed, in those early days, of carrying net or pillows about with me, than I should have thought of taking a four-poster bedstead or a cooking range. No one had told me, what I was now thus early to learn, that in New Guinea the wise man takes his blankets and his net, and his food, and such cooking furniture as he needs, wherever he goes.

I heard that night, for the first time, the since familiar and invariably misleading statement, that "there are no mosquitoes on *this* station"; and really they did not trouble me very much, though I found on getting up in the morning, that I had been bitten many times during the night.

Next day I started back for Dogura in the Mission cutter *Canterbury*, and it took forty hours to do the forty miles against a head wind. The native crew was not particularly expert, and I was too horribly sea-sick to have tried to help them, even if I had known much about it myself, and the dog



ULAKU STATION.

and I crawled up the hill in time for breakfast at Dogura very feeble and dirty and washed out, and very, very hungry.

Two or three weeks afterwards I was slightly unwell, and the authorities, inspired by a nurse who had been keeping an expectant eye on me ever since I first came, at once decided that I had "got it."

I had come to New Guinea to do as I was told, and to go where they sent me, so to bed I went, and I swallowed all the physic they offered, and let them take my temperature every half-hour or so, though I grumbled wickedly at the nurse who made such an unreasonable fuss about everything, and told her that if I had *not* got fever already I should certainly get it very soon at that rate. And then I went mildly off my head, and thought my dog was a codfish, and bothered every one who came into the room for a dictionary, so that I might verify some theories as to a striking similarity which I thought I had discovered between French and Wedauan. This lasted for only part of one day, but the report went south that I had had my "first attack of fever," and it was printed, along with other heroics, in the missionary magazines, and I was left to reconstruct my shattered theories about health in New Guinea, and to marvel at the merciless speed with which punishment had overtaken my simple, involuntary offence against those laws of health which I had committed to heart so carefully in Australia, and resolved to follow so faithfully as long as I lived in the tropics. Thinking it over afterwards, in the light of fuller experience, and with the natural man's disposition to give himself the benefit of the doubt, I am inclined to believe that it was not really malarial fever at all, but rather the result of exposure to the mid-day sun while I was attending to the work that had been given me in the school at Wamira, a couple of miles from Dogura. This daily walk, with a river to wade through, and the unaccustomed labour in school, and the return journey in the hottest part of the day,

and the climb up the hill just before the mid-day dinner, and the respectable, but quite unsuitable garments that I used to wear in those days of my ignorance—these things, following on my experience at Mukawa, and the shaking up in the cutter, might have accounted for my lapse.

But it is a standing joke in the Mission that no man ever acknowledges the reality of "his first attack," and so perhaps I must leave it at that, especially as there were undoubtedly suspicious features about the case. Just eighteen months afterwards, I *certainly* "had it."

The new R.M. of the Division was visiting this station for the first time, and he was our guest for some days. I put him into my mosquito-proof room, and myself slept in a hammock on the verandah. We played chess, and sat up rather late at night. And then we went to Uiaku, where the accommodation is inferior, and the mosquitoes so bad that sometimes I have hardly been able to minister at the altar, because of the attacks on my hands and wrists, and face and neck. There, too, we played chess, sitting out at night on the verandah, and being bitten again and again. I knew at the time what all this might easily lead to, but there was no getting out of it. When you have visitors, even in Papua, you naturally have to be a complaisant host rather than a methodical creature of fixed and careful habits.

A fortnight afterwards I paid the penalty of my hospitable indiscretions, and as it is the only attack of malarial fever of which I can be quite sure, I copy out, from notes written at the time, an account of my experience. The R.M. arrived here on Thursday, January 21 (1909), and went away again on the following Monday. On February 2, exactly ten days after we had slept at Uiaku, I was playing chess in the evening with my Better Half. We were both rather bored, for he was just recovering from what he called "a slight bout of fever" (the station log, by the way, records the significant fact that

he had gone to Uiaku, and so been exposed to infection, one day before the R.M. and I stayed there) ; and I had been looking all day for a mail which had not come. In the middle of the game, I apologised for my stupid play, and said that I was feeling " fey " about my letters, and in between moves I was imagining all sorts of horrible news that might be brought by the mail when it came. We finished our game about ten, and I drank a glass of water, and at once began to shiver, and my teeth to chatter. As I got up from the table my legs were so stiff that I could hardly walk, and there were aches and pains in every joint, especially about the ankles. I went straight to bed, but though I wore thick woollen pyjamas, and put two blankets and a heavy rug over me, I could not get warm, and my teeth went on chattering like castanets. I fell asleep about eleven, not feeling particularly ill, but very cold, and stiff in the legs. If I stretched them out, or curled them up for relief, piercing draughts of cold air seemed to be coming in under the blankets. I woke again at twelve, still shivering, and then I got up and set the kettle to boil, and took my temperature, and hunted up " Ross on *Malaria*." The thermometer read 102 degrees—nothing very much, of course, but yet it was the first time, as far as I know, that I had " had a temperature " in New Guinea. On that earlier and more doubtful occasion at Dogura, it was never anything but slightly below normal, and the other symptoms, shivering, and chattering teeth, and stiffness in the legs, had all been absent. But this time there was no doubt about it, and I read up what Ross wanted me to do at such a crisis. The book advised me—

- (1) To go to bed at once.
- (2) To send for a doctor.
- (3) To do as he orders.

But a doctor was out of the question, and I was in bed already, so I shut the book, and lay there very cosily, enjoying the

profuse perspiration and the delicious glow that followed close after the hot tea, and rejoicing to find how everything had worked out exactly as it should have done, according to the rules of the game. Exposure to infection at Uiaku, and ten days afterwards, almost to the very hour and minute, all the characteristic symptoms of an attack of malarial fever, precisely as they are described in the books, but as I had never yet experienced them. A really splendid typical instance of infection and uninterrupted development!

Between two and three o'clock I fell asleep again, and woke at sunrise to find a policeman knocking at my door, with a mail bag that had been over-carried to Buna. My temperature was down to 100 degrees, and though I was still rather shaky, and had so little mastery of my limbs that I broke a lamp glass and a teacup, and spilled a bottle of tabloids all over the floor within ten minutes of getting out of bed, I nevertheless felt very cheerful and well, and that was the end of my first and only genuine attack of fever. It had lasted from ten o'clock one evening until early the next morning, and caused me no inconvenience beyond a wakeful but quite pleasant hour or two in the middle of the night. I did my ordinary day's work in school and dispensary, and enjoyed my mail, and walked down to Uiaku a few days afterwards as usual, and as if there were no such thing as malaria in New Guinea, or anywhere else in the world.

I was careful, of course, to begin at once, and to continue for some time, the after-treatment that is prescribed in cases of fever, and there was no return of the symptoms, unless the following experience had anything to do with it. After the hard work of Lent and Easter, followed by a fortnight of semi-starvation at Okein, I had set out inland with the R.M., over mountains and quite unknown country. We had a very rough time of it, and I suffered a good deal from scrub itch and the bites of sand flies and leeches as well as mosquitoes. It was a

forced march that we were making, towards the end of nearly three weeks' almost constant travelling; and one Sunday, after crossing and re-crossing a fairly deep river some dozen times during the morning, we came at mid-day to a village on the river bank, where there had been trouble not long before, but which was now deserted. Several of the police, including Arari, the corporal, were knocked up, some with sores on their legs and feet, some with fever, and some with sheer fatigue; and I was thankful when the R.M. called a halt, and ordered the tents to be pitched. I was beginning to feel rather done, and the insect bites on my ankles were troublesome; and the deserted and ruinous village, with its tragic history, was depressing; and heavy rain came on before our fly was fairly up, and the river began to rise, and by dark it had risen twelve or fourteen feet, and at nine o'clock it was washing into our tent, and looking as if it still might rise much higher, and we had to turn out in the dark and climb up into a tumble-down native house; and the police were recalling all the horrible stories they had ever heard about floods, and wondering whether any alligators would be washed into the middle of our camp, and what would happen if they were. It is no wonder that next day I had a slight headache, and did not take much interest in my food. The R.M., who was a medical man, pulled a thermometer out of his pocket, and straightway pronounced me "guilty." I was well enough to have argued the point with him if he had been only an ordinary R.M., though I was obliged to accept the verdict of an M.D. without protest; but I was also *unwell* enough to be very thankful when he decided to go no farther through the flooded country, and to spend the whole of Monday in camp, to give everybody the chance of picking up again before making back to the coast.

I was perfectly fit next morning, and though the trouble with my ankles increased and continued for nearly three

months afterwards, neither during the rest of that trip, nor since, have I had anything approaching a symptom that was suggestive of malaria. If this third and last experience really was malaria, I imagine it to have been a relapse after the undoubted attack three months before, brought on by the relatively low diet of Lent, and the absolute scarcity of food at Okein, followed by over-fatigue on the march, and the depressing effects of the insect bites and the sores which were caused by them.

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Malaria has been recognised for centuries, but the real nature of the disease was not discovered until thirty years ago (1880), and it is only within the past ten years that scientific certainty has been attained as to the methods of infection, development, recurrence, prevention, and cure of the different kinds of malaria fever. Many hundreds of books and pamphlets have been written on the subject by medical men who have observed and experimented, but the important practical results of their investigations have been set down simply for the lay reader, and it is merely from such simple sources that I have drawn the remainder of this chapter. Besides Dr. Simpson's book, already referred to, I have used the ninth edition of *Malaria Fever, its Causes, Prevention, and Treatment*, by Ronald Ross, published, under the auspices of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, by Longmans & Co.

The following plain statements, which deal not with theories or fancies, but with ascertained facts, are taken almost word for word from one or other of these elementary manuals, and I neither attempt to give any account of the patient experiments and brilliant triumphs which have made it possible now, in most cases, to prevent or to cure the disease with something like certainty, nor do I pretend to know any more about the matter than any moderately intelligent reader could gather from the popular handbooks of Simpson and

Ross, except that in my own case I have had the opportunity of testing and approving the advice which they give.

Malaria, in its several forms, is caused by millions of minute parasites, which gain an entrance into the body, and live in the blood of the patient. The blood is made up of red and white corpuscles floating in a clear fluid, and when some of these germs, which are not bacteria, but animal parasites, have once found a way into a human body, each of them attacks and enters and inhabits and feeds upon one of the red corpuscles of the blood, just as a grub enters and inhabits and feeds upon a nut.

These microbes, when they first enter the blood, are so small that between two and three thousand of them could lie in the circumference of a halfpenny, and Ross considers that something like a quarter of a billion of them must be present to produce fever. The parasites grow larger at the expense of the red blood corpuscles, which at last break down, and then each parasite separates into a number of spherical segments, which escape into the blood stream. Each segment attacks another red corpuscle, to undergo the same development and discharge another brood into the blood-stream.

All the malaria parasites in the blood of an infected person tend to propagate and produce new segments at the same time, and it is precisely at the moment when these new millions of little creatures are scattered in the blood that the patient's fever begins. Afterwards, when the young microbes occupy fresh blood corpuscles, the fever ceases for a time. But when the new generation is matured and forms segments in its turn, a fresh attack of fever occurs. For a period of from three to twenty days after infection, or even longer, the patient may remain apparently well. If the development of the parasites is allowed to go on unhindered—that is, if nothing is done to prevent them from breeding and increasing in the blood—an

“ attack of fever ” takes place as soon as they have become sufficiently numerous. If, in spite of this plain warning, they are allowed, again, to propagate and still further increase, the fever may, and almost certainly will, recur again and again, and the man become at last very seriously ill. A patient who has been taking quinine as a precautionary measure may have but a few slight attacks, in place of a long series of illnesses. Relapses often seem to be provoked by such things as exposure to the sun, or chill, or fatigue, or other illness, or even indigestion ; but the fundamental cause of them is *the persistence of the malaria germs in the blood.*

The number of parasites in the patient varies from time to time. The more numerous they are, the worse, as a rule, is his fever. One may have large numbers of these parasites in his blood, and yet show no signs of fever. They sometimes continue to live on in a man in comparatively small numbers for years, even after he has left the tropics and gone to live in a temperate climate—just as rats will live in a ship—and it is only when their numbers again increase to a quarter of a billion or so that another relapse comes on.

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Suppose some reader of this book, who knew nothing of the matter, could suddenly be landed at Wanigera, he would be subject to infection at any moment after his arrival. If he were a careless or prejudiced person, and refused to be advised by those who have lived here for some time, the chances are that he would become infected this very night. If he took a few absolutely necessary precautions, however, of which I will speak presently, he might avoid the malaria for years, or even escape it altogether, though he could hardly have come to a more sure place than this, if his deliberate purpose were just to find out by personal experience, and as speedily as possible, exactly what an attack of malaria fever is

like. There are scores and scores of children in the villages that lie so close to this station, and it is practically certain that nearly all the children under two years old, and probably at least half of those between two and ten or twelve years old, contain the parasites of which I have been speaking. It might even be said, without much likelihood of error, that nearly every inhabitant of such a district as this is more or less infected with the malaria microbe. The native children themselves do not suffer much, though they are a constant source of infection for others, and as they reach the age of puberty the parasites will tend to die out of them by some natural but unknown process. Later on in life they may become infected, and re-infected from time to time, but the natives, in general, seem to be so accustomed to the presence of the parasites that they cease to suffer fever or any other illness in consequence of them.

In one sense, malaria is *not* an infectious disease. Our imaginary careless newcomer would not necessarily "catch" the disease because he lived near, or entered a village where there were hundreds of other people suffering, more or less, from malaria. But if, as we are supposing, he came here "without precaution," it would certainly happen that in a very short time some of the parasites would be transferred from the blood of an infected native into his own blood; and then—though there would still be time to take preventative, and probably effective, measures—yet, if he neglected them, in a week or two he would have the experience he came to seek. After the first attack, if he pleased, he would probably have no great difficulty in cutting the thing short, so as to have no relapse; but if he still persisted in his foolishness, the fever would almost certainly recur again and again, until the billions and billions of parasites had destroyed nearly all the red corpuscles in his blood, and, apart from the natural resisting powers of the body, which vary in different persons,

our adventurous but idiotic man would sooner or later be past recovery.

Until a few years ago, no one could explain the manner in which the malarial parasites first gained an entrance into a man's blood. It had been noticed for centuries that the disease occurred chiefly in the neighbourhood of swamps and stagnant pools, and there were vague ideas that the infection was taken into the system by the lungs from the air, or by the stomach from swallowing infected water. The old name "malaria" expressed this idea, this "superstition" as Ross calls it, that the disease is due to a poisonous exhalation from the soil, or to a miasma rising from the marshes; and though the word is still employed because it is already in general use, and every one knows what it refers to, the reference to "bad air," which has obtained such a grip on the public mind that it is not likely to disappear for many years, is nevertheless altogether false, because it implies a quite misleading notion as to the true relation of cause and effect.

The malarial infection—the parasite—the microbe—the germ—is conveyed from one human being to another by a particular kind of mosquito called *anopheles* (a coined Greek word, meaning "the thing that is good for nothing," "the worthless one").

Mosquitoes are the same as gnats, which in temperate climates are troublesome only in summer. In the tropics, however, gnats are very troublesome indeed—worse at some times than at others, but a very irritating nuisance all the year round, and they have acquired the special name of mosquitoes. Many hundred *species* of gnats or mosquitoes are known to science, and these are grouped by entomologists in numerous *genera*. Many different kinds may be found at Wanigera, but, after catching and examining hundreds, I find that perhaps two out of every three are *anopheles*. Another fairly common mosquito hereabouts is the *stegomyia*, or "tiger

mosquito," a striped or brindled creature, with his hind legs curled up over his back, and an insatiable appetite. This is the mosquito which would pass the germs of yellow fever on from one human being to another, exactly as the *anopheles* transfers the germs of malaria, only that happily there are as yet no infected persons in New Guinea. For the full life of the mosquito, which is as interesting as it is wonderful, and specially for accounts of the habits of the *anopheles*, I must refer the reader to the little books already mentioned. Enough, now, to say that it lays its eggs in stagnant water, swamps, marshes, puddles, old water-logged canoes, empty meat-tins or coconut shells or zinc packing-cases, or anything of the sort that has been left lying about and filled up by the rain, such as may be seen to-day in the gullies, or in the long grass round the villages, or near the back doors of any one of the score or so of Mission stations, and trading and Government out-stations that I have visited on this coast. The *anopheles* sleeps by day, but towards sundown becomes active, and from then until sunrise the female flies about seeking for victims. The male *anopheles* is a harmless vegetarian, but the female cannot breed and produce eggs until she has had a good feed of blood.

And so, if one could live in a house that was made mosquito-proof by wire gauze over all the windows and doors and chimneys and drains, and never go out of doors between dusk and dawn, it would be possible, as has been experimentally proved, to live in the midst of a malarial district and yet avoid infection. This, of course, cannot be done when the houses are built of native material; and a missionary, especially a priest or a nurse, is often obliged to be in the village or in the church at night. But it is quite easy to put on gloves, or (as I have always done at Evensong) a pair of old motor gauntlets, and high boots, or puttees, or two pairs of socks, for the protection of wrists and ankles, which are the special points that

the *anopheles* attacks. I have made careful trial of the various substances advertised for rubbing on the skin to keep the pests away, but I have not found that anything of the sort is much good in New Guinea. The *anopheles*, with its slender body and spotted wings, and queer impudent way of tilting its body out at an angle of forty-five or fifty degrees when it rests upon a flat surface to sleep, or perches on your finger to bite, is easily distinguishable from other mosquitoes, though it makes no sound as it flies, and is so dainty and delicate that you would hardly notice it unless you had learned to be on the look-out.

It is simple enough to get, and to use, an efficient mosquito net, though I have never seen such an one in New Guinea, except the two or three that I specially ordered before leaving Sydney. The nets in common use here are either too small, so that the limbs of the sleeper come in contact with the fabric, and he gets bitten *through* the net; or the meshes are so large that the tiny delicate *anopheles* can readily squeeze through; or the net is old and damaged, and the owner has not troubled to mend the holes, because he forgets, or has never heard, or does not believe, that a mosquito will try over a net, inch by inch, to find entrance, as a dog quarters the ground when he is looking for a hidden bone; or the net, even if it is of a suitable pattern, may so be badly hung that the mosquitoes get in from underneath. In addition to the portable nets, I had made in Sydney, at a cost of a little over £3, the wooden frame of a mosquito-proof room, large enough to hold a bed, a table, and a chair. It is built in sections, bolted together, and covered with muslin, and inside this square tent-like arrangement I spend every hour of darkness that my duty does not oblige me to spend elsewhere.

With all these precautions, and a few others, that are quite too trivial to mention even in such a frivolous book as this, one does get bitten now and then, and by the *anopheles*. It is

probable, in Wanigera, that pretty well all *anopheles* are infected, and so one has almost certainly received hundreds of malaria parasites into one's blood from time to time ; but it is just here that the regular use of quinine comes in.

Quinine kills the parasites in the blood. This is a certain fact, though no one has yet been able to explain the fact. The drug acts upon the blood in such a way that the germs which have been taken up from a malarial patient by a female *anopheles* mosquito, and after a week or two put into the blood of a healthy man, are *destroyed before they have time to propagate and become numerous enough to bring on an attack of fever.*

That is the story of malaria, though no one can be certain just yet that it is the whole story. And if you desire to avoid the disease, even though you are obliged to live in a country where it is widely prevalent, and causes many deaths, and makes invalids in large numbers, and weakens the vital powers to such a degree that the sufferer from malaria is peculiarly liable to be attacked by other diseases, all you have to do is to protect yourself as carefully as you can from the bites of the malaria-bearing *anopheles* mosquito, and use quinine regularly, so that even if you do get bitten, the poisonous germs may be killed before there is time for them to do you much harm. Full advice as to the best way of using quinine is given in the handbooks, and I need only add that my own practice has been to take fifteen and ten grains of quinine on two consecutive days in each week of these three years, with perhaps five grains every other morning at the beginning and end of the wet season, or when I have been travelling, or otherwise unusually exposed to the possibility of infection, and an odd five grains now and then if I had got wet, or over fatigued, or chilled, or if I happened to feel " a little bit out of sorts."

The reason for routine doses every week is, that the increase and full development of the parasites in your blood does not take place until nine or ten days after you are bitten,

so that a sufficient dose of quinine each week will kill any parasites that have been put into your system during the previous seven days, before they have time to propagate and increase, and cause an attack of fever. Regular precautionary doses every nine or ten days would do just as well, but it is simpler and easier to keep to the same days in each week—say Sunday and Monday—instead of having to look up a calendar to find out when the next dose falls due.

I have tried to make it plain to those who are interested in New Guinea, and especially to such as care about our Missions, that there is no need, under ordinary circumstances, for any white man in the country to suffer from malaria. This is a long chapter already, but I must end it, as I began, with a few personal experiences by way of practical illustrations of the truth of these teachings.

My Better Half, after years of suffering, and more than one attack of "blackwater fever," which is a peculiarly dangerous kind of relapse after malaria, occurring, as a rule, only in persons who have neglected continuous treatment and have already suffered numerous ordinary attacks of fever, has also found in recent years that wisdom consists in following the counsels of the Wise Men.

We are careful that no empty meat-tins, or broken bottles or puddles, are allowed to lie about on or near Wanigera Station, to form breeding places for *anopheles*. We are careful about our mosquito nets, and we use quinine regularly; and we are, I believe, the only members of the Mission staff who never have fever. Until two years ago, our South Sea Islander teachers were always "going down" to it. Hardly a week passed but what Peter or William was absent from school, or Reuben was unable to do his Sunday work, by reason of an attack of malaria. In March 1908 we began to teach them the routine use of quinine, as a preventative against getting fever, instead of a mere drug to be used when they were actually ill.

For two years we have lined them up after Evensong every Sunday and Monday for "Quinine drill," and we have made them attend to their mosquito nets. The improvement was immediate, and it has been continuous. Since the beginning of March, two years ago, no one of the three Wanigera teachers has had a single attack, except that Reuben, after he went to Okein a year ago, carelessly ran out of quinine, and was ill for a few days soon afterwards.

In Samarai, for some years past, owing to the ability and resolution of the medical officer, there has been practically no fever, though I have heard some of the baser sort of white men speak as if they thought his precautions were mere officious faddisms.

Before I left Sydney I spoke of my hopes for good health, and warned the people in the Mission office that if I came back with a clean record I should call upon the secretary to bear witness that it had been no chance result of personal vigour or special bodily fitness or simple good luck, but the natural and looked-for outcome of a little useful knowledge and a good deal of painstaking care.

I have written these two chapters chiefly for inexperienced people in Australia who may be coming to New Guinea, especially for new missionaries and their friends, but also for all who are interested in the New Guinea Mission, since it is time for them to understand the true state of affairs. I do not expect that the white people in Papua, with one or two exceptions, will take what I have written very seriously. People in New Guinea, as a rule, are obliged to live outside the current of modern thought and scientific discovery, and most of them are so busy trying to make money quickly, or to fulfil their still more absorbing task as missionaries, that they have neither time nor inclination to read books, or even magazines and newspapers.

Only a month ago I was in the company of a fine old man

who has spent half a lifetime in the tropics. He was telling me about a new house which he hopes to build. It would have been easy to find a well elevated and suitable spot on his land, on a hill about half a mile from the swamps, which is farther than an *anopheles* mosquito generally flies. But the good man does not trouble much about mosquitoes, though the mangrove swamps are full of them, and he neither knows nor cares whether they can fly a hundred miles or only fifty yards. It is the "malarial mists" he is really anxious about, and he explained to me, very fully, that if you put your house upon a hill, these mists rise from the swamps and strike fair against your walls, and you get fever; whereas, if you build on the lower ground, near the water, as *he* means to do, the miasma passes right over your head, and there you are! The good old gentleman was shaking with fever while he talked, and elderly men who have lived half a lifetime in the tropics are not likely to be converted by younger men with hardly any experience at all, so I did not try to argue the point. But one does not like to think of the raw new chums who will have to live in that house, and pick up their experience at the dangerous hands of that excellent, but uninformed, old gentleman. My copy of "Ross on *Malaria*" was given to me by another elderly man who has spent ten years in the country, but the margins are scored with pencilled sarcasms at the expense of the scientific investigators who have done so much to make life bearable for the Englishman in the tropics.

I have had a middle-aged man as my guest in this house, giving him my mosquito-proof room, and myself sleeping under a net on the verandah: and I have found in the morning that he had shifted out on to a sofa, and spent the greater part of the night without a net at all. This man suffers from fever frequently, though it is only fair to add that it does not seem to have done him much harm in all the many years that he has been in the country; but here again, raw newcomers may begin

badly by having him as their exemplar and experienced guide. I have had a young man as my guest, a newcomer like myself, and he professed to be shocked by my precautions, on the ground that if a man has "Faith" he surely need not bother so much about quinine and mosquito nets. There are some people in the world with whom you simply cannot argue, and I forbore even to quote Voltaire on the subject of arsenic and flocks of sheep; but I was not sorry when my friend went down with a severe attack of fever within a fortnight of coming to Wanigera.

I have had an elderly middle-aged man here on a visit, and he sat out on the verandah each evening, because it was so hot in the house, and wore thin socks and low shoes because boots were so uncomfortable, and complained of the way the mosquitoes bit his ankles, and would not have his net tucked under him because that made it too stuffy, and would not accept quinine because his doctor at home had told him, only a few months before, that he would be all right if he took "one grain a day." And ten days afterwards, when he had gone away from here, he had a very sharp attack of fever, and received a good deal of sympathy. I doubt not that the sympathy was continued, perhaps along with relapses of fever, when he got safely back to Australia; but I fear he may have done something to strengthen the popular misconceptions about the New Guinea Mission and malaria.

Another man came up here for a week or so, and we were able to take him inland for a few days. On our first night in camp, in answer to a question, he pulled out the whole supply of quinine that he had been told would last him his three months in New Guinea—a tiny bottle of one-grain tabloids. Two or three of us swallowed the entire lot there and then, and presented him, instead, with a business-like bottle of five-grain tabloids, together with brief instructions for their use. He probably did not use them, as he had frequent

attacks of what he bravely described as "biliousness" during the rest of his time in New Guinea, and I hear that he is still having occasional bouts of what the Australian doctors tell him is malaria.

A lady, for whom on many grounds I have the highest admiration and respect, gravely explained to me that it is really rather good to have fever now and then, as it keeps the body low, and "the weaker the body the stronger the spirit," with other perverse applications of some scraps of mediæval asceticism that I daresay she had picked up from a sermon.

A man, who has been four years in the country, and has suffered almost continuously from fever, told me in the last letter that I received from him that he had not slept under a mosquito net for more than forty nights in all that time. And so I might go on with true stories about the missionaries and the visitors and the Government officers, and the traders whom I have met in and about Wanigera. With the single exception of our R.M., who is as excellent a doctor as he is a just and capable magistrate, I do not remember one of them who has taken the trouble to find out about these things, or who does not suffer, more or less frequently, from fever.

But I must make an end or I shall be counted a hopeless crank, according to my own definition, and on my own written and printed evidence. This is a free country, after all, and a man in New Guinea has a perfect right, if he likes, to take one-grain tabloids of quinine, or no quinine at all; and to breed *anopheles* mosquitoes by the million in empty sardine tins outside his back door, as long as his neighbours are too ignorant to protest: or to avoid exercise: or to starve and poison himself on unlimited one-pound tins of fibrous matter from the slaughter-yards—but I hope some of the folk who have had the patience to read these two chapters will do what they can to set the popular mind right on some of the matters with which I have tried to deal. It is too late in the day

for intelligent people to think of malaria as a mysterious and deadly disease that makes no distinction in the choice of its victims, or for honest Christian folk to speak and write about New Guinea missionaries as men and women who bravely take their lives in their hands when they come to this "dreadful climate."

The man in the street, of course, will go on talking about miasma and malarial mists; but those who have heard the truth of the matter, among whom my readers must now please count themselves, will have no more patience with the "malarial myths" that did well enough in the days of our grandmothers.

The time will come, and I hope it will come very soon, when the white man in New Guinea who allows himself to get fever will merely be ranked with the ill-conditioned fellows who get drunk, or do other low and unpleasant things—they have a perfect right to do it, as long as they do it at their own expense, and do not desire the company of decent men and women, or expect sober and healthy people to employ them, or trust them very much—and I even hope this chapter may do something to hasten the time when the missionary in New Guinea will be expected to set a good example to the other white men in the matter of personal health as well as in the higher branches of morality in which, by his profession, he is quite fairly bound to hold himself beyond reproach. The missionary orators and magazines will have to stop talking about the "heroism" and the "patient suffering" of "the white staff in New Guinea" because people will realise, some day, that the man or woman who is always falling ill and "getting fever," and having to go on furlough, is, except under very special circumstances, no proper object for sympathy and sentimental eloquence, but only an example of how even the most earnest and devoted person can be rather an expensive nuisance because of his ignorance, or carelessness, or both.

CHAPTER XXIII

SOME TROPHIES

TWELVE years ago I walked from Mildenhall to Bury St. Edmunds, and soon after passing Icklingham I found a strangely shaped piece of flint. I did not know till afterwards that the place was famous for the flints which have been found there. I carried the thing for some time in my pocket, and at last it went into a box of such odds and ends as a man picks up, and keeps, and carries about, for no particular reason, as he goes on through life. And now, after scarcely thinking about it for the sixth of a lifetime, I have fished it up out of the jumble of silver pencils that won't write, odd sleeve links, faked bullets from the field of Waterloo, foreign coins, Japanese mother-o'-pearl fish-hooks, engraved seals, broken chessmen, cameos, bits of Indian ink, parts of fountain pens, sealing-wax, tiny brass screws, duplicate keys, shells, egg drills, "rubies" from Oodnadatta, acorns from Hadley Woods, fossils, cracked amber pipe stems, and all manner of mixed rubbish, and there it is on the table in front of me. I used to think that it was some kind of spear or arrow head, but I learned, afterwards, that it was an altogether typical example of a flint razor. And on the table beside this yellowish-grey flake of English flint, there lies another piece of stone, of remarkably similar shape. The two pieces have precisely the same breadth, and are of the same length within the eighth of an inch. This second piece is rather thicker and considerably heavier than the other, and jet black in colour; but the most casual and uninformed

examination of the two pieces would persuade anybody that both had been shaped by the art of man, and for much the same purpose, if such things could have any possible meaning or purpose at all. Looking at them, side by side, you would think they had surely been made at the same time, by the same hands, and that any dissimilarity was due only to the accident of the different materials.

And yet the one was used as a razor two thousand years ago (or ten, or twenty thousand, for that matter) in my own country, before the use of metal was known in the East of England; and the other was made and used for an exactly similar purpose quite lately, perhaps only a few months ago, here in Wanigera, by some Papuan who was fain to shave himself with the ancient implement to which he and his forefathers were accustomed before the missionaries came with their broken bottles and lamp glasses, and cast-off patent safety razor blades.

The New Guinea razor is chipped from a piece of obsidian, or volcanic glass, which is sometimes found hereabouts, though most of it has been brought back from Goodenough Island by the adventurous seafaring men who used to go thither on trading expeditions with their tapa cloth, and sago, and earthenware pots.

Though you tried to explain the use of these stone razors, most people would find them quite uninteresting, and a few, perhaps, would be ready to suggest that one or the other was forged; but to me, who myself found the one in a Suffolk flint heap years ago, and picked up the other in my own fowl-yard a few weeks back, they are among the most valuable of my not very numerous possessions. For they express, in concrete form, a feeling which has grown more strong each day that I have lived in New Guinea—a conviction that, in spite of the apparent striking strangeness of the country and its inhabitants, it is all really very familiar when one gets a

little way below the surface. The things the natives do here and now are exactly the things my own people were doing a few hundred years ago; the tools they use are only earlier forms of the common tools with which my own countrymen are doing their complicated work to-day; the way they live and the thoughts they think are much what my own ancestors were thinking in the days, not so very distant as world history goes, when they had not yet been caught up by the twin currents of Christianity and civilisation, and carried swiftly forward, but were still lingering, as these coloured people linger still, in "darkness" and cruelly primitive "habitations."

It would be hard to find, in all the diocese of New Guinea, a district where the ordinary village life has been less disturbed than here; and yet, inevitably, living under the eye of "Government," and with an English missionary for their neighbour and friend, the natives have lost something of their savage simplicity.

Not very far away, however, there are other tribes, whose manner of life has not been changed at all, or their thoughts influenced, by any magistrate or missionary. In behind the mountains—behind those very mountains that I can see from my verandah—there are wild people living who have never seen a white man, communities of Papuans to whom no ambassador from earthly or Heavenly King has ever gone. And there are others whose knowledge of our ways is limited to the crowded experience of one day, when "Government," in the person of a Resident Magistrate, marched into the village with an escort of native police and a long string of carriers, and looked at the people, and counted their houses, and bought some food, and made a few observations with prismatic compass and theodolite, and then marched off again into the bush, taking one or two men to guide him to the next village, and sending them home with some finely



A DORIBI PRISONER.

flavoured black sticks of trade tobacco, and a few wonderful glass beads, and perhaps a couple of knives and a tomahawk. By the friendly kindness of more than one R.M. of this Division, I have joined in three such patrols; I have seen something of the interior of this beautiful land, and caught stray glimpses of its natives, living their altogether primitive life in the bush.

I have wasted many half-hours in packing parcels of curios, and nearly as many half-crowns on the postage thereof, only to bore my friends with queer but useless presents of native pots, and mats, and tapa cloth, and shell necklaces, and stone axes and chisels, and string bags, and lime sticks; but there are three things hanging on the walls of my house, which, with the obsidian razor, are the particular trophies of these three New Guinea years.

One is a shield, four and a half feet long, and fourteen inches wide, made of soft light wood, and firmly bound with fifty rounds of plaited grass to keep it from splitting. It is cut away to a rounded point, in orthodox fashion, at the bottom, and furnished with a strong handle and woven sling for attaching to the arm. A man crouching low, and holding himself well together, would be completely hidden behind this shield, if the point were planted on the ground.

It is two years since I went with the R.M. into the Doriri country, on what was not, strictly speaking, a punitive expedition, though the Magistrate meant, if he could, to bring back certain men who were known by name, and "wanted" in connection with various raids and murders.

Walking back from Uiaku one day along the beach, three months after I first came to Wanigera, with seven boys to carry my "swag" and a lot of coconuts, I saw, as we drew near to Yuayu, that something unusual was going on. It is only a small village, of between twenty and thirty houses,

but on this morning it was full of people, and my boys, much excited, explained to me that the Doriri were there.

I had heard of these people, as a famous fighting tribe, dwelling some five or six days inland, over the mountains, sixty or seventy miles through the bush from the coast.

In the middle of the village I found a score or so of strangers, Doriri, who had come down on a friendly visit, though from what I heard afterwards of their doings at Uiaku it might more properly have been described as a blackmailing tour.

They were fine, big men, with strong, hard, clean-shaven faces, and heavy lines round their mouths, intellectual looking (though "cunning" were perhaps the better word), with well developed chests and arms, and all of them were elaborately painted and decorated, as to face and head, with beautiful and unusual shell and feather ornaments.

They were quite friendly, though I fancied that they bore themselves more independently than the mild-mannered folk of Wanigera. The Maisin carriers were able to interpret most of what we said to each other, and I gave them a little tobacco and they presented me with a few feathers, and as I tramped the rest of the way home I fell to thinking of what might be the happiness of a man who should be called to be the Apostle of such full-grown, bold-looking, blood-thirsty old rascals as these notorious Doriri were supposed to be.

And so it was with very special interest that I climbed, for the first time, over the mountains behind Uiaku, along a track that only one or two patrols had trodden before, up great stone-strewn water-courses, and down valleys where the running water sang between rounded rocks and everything was covered with ferns and bright green moss, and through shady forests where the ground was soft with fallen leaves, and across sparkling rivers which sometimes foamed and fell over great stones, or rested in clear pools before

plunging suddenly down in glittering waterfalls. Now and then we had to force our way through difficult patches of cane grass, or climb with hands and knees up stony acclivities, and sometimes we marched all day through heavy rain and mud, and always we camped about four o'clock in silent forests, which woke at sunset, and rang with the music of birds and insects until the sun rose again.

At the end of the third day we were within a few hours of the first Doriri village, and early next morning we came to Ibinambo, built beside a pebbly river, on a red cliff not easy of access. For extra security in times of trouble the people had several houses in the trees as well as a dozen or so upon the cliff; and in one of these we spent the night, hiring it from the pot-bellied owner for a stick of tobacco, and bribing him with another stick next morning to satisfy our curiosity by unfastening the elaborately woven strands of his long and very dirty hair. It was dizzy work, climbing the eighty or ninety feet of swaying cane ladder, but you might easily find worse sleeping places than a New Guinea tree-house, especially if your choice lay between that and a camp in the midst of the insanitary filth of a small inland village.

I wondered, at the time, whether a tree-house, however lofty, would be any real protection to its inhabitants in time of war? It would surely be so very easy for a resolute enemy to fell the tree! I have since learned that there are several "Rules of the Game," even in New Guinea, and that the other man would never dream of cutting your house down, though he would do most extremely unpleasant things if he could chance to catch you before you had time to scramble up the shaky ladder. All may be fair in love and war, but civilised navies do not pitch oil of vitriol at each other, though they are ready enough to launch torpedoes and explosive shells; nor do civilised armies poison the springs, though they do their best to cut off or destroy the enemy's food supplies.

And the coloured man, also, when he goes forth to war, observes the conventions.

From Ibinambo, we went on to many villages, scattered along the rivers, and on hill tops, and in hidden places of the forest, Fasire, Vasi, Sapia, Domara, Adewari, Kwasi, Dorerebubu, Kekefebubu, Tanaturi, and Bibira, and a dozen others, lying, most of them, nearer to the other coast than to Collingwood Bay. Some of the villages had been deserted on our approach, and in others the men had waited and made a fuss, while in yet others they waited, and were friendly. None of the natives seemed disposed to quarrel with "Government," but none of them quite seemed to know what it all meant, or what was the safe and proper thing for them to do.

The magistrate was a military man in everything but actual experience, and his fixed idea was to take each village by surprise—a very difficult accomplishment, by the way, in a country where news seems to travel along the wind, or to be carried by the rivers or the birds. If I had happened to be a native in one of those Doriri villages that was "rushed," I should first of all have been frightened out of my life, and then I think—I even hope—I should have had the pluck to snatch up my spears and do foolish things, as some of them were brave enough to do. The R.M. really meant no harm, and his only weapon was a little rusty electro-plated revolver, with mother-o'-pearl handle, such as romantic suburban householders in London sometimes keep in the right-hand top drawer of their writing desks. It was not till my friend woke me, hurriedly, in the middle of the night, and assured me that we had been attacked, and insisted on my keeping the dreadful thing under my pillow till the morning, that I discovered it had only two cartridges, neither of which, as we proved at the end of our tour, was capable of rapid explosion. The police sentries had been frightened by some noise in the bush, and had begun to blaze away at every shadow they saw,

though I was sleeping too heavily from sheer fatigue to hear anything of that midnight scare.

When we got near the village of the men who were "wanted," an ingenious plan was devised, by which the place was to be rushed simultaneously from opposite sides. Either because they had to move over unknown ground, or became tangled in the heavy grass beside a river, or perhaps because the native corporal's watch stopped, or he could not really tell the time, the manœuvre miscarried, and the two forces ran into each other's arms within fifty yards of the village, and then they raced in open order for all they were worth into the village of Bibira, and arrested the entire male population, which consisted of six men. The terrible Doriri warriors had been sitting together under one of the houses as we entered, but they dived into the bush, headlong, like rabbits into a burrow. The police went after them, and in fewer seconds than it has taken to write, all but one were handcuffed round a coconut palm, and, as if the tree in the middle of the ring were insufficient, I was set to guard them, while the entire force hunted for the missing man, and found him up to his eyes in a filthy mud-hole close to the village. Two or three women scurried away at the first alarm, and others were probably in the gardens, but half-a-dozen poor little seared children ran up and down and screamed, or fell over the squeaking pigs, or tried to clamber up into a tree-house.

As a non-combatant, and all things, especially the coconut, considered, I felt justified in leaving the prisoners to entertain each other, while I gathered the babies together in a house where they were very happy by themselves until we went away early the next morning.

This "rushing" of villages was doubtless quite necessary in earlier days, and it may sometimes have to be done still, but it is fortunately going out of fashion.

My other magisterial friend is a good specimen of the

man who tries to gain the confidence of the natives by more scientific and humane methods. He bristles, when he is on the march, with a complete armoury of lethal weapons. He has a well-oiled and very business-like revolver at his belt, and a Winchester over his shoulder, and always close at hand there walks an extra policeman with a spare shot-gun, and at night time the orderly lays out variously coloured canvas bags which are heavy with cartridges appropriate to each of those excellent weapons.

But, in reality, I can hardly imagine a less terrible example of the "death-dealing Englishman taking up the white man's burden." My friend is of Cambridge, and a scientist, and a doctor of medicine, and a philologist, and a philosopher, and, best of all, a "native man," and he will go to endless trouble to secure reliable interpreters for new country, and wait the whole morning in camp, or half a day in the bush, while an embassy goes forward to explain that "Government" has come "to make peace," and not "to fight." The R.M. is prepared for war, and I should be sorry for the native who tried to be funny within range of the Doctor's Winchester; and he gets where he wants to go; but he gets there, as a rule, peaceably, and his second visit to a village is generally easier and pleasanter than his first.

Omelets cannot be made without breaking eggs, and savages cannot always be managed by well-reasoned methods of gentleness and quiet persuasion; but, all things considered, nothing could be more humorously harmless than the "rushes" of my military-minded man with his silver-plated revolver and innocuous cartridges, or more humane and effective than the warlike peaceable methods of the patient, scientific man. I have seen the one wait all through the night, up to his middle in a swamp, under a drizzling rain, and "rush" a village at daybreak, only to find the houses empty and all the fires cold—and no harm was done. And I have

been close to the other when his police were holding their breath and creeping up to a large village where no white man had ever been before, and where a mob of natives were shouting and shaking their spears, while the police were just itching to "have a go at 'em"—and, once again, no harm was done. If the military-minded man had carried Winchesters and real revolvers and sporting guns loaded with buck-shot, and if he had rushed that place—well, the natives would have had a very bad time, and it would have been hard to persuade them, afterwards, that the white man wanted to be their friend. Or if the scientist had gone there with a toy revolver and a couple of non-explosive cartridges, it might have been the white men who would have suffered, though a strong force would have gone up afterwards to punish our unlucky "murderers."

And so, on the whole, an outsider gets the impression that the Government officers in Papua, though without any special training, and differing very much in personality and methods, are well suited for their work, just as we missionaries, with most various and unequal preparation for what we have to do, seem to manage it somehow.

But to come back to Bibira. Those six men may have deserved their evil reputation, and the sentences which most of them received when next the Judge came to Tufi, but they were quiet and friendly enough during the journey back to the coast, and they all behaved well while they were in gaol. Even though they were technically "murderers," one felt no horror, of course, in their company, as one would in the presence of a white man who had foully killed another. The wild Papuan, when he kills, is merely doing what is expected of him in the community to which he belongs. The white man, with possibly mixed motives, forbids this, and backs up the prohibition by taking convicted "murderers" away from their homes for a year or two, and sending them back to be

pioneers of civilisation in their own villages, and perhaps, when next the R.M. comes that way, to be appointed Village Constables, on the strength of their practical familiarity with Government ways, and their understanding of the "Hanua Bada" tongue.

The houses of these Bibira men had been full of clubs and spears and shields. There were besides only a few cooking pots, and those of the very roughest kind—no ornaments worth speaking of ; no implements for garden work or peaceful occupation of any sort ; but only shields and clubs and spears. There must have been a full hundred spears of different sizes in the half-dozen houses, and not fewer than a score of shields, and many of the latter were scarred and broken by spear thrusts or the blows of clubs.

The R.M. caused nearly all the spears to be destroyed, on the reasonable ground, which was explained to the prisoners, that the village had been concerned in recent raids, and he confiscated half-a-dozen of the shields, for the Government Museum at Port Moresby, and allowed me to keep another. That is the shield which hangs on my wall to-day. It is of no intrinsic value, and I could get a hundred more, exactly like it, without going nearly as far as Bibira ; but when I look at it I am reminded of those scattered villages, and of the great valley of the Upper Musa where they lie, and I remember how one of the prisoners used it when he had to swim the flooded Adaua River, a little way above its junction with the Moni, and how the man was carried swiftly down the stream and all but drowned, while the police, who followed him on either bank, were in doubt whether to shoot him or let him drown. And I remember how we went across, one at a time, with a pile of baggage on a roughly made raft, towed by the police at the end of a long rope, and how the rope broke and I thought that I was to be washed down and drowned alongside of the struggling prisoner ; and how the R.M. waded in

three feet of water without any clothes, but carrying an open umbrella to protect him from the rain; and how he was bitten by a scorpion; and how we ran out of food, and had to turn back to the coast. And I remember the stockaded villages, and the mountains; and the two days drifting on a big canoe down the stately Musa River to the sea, while our crowd of carriers and most of the gear went merrily down on a fleet of triangular rafts, each with its wood fire in the stern, so that they looked like a procession of busy little steam tugs on the Thames; and again and again I think of what will be the happiness of the first missionary who is allowed to waste his life among these people, not dying at their hands, since "Government walks about," and the white man is safe, but living with and for them, utterly unknown in this world, except among a simple savage tribe who live in scattered villages behind the mountains, but known then and ever afterwards at Court, where, when the war is ended, he shall stand in the very Presence Chamber, surrounded by Doriri no longer brutal and ignorant, but subjugated and reconciled to their Saviour King.

Is it true, as a preacher declared the other day, that romance and spiritual enterprise have gone out of Christian life in the Old World? Here in the Foreign Mission field is romance abundantly for the Knights of Christ, and enterprise of very various kind—a poor and worthless speculation, as values are reckoned by the man in the street, or by the ignorant and foolish Christians who "don't believe in Missions," but labour worthy of a Boniface or an Augustine, as worth is counted in Heaven, or by Christian men and women who do believe in sharing with others what alone makes life completely worth the living to themselves. And then there is the Numba district, as it has been called since it was first discovered less than a year ago. It lies perhaps a hundred miles from here, right up in the mountains behind the head of Dyke Acland Bay, on

the other side of Cape Nelson. The R.M. and I went by whaleboat and canoes up the coast to Pongani and Emo, landing wherever it was possible to walk, and making a traverse of the coast-line as we went along the beach. I cannot stay to write of the coast villages, or of the many marvels which befell: as when one fish after another flopped into the whaleboat, so that the police put down the awning for protection from the silver shower (this sounds peculiar, but I may add that the fish, though large, were of an inedible kind): or as when a sea monster, as big as a calf, jumped into the boat one night while it lay at anchor, and was butchered with tomahawks, supplying enough and to spare next day for our party of nearly a hundred: or of Pongani itself, the Port Saïd of this coast, where every one passes sooner or later. It was from Pongani that the R.M. went inland to pay his first visit of courtesy to an unknown tribe who had lately been at pains to send a defiant and unseemly message all the way to Tufi, in which were specified with nice particularity the extremely uncomfortable things they meant to do to "Government" if he ever dared to come that way.

We did not go by the direct route up the river valley from the coast, by which a patrol had gone a few years ago and then turned back, after having trouble in the first village it touched; but we cut a new track over the Hydrographer's Range, led by a guide who had volunteered to find a way by which we could reach "the fight village" from an altogether unexpected quarter. This convenient traitor was to get a tomahawk in any case for his trouble, and several tomahawks and countless yards of red "calico," and goodness knows how many glass beads, if by his mediation the matter ended peaceably. It was then, after climbing thousands of feet up into the clouds, and marching for several days through forest harmonies in green and brown, that we dropped into a well-watered valley, and ate chocolate in a garden house while the little man with

long hair and no clothes at all except a piece of string (literally, not figuratively), went forward to tell his friends that they must behave themselves and be polite to "Government"; and came back in a couple of hours with two other string-clad gentlemen, who were laden with sugar-cane, and friendly but very frightened. One of them, fair skinned and with side whiskers, reminded me at once of a little London clerk, with his sharp features and quick nervous manner. He and I were much together in the next few days, and it was from him that I purchased the trophy of which I am soon to speak.

The village, Avaru, was stockaded, and built on the top of a splendid hill, from which, with the glass, we could see for hundreds of miles. All along the valleys were signs of human habitation, spirals of blue smoke, cleared garden-land, grass patches where gardens had once been, and here and there a solitary house. We could see no villages, though the size of the gardens indicated a large population. In Avaru, where there were not more than thirty houses, most of the men had waited our coming, and there were piled up heaps of food for our eating, and a wretched pig tied head downwards to a wooden pole and carried ceremoniously on the shoulders of men, and laid, for propitiation, at our feet. As soon as everybody had recovered himself—for at times like these one's breath has a way of coming rather short—there was much laughter and friendly talk; but it was a little while before the men of Avaru could overcome their suspicions of the knives and beads and tobacco that we gave in return for their food, and of the tomahawk which was presented to the chief man in return for his compliment of the pig. It seemed that they had not heard or seen the firing of a gun before, and Avaru, for the sake of a tree through which Corporal Arari put a few bullets, is doubtless still a place of pilgrimage for all that countryside. Most strange of all it seemed that they should

not know the use of manufactured tobacco. There was tobacco growing between the houses inside the stockade, and the neighbouring gardens were full of the precious plant which some foolish man once called a "weed"; but anybody who felt like a smoke would just gather a handful of green leaves, and toss them for a moment on the fire, and then roll a cigarette and puff it in his bamboo pipe. It was in this village that I first saw lengths of bamboo, larger and smaller, plugged up and used for the carrying of water as we use jugs and pails.

In the evening, the universal friendliness became extreme, for the natives had got over their terror and were busy with their beads; and even the police, full of roast pig, had nearly forgotten the sharp disappointment of their too peaceful entry on the place. We were high enough above the sea-level for the night to be chilly, and as we sat in the comfortable warmth of the dancing fires, my little London clerk, to whom I gave a condensed milk tin and an empty sauce bottle, offered me a whiff from his bamboo pipe. I took the thing, already filled with smoke, in my hand, and pulled myself together—and then I hesitated and was lost. The police laughed, and I knew that I was a coward as well as a boor; but though I have done harder things than that in New Guinea, and really wanted to be civil just then, I simply could not, and I have ever since been ashamed that my courage failed so miserably at the critical moment. But I bought the pipe from Whiskers next morning, and I hope he remembers the taste of my tobacco and still wears the red and white beads round his neck, and treasures them, and thinks sometimes of me, as I remember him and his hill-top village whenever I look at his large and very evil-smelling pipe.

In Avaru, permanently seated on a specially sheltered platform, was the most swollen man I have ever seen. He could never have been tall, but his body had grown outwards

and outwards until his head and limbs seemed mere exerecences upon a nearly circular mass of flesh that was as hard as a well blown football. The R.M. knew that it was quite out of the question, but yet the medical student could not help talking about post-mortems ; and even I, the sentimental layman, should really have been quite glad to know what was inside.

Lest this digression seems out of place in a missionary book, let me add that the man himself was perfectly comfortable and contented, and that we gave him plenty of tobacco for allowing us to gaze at him, and some extra beads for the privilege of prodding him anywhere and as hard as we liked. There were several fortunes in that poor chap's infirmity, if only he could have been shipped at so much the cubic foot to Sydney, and shown, for sixpence a time, to country people who are tired of live alligators and baby whales.

We went on from Avaru, up and down the valleys, for nearly a week, finding village after village, a mile or two apart, most of them of no particular size, but each with indications of a population that might reach the hundred. We passed along well worn tracks that branched off constantly towards large gardens and other villages and garden houses, and we could but feel that we were in a fertile and thickly populated country. Now and then, on some distant hill-side, we saw strings of people hurrying away through the grass to the shelter of the forest ; and though our guide sent messengers each day ahead of us, so that we sometimes found a few men waiting to do the honours of the place when we came, the villages were generally deserted when we entered them.

We came, about the middle of one day, to Numba, the source from which the insulting messages had lately been sent down the coast. It was here, as was fitting, that the people made something of a demonstration, and that mischief would most certainly have followed, but for the tight hand the R.M.

was able to keep on his men. We saw a crowd of natives and many spears ; but only eight or ten men waited for our entry, while the others fled, shouting, and turning back to shout again, leaving the upper end of the rectangular village as we entered at the lower, and hiding among the trees on a little hill that overlooked the place.

Numba is unusually large for an inland village. The sixty or seventy houses fill the whole of the four sides of a narrow oblong, that is perhaps two hundred or two hundred and fifty yards in length. The space under each house was blocked with slabs of heavy timber on the outer side, so that we could only get into the village, which covered the entire width of a ridge, by one of the narrow gates between and beneath two houses. Each house was of such size, and so arranged with interior passages and partitions, that it might readily accommodate three or four separate families. Immediately we had occupied the place, and the eight or ten men had been sent to try and bring the others back, the R.M. asked me to go right round the village, counting the houses, and taking note of their arrangements and contents. I found them full of spears and shields and elaborate stone-headed clubs, and stone tomahawks and chisels, and there was much food, including excellent cucumbers and melons and a few inferior lemons or limes. Rules against looting are strict on these expeditions, and the spears and clubs, together with many others which Arari brought back from the hill-top, were thrust into the ground and stacked together outside our tent. It was important that these natives should have proof, afterwards, that we had not come to rob or destroy. We saw no other men than the few who had just received us ; but these went off again and again and returned with food from the gardens, and they would have given us every pig in the place, so anxious were they to make sure that " the bitterness of death was passed." Payment was made for every root of

taro, and for every cucumber, and for every length of sugarcane, and the R.M. and I were at considerable pains to find the owners of two clubs which we much desired to carry away with us. That club from Numba is the last of my special trophies. I obtained it from a big fellow with a yard or so of thin twine as his only wear. He may or may not have been the actual owner of the club, but the other men were all agreed that he had power to sell; and though the twelve sticks of tobacco and the few spoonfuls of beads were of comparatively insignificant value, it would have done no good to anybody if I had given more. The club is very fine, unique in some of its details, and the design, as the owner was careful to explain to me, is of a phallic kind.

We came next day to a group of villages, Mejore, Sanare, and Manamu, on the summit and along the slopes of a high hill. Here the people had been too frightened to wait for our coming. That they meant well was shown by the presents of food which we found tied on to posts at the entrance to each of the three villages, though a tabu of branches had been carefully laid beside the presents across the paths. It was as if they wanted to explain that they would so much have liked to stay and meet us, but found when the time came that they just could not, and would we, please, turn round and go away again by the way we had come? The doors of all the houses had been blocked with pieces of wood and mats, but the few that I entered were much like those in Numba, large, and so arranged that several families, or several establishments, might live together under one roof. This might mean either a general custom of polygamy, or many more families than the eighty or ninety houses would ordinarily suggest. Outside some of the houses, hanging by the doors, were bundles of human skulls, wrapped in filthy tapa cloth, and each with its jawbone attached. I naturally thought that these skulls were those of enemies slain in fight, but the R.M. assured me

that they were much more likely to be keepsakes of departed friends, or to have belonged to householders, and that they were hung there as hatchments are fixed outside a dead man's house in England, or as we keep a baby's curl in a locket, or put framed photographs on our table, or along the mantel-piece.

We saw, in this village, musical wind instruments of wood, for use as conchshells are used on the coast, or as horns are blown elsewhere.

This village, with its four or five hundred people, in the centre of a population which, according to the R.M., "must surely be counted in thousands," would be the natural and convenient headquarters of a new Mission district some day. The hill on which it stands is somewhere on the seventy or eighty mile straight line between Mount Victory, or Cape Nelson, and Mount Lamington at the north-west end of the Hydrographer's Range, and much nearer to the latter.

Here is another and still more splendid field for spiritual enterprise and the royal romance that is said to be dying out of the weary old world:—thousands of people, with whom the Government has but just come into touch, a people apart, living in a hitherto unknown mountain valley, absolutely uninfluenced, as yet, for evil or for good, by civilised man, waiting, as it seems to the missionary, for the authorised teaching and the close contact with Christianity which can alone give any meaning to the new modes of life which will soon be forced on them by magistrates and traders.

It is only a question of time, and the white men will find their way backwards and forwards over the mountains and up and down the valleys, and in a few years the hill folk will be as thoroughly pacified, and as open to all the influences, good and evil alike, of civilisation, as are the people dwelling on the coast. None of them, I believe, are evil-minded, in the sense that they deliberately desire to give trouble, or to

resist the white man's coming and settling in the country. Nor do they really wish, when once they understand the possibility of the other thing, to go on living in their ancient state of terror, when every stranger was an enemy, and a man must go always armed and in fear of his life. It is just that they do not yet understand. They are frightened when the white man first comes into their neighbourhood, and they try to spear him, as they would try to spear any other stranger. They are afraid of the unknown, as children are afraid; but when once they understand that we are ready to be their friends, with no intentions other than peaceful, these bush people will accept the situation as the men on the coast-line have done, and settle down to a life in which offence and self-defence are no longer the outstanding features.

The policy of the Government, and the practice of individual magistrates, seem to be quite fairly calculated to bring about this new and desirable state of things as speedily and gently as possible.

But the Christian Missions should be ready to follow up the preparatory work of the Government. Nothing would be gained, and much might be lost, by unarmed missionaries travelling for the first time into wild country that was not yet under Government influence. Apart from the heavy expense of such pioneer work, and the needless incurring of personal peril which such amateur expeditions would imply, the Missions always have their hands quite full, as it is, with work already undertaken. A purely missionary party twenty or thirty miles inland, anywhere along this coast, at the present moment, would be almost sure to get into difficulties. Even if no lives were lost, there would be trouble of some sort, and a police patrol would have to go and tidy up; and nothing would have been gained, while, from our standpoint, ground might easily have been lost. But we ought to be ready and waiting with men, and with the means for their equipment

and maintenance, to follow close behind the magistrates, occupying each position as it begins to be fairly settled, helping, as only the Christian teacher can help, in the work of civilisation which the Australian Commonwealth has undertaken in Papua.

I do not agree, of course, with the modern popular tendency which identifies Christianity with civilisation, and thinks that you have done nearly all that needs to be done when you have civilised a savage people. Indeed, bare civilisation by itself would be a very questionable sort of gift, and there are many features of European civilisation which I should be very sorry to see introduced to this country; but if the Australian people are resolved, chiefly for their own convenience and profit, to take charge of Papua and its inhabitants, the Australian Church must take care that the best part of modern civilisation, its Christian faith and principles of life, are imported along with the civil code and the tomahawks and the trade tobacco, which are really all that the magistrates and the traders are concerned with. If there were no Government here, it would still be our duty to attempt to evangelise the scattered thousands of people, accepting the inevitable risks as they arose, in simple obedience to the marching orders of the great army of Christ's Church. But there is no question of that, just now. The pacification and the elementary civilisation of the natives are going steadily on, without reference to the Church, or to the Christian people in Australia, as such.

We are in honour bound, it seems to me, since we are Imperial Churchmen as well as Imperial Englishmen, to carry the Cross alongside of the Union Jack into this distant corner of the British Empire.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE EMIGRATION OF SOKIRAM

Now and then some one goes away from our village. We have friends up and down the coast, whom we visit and with whom we sometimes intermarry ; and we trade our sago and tapa cloth and earthen pots and spears on the other side of Tufi and even beyond Mukawa ; and canoe parties come to see us, conjurers from Winiafi, or people from the little villages round about Sinapa.

But they are only visits, and we are all glad to get back again to our own homes, and hope to end our days in the place where we were born, where we have hunted and married and had children born to us ; where we know everybody and nearly all there is to know about them ; where every creek and patch of grass and clump of trees is a part of home ; and none of us thinks of going away for good—why should he go ? where should he go ?—until the day of his final emigration, when he will go away from the village once and for all, and be seen no more.

We do not often think or talk of death, and therein we are rather like children. Our grief is passionate enough for a little while—so passionate and uncontrolled that when the long day's wailing is over, and our friend buried at sundown, a reaction comes and we can weep no more, and it might seem that we have soon forgotten, and gone carelessly on again with our own lives. But there are ever so many familiar faces still left in the village, and the sunshine is as warm and bright as ever, next day, and there are so many useful and pleasant things

for us to do, that it is not difficult to turn our thoughts away from the dreadful mystery of the man who went out so quietly from amongst us yesterday, back to the everyday easy things that we can understand. It really is not that we are unloving, or selfish, or careless; but we know so little of the past and almost nothing about the future, and we must live altogether in the present. There is always something waiting to be done in the gardens, and even though the sea be too rough for fishing, or the rain too heavy and cold for hollowing out a new canoe, there are the nets to mend, and new lime-sticks, and sago spoons, and paddles to be carved, and spears—always spears! There is not much fighting nowadays, but the spears will be wanted when the hunting comes round again, nearly at the end of the dry season. Besides the spears, there are the stout pig nets to be made, or mended, and ornamental head-dresses to be repaired and elaborated—no man need sit moping in the village, when there is always so much in everyday life that is really important and interesting; and even when there is nothing very particular to do, there is always something that we want to talk about.

Perhaps the most important and interesting time of all the year is in September and October, when the great hunts begin. Here and there in the bush, behind Wanigera, are large open patches of grass, where the wallabies and the wild pigs feed. The people of these villages are owners of ten or twelve such patches, and they burn them off each year. The chief men decide everything very carefully beforehand, such as the dates and the details of the different hunts. The big hunts generally take place on Saturdays, as everybody is suited then, and the school boys and girls, and the Mission teachers, and the boarders, and perhaps the white missionary himself, will be able to come out. And a whole day's hunting makes a man very tired and stiff, and Sunday is always a good day for rest. In the very height of the season, and when



SOKIRAM.

the long coarse grass is exactly right for burning, and the wallabies at their best, there may be two or three hunts in a single week. On the appointed day, the whole village is very early on the move, though it would be useless to fire the grass until towards mid-day, when it has been well dried by the sun. Everything has been put in readiness overnight; even the traditional chants that are to attract the wallabies were sung the night before. But there are always finishing touches to be set to everything—spear points made a little sharper, more paint to be borrowed or bought and smeared on one's face, or some more feathers for one's hair, or another potful of food to be cooked by the girls; for a man gets hungry on such days as this, especially if he has been too busy and excited to eat much in the morning. It is rather like a Bank Holiday at home, for it is a pause in the ordinary occupations of life, and there is a sense of adventure and much going up and down in crowds. Towards nine or ten o'clock the men go out, and the boys and girls go with them. The married women stay at home, perhaps because they must look after the little children, and get in plenty of wood and water, and have everything ready to cook the game in the evening; but, anyhow, it is simply not the thing for married women to go out on these days, and not one of them would ever dream of going. Every one is magnificent in war paint, and feather head-dress, and boar-tusk ornaments, and necklaces of dogs' teeth, and large cowrie shells as big as a hen's egg, and as white as milk. The girls bend beneath heavy loads of cooked food carried in string bags, and the boys have bunches of coconuts on their shoulders, while others pretend that they are grown up men, and run about across the path, spearing imaginary wallabies and wild pigs. The men are quieter, but they are much excited. The things they wear, and the patterns traced in red and white and black upon their faces are reminiscent of the old days when they were wont to put on all their finery

before a big fight ; and they tell you that they feel more in the spirit of the hunt when they are thus caparisoned. And they are very splendid and terrible. Eyes flash fiercely from faces that are masked in bright scarlet and shining black ; some of the head-dresses are very beautiful, and all are elaborate with shark's teeth and the curved and corrugated beaks of hornbills and Raggiana feathers and cassowary plumes, arranged symmetrically. Some men wear long strips of yellow cuscus fur hanging from their elbows—the sign, in olden days, that the wearer had slain his man. The very spears are decorated with red and blue feathers of parrots, or the white and sulphur yellow of cockatoos, tied cunningly on strings, and standing out along the whole length of the spear as the bristles stand out along the back of a hog. The only inland tracks, behind the villages, are those which lead through the gardens to the hunting grounds. A few men will have been along them beforehand, to make sure that the grass is ready for burning, and they may have re-opened the path where it was overgrown, or perhaps felled a few trees to serve as bridges over the deeper streams.

Parties come from all the villages round about—from Aieram and Murin and Aiafi, as well as from Rainu and Oreresan and Kumarbun, and there may sometimes be Maisin guests from Yuayu and Uiaku and Uve. And they wait at an appointed spot until all are assembled.

If I were a painter, I could hardly find a more striking subject for my brush in all Papua than one of these hunting trysts. Later on, the whole thing grows confused and overwhelming, and the men are soiled and blackened and stained with sweat and mud and smoke and fire and blood ; but as they sit quietly together in groups, in the deep still shadow of the forest, under trees so high and leafy that hardly any light falls directly on the ground, these three or four hundred figures,

of the colour of bright copper, glittering with decorations, and glowing with the brilliant hues of tropical birds, are beautiful and splendid. The stillness, only broken now and then by a sweet wild bird's note ; the soft, diffused green light, stabbed through here and there by slender quivering golden shafts of sunshine ; the rich patterned carpet of green ferns and moss and brown soil and withered leaves ; and the surrounding curtains of darker vegetation, delicately seamed by vertical light blue threads of smoke from smouldering fires, make a fitting frame for the central beauty of many human bodies, at rest, but alert and ready for instant rapid movement as soon as the word is given.

It is only an impression, only a passing sense that here is one of the most beautiful things you have ever seen : and then, at a sudden signal, the picture breaks up and fades, and you see but a mob of unclean savages, rushing off, with shouts, through the trees—dirty fellows, with trumpery ornaments on their unwashed bodies, in search of flesh-meat with which to break the monotony of the taro roots and coarse shell-fish that are their ordinary food for eleven months in the year.

When they reach the grass, there is twenty minutes of speechifying, under rapidly constructed leafy booths or shelters, and near a big fire that has been specially and ceremonially kindled. The chosen orators are more concerned with sorcery than with the hunters or the game, and, as soon as their speeches are over, the men separate, running off in three or four groups, each with fire-sticks, to different parts of the grass patch, which may be several miles in circumference, and often with ten or twenty acres of high timber in the centre. The patch is fired simultaneously at many points by men who run along the outer edge and set fire to the grass as they run.

These hunts are not held except after ten days or so of hot sunny weather, and soon the grass blazes up, and before

you realise that the hunt has begun there is a terrific roar, and the burning cane and small timber crackle like repeated volleys of small-arms, and now and then there is the sound of an explosion, and solid masses of grass and trees seem to be lifted bodily into the air, only to disappear in whirling confusion of dull fire and glowing smoke. The sky is soon hidden by a great thick cloud of drifting smoke, yellow and brown and red, with volumes of flying "blacks," as if a London fog had suddenly come alive, and were turning and re-turning upon itself.

Stiffing gusts of hot air sweep down upon you, and leave you smothered with charred leaves and grass, and all along the ground are the red tongues of the fire, leaping up to twice and thrice the height of a man, and sometimes running with surprising swiftness to the very top of a solitary tree, in a pillar of twisting fire and swirling smoke. Silhouetted sharply against the red line of the fire are the dark figures of men, each with his spear raised to strike, and all closing slowly but steadily in towards the heart of the Inferno on the other side of the flames. You follow them up, though the ground is so hot that you can hardly bear it, spite of your thick shooting boots, and your dog dances from one spot to another, over fluffy white ashes, still smoking, and sometimes red with fire, or clings, as long as he can keep you in sight, to some tiny green oasis that the flames had spared. There is fire, and the sound and smell of fire, everywhere. Soon numbers of little birds come flying out through the smoke, and great eagle hawks go sailing about overhead. Still the ring of fire closes inward to its centre, and still the ring of men follows it up. And now the wallabies begin to make rushes through the flames, and the spearing begins. A wallaby comes looping along out of the smoke, and it is speared, and then another and another, until they are killing them all along the line. At first, a great shout goes up for

every animal, and a score of men run to cut it off, but afterwards each man is too busy to help his neighbour or to shout, and the slaughter goes on almost in silence, except for the roaring of the flames, and the whistling of the hot winds, and the heavy flapping of the hornbills as they go lumbering overhead, and now and then the shriek of a pig that has just felt the spear.

I have never been impressed by the marksmanship of these men. At home on the Station, or in the village, you may sometimes see wonderful exhibitions of spear throwing, and spear dodging, and spear catching; but at these hunts I have watched a wallaby pass unscathed through a shower of thirty or forty spears. Once struck, it is done for. The men close round, or a dog runs in and drags it down, and though the stricken creature will sometimes stand up bravely and try to fight, it is helpless as soon as a cumbering spear has made the strong, rapid, steady leaps impossible.

It is always rather brutal, and too tame to seem like real sport, and it lacks any spice of danger for the hunters themselves. It is no adventurous killing of wild beasts, but rather the wholesale slaughtering of timid, gentle, beautiful, tame things, as when they entice thousands of rabbits to a water-hole in the back blocks of Australia, and men come and knock them on the head in the morning. The wallabies have no chance—the men are out for food, rather than for sport; and it is just so much wholesale butchery in preparation for the gorge, that night and the next day, when every man and woman and child in the village will eat and eat until he can eat no more, and then roll over and fall asleep, to wake next day and eat again.

As soon as a wallaby was killed, it would be tied together by the legs and hung in a tree, or given to a boy or a girl to carry. You would see small boys staggering about for the

rest of the day under the weight of creatures larger and perhaps heavier than themselves, and late in the afternoon carrying the booty all the long way home to the village.

When the grass was all burned, and such animals as still lived had been driven into the central clump of timber, the slaughter became swifter than ever, for a little while. The shady spot, so quiet and still at other times, was changed into a shambles; men were all round it, only a yard or two apart from each other, and they gradually closed in, sending up terrific yells when they speared a pig or slew a cassowary. One never had a chance to count the "bag" on these days; but the grass, which seems so empty and still, as it stands, swarms with life when the flames eat into it, and nearly every living thing is slain. The people rest a little while when all is over, and then come home in a long procession, every young man and many of the children carrying things which have been killed. No man will carry an animal that has fallen to his own spear, any more than he would eat part of a village pig which had belonged to him and been fed by him.

On the Sunday morning after the first of these big hunts that I had ever seen, very few women came to church, as they had stayed at home to cook; but there was a congregation of nearly two hundred and fifty men, all of them very stiff and sleepy, and some still charred and blackened and stained by the doings of the previous day. On the Monday morning, some enthusiasts went out to the place again, to try over the patch for any creatures that had escaped on Saturday, and come back to the old feeding ground. Late in the afternoon a messenger came to say that a man had been speared, and soon afterwards they brought Sokiram and laid him on our verandah. A spear had gone right through his thigh, from back to front, and his friends had made a



PIG HUNTING WITH NETS.



A GRAVE.

rough litter of green wood and carried him to us. We did what we could for him, in spite of his poor old mother, who came and howled dismally, and even threatened to throw stones at us when she thought we were being especially brutal, and she ceased only when I turned a stream of Condy's fluid on her, which I fancy the poor soul thought was her son's blood.

While Sokiram lay sick, his friends sat out in the street at Rainu, and neither ate nor slept. "Is our friend well," they said, "that we should enjoy our food? Does he sleep, this night, happily in his house, that we should go up into our houses and be comfortable?" And so, all through the night, they sat there round fires in the open, and all next day they fasted. The man was moved into his brother's house during the afternoon, because he said his own was "too heavy." He was oppressed, wanted more air, wished for a change—and I could not wonder!

All the twenty hours that he was in his own home, and the other twelve or fifteen that he spent under his brother's roof, he was in the midst of a noisy crowd. The women wailed as if they had quite made up their minds that he was soon to die, and his friends came and asked him who it was that had bewitched him, for there is no room for "accidents" in the Papuan scheme of things. He seemed to be doing well, though there was a slight swelling of the thigh late on the second day, which the natives said was the "blood running about inside." Their idea was that the spear had broken something, and that the man's body was all in loose disorder, so that nothing remained in its proper place. Towards evening his temperature went up, and he gradually grew worse. Our first treatment seems to have been right enough, but the thing was now beyond us. For myself, had I been in Sokiram's place, the worrying of my relatives, and the noise all over and about the house, would soon have put me

into a fever. Their mauling and hauling of the sick man was enough to have made a healthy man ill, and it might well be fatal to one who perhaps needed rest and quiet beyond all else. But they prodded him and pinched him, and if he became stupid, as he did now and then, they pinched and prodded all the harder, and rolled him over and over along the floor, and the whole crowd, as many as twenty at a time, talked to him, shouted at him, his wife and his old mother most shrilly of all, and they pushed and struggled to come as near him as they could, and to get hold of a leg or an arm, if there was one in sight, and they all pestered him to tell them the name of the man who had thrown the spell upon him, for they were sure that the spear wound was not enough to cause death, and they had quite made up their minds that he was going to die, and kept telling him so; and in the height of all this hubbub, a little after midnight, Sokiram collapsed and died. He had been patient enough, even with the howling and the pinching and the prodding, which he seemed to accept as part of the ordinary course of things, but at last he seemed just to let himself go, and so made an end.

Most likely there were complications of which we hedge doctors knew nothing; but it is at least equally possible, as it seemed to me at the time, that the man was simply worried and pestered and prodded to death. If I should but cut my finger, or break a tooth, and straightway have my house invaded and besieged, and be knocked about and maltreated and kept awake as that man was, it would mean madness at the very least, even if I did not end by actually dying of the wounded finger or the broken tooth.

But then it was they howled, and beat their breasts, and foreheads! It began, at its loudest and worst, five minutes before the death; and it went on, with never a break, all

through the night, and late into the day. Visitors, men who had been at the hunt, came in from the other villages, with their wives and children, and the women cut themselves and wailed, while the men sat about in groups in the street.

Early in the morning, almost before it was light, we heard that there was trouble in Rainu, where Sokiram had died. Although he was conscious almost to the last, he had made no answer to the questions of his friends, nor told who had bewitched him, and now their anger was diverted to the people of Oresesan, and the man who had thrown the spear. "Let us go over," said they, "and let us spear one of them, that they also may have a man to bury this night." It was only foolish talk, and nothing would have come of it, but it seemed to be just one of those cases in which we might do well to interfere. I had been but a week or two in the place, and my Better Half was already in the early stages of an illness which soon afterwards invalidated him completely, and took him away from Wanigera for nearly a year. We sent for Nonis, and coached him up, and soon afterwards a procession passed in front of the Station, from Oresesan to Rainu. Reuben and I went first, with the V.C. close behind us, and then a live pig, hung head downwards on a long pole, with fifty or sixty of the village men, and a mixed rabble of perhaps another hundred.

In Rainu, the entire population was gathered round the dead man's home. The women were in under the houses, and their wailing rose and fell in rhythmical bursts of mournful music, and the men still sat out in the open. There were so many, that the street and the spaces under and around the houses seemed covered with human bodies, but some of them moved and made an open place for us, and though they went on talking among themselves, they listened carefully to what we had to say. It was Nonis who played the orator, while I acted as prompter, with Reuben as my inter-

preter. "The thing was all a mistake. Did not every one know that the spearing was unintentional? And that the bellies of the men of Oeresan were just as sore as those of Rainu?" (I had spoken of "my heart," but of course Reuben made the necessary anatomical change in rendering it into the native idiom.) "Had they not joined in the wailing? Had they not brought a large pig, expecting no present in return, but only to show their sorrow?" And at this point the inverted pig was hung up under the house where the dead Sokiram lay. "Let there be no more empty talking, but let them bewail the dead man together. And if any still had foolish words to say, let him stand up and say them there and then, and Nonis would put the handcuffs on, and carry him away to the Government at Tufi."

Nonis had shouted out the words in his loudest and most cracked and raucous voice, and as he reached his peroration he had jingled the handcuffs dramatically; and there was really nothing for it but that the chief men of Rainu should assure the assembled multitude that the light-headed talk had been only among a few young men who were not yet old enough to know better, and then everybody agreed with everybody else, and so the matter ended. I stayed there for a while, looking on.

The platform under Sokiram's house had been cut away and lowered to the ground, and the dead man lay upon it, in full war paint, tricked out with all his finery of feathers and tusks and shells, and held on either side in the arms of his wife and his old mother. Their heads were newly shaven, and their faces covered with coagulated blood; and still from time to time they cut themselves anew, keeping time, as did all the other wailing women, with the rhythm of the Song of Death. All about, sitting together under every house, were groups of women who gashed their temples with obsidian razors or shells, and for days afterwards, as

always when some one has died in the village, they went about with unwashed faces scarred and blackened with congealed blood.

Sokiram was buried at sunset, and the whole village fasted until then. A few days afterwards, all the relatives (and they were many, for Sokiram was one of the younger chiefs) smeared themselves and their clothing, from head to foot, with the accustomed mixture of coconut oil and pot black.

Not many people went to the cemetery, which lies hidden a little way back in the bush behind Orerasan, two or three hundred yards from my house.

The body, wrapped in a large pandanus mat, was carried on the shoulders of men, and laid in a shallow grave. You cannot dig more than eighteen inches or a couple of feet hereabouts, and an even lesser depth than that must sometimes do in the rainy season.

There is nothing but sandy soil and brackish water beneath it, no foundation on which you could even lay a tombstone; and Charles Lamb, if he had walked in this Sleeping Place of ours, would not have been provoked to ask "Where be all the bad people buried?" A plain wooden cross stands up over Jimmie Nogar's grave, with his initials roughly outlined by brass-headed nails, but the other graves are only garnished with broken spears, cracked cooking pots, and strips of torn tapa cloth which once belonged to those whose bodies now lie beneath. We are all so very much alike in the time of our earthly life, that we feel no need for artificial distinctions or particular remembrance after death. Our lives, like the lives of the white men, are "full of rewards and pleasures—so that to see the day break, or the moon rise, or to meet a friend, or to hear the dinner-call when one is hungry, fills him with surprising joys"; but for us, as for our white brothers, "this world is yet no abiding city. Friendships fall through, health fails, weariness assails";

and the "friendly process of detachment" goes on, so that "when the time comes that we should go," we have "few illusions left about ourselves."

"HERE LIES ONE WHO MEANT WELL,
TRIED A LITTLE, FAILED MUCH"

would serve each of us for epitaph, as it might serve most kings and greengrocers and archbishops and millionaires and schoolmasters and cobblers and pork-butchers and chancellors of the exchequer, whether they be buried in Westminster Abbey or Kensal Green—an epitaph of which neither they, nor we Papuan natives and Papuan white men, need to be ashamed, since human nature, under whatever coloured skin, is what it is, and not what we think it ought to be.

But every one knows this in Wanigera, though most of us care little about cobblers or chancellors, and we should not wish, even if the idea had ever occurred to us, to fill our cemetery with "stupid monuments recording the fictitious virtues of nobodies"; and so the spot is very much as Nature left it, except that it seems always more quiet and solitary and apart than any other place so near to the noisy life of living men and women in the village.

When Sokiram's body had been put into the grave, a man stood at its head with lifted spear, and shouted out an adjuration, as I understood, to the ancestors of the clan, to make way for the man whose spirit was now released and ready to join them. The native belief is not clearly defined, but they seem to agree that the spirit leaves the body only after it has been laid in the ground. And then the grave was filled with clean sand brought from the beach, and the people went home, while a few men waited in the gathering darkness, through which hundreds of fireflies

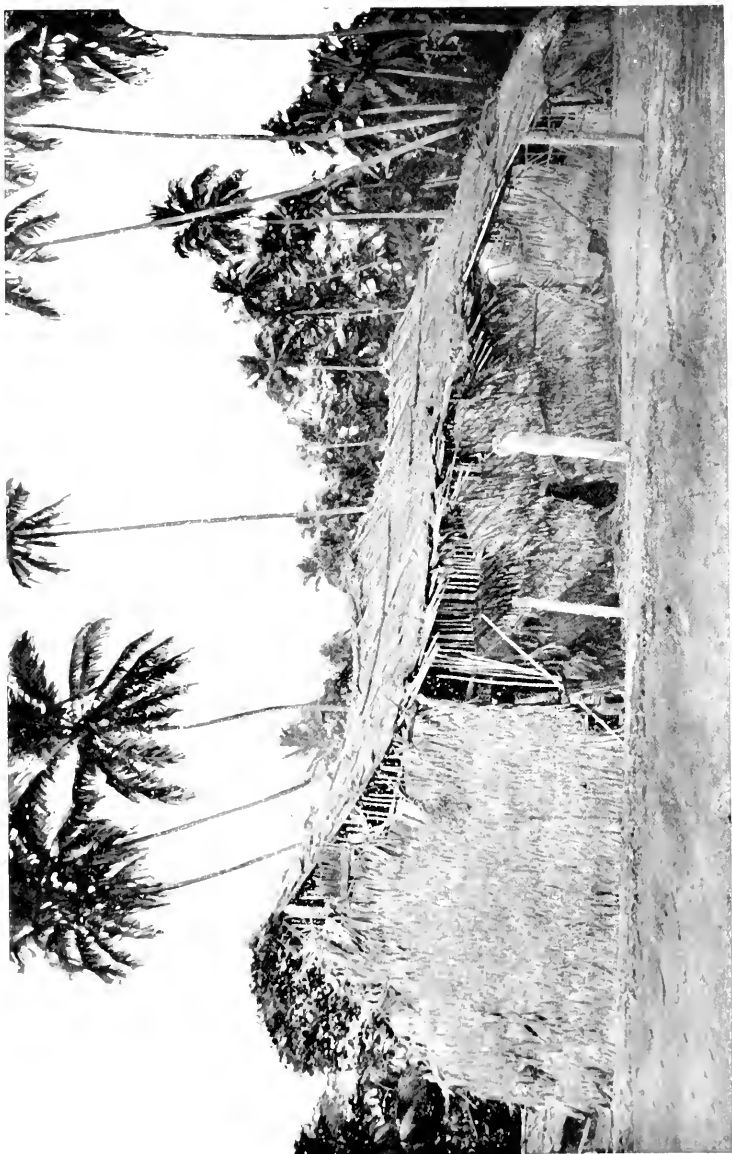
went flickering, long enough to build a low fence round the last resting-place of their friend : and then they, too, went back in single file along the narrow overgrown track to the cheerful fires and warm houses in the village ; and the body of Sokiram, young chief and warrior of the Rurukorot Clan, was left, perhaps for the first time since his mother bare him, in solitude and peace.

CHAPTER XXV

ON HOLY GROUND

MARCH the 27th, 1910, nearly four months after I began to write this book—and yet it is not till now, late in the evening of Easter Day, that I have felt ready to attempt any account of our village Church. In a proper missionary book, this chapter would have come very near the beginning, not only for conventional reasons, but also because it is to deal with the things I care for most, and of which I seem to have so much to say. And yet, in spite of half a dozen earlier efforts, it has been set aside half a dozen times, until my writing has drawn almost to an end, and the other four-and-twenty chapters have been filled with the interesting and ludicrous trivialities of daily life, with no more than casual reference, here and there, to the fine building which stands with ever open doors in the middle of the Station, which every one must pass and repass as he comes and goes, round which the children “creep unwillingly” in the morning, and race shouting at mid-day when school is over, and within whose walls go on the daily miracles on which all our other work depends.

It is, indeed, only within the last few hours that there has been any special thing to say, though stories of the Wanigera South Sea Islanders, and of the boarders, and of the white men, and of all the other Christians and heathens, gather as readily around and within the walls of this native-built Church of St. Peter, as they do round any other place or part of our mission work. There has been a Church, of course, at Wanigera, ever since the Mission Station was



OLD WANIGERA CHURCH.

established ; but only lately have the great activities that one naturally associates with such a building, begun to go steadily forward here. A priest lived at Wanigera in what we have already come to look upon as the very early days. Twelve years ago, the Holy Communion was celebrated for the first time north of Mukawa, in temporary buildings at Sinapa ; and again, a week later, there was a celebration in what is described as " the Living House of the Missionaries in Wanigera Village." A week later still, it was in " the Mission Station Chapel," and for two and a half years these weekly celebrations were continued. There were rarely more than two communicants, the priest himself and Jimmie Nogar, except when the Bishop or some of the Christian schooner boys were present ; and the weekly order of the services was often interrupted by the illness, or the absence, of one or other, or of both, of the missionaries ; and once, for a couple of months, there was no Communion at all, because " the supply of wine on the station had gone bad, and no more was to be had." At the end of 1900, the priest in charge left for England, and he did not return to New Guinea. On June 23, 1901, Mr. Money was placed in charge of the district ; and for six years he was here by himself. The Bishop visited Wanigera, on the average, once in six months, though there were one or two years when he did not come here at all ; and whenever it was possible a priest came up from Mukawa or Dogura for a celebration ; but for the practical working of things, apart from this minimum of spiritual assistance and fellowship, and for dealing with the inevitable difficulties as they arose, the young layman and his South Sea Island teacher were left to themselves.

It is often said, in Australia, that this is a layman's mission ; and though there may be no other instances exactly like Wanigera, it has nevertheless happened, very constantly, that the Bishop has been compelled, when no priest was

available, to choose between putting a layman in sole charge and then leaving him to do the best he could by himself, with only the irreducible minimum of supervision and support, or simply letting the work remain undone. This book has not been written to glorify anybody or anything, but I find signal proof of Divine Grace in the fact that an altogether inexperienced layman, coming in his early twenties, with no particular preparation for the new life, except utter willingness to be used or cast aside as a worthless tool in the hands of the Master Workman, fresh from a city office, and set down almost immediately in this wild place, should have persevered for six long years in such unbroken loneliness, and been able to do battle, single-handed and with all manner of sickness, against perplexities such as even I, coming in the easy, later days, can hardly imagine, and that he should have done, with the very smallest help and guidance from older and more experienced men, the remarkable pioneer work which has been accomplished by him whom I have been wont, laughingly, and yet in all loving seriousness, to call "my Better Half."

That this pioneer work, done in whatever difficult and ill-equipped loneliness, has not been wasted effort is shown by the record of steady progress since it became possible to supply stated spiritual ministrations in Wanigera as, and when, people were ready for them.

The first baptisms, north of Mukawa, took place on Easter Eve two years ago, when seven young adults were Christened. Since then, on the vigil of Pentecost in the same year, on Christmas Eve in 1909, and again yesterday, baptisms have taken place, so that now, in addition to the boys who were baptized at Dogura, forty-three Wanigerans have been received into Christ's Church.

Since September 1907, the Holy Eucharist has been sung nearly every Sunday in Wedauan, which is fairly under-

standed of the younger folk, with week-day celebrations in English; but early this morning, for the first time, I celebrated the Holy Communion in Ubir, the vulgar tongue of these people. All through Lent we have been working at our Liturgy, and for the rest of my life I shall remember, with mingled thankfulness and amazement, the indescribable way in which an unknown and insignificant language seemed to lend itself more and more wonderfully to this new and tremendous purpose.

We Britons do not care to talk much about the things we feel most deeply; but, without making any ridiculous claims to direct inspiration for myself or for the man who alone was able to do, and has done, most of the real work, I am persuaded that God the Holy Ghost has been very specially with us, and with the young natives who helped us during these last few weeks, guiding us, according to our Master's own true promise, to the means by which the Ever Blessed Trinity may be most fitly worshipped by yet another "tribe and tongue," which is now just turning to Christ.

Again and again, where it seemed all but impossible that we should ever find an expression in the vernacular for some lofty thought or theological formula, an unexpected way has suddenly opened right before us, or a hitherto unknown word has emerged, of striking and almost miraculous fitness and shape and colour for the special need of the moment.

Our Liturgy, which was the means by which in Wanigera half a hundred new-born Christians joined this day with the rest of Christendom in celebrating the Resurrection of the Crucified Saviour, is doubtless full of imperfections, the inevitable results of our human ignorance and negligence and dulness, and those who come afterwards will find abundant scope for the bestowal of patient labour for its improvement; but with the syllables and sound of the unfamiliar and wonderful words still trembling on my tongue and ringing in

my ears, I bear witness this Easter night to the fact that God does most abundantly help and bless those whom He calls to serve Him in the Mission field.

Even though a missionary does nothing else—and we are all haunted sometimes by the thought of how little it is we do—it will be something to remember, at the end of life, that one has been able, however humbly, to have a share in the preparation, and to use for the first time at the altar, a Liturgy in which, perhaps as long as the world shall last, a people will worship God, and find its nearest approach to Him who is the Object and the End of all Christian service and worship.

“ Lord, grant me grace to bend
 Until my years I end
 Over the poorest tongues beneath the suns ;
 Such clay may yet supply
 Gems for some liturgy,
 And God's thoughts clothe themselves from lowly lexicons.”

It is at such a time as this that one most of all thanks God not only for the gift of life and health of body and mind, and for one's religion and vocation to the Christian priesthood, but for the further vocation to the life and work of a missionary priest. Such an one has very often something of this sense of overwhelming thankfulness, especially at and after the Sunday Eucharists. Never, for a single moment, have I regretted the series of events which helped to bring me out from my own country and people, and settle me, perhaps for the rest of my life, in New Guinea. Not for ten consecutive seconds, in all these past three years, have I wished to be elsewhere, or busy with other work. Would it be possible for many middle-aged men, I wonder, to say as much? Optimist though, by the grace of God, I have always been, I could never have said as much elsewhere. And yet from what I know of them, I believe it could be

said with utter truth by nearly every missionary. I cannot analyse the thing: I only know at last the meaning of what a missionary Bishop promised me, not long before I left Sydney, that in a little while I should be wondering why all the other fellows that one has known do not come and live the life and do the work that is so supremely worth the living and the doing as to make other and lesser things seem simply not worth bothering about.

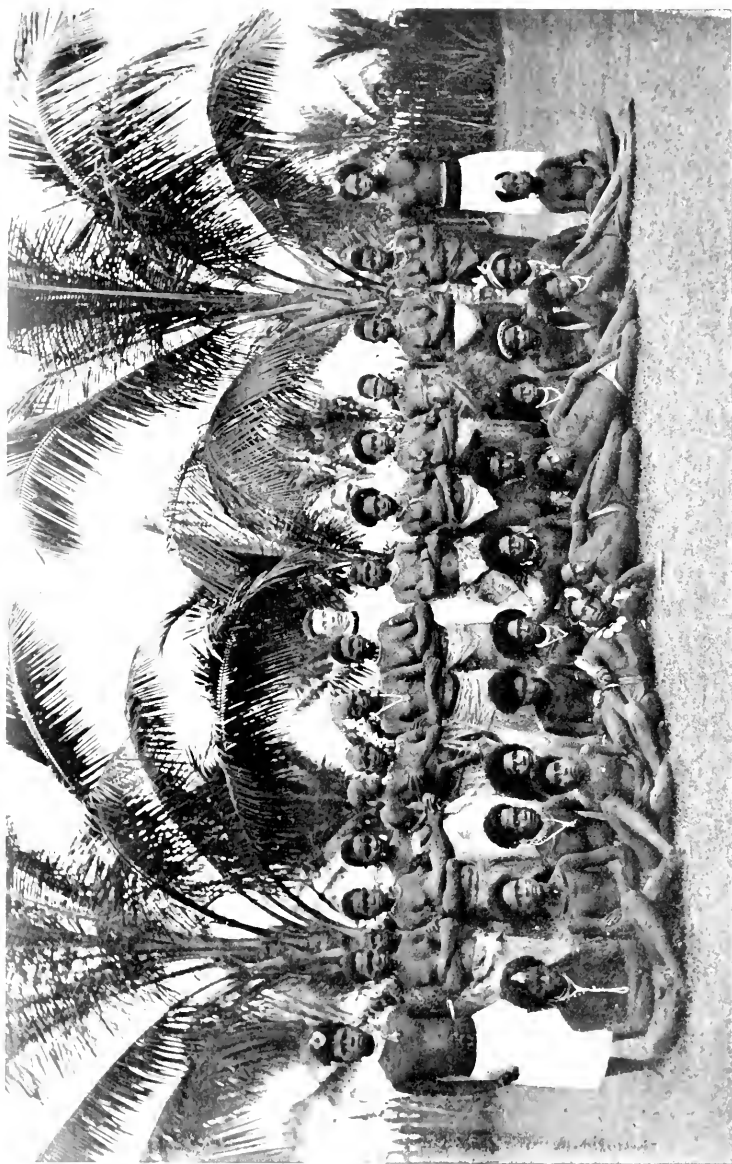
And there are the venerable words about leaving houses, or brethren, or sisters, or parents, for the Kingdom of God's sake, known so well and so long that they had become almost emptied of meaning until some such day as this, when the missionary begins to understand a little more about the " manifold more in this time," the " hundredfold " even here and now.

The Baptisms yesterday took place as usual a little before sunset, and the service was in the vernacular. We have no form of Evensong that would be intelligible to the older men and women, so that on these occasions we are as yet unable to obey the rubric. Five men and a woman were baptized, by the names of Daniel, Sydney, Bertram, Silas, Eric, and Theresa. The woman is she who appears elsewhere as " Aunt Polly." I wanted to call her Susan, but it seems that nearly all available Christian names are already assigned to those who for longer or shorter periods have been looking forward to baptism. One candidate, whom I have put off until Pentecost, wished to be called after me, but he can get no nearer my name than " Arfur," which, in Ubir, exactly means " a boil," so he will have to be content with what he calls " Kent-a." This man has been haunting my house for a week past, pleading for Baptism this Easter, and yesterday he followed me along the path to the Church door, smiling and pleasant, but begging for Baptism now, rather than two

months hence, as men pester parsons for "the price of a bed," or a meal, outside the rectories and vestry doors in Sydney. Another man, who has been regular at class, but must wait awhile, was the Sawaia who sold me an emu's egg two years ago under rather comical conditions. He, just now, is inclined to be indignant and argumentative about the delay, which probably means that I have made no mistake in putting him off again, though it be for the third or fourth time.

Daniel is an elderly man from Yuayu, who until yesterday was known as Taru, which in Maisin means "a dog." The Christian name, which somehow suits him exactly, has been entirely of his own choosing, though he possesses probably no clearer idea of Daniel the Prophet than of Daniel Webster. It must be five or six years at least since this man first began to think about Baptism, and he has been coming up to Wanigera every Sunday for months past, paddling his own canoe, and spending the day on the Station, and paddling home again at night; and for the past fortnight he has camped on William's verandah, so that he might attend the daily class for catechumens.

Every other day his wife has walked along the beach and brought him supplies of food, and once or twice he has been up and off before daylight on a flying visit to Yuayu, with his sleeping mat under his arm in case of rain, getting back about two minutes before the bell rings for class in the afternoon. He has, within the last few days, shaved himself carefully, eyebrows included, and the general clean up, combined with the change of outlook and his new hope and interest in life, has brightened Daniel's dull eyes and made him look almost a young man, instead of the dirty, tottering, bleary-eyed, infirm old creature I used to see at Yuayu last year. He may very likely be no older than I am myself, but at forty a Papuan is already an old man, and this Daniel,



EASTER EVE, 1910.

even since his rejuvenescence, certainly looks old enough to be my father. Bertram, as handsome as ever, but with new shadows in the depths of his beautiful eyes, is the Gembud of other days; and he whom we now call Eric is the Yafarab with whom William had those angry passages a year ago.

Directly after service, the Christians assembled on the tennis lawn "to have their shadows written down," as they call it. Not all our Christians were there. Julia is away at Winiafi with her brother Philip, on some native visit of ceremony connected with her approaching marriage. Martin and Kate, with their baby Denys, have taken a pig and a present of sago to some friends still farther up the coast, beginning thus early, and on their own initiative, a very colourable imitation of the civilised Christian's Easter holiday. Agnes, whose husband is not quite ready for Baptism, is nursing poor little Phœbe through an attack of whooping-cough, which has carried off some fourteen small children from the village since Christmas. "Hungry Peter," with a few other Christian boys, is still working at Okein, and John Dogio lies sick in his house at Murin, after a too energetic pig hunt on the slopes of Mount Victory.

This Easter, like other of the great seasons, has been a dramatic reality to our Christians, and even, in some degree, to all the people who live near the Station. On Good Friday, there was a noticeable absence of ornamentation among the two hundred or so of heathens who came to the non-Christian morning service. This, so readily reminiscent of a good English Church during Lent, was in response to no suggestion of ours, but merely an instinctive following of native custom at times of mourning.

Thomas Kasiko, who ordinarily overdoes it in the matter of feathers in his hair and paint on his face, and cut paper patterns round his neck (like the frill round a ham), and leather pouches and belts and beads all over his body, looked posi-

tively naked in nothing but a dingy waist-cloth. I have noticed, very often, how easily these "primitive Christians" accept the general scheme of ecclesiastical discipline and practice. Last Christmas Eve, early in the morning, two women stopped me on the beach, one a Christian, and the other looking forward to her Baptism that evening, and Agnes asked whether the catechumen was to fast all day, or would it be right for her to take "just a little food," if she felt very hungry? I do not remember that I had ever exhorted her, as I certainly ought to have done, in the words of the Prayer Book rubric, "to prepare herself for the receiving of this Holy Sacrament" with "fasting" as well as "prayers"; and though it is possible that the suggestion may have reached her, indirectly, from the missionaries, the idea might very well have come to her naturally, and it would certainly be easily accepted by a Papuan, to whom frequent "fasts" and "offerings" commend themselves as a part of ordinary life.

There were only three communicants at this morning's service. No Bishop has visited Wanigera since I came, nor for fifteen months before that, and so Confirmation has been impossible. The circumstances have been special, by reason of the long illness and subsequent resignation of the first Bishop of New Guinea, and the weary delay in the appointment of his successor. It was as we came out of Church after the Baptisms on Christmas Eve that a small mail was brought to me, including a telegram which had taken three weeks to get here from Sydney, to say that the Vicar of Whitkirk, in Yorkshire, had been chosen as our Bishop. The little congregation understood very much of what the news meant, and we cheered the Bishop then and there, and he has been prayed for day by day in Church ever since. He will come to New Guinea, for reasons which are suggested elsewhere, with a better chance of health than the first Bishop had; and now that the Australian Board of

Missions has come alive again, we are hoping that he will be allowed to stay in New Guinea and go on steadily and without repeated interruption, in the work for which he is to be consecrated ; and not obliged to be very often absent in Australia or England, " pleading for his poor flock " instead of ministering to them ; wearing himself out in the collection of money and the hunting up of men, instead of being to his own sheep an ever watchful shepherd ; trying, as a popular lecturer or an eloquent preacher to awaken interest in a Mission which is supposed to have the whole Church of Australia behind it, instead of " giving heed unto reading, exhortation, and doctrine " in the midst of " the people committed to his charge."

I do not feel that the Morning and Evening Prayer of the Anglican Church Prayer Book would be quite suited, at present, to our native congregations, but I look forward to the time, not very distant perhaps, when the Holy Eucharist will be celebrated very early every day in this Church of ours, with some short simple service late in the afternoon, which Christians could attend when they came back from their day's work, and before, or very shortly after, the evening meal.

The Church was built, in the first instance, by the villagers themselves, and it has been kept in repair ever since without any cost to the Mission. Architecturally, our general style must be described as horizontal, rather than perpendicular, and any beauty that the building can boast is due to its size and quiet simplicity and admirable adaptability to the purposes of its being rather than to any delicacy of design, or striking skill or originality in its execution. Just fifteen months ago the Church was re-roofed. For some weeks the men had been preparing sections of sago-palm thatch. On

New Year's Eve, as the sun was rising, about a quarter to six, people came crowding in from the villages, and by half-past six they had stripped the thatch from one side of the roof, singing loudly all the time they worked. By the end of the day, that half of the roof had been replaced, and next day the other half was done. While men and boys worked upon the roof, others went out into the bush for more palm leaves or for a new post to replace one that had been attacked by white ants, or sat about on the grass, sewing the lengths of thatch, while the women brought clean sand from the beach, for the floor, and cooked the taro and sago which we had provided for the workers, and the children carried away the rubbish and threw it into the sea, or burned it. If the thing had been done by hired labourers, or by contract, it might fairly have taken them three weeks or more; but it was an instance of the vigour with which the Papuan can work when he pleases, and if he is led by white men who thoroughly understand his little ways.

It is not easy, though of course we try, to teach the Papuans that religion is a thing which ought to cost a man something. They are so poor, as the white man counts poverty and wealth, and we are so rich in the possession of calico and tobacco and tins of bulamakau—but they must be taught somehow. It would be bad for these people to have everything provided for them free of charge, or even to be paid for re-roofing their own village Church and keeping it in repair. There is a good deal of human nature in these parishioners of mine, and I would rather they and I should worship God in a rather queer-looking Church, built and furnished, however poorly, and renewed, when needed, by their own voluntary unpaid labour, than in a building that creaked and bristled with expensive trivialities from the ecclesiastical warehouses, which even if we should persuade well-to-do English and Australian Christians to pay for and

present to us, would have no beauty or meaning for the Christians of Wanigera.

The present furniture of the Church is very plain. There are no seats, but the soft, smooth floor is swept each day, and often sprinkled with fresh, clean sand. The altar stands on rather rickety platforms of split palm, similar, though of somewhat closer and finer workmanship, to the floors of the houses in the village. The font is a large ordinary earthenware pot of native make, mounted on wooden posts of a peculiar shape such as are used about the doors of a chief's house. The raised design of this particular pot, belonging as a sort of crest or coat-of-arms to a family in Kumarbun, is supposed to represent "*daus*' (devils') chins," and though I rejoiced in this at first, as reminiscent of the mediæval gargoyles on English churches, it occurs to me that those ornaments were always *outside* the building, whereas these are upon the very edges and outside of the font itself. The prayer desk, and lectern, and altar were carefully made of soft, foreign wood by an amateur carpenter, from designs in an illustrated catalogue of Church furniture, and, though they serve their purpose for the time being, they look strangely awkward and out of place in the midst of their present native surroundings. They are held together by nails which soon go rusty and need to be renewed; and I remember that on the first night of my return from a visit to Dogura the desk collapsed, and sent me sprawling across the chancel in a flying cloud of hymn-books and loose leaves. Reuben, of course, waited until I had picked myself up and finished the service before he warned me that the nails had rusted again and that the desk ought to be mended.

When the time comes for our sanctuary to be made beautiful, I look forward to covering the bare walls and floors and replacing the rough packing-case altar and seats with work of native design. The men and women of Wanigera

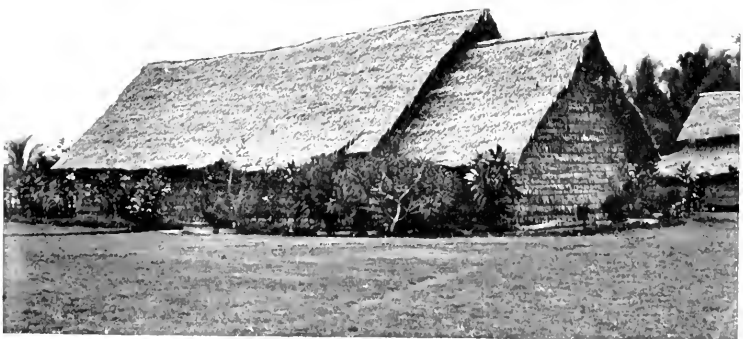
may have crude ideas of art, but the hands that can decorate spear heads, and the prows of canoes, and paddles, must learn to carve a Holy Table for the House of God : and the women, who can all trace their family designs upon the tapa cloth which they wear, must provide coloured hangings for the chancel walls. Even their skill as potters might be utilised in the making of tiles for the sanctuary floor or for the bare spaces behind and round the altar. One dreams of some Papuan revival of those happier days, no longer possible perhaps in England, when each village community had its own craftsmen, and the Parish Church was the very centre and shrine of their devotion and their skill, before the "Great Pillage," and before it was possible to choose and order a Number 17 machine-made altar, or a hideous Number 12 font, with discount for prompt cash, from the pages of a commercial catalogue.

Our services are very simple. We use the Eucharistic vestments, but there is no ritual worth speaking about. Nor have we any musical instrument. For some reasons one is glad enough to be without the American organ that you find in country churches in Australia. Every one in Wanigera sings flat, except Peter, but in the absence of any particular standard in these matters we are not reproached by constant mechanical reminders of how flat we are. And we sing very slowly—so slowly that it often seems that a stranger might sing and look out the words in a dictionary at the same time. Sometimes, in an impatient mood, I have tried to quicken things up by hammering vigorously with a book upon the desk, only to wish directly afterwards that I had left them alone ; for the girls as often as not will take charge of the singing then, and finish the hymns at a breakneck pace, reaching their shrill *Amen* before the rest of us have well begun the last verse.

These girls of ours have voices of surprising strength and



CHRISTIAN GIRLS.



ST. PETER'S CHURCH.

shrillness, and when the general congregation has dropped and flattened until nearly every one is trying to sing bass, one of them, in a distant corner, will suddenly pipe up an octave, or even two octaves, higher, and until the hymn is ended your ears will be thrilled by sounds, not unmusical, but more shrill and piercing than anything you thought a human voice could compass. The children sing the psalms well, to plainsong chants, but they are better pleased by hymns of the Moody and Sankey order, where a single word or phrase of Gospel truth is farsed and almost hidden among other words or phrases that are repeated over and over again until there is enough to make a whole verse; and as for the ordinary measured hymn tunes, such as those in *Ancient and Modern*, you must either let them be taken with dirge-like slowness, and according to the native notions of time and metre, or run the risk of hearing them sung in giddy rag time.

We are fairly punctual with the services at Wanigera, though nobody but myself uses a watch. It used to be the custom for self-appointed criers to go up and down the village for an hour beforehand summoning the people to taparoro. But now, if a man is coming to service at all, he strolls along soon after the warning bell has rung, and sits on the grass with his friends, until a few more strokes give notice that the preacher is putting on his surplice. And then the men and the women and the boys and the girls file in through their several doors, for on all public occasions in New Guinea the sexes naturally separate themselves, while Nonis in his blue uniform stands up and shouts, with that far-reaching raucous voice of his, "Taparoro, taparoro, all people come to taparoro—make haste, make haste—taparoro, taparoro!" and the service begins with a hymn, which gives the few stragglers a chance to slip, without unpleasant prominence, into their places. At Uiaku, the more leisurely

methods of the South Sea Islanders still prevail. I very well remember the first Sunday I spent there, in the days when I was humble and patient and long suffering, and prepared to take things as I found them, and my Better Half kept that dreadful bell a-clamouring for a solid hour and twenty minutes, though he assured me afterwards that he had fallen asleep and forgotten to stop it. In spite of his apology, there is reason to believe that an hour or so of bell music, in preparation for each half-hour of public worship, is still the "use of Uiaku," and perhaps of other Mission Stations in New Guinea, for here is the story of what happened there three months ago.

I have not often been away from Wanigera on a Sunday ; but last Christmas Day, which was a Saturday, I went down to Uiaku and spent the next day with Ambrose and Benjamin. There are no Christians yet among the Maisin, but Samuel came over from Sinapa, and I celebrated, early in the morning, with these three South Sea Islanders, and then told Ambrose to take the other services as usual. There was a class for children at nine o'clock, and half-an-hour later the bell began to ring for the "village service," with a particularly insistent ring. The bell is of fair size, and it hangs under the verandah of the house. The Maisin people are nothing if not vigorous, and the boy who had charge of things settled down to his work and was evidently prepared to go on with his solo until service time, which Ambrose told me was to be at ten o'clock. For a minute or so he would rattle that bell like a fire alarm, and then, after a short pause, let off a series of quick-time triplets, and then hold his hand long enough to work you to the topmost pitch of painful expectation, and just as you were feeling that you would have to shriek if something did not happen, he would ring eight or ten loud and slow and solemn strokes upon his bell, and then break once more into his imitation of a midnight

fire alarm. Everything that can be done with a single bell of seventy or eighty pounds weight was done by the ingenious youth that morning; and at ten minutes past ten, with my hair in disorder and my teeth chattering, and every nerve a-tingle, I went over to Ambrose, who was lying on his verandah, with a lot of men about him.

A. K. C. (with a quietness that seemed suspicious even to himself). "Well, Ambrose, what time we have service? You have service by-and-by?"

Ambrose. "Yes, service b'ime bye."

A. K. C. (anxiously). "What time you have service?"

Ambrose (promptly). "'Leven o'clock."

A. K. C. (blankly). "*Eleven* o'clock! Why, you said *ten!*"

Ambrose (blandly). "Sometimes people they come early, service ten o'clock. Suppose they no come early, service 'leven o'clock."

A. K. C. (very faintly). "Oh! I see. And you have service to-day at eleven?"

Ambrose (very cheerfully). "Yes. Service 'leven to-day."

A. K. C. (hoping against hope). "And bell go on all the time?"

Ambrose (with his mind evidently made up). "Yes, he keep on all the time."

A. K. C. (giving it up). "Oh!"

And eleven o'clock it had to be, since I was too broken and feeble to attempt any compromise with Ambrose, but I vowed again, as I had often vowed before, never to spend another Sunday in Uiaku if I could help it, or until I knew enough Maisin to take charge of things myself.

There is no space in which to write of the special services in Wanigera Church—of the burial of Josephine, when Mary wailed and scratched herself with obsidian, while the old

heathen grandmother carried the poor little naked body in a string bag on her shoulders, and laid it before the altar on an empty meat-case covered with an old red blanket, and Mary's father stood near, with a bundle of palm-leaf sleeping-mats under his arm and big tears rolling down his cheeks, and the Station bell tolled at intervals, and the rain poured down, and the little procession of Christians and heathens went singing hymns through the village to the cemetery, and then had to go on singing hymns until we had gone nearly through the book because I had not known that it was my funeral, nor that I ought to have ordered the digging of the grave : or of the marriage service of Reuben and Mary, when Reuben was so splendid in his new suit of spotless white duck, and Mary, in her hastily washed and hardly dried dress of dingy pink cotton, and, in spite of her vast experience of things matrimonial, was so shy that we could scarce persuade her to answer the appointed questions, and it almost seemed as if Reuben did all the promising for her as well as for himself : or of the wonderful baptism services on the Eves of the Great Festivals, when the low sun threw gorgeous colours up and down the silent, crowded church, and the still air seemed all a-tremble with unimaginable miracles and mighty spiritual force : or of the frequent Eucharists : or of the daily offices, when, to the ancient melodies, we "sing the Lord's song in a strange land."

Nor can I stop, except for a moment, to speak again of Peter, with his Sexagesima sermon on "Shem, Ham and David," when "all the people of Israel were drowned by a big fellow flood," and his Easter oration two years ago, when he preached at wearisome length about a lady, apparently of Scotch extraction, whom he called, indifferently, MARY M'LACHLAN, and MISS M'LACHLAN, and MISS M'LOUGHLIN, which happened to be the name of a lady who had lately left the Mission. It was not until nearly the end of things

that I understood him to have been speaking, all the time, about MARY MAGDALENE!

You are not to think that even our Church life in New Guinea is merely comic, though there, too, the Spirit of Comedy is often abroad; for it is holy ground, this ramshackle, ant-eaten Church of ours, even though the frogs come and hop about and sing to each other on the altar steps in the rainy season, and the little brown and green and golden lizards run up and down over the walls, and a big iguana lives in the roof, and the cats and the fowls come in each day and scratch and hunt, and the land crabs dig holes and leave elaborate trceries over the smooth sand, and the stillness of everything at taparoro time is sometimes broken by the slither of a silvery snake that is chasing the cockroaches along the heavy beam that does duty as a rood loft; and on Sundays the naked babies throw summersaults and laugh and crow and play king-of-the-castle in the midst of the sandy floor, and hide-and-seek round the open entrances and in and out of the vestries all through service-time; and I must shut my eyes and pray for Peter and for the patient congregation, and for my impatient self, when the sermon is longer and more fantastic than usual; and the mosquitoes come and bite me as I stand before the altar in the first hours of the morning; and flying things, as big as mice, come flopping into Church in the evening, with the whir and fuss of aeroplanes, and claw me by the lip, and when I shake them off they go buzzing noisily straight for the big hanging kerosine lamp, and take headers down the chimney, and there is a loud pop, and a smell of baked meats, and the lamp flares up and smokes, and the glass cracks and falls in fragments, and we must finish the service by the light of a candle brought hastily from the altar.

It is holy ground to the hundreds of heathen hereabouts, hardly less than to the little handful of native Christians;

and in spite of all the funny things that happen, and the discrepant things that are said and done in the Church of St. Peter in the Swamps at Wanigera, it is a very House of God, as splendid and gracious in its way as the other Church of the Fisherman on Tiber banks at Rome, or the Abbey near the Thames at Westminster, to the happy priest whose peculiar joy and privilege it is to celebrate and baptize and pray and teach and preach within its walls, though still with stammering lips and a slow and unfamiliar tongue.

POSTSCRIPT

MARRIAGE

ON Monday, the 9th of May, 1910, in St. Peter's Church, Wanigera, N.E.D., Papua, by the Rev. A. K. Chignell, B.A., Peter Seevo, Mission teacher of Wanigera, the son of Tom Vulau, of Taumbaru, Santo, New Hebrides, and Polly Owarisak his wife, to Melita Moya, the daughter of (the late) Burir, of Rainu, and Yarob his wife.

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