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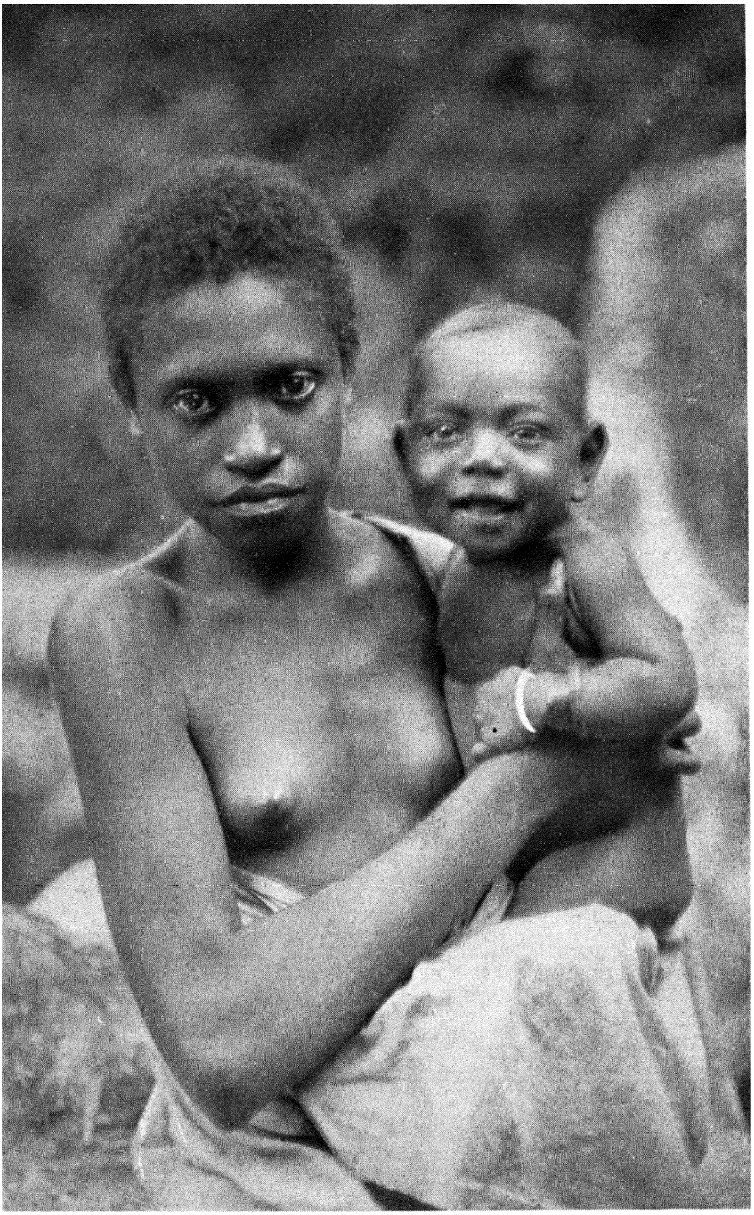
SAVAGE CIVILISATION



WOMAN AND CHILD OF THE NORTHERN NEW HEBRIDES

SAVAGE CIVILISATION

by

TOM HARRISSON

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SEESAW

In every tropic land the poorest people are always the inhabitants.

ALDOUS HUXLEY

There can be little doubt that the importance which I thus claim for Oceania, and especially for Melanesia, as providing a basis for the analysis of human culture over a vast part of the earth's surface is the direct result of its insular character. It is only through the isolation due to this character that there have been preserved, often apparently in a wonderfully pure form, samples of cultures which have contributed to the building of some, perhaps all, of the great historical civilisations of the earth.

W. H. R. RIVERS

Be a good boy, now. If you are naughty, look out . . . for the white man will get you !

Mothers' Saying in New Hebrides

DORIS: You'll carry me off? To a cannibal isle?
SWEENEY: I'll be the cannibal.
DORIS: I'll be the missionary.
I'll convert you !
SWEENEY: I'll convert you !
Into a stew,
Into a nice little, white little, missionary stew.

T. S. ELIOT

CANNIBAL. In sixteenth century plural *Canibales*, adopted from Spanish, a form of *Caribes*, a nation of the West Indies, who were *anthropophagi*. *Caribe* signifies " brave and daring."

Oxford Dictionary

Every culture rises and falls. The reason is that in every culture, as we can observe for example in our own, completely opposed principles, the principle of barbarism and the principle of civilisation are developed and evolved at the same time.

OUSPENSKY

If we are indifferent to the art of dancing, we have failed to understand . . . the supreme symbol of spiritual life.

HAVELOCK ELLIS

You must have a chaos inside you to give rise to a dancing star.

NIETZSCHE

Proceeding therefore to more inland places, I saw a secret place, where there were not many, beside *Lucifer* himselfe; to which, onely they had title, which had so attempted any inovation in this life, that they gave an affront to all antiquitie, and induced doubts, and anxieties, and scruples, and after, a libertie of beleeving what they would; at length established opinions, directly contrary to all established before. Of which place in *Hell, Lucifer* affoarded us heretofore some little knowledge, when more than 200 years since, in an *Epistle* written to the *Cardinall S. Sexti*, hee promised him a roome *in his palace, in the remotest part of his eternall Chaos*, which I take to bee this place.

DONNE

I hope, nevertheless, that we shall arrive somewhere. . . . I am not addicted to the dilettantism of chaos. The world, no doubt, at any given moment of its existence, is anything you like to call it. But it is out of this aimless dispersion, out of all these zigzagging efforts, out of all this disorderly growth, that the ideal of an epoch ends by disentangling itself.

JULES ROMAINS

But because one does not want to follow Western thought into this dilemma, one none the less recognises the value of its achievements. One would not have the world discount them and retrogress in terror to a primitive state. It is simply that one recoils from the Western intellectual's idea that, having got himself on to this peak overhanging an abyss, he should want to drag all other people . . . on pain of being dubbed inferior if they refuse . . . up after him into the same precarious position.

That, in a sentence, is my case against Western values.

PAUL ROBESON

Slowly but painfully we are beginning to learn that when even the most laudable of ideals departs too widely from the discipline of reality thinking, it can be just as dangerous as the inflated ideas of the possessed. For, despite his self-satisfaction, the undisciplined idealist is a heavy liability, not an asset, to society. Yet, even if we would, we cannot dispense with these ideals. The task of civilisation is to make our day-dreams correspond more closely with the capacities of man.

GLOVER

Rōses round the door,
Bābiēs on the floor,
Who could ask for more in Sleepy Valley?

Jazz tune

JIGSAW

AT THE END of 1932 I was wandering around approximately in the middle of Borneo, when I got a much black-handed letter saying would I (as biologist) go with the Oxford University Expedition to the New Hebrides islands in the western Pacific, in the following year. I was on that job in July 1933. After the official end of the expedition in early 1934, I stayed on, until I had spent my fare home; so I "went native" and lived mostly among people who were still eating each other. Then, curiously, I became a civil servant, finally a film star; all within the New Hebrides. Hollywood bound, November 1935, a millionaire shot a peregrine falcon. I spent the first half of 1936 studying the vast literature of this subject.

In writing about it I have had in mind (*a*) the goodness of D. B. Kittermaster, (*b*) the obstinacy of Thomas Manning and Reynold Bray, who have insisted on going for four years with Smitch to the Magnetic Pole and (I hope) back; they wander the endless snow and ice.

I thank my friend OLIVER BELL for frequent criticism and valuable help; also Lindsay Macmillan of the New Hebrides, John Layard (for unpublished notes and a song translation, page 69), and Frank Stimson of Tahiti (for Polynesian chant translations and ideas). Others who have helped me are mentioned in the text. The Cambridge Ethnological Museum (through Dr. A. C. Haddon and Dr. Louis Clarke), the Royal Geographical Society, the Hakluyt Society, the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society, Dr. Williams' Library, the Melanesian and Presbyterian Missions, John G. Paton Fund, and

the Record Office, have kindly given me permission to use their files, documents or restricted publications. I am grateful for certain illustrations from the Oxford University Exploration Club, John and Zita Baker, Alfred Guthmann, and A. K. Langridge. Dr. Havelock Ellis, Admiral Sir William Goodenough, Dr. A. C. Haddon, Noel Porter and Cecil Lewis have each criticised parts of the manuscript. They are unanimously agreed that the prose style is at times unsatisfactory, unpolished. I have made certain modifications at their kind and helpful suggestion. On the whole, however, I have kept the pattern of words to fit the pattern in fact; angular fact. Literary values are inclined to be upset by a few years living among people who regard writing as ludicrous; who express their lives in memory and motion, in patterns of colour and dance.

This is not a story of decadence or despair but of inevitability; with oases in chaos. It is a bitter lovely story of man, in stone and song, in iron and gunpowder, seeking in his sequence Tagaro, the sacred Kura bird, a gold beached continent, sweet-scenting sandalwood for Confucius, sugar slaves, the key to Port Sunlight, Pandemonium Government, yellow shoulders nudging for empire, even to the film's last sensationalism—all bloody but (unbelievably) unbowed. And now a smoky phœnix.

I have left each reader to draw most of his own morals and comparisons; of these there are, I believe, many to be drawn. These *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (1933) definitions should be borne in mind:

Savage: uncivilised; existing in the lowest state of culture.

Civilis(z)ation: the action or process of civilising or of being civilised. . . .

Civilise: to make civil; to bring out of a state of barbarism, to instruct in the arts of life. . . .

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PLATES

Thanks. It is difficult to take photos in the damp jungles of the New Hebrides, especially under the conditions in which I mostly lived; when, also, to produce a camera would often have been to destroy my particular line of approach and falsify the position of wandering unwhite white man. The negative record seldom seemed worth the sacrifice of a status that was, ideally, insignificant. Therefore I am beholden to my fine friend Alfred Guthmann, who came over from Tahiti for a few weeks, and took photos on Malekula. The Santo photos were taken while I was a member of the Oxford Expedition, by Zita Baker, courtesy Oxford University Exploration Club. Douglas Fairbanks supplied 102b, 196b, 428b. The frontispiece and 418a were kindly supplied by Martin Hurst and E.N.A. Dr. A. C. Haddon, F.R.S., and the Cambridge Museum of Archæology and Ethnology generously allowed me to use two photos (38 and 358) by Martin Johnson and Templeton Crocker, from their splendid collection. The still photos are of specimens in this museum; three (26b, 118, 418b) have already been used in Deacon's invaluable technical work (*Malekula, a Vanishing Race*) and are here reproduced courtesy Messrs. Routledge. While A. K. Langridge and Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton have kindly permitted me to reproduce 116 and 118 from *The Life of John G. Paton*, 142 from *The Conquest of Cannibal Tanna*.

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TEXT FIGURES

Thanks. My friend Dr. John Baker, lecturer in Biology at Oxford, who has been three times to the New Hebrides, has especially drawn figs. 19, 311; his dance plan and music (see *Man and Animals in the New Hebrides*, Allen & Unwin) form fig. 386; his hill panorama, redrawn by Royal Geographical Society, fig. 374. My friend Stuart Somerville did the crayon drawing, fig. 432. Miss Talbot did (under my supervision) the excellent exact drawings of native objects in the Cambridge Museum, collected by Mcafee, Rivers, Deacon, John Layard and myself.

Dr. A. C. Haddon, F.R.S., has given permission to reproduce some remarkable continuous-line drawings collected by the late A. B. Deacon (J.R.A.I. LXIV, 129). Dr. Haddon and Messrs. Routledge have kindly permitted me to reproduce certain figures (183, 260, 327, 340, 423, 430) from Deacon's *Malekula, a Vanishing Race.*

The remaining figures are from old and forgotten books, representative of the period.

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MAPS

Thanks. Four of the maps (Book VII and folder) were drawn from my originals to illustrate three articles of mine in the *Geographical Journal*, August–October 1936. They are reproduced here by courtesy of the Royal Geographical Society. The others are taken from various works, as indicated in the legends; II by courtesy of the Hakluyt Society. The physiological map, p. 242, specially drawn by Dr. John Baker.

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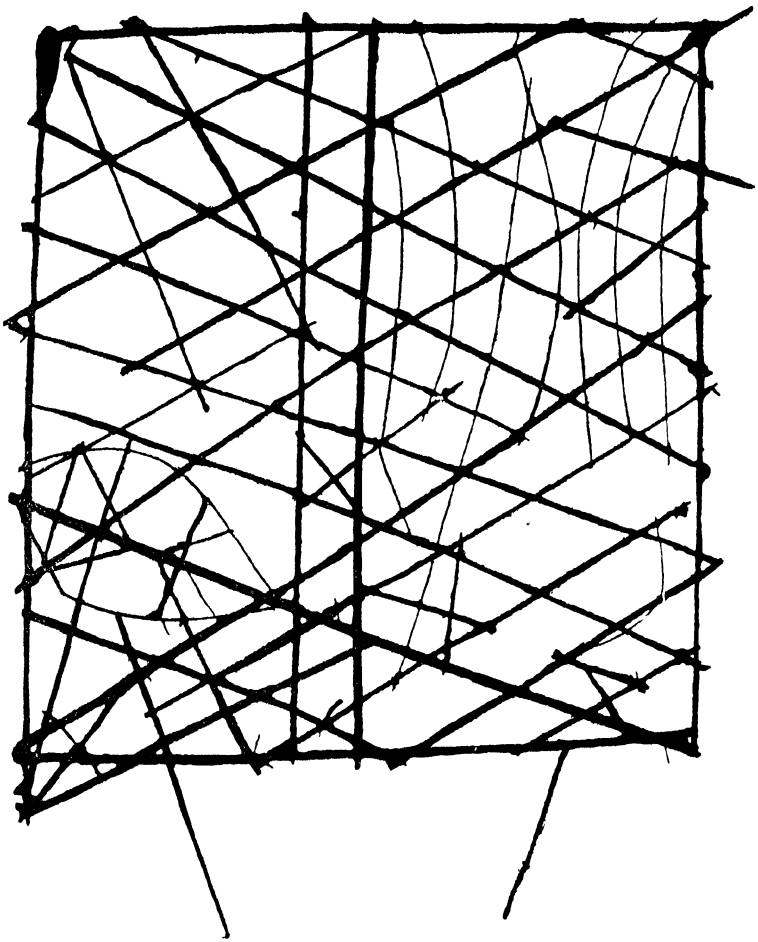
I

THE VOLCANIC AND CORALLINE New Hebrides islands in the western Pacific are densely inhabited (before the coming of Europeans) by black-skinned, woolly-haired natives, with a civilisation centring on the slowness of stone implements, on curved tusked pigs and a spiritual ascent towards the high-soaring hawk. Dancing, economics, agriculture, reverence to ancestral spirits, war with rules, and a kindly creator-god, are important. The climate is static and levelling; the culture is not. An outline of tribal life in north-west Malekula is here attempted; it is the necessary foundation to the story.



NATIVE NAVIGATIONAL CHART

made of sticks, twine, etc., showing wind, current, sailing route (after Percy Smith, Polynesia).

VIEW

I STAND for the first time on top of Mount Tabwemasana, on Espiritu Santo island, New Hebrides group, 6,000 feet over the sea, highest point in several thousand miles of Pacific; west a thousand to Australia and east nearly as far to Fiji.

The clouds have sunk for a while into the deep valleys. I see across a chaos of peaks and tangled ranges—higher than Ben Nevis—to the sea on all sides, studded with islands of every shape, in colour unvarying darkly clothed with a uniform of deep green jungle. To the south over many miles unbroken green, then sea blue, it is for a moment possible to see some fragments of paler green: the great cane grass plateau on north Malekula. Behind Malekula the 4,000 foot volcanos on Ambrym and Lopevi smoke upward to threaten this wide stability. The waves of the south-east trade roll in from the Antarctic to break on coral reefs, brilliant and poisonous. The land, too, is coral; thrown up terrace by terrace in submarine hates, back to pre-history. These high mountains are of oldest granite, with their own extraordinary flowers and birds.

There lie (scattered by some wide handlessness) nearly a hundred islands in chaotic archipelago. Roughly a double chain running north-north-west to south-south-east for four hundred and forty miles; 13th to 21st degrees of latitude south, 166th to 170th of longitude east; the land area a little under six thousand square miles. This island of Santo is the largest, roughly one thousand five hundred square miles. The land is nowhere flat; up and down break-backs, range after range; remote mountain pockets of life. The

islands at the northern end of the chain are somewhat isolated into the Banks and Torres subgroups, those to the extreme south similarly. Currents sweep from the south up to New Guinea twelve hundred miles north. Hurricanes and tidal waves eat at the land from November to March. There are earthquakes of lesser degree every few days. The climate is one of the least seasonal in the world: constant damp heat, rain falling in all months, sometimes more than two hundred inches.

These New Hebrides islands are so isolated that few large animals have come. There are many lizards, some snakes, enough insects among bright trees and too many creepers; innumerable fish and nearly a hundred sorts of bird. Man is the obvious animal. Black swarthy man, with curly wool-hair (things crawl in the wool) and stocky hard body. He is of the Melanesian race; he differs from the Polynesian, who lives in the easterly groups of the Pacific, in that he lacks lank hair and yellowish skin. The Melanesians have been widely considered as among the lowest people in the world. And the New Hebrideans as the lowest, most primitive Melanesians. While the natives of Malekula have had the reputation of lowest among these low.

At the bottom of the cliff below me a bird—a new sort of starling—is sending weird noises out of a flame flower bush. This bird was here before science; on the ancient mountains before the up-pushing corals of lowland. I have skinned one; it shall be added to the knowledge of Europe. And as the clouds roll up again from the gorge, a white wisp sails between vision and dim line of the wide bay below. I see the sails set on the galleons of Don Pedro Quiros riding into anchorage at their Nouva Jerusalema three hundred and thirty years ago. As the cloud blots out the world, I doubt the objects of ornithology, in this little leaf hut of cool isolation. For the cloud has risen as the smoke of innumerable fires. Now only this my starling sings—for a hope that is budding in the valleys.

When the galleon's sails shone yet to the north beside the

great lake-crater of Gaua, the bay and all this land was afire. It blazed in its life, swaying, several coloured, knowing fully the past, blending the present with living, concerned only with an individual future. Everyone *was*. I heard—an ugly melody—voices telling truth, manner, need. These were the voices of any islanders in the evening. I listened to one who spoke from a fragment of paler green, at Matanavat in north Malekula, before he saw sails, hidden this afternoon.

RAIN-FOREST

PERSONS

To us the great moments are those of the Na-leng dances; the greatest interest is in our pigs, they come before food and sleeping; but first I must tell you of the place and its starting.

The village of Matanavat is near the coast. It is the central village of our tribe, whose men wear penis wrappers with testicles hanging; the women wear narrow red plaited mat skirts with angular patterns, each angle and criss-cross on purpose.

Around Matanavat are about forty villages. The village itself we divide into two halves, each with six men's club houses, and a third "half," of one lodge. There must be about 800 people in all. The third "half" is called Botnia. Botnia has no prestige and few rites. There are no Botnia stories. It is simply said of it: that it was always there. That it did not begin. That there were men there when the first men came! The people were small; they had no canoes, only rafts.

There was in the islands, about fifteen and more generations ago, on until seven generations, the coming of some people whose lives spread over many islands. They traced their descent from a succulent fruit, a rose-apple. One rose-apple man came to Botnia and founded our present Matanavat. It was thus:

The rose-apple fruit was ripe and scarlet. It fell on the upright buttress of the hard wood *natabol* root near Are in the hills in the inland. The fruit split and the half fell on one side, the half on the other. From one half came forth a boy, from the other a girl. The buttress of the root was like a wall, so that each did not know the other was there. And they grew up, feeding on the fruit that fell about their feet. Until one day a fruit fell just outside. Both ran out for it. They bumped into each other on the way. Then they were mightily surprised, and said to each other: Where have you come from? They told each other the same story; then they

looked at each other's bodies and were very interested to find that they were not the same. In time they had two sons who formed two villages in the hills; they were the beginning of these, as their chiefs.

One of these rose-apple people grew old at a place called Lembinuamb. He tells his son to bring him yams for the New Year festival. But his son does not do it, he is lazy. When his father rebukes him, he hits his father with a banana stalk. Then the old man, named Tora-tora, is ashamed of such a son at such a place. He goes painfully, away from Lembinuamb, and in the evening rests under a fallen tree. There a man from Botnia finds him and is glad, for he sees that this is a high man of the rose-apple people; in Botnia they have no high men, so that at festivals they must make their offerings to other villages before they may themselves partake; that is not good. So Botnia take care of the old man. They buy him a woman; she has two sons.

It is the New Year again; the old man is sick again. He tells his two sons to go and gather for him yams of the kind *nandus*. The first son brings back a *bogutchil* yam; the second son does right, he brings back *nandus*. The second son thus becomes chief of Lembetaram, the first half of Matanavat. The first born becomes less the chief, more the talker, the arguer; he heads the second half of the village, called Thomelneas.

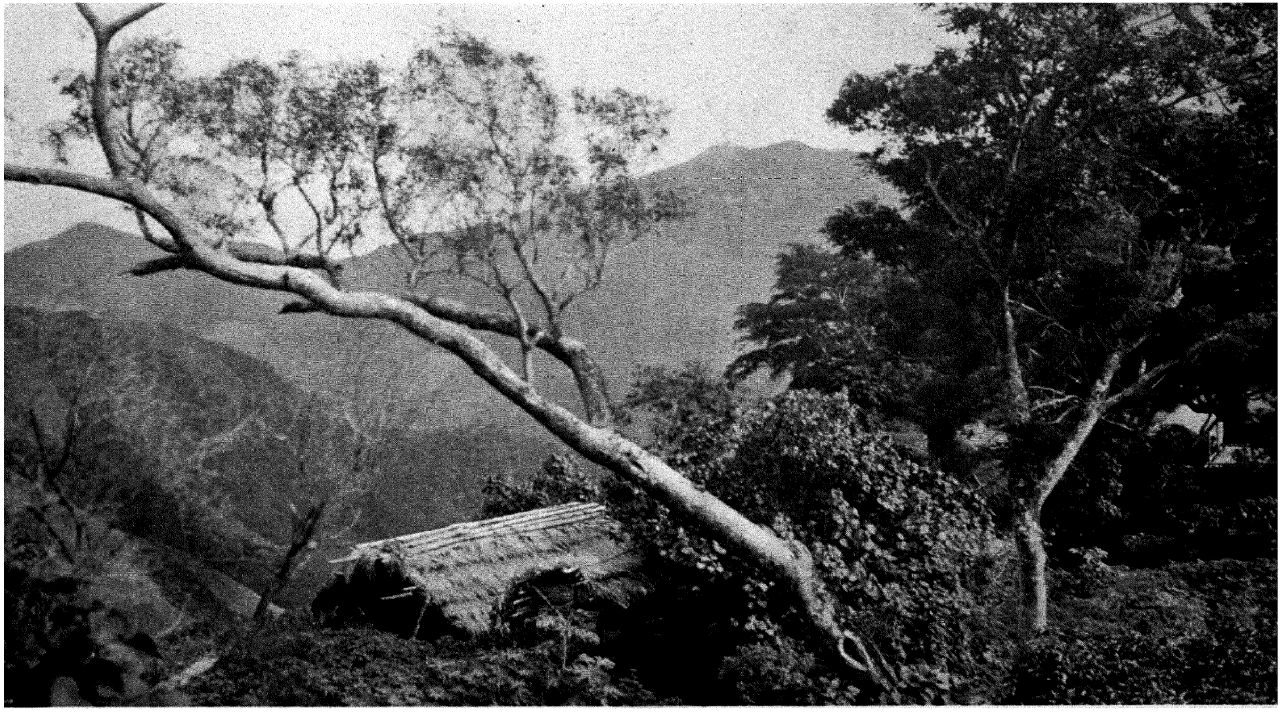
Botnia stayed rubbish people. Some say that in those days they were a great many. It is by the marriage of Tora-tora's sons with Botnia women that Matanavat has grown.

The village grew and straddled loosely over the ground among the jungle trees, tall and green, with falling creeper, coloured by the shiny lichens we put in our hair, the white orchis flowers that we do not touch. The houses go scattered without any order from the bottom of the steep foothills across the flat coral plain for three hundred paces, towards the noise everlasting of waves on the white sand. There are high stone walls kept in order with care, built by the labours of all men during months. The houses of chiefs and other

good houses may have their special walls, not so many stones thick. Each small group of houses has a low fence of bamboo and hibiscus, or tight woven wild cane. For on the Matan-avat ground, just at the side of the big stone boundary mark, there is a cane brake. Here most of the thatch of the houses is got, as well as the shafts for our arrows.

The roof of the house slopes down on both sides steeply from the long ridge pole to the ground. The thatch is dense, it is dirty from rain; it sticks up like shaggy hair such as some few men have when they do not use their long combs. The two ends of the house are blocked in with bamboo and logs. If the family works all the day, the house may be made in two months. It will stand to a hurricane. We leave a square hole in one end—the height of a child who is trying to walk, the same breadth. By this folk go in and come out, light enters and smoke departs. Thus the mosquitos do not come inside to the dim interior, where the cooking ovens break the clean surface of bare earth. From the rafters there will surely hang a multitude of baskets, mats, gnarled sticks of unusual shape, bundles of cane torches, coils of bush rope and smoked spiders' webbing, perhaps a spiders' web cap of high privilege; a conch shell with a hole in the top, used to blow forth the numbers and grades of pigs that are sacrificed, different blowings for the different tusk growth stages. Odds and ends are stuck between the rows of sewed-up leaf that make the waterproof, spearproof roof: the head of a dolphin, stone axe-heads, ready elbowed hafts for stone adzes, a bat's wing, pudding plates carved with four legs and two handles, bunches of fowls' feathers and the jaws of wild pigs.

A club house for men is larger than the other houses. It is about forty paces long, fifteen wide, the height of four or five men in front, sloping down to the ground at the back as well as the sides. No woman may approach a club house. This is the place where the men talk unwomanly things, where they gather to plan in the evenings, talking out daylight. Each club is a group of related men who eat together and often co-operate. A son joins his father's club.



A HILL VILLAGE, AMONG FLAME-FLOWER TREES AND CASUARINAS AND CLOUD

All men and clubs are a part of the village; that is the wider coherence. The club is a smaller, more frequent loyalty. No man can fight another of his own village; nor can he marry a woman from it, except the women of Botnia. A man's position is fixed in relation to many women by some special relationship through marriage or ancestry, named or remembered. While several villages close to Matanavat are friendly, allied; they do not fight. Long ago a Matanavat man killed one from Botermalap, near by. The chief of Matanavat tied him up in a tree. The Botermalap men came over. They filled his body full of spears and of arrows.

Each half of Matanavat has its chief who is hereditary, the leader of the chiefly club, higher than the other club. He has privileges which ensure his wealth, so that he may kill his way up the graded society, as I will shortly explain. Each club has its sub-chief, who may, if that club prospers, gain much prestige by the killing of pigs whose tusks have grown more than one complete circle, though the hereditary chiefs will not permit him to challenge their own prestige. Each club has its personal " pig-pride " and is very jealous of it. The club guards the rights of each of its members to land inherited from his father; it sees that no such land passes to other clubs through default in debt, or by adoption. All clubs work together for the good of the village, in war, fishing, canoe trading and the great feasting dances.

Each club has some form of magic which is its monopoly, though at the service of the village; also certain rights over dances, festivals or agriculture. The village will pay for the use of the privilege. Thus club Limbetentartar alone knows how to make the enemy women run from their husbands, leaving the village physically desolate; and they own the flame flower. Longmelneas has the last tooth of the first great rain magician, whose tooth alone is the sure rain charm. Each club has its own month in the year.

The unmarried men sleep in their club houses, always at right-angles to the door. The married men usually sleep with their women, whose houses are scattered all over the village.

A bed is a few rough sticks, a thumb's length off the earth, spread with two strong mats (which the women weave). Perhaps three times a week man and woman share a mat. They sleep heavy by small warming fires, kept up through the night, half in sleep. A man may have several wives,—as many as he has pigs to buy and land to feed and cunning to get. It is rare for an ordinary man to have more than two women; a chief, five or six.

The women repay him well. The man works hard in the slow period of clearing the strong jungle, with stone axe and shell scraper and firestick. He digs holes with long sharpened sticks, ready for the planting of yams. But the work of the later months is more the woman's work, careful tending and many small labours. To her also falls the hewing of wood and the drawing of what little fresh water we have and we need. Often the man is busy about the ritual of life, planning and talk-talk, while he carves with a sharp clam shell or hard stone the long spear head for one of our four types of spear, or twists the tiny bush threads round and over and knotted to keep the thin sliver of poison bone in place at the head of the delicate arrow. Cutting shapes is a slowness; form grows in the ways decided by precedent, growing again exactly to the perfection of each predecessor. A man must carve clean, carefully, living clean and careful too, in harmony with spirit and unearth throughout the time of his carving. Or he may be out in the bush hunting; preparing the logs for the uprights of a house; working with many others day after day to hollow out the core from a huge teak trunk, through a narrow slit which will be the mouth of the gong—he that shall boom mightily when fine-carved with a face, then dragged with singing and erotics through the forest to be placed on the dancing round as an upright gong.

The gong is celebrated with pigs. Women are bought with pigs; women must (above all) tend the pigs, feed them twice a day on, especially, cooked taro and coconut scrapings.

Pigs are our life and our progress. Without pigs we should only exist. Our pigs are power.

The first pig came out from a vine on a tree; it was a boar. Another pig came from a rock in the sea and was the sow; she bore a son. He started the tribe of Tevter in the south, whose people still do not reply to their group name but to the call for calling in pigs, " Mboi, Mboi." There are many sows running free, many piglets. The best male piglets have their top canine teeth taken out when they are nearly one year old. These teeth should otherwise rub on the lower jaw tusk-teeth, so stopping them growing. Canines removed, there is no such check. The tusks start to grow curving up and over backward, eventually across the cheek and down towards the lower jaw-bone again. Slowly the tusk will grow right into the lower jaw-bone, will pass clean through it, still curving a circle, so that it comes out again in the front of the mouth near the point which it started from: one complete circle. Then it may grow on, do the same thing all over again. Each circuit takes about seven years. The value of the pig, here in Matanavat and in all other places, is the stage of growth in the tusk.

Magic with shells is paid to ensure a good growth. Some men inherit black stones from their fathers, which others may pay to use—so that their sows litter many male pigs. A magician of the club Lembitimul knows leaves and a chant that will make sows bear many male piglets. The ghost of a dead warrior, Tesumbal, is appealed to; he is concerned with the pig's tusk.

A pig with its tusk just sprouting begins to be interesting. Forty like that might buy one circle tusker. A double circle tusker could not be bought for any usual exchange. A three circle—pigs do sometimes live to reach that stage, though usually it saps their strength and they are poor-looking by then; while few men will risk leaving their pig so long unkilled, lest it die a natural death—is surcharged with power, its tusk is the coiling snake and the spirit of earth; you must pay a pig even to see it.

A sow is worth nothing. The flesh of the pig is of no value. The condition or size, fat, hair, the look of the pig—none are of any significance. What counts is the circled length of the

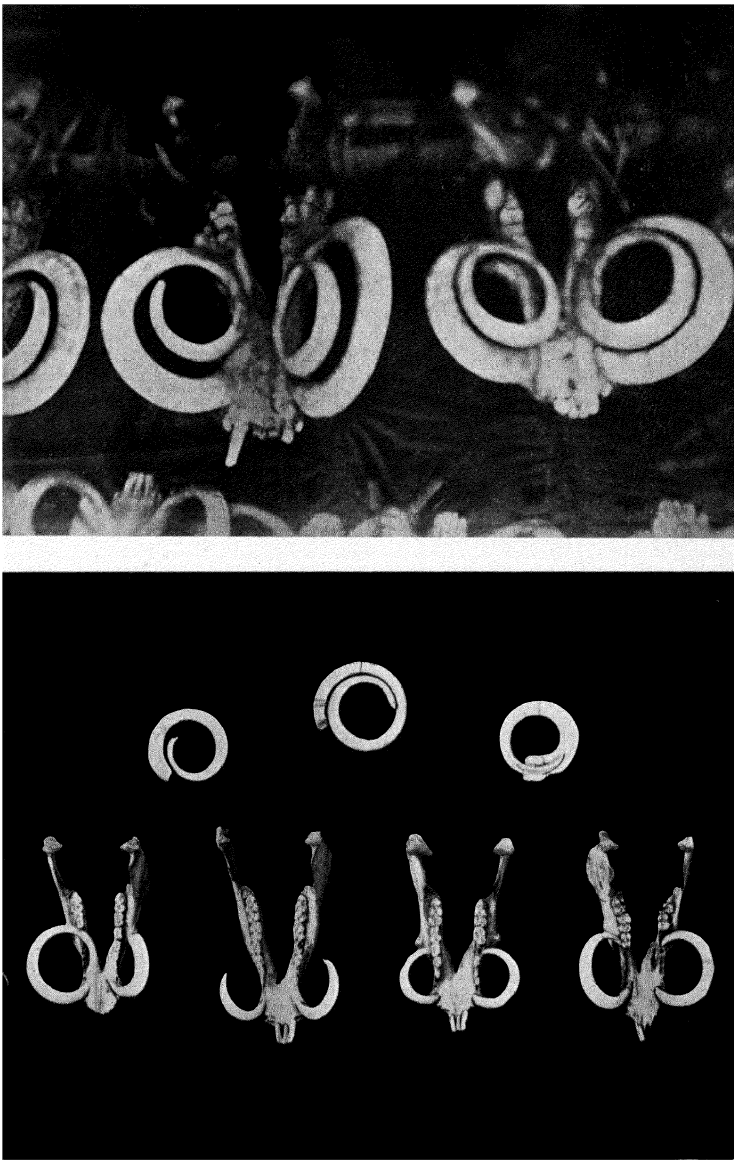
tusk. The tusk without the pig; the dead pig with the tusk; the pig's skull; a monumentally magnificent-looking pig with a small tusk—all these are without meaning. We have no use for intersex pigs, which are very rare here. When one comes, we trade it northward to the island of Malo, for between Malo and the people northward in Santo there is a trade in these pigs; they consider them of the highest. We need the living tusked boar, castrated or not.

The tusked pig must be tethered. He must be fed on soft food. If left to roam free he may fight another pig or root in the ground, breaking a tusk. If one of the two tusks is broken the pig loses most of its value, however good the other tusk. Thus there is much work in tending pigs; planting food for them; cooking that food on a special fire, away from human food. This is mostly work for the women. According to her nature, a woman can look after from four to nine good pigs at one time. Therefore a man, who buys a woman for about ten pigs, buys a pig-worker whose efforts in time will repay him her cost; and then more.

He must first get the ten pigs to pay for the woman. He is a youth. He will borrow pigs from the father and the members of his club. These he gives to the girl's father and relatives, if they like him and the girl likes him. The chief of his half of the village will give him one pig to help payment. He helps every buying of women because it is good to have women in the place, so that there be many children and pigs; the place will prosper and be powerful. He (our chief) will receive, in return, one pig from the fathers of all girls born in the village, when they are sold out to husbands.

With the aid of his woman the man can start feeding pigs in earnest. But he owes for the woman. First he must pay back those debts. This is one way into the business.

For on all such debts there is interest. And this interest is the growth of the tusk, what that growth would have been during the time of the loan, had the owner still had the pig. So you must pay back a pig, any pig, with a bigger tusk—according to the condition of the pig you received and the



PIGS' CIRCLE TUSKS, IN THE WAY THAT THEY GROW AFTER THE UPPER TEETH HAVE BEEN REMOVED

The double circle takes about 14 years to grow and is of inestimable kill-value so long as the pig is alive. Pig is power.

time that has intervened. The longer you take to pay back the pig, the more valuable the pig you will have to pay back and the harder for you to do it. Every man will know how the tusk was when it was lent; how many moons ago that occurred. Every small stage of the tusk growth has its especial name. There are fifty especial pig words. No man would default in repayment. Because, if he did, no one would ever lend him pigs or other things again; he would be barred from expansion and honour. If a man is slow about paying, you may send him a coconut frond knotted in various ways according to the growth on the tusk of the pig that you lent. This will remind. Or you may shame a debtor by giving him a yam and fowl pudding publicly, in the open. As a last resort his club will pay it off for him, rather than let their prestige more down.

Clearly, starting with all your pigs out and in debt for your woman, you cannot catch up on the tusk growth of the pigs you owe. Therefore the young man will have to concentrate on growing pigs and, when these are still quite small, lending them to other people who need them; who will then be in his debt. While he will cancel out some of his debts with numbers of small tuskers, perhaps trading them on to the islands like Tutuba and Mafia to the north, who, in certain of their rites, use many small pigs for which they will gladly give some big tusker ones in exchange. He will also work at putting up club houses, stone works, making new gongs, shell money, and the many other services for which small tusk pigs are paid by the chiefs and other rich men who need big works done to confirm their importance. He will probably have sisters; when these are married their husbands will give pigs to him in part payment. When, as he hopes, the sisters have sons, he will receive further payment from their husbands. In such ways the elder brother especially benefits, he has always the advantage; but in our tribe it is taboo for the father directly to help his sons, elder or younger.

A lad of energy and resource will pay off his debts in two or four years. Then he enters into a new period; from young

man into the bid for full power of manhood. He starts, free of debt, lending pigs to other people. He lends as many as he can. When a neighbouring village wants to make some sacrificial ceremony (and there are many) or a man wants to make a chiefly rite, the young man lends him pigs; the more pigs he can lend the better. Those pigs are being left to mature at the other person's expense and responsibility. He has not got to feed them. He can feed others instead. He has not the ever-present worry of the pig taking sickly when the tusk, curving, starts growing into the jaw again: for if the pig dies, it is in every way dead—cannot even be eaten; when the pigs are returned, better tusked, he lends them again. There is always a demand, for the more pigs there are available to be loaned, the more is all business and ritual encouraged, the whole local life stepped up. In any important event—birth, death, canoe-making, incision, chiefly marriage—pigs are needed to solemnise. The shrewd man who can see ahead, who is so popular that people come to him early to ask for a loan (for to borrow is to benefit the lender and therefore to honour him), gets more and more owing to him in relation to what he actually has in his huts. He may buy more women with some recalled loans, so increasing his pig capacity for the future. And because a pig becomes more liable to die when its tusk is completing the circle and it is entering into the very valuable stages, he especially keeps such pigs out on loan for the present. There is always a demand for good tuskers.

Thus after some years of plan and manœuvre, loan and reloan, the man is owed a large number of tusked pigs. Now: carefully move. After talks with his club, who back him if they like him, he takes the important first step.

He sends to each club in the village a raw fowl. Men come and help him carry in yams from his garden, slung in a special way on the under side of poles, like carrying men who are dead; until there are many yams on the dancing ground. Then all villages come together at that place, to eat his yams. When they have eaten they stand outside the man's club house ; he is in the centre of a group

of club chiefs. Then the club chief of Limbetentartar calls out " Low-ūs-ār. Low-ūs-ār "; words of unknown meaning. The club chief of Longmelneas holds up a piece of *kava* root. The chief of Lembetaram " Names a day," saying five or seven or ten days, when for the first time other villages will come in to start the long series of stages in the rites to follow, until the first climax in the dance until daylight Nebimg-tingtingnerats, a gong is to be erected; second climax a year later in sacrifice.

The man is on his way. He is going to try to ascend the social scale, the first step on the chiefly graded society, the Nimangki, each grade of which can only be entered by a long pig-expensive period of payment and preparation. He is going to destroy all his wealth by killing.

Great is the effort of each ascent, its strain and excitement; the result is worth it. For at the end the man will take a new name, a rank, privileges of that rank such as the right to wear a certain feather in his hair, croton in his belt, shell armlet above his elbow, or to make a fence of cotton root around his garden. While above all these visible things he will be invisibly higher, away from the earth itself, from the rubbish life (at its lowest in Botnia). He will be on his way up the up and up striving of ascent along this steep track into the sky, to the hawk soaring there above all, the Highness that looks down upon all men, fierce and powerful. Until that terrific day when by the human sacrifice he will earn the title of Hawk itself, with the right to wear its feathers in his hair. While the whole community during these periods will be at peace, with feasting and goodwill among villages, a truce on sudden death until the satiation of death in the final killings.

For two years the people will devote their energy to producing a surplus of food, so that in the end all shall play without worry. The new great slit-gong is the cause of much work, until it is erected in the group of gongs, as high as half a man again, and more than an arm's stretch around; carved evil faces, an ever onlooking group who

stand at the edge of the long glade cleared out of the jungle, among enormous banyans and scarlet-flowered trees, hanging lantana and blossomed convolvulus. Then there are months of dancing, planting yams, making ornaments, masks and carvings and head dresses, new mats and skirts, a great new house, banana groves, so that all may be to the uttermost honour of this host village and to the glory of the club of the man concerned. There are some thirty ritual stages in each personal ascent, for each rise in grade; there are five grades in Matanavat, which is less than in many places (on Malo they say that they have thirty-five; our hereditary chiefs at Matanavat restrict such over-development). It is impossible to make more than one grade in five years, because of our many preparatory stages, all mounting to a climax when the final pigs have been brought to the village, ready for death. The last all-night dance goes. . . .

Towards late afternoon there are thousands of people gathered around the dancing ground, beside the many new-built food huts and yam beds, loaded with yams, coconut, sugar cane, breadfruit, taro, fish, shell-fish, flying foxes, sedge tops, tree cabbage, eggs and eels. Men sit and stand about in the shade of the great forest trees. Women attend to their coiffure and babies. All settle the long plumes in their hair, the scarlet hibiscus flowers and multi-coloured croton leaves, fern fronds stuck in their belts, long plumed bunches of blue lichens and of yellow-dyed moss in the creeper or pig's tusk bangles on their arms; bodies glistening with coconut oil, faces red and blue with wood paints, cheek bones ashed white. The sun is sinking when in the distance is heard low tense singing and the noise of a single drum. It comes close. A column of men stamping and chanting, rushing and pausing in perfect harmony, stamping out barefoot rhythm; every few yards pausing to emphasise stamp, chanting fiercely, higher goes the intensity. These are our men of Matanavat, who bring a long green bamboo on which are slung the scarlet and

brown hawk banners, to be planted in the centre of the dancing ground. As they come on to the ground six men are ready at the upright gongs. They begin to beat out, two-handed with big lumps of wood across the thin mouths of the slits in the gongs, this extraordinary music, that beats into body, over each person, irresistibly gathering excitement out of the twilight into vibrating shudders of sound and movement, until the air sags and vibrates—the persons, the trees and the sounds, drawn into one crowded pattern of feathers and flowers dancing in black woolly hair, of women gleaming and swaying, black lifted arms weaving, crashing out intricate patterns in rhythm from these great gongs who boom and crackle, hurtling chunks of sound that throw every other possibility out, so that this is the world, this and the movement, the speeding of blood pulsed by this terrible heart.

The men, many hundreds now, bunched in a dark cylinder around the planted bamboo and its swinging banners, are thrown as shadowed masses against the blackening jungle, by the dancing light of the burning wild cane torches. The women are outside in one long ring that swings and sways, shuffling grooves out of the earth without knowledge; the world there without end. Their circle is sucked in and thrown back by the changing bursts of the gong rhythms. And in the channel between circle and cylinder the Matanavat men are dancing like so many furies, to the sound exploding, rapid bursts, faster and faster the gongs, then tailing away into a dying throb when the men die, shudder, sink and shiver their sweat-grey bodies in passion, seem to fall on the run from some enemy spear thrust. Until the full fury comes swinging back and the echo stirs all into one new frenzy, piling up, more, is there more? While the men in the middle sing and sing as they stamp and leap, one man and then another taking over the same melody but weaving new words into refrain. They tell of all that has been, trivial or terrific. The women, as they shuffle and sway, wail from the womb. The proud man that has brought all this to be (through his charm

MEN AMONG THE SLIT-GONGS AND SACRIFICIAL STONES AT THE EDGE OF A DANCING GLADE

gain these through the pigs which he gains by industry and by popularity.

This, then, is a crisis in our life. This is a goal that not many achieve, but in which all participate. From early youth we have been trained in pigs. Coconuts with sprouts are used in teaching pig business. The length of the sprout equals the growth of the pig tusk. A story says that it was the little boys who started the whole pig-killing ritual. In other parts they tell how the fathers found their sons playing a game by catching one hundred lizards or green crickets, and tethering them to twigs, then clubbing and spearing them with twigs. This gave the elders the idea to do the same with pigs. That is why, at Matanavat, father and son may not kill pigs together or co-operate; and this father-son resistance takes effect also in our particular system of alternating generations, in reckoning relationship or permissible marriage. There are twenty named sorts of relative, and each person is related to a great many others. One must be very careful to use the right form of address, to observe the regulations of behaviour between different grades of relative. To the parents of his woman a man must be very respectful; he may not laugh in their presence, they are given the best foods when they visit; the man is their dutiful servant. A man must be careful, also, how he approach his brother's wife. And so on, so much.

When the man killed his pigs he had with him, you remember, a friend, his friend. This " friend " (if there is a word for him) is a man from another village. The pigs were killed and given, so many to each chief and each village, to be eaten. Some were not killed, only touched on the head. This counts as killing, in so far as they cannot thereafter be used for any purpose except food; alive they are easier to carry away, while if a village receives many pigs it cannot deal with them all dead at one time. The man gave a large share of those pigs to his friend. That was a challenge to his friend to make a similar affair himself, to return (to the present killer) that number of pigs and if possible more.

This friendship is the centre of our system of competition and " face."

If a man gives you something, you must repay, unless it is a payment for some definite service or recognised right. Only a few men, each representing a larger unity, can go far on the social ascent of the Nimangki. Every individual participates more directly in this smaller system of giving. Every man has his opposite, his firm shadow as it were, against whom, through his life, he competes on the small scale. Thus he may shoot a rare bird which is excellent eating. Though he will wish to eat it, he is likely to give it to his friend or perhaps to some other man who has in some way attracted his attention or rivalry. That man must repay it, as soon as possible. If he does not, he will become ashamed to be in the presence of this other; his wife may even hint that he is no man. Our legends tell us that we made such exchanges before the exchanges with pigs. All men are kept lively in consequence; they must keep up their prestige as hunters, fishermen, gardeners—in this land where we have enough food, where a man could so easily lapse back into nothing, become no more than the *natabol* tree from which we came forth. The man who quickly repays, and who gives gifts that are hardly repayable, soon grows above others. He appears as the one of ability, fit to be a master with pigs, the head in his lodge.

Villages compete in the same way. At the New Year, which our experts calculate, we take out the yams at the festival; then there are many harvest exchanges between individuals and villages. The greatest village exchange is that of the hawk. If a man shoots a hawk—which is very difficult, for they seldom come to earth except to nest in far places—that hawk belongs by right to his chief. When the chief has paid the shooter a pig, and has himself taken the best feathers for his sacred ornaments, the whole village will take this lovely bird and one very valuable pig, a twice-circled-tusker, to another village. They will present this pig and the bird (with the usual numerous formalities) to the chief of that village. And that village will take the bird and

cook it in the bush far from women (it is so holy); there every man eats a fragment of this highest killer. Then they must strive to repay the gift; until they have done so they may not go to war against the donors.

There is club competition, too, of the hawk sort. A club with a high grade man at its head may wish to have a hawk, carved from roots, at the end of its ridge pole, guarding high over the small entrance to the house. The right to have this on a club house costs much in pigs and yams and feasting; all the club members working together, in this which is equally all.

There is a wonderful dance of the hawk, one of a large group of ballet dances called Na-leng. Na-leng is aftermath of the pig-killing rites. It comes thirty days after. It is the beautiful flower that blossoms from the effort, from the ultimate death of those curving tusks.

These Na-leng dances are done by individual actors with a chorus of fifty or one hundred. The chorus have thirty days' rigorous training. They are not allowed out of a small enclosure in which there is a special house; they are not allowed to see the sea or women; they may only eat certain oven-cooked foods. Each day, they, the best looking young men of the tribe, are trained by elders who have danced many Na-lengs in their youth, are not now so supple or comely as then. There are many Na-leng dances, all exclusively male. From time to time new ones are invented out of dreams—when our souls walk in our heads—or amazing adventures. They reflect the drama of our far-memory. Some are simple plays, such as a man being operated on for elephantiasis; a charming dance of the fowls taking food, done with fowl masks and headdresses; a beautiful dance symbolises the coming of a first canoe, the chorus moving forward with feathered and painted paddles to the nut-rattled rhythm from the bangles tied on their ankles, all the upper body moving in muscle as their feet strike forward like waves over the earth, while at the back the two steersmen work their big paddles as if in a storm.

Na-leng Longtisamba is so moving that young women have been known to leave their husbands shamelessly and openly, to run after a dancer as he leaves the glade. Young women are not now allowed to see the dance in entirety. Husbands are afraid for them. Yet, in words, it is simple enough.

The chorus carry fighting clubs over one shoulder; lengths of wild cane in their free hands. Each has nut bangles on his feet. They start kneeling, beating cane against club handle, chanting. Rise, hurl away the cane with one wide sudden sweep. A man dances, in silence, down the lines, giving to each man a scarlet *lokalok* flower, flower of the yam planting month, the time when the life of the next season is sown. With flowers waving, the chorus start to interchange and criss-cross in a most complicated and absolutely polished way, the whole in perfect order, never a moment's hesitation or wait, movements faster and faster, the ankle rattles shaking and shimmering into a frenzy of sound (the great effect of the dance is attained by the use of these rattles, that can be controlled by the foot movement, so that the whole dance may go for a few seconds in utter silence, then a few words of lilting song, to be carried away in one sweeping explosion of sound; gut-shakingly sudden), until the whole chorus is moving fast and in one movement, great leaps and strides, the bangles clashing out in synchronisation, weird wild music shattering the uncanny quiet of the mid-dance. Then for a few moments the biggest gong at the edge of the dancing glade, the mother, takes up this too rapid rhythm that eases; chanting comes up again. They sing of the ghost of an ancestor killed in battle who came to a man in his sleep and told him to make a new dancing. Sharply, from the edge of the jungle, a bamboo hand drum is beaten in harsh staccato. And out staggers the ghost. Soot black from head to foot, except that his face is the white of ashes; down his cheeks and chest are running blood lines. In ghastly ghostly silence, the dense crowd around the glade watching without movement, the ghost slowly and awfully circles the chorus, aimless and sad; goes

his own way out into the jungle. The hand drum comes rattling again. Out comes a young man, lithe and lovely, gaily dancing to bring back the light into the heart; in his hair many feathers, and he whirls long sprays of sweet scented flowers as he swings so gracefully between the now moving lines of the chorus. He is life. And after him, drum rattles again, bringing near death, come two big bowmen, who rush out, leaping, crouching, hiding behind the air, threatening each other and all. Behind them, after a little pause for their action, two fine strong young men stride out, carrying killing clubs, clubs of sacrifice. After them follow two young lads, who shuffle and stamp forward in womanly dance motions. They wear women's mats of the finest kind. On to their nipples are clipped half-coconuts painted as breasts—rather fantastic colourful breasts.

The bowmen, the chorus behind, speed into a terrific whirl of movement—nut bangles stamping out the time. The bowmen rush forward to discharge feathered arrows (at no other time are our arrows feathered) over the heads of the women. The pattern of vivid movement, intricate and lovely, is broken, resolves itself once more into something human that may dance itself out into the dark fringes of the forest.

This is the art of this living.

The hawk dance and other Na-lengs are less obviously linked with the things that we all know.

One hundred young men of the chorus in perfect training and dressed up in their best, shining, on each head a five-foot high headdress of fowls' feathers. They criss-cross and interchange position with marvellous accuracy. Until out of the jungle come two bowmen, separate, rejoin, miming at battle, the chorus dividing to follow each one in his own battle movements. Then, all formed up into a square again, marking time, arms outstretched, they are singing. Out comes the principal actor, the hawk, a fine youth with his body beautifully painted with a hawk on the chest and hawk on the back. Arms outstretched and hands turned upwards, he swings and soars as the hawk does, threading his way

through the line of chorus. Then, suddenly, the hawk swoops, strikes into the heart of the chorus. They cower, shudder, arms bent at elbow, hands upward, crouch, shudder to death—they, the small birds. Alone and majestic the hawk stays there towering above them all.

Hawk looks down at his greatest killing when a man has reached up through four grades, until at last he is ready to take status of Man-hawk, Maltanas.

Very rarely a child is born to an unmarried woman. Girls are married young. Such a bastard is remarkable among us. If it is a son, there is a rush to adopt him. Each chief will wish to pay pigs for him. The one who gets him becomes to him father. He sees that the child is carefully tended and brought up as his own true son, kept healthy and given the best affection ; for his is a destiny. When the boy is about thirteen, preparations are in progress for a great pig-killing in his honour—the sacred rite Maltanas. After the many preliminaries, a medium-sized house called *negamal nanauru* is built. It is unlike other houses in that its roof does not reach the ground and is of imported palm from the village of Botermalap, not of cane-grass as is usual. The centre ridge pole, about the height of a man and a half from the ground, is of hard *natabol* with two buttress roots left in place, carved into a clean spreading span of about two full arm-spreads, angled up from the trunk so that these are as wings—a great hawk poised to strike. The end of the trunk is whittled into a decurved beak of power between the wings. This hawk projects over one edge of the house. The floor of the house is not the bare earth, but layer after layer of clean white coralline stone gathered by many men from the beach and jungle edge, with much labour. These come to fill the house with a great bed, nearly to the roof.

The village of Wowo to the north is paid pigs to make the wooden effigy of a man, Nigimthial, which they alone can make; taller than any man of flesh, carved of teak with all the body fully there. The figure, carefully brought amid much dancing, is placed against the end upright of the

house, under the poised hawk. Over the hawk, between its wings and from over its beak (there waiting), is slung a deep rope spun from the root of hibiscus by the hands of a chiefly woman.

On the last great night of the rites, before the morning sacrifice of pigs—and in this there will be a thousand pigs ready to die—the boy dances conspicuous. Towards daylight the women of the man, who is making the killing of the pigs, take him to a hut and make him there freshly wonderful with flowers, bright feathers of scarlet parrot and green fruit-dove. They rub coconut oil into his soft young skin, until he is a shining thing; his face vividly painted from the stones that are found in the stream bed up near Tomlelip. About his person are many kinds of leaf; he has a new belt strap, and though he has not been cut he is given a new brilliant penis-wrapper. In the daylight, when all is ready and the pigs tethered, there is a great call from the gongs, and all the many hundreds of men dance in column to the hut where the boy is made ready. He, the young fatherless one, dances out and leads all his column of elders stampingly back, into the full fury of sound in the dance glade. He leads by its rope the best pig of all this killing, a three-circled tusker, painted as he is; from the people there goes, as they see this, a gasp of awaiting. Proudly ahead of all this dancing the boy comes dancing up to his adopted father, waiting now in finery, squatting on the stone altar inside the hut of the hawk. Up to the image at the feet of this father. There are men behind the boy dancing. They take his soft arms suddenly; one jerks the rope that hangs between the wings; from the multitudes watching, a wailing as they slip it over the blue painted neck, jerk and lift him to hang there, head to the knees of that father, who, lifting his club from the ceiling, strikes harshly into the flowered head.

A terrible crying bursts forth. Some are sick, some defecate with feeling. In a high pitched voice men and women sing in the women's way, the song of sacrifice. On the dead boy, lowered now to the ground, the fine pig is clubbed and left lying.

No person has dared to warn the boy. All, through life, knew his destiny: Death to tell him.

This is why none of Matanavat eat human flesh. These others around us make only pig sacrifice; they eat men; while those of Are and beyond eat (some say) even women. We have not eaten man within memory. The boy's body we send to the people of Wowo who make the man effigy, against which he swings as he dies hanging. But first the boy's body and that of the fine pig are given to the friend of the killer, he taking the rope of each in his hand. Thus he has received them and must return them. This is a hard thing to do, such sons before marriage are rare; the debt may pass on through generations.

The killer has title Maltanas, the ultimate highness. He is the favoured of creator Tagaro, he communicates with the unearthly. He may do as he wishes; he may do even what is not done. No man dare be hated by him. After the killing he stays for thirty days on the stone platform; his limbs are covered with armlets of the most valuable shell beads from Malo island (these we pass on as heirlooms); he has pig tusks as bangles from elbow to wrist, he eats only yam.

It is curious when a boy is sometimes born before marriage. The women have many children after marriage. Not very long ago there were still villages, such as Tinumbi on this mainland, and all the people of Tangoa island to the north—who knew not what nice thing to do with a woman. When they felt the need they had a special wood, *nimbetala*, packed with leaves in a hole, which they used; until one day a man from a village near here came and called at a house while the husband was away. The woman invited him in. He made fire with the firesticks, squatting before her, she fanning the embers. And he grew sexual; and she noticed it and said, " There is my husband's *nimbetala*, up there, hanging in the roof; you may use it." And he said: " Not that: what do you mean ? It is you I want to use." And she was very surprised, but let him. She found that it was *very* nice. She told all the women, so that they made their

husbands buy the secret of this new custom from the stranger. They burned all their *nimbetalas*, except for one that this man took so that he could show it at home, could make his people laugh and laugh. The women had children, the same after that ; it was nicer for them than when their husbands liked only pieces of wood.

The moon shapes the child in the womb. Each new coming of the new moon is the time for such shaping, a time also for silence, respect and the propitiation of ancestors. Fathers at first want sons, who will make the family tree to grow, will tend their skulls after death and look to their death feasts. Daughters are good and in time will bring in pig payments, but a man is his son. So he may make magic for the child in the womb formed by the moon. He pays a small pig to a certain magician ; in return he receives green young coconuts (not red ones by any chance) on which magic has been done. The husband gives these to his wife, passing through his legs, then hers. She drinks and carries a son for each such coconut.

Women are sick in each moon, and this sickness is dangerous to the men's fighting spirit; sick women may not go into gardens, nor feed pigs or a sow. When a woman has not been sick for two moons, she has no more contact with man. And at the right time, which she counts, she calls in the Tavetnasumb, the midwife. No man comes near her hut at this time. At birth the child is washed. The navel cord is kept by the mother, who is given much roasted coconut water, very hot, after the delivery.

On the fourth day after birth the maternal uncle comes over from his village. He comes to the door of his sister's hut. She inside, still secluded, pushes the baby to the door. With a sharp orange thorn the man, her brother, pierces a narrow hole in each ear. In those, later in life, he will wear tortoise-shelled spiral ear-rings and tufts of coloured pigs' tails. Then an old man and woman relative of the father's take the child and ask the maternal uncle:

" Where did this little thing come from ? "

And the maternal uncle says:

" From my village." For the mother is of his clan, and it is the child of his place. Then the old ones ask him:

" What, then, is its name? "

To which he replies usually his own name, with the prefix Le- if it is a girl. Uncle then gets a good tusker pig and goes home; if it is a girl he will get a better pig than if it is a boy, because if it is a girl the father will eventually gain pigs from her when he sells her in marriage, and so he is indebted to his wife's brother, who has, in some way, produced this pig-earner—though for himself he would, perhaps, rather have a son.

Nose-piercing is done later, without any ceremony. Though Matanavat people pierce the nose, they do not wear anything through it except a stick, unlike other tribes who love to put a shining white sea-stone there.

The birth of a chief's son is something of an event, because he will come to have many duties for his half of the village. On the second day after the boy's birth the great gong is beaten with a special staccato rhythm that brings men in from all the surrounding villages, loaded with over-ripe fruit, pawpaws and oranges, squashy bananas, soft yams now more than soft. The visitors form two sides and have a fight with all this rotten fruit. Into it someone may slip coconuts or hard yam; then will be fury let loose. At the end, when the ammunition, laughter and arms are exhausted, the leader of each side announces his casualties—how many have had blood drawn. To each thus blooded the father of the boy will pay a half circled tusker pig. He also gives a great feast. These special rites for the chiefly occasion cost the chief a good deal; he must keep up his chiefly prestige, and it reflects credit on him; while such activity circulates wealth, it gives pleasure.

Our women know no method of procuring abortion except by mechanical means. They are ignorant of the concoctions for this and for the preventing of any growth of child within them, which are said to be known in some of the isles to the north. We trace descent through the father to son, and the

need of the one for the other in death would make it go ill with a woman who killed unborn children, unless it was the wish of the man. Adoption is widely practised wherever one man has few and another many children. Pigs are paid to the parents; the child becomes the full child of its foster parents. A man will nearly always adopt a child who is his classificatory maternal nephew, so that uncle becomes father.

There are several sorts of love magic, to make a man or woman wish for another. Men insist on their wives being virgins. If a man marries a girl who is not a virgin, he hits her until she tells him who is responsible. The responsible man will be made to pay a half circle tusker pig, while the husband may claim back some part of the pigs from her parents. For adultery after marriage (which is nearly always led by the women) the penalty is the same. Regular adultery is punishable by death; it rarely occurs. Adultery with a chief's wife is very serious: first offence two circled tuskers; second death. It is the woman who instigates adultery, who breaks a twig before another man and throws one part near his feet. Certain women are always hungry for new lovers, insatiable, killing with their wish, husband after husband; these "have a snake inside them," maybe a lizard, who dropped through the navel one day, while sleeping under a tree. (Never sleep under a tree.) The stealing of things like a man's food or his pig is worse than the theft of his woman; punishable by death.

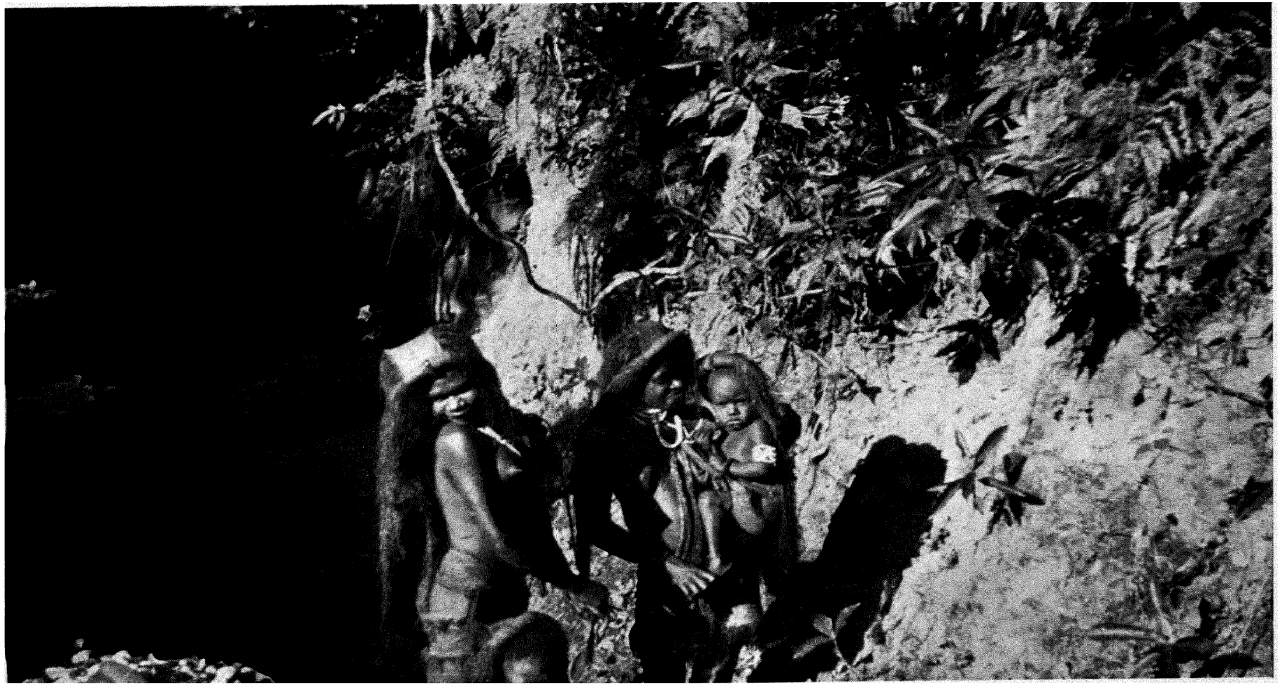
A woman may leave her husband simply by going back to her own village, but war may follow unless the marriage pigs are paid back—which seldom happens, because all the various relatives who have received their share are not prepared to return them. A man cannot get rid of his wife unless by beating her she runs away. Few men would do this, because their women are invaluable workers. And a man comes to feel good with one woman, who grows old, beside his own growing old. Thus women are in a strong position, as also because children are desirable ones.

Widows are taken by their husbands' relatives or sold by them again at much reduced prices.

Though the women work hard they have their own pleasures and rites. They participate fully in the men's graded society, and have a special one of their own. This is much simpler than the male graded society, but gives them a special status of their own, not found among the northern islanders who trace descent through the mother. In this the husband and his brothers help. They make a big new house and eventually tether one hundred pigs around it, including two circled tuskers at each side of the door. After an all-night dance, with chanting only (no gong music), two women start, one from each side of the door, to kill round the pigs to the other end of the house. A woman who has done this once is Lelek, then Liat and gradations of Liat, with special red head-mats and fire privileges; eventually the fine pink skirt with purple patterns, called *Serivar*, traded in from the islet of Vao to the east.

The women are also taught their own type of patience and strength by an initiation soon after marriage, when their two front teeth are taken out. This is done in a specially built house, entered after an all-night dance of women only, in which they mostly crouch and sway as they sing through cycles of history. At daylight the newly-wed girls lie down with open mouths and the two teeth are deftly knocked out in one movement by experienced old women. For thirty days the women stay in the hut, eat only yam, and are subject to hoaxes of all sorts from the other women, who dance all night among them, defoul them, pull away their mats, in general annoy them all they can. The newly-weds may not cry out or in any way complain. On the thirtieth day at daylight they swim in the sea; their husbands pay pigs to the women who have tended and mistended them for this period. They emerge as adults.

Sometimes some of the village women wear red strips of mat on their heads. The whole is dyed red, and looks like queer long purple hair. These headdresses, called *nambwe*, are put on after the chiefly rites of the graded pig-society. The wearers are the wives of the man who killed the pigs; they put on the *nambwe* with some ceremony and thirty days' hut



WOMEN WITH MOURNING HEADDRESSES. THE CHILD IS A CHIEF'S DAUGHTER ; SHE WEARS A VALUABLE SHELL-BEAD ARMLET

seclusion, after the final pig killing. They continue to wear the *nambwe*, night and day, for two or three years, and during that time neither man nor wife may eat the wild *woveli* tuber. This is a tabu of mourning, as if one was dead; part of the death and resurrection of pig sacrifice. When the tabu is to be ended there is a big yam feast and a dance, with three pigs, one a circle tusker, killed at daylight after an all-night dance; there are presents of pigs by the man to his wives' sisters, who come and take the *nambwe* off the women. Only then will the man be free of all the Mangki affairs that he started that day, three or four years ago, when he stood in the clearing outside his club and " named a day."

The women are good mothers. They especially tend, and even suckle, their babies for two years. Then the sons go gradually more under the influence of their fathers, while the daughters stay with their mothers, with whom they go also on holiday visits to the villages of the mother's relatives. The children are educated by listening and watching. Their parents like to be near them. They learn thus the innumerable legends, songs, observances and points of etiquette, the vast vocabulary of objects, knots, animals and plants, pig grades, agriculture, the calendar, and the reef. They learn to make the many intricate labyrinths of continuous line drawing in sand, which are so necessary to knowledge now and hereafter. These must be learned to perfection, with their stories and certainties—none may forget. They play games with string and fingers, drawing, water fights and belly smacking, races and mud wallows, spider hunting, birds-nesting, shooting with miniature bows, spears to the fish, stone slinging at native rats, and climbing for coconuts at moonlight when they sing sweet jingles in a language whose meaning is lost:

" *Urumbuamb saysan unrunbar*
Bayunda undayo senda senda
Um um so lo to soloto takeas
Charcharutlumsung."

They are instructed into the observances of the moon and the good kindly god Tagaro, who is mainly there, in the sky. At certain seasons he must be prayed to. The child is warned against the longer haired, pale skinned men Intumbulu, who live in caves or among banyan roots; they only come out when it rains, to steal the tops of cabbage trees or to spear people on the ends of their tremendously long finger nails. There are not many devils or awful spirits just here.

A child is not punished or smacked by ordinary parents; he is let to do as he will, so long as he keeps near to hand, which he will surely do for fear of the forest—though we have no visible things that kill in the forest, the snake cannot kill. He will not do what may not be done, for that would be death or long sickness. No little girl would ever at any time, however secretly, try to approach a man's club house. No female could want to do such a thing. Each generation accepts the laws of its elders, what is done is done, what your father did you shall do; only strange impacts, accidents, magical men or very high men will make something different.

The big day in the life of a boy comes when he is about seven. Then he enters mid-life and high education. Then is the time for incision. Many boys are done at one time, after an all-night dance of a special kind, mostly with war-clubs. The boys are held down in the sea over logs; their foreskins are cut with bamboos by experts. Then soothing leaves are wrapped around the place, and the men dance back to the village, with blowing of shell trumpets and mighty yells to keep the women away.

For thirty days the boys are confined to a special house. Each boy has a man, called his *tumbat*, who is of a lodge other than his own, to look after him during all this period. As he comes back, tired and frightened from the operation, he is taken to the house by his *tumbat*, who says:

" Come on in, rest my lad, poor lad, I have made a good bed for you." The *tumbat* goes ahead of his boy through the low door into the dark—particularly dark—hut. He calls the boy:

" Come, here is the good bed I have made ready for poor you."

The boy gratefully lies down. He lies, to his horror, in a mass of pigs' excrement and wet mud, ashes and charcoal, soot, interspersed with thorny creepers and stinging bush leaves. And all that night relays of men dance and kick up dirt; they foot the boys; there is no rest or sleep.

This is the first incident in a long sequence that the boy must go through for the next thirty days. Hoaxes cleverly done, over and over again the boys are frightened or puzzled until they pay beads, fowls, etc., to the men who then tell them the secret. Thus men come at night with fruit secretly made of earth and filth, which the boys, who are constantly underfed, readily pay for and ravenously bite. Ghostly noises are made with plaited coconut leaves, voices of ghosts which terrify the lads through the night, until, after payment, the source is made known to them. Amusing is the hoax when a man takes a strip of hibiscus bark in his mouth, manages to blow it up and down through his nose; a large bird-catching spider is tied to this, and the spider is made to dance up and down. The boys are implored to pay quickly to this man or he will die; only shell money can cure the disease. Foul talk, not ordinarily used (for swearing and any sort of insult is a serious affair) here comes into its own. The boys are insulted, their sexual organs in particular are insulted. We have a good sex hoax, in which men, with large hollow well-painted woods over their organs, creep into the hut at night and suddenly yell.

" Ha! Boys, we are men from the Big Nambas tribe to the south. And, as you may have heard, we have a way with the small boys that you do not yet know of. Now, small boys, nice small boys, let us show you."

Then they speak to the *tumbats*, saying:

" We heard you had been cutting some of your so nice small boys, so we came this long way, through many enemies, because we wished to enjoy them. How about it? "

Poor boys are terrified; they have been told often that the

Big Nambas are bad people with bad ways. But they hear their *tumbats* say:

"Yes, we can arrange that, I think. First let us have a fire and look at you."

So they make fire; the faces of the men are masked; the first light shows the great organs; the boys are very afraid. Then they are told that if they pay, they may examine these organs first, before any more happens to them. They pay, but do not wish to come near. They are forced to come near. And when they do, the hoax is revealed and the men roll around on the floor, helpless, helpless with laughter at this marvellous joke. We like to laugh. Laughter from hoax, or a foot slipped on banana skin, is good laughter.

The boys may not laugh. Nor may they cry, complain, answer back or refuse anything. For this is the time to teach them patience, respect, and firmness of character, as well as to teach them about many ghostly and spiritual things which are unknown to women. These ignorances are useful for keeping women and children under control; and there is not much other way of controlling, in some respects.

When all this is over, the boy comes out for the first time wearing a penis-wrapper, made by his mother; until then he has been naked. Pigs are paid by his pa to the maternal uncle. Now he is "little man," the pride of his mother's heart, though she is sad to lose him—now he will feed with his father in the lodge often; he will sleep there as a bachelor. When hair begins to grow on his face, so that he pulls out the hair with a *navu* sea-shell, he puts on the wide bark belt round the waist.

The origin of incision is an example of how women influence we men.

The first people did not practise incision. One day a man went into the jungle with his sister. She climbed a breadfruit tree to cut down the ripe fruit with a bamboo. When she had finished, she threw down the bamboo. The bamboo accidentally cuts the man's foreskin. The man cries out and it takes him thirty days to recover. Then he has contact with a woman and she finds it is very good indeed, and she tells

THREE YOUNG HEBRIDEANS. THE BOY IS A BLONDE

another woman and soon this man is in great demand, to the fury of the other men; but their women sneer at them and say they need to be like that one. So they pay him to tell the secret. He tells. And they have in such wise cut their children ever after.

The boy is now a miniature man; he has yet a long way to go. He must, for example, make the formal first journey to Malo island to the north. Any family may have a small outrigger canoe; the head of it may purchase (with pigs and feast) the privilege of using as the canoe's figure-head either the single or (more costly) double bird heading, which represents the frigate-bird, or the shearwater that passes here in its millions, two or three days in a solid stream, regularly at the same time each year, on its way to its nesting grounds—on Buninga and other islands far south. But the pigs' head prowhead (the only other allowed or thought of), is reserved for the three big trading canoes of the village. These canoes each belong to two clubs; each club of the pair makes the canoe when it is needed, though anyone may come on a canoe trip. A canoe of this sort only lasts about three years. It is made from whole logs of hardwood, placed on top of each other as two deckers. It is a long infinite labour for the men to cut and dress the trees, then to chisel out the canoe, inside and out, from the hardwood with the shell and stone axes and adzes, using also firesticks; the outbooms, masts and outrigger, outrigger stakes and hundreds of arm-spans of sennit rope binding. While the women make the big triangular sail, used inverted, shape of a crab's claw, by sewing together many small strips of pandanus matting, red-dyed. The canoes are not so large as in some parts; we west Malekulans are not great canoers, and the people farther south down this coast have only rafts (or nothing). The Matanavat canoe is about fifty feet long and takes about thirty men, their food, pigs, paddles and weapons; there is a wide bamboo platform on top for such stuff.

The launching of the canoe marks the end of much hard work. So, as on all such occasions, it is a time to dance, a time to feast and sing, make great puddings of yam and fowls,

kill pigs. The new canoe is decked with green leaves, palm fronds, feathers and flowers. It goes on a tour of honour to the other sea villages, where there are sham fights. The chiefs load it with pigs and yams, later to be repaid.

The trading is mainly to Malo, with shell money. Also to Omba, home of the god Tagaro, for red mats, at the making of which the Ombans excel. Before setting sail on such a voyage the wind magician makes his magic for a calm sea, with certain leaves before daylight at the point towards Malo, where he breaks and rubs the leaves on rocks in the sea, crying out six times, " Wūūweea." Women may not go on one of these long voyages.

The novice going to Malo for the first time must not turn his head any time on the way, nor speak. In mid-voyage all eat coconuts in solemn manner, first putting this food to their lips and praying, " Father, it is good that I go ashore on Malo." When arrived at Malo the novice is beaten; over-bathed; not allowed to prepare his own food.

The great trade speciality of Matanavat is its shell beads of a certain type, justly famous all over the group—in some parts, especially far north, as important almost as pigs.

Here at Matanavat the men make the shell money. Everywhere else it is woman's work. Hard work, too. Collecting the little cuneiform shells from the reef. Chipping and filing the tops from the shells carefully between stones, working to and fro, to and fro with a stone in the hand, rubbing the shell over an old canoe plank to get shining white and smooth, a small cylindrical bead, through which a hole is bored with a sliver of the very hard *natot* wood. It is said of this work: that there is no other work so hard. The shell is traded to Malo and the other islands to the north in return for pigs and for the red-dyeing leaf *nese*, so much in demand by the inland bush folk like the Big Nambas to the south. The trade is profitable. The shells are strung on twine, and one full arm-spread, *ningavru*, will bring six leaves; five *tang*, or bundles of a few score such leaves, will get a valuable tusker pig from the Big

Nambas. At Matanavat shell beads are used for making chiefly arm ornaments, especially the very sacred hawk armlet; for buying fowls, two arm-spreads for three male fowls (you may not buy one male) or one spread for one female. A man may give his woman a necklace of it—if he is pleased with her,—for a dancing ornament ; that will make her " flash," special.

A man is not finally a man, except he is a chief's son, until he has been blooded into war.

The first man and woman who came out of the split sides of the rose apple, started war. For when the man first took the woman, he said to her: " If I hurt you too much, you will cry out Tamat, peace." It hurts her but she cries out in a loud voice; she does not cry Tamat, peace; she cries, Navoru, fight. And there has been fight ever since.

War starts over women running away, or over matters of village pride and prestige. There are very old feuds beneath these causes. Women are never touched in war and may go free where they will, though this is not so in all tribes. Children too, except boys who have put on the penis-wrapper, are immune from attack. Chiefs take no active part. And a man may walk anywhere in war so long as he holds up the frond of a cycas palm and carries no weapon. A village will not fight within itself. Sometimes very serious trouble may flare up between two clubs and some fighting ensue, but it cannot continue, will always be settled by sunset. Matanavat does not fight the villages immediately around it, and has especially an alliance with Botermalap. Arrows and spears are the weapons; also stones flung fiercely from fibre slings, whirled in the right hand, front to back; and boned-tipped arrows poisoned first in tree sap, then in a deadly black fungus. There are six types of spear, from the fine light-tapered palmwood javelin, that will pass through a man, to the terrible *natable* spear which is of arm and leg bones in serried clusters, a bristling mass that cannot be drawn from the wound. The bone for these is got by digging up the graves of other villages at night and

using their bones. No ill feeling or payment arises so long as the skulls are not touched. There are six types of club: knobbed, shaped like paddles; and the lovely forked club called *lokumat*, the tail of a hawk. Some men, the experts in working with stone, can carve these. There are man traps, too, deep pits covered over on the tracks with sharpened bamboo spikes within, arranged so that when the man struggles to escape the spikes must tear him to pieces. And fine *Nautilus* shells are buried in the ground, sharpened points of poisoned bone sticking up from them.

War is not undertaken lightly. To make the men of the place strong they will not approach women or the sea for thirty days, living simply and quietly. During this time the hereditary war clairvoyant, the Nataru, of club Lembetaram, is alone in his hut, sing-singing esoteric chants to a root of the *kava*—peace-drug hung from the smoky rafters. On the twenty-ninth day he reaches a climax of knowing, takes coconuts and goes to the tabu place *Rorumbal*, sacred for war magic, out in the jungle; and there he prays before the sacred stone to the great warriors of yore, Chimbu, Ras, Vaghal Maton, Salen, Sari, Yan, Theti, and Bunaburra. Then he will see in a dream the number of enemy men who will be killed, standing behind the *kava* root. If he sees none standing there, then there will be no war. If he sees men standing there, then next morning all go to take out yams. Those who wish to take part in the war personally, do not cook any yams. The Naturu gives to each of them a fragment of his *kava* root, which each puts in a small black basket worn in the back of the belt, taken off only to eat or to urinate. These men may not eat food cooked by women; and at this time no woman may use the usual paths around the village, lest one have a trace of menstrual blood, which would bring female weakness, disaster on all. This war magic and clairvoyancy is a very potent one, though not perhaps so effective as the amazing snake invisibility magic of the magicians in the Malua tribe next to the south, who are, therefore, feared even by powerful Matanavat.

Often war is made on an agreed and appointed day, when the two villages meet on the chosen battleground at the place *Netsalamb*, line up and hurl at each other spear and abuse, from neither of which are there any shields; the clubs are used to ward off the former with great dexterity. The results of such meetings are often nil; sometimes the fight may become really bold and many will die. Other is by stealthy approach, by surprise. In neither war is it the idea to kill many, but rather to kill one, anyone—but one thoroughly. Hate does not need quantity. A wrong done by one community to another is satisfied by the killing of any one man from that community.

On the field of pitched battle corpses are generally left to stink; sometimes brought home and buried without ceremony in the dead man's house. The skull is not subsequently removed. For the spirit of a man killed in battle is a terrible thing that will wander the world, redly seeking revenge. So it is feared. The skull is not tended; the man's gardens are cut and destroyed. To avenge the death quickly, equalise the score, is important. His brother will roll in the ashes of fires and the men of his club will not drink coconuts, nor eat yam, nor dance, nor cut their hair or shave until the death is avenged. They will not sleep with their women, who will wear round their necks hibiscus bark ropes as a sign. The chief will pay to the son of the dead man two very valuable pigs as compensation. He will give a half circle tusker as recompense to a wounded man.

But in war by stealth, if there is time before the enemy are out in pursuit—and probably they will not hear the killing, if the man is struck down cleanly and silently in the shade of a tree resting by the pathway at noon, or coming from his hut in the first flash of morning—the carcase is carried back, slung under a pole, to Matanavat. When this happens, a special rhythm is beaten out on the greatest gong, three longs, pause, three longs, long-short-long, three shorts, long. This news goes booming out over the tree tops, is taken up all over the land, maybe running on a day's journey back into the hills, each village giving its

call note, the call notes of Matanavat, and (if they know) the call of the village who has suffered. The whole land roars into a riot of sound, waves fiercely sweeping over all, spreading a hate and drumming into men a fear which is in some way personal to all, the fear that is for ever there around the corner of the winding jungle trail, silent sudden death, which will mean that all life is cut, can have no fullness or ultimate completion, cannot be taken up fully by son and grandson. Yet each, too, is tensed and strengthened by the fear which rouses anger, vigour, the urge to repay, to give or to take, and to be aware.

The body is hung above the face of the mother gong, and tied by the men of the rubbish lodge Betair. It hangs obscene. The penis-wrapper and belt are removed—this (only) time a man may be seen naked. The man who struck the fatal blow, Naghvali the brave one, dances to the door of the lodge Lombelunbatik, who are the owners of the rights of the flame tree, whose month, the month of yam planting, they control. He gives to the head of that lodge a medium-tusked pig, and the lodge head puts in his mouth a flame flower, brilliant scarlet and tube-shaped, called *lokalok*. Or, if not the season of *lokalok* flower, its leaf. The killer then dances out, before the whole village, in the music of gongs ; to the chief of his half of the village. And he drops the flower from his teeth at the feet of the chief. The chief embraces him.

Through the night the dancing goes, in a formal pattern of rush and pause. And one man of the club of the flame flower has the privilege to lead the incessant chanting, taking it over the hate of this group against that group, of all that made this killing. In the morning light this man dances out, stone adze over shoulder, to strike the forehead of the hanging body and make this place clean again. For the people of Matanavat do not eat their enemies, nor do they eat any human flesh. Some tribes do, but long before this the Matanavat folk have ceased to do so. The body is left to lie and rot and feed the sows on the stones at the edge of the dancing glade. The conch-shell trumpets blow and

the chief pays the killing party, pigs for their services. And the killers give lesser pigs to the Nataru war magician—one for each corpse.

These wars seldom last long. Pigs are exchanged to recompense. *Kava* is also used as a peace-maker, a drug of peace, but it will not grow in the rather dry Matanavat soil and so is rarely used here, the little that is available is used for magical rites. Or if it is desired that the peace shall last longer, maybe half a generation, then each side exchanges also one man with a pig tied to his leg. This man may be killed with his pig, but more often each side takes the newcomer into the place of the man he has been exchanged for and he lives the rest of his life fully there, as if he had never lived anywhere else. There to die a natural death.

The inter-village exchange of hawks causes a long peace. The scrub-turkey, *mola*, even more so. This is an important bird, with its scarlet head and almost human voice; as well as that it buries its big delicious eggs in the ground, and its young, when they hatch, lift themselves out and can at once fly a little. If one village gives a scrub-turkey to another, that is a token of permanent peace. No war will ever again occur between them. Naturally this is rarely done. No village would wish to be for ever at peace.

Matanavat is not clever in poisoning sorcery, as are some local villages—of which, therefore, it is rather afraid. Death ordinarily comes in natural course. The number of yam seasons in a man's life are not counted. They mean nothing. The pigs he kills, they are counted. And the number of his children and children's children and their children. It is probable that death will come to him in its good time, when the hairs on his head are whitened. The child may often die as a child or at birth; so may the mother. Then they are buried lying on one side, inside the house, their faces covered with the *nitsal* death mat. In childhood he will have yaws, sores on the legs and face. But the yaws medicine

knower will come, and the sores will go in time, unless he will not bathe. But once grown to near man's stature, there is little that can make ill. With age again sores may eat flesh; and these are hard to cure. The man must come and stroke the leg with a leaf, put the leaf in water, put the water into a hole in the ground, and a leaf on top of the hole. And after the time in which a man may cook a taro, he will come and lift the leaf and see what is there in the water. Perhaps he will find there dirt, or the tooth of a pig, or a splinter of bone. That will be half the food of the devil that has been in that sore, and the man has through his power made the devil sick up this splinter. Now it will be better in the sore. The devil is sick.

With age, too, the leg or arm may grow large, the skin thick, so that in time the limb is so great it cannot be moved unless some person lift it and carry it for its owner. This is because, when the man was a boy, he cut the liana *nimbembi* that grows in the forest and blocks the trail, but may not be cut. Yet sometimes a man hurrying forgets and strikes with stone or bamboo at this thing that blocks his way. This is the price of that folly, and it is very hard to cure, though a skilled man may be paid pigs (and good ones) to cut the place with sharp flakes of stone many times, letting the blood run. It is not rare for a feast to be followed by short wind and coughing, for which there are spells and strong leaves that cause copious vomit; relieving this feeling. Maybe after a man has worked very long at paddling his canoe, or at cutting with his stone axe, while he is weakly yawning, the spirit of a man killed in battle enters in ; then he will grow very sick until he coughs blood and dies.

When a man sneezes, his soul has been away; maybe someone is making evil plans against that man. There are sometimes other invisible sicknesses that seem to strike one from within. Then the clairvoyant is called in and he sings for a long time appealing to his four spirits: Tokon and Tapi, who are male, Lelerits and Lesiri, female. Such spirits go always in fours. They will find that some other man or his unknowing spirit is making this sickness. If at that

time any man is seen to yawn, then that is he; the evil goes out of him.

Where all else has failed, a good flogging with stinging-tree branches may have a good effect, especially when a man feels dull and useless.

For the most part the men and the women are healthy and strong when they are full grown. There is no time or way for them to grow weak, unless there comes a great hurricane, or they neglect the skulls of their ancestors.

Once there was no death. Man and woman changed their skins like crab and the big red prawn, until one day a man went to the jungle, leaving his little son to the care of grandmother. She saw the crab change its skin; thus knew that it was time for her to do the same. She did. Then she came and fondled the child. But he, seeing this fresh young woman, did not recognise his great-grandmother. He cried again and again for his great-grandmother. She was sorry. She turned back into an old woman again; then the child was quiet. Had the child not cried, she would have been young again, all people would have been young again, there could have been no growing old. Children will cry.

Now there is death in its season. When one feels death come upon him, he tells his son (and his club) to take out yams and make ready his things, to hold a feast for him. All men and women from the tribe come. Through the night they dance to the music of one small drum and beaten bamboos; at this time also the pan-pipe flutes are to be heard. The old man gathers together the edges of his life on that evening. He dances through the throng, shaking aloft the flaming torch of wild cane that scatters burning sparks widely. He chants his life, crying a new philosophy that comes gaily now: he has reached where he can do no more and there is no use in striving. " The time is coming when I shall die and be here no more. Now I am alive yet and this is the time to scatter the everything."

In the morning he will kill his pigs. Some he will give, dead, to his " friend," his old give-and-take rival, as a

farewell gesture of upness. If he has no sons some other may make this feast for him; and inherit his ground.

Though he may yet live long after the death feast, he will strive no more with pigs or living, he will rest and be ready easily to die, without distress to him or any. The pigs have made ready his path of the spirit and opened the road of hereafter past the hungry devil Lesevsev, who waits there seeking to eat those who cannot give pigs.

So when the old man dies he is buried without great sorrow, because he was ready for death. A younger man causes much mourning and constant wild wailing, until the fifth day and pig distribution, when his brothers give pigs to the chief, to recompense him for such a loss of a young man. The chief pays recompense to the brothers of a man killed in battle ; it is right that for a strong lad he should in his turn be recompensed. An old man is put in a hole, dug by the men of another club, at right angles to the door of his house. The gravediggers are those who, when they heard of the death, raced to the place and arrived there first; they will be paid pigs. The body is tied in a mat with a hat of spun spiders' web and fowls' feathers on the head; put in the hole before sundown, but first a cooked fowl placed in the grave. A flat white stone marks where his head lies—end away from the door. His sons will cover him over, while his daughters' husbands bring a fine pig to put near the grave. Three days after they will kill this and some other pigs, giving a good one or two to the old man's " friend " —he will have to repay the son now. The close relatives swim in ashes and soot. They stay for thirty days secluded in the house, sitting by the grave, respectful. On the twenty-fourth day bunches of green bananas are brought to them, salted to ripen in seven days; and on the thirty-first day a big feast of yam and banana is held to end this mourning, which is dissolved by the brother killing a pig in the dancing ground, in the presence of all, to be eaten by all. For a very important man or a chief there is then a big dance ; such a man is buried with his head left sticking out, his body buried in a sitting position, legs crossed.

Most important is the launching on this thirty-first day, early in the morning, of a miniature canoe, made out of cabbage-tree wood, loaded with coconuts, beads, fowls, feathers, stone axes. The sons take this canoe to the sea and wade waist-deep. They say, in prayer to the spirit of father in the canoe :

" If you are a man of the sea, your canoe will go out and we shall not see it back again."

Then all who are assembled by the edge of the shore and on the reef, watching, will see, as the canoe sails away on its tiny sail and the eager tide that sweeps this coast, a blue and white kingfisher fly from the jungle's edge and swoop steeply, easily, into the canoe. Then it is sure that the spirit of this man will rest in peace. The kingfisher is a bird of good.

For two years his body is left to lie. Then, at the time of New Year and the yam harvest, good time with plenty of food and prosperity, time of watching for the new moon, the stone is lifted and skull taken up gently by the man's eldest son. Quietly, without ceremony, he kills a fowl and takes it with the skull to the sacred tabu place of his club, where he puts the skull on a dolmen he has prepared, of white coral slabs; one in a row of such dolmens, within the stone-walled tabu place (which has one low gate), beside which are the tabu places of the other clubs. Near these no stranger or woman may come. The skulls of women are taken by other women to the village of their birth, where their sisters' sons put them into tabu places. There are other and more separate tabu places, one for each lodge, where magic is done, where there are magical things, like the two pigs carved of stone ; or the snake in sacred bamboo of Lembetntartar, who makes enemy women run from their men. The power of this snake is terrific. Its magician put it, once, in the post of his yam bed, because he thought some men from the village Tenmerar were stealing his yams ; and this was a great crime. Seven Tenmerar men came to roast his yams. They heard the snake rattle; it

cracked itself within the post. One man broke the post and saw it and ran; and they were all killed by the dreaded bushmen of Are, they were eaten by the bushmen of Are.

And there was a Matanavat man called Chomtomarina of the lodge Limbutimul long ago, who grew very powerful though he was not a hereditary chief. He threatened the power of the hereditary chiefs. His prestige was so great that all helped him when he planted his yam gardens, as if he had been a hereditary chief. He made many new things, as had the madman Natsinambor of Atchin. One day he told his wife to bury a child in a very high yam mound; she had to do it. Also he masqueraded as woman. The chiefs did not like this, nor his power; they went to the village Potorovo, where Chomtomarina had his "friend," with whom he competed in giving and killing of pigs. This man bade Chomtomarina come to him, by sending a cycas palm leaf—an invitation no man can refuse. On the track he was attacked by other Potorovo men who killed him and ate him. And his two wives, now widows, planted a long bamboo straight up through the house, through which his spirit came and pleased his wives—such was its power. The bamboo grew; his spirit inside became a great snake which, whenever it rattled and cracked against the bamboo with a noise like thunder, meant that there would be bad trouble. When the noise was heard, no one would walk about on that day.

One of Chomtomarina's sons, Malkar, grew up. He grew tired of the snake constantly dominating his house—it was growing all the time bigger, and new ones were starting too. So he cut it and burned it. Then the spirit of Chomtomarina said to the lad, "You are a pig, so the Big Nambas tribesmen will eat you." And from that day forth Malkar never went to the Big Nambas country with the Matanavat canoes taking their red leaf for exchange with pigs. But his heart would not be at peace. At last, after many moons, he said, "Well, I will go and be eaten." And he went in a canoe from Wowo. The men of Ontowalo in the Big Nambas ate him. For which the men of Wowo who took him had to

pay recompense to the chief of Matanavat for losing him, one tusk pig with a more than one full circle tusk !

At the first quarter of the last moon in the year, Etelogian, bananas are taken and ripened, some put on the skull dolmen in the tabu places: seven days later the year is said to be New at Botermalap, then at Matanavat, and so on on subsequent days at other villages of the group, who exchange yams and bananas in our network of village give and take of over production and show for prestige. This is the time, above all, to think of the father's skull. A time to cut a small yam of the sort *Nimbisuru*, a ripe banana of the sort *Nemutnut*, *kava* wood or root; with one sprouting coconut. These are laid before the skull; a prayer is sent to the creator Tagaro and to father, now called by his name (as never in life), that the son may prosper in the year now ready. The son eats a part of the food there; he goes home without speech or laughter.

For the spirit of the father has passed to the cave *Navamb*, dancing the wild red lights in the sky of an evening; and, as the spirit dances, fowl feathers may fall from the hair in white down ! Sometimes a spirit who has not been cared for here on earth will come and walk through the jungle—as red as fire. This may kill his own child or brother; it may ruin their yam gardens. Devils may enter into stones too; not long since such a one fell with a mighty roar from the sky near Nokorvat. A devil can enter the white owl, *lulu*; that is terrible until he can be shot with an arrow. Nevertheless, the evil spirits are seldom troublesome, the people take great care to please them through the skulls and their offerings, as well as by speaking no wrong of those dead.

. . . . . .

But I have not talked much of what we *must* do each day. The daily life of the village is full of two things. The intricacies of mental and spiritual life which run through all things, as you will perhaps realise, from what I have already described; and the work of getting and preparing

A MAN COMING OUT OF A HOUSE, THROUGH THE LOW DOOR-WINDOW-CHIMNEY
The leaf-roof is spearproof, height 25 feet, length up to 100 feet

Yam is our frequent food. It will be ready—some sorts—for unearthing in about five months, when the one planted tuber will have increased to perhaps half a dozen. And lest this shall not happen each year, the people pay the Long-melneas club magician to make his yam magic, putting a compost of leaves and spell in a bamboo at the foot of a miniature gate to a miniature garden, built away in the jungle.

In the month Etilogian, when the red yams are ready, there is a great rejoicing, for in some of the months lately there has perhaps not been too much to eat ; and it has been the wet time, when all walk abroad with the fan-palm leaves as shelter against the frequent downpours ; when there may be hurricanes to break the yam vines, destroy the bush tracks and terrify the sea. One club is in charge of this taking out yams; it fixes the day, announced with much gong beating. There is a great going to and fro in this time, this formal presentation of a sample of the year's crop to other villages, clubs and chiefs. This is three months after the *palolo* sea-worm has come on the reef in his millions,—so regularly on a certain state of tide and moon known to the day experts, that all are waiting there with small hand nets, to catch worms in canoe-fulls, with feasting and dancing ; these worms fix the year in its progress and name the months of the worm, Na-uwl. Each night of these months has its name; the day, too, and the night are divided in eleven divisions of light; the year equals one yam. There are seven measures of distance.

Other months are named after the wild tubers *nevembu* and *nivilsurot* and the edible sedge *navaviso*. These were great foods long ago ; before people learned to grow many yams. Taro does not grow here, for it is dry coral land with few streams that flow all the time. Of breadfruit there are nine-teen varieties commonly grown; some sort is ripe in most moons. Breadfruit trees are not planted, they grow freely of themselves; they need to be cleaned around the foot, lest other so-eager growings should at first strangle them. To make the breadfruit grow surely, Matanavat pay the village Lem-binuamb a pig, and their magician makes his magic with

scented leaves in water on his sacred stone, seven days, he stopping indoors oiled with coconut oil, red parrots' feathers in hair; for this is hard magic. Then he climbs a tall tree and looks into a young breadfruit tree. He sees there the fruit coming. He cries out the good news.

Sugar cane is planted in with the yam by some people. There are three common sorts; three other sorts are found, rather rarely. Bananas are planted in the rainy time, among the yams; there are eleven kinds. At first the banana grew for a long time, but bore no fruit. Then a coconut, the first one, came from the island of Omba to the east. It saw the banana carry a fruit and then die. So it said to the banana, "You fool, you spoil yourself; watch me, how I carry food over and over again, but go on, do not spoil myself." Then the coconut went back over the sea to Omba and when it had many fruit ready on it, it came and showed the banana how this was done without dying. So the banana learned to carry many fruits. It was not very long ago that the coconut came.

There is a bush with red and purple veined three-fingered leaves, some yellow or red, or green. This is the cabbage-bush, used to wrap round much food when it is cooked; it keeps in the good taste and adds good taste of its own. There is one other usual food that is grown, the pawpaw *nawus*, which was found by a man clearing the bush at Loorenerong. The finder brought the fruit to the dancing ground and beat the big "mother" slit-gong drum with the call for everyone, men, women and children, to come. All came, tried this fruit and found it good; especially the children, from which comes its name, mothers' fruit—as well as that the tree looks (for all looking) as the breast of a pregnant woman ready with milk. The place where this first pawpaw was found is a very sacred place now. The descendants of the man, who found this first, make there a very bad magic, taking a burning stick and singing, crying out, "Hungry! Hungry!" while they put the stick against a ripe fruit and then eat the fruit. This will cause severe famine among that man's enemies, probably by ending

rain to water the crops in this rather dry part of the island.

(We can store water in the hollows of a certain sort of tree; it does not last long.)

Against such aggressive magic there are sorts of protective magic, to make the rain come; one with the inherited tooth, the other done with the help of many men carrying leaves and the branches of the *nirumbetseng* tree, behind the magician. If, as may occur, too much rain follows, sun magic will have to be made. Such magics are often expensive. A pig-wealthy man employs magicians to ensure good crops, to make many male pigs in the litter. Magicians are men who deserve pay, for they work often away, under tabu, from women; women are bad for their power. If a magician's wife commits adultery and then returns to him, he will be contaminated. He will sicken and die.

In the sea are many shells and fish. There are pronged fish spears, thrown hard and straight. There are small hand nets and tortoise-shell bails. At night parties with flaming torches cut off dazed fish in the pools. Some dive for lobsters, crayfish and squids. Dive deep down for shell-fish, carefully watching for the deadly jaws of the giant clam or the fierce sleepy rock-cod who grow bigger than pigs. Before New Year the turtles come inshore and may be caught easily, turned over on their backs when they have laid their eggs above the mark of the high waters. There they bury their hundreds of eggs, which taste a little of sand perhaps, but can be easily eaten when cooked in bamboos. There are long fish traps made in the reefs by piled-up walls of stones, the work of all the village. These are made especially and after the fish magician has advised us that it is a good time for such work. He has taken his sacred leaf and a yam; thrown them (after uttering spells), into the sea. He has spat kava on his sacred stone and begged fish; stayed three days there in his tabu place in the forest; eating only yam with coconut milk while he prays to the shark—the very large shark that comes into the passage at Lelibangār. The shark and his sacred stone will, between them, run the fish in shore; the people will work for five or six days at the great stone fish

trap, finally catching thousands of fish, many, many, many, they cannot be eaten, many are traded at good price up to hill villages that seldom come near the sea. Fruit-bats are good feeding, though hard to shoot with the arrow unless they can be found hanging, as they sometimes do, low by day, their big eyes peering as you approach; but not thinking to move till too late. When a man shoots a fruit-bat he is likely to give it to another. That other must soon repay it. If he does not, he will be shamed, his wife may taunt him, may even go to please her husband's rival.

There are fifty common sorts of birds that may be eaten, three that may not. We name each sort of bird. Our parents teach us their names and nests, their eggs and food. It is thus with all living things, we know them. To catch the rails and purple coots, which cannot be shot, there are hedges made with gaps in which are drop platforms, with nooses on branches that fly up when a bird passes through. It was with one of these that the man Tival made himself remembered.

Tival came along one day as his brothers were cooking their catch from a line of such snares they had made. They gave him the gizzard of a big purple coot to eat. This is called *chinuborit,* the tastiest part of the bird. Tival liked the delicious *chinuborit.* So he decided to get some more, to do some trapping on his own account. He made his trap line in a couple of days. Then came to inspect the results on the following morning. He found in it several purple coots. He let them go. The same thing happened several days running. He was annoyed. He went to his brothers and asked them what was the matter. He said he had rotten luck, he could never catch good-eating food as they did. Next day they came around the trap line with him. There was a purple coot. He was about to let it go when his brothers stopped him, and said: "What do you mean, bad luck? This is good luck indeed." Then the truth came out. His brothers laughed; they laughed until they were sick at this mad brother who did not know that the *chinuborit* was only part

of a bird, the gizzard of the coot—not a separate animal. People still laugh when they catch a coot, thinking of funny Tival who did that thing.

We do not eat snake or rat; some tribes to the south do so. There is pig meat when there is ritual. There is fowl of four colours and one flesh, smaller than a coot and the eggs smaller still; they lay ten at a sitting. Each man's fowls may roam free; they come to the huts to be fed by the women in the evening. Each is marked by cuts on tail and wing to show who is the owner. The fowls are used in payment for small things; fowls are mixed with yams in yam puddings on all important occasions—for yam is the food. We are strong because we eat what grows slowly and strongly from the earth of this place, leaves growing upwards.

There are two meals a day. One in the morning when the sun is well up. The other when workers come back from the bush—the sun is well over the sea. This meal is the big one, and when it is over the sun has gone altogether, it is time to sleep.

The cooking is done in the oven, a hole in the ground, within the hut. Fire is made with hard sticks rubbed to and fro into a groove on soft wood, that gradually heats up and frictions a gathering pile of dust at the end of the groove until that smoulders and is gently blown into a small flame, fed by bark and dry leaves. Long ago there was only cooking in the sun, by the sun's heat; breadfruit were left until hot and fierce from long over-ripeness. Men and women were tired of eating like this. The food was hard for the stomach. Then one day a man from Betailamp was walking in the forest when he saw, in the high wind over the tree tops, the branches of two trees rubbing against each other, and he stopped and watched, for it looked as if they were as man and woman to each other in their movement, such as he had not seen in trees before. Suddenly light redness rose from the rubbing; again this was such as he had not seen before. And he ran home, rubbed sticks, made this colour again and found fire. To-day there lives Paiwar of his line, and he is chief of Batailamp.

Stones are made hot on the fire. The yam is pulped on sharp sticks or scraped over rough coral stones, so that it is a thick treacle. The flesh of old coconuts are scraped into fine powder and from these the thick white juicy oil is squeezed by hand over the pulped yam. Into this may be put whatever is to hand—whole fish, prawns, crayfish from the reef at full moon, whole eels (if it is the time which they throng in inland mud, until it is no more mud, only eels), fragments of wild fruit, a little warbler bird; all wrapped up in cabbage leaf, and put on the hard hot stones, more stones on top, masses of leaf, dust, dung and ashes to keep in the warmth. There it is left while the sun shines. It is taken out steaming, smelling, full flavoured; nought has escaped of good for anyone. The women do most of the cooking, separately for the men and for themselves.

We have no cook-things made from the earth, such as we sometimes see on Malo island, where they have been bought at great price from the people of Santo, who make them in the north. When we clear our gardens we find many pieces of such pots scattered about, some carved with faces, fine patterns of lines with some meaning. These were brought by a great flood that came over all the land. A child broke down a side of his parents' secret pool, flooding the land.

Before sundown all bathe in the sea. Everyone all the time striking the water with hollowed hands, sending noise booming to frighten away shark, octopus, sting-rays. The children play and people call to each other. Laughter; and mothers rebuking the naughty ones. There is the noise of stone adzes cleaning the firewood, pigs grunt, and the fowls cluck to be fed. If there is war or the death of a fine young man, voices may be hushed, eyes will look about, less readily engrossed in the moment. The pigs grunt just the same. While the women are busy about the cooking, the men sit around in the quickly gathering dusk, talking and talking and talking of all the many things that there are to do to-morrow, discussing minutely the day that has just been passed; the words weave a pattern in the evening. The trade wind of

day dies into the land breeze of night. On all sides smoke filters out in thin columned fingers through the grass-thatched roofs of the huts. Then, perhaps, a girl, breast figured against some brightening fire, will sing a song of the long ago, one such as the song of Atchin:

" *I stop at home, all alone,*
I hear the battle rage along;
I hear now the battle swaying hither,
Swaying thither, round my love.

" *The men of Pwe-ta-a-rol-e*
Are planning evil against my love;
And I, hither, thither, go
Sighing for my dear lover.

" *The men of E-mel-e-mbe*
Bespoil the body of my dear lover;
And I, hither, thither, go
Grieving, sighing for my dear lover."

Comment:

These were a numerous people and this was the way that they lived. They were one of many tribes, scores of dialects and distinctions. In these islands there has been no wide uniformity of culture or language—as exists over thousands of islands in the east of the ocean. Here some trace descent from the mother, others from the father; some deform the skull; some make elaborate effigies of the dead. There are half a dozen methods of burial; round houses, straight houses, long houses, houses always on stones. Women naked, women in grassy skirts, in voluminous skirts of hibiscus fibre, in narrow red mat skirts or broad white ones. Tribes a few miles apart may not understand each other's language. Nevertheless there runs an incessant interchange of things and ideas, the firm roots of tradition always sending out new branches on the evergreen tree. New influences going from island to island; drifting in from far-away groups, drifting out again.

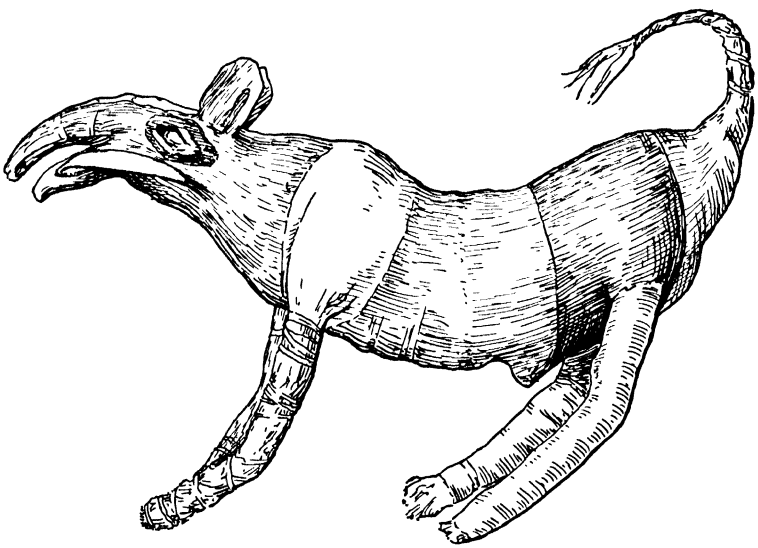
All are of one race with one broad pattern of feeling,

agriculture, stone adzes, masculine war, the fear of dissatisfied death, the urge to climb higher, a kindly creator (though he perhaps was not yet widespread at the coming of The Last Conquistador).

There is no typical tribe; each has its peculiar features. Matanavat has, for example, fine dances, elaborate pig ritual culminating in a child sacrifice that has replaced cannibalism (which is also non-existent in the northern part of the group), complex club organisation and specialisation of magic, a hereditary chieftainship not yet obliterated by the development of equal opportunity of pig ascent, most excellent breadfruit, good doctors. It lacks specialised secret societies; its carving is simple; canoe culture only mediocre; garments and red mats rudimentary as compared with Atchin or Omba; supernatural beliefs simple. I have written of Matanavat because, knowing nothing much of any culture, I came by chance to live there especially and to learn their ways. I gathered and killed pigs myself to enter their first stage towards chiefliness. The balanced system of classless capitalism, typical of the whole New Hebrides, came easy to me. I was fascinated by this intricate, unnecessary system which defeated the attempts of a damp, static environment. Every man had more than enough for himself and success; each one could do everything that was necessary. Pig business gave another motive, constant zig-zag personal progression, timed on a growth of tusk not to be hurried or made. Around this growth they centred full cycle (far more than I can here describe) of peace and war, drama, dance, religion and resurrection, and a striving for highness up a broad ladder into the blue, until a man may reach so high that he is above tabu or tradition, he is not of earth, he is a hawk or a frigate bird, he may do a new thing. I wish that I were a hawk.

It was interesting too, to find a people so obviously developing out of the crudest ideas of sex physiology into paternal beliefs; the mother's brother still with many fatherly rights. This system giving stimulus to child-bearing and fatherly respect. Near the end of this book I will describe

some other societies briefly, including a plutocratic cannibal one; and a matrilineal and very peculiar one. From experience, from many months of seeing, doing, and hearing, I have pieced together this story of Matanavat, before the white man came there. How such a culture—built up in a terrifically complex way, yet only one piece in this island kaleidoscope—was itself pieced together, I shall presently try to explain. Now it is time to welcome the advent of another type of culture that was peculiar particularly in morals and death.



PANTOMIME PIG

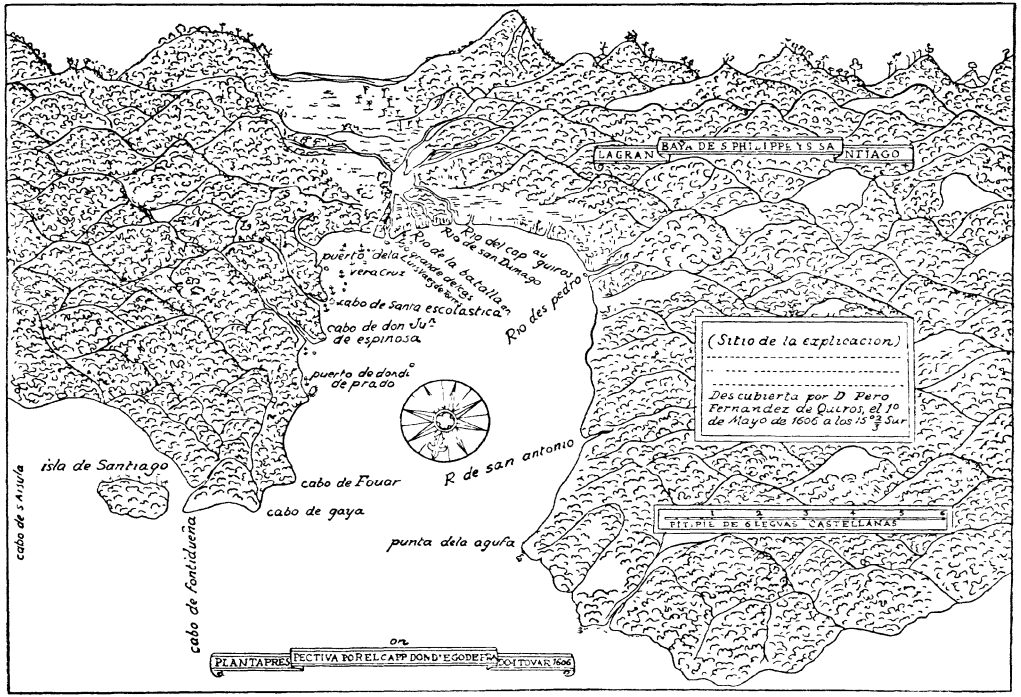
eight inches high, in three colours; made of coconut fibre with real tusks; used in Na-leng dances.

II

(1607–1827)

A SPANIARD finds the New Hebrides in 1606; believes he has discovered the long-sought Terra Australis. Incredible rituals, possessions and utterances, as shown in original documents. Catholic conversion with razor and stocks. *Who has the guns?* The Spaniards soon sail away; they leave the native culture, slightly soiled, to its own development for 160 years.

Great explorers travel the ocean in outrigger canoes. They bring new conceptions. They are followed by a Frenchman; then Cook, Bligh and others; bloody incidents and quaint observations. The pattern gathers closer.



THE FIRST MAP OF THE NEW HEBRIDES: QUIROS, 1606, IN BIG BAY, ESPIRITU SANTO
(compare Map VII)

THE LAST CONQUISTADOR

WHILE I LIVED for a time in leaf huts in the mountains of Santo, finding there new birds and beauties for the British Museum and myself respectively, often of an evening I would see in the great Bay of Saint Philip and Saint James far away below: cloud galleons riding on the on-on swell that runs (in any weather) twenty miles wide and forty deep down the bay, framed in this vast stadium of deep green mountain. There a peregrine falcon perched on the world's top may look down across the centuries to the surf piling on the stony shore and the *Almiranta*, paint-worn on its long careless journey, nosing for an anchorage long since sunk in some fierce storm.

" *Beach provincia aurifera* "

While the men of Matanavat and a thousand other tribes were busy about their business . . . ten thousand miles away a man was writing memorials innumerable to great white chiefs.

Columbus made the white world look westward. As his America became established, some sought new lands. Thus in 1564 Lope Garcia de Castro, Viceroy of Peru, consulted with astronomers and mathematicians as to what lay farther west across the Pacific. He caused Mendana to be sent west and find the Solomons. Mendana's lieutenant on the horrible bloody 1595 expedition was Pedro Fernandez de Quiros, a young pilot who gained on this voyage a reputation as " an officer of known worth, experienced in all the perils of the sea, and learned in many things of the heaven."

A first great geographical expansion of Europeans was contracting. Philip III, King Sovereign of the World, ably

piloted by the Duke of Lerma, was sliding great Spain into ruin. Quiros was almost the last of Spain's incredible explorers, fully one of them, though he lacked a supporting determination to control others, had a restless puerility in administration. He had children, but he soon neglected his family. Never a womaniser, he was generally ready to embrace a good-looking black boy. The poet Bermudez was his life's companion, and has left us beautiful worded accounts, in which he describes Quiros as "Lusitanian master, star of gallant Portuguese."

Quiros knew from experience what it was like to make these voyages into the unknown. Nothing could be more uncomfortable or dangerous. So when he got home from Mendana's voyage, he got all the mappes he could lay hands on and started brooding. He found that those marked a great continent, Terra Australis, stretching right across the south Pacific and up to the south of the Solomons. A great south land was sponsored by Pomponius Mela in A.D. 50, helped along by Ptolemy and Marco Polo. Now growing science had calculated its existence from its theories of land balance. And the Terra had an additional attraction: "Beach provincia aurifera." Quiros saw across knowledge this great continent to be found, its millions of souls to be saved. The example of Columbus showed that to do such things demanded all a man's cunning, persistence and life. He devoted the rest of his life to the realisation of this dream, unswervingly. He somehow crawled over every obstacle that blacks and his fellow whites could devise until after weathering every danger and despair, he was literally killed by Councils and Committees. It would be absurd to suggest that any man ever wrote more petitions. His would have been the work of a madman, had he not shown that he could back up his dream with action. He was the best pilot of his time; inventor of instruments; one of the first to distil seawater to fresh. Yet one cannot fail to be impressed by the muddled simplicity of his organised mind, as indicated in innumerable statements such as "I mean that the most minute circumstance that has ceased to do harm may have

its effect on the course of events." The relation of his expedition to this history abundantly proves this remark.

Organising

With his dream in his pocket he approached the Viceroy of Mexico. He was referred to Spain; off he went. On the way he was caught in a gale that sunk many boats in the convoy, delayed them a year, while Cumberland's fleet threatened them in Cartagena. Arrived in Europe, it is a Holy Year. He buys a stout staff and sets off on foot to Rome. Arrived there he approaches the Duke of Stresa who happily sponsors him to the Pope. Quiros draws for Pope Clement VIII a vivid enough picture of his continent teeming with people who could know nothing of the true faith, but who must indeed be waiting only for these glad tidings to reach them, so that they may embrace the Virgin. In 1602 he returns to Spain with Papal letters and blessed rosaries. He is just in time to gather the last flickering splinters from Spain's dying fires. He boldly accosts the King as the Escorial convent Philip shows his " accustomed clemency and benignity "; and (Quiros hints) " inefficiency." There are many delays. " I was forced (he says) to be more importunate to his Majesty, submitting new memorials every day." Politicians obstructed him: " During this time I had much trouble at court and I made a long discourse on the life passed by those who had business to prosecute there." He became increasingly outspoken. At last he got his papers, including the King's Order stating that " His Holiness (the Pope) was pleased with his proposals in so much that he conceded many spiritual gifts for those parts (if I do order the voyage to be taken)."[1]

[1] These gifts include a special dispensation for absolution. Quiros had learned the need for this on Mendana's expedition when a ghastly accident occurred. For the chaplain had died and left his vicar doomed to an awful damnation. The soul of that era in white civilisation is in that lone vicar's cry: " Oh, my God! how great is the punishment that You send for my sins. You leave me, O Lord, without a priest to whom to confess. O Father Antonio de Serpa! Happy are you to have died after receiving the sacrament. Who would not change places with you, and not remain in mine, in which I am so abandoned, for I can confess all who are here, but have no one to confess me? " These are the problems of exploration that the organiser can only learn by experience. (The vicar died.)

At last Quiros set out on the first lap of the long journey which was to end in the New Hebrides. This voyage was typical of all that he undertook. For at Guadeloupe the boat's crew was attacked by the natives and sixty killed. A storm then smashed some of the accompanying boats. The frigate he was in hit the rocks. Out of what was left a new boat was built and he sailed off to the American mainland for help. After great hardships he brought back relief to those who had remained; they had lived on a ration of two ounces of bread for ten days. When at last he reached Panama, no one there took the slightest notice of his royal and papal orders. He had no money and they would give him none.

A muleteer sues him for debt. He lives like a pig. One day he goes on to the old wood balcony of a hospital to see a religious procession. The balcony collapses. A priest is killed. Quiros spends ten weeks in hospital. He has no money to pay. After all sorts of miseries—this man lives for his dream, an epic of bathos and bravery, a book of its own—he reaches Peru. There, too, they take no notice. So he gets to work at his hobby, or to put it in his own way, " I was forced to continue my memorials to the Viceroy, and to set forth all the details I deemed necessary." His memorials had downed Pope and King. What hope for a Viceroy ? Long after they are due and more than two and a half years after leaving Spain, he is given ships. The *Capitana* of 150 tons, the *Almiranta* of 120 tons; and a launch, *Los Tres Reyes*. There are 130 men and six friars. Cost: 184,000 ducats. Second in command, Torres (Luis Vaez de), a man of great determination who later discovered the straits north of Australia.

His plans at long last matured, Quiros arranged to celebrate his farewell by a procession in sackcloth for the blessing of the standards. " But the envy which is so powerful put an end to this laudable intention." Complaining bitterly at such obstruction, he received a last blight in the person of Juan Ochoa de Bilboa, Chief Pilot attached by the Viceroy, a man who subsequently " did me much injury."

" *Gulf of Our Lady of Loretto*"

The final departure was not so bad. Ships fired their guns; there were crowds in the thronged Port of Callao.

So soon as they were out of sight of land, Quiros gave a taste of things to come. He renamed the whole Pacific " Gulf of Our Lady of Loretto "; for she was their patron. The Franciscans chanted loudly: the Te Deum. The sails drew them steadily west-south-west. There were many aboard whose eyes gleamed at the by-now-familiar phrase "Beach provincia aurifera." A month later they were in swell-run waters and the crew began crying out against going so far south in winter. Torres and Bilboa were quarrelling, so Quiros " made the Admiral embrace the Chief Pilot and make friends." Quiros was unwell, which, with the swell and the angry spirit of the crew, seems to have caused him to change his whole plan of running south. He headed north-north-west, with lame excuses. If he had gone on he could have found at the least New Zealand; he would have realised his dream in part. He lost his chance. Antarctic discovery was left to another nation and another century; but Quiros, plugging steadily north-north-west, was heading for our history.

It was not a straightforward run, of course; Quiros never had one like that. The men were getting good rations—1½ lb. biscuit, 1 lb. meat, 2 oz. bacon, 1 oz. pulses, ½ gallon drinking-water. They prayed regularly; if one blasphemed he went without food on that day. No cursing, dice or cards. But Bermudez, in his secretarial capacity, wrote: " According to what afterwards became known, worse things had been said of him than if he had been a Turk." To this " the captain replied that it was not a new thing to him, for in other voyages he had sailed with men who were easily wearied. It was not to be desired that vile mothers should bring forth such harmful and ugly monsters." Matters came to a head three months out, when the mutinous Chief Pilot declared that they had gone 2,220 leagues, which was too far. Quiros, incapable of coping with such problems himself, called a meeting of his little fleet, " in order that one may

state in public the number of leagues he believes we are from the port of Callao, also the reason why we have not yet come to the island of Santa Cruz." A wrangle ensued that would have made a British sea-captain's beard drop out. It was finally demonstrated that the Chief Pilot was lying (by over a thousand miles). A typical conversation concluded the affair, thus:

"The Chief Pilot (Bilboa), who became agitated, and again went up into his deck-house. Thence he declared that he came to serve King, and not for pay, and that he had worked hard in fitting out the ships. To all this the Captain (Quiros) replied that all present were aware that without knowing him, or owing him anything, nor wanting him, but only to do him good he had been taken, but the Captain had seen that, by his inefficiency, it became impossible that he could be of any use. Finally the Chief Pilot showed himself to be ungrateful. The Captain said that it was enough to know that it was incredible how much he had said, and that it was not to be hoped from his mind that his work would be well to the point. In fine, in the ship it was said that there was one who did not wish that lands should be discovered, nor that anything should be found; and that the Captain, seeing the state of affairs, and the obligation to all, said to the Admiral (Torres) that he was to take away the Chief Pilot as a prisoner. Presently it was reported to the Captain that the ship was in a state of mutiny, owing to what he had said in public; 'is there one that objects, it being for the royal service, that I turn the Chief Pilot out of the ship?' One who spoke in his favour was ordered to hold his tongue, being told that the day before he had said just the contrary.

"The Captain caused a block to be put at the yard-arm. . . .

"The great mistake was not to have thought of bringing irons, fetters and chains. . . .

"There were not wanting in the ship those that were tired of her, and they asked the Captain to let them play

a little, and that the winnings should be given to the souls in purgatory. . . ."

Quiros showed himself incapable of handling his men; nothing happened to the mutinous pilot.

Very High Land Ahead

Four months after leaving Peru, the wind increased in force, with thick weather. The ship was hove-to and drifting in the tides. When it cleared, Quiros ordered sail to be made. " Put the ship's head where they like, for where God will guide them may be right," and as a pious afterthought " as it was south-west, it might continue." Before sunrise on the following day sailor Francisco Rodriguez, from the masthead of the *Capitana*, cried with cheerful voice, " Very high land ahead." As they came close they saw smoke; natives called the launch to come closer. There were bananas and palms growing on this high, smoking volcano. But the shore offered no anchorage. This first land to be sighted by known Europeans was Meralav, the now extinct volcanic cone in the Banks or northern New Hebrides. They sailed through the Banks, scattering nice names—San Marcos, Nostra Senora de la Luz, Margaritana, Las Lagrimas da San Pedro, Cardona, La Clementina, Portales de Belen, Verjel, and Virgen Maria; forgotten names. This last, Virgen Maria [now called Gaua],[1] was the first upon which they landed. Perhaps on that day some native had sung the Gaua song:

" *Appoint your messenger: I have uttered my speech.*
A day of rain floods indeed
Has resounded through every land.

[1] I have used the renderings of island names which I believe to be accurate, at the same time in most general use at the present time in the group. Each island has a variety of names—e.g. Gaua = Lakona, Santa Maria, Vergen Maria, Lakon, St. Marie; or Meralav, Merlav, Merilav, Meralava, Merlava, Star Peak, Pic d'Etoile, Nostra Senora de la Luz, etc. ; Omba = Oba, Opa, Aoba, Lepers' Isle, Île des Lepres, Lombenben. My renderings sometimes differ from those of the Committee on Geographical Nomenclature, 4th General List of Oceanic Names, Royal Geographical Society, 1931. Some of their renderings cannot be accepted as final or satisfactory; the whole subject is very confusing.

I have anointed my lips,
Very sacred every morning.
The foam has splashed as rain over the land
The wind has come with a rushing sound.
And a calm lies on the harbour.
I will charm the clouds that open over Meralav—my lips have pierced the clouds."

On this beautiful island they estimated that there were 200,000 people. Four canoes with unarmed natives came out; they showed no fear. They gave the Spaniards coconuts. No doubt, seeing these men, the crew now perused the detailed instructions which their captain had issued on the subject of dealing with blacks.

As Fathers to Children

" The barter should be conducted by one of us, who should always give the natives to understand that the things are of great value, as they really are for them; and because they do not value their own things much and ours but a little."

" Natives never give up anything they have about them, nor do they understand our covetousness."

Most significantly:

" Never ill-use them nor detain them, unless it is to let them return with clothes and presents,"

which is highly commendable, but not quite clear until you read:

" Chief or other natives who appear to be of consequence should be kept in the ship as hostages."

The whole attitude should be " as fathers to children." Thus primed the Spaniards approached their children. The first contact is so perfectly a part of the two impacting civilisations and intelligences, that I cannot do better than quote from Quiros' account:

" While they were looking at each other and talking by signs, a man rushed down from some rocks behind.

He was well made, of a clear mulatto colour, the hairs of his beard and head brown and crisp, and rather long. He was robust and vigorous. With a jump he got into the boat, and, according to the signs he made, he appeared to ask: ' Where do you come from ? What do you want ? What do you seek ? ' Assuming that these were the questions, one of our people said, ' We come from the east, we are Christians, we seek you, and we want you to be ours.' He showed himself to be so bold, that our people understood that he wanted to make us believe that to him we were a small affair. He presently was undeceived, for he was seized and brought to the ship, where he came on board so fearlessly that we had to confess he was no coward. The Captain embraced him, and asked about the other land by signs, of which he appeared to give extensive information. He pointed to several places on the horizon, counted on his fingers several times, and ended by saying, ' Martin Cortal.'

" It was very pleasant to hear him, to see how lively he was, how vigorous, how agreeable among our people.

" The night having come on, the launch arrived, and the pilot of her told the Captain that they were bringing a native prisoner, secured by a hatchway chain. But he broke it; and, taking part of it and the padlock with him on one foot, he jumped overboard. The Captain heard this with great regret, fearing that the man had been drowned. To make sure of the other, he ordered him to be given his supper and to be put in the stocks, but on a bed where he could sleep. He also ordered that the ships should go in search of the one that had escaped. Going in search at ten at night the look-out man heard a voice from the water, and made out the place where the native, being tired out, was struggling with death. To the cries of the swimmer came answer from the prisoner, in such doleful tones that it caused grief to all to see the one and hear the other. The swimmer was got on board, to the joy of himself and us, and to our surprise that he could have sustained such a weight on his foot for four hours.

> The padlock and chain were at once taken off, and he was given his supper, with wine to drink, and then put in the stocks, that he might not try it on again. There both remained all night, talking sadly and in confusion. At dawn, the Captain, pretending that he quarrelled with all for putting them in the stocks, let them out. He then ordered the barber to shave off their beards and hair, except *one* tuft on the side of their heads. He also ordered their finger nails and toe nails to be cut with scissors, the use of which they admired. He caused them to be dressed in silks of divers colours, gave them hats with plumes, tinsel, and other ornaments, knives, and a mirror, into which they looked with caution. Arrived at the beach they were told to jump out, which they could hardly believe . . . It appeared that he was a chief, for all respected and obeyed his orders. . . . In fine, a good understanding was established."

(This might be read again.)

The account emphasises the enormous population, the teeming life, the great quantity of pigs, fowls, and bananas and coconuts. Pilot Leza says: " The friendship they showed us was so great, that they made bold to get into our boats, with children at their breasts." The whites were loaded with fruits and meat. The women gave them their children to fondle. The natives were attractive, energetic, very numerous, and friendly. But that afternoon some trouble arose. " Countless arrows " were discharged, and one sailor wounded in the cheek. The Spaniards retaliated, hitting three natives with arquebus fire. Uncompromising Admiral Torres puts Virgen Maria in a coconut shell:

> " To the eastward was an island not very high, and pleasant in appearance. It was very full of black people. There we caught two in some canoes, whom we clothed and gave them presents, and the next day we put them ashore. In return for this they shot a flight of arrows at a Spaniard. They are a people that never miss an opportunity of doing mischief."

In this climate it takes a long time to grow a nice beard —a mark of a full man. Chin and head are sacred. What should a stranger make of the stocks? While in a man's hair live many fat lice—valuable source of a salty flavour that the Gaua people love. So the Spaniards sowed their fatherly harvest in their land of the Virgin Mary.

Never with Goodwill

Sailing on south, they saw to the south-east a long range of high mountains, La Clementina. To the continent seekers, weary of the way, they looked just right, and to Quiros "all appeared to be a continuous continental land." Pilot Leza voiced the public feeling when he said, "All this land in sight is very extensive and very high, and does not seem to be less than continental. May God see fit that it be so!" It was, in fact, five islands.

Then they came to the mouth of a great bay; arrow and arquebus enjoyed some light exchanges en route, when near shore. Into the bay they went, minute beneath its mountains fanned across this little world in a full-dress setting of seeming permanence. Here, 1606 years after the birth of Jesus, they found the end to their quest, as any man would. They found a good port, Vera Cruz (now disappeared). Named the whole Terra Australis del Espiritu Santo; the farthest land of the holy spirit.

Torres writing to the King of Spain handles this matter in his pungent style:

> "We discovered a large bay, well peopled, and very fertile in yams and fruits, hogs and fowls. They are all black people, and naked. They fight with bows, darts and clubs. They did not choose to have peace with us, though we frequently spoke to them, and made presents: and they never with their goodwill let us set foot on shore. This bay is very refreshing. . . ."

Conservative Leza reported beautiful plains, everything peopled by natives who "seemed to cover the land, far up to the mountain tops all was inhabited." On the first

day a boat went out. There was a great assembly of natives and " some were induced to come on the beach, where by signs they asked us to land. As we would not, they flung certain fruits into the water, which were collected by us." Next day: " The Captain ordered the Admiral to go on shore with a party of soldiers, and try by all possible means to catch some natives, so as to establish peace and friendship, based on the good work we intend to do them . . . (Spaniards) kept waving a white cloth to those on shore, to see if anyone would come to be regaled and dressed, but none of them wished to do so. They, however, put their bows on the ground, and told us to land and get water, and they gave us a fruit which is very good to eat roasted."

Another attempt to make contact:

" A great crowd came out to see us, men, women and children. So we waved to them, and they came near our boats, and that they might not shun us a dress of silk was given, having been brought for that purpose. The principal native was much pleased at this. They called to one of our people to dress him, and, with this object in view, two sailors got into the water, and waded on shore where the natives stood. They all began to embrace the sailors, and the sailors to embrace them with great rejoicing. Presently we told them to put down their weapons, which they did with goodwill. They were dressed in the clothes, and they gave us much fruit to eat, including many bunches of plantains."

So much for these folk who, according to Torres, "never with their goodwill let us set foot ashore." Surely it is time for some savagery. . . . . Luckily soon after " Natives were seen in the woods, and to frighten them some muskets were fired in the air. A soldier who lost patience, or who had forgotten his orders, fired low and killed a native. A Moor who was the drummer, cut off the head and one foot of the dead, and hung the body in the branch of a tree." (Quiros' account.) Three native chiefs then boldly approached to parley; the carcase was waved before them.

A YAM GARDEN WITH THE YAM VINES GROWING WELL UP THE TRAINING POLES

The people are those who live on the west side of the Bay of St. Philip and St. James, where Quiros in 1606 discovered his Terra Australis

" The chief showing great sorrow, went back to where the people were."

Leza says: ·

> " Seventy men from the ships were got ready. When they landed, they were to take possession in the name of His Majesty. This was done and a cross was set up in memory of the event. . . . Three of the principal men came to us, and it appeared that one was king over the others, for all did his bidding. Speaking with us, we asked them to lay down their arms. Then their king, with his two councillors, both old and grey-haired, drew a line on the sand, saying we were not to cross it, and that they would lay down their arms if we would do the same. . . . Our Admiral (i.e. Torres), seeing that they put this limit upon us, told them to go away, because we would come farther, and well armed. They retired, but skirmishing with great noise; and, as their audacity and insolence was too great, he ordered some arquebuses to be fired off. One of them fell dead, and others fled into the forest wounded. Presently he (Torres) ordered the dead body to be hung by one foot to a tree, that it might be seen by all."

Fighting then commenced. The natives showed determination, but they were hopelessly out-weaponed.

> " We made some ambuscades, and in one particularly, the Chief and many others were killed. Some fell there, while others fled in agony into the forest. We dragged away the body of their Chief in their sight; and, retiring a little, they came back towards it. They moved the arms and head, and called. They carried the body away, so that they were seen no more."

All friendship between the two colours thus became impossible, though it had apparently started with the best chances. The Spaniards do not seem to have realised for one moment that they were dealing with ordinary human beings. In the sweet words of secretary-poet, Bermudez,

" such was the end of the peace that the Captain hoped for and sought for, as the means of discovering the grandeur of the land and all that was contained in it, and such was the intention that the Captain had, which was but a sound."

A World for Its Heaven and Earth

Quiros was ready to go on being indefinite; but second in command the Admiral, Torres, was not. He wanted colonisation by conquest, without any of Quiros' good natured friendlinesses with razor and stocks. First the formal occupation, grandiose proceedings that show their faith in the continent. From the mountain top, seeing the sea on all sides, these must appear very pathetic.

The bay had been named San Felipe y Santiago, with capes St. Ursula, Don Juan de Espinosa, San Scholastica, etcetera; rivers Salvador, Battle and the Jordan, wide as the Guadalquivir at Seville.

Quiros declared:

> " Knowing further that for the royal authority, the better establishment of the work, and the discipline of the people, the union of their wills, and for other hidden reasons, and for them altogether, it was very necessary and obligatory to create a ministry of war and marine, so that by land and sea there might be established such order that what we desired might be better secured . . . seeing, also, how much it imported that the roads should be guarded by escorts, and that there should be ambuscades to alarm the enemy and secure our safety . . ."

With this high intention in view he appointed nineteen new titles and officers; Torres was made camp master and immediately became active in preparing a settlement on land.

Quiros then assembled his men and addressed them in the following manner (though at much greater length than can be quoted); after much about his duty to his King, noble thoughts, and " firmness and hope, which are the qualities needed to achieve great and famous deeds, the more when the honour and reward are to be seen and palpable; which

are two things so sought after and loved in this present life, and the want of which causes what happens to be evil." He goes on to declare:

> " The present subject of which is to be announced to you, gentlemen, is that of an Order, the title of which is to be the ' Knights of the Holy Ghost,' with the constitutions and precepts to be kept and professed, guided by such lofty and Christian ends as will be seen in them when the Lord is served, as I shall be able to show. All is done in confidence that His Holiness and His Majesty will be served in payment of my continual labours and good desires, by confirming this Order, with advantageous privileges, as long as the world endures . . . and I, the Captain, Don Pedro Fernandez de Quiros, give to each one of your mercies this blue cross, which presently you are to place on your breasts, being the insignia by which the Knights of the Order of the Holy Ghost are to be known; and for the persons in whose charge . . . if I should fail, is to be placed the discovery, pacification, and possession of all these parts that we are discovering and may discover in time to come. I pray heartily that the Knights may know and esteem the value of this cross, gained with determination to win much higher honours . . . and they must bear in mind that though it has not cost much money, labour, sickness, nor time, that which it remains in their power to pay in this very high enterprise is very great, for it is now known that the enterprise holds a world for its heaven and its earth."

According to Bermudez, " All this was listened to with much pleasure and accepted with satisfaction."

That night there was a great display of fireworks, bells, drums and dancing on board. The natives were much excited, but not so excited as Quiros, who, after mature thought said: " Gentlemen, this is the eve of my long-desired day, for which there should be no empty hand nor person for whom the appointed good things are not welcome, and as much more as the part he takes may deserve."

Pressed by the Feet of Christian Men

Next morning things went ahead with a rush. Torres, forbidden to sleep ashore, was making a fort of branches with four cannon, before dawn. In it the monks also prepared an altar; it became " Our Lady of Loretto," first Christian church in the New Hebrides. (Could Quiros only have seen down the zig and zag of three hundred coming years to the failure of so many churches on this beach, the struggles between three denominations, all failing when the local planter invented his own sect, rum communioned!) Three companies were drawn up on the beach. " The banners were fluttering and brightening the whole scene, received their tribute from discharges of muskets and arquebuses." Quiros knelt and said " O Land ! sought for so long, intended to be found by so many, and so desired by me ! " An orange wood cross was then processioned, held by Torres, priests kneeling. The cross was raised as Bermudez read a most solemn pronouncement; he had also composed a poem:

> " *Behold how we have found these lands,*
> *Now clearly seen by mortal ken,*
> *Those are regions now made known,*
> *Pressed by feet of Christian men.*
>
> *Unknown no longer is their fate,*
> *Now full knowledge points them there,*
> *No longer hid in fleecy clouds,*
> *God his secrets now lays bare.*"[1]

[1] Bermudez, born Seville 1585, wrote at least eleven plays and three volumes of poetry, including *God the Best Guardian*, a singular mixture of sacred and profane (cf. Ticknor); *Hispalica* written three years after Quiros' death. He often intrudes his words into Quiros' accounts, as with " In fine, he was sweet in his laughter and smiles, and his whole appearance was cheerful. Being rich is so many parts and graces, he would be judged to be very beautiful for a girl; but he was actually a youth of about thirteen years. This was he who at first sight stole away the hearts of all on board the ship; he to whom all offered their gifts, and to whom the Captain, with great persuasion, desired to present a dress of silk, which he put on with much grace. It was pain to the Captain that the youth could not be kept, to take as a proof of the greatness of God in those parts."

There follow the reading of six possessions, " which our people heard with joy and gladness, the eyes of many filling with tears." In the first possession " I, Captain, Pedro Fernandez de Quiros, in the name of the most Holy Trinity, take possession of all the islands that I have newly discovered, and desire to discover, as far as the South Pole." (A technique of land claiming that has since been successfully emulated by many whites in the islands.) He took possession of the continent in the name of everyone else he could think of. In claiming for the Catholic Church he said " which I do with joy and to the end that to all the natives, the whole and sacred Evangel may be preached zealously and openly."

Leza reports him: " They may found, administer and maintain their professed charity in all the hospitals there may be in these parts: it being so necessary that the natives may become acquainted with all our procedure and feel the devotion and love that our suffering for them, and the curing of their infirmities, and the other good things we do for them, so justly merit." Then the Father Commissary and all assembled " offered prayers that those idolators should abandon their abominable superstitions and worship of the Devil, and by virtue of sermons, should turn to a knowledge of the true Lord."

The reading being finished all cry with a loud voice " Long live the King of Spain, Don Philip III, our Lord ! " Three banners unfold: four masses said: all guns fired and " all shouted with infinite joy, and many times ' Long live the faith of Christ ' ! " Two slaves were liberated to complete the ecstasy of this wonderful day.

The Knights of the Holy Ghost have a Field Day

But the work was not over. After a fantastic argument with the lately mutinous Chief Pilot, which Quiros concluded by saying, " that before God he could justify his acts in giving information, pardoning, or giving hope. When such means were of no avail, he held the rod in his hands, giving such blows as the culprit deserved," he had a siesta. Awakening

refreshed he proceeded to name the city " Nouva Jerusalema." Immediately there followed the election of " such officers as is usual in a city that was the capital of a province." There were 13 magistrates, a secretary to the municipality, two J.P.s, a chief constable and various business ministers. Don Antonio de Chaves was appointed Registrar of Mines. Then all swore before the cross; the Father Commissary was in tears. Overwrought, the Captain went on board, where arrived, " he ordered that block on the yard-arm to be taken down . . . for the Captain could not believe that persons with such an honourable destiny would do things the punishment of which would be the rope."

To complete this glory, that same afternoon Torres was ordered to take a party inland, where they found better farms and villages than ever before, at one village the natives occupied with their dances. These were put to flight, so that the Spaniards were able to take " all their food, which they ate at their ease." Leza says of the same incident that after all the ritual a hundred men and the Holy Father (so recently over-set with weeping) went inland and took many very large pigs and " fruits, with which we loaded ourselves and went to go on board." So ended this epoch-making day, whose only influence on the New Hebrides was that it started, by that evening theft of foods, an epoch of theft and piracy lasting three centuries.

What could the black make of all this? These unfamiliar people whom they had welcomed as something supernatural, turned out to be not only sudden, unaccountable butchers, who " did not choose to have peace, though we frequently spoke with them, and made presents: and they never with goodwill set foot on shore "; but also treacherous thieves, men who mutilated corpses and even broke the rules of war so far as to kill a chief. To the natives it seemed incredible that there were people who could actually *steal pigs*. That made the breach irreparable. And news of the white man went in canoes all over the group. But the Spaniards, finding that their guns gave them a power which the natives

could in no way combat, grew braver, all conquering. There was no further pretence. The case of the boys and the goats is a nice example of normal technique.

Charade : *Three Boys and Two Goats*

Torres was sent inland with thirty soldiers "to reconnoitre a certain height where they found a large and pleasant valley, with villages. We caught three boys, the oldest about 7 years of age, and 20 pigs. With these we began to retreat, and the natives, with vigour and bravery, attacked. The chiefs came out to the encounter, and by their charges forced us to lose the ground that we were gaining. Arrived at a certain pass, our people found the rocks occupied by many natives, who were animated by the desire to do us as much harm as possible." Leza illuminates the incident thus: " We made a rapid attack, and though they began to cry out and run away we pressed upon them and did great execution, also capturing many extremely beautiful women; but we let them go because our General (Quiros) did not wish any woman to be brought on board. We also caught 3 boys. We retired the way we came, there met us on the road a great number of barbarians . . . that day we fought in a manner that merited any reward."

They reached the ship without losing a man. Then there was a certain person who said in a loud voice: " Thirty pigs would be better eating than three boys." This erroneous statement annoyed Quiros, who favoured the lads, and said " with much feeling that he would rather have one of these children than the whole world besides." He concluded a considerable speech on the subject with the following words: " I give the blame to my sins, and to those alone. And how much better it would be for the person who spoke such nonsense if he had given praise to God, who in a way so strange and unthought-of saved these three souls—a thing which we must believe to have been predestined."

This kidnapping infuriated the natives, who for some days attacked with the utmost persistence, attempting to sack the

"city." Indeed Leza remarks that "they seemed to have come with some evil intention." So Torres was sent ashore with the three boys to placate the natives and also, as Quiros puts it, "as a decoy to induce the natives to come, so as to take them to the ships, and let them return." After giving the natives "a few volleys," one of the boys began to shout, at which the father boldly returned and talked to his son. The other boys were revealed dressed in their silks, when "two natives waded into the water up to their breasts, showing by this, and by their joy during all the time the sweet discourse lasted, that they were the fathers of the boys." They asked to have their sons back. "Our men said that if they brought some pigs and fowls we would give up the boys." An hour later a pig was produced.

"Thinking that we would give one of the boys in exchange. In order to take him, one of them waded into the water to the boat and, when he saw the boys, he begged for them." The boat took the pig, then made a clear Quirotic statement, to the effect that "*for each boy they must give 30 pigs, and they might give as many as they had in the land, for they would not get them*," adding that "with this we took leave, the boys weeping when they saw their fathers go away."

At this stage two goats were put ashore from the ship (for fun). "They began to rejoice over them, making great shouting. This went on for six hours, and the intention was that they should take the goats for breeding purposes. Seeing that we would not give them their sons, they joined in one body and retired." So Torres "ordered that they should be given a volley, on which they fled into the woods, and we took the goats on board again."

"Then the biggest boy (age 7), who was afterwards named Pablo, said to the captain, not only once, but many times, with signs of great affliction, '*Teatali*'; which was supposed to mean that he wanted to go on shore. The captain replied: 'Silence, child! You know not what you ask. Greater good awaits you than in the sight and the communion with heathen parents and friends.' Pablo and

his two companions were taken to America. They died within the year.[1]

And all in the name of Jesus.

Including the Two Islands of England and Ireland

There followed many forays, decoys, killings and processions (notably at the Feast of Corpus Christi). The birds sang; " on board at early dawn a sweet harmony from thousands of blackbirds, nightingales, and others. The mornings and afternoons were enjoyable from the pleasant odours emitted from trees and many kinds of flowers, together with the sweet basil. A bee was also seen, and harvest flies were heard buzzing."

But things were not going well. Discontent, nostalgia and native resistance were pressing. It was decided to set sail. Then the departure was delayed because many were made very sick from fish poisoning. Finally, fifty days after their arrival, June 1606, there was an extraordinary confusion about getting away. There seems little doubt that Quiros, sick from the fish, was led astray by his men, who took control and sailed out, deliberately losing touch with the ship commanded by Torres. Torres said to the King of Spain: " From within this bay, and from the most sheltered part of it, the *Capitana* departed at one hour past midnight, without any notice given to us, and without making any signal. . . . But my temper was different from that of Pedro Fernandez de Quiros." So Torres went on to discover the straits between Australia and New Guinea ; to die there. Quiros headed at first for Santa Cruz ; then more trouble on board, so back for America. Back to a life of the old penury, scorn, and daily memorialising. For seven years he wrote

[1] Quiros tells a charming anecdote of Pablo's little black playmate, Pedro, who " went about dressed in silk, with a cross on his breast, and so astonished and pleased at all he saw, and at his cross, that he looked about and showed it, putting his hand on it, and named it many times. It is worthy of note that the cross elevated the mind even of a barbarian."

The influence of the cross was felt also by the distracted fathers and their friends, in whose area " it is to be noted that a cross, which had been left, was found raised in its place, and the natives had put branches and flowers round it."

memorials: fifty in fifty months. The first on the flyleaves of a pamphlet, selling his clothes to print it. To defray expenses of the third he pawned the royal banner under which he had taken possession of his continent. The fiftieth is 108 pages long. Their theme is:

> "All that has been lost in America may be gained in Australis del Espiritu Santo. It seems as if God kept the better and richer lands to the last, and for a man of such good intent. Hasten my lords, hasten the measures for the greatness and necessity of this enterprise: it is only for this once. . . . The length is as much as all Europe and Asia Minor, as far as the Caspian and Persia, with all the islands of the Mediterranean, including the two islands of England and Ireland."

He received eventually five hundred ducats for all his services! All his results were suppressed and some are probably still unknown. The lack of honour extended to him at his home-coming was in part due to the reports of certain of his crew, such as the mutinous Tobar, who wrote to the King: "that which Pedro Fernandez de Quiros, the impostor, discovered were some reefs and small islands, for his crew mutinied without that talker seeing it, for he was in his cabin aft. He was not listened to, and they told him to keep in his cabin and hold his tongue. He thus saved his life . . . he might as well be confined as a lunatic . . . such low and mendacious fellows ought to be of no account."

Quiros died without honour. He left in his will an extraordinary estate.

A Weird Well-meaning Will

> "I desire much that in these regions which it has been the will of God to show me, and in all those still hidden but, no doubt, as well peopled as those I saw, there be designated and fabricated some nests without brambles, nor other kinds of thorns, refuges and pleasant abiding-places of pelicans, who first tear their flesh, open their bosoms, and clearly show entrails and heart; and, not content with

that, they should give to these people dishes cooked in many ways in the braziers of enlightened charity being the pots and pans of piety and pity, and the table service of all equity; and that for drink there should be the sweat of their brows, if they prefer not giving the blood of their veins; all this with pure and clear love, always without ever a step backwards. I should not wish, in no way whatever, that among these new and tender people there should come to settle and to live, or to enter into grand palaces for their nests, any falcons, or sakers, or other birds of prey which, circling and dissimulating, spring suddenly on their prey and grasp them with cruel talons, and with their fierce and sharp beaks tear them into two thousand pieces, without ever being gorged, or picking the bones when there is no flesh left on them. . . . An example of this is in the Indies with their islands. . . . I answer for them, and say in this wise, that the forces, injuries, injustice, and great evils that have been done, are incredible, the methods infernal, the number not to be counted. . . . It is money, I say, that they (the whites) want, and more money, though it be torn from men's entrails. This I have seen. . . . And more also; for God and His Majesty will be served in all these regions, and the natives will be made to prosper, as is just and right, under heavy penalties, to be attempted and seen to in the great and small affairs; and this will be my reward."

The great bay is left with its towering mountains. A wooden cross stands by the river Salvador; in this island, which is one-thirtieth the size of Iceland, the leaves put there by barbaric fingers wither, the tiny brown borer beetles, termites, perhaps a sort of bee also, bore patiently into the cross till the white wood crumbles to slake sharp hill winds. The infinite number of hermit crabs wiggle above the tide line, their many coloured bodies as they pull to its last pieces the binding of a Bible, slipped from some farewell cowl. The two or three silks, that have been left, fray. The skins beneath them fester a little.

Go

A People Courageous and Sociable

The Spaniards sailed out of the bay, leaving in the words of Quiros:

"The beach bordered by a dense mass of great trees with paths leading from them to the shore. The earth is black, rich, and in large particles. It is clear of wild trees to make room for fruit trees, crops, and gardens surrounded by railings. There are many houses scattered about; and wherever a view could be obtained, many fires and columns of smoke were discerned, witnesses of a large population.

"The natives generally are corpulent, not quite black or mulatto. They have good eyes. They are clean, fond of festivities and dancing to the sound of the flute and drums made of a hollow piece of wood. It is to all appearance a people courageous and sociable, but without care for the ills of their neighbours.

"The bread they use is mainly of roots, whose young shoots climb on poles, which are put near them for that purpose. Their meat consists of a great quantity of tame pigs, some reddish, others black, white or speckled. We saw tusks, one and a quarter *palmos* in length, and a porker was killed weighing 200 lbs. The natives roast them on hearths, wrapped up in plantain leaves. It is a clean way, which gives the meat a good colour, and none of the substance is lost.

"Their fruits are large, and they have many coconuts. But from these palms they make wine, vinegar, honey, and whey to give to the sick. They eat the small palms raw and cooked. The coconuts, when green, serve for cream. Ripe, they are nourished as food and drink by land and sea. When old, they yield oil for lighting, and a curative balsam. The shells are good for cups and bottles. Of the leaves they make sails for their canoes, and fine mats, with which they cover their houses, built with trunks of trees, which are straight and high. From the grease, they get the *galagala*, used instead of tar.

" There is great abundance of fruit. [Quiros lists many, including excellent bananas, breadfruit, figs, filberts, sugar-cane, oranges, almonds, a sort of pineapple.]

" The natives make from the black clay some very well-worked pots, large and small, as well as pans and porringers in the shape of small boats. It was supposed that they made some beverage, because in the pots were found certain sour fruits. There were also seen ebony and large mother-of-pearl shells; also some moderate-size looms. In one house a heap of heavy black stones was seen, which afterwards proved to be a metal from whence silver could be extracted.

" The land is shown to be healthy, from the natives living in houses on terraces, and having so much wood, and because so many old people were seen. Nor were there any mosquitoes or ants in the land."

Finally Quiros argues that the people are indeed not uncivilised, for they have capons.

Leza tells of the:

" great quantity of pigs like those of our Spain and many cocks and hens . . . another small kind of yam, which served them as their chief food; for all the houses were full of them, placed on shelves to preserve them from the damp, that would cause them to go rotten. We loaded ourselves with this food many times, for there was no one to protect it from us, and there were few houses in which there was not a great quantity. I say that this land is so fertile that the first inhabitants would not have died of hunger."

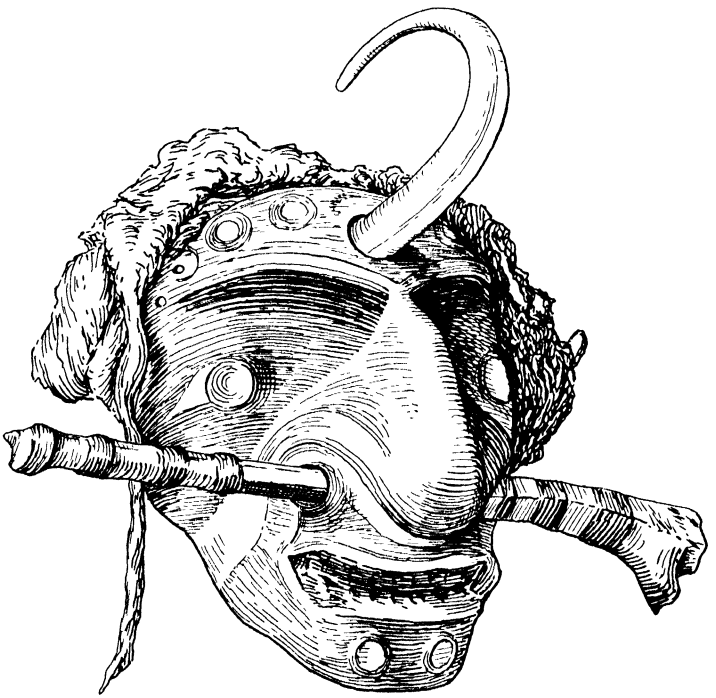
Torres unenthusiastically:

" A very large bay, very well peopled . . . village of four streets, and an open space at the most elevated part. All around there were many farms, surrounded by palings. Our people found in their houses several kinds of fish, roasted and wrapped in leaves, and a quantity of raw mussel-shells in a basket, as well as fruits and flowers hung on poles. Near there was a burial place. They also found

a flute, and certain small things worked out of pieces of marble and jasper."

Torquemada sums up:

"The whole is a land which, without any doubt, has the advantage of America and the greater part of our Europe . . . our people took from a single house they entered 14 pigs."



A KNEE-PAD USED IN DANCES OF A GRADED SOCIETY IN SOUTH MALEKULA

The unicorn effect from a pig's tusk. Human bone through the un-Melanesian nose. Spiders'-web hair. Four colours; eight inches high.

Sources. My complete card index, which contains the sources used in this book and much other material, will be placed in the library of the Royal Geographical Society, London, S.W.7, for the benefit of students. As this book is intended for general readers, I have kept the original references, which can only interest a few, out of the text, and have put them at the end of each section.

SOURCES FOR QUIROS: MSS. of Quiros, Torres, Leza, Tobar, in libraries of the King of Spain and the Ministry of Marine; these had lain there 250 years unused and wrongly labelled when they were first brought to light by Zaragoza. Sources have been most carefully studied and translated by Clements Markham; the Hakluyt Society have kindly given me permission to use these, for which courtesy I am indebted to them. Also to Charles Duff.

More scanty data on Quiros is given by Dalrymple; Collingridge; A. H. Markham; Figueroa; Thomas; Roche; Purchas; Arias; Ticknor; Pingré; Prior; more fully by Burney. See pamphlet translation of a Quiros memorial, Sydney 1874; and Torquemada; cf. Lord Stanley of Alderley and R. H. Major in Hakluyt Society publications, 1859–68. Rose 173.

Cf. MAPS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM, TYPICAL OF PERIOD:

46.c.2. Typus Orbis Terrarum, Antwerp, 1570; the Terra Australis stretches across the world from Pole to Capricorn.

46.d.12. Antwerp, 1612; Solomon's shown and Terra runs from New Guinea through South America.

First New Hebrides map done by Tova, reproduced in Boletim de la Socieda Geografica, 1878: also Markham and Collingridge; my map II.

Quiros has been almost forgotten in the past thirty years, and has never received his full due.

WAVES

Te-kura-a-moo and Others

IN THE SEVEN GENERATIONS that passed until the people of Santo had opportunity to avenge the swine stealing, chief-murderous ones, there came other explorers from the east, as Quiros had done. From these explorers and from within the islands, the natives continued to develop some of the highest conceptions seen in these seas: sacred red mats; bird symbolism; loveliest dances. The explorers came over thousands of ocean miles in long ships, termed canoes, their outriggers dancing over the waves, sheering lean and deliberate through the foam caps, as water-twinkling laughter rippled up the cutting paddles. From time to time a far-roamed frigate-bird, hawk of the sea, would drift for a day behind; or swing over the wide mat sails' inverted triangle (a scarlet butterfly). The sailors would murmur, pray to be brought safely to a land of firm friendly women and many fruits. Perhaps one might sing:

" *My soul is a wild-pigeon,*
A petrel, a stormy petrel !
Bitter-cold is the far journey."

The heroic age of Pacific voyages was by now past its prime, since in A.D. 650 Ui-te-Rangiora and his followers in one very large and six small canoes started travels all over the Pacific, including apparently from farthest east over to five islands in the New Hebrides, probably to Peru, once it seems even to the Antarctic ice. Ui-te-Rangiora is presumed to be descended from Tu-te-Rangi-marama, of alleged Aryan stock, who left the homeland after great troubles; this was probably somewhere in India at about 450 B.C., though over such long periods genealogies are unreliable. Four hundred years later, as result of quarrels, Te-kura-a-moo came on eastwards, perhaps to Java. By A.D. 450 many had come and prospered as far east as Fiji, until wars originated by Ari, Kuru and Taakura. A.D. 875 was the period of Apakura; Raratonga was first colonised by Ata-i-te-Kura. In A.D. 1100 Onukura visits Hawaii, where Kahukura brought sweet potatoes. These folk were far from the first to enter the Pacific; they were some of those whom we call Polynesians.

The Quest of the Sacred Kura

After the hither and thither pushing eastward from somewhere in Indonesia, these long-haired, pale-skinned people settled and prospered. But occasional hunger, war, overpopulation or a canoe caught out in a storm, caused new movements. Having come from the west, the ancestral homeland of legend lay in the west, calling adventurous sailors in the same vague quest that had brought Quiros. Sometimes the voyages were in search of the sacred *kura*, whose red feathers were emblem of highest chiefliness, symbol of the great gods widely over many lands of this sea. It was in quest of the *kura*, too, that many impacts came back westward.

Canoes seating up to a hundred had been evolved to their finest; they could live in any sea. Some islands, especially in the northerly groups, had canoes that could sail safely

THE LEGENDARY WHITE IMMIGRANTS CALLED AMBAT

introduced head deformation into south Malekula. The central head is clay-modelled over a deformed skull. The other two are carved in stone.

MOVEMENT IN A MATANAVAT NA-LENG

of comparatively recent origin. Note the nut-rattles, the whole bodies moving. Hawk designs on these bodies.

and quickly with a strong wind full a-beam—the problem that had baffled Phœnician, Greek and Roman, and for centuries held up European expansion. Long before the Norman Conquest of Britain canoe voyages were made over this 20,000,000 square miles of ocean which (as Dr. Woods put it) make the Odyssey seem like an incident. They made wind and tide charts with grass blades and sticks; had a coconut sextant; much astronomical lore and nomenclature. Much of the canoe development occurred after arrival within the Pacific, to solve (under pressure of need) special problems of reef, tide and typhoon.

The first folk to reach the New Hebrides islands (long before *kura* and this history) were probably brachycephalic pygmies of Papuan (? Australoid) type, strong strains of which still survive in Malekula and Santo of the New Hebrides. It is impossible to know when or how they came, or what was their culture originally. Probably some drifted on rafts, such as are still the only vessels in west Malekula.[1] Other folk followed, larger dark Melanesians (? Proto-Negroid). Some of these looked something like Australians. The larger folk pushed the pygmies inland, away to the high hills. There may have been many impacts of these dark people, or just a few odd canoe landing-parties who multiplied in these fertile islands, to form a great population. Legend records also very early white folk, such as the Ambat brothers. These comings happened long ago and there is no way in which we can date them. But the paler Polynesian seamen who spread so much into the east have kept genealogies and remarkable memorised " logs " of pioneer voyages. In part of the New Hebrides where they impacted, they have recorded their generations with megaliths.

The foremost Maori scholar has written:

[1] A remarkable raft was manned by a well disposed and soldierly Aragonese youth who escaped from the departing ship of Quiros, so that he might endeavour " to teach the heathens or to live in solitude." He pushed off by night with some beads, bells, twine, wine, knives, and a sword. The crew was appalled at this " act of a man who was held to be rational and a good Christian . . . to think of his nakedness . . . above all, of his being cut off from the divine offices and sacraments." He may well have reached new land and there been received as a god.

" Columbus felt his way over the Western Ocean while his half-crazed crew whined for their gods to keep them from falling over the edge of the world; but the Polynesian voyager, the naked savage, shipless and metalless, hewed him out a log dug-out with a sharpened stone, tied some planks to the side thereof with a string, put his wife, children, some coconuts, and a pet pig on board, and sailed forth on the great ocean to settle a lone island 2,000 miles away . . . and did it."

The *kura* quest demanded the highest and bravest of minds. The bird was part myth, part an ancestor (as Te-kura-a-moo and Taakura, above); on earth *kura* was rather ill defined—the quality of vivid redness in certain birds, which then became the *kura*. The scarlet throat-pouch of the frigate-bird; the scarlet honey-parrot found in certain small islands; the shining white tropic-bird, with its two curious bare scarlet streamers in the tail, nesting on remote atolls. The *kura* quest was for the feathers of these two latter; and it was dominated by the first, the frigate-bird, killer of the seas, bird of the great esoteric god Io, source of finest art forms such as the spiral carving of south-east Papua, the kites and canoe prows of Malekula, the Matanavat dances of Na-leng, the bird-cult figures of Easter island, whose script (the only one known in the Pacific) has now been shown to parallel the script from 2000 B.C. buried city Mahenjo Daro, high civilisation in inland north-west India, 12,000 miles away! The frigate-bird, replaced inland by the hawk, soared high up above man in its spirals; many were the chants:

O Frigate-bird of lustrous black, bathing in the far land of Ahatea, boundless expanse of the skies,
O, behold—ascending!
The sacred kura mounts on high!
O Frigate-bird of shimmering black, bathing in the remote ceiling of the sky!

One *kura* voyage has been traced in New Zealand mythology to the (alleged) New Hebrides. It was led by a chief

called Whakarau. He brought back, from this far land of strange fierce people, after four months' voyage, many red plumes. Another party set out for this land and arrived there. The inhabitants demanded one hundred men for eating, in payment of the plumes; much fighting followed, many were killed (at Nokorvat, near Matanavat, such rites were made long ago). There are many stories of Polynesian voyages to dark folk far to the westward. Many set out never to return. Some settled by friendship, or by force on the small islets where the dark folk were not many.

In the east they say that Tahiti itself was hooked up by Maui, who put red *kura* feathers on his fish-hook. Maui has reached the southern New Hebrides where they tell how, in the form of a snake, he hooked up Aniwa, the tiny islet that will later (in this history) become the playground of Jehovah and South Sea Saintliness. Close by Aniwa is Futuna, which speaks the language of Samoa one thousand miles to the east.

The value of red feathers was learned by Captain Cook when he brought some tropic-bird and red parakeet feathers from Tonga to Tahiti. He says:

> " The important news of red feathers being on board having been conveyed on shore, the day had no sooner begun to break next morning, than we were surrounded by a multitude of canoes. At first, a quantity of feathers, not greater than might be got from a tom-tit would purchase a hog of 40 or 50 lbs."

Sir Henry Howorth has suggested that the importance of redness comes from junks drifting on the prevailing currents south to Hawaii. However that may be, redness reached the New Hebrides as a late conception, modifying many ideals. Especially it influenced currency; and red mats were a beautiful feature. These spread from the east-lying island of Omba, which received the strongest late Polynesian influences, remarked by so many visitors—light skin, lank hair and passionate women.

Iraparapping

A shark man, Topunena, brought the first red mat westward to Malekula. In those days some men had the secret of hollowing out a hard-wood trunk into a thing called Iraparap; inside Iraparap a man was a shark, except that his feet insisted on sticking out of the back. If Iraparap met a full-time shark in deep water, it had to insist on the fish going first; if the fish came behind, it would eat the protruding feet. One Iraparap went racing—for they travelled at speed—right over to Omba. There he saw women washing some red mats, called *malmal*; which is the syllable also of height and of hawk. The women left the mats to dry in the sun on the gleaming white coral sand. The Iraparap made a big wave, which washed out two mats. He took these back home, where he became man again. One great dance day he and his wife came forth; he wore one of the mats as a penis-wrapper, she wore the other as skirt. Until that time no red mats had been used, only plain ones, in Malekula. Because of it, a big canoe was prepared to go to Omba; it was guided there by the Iraparap. This was about eighteen generations ago, in east Malekula, whence the mats spread, round to Matanavat and all over the island.

The people of Malo island, to the north, tell how the hawk Mala helped in getting *malmal* mats from Omba. These are insignia of the highest chiefs on Malo, who are called Malmal. Thence this new feature spread northward into Santo.

A Truce on Great Evil

Thus red birds are often sacred. The old woman Nepkalam of Tanna had two sons who, at her instigation, slew the devil giant Semsem (evil devourer in many islands) with spears. They asked birds to go close and see if Semsem was really dead. The honey-eater went first and put his head into the wound; finally the parrot went right into one wound and out through another, right through the body, proving its death. That is how these birds got red feathers. And the

sons cut Semsem into many small pieces, then blew great blasts on a conch-shell trumpet. All the pieces changed suddenly into the people of Tanna, whom Semsem had devoured. For he is the spirit of cannibalism, with whom is often linked the redness of blood.

Equally evil was Ias, the father of Malmalmari and Malmalomba, who brought red mats to Atchin nineteen generations ago. This was a time of much culture change in the New Hebrides—perhaps related to the big earlier movements from Tahiti to Samoa, New Zealand and elsewhere at about twenty-eight generations ago.

Ias had a sister and a wife. The sister he sold to the mainland of Malekula. The wife stayed on Atchin and bore him two sons. Ias liked killing people and eating them. He said: "If I don't kill people, what shall I do?" He went on and on killing. Until his nephew on Malekula, Natamaki, brought over a pig with four tusks, two on each side, called Nevativat—of unthinkable rareness. He brought this pig and a big stone, made a fence of small stones around it, and put the pig on the stone at the place Buok on Atchin. (This was the first new Nimaki Society rite; he was the spirit (*natamas*) of the rite.) He said to Ias: "I kill this pig that you may be good now and not eat people all the time any more. You shall stop quiet." But it was no good. This killing could not quieten Ias for long. Soon he hungered for flesh again, the pig was forgotten; he hungered after his wife. So his two sons, Malmalari and Malmalomba, hid her by burying her in the sand. Ias came questing; he smelt her and began to dig with his hands in the sand, crying out: "I have found a foot," then "Ah, here is a leg." "So: I come to the joining of legs." Then Malmalmari and Malmalomba rushed forth, they speared him and clubbed him,—their terrible father.

Later another man, Malain, from the mainland of Malekula, brought newer stone rites and sacrifice. Always the using and killing of pigs has grown; much comes from inland in north Malekula, whence also the first chiefly man, Toratora, came to Matanavat bringing higher culture to

the low " rubbish folk " of Botnia. The pig rites have spread and developed new forms, even since the white man's coming, for example to west Ambrym in the twentieth century.

The Rose-Apple People,
Why Men are Black

Some of these important influences came from the rose-apple (red fruit) people, as at Matanavat. They affected the whole central part of the group, where they keep their genealogies (in the Polynesian way) back about seven to fourteen generations. The rose-apple made man black. Widely there are legends, often very fine ones, of long ago white men with long hair, called Ambat, Kabat, Nombo, Intumbulu, Tamererunse. They are said to have introduced pottery (which Quiros found flourishing in Santo), the dog, wooden effigies of the dead. It was two children of Ambat in south Malekula who ate the rose-apple fruit that had been forbidden them; so became black and put on the penis-wrapper.

Kindly One, his Remarkable Rivalry

Tangaroa (=Tagaro, Horo or Tahar) was another important late influence. He was the benign and unifying creator, who lived in the sky (sometimes also in stones); latest god of the Polynesians, he became perhaps the first true god of the Hebrideans. The western islands in the New Hebrides call east-lying Omba " the home of Tagaro." There Tagaro got pigs from a spirit woman, so that he could rise high in society, a society called the Suqe, which equals exactly the Malekulan Manki. Suqe is also an evil spirit, making things bad like Semsem and Ias. Tagaro, killing many pigs, made good. It was on Omba that Tagaro entered into competition with Mera-mbuto in a reciprocal exchange —ordinary type, extraordinary result.

Mera-mbuto invited Tagaro to eat with him. The food was bad. Tagaro naturally returned the compliment; his food was good and included pig. So Mera-mbuto re-invited Tagaro, gave him a pig also. Tagaro gave Mera-mbuto an

even better meal in return; as on previous occasions, Mera-mbuto asked what it was that he ate, so that he might return better. Tagaro, impatient at such clumsy manners, said: " My mother; I cooked her in the oven." Mera-mbuto went home and cooked his mother and made her into a pudding for Tagaro. Then Tagaro told Mera-mbuto to set fire to the house while he (Tagaro) was inside. Mera-mbuto did so, but Tagaro had prepared a hole in the floor; so he escaped unharmed. Therefore Mera-mbuto said to Tagaro, " My turn now, to-night you set fire to my house." And Tagaro burned the house of Mera-mbuto. Mera-mbuto was burned with it; he died.

The western islands do pilgrimage voyages to Omba, for Tagaro. Initiate lads copulate with a woman made out of sand. It was this that Kiho, high deity in the Tuamotus, three thousand five hundred miles to the east, did with the red earth and said:

" *Thou art he that shall become famed through me,*
Thou art he that I shall inform with all my secrets, arts and lore,
Thou shalt be the Expounder,
Thou art he who I shall cause to beget progeny."

To this first one (Atea), Kiho gave his crimson feather girdle, Te-hume-kura. Similarly it was done by other gods (including Maui) in other islands, making man to multiply from one shaped out of sand.

Tagaro (brother of Qat=Ambat) spread in some form into the vaguely unifying culture-hero or deity of the whole New Hebrides (but not in the Solomons to the north). A kindly god, who caused men to prosper. He seems to have come first about A.D. 1400 to the north of Malekula; perhaps correlating with the driving out of the Tangaroans from Samoa about A.D. 1250. In the New Hebrides this kindly conception was quickly accepted, passed on by talk, transformed and modified through scores of dialects. Thus the conception became, from the Polynesian point of view, degenerated; from the Hebridean point of view it was an advance, one of the few names and ideas accepted by all

tribes in common. This spread of Tagaroan belief, which undoubtedly went on without any comparable spread of immigrants, is typically New Hebridean. It was thus that in 1839 another paler-skinned party came from the east, from Samoa, to introduce another vague concept, the seven-day creator and sky-god Jehovah, opposing the evil one, Satan. Such mind to mind contacts have gone far ahead of the direct influence of their introducers; while misunderstandings, the actions of very high chiefs and neurotics, drift currents and winds, have helped to build up this culture kaleidoscope, from pre-history on to the nineteenth century. For though Pacific canoe culture was brought almost to a standstill by European influences, several Polynesian parties drifted into the New Hebrides in the nineteenth century, including a party of Tongans who drifted a thousand miles to Mele islet off Efate in the south central part of the group, 1845; they survived by force of arms and married native women.

There has never been a stability in the New Hebrides. There was constant cultural evolution. Quiros was only another sort of Ambat. Henceforward this story will often concern our sort of white man, because from his writings we can construct a fuller picture. But it *must* be remembered that the era instituted by Bougainville and Cook, the one hundred and fifty savage years that are now to be considered, are only another incident in a long series of incidents, a chaotic chain of events in a chaotic chain of islands, coralline or volcanic restless.

Between Quiros and the coming of Bougainville, a hundred and seventy years later, the New Hebridean culture had moved on its own way, receiving many new influences, some perhaps far repercussions of Brahma or Buddha, Japan and America. Others internal. Pig business, with a climax in sacrifice, became the central theme of life, modifying cannibalism; with it came equal opportunity for all to ascend the social ladder of piggery—ascent, to the bird of prey, higher and higher—weakening a fixed aristocracy; redness; more elaborate stone works in decimal groupings of dolmen and

monolith; finer dances; a development away from matrilineal into patrilineal social organisation (continuing even to-day). Not absurdly unlike some of our own (presumably unrelated) ideas—the Prussian eagle, red shirts, Your Highness, the One God, and Honour thy Father !

Sources. *New Hebrides:* Codrington 157, 180, 370, 411. Deacon 617, 624, 723. Dixon 345. Firth. Goodenough 322. Gunn 329. Humphreys 92, 188, 193. Ivens 49. Layard 215. Leverd 171. Mawson. Paton 159. Ray 147, 150. Rivers II, 390, 583. Robertson 385. Suas 204. Tattevin. Turner.

Elsewhere: Andersen. Best. Cook 293. Ella. Fornander. Handy (34) 131. Howorth 22. Moerenhout. Rose 171. Schmidt 1020. Sittig. Smith. Stimson (several papers). Taimii. Taylor 86. Thilenius. Williamson (Pol.) I. 22. (Rel.) II. 303. Wood 30.

Frigate-bird and Easter: Balfour 381. Beasley. Haddon. Harrisson 113. Hevesy 666. Kennedy 294. Lacoupèrie 26. Maude 41. Ross. Routledge. Skinner. Webster 49. Woodford 347.

Patrilineal: Barnard. Deacon. Haddon. Layard. Perry (1923) 247. Radcliffe Brown. Seligmann. Tattevin.

Genealogies are the only dates for this period; they are doubtful over twenty generations, while they are only kept in the areas of extensive Polynesian influence. I have had valuable canoe data from Dr. A. C. Haddon and Tahiti material from Frank Stimson (chant translations). Current theory of Pacific culture growth is very unsatisfactory; in a later section a brief outline of the general problem will be given.

PROW-HEAD OF A CANOE

lashed on through the holes. Two feet long, in black, red and white. It represents a frigate-bird and a pig's head—a combination of high privilege.

A GREAT FRENCHMAN

LOUIS ANTOINE BOUGAINVILLE, son of a notary, was born 1736. He was the best French explorer. He had every advantage—all that Quiros lacked in influence, leadership and charm. He was much influenced by Rousseau. At twenty-two he wrote a classic on Integral Calculus and he was Fellow of the Royal Society of London at twenty-six. He served in Canada and became a very young colonel "who smiled on the face of death as lightly as in the eyes of a woman." He smiled into the eyes of an Iroquois chief's daughter with notable success. Twenty-one years later he was confronted at an awkward moment with a full-blooded Iroquois nephew. He was despatch rider for the king; rode from Paris to Madrid and back. With his own money—all he had, and the help of his rich uncle, who was a minister—he anticipated England in taking over the Falkland Islands; and from this gateway to the Pacific he planned to be the first Frenchman to circumnavigate the globe.

On the two ships *Boudeuse* and *Etoile*, he set out from France in 1766 with a picked crew and distinguished officers, the eminent botanist de Commerson and the German Prince of Nassau, "a young man of twenty, handsome as a god, witty, well-bred, haughty, daring, courageous, intrepid and reckless." On the journey he and Viceroy of Brazil had a fine row; and he made sympathetic contacts with Indians and Terra del Fuegans, including the awful episode of the small boy who ate a mirror that was given to him, and died, though not before "our chaplain surreptitiously baptised him."

He beat up round the Horn, and away over the long sun-still days, to reach Tahiti a few months behind the Englishman Wallis. He had a fine time at Tahiti, which he called New Cythera (de Commerson said Utopia); and he aroused the interest in that fair land which has ever since been shown by the French. The statue of Bougainville stands there under the lovely flame-trees on the water front of Papeete. In the

week of incredible fêtes on July 14th, girls such as he loved dance in his shadow day and night, some with the syphilis his ship introduced. Alfred Guthmann looking out to sea plans new poems and voyages at his feet; weird Alain Gerbault trims his slender *Firecrest*. But the eyes of Bougainville look where they cannot wish to look, into the rooms of a cheap house. His back is to the sail-filled harbour and the reefs' colours; his back to the New Hebrides and the urgent West.

He sailed from Tahiti 3,000 miles into the New Hebrides, May 1768, as White No. 2, 162 years behind Quiros. Coming from the east he passed to the south of the Spaniards' route, between the islands that they had named as one range, La Clementina, and part of the "continent." Bougainville named these Aurora (Maewo), Pentecost and Lepers' Island (now Omba). Carrying on westwards they landed for wood. The natives showed signs of hostility. So the Prince walked forward and gave out some pieces of red material. This made things all right; no colour could have been more fortunate. The sailors cut firewood without opposition, while small quantities of fresh fruit were obtained without difficulty. As the boats pulled out the natives gave them a volley of stones and arrows. " A few rifle shots soon put a check on their boldness."

Passing on, at another place the natives shot arrows at one of the boats, while they uttered horrible cries and beat on a drum. The sailors replied with musketry. Bougainville says: " I took steps to avoid the dishonour of any further abuse of the superiority of our forces." On another occasion he says, "we were so strong that we could not punish them." He was humane; he made no further attempt to land. His influence was slight. But he proved that this was no continent, it was a complex group of islands, which he named L'Archipel des Grandes Cyclades. In order to make certain there was no continent he went on westwards far towards Australia. For over two centuries it had been supposed that there was a continent in this area.

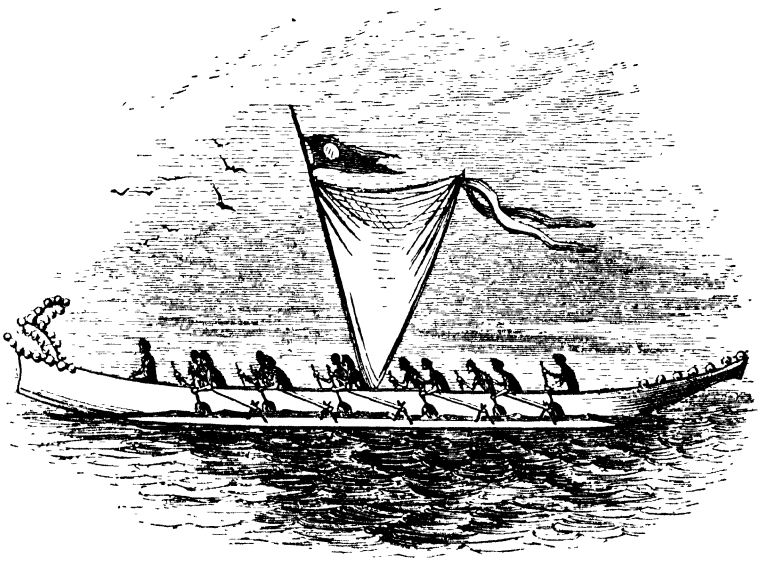
Bougainville introduced not only gunfire and a new sort

of red material into new islands, but another element new to the area, and that in a queer way. He had as his botanist the eminent Philibert de Commerson, who could (as a biographer puts it) " tell at a glance the sex of the rarest plants." A man of singular virtue and enormous asceticism, who before leaving Paris founded a prize for virtue, an annual medal to be awarded to " whomsoever should have performed without motives of ambition or vanity and without hypocrisy, the most praiseworthy act of a moral or social kind." He had an assistant, Baret, nicknamed " the beast of burden " because of the great load of plant presses and paraphernalia that he carried about behind his master in Patagonian snows and Pacific heat. About twenty-six, he was " by no means over-favoured with good looks." Each was devoted to the other, and Commerson, in a will made before he left Paris, had not forgotten to make provision for this trusty servant. He shared his master's cabin. When Aotourou—the Tahitian who later became a favourite at the court of Versailles—arrived on board, he became much excited by Baret. He went round and round Baret, repeating, " Aiene, aiene." What the devil did that mean? It was found to mean Girl. Sensation. Everyone was greatly intrigued. Finally a bold soldier satisfied himself by personal investigation—Aotourou had only been able to use his native intelligence. Baret was a woman ! She became Jeanne Baret, darling of the ship. Poor Commerson blushed and blushed; then blushed. This was the first woman to go round the world and the first European one to enter the Hebrides. Bougainville says of her: " I must do her the justice to acknowledge that her behaviour all the time she was on board was a model of propriety. It must be admitted, however, that had the two vessels been shipwrecked in this vast ocean on some desert island, Fate would have played some strange tricks on Baret."

Bougainville came back to France, to be honoured as a hero. Also to be reviled for spoiling the simple savage (a whole volume by Diderot). Later he was considerably disgraced in the battle of the Saintes. Yet six years later he

was appointed commander-in-chief at Brest. He was nearly executed in the 1792 revolution; but Napoleon grew fond of this " Monsieur le Royaliste " to whom he granted 40,000 francs a year. He grew roses and died, rather lonely, intelligent and French at eighty-two.

Bougainville Strait limits to the south the poor continent of the Holy Ghost, of penniless dishonoured Quiros. There the tide is terrible, raging and pulling through the narrows between Aore and Malekula. In a canoe one must paddle and sail and bail with the care of dynamic death.



A SAMOAN CANOE
(from an old mission book)

For this Frenchman his superb mauve and purple convolvulus blossoms of Bougainvillea (by which he is remembered), lit with the radiance of a sun that goes sliding behind the pantomime peaks and evening blue of Moorea. For the earlier weird Portuguese: the green of cork oaks on a dusty road and the jangled singing of serins in the thick branches;

confusion of brave notes. For the other fine man, to follow, the blue of the channel on a clear summer morning.

Sources. Bougainville. *Bull. de la Soc. de Geogr., Comm.* IX. 198. Burney. Commerson. Dalrymple. Diderot. Diderot and Chinard. *Ency. Brit.* Forestier. Markham. *Pac. Isl. Year-book*, 1932. Thiéry. *Times* 9/xi/29. Information from Cecil Lewis. See de Kerallain, Fesche and Lefranc in Thiéry.

A GREAT ENGLISHMAN

White Man's Burden

SIX YEARS AFTER Bougainville, his English equivalent came also from the east, into the New Hebrides. Captain James Cook, son of farm servants, our finest navigator, was the first to explore the group thoroughly, spending forty days. He gave the name New Hebrides, in 1774.

Cook had a genius for native contacts. He sported absolutely no visible white man's burden. Especially he went chief-hunting. Over and over again on his voyages we find him seeking out the native aristocracy with the persistence of a gossip columnist. When there was Cook on the ship and a chief on the shore, Cook went ashore. From cane chairs and gins, the Britisher among blacks to-day would damn a man who behaved like that. It is characteristic of Cook's outlook that in order to assure himself of native cannibal habits, he had them roast and eat a piece of human flesh on his deck. Maybe he had a quiet snack himself to see what it tasted like. Oh, that succulent sweet-bitter pork!

Though he came from Tahiti, he considered the New Hebrides equal in beauty to anything he had seen. His opinion of the natives was not so high; they " were the most ugly, ill-proportioned people they ever saw . . . they are

a very dark coloured and rather diminutive race, with long heads, flat faces, and monkey countenances."

He did not stay long in the north, only long enough to have his first friction—he who so rarely had trouble. "A good many natives came round them, some in canoes, others swimming. The captain soon prevailed on one to come on board; which he no sooner did, than he was followed by more than he desired. So that not only the deck but also the rigging was presently filled with them. He took four into the cabin, and gave them various articles which they showed to those in the canoes, and seemed much pleased with their reception. . . . A fellow in a canoe having been refused admittance into one of the boats, bent his bow to shoot a poisoned arrow at the boat keeper . . . on the captain calling to him, he pointed it at him. Having a musket in his hand, loaded with small shot, he (Cook) gave him the contents. This staggered him for a moment, but did not prevent him from holding his bow still in the attitude of shooting. Another discharge of the same nature made him drop it. At this time some began to shoot arrows on the other side . . . a four-pounder shot fired over their heads, sent them off in the utmost confusion." Cook quickly went ashore, and the natives made their peace signs, which were: to wave green branches and sprinkle water over their heads.

The people set no value on iron, would very seldom part with a bow, now and then exchanged an arrow for a piece of cloth. They gave "extraordinary proofs of their honesty," chasing the ship under sail in their canoes, in order to pay back presents or goods given to them. Cook believed that "had we made a longer stay, we might soon have been upon good terms with this ape-like nation."

In south Malekula the natives came out in canoes waving palm fronds—their token of peace. They expressed their admiration "by hissing like geese."

Travelling south through many new islands, "which exhibited a most delightful prospect, being spotted with woods and lawns," the natives made signs inviting them ashore. But they sailed on until Erromango.

Misunderstanding ?

At Erromango the ship's boat went ashore and Cook stepped out before " a vast multitude," holding a green branch in one hand. The chief beat back any who attempted to approach too near the boat, sent for water, coconuts and yams. Cook was charmed with this behaviour until, for some reason, they wished to pull his boat ashore. Cook then fired at the chief; but his gun misfired. The natives got away with two oars and four casualties. Two whites were slightly wounded. As parting shot a four-pounder was fired at the natives holding up the oars; Cook says, curiously, " I was prevailed on to fire a four-pound shot at them." Over this incident the great German naturalist Forster and his son, both members of the expedition, published an outspoken account, whence he described how natives threw weapons from behind a sandhill, while the whites " for some time amused themselves to fire at them as often as their heads appeared." He says: " I cannot entirely persuade myself that these people had any hostile intentions." This statement infuriated the eminent mathematician and Fellow of the Royal Society, William Wales, who was also with the party. Wales describes Forster's account as " one of the most singular pieces of misrepresentation ever dropped from a pen, and should I attempt to describe the ideas excited in my mind by reading it, I should be greatly at a loss for words without transgressing the bounds of decency."

Tanna

Then they sailed to Tanna. The natives there were " hospitable, civil, and good-natured, when not prompted to a contrary conduct by jealousy." They came off in canoes. One, coming as near as he dared, threw towards them some coconuts. Cook got into a boat, picked up the nuts, gave the men some cloth. Others then came alongside. All of a sudden " their behaviour was insolent and daring." They laid hold of the ensign and tried to tear it from the staff. So off went the four-pounder and a few musketoon bullets.

A RAMBARAMP EFFIGY OF A DEAD CHIEF FROM SOUTH MALEKULA where Cook was well received. The whole is of fibre over a wooden frame, 5 feet high, vividly coloured. The modelled skull of the deceased has spiders'-web hair. The many pigs' tusks armlets are a sign of high rank, as also the knee-pads and pattern of lines

Next day there were some thousands of natives armed on the beach; odd canoes brought out coconuts. One fellow hit the side of the ship with a club which he then offered for sale. Beads were let down to him on a string; off he paddled without giving the club. " This was what Captain Cook had expected, and, indeed, what he was not sorry for, as he wanted to show the multitude on the shore the effect of their firearms, without materially hurting any of them. Having a fowling-piece loaded with small shot, he gave the fellow the contents; and when they were above musket-shot off, he ordered some of the musketoons to be fired. This transaction, however, seemed to make little or no impression on the people; on the contrary, they began to halloo and to make sport of it. One fellow showed us his backside in a manner which plainly conveyed his meaning."

After this Cook went ashore, where there were many armed natives. Having dispersed them with gunshot, he drew lines on the sand and told them to down arms. Mr. Edgecombe hit a man with some swan shot. The position eased. The whites were allowed to cut trees for wood. In particular (during this period) the whites were helped by a charming old man called Paowang. He was never seen with weapons, and always urged the natives to a friendly attitude. He gave Cook the only pig presented during their stay. He brought aboard an axe that had been lost in the woods; Cook mentions that these people were always careful to return such things, unlike the Tahitians. Cook draws a charming picture of Paowang; he " came with presents of fruit and roots, carried by about twenty men, in order, as I suppose, to make it appear the greater. One had a small bunch of plantains, another a yam, a third a coconut, etc. But two might have carried the whole with ease."

In the following days Cook went for a delightful expedition inland, and the people showed " a readiness to oblige them in everything in their power." Forster made similar expeditions. He had the habit of carrying large plant presses, etc. Some natives had been noticed making overtures to him; homosexuality was therefore charged to their account, until

Cook suddenly realised that they mistook the good German for a woman, because on Tanna only women carry loads on the back. Everything went well, though Cook had to rebuke petty officers for wanton use of their muskets against some stone-throwing boys; he " took measures to prevent it for the future."

Six Eyes

Work ashore went without any trouble, the whites engaged in taking logs aboard, until one day some four or five natives stepped over the line drawn on the sand, inside which they had been forbidden to venture [the Quiros trouble again]. The sentry then shot one man dead. Forster says " The sentry drove him back once more, with a rude thrust sufficient to rouse a man much less irascible than a savage. He, to vindicate his rights, laid an arrow on his bow, but the soldier instantly levelled his musket, and shot him dead." Wales leapt to the over-defence: " What man is there even of common sense, who will not see the absurdity of placing a sentinel with orders to prevent these people from breaking in, if he did not do it. . . . He (Forster) did not see the transaction, neither did any person of moment." But Cook says distinctly enough, " Having my eyes fixed on them, I observed the sentry present his piece and was just going to reprove him for it . . . but I was astonished beyond measure when the sentry fired, for I saw not the least cause."[1]

The natives fled, carrying the wounded men. Some returned to tell Cook what had happened. The surgeon and

[1] For lighter entertainment in the Forster versus Wales class: Forster describes how the natives throw a light green reed with such force as to enter above an inch into the hardest wood. Wales is very rude to Forster over the whole story. He adds: " It is apprehended, that no remarks need be made on this article." It is rather amusing, therefore, to notice the following passage in Cook's official account. " I cannot continue without adding an entire account out of Mr. Wales's journal. The passage is as follows: ' I have often been led to think the feats which Homer represents his heroes as performing with their spears a little too much of the marvellous to be admitted into a heroic poem; I mean when confined within the straight stays of Aristotle. Nay, so great an advocate for him as Mr. Pope acknowledges them to be surprising. But since I have seen what these people can do with their wooden spears, and them badly pointed, and not of a very hard nature, I have not the least exception to any one passage in that great poet on this account.' "

Cook went to help the man, and reached him in time to watch him die. " This affair threw the natives into the utmost consternation; and the few that were prevailed upon to stay, ran to the plantations and brought coconuts and other fruits, which they laid at their feet." " So soon were these daring people humbled," says Cook. Who had the guns ? Cook.

Cook put to sea without delay.

Perhaps Render More Happy

The initiation of the native was now complete. A white man had been to all the main islands. He had fired off his stickshining and smoke after, with my brother crying out there on the sand shore as we took him and ran in our fear—this new unseeable spirit striking its death more quickly than Levuts, than Tisumbala—to the hut where the in him went out, went without meaning, with no hate or pigs,—he had made no preparation.

Cook sailed on to find more lands, to meet his queer Deity-death in Hawaii. He popularised the Pacific and made the world aware of its potentialities. His accounts were both accurate and interesting. He let loose the mob, with his final words about this group so " well worthy the attention of future navigators." " In so vast a field there will be room to acquire fresh knowledge for centuries to come, coasts to survey, countries to explore, inhabitants to describe and perhaps render more happy."

Five years after Cook, Bligh, cast adrift by the *Bounty* mutineers, came struggling on his long journey from the East, from Tofua to Timor, in the open boat voyage that saved his reputation. On May 14th, 1789, he sighted the northern islands of the New Hebrides, which he named the Banks Group in honour of the great botanist Sir Joseph Banks, who also did much to popularise the Pacific. He revisited them on his second voyage, after eight days' sailing from Fiji, August 1792. He did not land on either occasion, though he sailed into the amazing crater bay of Ureparara

or Bligh Island at the extreme north of the group and there saw " a great body " of natives, some " who had cloth over their shoulders like the Otaheitans."

Then another French navigator, Comte de la Perouse, who passed by the north of the area in 1788, with two ships, *La Boussole* and *L'Astrolabe*. He says:

> " We punish by force the slightest thefts and the least injustice: we show the natives by the use of our firearms that flight will not save them from our resentment; we refuse them permission to come on board and we threaten to punish with death those who come too close to us. This method is a hundred times preferable to our earlier moderation; and if we have any regret it is that we came among these people with principle of kindness and patience.'

The whole of La Perouse's expedition was lost, probably eaten, and no trace of it was found for forty years. His name is more remembered than Bougainville's among the modern French of the New Hebrides. He is their spiritual father. The French inter-island steamer is the *Laperouse*, and a suburb of Sydney bears his name.

In 1793 d'Entrecasteaux came, looking for La Perouse. He passed along the north of the group. Then there were no significant white contacts for thirty-five years. The native at the beginning of the nineteenth century was still stone age and he-and-she.

Sources. Bligh. Cook. Dalrymple. D'Urville. Flinders. Forster. Holmes (full Cook bibliography). Labilladière. La Perouse. Lee 160. Rutter. Thomas. Tucker. Wales.

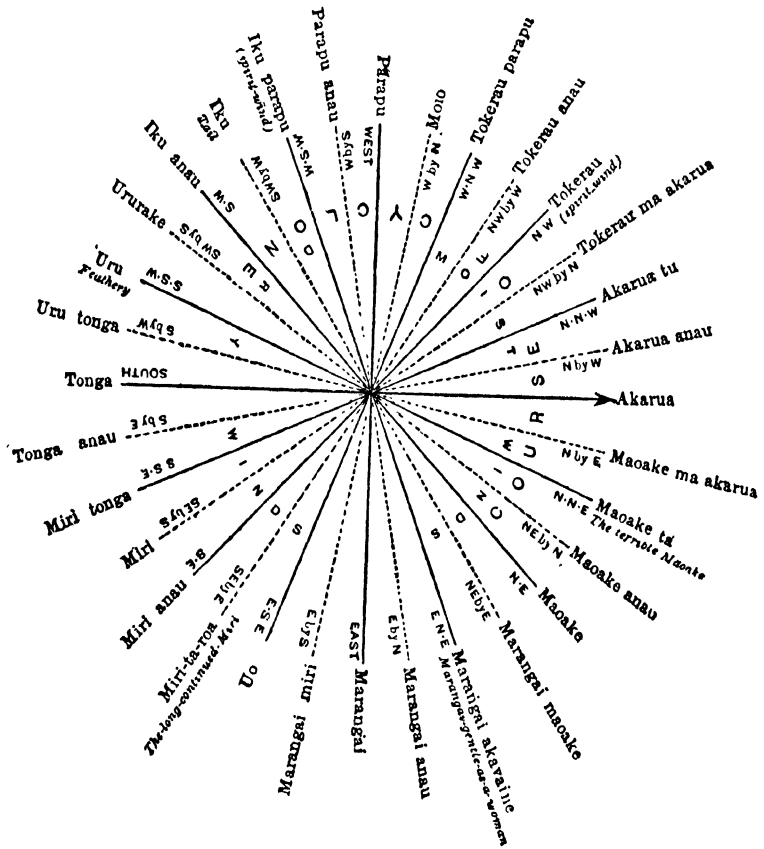
Professor J. Holland Rose has kindly given me certain information.

A TANNA MOTHER
(from *Cook's Voyages*, plate XLV)

III

(1827–1862)

SOME NATIVES still think that the whites are gods. Discovery of sandalwood, 1828, instigates period of vigorous and vicious exploitation. Determined impacts of a metallic culture. Savage comes into its own; sometimes it is almost unbelievable. The strong arm element of European civilisation is, as ever, to some extent countered by the kindlier. Thus another group of deists, the Jehovans, follow the Tangaroans in 1839. Many missionaries die sudden deaths in the attempt to bring an unarmed decency. Some extraordinary characters. Shirtics. Direct interpositions of the Almighty, via revolver. Warships open fire.



A POLYNESIAN WIND-PLAN

The Chinese invented the compass, which was unknown in the stone-using Pacific. But the wind-plan was a very important part of knowledge, for fishing and for long sea-voyages. *Raka*, god of winds, and his children, love to blow through holes on the horizon, "*rua matongi*." The "head" of the winds is in the east, the tail (*ika*) in the S.W. by W., until the wind dies away in the S.S.W. into *uru*, "the touch of a feather." Cyclones often start at N.E. and circle until, at the *uru*, "there is a perfect calm, mocking the desolations so lately wrought." (Gill, 187.)

IMPRESSIONS

False Impression

UNFORTUNATELY we do not know what the blacks thought of those early whites, in their own words, though it is sure that in most places they associated them with their mythical ancestors or with returned spirits, and regarded them as preternatural.

A story that I collected in north Malekula, now gone down to native mythology:

The first time we saw white men they came on a large ship and stole many natives, who had after a while gone on board. Other men they shot with sticks that smoked. And these white men had queer feet. So whenever, after that, we saw a ship approaching, we blew conch-shell trumpets and danced with spears on the beach, so that the ship went away again. Then one day there was an enormous rejoicing, for one man found a whole white man's foot washed ashore. The time for satisfaction had come. With all the necessary rites on stone, the sacrifice; then drums were beaten, many hundreds of people assembled, and the night-long dance commenced. At dawn the ground-oven was opened, in the presence of all the men. The highest took the cooked foot, hung it on the greatest drum and struck it with his chopping paddle-club. Nothing happened. It was taken down and one man cut it with a bamboo knife. It would not be cut. Black men's feet are very hard underneath. Apparently white men's feet were like that all over. A chief tried a bite. He could not bite a bit out. So it was cooked again in the oven. Everyone was worried. This had not happened before, it really wasn't done. Everything was mad and bad about

these white men. The white man's foot was baked and roasted, without making it able to be eaten. No good. The white man was too strong. He was the stronger in ship and in killing and in him, with all this and the smoke from his mouth.

Many years later, we found out what a shoe was.

Three Angles on a Bishop

Bishop Patteson was the first white man to be seen in many parts. Here are three ideas the natives had about him:

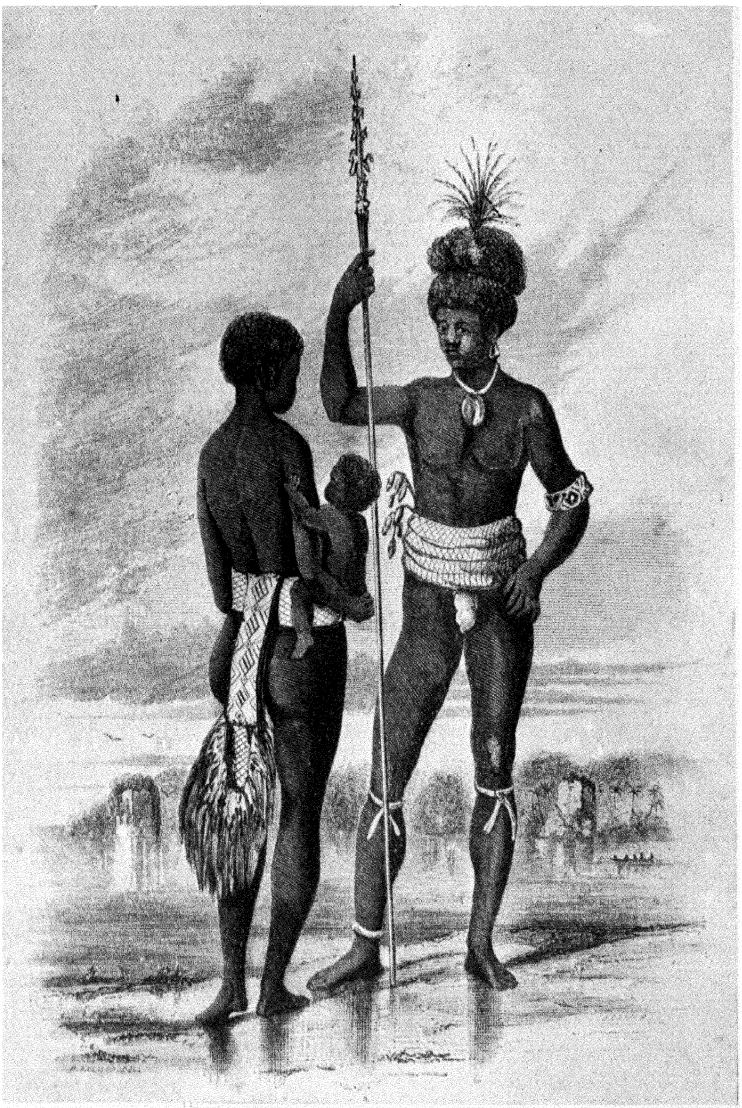
(i) They saw he was not a man like themselves; he was the ghost of one named Porosros, come back to life again. This was clear because as soon as he landed he walked into the house of the deceased man, quite naturally. Thus, in the early days, natives would shoot their arrows at missionaries, for " no such missiles could really injure a spirit returning from the unseen world."

(ii) At Mota, Bishop Patteson gave the chief an axe. " He loves me ! " exclaimed the man. " It must be my father ! He had a dark skin when he died, but now he has left that in the ground and come forth white." And for some time the belief held that the white men were the ghosts of their ancestors. " He is not a real man," they said of the Bishop, " for he has no feet, only something like hard stones ! " " And even when he took off his boots, they were still uneasy for he had no toes ! "[1]

(iii) Some of those on board the Bishop's ship wore red shirts, and the natives thought that they must " hail from the place where the sky begins (to the east), and catch the redness of the sun when it sinks over there in the evening." They could not understand why the ship did not drift ashore. It seemed to stay or move as it was ordered. A native who later became a mission boy and learned to write, wrote of this first white ship:

> " The ship began to sail. We did not know they had weighed anchor, but one man gave orders to the others about the sails. It was sailed out quite straight. I saw no

[1] Socks.



A MAN AND WOMAN OF EFATE, FROM AN OLD PRINT
BY A NAVAL OFFICER

This is about the only record that remains of the remarkable Efate culture, which was wiped out by white contact. Efate is now the capital island of the group

one steering with a rudder oar, so I again thought the word of that man had *mana*, and that he had told the ship to sail, and the ship obeyed. And I saw the ship sail straight out."

Maklaut

White skins were not as noticeable as red shirts, queer feet, ships without outriggers, and, of course, the talking stick. John Layard has kindly supplied a story from Atchin islet that illustrates the whole thing splendidly:

The first white was a captain whose name is handed down in Atchin history as Maklaut (= Macleod). Though his boat's crew was the first company of Europeans to be seen on Atchin, the white man's works were already known through, firstly, the news that a man of the island of Malo, off the south coast of Santo, had got hold of some wire which somehow or other he had manufactured into a kind of axe. Then an odd axe or two made their appearance, having been traded probably through many hands. One Atchin man I heard of paid the high price of three money-mats (*ni-mbwen*) for the privilege of a day's use of one.

Was he Ta-har, the creator-god, or was he one of the other type of ancestor, belonging to the older cannibalistic religion? The men of Atchin did not know. But they had already heard of more than one white man's atrocity, and decided to be on the safe side, fearing that he would eat them. So, when he anchored off the beach called Onema, they went out to meet him in their canoes, blowing conch-trumpets, the emblem of the new pig-instead-of-human-sacrifice Maki religion, to frighten him away. This demonstration did not have any great effect on the white men, and when a little later the funnel (or kitchen chimney?) of the vessel began to belch forth smoke, the men of Atchin who believe in a home of the dead in the Ambrym volcano, became more convinced than ever that they were having to deal not with the good Ta-har (= Tagaro) but with the revengeful ancestors.

There are, however, in Atchin tradition, stories of how the dead, on their journey down the coast to Ambrym, have

been encountered by living people and are themselves unrecognisable from the living. It was, therefore, not surprising to them when a party of the supposed ancestral ghosts, seeking water, landed on the mainland coast, bearing a tank. One white man ran into the bush and plucked a coconut leaf, by which the natives understood they wanted to eat. So they swarmed up the trees and supplied them with fruit.

Next day was washing-day on board, and the sailors' red underclothes were hung up on the rigging to dry. This caused a new sensation, as it was now thought that the ancestors had themselves turned red and were flying in the air. Nor did this power of flight seem of itself at all improbable, since the men of Atchin believed in certain magicians called *bwili*, who, like our witches, have the ability to fly and who delight in tricking human beings and luring them to death. More sinister, however, was their colour, red being the colour associated with one who had died a violent death in battle, who has had no burial and is therefore a restless ghost without a home, seeking to harm all those it meets.

This apparition, therefore, boded no good. So far, however, nothing physically untoward had taken place, and it looked as though with due care on both sides, friendly relations might be established. It happened however, that the white man's vessel had previously been to Santo, where it had taken on board a man belonging to the island of Tangoa. This man had friends in the Atchin village of Emil-lep, and when eventually the white men landed on the island, he went off to see them. Captain Maklaut thought he intended to escape, and the first explosion of a musket to be heard in Atchin rang out over the waters of the sound, as he shot at random among the astounded natives, wounding in the hand one of his Atchin friends, father of a man named Ewewa. The terrified Tangoa man was quickly captured, and taken on board.

This was the first sign of the white man's temper. After two days, Maklaut sailed off to Santo, but the seeds of his action on Atchin, as those of endless white men all over the Pacific,

were already sown. Whether by chance or design I do not know, it happened that two canoe-loads of men from the Atchin village of Emil-lep, where the original tragedy had occurred, were present at the time on Santo. Maklaut took one of their number on board, ostensibly to view the ship. Whether this was with the intention of kidnapping him, as he had apparently kidnapped the Tangoa man, or not, is a moot question which the fair-minded people of Atchin do not pretend to know. The men of Emil-lep leapt to the conclusion that he was, and, launching both their canoes, attacked the ship. They had, of course, no chance with bows and arrows against the white man's weapons, and were repulsed, one being wounded.

Marawa's Finger-nails

In the northern group Marawa, Spider, was important in legends. He was a long-haired pygmy who lived in a cave. He helped some ordinary men to prosper, if they paid him. And he was a friend of Qat, eldest of the twelve Tangaro brothers. He once made a canoe for Qat, very quickly hollowing out the wood with his finger-nails. So when hoop-iron came it was thought to be the finger-nails of Marawa. In some places it is still so named.

Some thought hoop-iron was the heaven-root, *gar tuka*, brought from the strong, hard base of the firmament by these ships from beyond the eastern horizon.

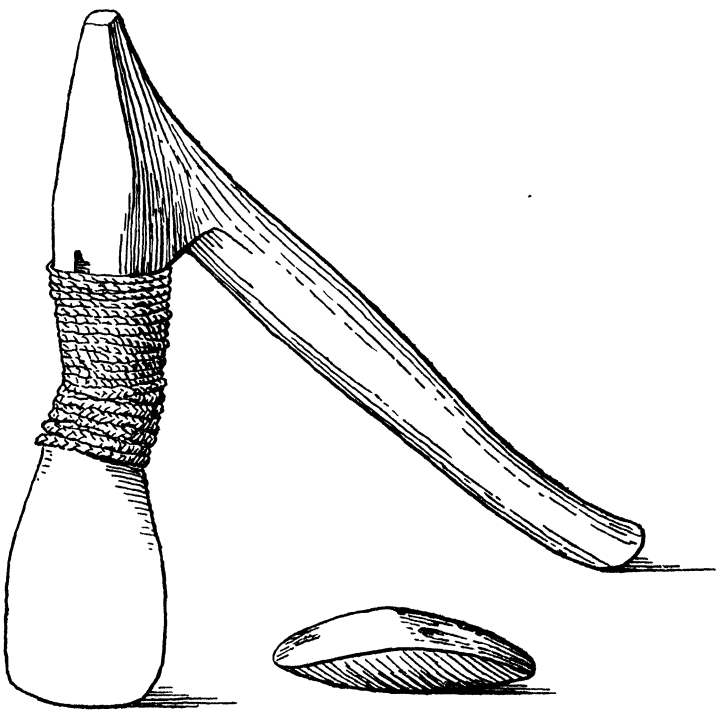
Facial Angle

Such were the mental impacts of white on black at first. To this day the white is widely called Taghar, Ambat or Kabat, the names of great gods and culture heroes, though alas, it is only a name. To round off:

On south-east Malekula in 1875, a boy stole up to Good-enough's ship's doctor, measured his nose with a straw, broke off the straw, and went away "gently and thoughtfully." The Commodore remarks, "We are measuring their facial angles, writing down their language, pacing their houses, they measuring our noses." Recently I was

going through the wonderful Haddon collection of photographs in the Museum of Ethnology at Cambridge, when I found a photo taken by Layard on Atchin, 1914, labelled " Length of the ethnologist's nose about to be recorded in affectionate remembrance by means of a scarification on the arm of his informant's daughter. The length was measured by a strip of grass."

As regards the mental impact of black and white, on this one thing alone *all* later whites into the group, even missionary and trader, were in agreement—that *the blacks* were disgusting savages, not to be tolerated in their native state.



A SHELL-ADZE HANDLE, TWO AND A HALF FEET LONG, AND A SMALL STONE AXE

typically shaped by polishing ; the cutting edge is nearest the shell-adze

In these opinions they differed from the earlier whites, from Cook, especially, and even from Quiros. At this time, curiously, some other yellow-skinned folk needed a sweet-scenting wood and its oils for their practices. . . . .

Sources. Codrington 313. Coombe 72. Coote 211. Goodenough. Extracts from Bishop of Tasmania's Journals and Letters in *Mel. Miss.* 1908. Data courtesy of John Layard.

SWEET-SMELLING

Sandalwood

UP IN CHINA, people who look quite like some of the ones that had developed the Pacific culture were crazy about smells. They wanted *Santalum album* (sandalwood)—had done since 500 B.C. Buddhists needed it in funeral rites. Brahmins wanted it for cast marks. Its oil was used as a basic perfume in nearly all Indian concoctions. The wood was made into fans, boxes, remedies for pains and headaches. For centuries India was the only source of supply. Prices were very high.

In 1828 whalers began to drift through the islands. One described the Tannese as treacherous, grovelling, and with a hog " not above the size of a rabbit " ! In that year they found sandalwood on Erromango in the southern group. This was the first downfall of the New Hebrides. By this time whites had already settled to a considerable extent in the Polynesian groups farther east, and in Tahiti a Belgian called Moerenhout had established a business organisation gradually extending all over the ocean. In his book (a forgotten French classic) he describes what happened after the discovery of sandalwood:

> " For a long time we have known of the fatal climate of the New Hebrides. Captain Dillon, who found the remains of de la Perouse, lost many men through violent fevers; but it was in 1830 that we saw the terrible effects of this

insalubrity, when many ships went there to get the sandalwood which this same Dillon had discovered. These ships carried as their crew Indians from Tahiti, Hawaii, Tonga and Rotuma, and of these two-thirds succumbed within a few days, and on this unfortunate expedition not less than one thousand to twelve hundred people died in a few weeks, owing to shipwreck, skirmishes against the natives, and above all on account of sickness."

The natives " have obstinately refused all communication with strangers; and if some disembark from the ships they kill all those whom they are able to surprise."

There is very little recorded about this period. The brig *Alpha* visited Aneityum about 1830, with Tahitian and Rotuman crews after sandalwood. A Rotuman stole something and a fight ensued in which five natives and two boats' crew were killed. Such first experiences had an effect on the whites to the east. They were put off the New Hebrides: and found it difficult to get boats' crews to go there. But some eastern expeditions continued, and soon the pageant of death prospered exceedingly. In the south-west a white civilisation was growing rapidly, and soon Melbourne was to be started. The riff-raff of Australia came into the sandalwood trade. The dominating influence of past centuries shifted from the east to Sydney, 1,500 miles south-west. No one yet slept ashore in the Hebrides.

Detritus

Some queer detritus was left over from those first eastern sandalwood hunts. Thus in 1840 the United States Exploring Expedition found an Erromangoan who had been brought back by one of the ships and landed at Tonga some years before. In 1849 Commodore Erskine of H.M.S. *Havannah*, saw another Erromangoan who had been brought there in the same way at the end of 1842. From this man Erskine heard an interesting story which he was afterwards able to check in the New Hebrides. It is typical of all that follows and much that is not dead yet.

A Savoury Roast

One Tahitian and two British ships had come into Tonga in 1842, seeking a crew to go sandalwood cutting in the New Hebrides. Sixty Tongans signed on; they were armed by the white men on board. They went first to Erromango, where they went ashore and were apparently on friendly terms with the natives, until an axe was stolen on the third day. Then a Tongan shot a native. The natives replied by wounding a Tongan. So the ship up-anchored and went north to Efate. There they made an arrangement to cut the sandalwood, to give the native owners a certain payment per ton. The whites stayed on board. The Tongans cut the wood, and they became exceedingly arrogant (a way Tongans have); they stole coconuts that were under tabu at that time, and deliberately insulted the natives. A fight followed. About 60 natives were killed by the armed Tongans. No Tongans were hurt; native weapons could do nothing against gunfire. The survivors were driven into two caves; the Tongans piled wood and pieces of roof thatch at the mouths of these caves, set them alight, suffocating all those within. The slaughter was terrible. The ships stayed a few days more, cutting sandalwood. Then sailed home, plus four Erromangoans, who " happened to be on board." The crew was paid £100 wages. An officer of H.M.S. *Bramble* says that no whites on board knew anything of this affair until afterwards, when they were angry with the Tongans. But this is disproved by the testimony of the mate:

" I shipped in the schooner *Sophia* of Tahiti, Captain Henry, to go after a cargo of sandalwood—in company with two more brigs, to Tanna, Erromango and Sandwich (Efate) Islands; but I had no idea that I should see so much blood spilled and the property of poor ignorant natives destroyed. We called at Tonga and shipped sixty natives to cut sandalwood and to protect our vessels while in the New Hebrides. We arrived at Erromango and anchored in the bay where Mr. Williams was killed; the natives

came off in canoes and appeared very friendly, making us presents of their bows and arrows; in return we gave them fish-hooks. Our natives, 70 in number, went ashore to cut sandalwood; the Erromangoan natives helped them to cut and carry wood the first three days. On the 4th day a dispute arose, and the work of destruction commenced. At four o'clock in the afternoon all that side of the island was a continual blaze of fire. Our Tongan natives killed men, women and children, burnt the villages and sugar-canes, and in fact destroyed all their cultivation, even cutting down their coconut trees with axes. During fourteen days they so continued murdering these ignorant natives and destroying their property. I blame the masters of the vessels for encouraging the Tonga people to act as they did by giving them ammunition to kill the natives. As I was mate of Captain Henry's vessel, the Tahitians belonging to our vessel gave me an exact account of every transaction ashore. Some natives swam off and begged us not to kill them and made signs that they would assist in cutting and carrying wood. We left Erromango on the 17th of October."

This is one of the few records ever made by a man actually engaged in the sandalwood trade.[1]

Missionary versions of the incident include : (1) Three ships stole 250 pigs from Efate; crew shot 26 natives; women and children were trapped in a cave, wood was piled in the mouth and the " whole made into a savoury roast." (2) Three ships were involved, all English, and 130 natives killed.

Naturally the Efate natives waited their chance to avenge such atrocities. A couple of Efate reprisals are worth noting as typical :

(i) The *Cape Packet*: a quarrel took place on board the *Cape Packet*, over Efate women showing more favour to the Polynesian crew than to the white men. Ten of the

[1] A " lady residing in the South Pacific " describes in the *Boston Dayspring* how Captain Henry and his lusty Tongans shot every native they saw and burned hundreds in a cave; this obviously from hearsay.

crew deserted; and made a plan with the Efate natives. The Efatese lightly bound the hands of several deserters and brought them back to the *Cape Packet.* They then induced the captain to come ashore and help them look for the remainder. At a pre-arranged signal the Polynesians burst their bonds, succeeded in massacring the whole ship's company, sacking and burning the ship. They lived for some time on Efate. Eight died of malaria, while the remainder left on other sandalwood ships, giving out that the Efate natives had destroyed the ship but that they had managed to escape.

(ii) The *British Sovereign*: a more straightforward tale. The ship had been wrecked on some one of the many available reefs. The crew got away in the boats. Two of these went ashore at Efate. The crews landed. The natives walked after them happily, in line, blacks dividing each white body along the dark bush trial. At a sign each black swiftly lifting his club to shatter the dome of each whiteness. The bodies were eaten, bits left around, one sailor escaped, and was hidden by two Polynesian (Samoan native) missionaries, who had by this time arrived on Efate. Then another boat came, looking for the shipwrecked survivors; it shot up the Efate men on the beach. They, furious, went after the Samoans and the last sailor. But the three heard in time of the plot and managed to escape into the bush. Later the Englishman escaped on another ship, leaving a testimonial in the hands of his brave Samoan benefactors:

" Sandwich Island, May 16 1843.

" This is to certify that Mose and his partner Olatapu on the 16 of May we had to run for our life to get clear of them left everything behind when the *British Sovereign* in his long boat came and fire at them J Jones was the only one that was saved out of the crew they killed them all through Mose I was saved, I beg of you to give him something he is a good man he venture more than any man would think and after all had run I hope the Lord will pay him for his troubles with me.

" JOHN JONES."

Mission history is silent about Mose; we shall see more of these early Samoans, who in silence paved a Christian way for their white followers. These were indeed Christian, helping all men, even the sandalwooders.

The little that is recorded of this period in Hebridean history is all of the same sort. No record exists of the number killed. Turner reckons 1839–48 " no fewer than 322 souls perished in the traffic." On Erromango, about this time, a dozen foreigners were eaten and 30 killed in two years. The *Encyclopædia Britannica* says: " The loss of life in this trade was at one time even greater than in that of whaling, with which it ranked as one of the most adventurous of callings." Navigator Hood writes of " atrocities committed by them (sandalwooders), quite equalling and almost exceeding in barbarity and treachery those of the cannibal natives themselves; and about four hundred persons engaged in the trade have lost their lives in Erromango and Tanna alone, since the sandalwood was discovered there, in consequence of the diabolical acts of some . . . no wonder that instead of regarding them any longer as sailing gods, they have designated the people that visited their shore in sandalwood ships, sailing profligates or devils."

The position in 1849 is summed up by Commodore Erskine: " Commercial intercourse with these islands had been limited to a precarious and almost piratical trade, carried on in small vessels . . . in a manner very discreditable to the white men employed in it, who have often shown themselves in no way behind the blacks in cruelty and treachery, and indeed with the sole exception of cannibalism, in the practice of all the vices we generally ascribe to savages."

The Darker the Skin

By this time many Polynesians in the eastern Pacific had thrown down the tapa mat of heathenism and taken up the calico lava-lava of Christianity. These paler-skinned people were more amenable to such civilising influences. A Pacific maxim was " the darker the skin the darker

the heart." The Hebrideans were unrepentant savages.

The sandalwood trade was making huge profits. The vessels used were small, and often too old for other commerce. Anyone with an old ship, a stout heart and plenty of gunpowder, could go into the business. The crews were generally paid by the "lay," each seaman receiving one 72nd of the total price obtained for the cargo. The ships regularly cleared £1,000 profit. The accounts of the *Julia Percy*, 102 tons, for one trip: she got 183 tons of sandalwood, price £85 a ton equals £2,745; paid £150 wharf dues, £1,412 all other expenses, net profit to owner £1,182. The *Julia Percy* cost £900. The 20 ships run by Paddon of Australia got more than £60,000 before his 1860 death. One man made £64,000 in 10 years; another is said to have gained £75,000. The price of sandalwood varied from £12 to £100 a ton, fluctuating widely. It was all too easy. The toughest guys in the very tough Pacific were ready to do anything for such gain. Ruthless exploitation and anarchy within the industry, rapidly reduced the supply of wood.

Pretty Puss

The most pleasant feature of the whole affair was that the natives attached no value to the wood. When once they had been taught that iron was quicker than stone, when one native had one piece of iron, all must have iron: no, NOT like children, but because that is their pride and jealousy, that spurs every man on through this placid-making climate, to equal and then to better his fellow. In 1830 they were giving a full dinghy load of sandalwood for a piece of hoop iron. Goats brought a ton each. A native was shot in a dispute when he asked for a white shell in exchange for his wood—the buyer refusing to give anything else but tobacco; in 1852 four natives were shot for similar cause. Cats, too, had a great success; though they were useless until the ships wisely introduced many ship-rats, thus creating heavy demand. The natives always were and still are very fond of cats. A cat was fair price for a boatload of wood. Much of this early wood was cut with stone axes. And

as those axes chipped and fretted their way slowly through the hard sandalwood trunks, they were tapping out their own low funeral march. Each chip doomed them more certainly. When each man had chipped a few hundred thousand chips, and when all had so chipped into some millions, and sweated to the boats with the wood fragrant against their sweat-stinking hot-bodies, then one of them might receive a piece of old iron. Thus they destroyed the whole rhythm and balance of their own life, which was timed on the slowness of stone.

Whites Ashore

The key-man in this prosperous trade became Paddon of Sydney. Paddon lost his crew of seventeen in reprisal murders during 1843, but a few years later, with his ex-opium brig *Brigand*, he established a station on Aneityum. He was the first to settle permanently in the New Hebrides. He started a sandalwood colony of fifty whites and sent the wood in small ships direct to China. He appears to have been fair with the natives, though opinion on this matter is far from unanimous. But though Aneityum thus became the settled centre of the trade,—to be for a while nucleus for all subsequent expansions of good and evil, first mission successes and the greatest depopulation,—Erromango was the fever point in this early activity. Here sandalwood was most numerous. Here the fiercest struggles for gain occurred. And so the missionaries took Erromango as their first field in the struggle to show the black that whites need not always be concerned in killing. To demonstrate this it was necessary for the Revs. John Williams, Harris, John Gordon, Eleanor Gordon, McNair, Robert Gordon, to die suddenly.

One white on Erromango established his government with an armed force sufficient to punish all native offenders; he lost men but killed back. Once the whites became enraged by a native woman going off with an Erromango man; so they spoiled the native plantations and killed their pigs. The natives assembled a strong force; sent word to the whites telling them to clear out or evil would surely

overtake them next morning. The whites took no notice. The following morning, while some were carrying water and others were preparing breakfast, they were attacked and slaughtered; three were eaten.

On neighbouring Tanna in 1849 lived the respectable Englishman Leonard Cory, sandalwood agent with £600 of goods in his stores, including the first definite record of guns, payable in return for sandalwood, and in particular pigs. These pigs, numerous on Tanna, were traded on to Erromango, where the natives gave sandalwood in exchange.[1]

On Tanna at this time there was also a less reputable Englishman, Stephens, who was on the *Vanguard* when its master and seven crew were massacred, and who had spent several years roaming around the islands with his gun, selling his services in war; his side was sure to win. The captain of H.M.S. *Havannah* records:

> "I was desirous of showing the vagrant Englishman, who, when among these islands, fancy themselves above all restraint, that offences wantonly committed here were punishable by our own laws; and although in this case it was not probable that any evidence . . . . which would weigh with a Sydney jury, even in the doubtful case of their considering the murder of a savage a blameable action, yet the inconvenience the culprit would be put to by his removal might operate in some degrees as a check upon the others."

Stephens was found not guilty, first in a long line of such men brought in from the islands on murder or other charges, and rather regularly acquitted by the Australian courts.[2]

[1] Pigs: This trade grew until in 1860 it was directed towards Australia; in 1865 one trader took 1,500 pigs, another 1,600; 8,000 were shipped in that year. The price was a few yards of calico for 100lbs. of pig. It is amusing that nowadays practically all white men believe that Cook introduced pigs; it is typically white psychology in the Pacific—the whites brought everything good! The native pig was *Sus papuensis*, a distinct species.

Obviously the pig trade upset the very foundation of native culture and currency (cf. Persons).

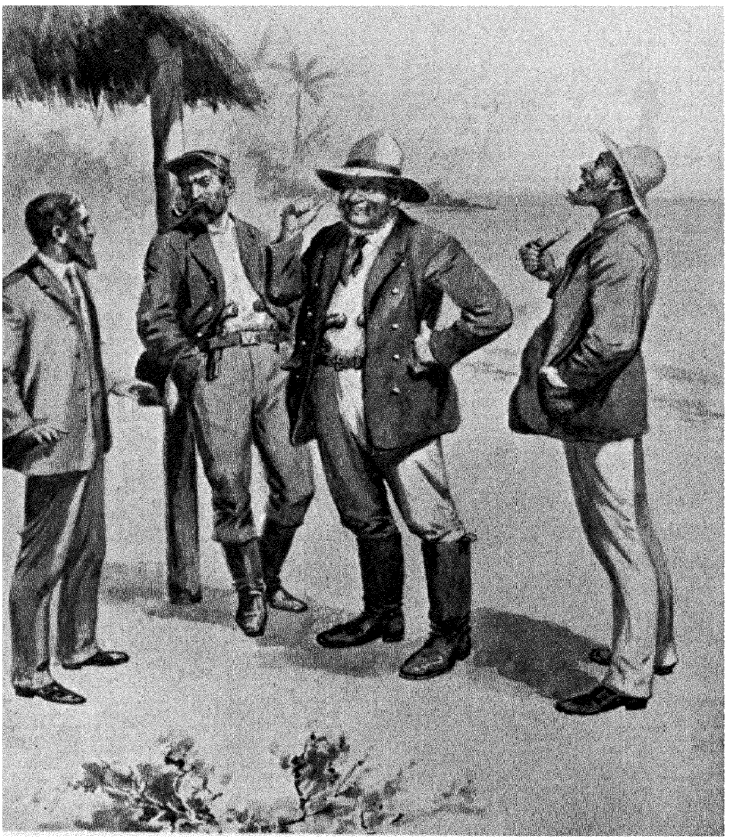
[2] Compare case of *Will-o-the-Wisp*, 1849, shooting three swimming natives; the William Manson fiasco; H.M.S. *Blanche* detains the *Challenge* and is sued for £900 for unlawful seizure; 1865, H.M.S. *Esk* takes a sandalwooder to Sydney

Team Spirit

There was not much team spirit in these sandalwooders. Each individual or group of sandalwooders was out to do the others down and spoil their chances. A Captain Richards describes methods in the Erromango region: " The mate of a Sydney vessel had boasted to him, but a few weeks previously, of having shot six men, as he sailed along the coast, with the charitable purpose of spoiling the market of those who might follow: and the same or another miscreant was reported to have shot a friendly chief in sport, when, having concluded his traffic, he was swimming ashore from the vessel."

Introducing diseases was popular. Thus the brig *Edward* from California landed smallpox in 1853 and " it seemed almost as if those on board desired to leave behind such a memorial of their visit." On January 1861, a schooner, *Bluebell*, deliberately took Tanna men with measles and landed them on Erromango; one-third of the population died as result. One trick was that of trading natives to and fro for cannibal purposes. They would take a Tannese boat crew, go over to Erromango and pay out (for sandalwood) one or two of the crew to the Erromangoans; later *vice versa*. Turner says that an Erromangoan was paid to the Tannese in return for twenty cats and one dog. The dogs and cats were taken back to Erromango and traded for sandalwood. Apart from the enormous profit made on such sandalwood exchange, the dog and cats had cost the trader nothing. He even got out of paying one man's wages ! The mate of one ship said that they fired on any tribe who would not supply sandalwood. If possible a chief would be kidnapped; kept as hostage until boat-loads of wood were received as his ransom. When the wood had been received they might, of course, take him and offer him for a similar price to any enemy tribe, that might care to avail itself of such an opportunity. Four Loyalty islanders were kidnapped; they worked for a year getting sandalwood; then they were sold to the natives of

on charge of shooting his mate; *Daphne*; and Captain Palmer (H.M.S. *Rosario*) who gives most outspoken criticisms of Australian legal methods in native cases.



SANDALWOODERS INTRODUCE AN EPIDEMIC (1861)

(from *The Conquest of Cannibal Tanna*; courtesy Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton. Paton, three-quarter natural size, is on the left)

Pentecost, for pigs, yams and firewood. Six managed to escape to Hong Kong (!) where five of them died. It was common practice to kidnap men as boats' crews for the ships, as it was very difficult to get any man in his right senses to sign on for the job voluntarily, after the first few years.

Whalers

Whaling ships drifting through the group in 1828 had found the sandalwood.

In 1842 a missionary at Tanna met a whaling ship which attempted to molest women and was attacked by the natives. The boat fired its guns on villages and did much damage. In 1849 a naval commander noticed many whales in the southern part of the group, and mentioned two sandalwood men, drowned in an amateur whaling attempt. There is an interesting 1862 story in this connection:

> " Not very long ago Captain Grant had a very narrow escape here. Cruising for whales in the neighbourhood. Just as they reached the beach, a tremendous shout arose from the jungle, and down rushed some hundred painted savages, who seized the boat and dragged it up high and dry among the mangroves, with the crew sitting in their places. Death seemed almost inevitable. Grant . . . made his men sit still in the boat. After a long and stormy debate among the captors . . . to their infinite relief and astonishment . . . the crowd, taking their boat as before, bore them back into the water, motioning them to be off, a hint they gladly took. . . . Standing round to the other side of the island, where there were a number of Europeans getting sandalwood, they found they had still more reason to congratulate themselves upon their lucky escape when they learned from them that, a few weeks ago, a number of people at that very bay had been shot by the white men."

Here are early signs of the way in which the natives soon sought to revenge their dead not on any white man, but on the particular white men responsible.

By 1865 a whaling station on Aneityum was making

£2,000 worth of oil in the year; and a German whaler on Efate reported the natives there as friendly. The Aneityum station seems to have developed out of Paddon's sandalwood establishment, when sandalwood supplies dwindled under excessive exploitation. It was run by Underwood until destroyed by a tidal wave in 1873.

Two enterprising fellows, Smith and Gray, built a 56-foot steamer on Erromango so that they might the more easily tow whales inshore to be cut up. They employed eight Solomon islanders, who had been stolen (mostly by lassooing) by ship *Cabria* (ex British Columbia.)

Whaling did not last long. The industry seems to have hung on into the 'eighties, in native hands under American direction, using old-fashioned harpoons; average price about £120 a whale. Whales are now rarely seen in these seas.

Heritage

The sandalwood supplies were nearly worked out by 1860, though there has always been some production since (450 tons 1928–34, value about £8,000, from central Malekula, west Santo, Efate, etc.). Out of this dying trade developed the even more vigorous and lethal labour traffic for Australia. Sandalwooders left a rich heritage of disease, and they upset all native values in the southern islands. In the north their influence was negligible, as was all white influence until after 1865. Before these effects and influences of the more disastrous sorts are considered, we must examine the activities of certain whites whose motives in visiting the islands were not those of personal profit, at least on earth. Before doing so, however, notice should be taken of the remarkable *lingua franca* that was evolved in the islands as a result of early white contacts; this has since become an important method by means of which tribes, who previously had no language in common, can converse with one another.

Pidgin English

This extraordinary language, Sandalwood English, Pidgin English, or Bichlemar, has a minimum vocabulary and is

easily learned. A few words are French (savvy), some archaic English (gammon):

I am hungry: belly belong me feller 'e sing out, 'e 'ear 'im no good, 'e want 'im kaikai 'e go 'long 'im.

We should eat: 'e good, you me give 'im one something along belly belong you me, allsame belly belong you me, 'e no sing out back again.

It would be very rude to say: "Me want 'im kaikai," which would also equally mean to chew a stick, or to take some food to carry away. When a man is sick he may say: "Somethin' 'e kaikai me feller."

A *saw*: "Pull 'im 'e come, push 'im 'e go; wood 'e fall down."

Piano: boxis where man 'e fight 'im white more black feller something along face belong 'im, belly belong 'im 'im 'e talktalk too much, 'e tell 'im out good feller talk.

Thus one goes a long way around to reach any point, but the short words are strung together at such colossal speed and lovely lilting rhythm (like most native dialects), that it makes little difference in timing. The language has gone into the jungle, where no white man has been; fused with native sounds and intonation until difficult to understand at all. Thus a Malekulan song:

Black e fite, white e frite, o—i,
Black e strong, white e strong, o—i,
White e comebat agin, mino,
Black e got wod, e got wod, o—i, o—i,
Where white e got hard—i,
Oh, strong i go—go, oh white-kill make im lite, o—i,
Kill im; dead e; man, i—i—i, amalo.

Which means: The black fights and the white runs away, but he comes back with a weapon that shoots fire and kills the black, who has only a spear.

The pidgin English way of telling distance is interesting.

I ask "Is it far?"; he replies "'E no long way."

I insist, so he says "'E no close up, 'e no long way too much."

I ask if we'll get there to-day; he says " Man 'e no can savvy. Might you me catch 'im quick time. Might sun 'e dead along road."

I ask what shall we do if it grows dark on the road; he replies " You me no savvy. Might you me find 'im one place belong sleep along road. Might you me go go go go long road where 'e dark too much. My word, suppose allsame me no like 'im."

After that one is quite likely to walk into the village five minutes later. [Words are Melanesian fuN.]

This language still dominates the New Hebrides, despite strong French influence. It is a common tongue between the many races of whites living on the islands. Before the four years' war the Emperor William ordered pidgin English to be replaced by German in New Guinea; this proved impossible. At the outbreak of the war German officers were giving their native police orders in pidgin English.

As the *Observer* once put it: " It is a fallacy to say that the English are bad at languages. In fact, the English are better linguists than the French, who are very reluctant to try themselves in a foreign tongue. So it comes that the general intercourse is in English."

In Queensland sugar plantations the language became universal. In 1876 a recruit coming into Sydney Heads for the first time saw the lighthouse flashing and said, " My word, Cappen, that fellow break plenty match."

Sources. The data used in those middle sections of the book (not based on my experience) are scattered in books, journals, reports and files in many parts of the world. It has been very difficult to reconstruct the exact sequence of events, especially as accounts invariably disagree about the same incidents. I have had to discount much mission over-statement, while nearly all the literature is coloured by obvious personal motives. I hope that the somewhat chaotic treatment that results may be excused; such chaos is typical of all my subject. It has been especially difficult to reconstruct the sandalwood period, as those involved in the trade did everything they could to keep out of the limelight, and only in the middle of the century did other observers appear at all regularly.

See Alexander 179. Angas. Barry 33. Belcher. Bellamy 105. Brenchley. Cheesman 134. Cotteau 272. Deschanel 245. Erskine. Geddie 35. Gill 94. Goodenough. Gordon 156. Hood. Markham. Moerenhout II. 159. Murray 117. Palmer 38, 54, 60. Rannie 120. Roberts 54. Robertson. Roche 23. Romilly 172. Selwyn. Thomas 330. Tucker 309. Turner. Wawn 49, 68, 96, 156. Wilkes.

Boston Dayspring, Dec. 1844. Gov. Reports. *London Patriot* ,1844. *Samoan Reporter* 1848. *Southern Cross Log*, Dec., 1916. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 8/7/51.

AN ENCOUNTER ON PENTECOST
(from an old print)

CHRIST IN CHAOS

Unarmed

THE LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY had, in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, made considerable progress in the eastern islands of the Pacific, since its arrival from England in the *Duff*, 1796, flying "three white doves bearing olive branches on a purple field." Many Polynesian groups were already mainly Christian, before one single convert had been gained in the wilder west. The Melanesian was to prove, as he has ever since proved, a less tractable animal.

Rev. John Williams came to the Polynesian islands in 1823; soon the Archbishop of Canterbury declared that he had added a new chapter to the Acts of the Apostles. At the end of 1839 he headed his mission ship *Camden* westward, to the New Hebrides. He wrote in his diary that "the

approaching week is the most important in my life." Touching first at Tanna, he landed Samoan teachers there on November 19th, 1839. The Tannese appeared sympathetic, and Williams, who had been very worried, felt better and " talked of settling his family in the New Hebrides." Next day the ship reached Erromango. Williams and his assistant Harris landed; gave presents to the natives, who seemed shy: then walked among the trees fringing the shore, in search of a drink. A few minutes later they were racing back toward the ship, pursued by a mob of shouting natives. They were struck down from behind and clubbed to death in full view of the ship's company.

The natives later informed Rev. Gordon—Williams' successor, who was murdered near the same spot—that they killed Williams because they were preparing a feast. They feared that, if the white devils were allowed to penetrate inland, they would discover the feasting grounds and rob them of all their food, as had been done previously by white men. It was not until Williams began to walk up the river, that they resolved to kill him. Rev. Gill, however, learned from Raniani, the chief who himself struck down Williams, that foreigners had visited his lands just before and murdered his son; he was therefore resolved to be avenged on the next white, but " was now both sorry and ashamed." It will be remembered that their only previous experience of whites had been gun-fire and death from Cook, Captain Henry, the *Alpha* brig and subsequent sandalwooders. They had no idea that there were white men who did not want to take and kill. A white without a gun, for the first time in the history of these islands, made it delightfully easy.

This murder shocked the Christian world. It was interpreted as savages rampant and irrespective. Erromango threw down the glove to Nonconformity. Erromango must be won. And in the end it was won; by then there was just a sad relic of the natives left alive. He who believes that sin reaps its own reward, will find ample support on Erromango which surely holds the world's record for murders per acre.

Samoan Bravery

The Samoan native evangelists left on Tanna, the day before Williams was murdered, were left to their own devices until 1840. In that year the ship stationed other Samoan teachers on Erromango, to show the courage of Christianity—brave white Christians were not forthcoming. Five months later they were picked up again by chance; just as they were due to be eaten. Others were put on Futuna; in 1845 more on Efate. On Tanna several died, on Efate and Futuna some were murdered. In 1845 Belcher found Samoan teachers on Tanna " literally imprisoned," being compelled to close the door immediately one entered or departed, to prevent the intrusion of the natives; all were sick with fever. They were in great fear and dreaded Belcher's departure, but he could do nothing for them, and considered their recovery " problematical." In June 1842 we find the Revs. Slater and Buzacott calling in on Futuna, to scatter Samoan evangelical influence. With complacency, mission history records: " When the island was next visited in 1845 (i.e. three years later) no great anxiety was felt as to the safety of the teachers . . . a boat was lowered . . . the boat returned without the teachers and without any satisfactory news respecting them. We pulled in close to the shore and saw enough to confirm our worst fears . . . the natives were armed and skulking about. . . . Everything looked suspicious . . . night was coming on . . . and we stood away for the neighbouring island, Aneityum. On this island we had the satisfaction of finding the teachers alive and well, but we were deeply grieved to learn that on Futuna the whole mission party had been murdered."

The white Revs. Turner and Nesbet landed on Tanna in 1843. " Their efforts were not attended with success." Soon " they two, but in one boat," fled into the night, followed by the teachers in their canoe. Forced ashore by a wind, they were threatened once more, but nothing happened until a sandalwood ship came in and the missionaries rushed on board. When they went aboard many natives are said to

have followed them weeping. They implored the frightened missionaries not to abandon them. " This we promised to do, and said the mission ship would visit them on her next voyage." But this promise was not kept for two years, when the new *John Williams* arrived from England. On her first voyage she was given the noble mission of taking back missionaries to Tanna; missionaries not one iota afraid to face once more the perils of whirling sling and lifted club; i.e. party of Samoan and Raratongan teachers were landed. An epidemic broke out on the island soon after. This had been the cause of the previous antagonism to Turner and Nesbet, and the murder of the Futuna teachers. Ioane, teacher, was clubbed from behind while bathing in a hot springs. Some evenings later Vasa, teacher, was struck by an unknown assailant while he prayed at the edge of the jungle; he died on his knees. A trading ship put in shortly after. Reluctantly, after much discussion, the remaining teachers accepted a passage on board. In the meanwhile one of the white boat's crew was murdered by the Tannese. The captain decided to avenge this by opening intensive fire; the teachers did all they could to dissuade him (cf. page 177). Meanwhile forty natives, who were ignorant that a murder had occurred, came on board to trade; they were all imprisoned in the hold. As the white man had already been eaten on shore, they were unable to stave off white vengeance by returning the carcase.

In 1849 there were four teachers left on Tanna; two were dead and one very sick by 1850. There were others on Aniwa, Aneityum and Futuna.

Brown Epic on Efate

Sipi, teacher, on Efate, did fine at first, with his fellow labourers. Next year, 1845, " both gone, and the station they had occupied abandoned." Sipi's mate had died; then Sipi took ill. His brethren Samoan workers from across the island came to see him; they left him in charge of a native boy while they went home to do Sabbath services. During their absence the natives killed him; they said this was their

custom when a man became delirious. In 1848 friends Turner and Nesbet turned up off Efate. " This lengthened absence of the vessel was most disastrous to the best interests of the mission." That is to say, six out of eleven of the teachers were dead: others very ill. In 1849 on Efate there were David, Mose and Silas, for whom Commander Erskine named a " Missionary Point "; the name is not used. In that year Revs. Murray and Hardie came to Efate; the teachers heard just in time of a proposed attack on the ship, and the ship sailed away quickly. It is therefore curious to find Murray reacting rather differently to Efate in 1853: he says " when we took the teachers on shore to introduce them to this most inviting sphere, the joy of the people seemed to know no bounds. We never saw teachers on their first landing meet with such an enthusiastic reception." Murray sailed away with a light heart, on November 1st, 1853. Nineteen days later the whole party of teachers were murdered by these same people at this same spot. In 1854 four teachers with wives and children were eaten on Efate; another died of fever, another of dysentery, and the last was generously removed. But in 1862 we again find one dying there of fever, while in the same year on Ancityum one died of sunstroke, on Epi several " all dead with fever," " two and wife on Santo dead "—but, O, GLORY BE TO GOD THE FAR-SEEING, one woman on Santo and one couple " alive and well," on EFATE !

Perhaps the last of these glorious fellows was William Munokoa, who worked on Nguna (near Efate) and died with the Rev. Peter Milne in 1874. He died at four o'clock one afternoon of phthisis. " We made a coffin of flooring boards, and on Saturday 3rd buried him beside the grave of his new-born that died before. Expense for coffin 16/–, for digging grave 8/–." That sure was some grave, William, with labour at 6*d.* a day!

So Christianity continued to hurl Polynesians at the razor edge of heathenism. Every year or two it called in on a boat to see how things were getting along. These Polynesian teachers had but the barest idea of Christianity. That was

not their job. They were to go ashore unarmed, to prepare the way. They were litmus tests to the acid and alkaline of dark danger; until places of comparative neutrality could be found. They made the way safe for " real " missionaries. For one never finds these people referred to (when they are referred to) as missionaries, as anything but "teachers." Once again it was the brown and yellow folk from the east who brought the new culture, Jehovah, as Tagaro before Him.

The Polynesians had been successful in not dying overmuch on Aneityum. This was marked as the spot. In 1848 came Rev. John Geddie. He said: " The Samoans and Raratongans have suffered much. The sacrifice of life and health among them has been very great." That is true. But he too was to have a hard fight; he was a chap.

A Nova-Scotian Hardbit

Geddie was a Nova-Scotian, real old style hardbit Presbyterian, a fine clean intolerant tough—one hundred per cent all talking, hymning and danceless. He went out with his wife—second white woman. Jeanne Baret, was of course, the first. On the windjammer out—down the whole length of the Atlantic, round the Horn, and right up the Pacific—he thinks. " It is hard," he broods, " to realise the thought that I am really on my way to these beautiful realms where no Sabbath smiles on the benighted people —where no congregations assemble to engage in the solemn services of religion, and where no preacher proclaims to them the good news of salvation, and warns them to flee from the wrath to come." Thus Geddie went glowingly to the islands where of his predecessors, two (Williams and Harris) had been killed at once, the other two (Turner and Nesbet) fled in fear of their lives. And as for the courage of Mrs. Geddie. . . .

Geddie was a man with no imagination—an enormous asset in such work. Life hinged on the Sabbath. He judged everything by how it behaved on Sunday. Indeed it became a favourite amusement for trading ships to try and arrive at his and other mission stations in the group on a

Sunday; their obligation was to land goods and mail above high-water mark and no farther. They would deposit the stuff accordingly and then in their own way pray for rain. Seldom were their prayers refused. It rains most days in the New Hebrides. The mail would be soaked; spoiled and illegible, with luck—letters from distant families awaited for many months. But would your A1 Presbyterian missionary go down to the beach and get his mail on a Sunday? Would he allow a mission boy to go get it? No, sirree!

Geddie was fully qualified to handle any heathen. Thus he "spoke to the sailors on the subject of Sabbath-breaking, which I believe is a prevailing sin in most vessels . . . the excuse by which they endeavoured to extenuate their sin is, that it is their only time for making their clothes, mending and washing, studying navigation," etc.

His journey took him far up the Pacific to Hawaii in 1847, where he found the natives' "clothes were still scant, many of them wearing nothing more than a common shirt, and I have even seen some few with the maro (a loose wrapper) only." This remark heralds the coming of the great shirt culture to the New Hebrides, of which Geddie from the east was pioneer. At this time, ninety years ago, Hawaii and much of Polynesia was completely shirt-ridden; there was probably not a shirt in the western Pacific. And it would appal Geddie to know that to-morrow there will be at least 6,000 New Hebrideans wearing a garment considerably less respectable and more scant than the maro, not to mention an odd thousand women technically naked.

Shirtism

The shirt became the essential symbol of Christianity in the islands. The pastors made an absolute distinction between native and European clothing. A native could not be a Christian in his own clothes; no Christian woman could show her breasts, as every woman had always done before. Trousers and shirt were the entrance marks to church service. Still are.

Rev. Robertson: "All who wish to attend services must

come well clad—the men in shirts and trousers, the women and girls in light print dresses."

Rev. McKenzie, curiously: "Tell them that it would be better to go to church with old clothes on than to appear before the Lord in clothes acquired by providing sacrifices to heathen gods."

Rev. Frank Paton "saw a man in a loin cloth and red shirt coming up the path. To his unutterable joy Lomai had outwardly broken with heathenism."

Rev. Gill expresses the typical impression on first seeing natives "roving about in a state of perfect nudity, they delighted to paint their bodies: as you approached the miserable-looking beings, you could not suppress the emotions of loathing and disgust which involuntarily rose in your mind."

Rev. Bowie makes a nice point: "When the native becomes a Christian, a great change comes over him—in his clothing, in his life, in his face." (Shaving is also compulsory to Christians.)

Even blackbirder and anti-church Wawn says the Tannese "appear simply more disgusting than if they contented themselves with nothing at all." But an old woman took his Pulvermacher's Galvanic Belt.

Rev. J. G. Paton shows another side of the clothes' line: "I hesitated to leave my dear benighted Tannese . . . for a long time I had seldom taken off my clothes for the night."

And Bishop Selwyn is delighted with the progress on Maewo: "Some labourers returned from Fiji had done a great deal . . . notably caused their women to dress." While on Mai (Emae) one young lady was tightly corseted and largely embustled.

Jack London visited Tanna in 1908, and saw some heathens: "How can I describe these people in my diary?" Mrs. London asked. "'Worse than naked,' and let it go at that," Jack replied.

This is not the place to dilate on the remarkable subsidiary effects of shirtism (why they accepted it will appear shortly).

Economically the mission natives were thus firmly yoked to the trader and to copra or sandalwood production, so that they might get clothes; they were supplied with the poorest clothes that rot quickly in this rotting climate; hygienically, clothes could not be kept clean within the native standard of living, so that skin disease, tuberculosis and parasites benefited. Psychologically a new element of shame and secrecy was introduced into the open, balanced physical approach of sexes.

Geddie never gave an inch on shirtism. One of the red-letter days in his life was when, some years later, his mission having prospered and Rev. Inglis also entered the mission field with success, he " had the honour in conjunction with him (Inglis) of presenting to each of the chiefs of this island a beautiful red shirt, the gift of ladies in Scotland. The present was given as an expression of the satisfaction of the donors, for a law passed by our chiefs to prevent the sale of native women for licentious purposes." Red shirts remained the highest token until a revolution in 1917, 14,000 miles away.[1]

Anowaman

Geddie's first reaction to the natives was awful; he asks, " Can we indeed expect anything good from the poor heathen ? " Five years later he felt a little better about it and said " The more I go among the natives, the more my heart warms towards them." " My first impressions were not of the most favourable kind, but I feel assured now that they have minds to comprehend and hearts to feel." Pertinent in this respect is a remark of old Yomot of Erromango (whom

[1] Geddie's masterpiece was the native reported by Rev. Robertson: " He came nearer, holding himself erect, looking grave and dignified, stopped as he reached us, raised his black hat, gave a most stately bow, and presented us with his card, on which was inscribed ' Lathella, High-Chief of Aneityum.' " On Ambrym, a native, seeing the missionary, dashed to his house, to reappear in a tall hat, a smile, and nothing more.

(Cf. Turner 389, 499. Bice 107. Campbell 87. Somerville 129, 158. Thomas 298. Goodenough 283. Markham 171. Frater 195—for other good stories. Also Milne 77. Don 145. Johnson 278.)

we shall meet in a few pages); he says: " We cannot talk of these things. You think we are hard and have no hearts, but we have. But the thoughts stay deep *anowaman* (in our hearts), and we cannot say them. We are not like other people." Naturally missionaries have suppressed much good in heathen natives, for to admit it would be to give loop-holes for attacks on their interference.

The Mark of the Beast

A much worse sight than nudity, however, awaited the brave Presbyterian on landing. He saw it as he approached in May 1848: " By the aid of a spy-glass we noticed some persons walking in front of it (an iron house), dressed in long priestly robes. In this we recognised at once the mark of the beast." Geddie here refers, of course, to his co-workers in Christ, the priests of the Marist Brotherhood. Geddie does not feel very "co" about it, however. As he puts it, " A new enemy has entered the field. The battle is no longer to be fought with Paganism alone, but with Paganism and Popery combined. The struggle may be long and severe, but victory for the cause of truth is certain." With an icy tone characteristic of tropical Puritanism, he says, " It is reported that a mercantile establishment is to be established in connection with the Romish Mission." There were eight of these priests with eight lay assistants. But in 1850 they returned to New Caledonia; their iron house and their long clothes were against them in this second Catholic effort in the New Hebrides. They do not appear again on the scene for many years. But " before they left, they invited Mrs. Geddie to come and get anything out of their gardens she wished." This brave Scottish woman accepted the offer. The Catholic seed grew on in Puritan soil.

A mission historian sums up: " Fortunately the pioneers were men instructed in the Scriptures who would have nothing to do with the Romanists. The priests got no encouragement and left the island to the Protestant missionaries. This was a great relief."

Geddie stuck on, with bulldog grip.

Seating 1,000

The native problem on Aneityum was not too severe. Samoan teachers had well paved the way. Boss sandalwooder Paddon on this island had been a better fellow than the common run. Of course, Geddie had his adventures and escapes. He spent years there isolated. We read such diary entries as: " God has seen fit to take our dear little Alexander to himself. He was seized with dysentery and died after three days." Of his wife's sufferings we are told little. Misunderstandings led to an attack at that time, in which parts of the mission were burned, and an attempt made on Geddie's life. And the act of a convert, in smashing and burning sacred heathen emblems in a sacred grove, nearly precipitated further trouble. Nevertheless, by the end of 1850, he " could record many unequivocal proofs of progress." By 1852 there were three buildings at the station, and in one of them a printing press was running, tended by versatile Geddie, tapping the Bible into the first written Hebridean language, Aneityumese. A congregation of 350 appears on the books, with 75 native assistants and 35 native schools, 1,400 persons under instruction, being a half of the whole (much decreased) population. Geddie was then stimulated to his one work of imagination. He built the enormous church of Anelgahaut, seating one thousand. [There are now 300 people on Aneityum.]

Geddie, with the help of Inglis, worked steadily on. I feel an intense admiration for that quiet devotion. These two men demonstrated that unarmed white men could live in the New Hebrides and make a definite impression on the natives. They lived, even prospered, in a climate and environment, and among a people, until then believed to be well-nigh impossible. In those days ships and mails were rare. Tinned food hardly developed. The causes of malaria unknown; quinine in its infancy. Consider the return of Geddie, when at long last he is induced to take his first holiday and return to Nova Scotia, which has been supporting him financially throughout; a member of his committee

writes: "We remember the amused look that was on the face of each member of the board when he unfolded his plans for the employment of his time during his visit home, proposing to start the week following on a visitation to the congregations of Cape Breton, intending in addition to visit . . . this was the man who had come home to rest and recruit after over fifteen years' (continuous) service."

Coconuts and Suicide

For some time the Kirk had been pleading, without success, for further representatives in the mission field. But before 1860 we find Revs. Paton, Copeland, Mathieson and Johnston had arrived in the southern islands. Nothing had yet been done by whites in the large central and northern parts of the group. Sandalwood was still going strong, especially on Erromango—the scene of frightful atrocities. In 1856 Geddie had called the Erromangoans "perhaps the mildest and most docile natives . . . the white savages who provoked them are to blame." They had a great desire for a missionary. In 1859, twenty years after the murder of Williams and Harris, handsome Rev. George Gordon came forward to offer himself as third Presbyterian missionary for Erromango. With him his wife, pretty Ellen. Gordon has left a most melancholy diary in the form mainly of numerous letters. When he took over the parish he informed his parishioners, "religion may be compared to a coconut. The husk of ignorance must be removed and the hard shell of the love of sin must be broken by the hammer of the Word, ere the blessing could be obtained. Once secured, it is indeed meat and drink to the perishing soul." Years later it was to be meat and drink and millions with a peerage to Mr. William Lever.

In the first year one chief showed Gordon one sign of favour—offered him part of a coconut.

The Gordons made their house—as did all these early missionaries—with their own hands, there on the damp, jungle-grown ground; among mosquitoes and often-rain, in a land of hurricanes and earthquakes, festering scratches

and black scornful people. Gordon complains that they are "so delighted with a missionary, that they will not assist me in building a house, or give me even a yam without payment." Much the same would, I suppose, happen to an Erromangoan who arrived to build a house on the outskirts of Aberdeen. Towards the end of his first year he writes: "It is absolutely necessary to treat natives with the utmost kindness, and allow them to take unpleasant liberties, till by and by they may learn to appreciate some of the excellence of etiquette."

This indifference or tolerance shown towards the missionaries by natives, who were at the same time constantly killing and being killed by sandalwooders, is interesting. And the missionaries played a far from negative part; thus we find Geddie constantly risking his life to interfere in wars and ritual suicides of widows. "The heathen tell me that strangling will no more be practised if I can be on the spot when death takes place. You will be surprised to hear that many of the poor degraded women are themselves most opposed to the abolition of the horrid practice."

In a few years Geddie had gained a strong moral influence and put a stop to many of these fierce customs. His personality did much for this. Other factors (see below), depopulation and culture decay, trade and the consequent dependence of native on white, helped. But the white man has a power. So we see Gordon, too, intervening in wars. One tribe told him that after he had rebuked them for fighting, "they went on several occasions, and planted themselves near those whom they desired to kill, but could not fight as in times past." Add salt, but there may be some meat there. There *is* some compulsion about the power in sincere interference, that gives it a temporary survival value.

Others Dug Deeper

But in January 1861 the ship *Bluebell* dropped a germ into the works. She took measles-infected natives of Tanna and landed them on Erromango. "Within a few months, 2,000 of the Erromangoans, or one-third of the entire population

of the island, were swept to their graves." Such diseases had been unknown before the white man came. They had no idea of how to treat them. Many lay in the sea when the measles got them; others dug deeper and deeper into the earth to try and keep cool, so that when they died they were easily buried. This was one of the many epidemics that decimated whole populations, who had no understanding of the wave after wave of sudden sickness that broke over their islands. But the *Bluebell* did a doubly efficient job of work. By now the sandalwooders were bitterly against the missionaries, who were beginning to exercise a real influence, firstly over the natives towards fair prices and intelligent defensive actions, secondly in the larger world outside the New Hebrides—the only world in which the sandalwooders could not afford to have their doings publicised. So they circulated stories about missionary methods, especially about poison and devils; to which the natives are sensitive. The *Bluebell*-ites said this epidemic was the work of missionary spirits, who were annoyed that the natives clung to their own ways. Gordon had lent some colour to this, for in an angry moment he had warned the natives, who took no heed of him, that because of their sinful ways soon the wrath to come would come. He told them of Pestilence from Heaven (*teste* Hood 203, Wawn 30, Gordon 182, Geddie, Paton, Inglis, Robertson).

Nine natives ambushed Gordon on the path leading to his new house. He was struck with an iron axe in the spine and fell dead, crying out. Mrs. Gordon, some way away, heard cries as she stood outside the growing house. A native rushed up. She turned away as he struck her dead with his iron axe. They put a portrait of the Gordons up in a tree and shot it full of arrows. The anti-church Wawn sums it up " as long as the missionaries were alive (they thought) they had merely the choice of Christianity or smallpox. They did not like either, so they killed Gordon to stop his praying and his wife also to complete the job."

The Presbyterian mission sent a petition to the Governor in Sydney " requesting an investigation into the sad event,

and the removal of the sandalwood trader, a British subject, who incited the natives to it."

But though those measles killed the Gordons on Erromango, Geddie on Aneityum had one consolation, for " I have reason to hope that not a few are now in heaven." Indeed the mission had done their fair share in insuring this, for the *John Knox*, London Missionary Society vessel, introduced the disease into the group by returning a native from Samoa. The epidemic swept throughout the western Pacific. It caused Paton to flee from Tanna; H.M.S. *Curacoa* to scatter shells. Geddie is " thankful to say, that the events of the past year seem to have had a solemnising influence on many of the natives, and there is a more than usual attention to religion." And so it was. This, and the other great epidemics that followed, drove the natives into desperate missionism, or to killing their missionaries, or to an unbreakable hatred for the white (such as survives to-day in Malekula). Whatever they did, the germs always had the last laugh.

Vengeance for Number Six

Erromango was left to itself once more, though H.M.S. *Curacoa*, flushed with Tanna successes in 1865, threw some shells at it (see below). Rev. Macnair tried again in 1870 and died there in July of 1870. Ships were by then actively kidnapping the Erromangoans for Queensland plantations. Then, in 1871, came Gordon's brother James, a fine person with great ability for language and solitary life. One day he gave medicine to two children of native Nerimpu. Both died. He was busy revising the translation of the Acts of the Apostles, in March 1872, when Nerimpu came and asked for an empty bottle. James handed it to him, and at that moment was struck by an iron axe. He fell, terribly wounded, open from ear to eye; he crawled indoors to die. The owner of the axe took out his axe and ran away, leaving number six in the Martyrs of Erromango series.

Number six had the first distinction of being revenged, in accordance with native custom and with the subsequent

white tradition of the group. The episode is significant because it shows the first signs of militant native Christianity, if we can call it that. This is the story as told by its hero Yomot:

The heathen say, "These Christians are women, they cannot handle a battle-axe and we can kill as we please. Show them your strength if you have any. Let no man know his father or mother. We have no brothers, no fathers to-night."

Yomot and his men went forth. . . . "At Arawan we killed the brother of my mother and his wife. They had hated our Missi and done him harm, and Christian boys had been cooked and eaten in that very village! Then we turned again to the road, remembering that we had left Wawis and Lifu Ukina alone, and that they might be in danger; but they were quite safe. Soon we caught sight of footprints and came across a young man. We deceived him, and told him to come and show us the road. He seemed to suspect something; but, though afraid, tried to hide his fear, and came forward. Nariovi was behind him, and when he saw his chance killed the man, and he lay dead by the wayside. Later we fell in with more people. One man, his name was Umas, talked with us, and when he left I stole away from my friends and followed him. It was not long before, he, too, fell dying. Umas was a great chief. It was for this that they wanted my death."

Yomot, a typical Hebridean, lived to die of influenza, a veteran mission teacher and glorious fellow, under Rev. Robertson, who at last was to win the relics of Erromango for the mission.

Robbie

Robertson was a man liked by all who met him. This cannot be said of most missionaries. His additional humanity was due to an unevangelical start. He first comes into the picture as manager of a short-lived venture on Aneityum called the Glasgow New Hebrides Cotton Company. This was sponsored by Geddie, Inglis, and newcomer Copeland,

" to encourage the natives in commerce, and thus indirectly to further the interests of the mission." A good idea. 1,900 lbs. exported, 1864. This sort of thing should be done by all missions. But Church and trade have since got into such a state of chronic opposition in the New Hebrides, that neither can even think of touching any part of the armoury of the other. Through this venture Robertson saw island conditions. He decided to leave business and become a missionary. He knew what he was doing. And he did what he knew. He chose to go to Martyrs' Erromango.

Robbie was a stocky chap with long laughing eyelashes, common sense and a common sense of humour. Legend says that he would take a glass of beer on State Occasions. (These southern islands seem to have bred a heretic strain; on Tanna, the recently retired Rev. Thomson Macmillan long scandalised his colleagues, because he made no secret of his liking for a game of billiards.)

Robbie spent his first Erromango year inside a stockade; he came out to bury his child. The people at first " all seemed very black." His wife got very ill, and he asked an old native woman, " Ohai, have you ever seen anyone as ill as my wife ? " In a loud voice she replied (in the patient's hearing), " Yes, often, and they all died ! " But Mrs. Robertson did not die. She lived to have a daughter who married the Rev. Peter Milne, missionary of Nguna, who in good time, too, had a daughter who married Rev. Bill Anderson, she too producing daughters, and alternative years in my stay in the islands cutting me or cutting me tea cake on her fine wide clean verandah. As this grand-daughter of Robertson's must interest me, I may be excused for a family story about little Lilian Robertson. She had become very Erromangoan, speaking the language perfectly and thinking natively—invaluable basis for the new generation of missionaries who were to stabilise Christianity in the islands—and so, as she draws out on the boat to go, alas, to school to Sydney, leaving behind a beloved black playmate, she cries " Oh, woe is me ! my dear Ulohoi ! we have grown up together, my brother, the child of my father and mother

and the grandchild of my grandfather and grandmother." A typical native *au revoir* !

While Robbie's colleagues went bald-headed to obliterate everything native, he tried (unsuccessfully) to encourage such arts as carving to survive under Christianity, not appreciating that their perfection is made by and in honour of immaterial but fundamental " heathen " conceptions. The sweeping away of all beliefs and the timing connected with the making of fine things with original tools, made the things themselves empty. Theirs is a religious art.

Missionary, 1871

By 1871 the stone age was over in the south and the gun age was coming in strong. The Presbyterian mission was firmly established numerically, with twelve missions, supported by Nova Scotia, Canada, Scotland, Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand; representing the four quarters of the Church of Scotland—Established, United, Free, and Reformed. The mission grew without any plan or co-ordinating authority on earth. Organisation centred on an annual Synod somewhere in the group, passing majority decisions which had (and have) no force over the minority; being only expressions of opinion. In practice each missionary went his own way and was only responsible to those who finance him at home. Effort had been concentrated in the south. In the north Goodwill had been a year on Santo; though he had not yet any converts " still he had by his example made the native respect him and all entertained towards him the greatest goodwill."

The Presbyterian mission was a very important part of the picture in the middle of the last century. The Melanesian Mission (Church of England), pioneered by splendid New Zealand Bishop Selwyn, had entered the northern islands to a lesser degree (where we shall meet them) and had agreed not to overlap the Presbyterians who were given the south and centre. The germ was the most important influence. Introduced epidemics of all sorts were ravaging the group,

literally wiping out populations. These were the major civilising influences.

Under Auxiliary

Technique of conversion to Christianity will put future developments into perspective.

No missionary in his best moments has ever maintained that there is anything mystical or terrific in native conversions. The native is more spiritual and at the same time more material than the white. The missionaries are placed (by their own prejudices) in the anomalous position, of considering whites so intrinsically superior to black ex-cannibals that it is unthinkable to attribute to the latter any of the higher specialities of the former. Thus conversion, miracle, religious ecstasy and strict morality belong (in the Presbyterian mind) to whites, a few of them. It is for this reason that we find comparatively few fine words on this score in the early missionary accounts.

They freely admit the value of medicine, thus: " Now, if we find that we can, by the cautious distribution of medicine help to break down the old system among this people, then I think we ought to lay this auxiliary under contribution to the cause of Jesus." Geddie has a bit of luck with a heathen medicine-man who falls very sick; Geddie cures him after three months, and he becomes a " regular attendant at our religious services." He cures another man who " ever since has been a regular attendant on the ordinances of religion." But he gets a shock when, " It is remarkable that the deaths that have occurred for some months past have been among the Christian party only. He who doeth all things well has wise though mysterious ends in view." Such differential mortality (aided by traders' propaganda) has been the cause of mission murders. Unfortunately the early missionary was often unskilful with his drugs. Yet what little he knew was of the greatest help to him, because when faced with these new unknown diseases, against which they had no remedy of their own, the natives clutched at any straw; and when the missionary was successful the healed man was his man.

In one mission community, things reached a point where " anyone of the number is sick all had resource to prayer for him and he recovers." Not by any means all would succumb to medical conversion. There was " the old chief who cried like a child, but said that he wished to remain as he was, and after death he was willing to bear the punishment of his sins." Beautiful is the answer of the inland woman when her husband Nuferudi, a chief, urges her to come that they may both join the mission. " No ! Dillon's Bay is an open country, and all go there, but my spirit has ever dwelt in the wild woods."

Medicine has grown as a mission weapon in the islands, reaching its highest on Tanna. As no other white interest (including Government) has done anything for the native, such activity, though necessarily far too limited and incoherent, has been a fine and valuable thing.

In a whole framework crumbling since white men had come to take or talk or kill or cure—Oh which ? Oh why ? at least some few came with decency, with nothing to kill—at least nothing that smoked or could be seen. Any clutchable straw; maybe to burn it later, if it too proved futile.

The dying flame in the fire of brown life was nourished by Scottish hands clumsy with grave-digging and crude Christian carpentry. These horny hands held out some crumbs of ritual advice, illusion and eucalyptus. The contacted natives soon realised this. *The natives began to ask for missionaries.* They were not of course asking for Christ. They were asking for some defence or some vague decency from the whites who were too strong for them. In the areas of fiercest contact, trade and disease had already destroyed the bases of their life, which was timed on the slowness of stone and man's ascending maturity. At least the missionaries could add no fiercer disruption.

Thus Rev. Robertson: " They seem to have a vague idea that missionaries have some knowledge that will help to protect them from evil spirits . . . a missionary's presence in the village adds to the importance of the tribe in the eyes

of other tribes. Above all from the missionaries they will get property, and for the possession of that they are prepared to do a great deal."

Rev. Gordon says: " They do not esteem anyone bearing the name of missionary on account of the doctrines that we preach. In general they only show kindness when there is some hope of being repaid . . . having attended a few Sabbaths they demand payment as a right and call us liars if we refuse."

An 1848 record speaks for itself: " We called the people together, and explained to them the object of our visit. They consented to forsake heathenism and embrace the Gospel."

The first mission flocks were as ragged as the first Christian church itself. Widows, potential suicides, natives flying from native justice, orphan children and lonely sick old men. As depopulation progressed in the southern isles, the whole social structure decayed, war petered out, communities scattered or merged. The Hebrideans were never a chiefly plutocratic people, each chief had only a limited jurisdiction. Depopulation fell upon all without distinction. While the chiefs, the old men who were the masters of native culture, and all the old unities were blotted out, sometimes in a few weeks. In such decay, when no man could any more have confidence in the goodness of Tagaro or the efficacy of native remedy and ritual, the missionary took the place of a new sort of chief versed in the ways of the major adversary. He collected the failing hope of the district or island, pushed into a previously unthought-of unity by a universal decay. Out of this the missionaries gained the temporal power that has so infuriated other whites.

One other point that has favoured the Presbyterian. He thinks of himself always as a White Man. He keeps aloof. You will not find in the vast mission literature the phrase " black brother." A great part of the mission fight in the New Hebrides has always been against the other whites. So their native converts must respect Western emblems of decency: trousers for church, Mister to be prefixed to white

names. No hobnobbing. The natives consider these men to be utterly unlike the other whites whom they meet,—dangerous whites who want their women and like being called by nicknames.

Practically nothing of the old culture was tolerated by the missionary. In everything he saw something heathen and "sexual." Perhaps there is no compromise. At least these men acted in accordance with their convictions. One can forgive them deliberate cultural destruction. Much of it would have happened without their intervention. The native did not (and still does not) come to the mission until his culture is already gone past repair. One cannot forgive them that they did not describe *what* they destroyed. . . .

Worse than Nothing

There is an enormous literature against the missions. You will not find a planter or trader who has got a good word to say for him. Scientists and anthropologists frequently attack them. The trader point of view is well put by Hall, famous *Mutiny on Bounty* author, and best Pacific writer, who makes a character say:

"You remember the old song:

'Shall we whose hearts are lighted
With wisdom from on high,
Shall we to souls benighted
The lamp of life deny?'

That's the missionary spirit. . . . They believe there is only one Lamp of Life, and that they've got it: so they snuff yours out."

If only it was as simple as that; if they were the only snuffers out. I felt anti-missionary after two months in the Pacific, but after two years, when I had got used to missionary manners, and had lived among mission and cannibal natives, as well as among all sorts of whites and through epidemics, I came to change my point of view. I say with Robert Louis Stevenson:

"With all their gross blots, with all their deficiency of

candour, humour and common sense, the missionaries are the best and most useful whites in the Pacific."

I go further: I say that if the missionaries had come to the islands and done *nothing*, just sat down and drawn salaries until they died or were murdered, they would still be the best people in the Pacific. For everyone else was doing worse than nothing.

" *Man belong Darkness* "

The native morality, rigorous within its own framework, *before* white contact, lent itself easily to understanding strict doctrines like the Presbyterian. The subsequent arrival of other sects, including Seventh Day Adventists insisting that Saturday is Sunday, did not worry the natives as much as one would suppose, for their own very complex calendar and fixing of ritual dates had an elasticity dependent on the chronology specialists. Similarly their own culture variations reduced their surprise at local variations in Christianity. Christmas fitted in wonderfully well with their own New Year, the first moon of the yam which had its important observances and offerings to ancestral spirits, and to the kindly (sky) creator Tagaro. While at the same season there were, in some parts, rites of vandalism to the great spirit of the ground Tanas, whose symbol was the snake; around whom much mythology and death. Adam and Eve had an almost exact counterpart in the white Ambat stories of south Malekula (see Waves). The Flood, here as in most parts of the world, featured in mythology. The Immaculate Conception is an easy idea for the native, who knows so little of paternity; but the associated idea of Original Sin is not endemic and is only slowly being injected into the younger generations by the fiercer clergy. A sense of sin is no asset to morality.

The name of Tagaro was often Tahara, near enough to Yehova (=Jehova). The evil spirit who tried to prevent human spirits from reaching the good after-life was Semsem; near enough Shaten (=Satan). The flying spirits in dancing lights, the hawk high soaring, went well in angel wings. Magic

performed daily miracles. The Atonement was complex with its link on sin. But sacrifice for the group was natural enough; with pigs, or as at Matanavat with fine young boys. Resurrection is an easy totemic idea; in Malekula there were great Nogho rites for the restrengthening and remaking of mankind every few years, centring around one (often white) body that would never perish.

Many stories of white culture heroes caused the natives to think that the first whites were returned gods and ancestors until their behaviour disproved it. Had the missionaries known about this, they could have made much use of it to their own ends, as with many native beliefs. But had they appreciated these, they would perhaps have felt so futile and horrified that they would have gone back to British slums. That would have been very sad.

It is sad that the missionaries invented for the heathen the caption " Man belong darkness," for their Tagaro was a God of Light.

Clearly the transitions to Christianity were not very difficult. The Christian native outwardly differed from the heathen in some calico and how he spent Sundays. But later many natives who were in close contact with whites (as on Efate) wore clothes and carried no guns; these did not work on Sundays, though they did not go to chapel. It has never been any easier to identify a black Christian in the New Hebrides than a white one elsewhere. In the mission schools they are taught to read. The missionaries have only translated three books for them to read; hymn-book, prayer-book and Bible. These are well learned.

Simple Stories

When a native heard from a missionary about the Crucifixion, he cried: " Missi, did they really do *that* to the *Son of God*? " And tears suffused his face.

A native comes trembling with fear to an ethnologist and asks: " Is it really true, these pictures that the missionaries show us? " The ethnologist goes to the mission house and finds there exhibited pictures of devils with tails,

breathing fire, while other devils consume the bodies of the sinners.

At a Bible Class a native is reading; he reads: " One soweth and another reapeth." The missionary asks the native what he thinks about that, and the native replies: " The woman sews the clothes and the man rips them up."

One day H.M.S. *Dart* got quite a shock from the booming of drums alongside, in a peaceful-looking bay. Then at daylight there came a strangely familiar yet unfamiliar singing. It was the Old Hundredth. The missionaries like to desecrate, as they think, heathen objects; thus the use of booming slit-gongs for church bells.

The Paama church had taken a rather different savage paraphernalia into the service of God. " The church had a strange flight of steps, made of man-of-war shells." Unexploded souvenirs of some forgotten punitive expedition.

Another aspect of modern civilisation was selected on Epi: " Leading to the church was laid a new coral path, on either side of which was a border of upturned beer bottles."

Peculiar Ideas

It is not legitimate to scoff at the actual Christianity of the natives, as most whites do. They are on the average more Christian than Christian whites (do such exist?). At least one can say that the mission natives are real pacifists, regular church-goers, keep holy the Sabbath, never steal. Like all Hebrideans they are inclined to be covetous and to bear false witness.

In the long run it is the material cleverness and wealth (that Hebridean virtue) of the white that has impressed the native most. There are many stories of white men getting what they want with false teeth, glass eyes, wooden legs. The first field-glasses were a disappointment. A native saw a distant figure and said: " There goes one of my enemies." The missionary handed him the field-glasses; the native was amazed to see, through them, his enemy so close. Dropping the glasses, he seized his arrows and looked again. Too far. He snatched the glasses again; then the arrows. It would

be hard indeed to lose such an opportunity. The man got a bright idea and said to the white: " You hold the glasses and then I can shoot him." The physical approach includes a dislike for white flesh; it is too salt. It smells funny too. The amazing ease with which the natives learned pidgin English soon gave them a better understanding of white mentality; in 1871 it gave a shock to an officer of H.M.S. *Rosario*, who to display his knowledge of native tongues, addressed an Efate native in Maori, Fiji and Samoan, the native politely replying, " Good morning, Sir."

The native has never been able to grasp the essence of England, the far-away white home. A native suddenly asked: "Bushman 'e stop along England?" (bushman means fierce hill-man). John Baker replied: " No got." After mature thought the native countered with: " I t'ink along England 'e no got bush." Scotland is better appreciated. A native hastened to his hut on hearing that a missionary was a Scotsman, so that he might show him a picture of a Scottish scene. He reappeared with a large placard advertisement for whisky.

Our system of royalty has always intrigued them. In the eighties a Tanna man is asked if he knows about the Queen. Yes, he has seen a picture of the Royal Family and he replies: " Me savvy, one big fellow man die; big fellow woman she stop, plenty piccaninny." An excellent description of Victoria's domestic economy. One day in 1915 a missionary was called upon to judicate between two furious tribesmen. One accused the other of vile swearing at him. He found, as the result of cross-examination, that this offensive language consisted of one calling the other " The Kaiser ! "

When you walk from the mission station a mile inland you have travelled a span of centuries, colours and civilisations. From civilised to savage, christian to heathen, modern to primitive, writing to talk, good to bad, God to Satan, black shirt to black skin. . . . WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE ? . . . DON'T ASK ME. . . .

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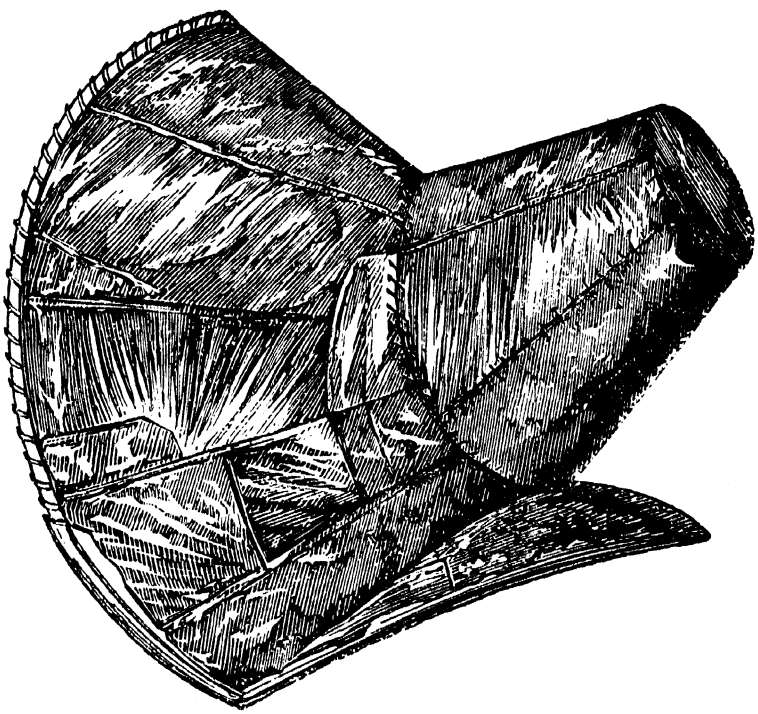
Govt. Report, 1931, 19. Ref. *Presbyt. Mag.*, Feb. 1873.

Information from Rev. W. Anderson, Dr. John Baker, T. Bird, Rev. F. Bowie, Dr. H. Follick, Rev. J. Gillan, John Layard, Rev. Frank Paton.



SOME DEVOUT CHRISTIAN CONVERTS MADE SABBATH BONNETS ENTIRELY OF TURTLE-SHELL !

SOUTH SEA SAINTLINESS

Jehovah Revolver

REV. JOHN G. PATON, born in Dumfries 1824, whipped the Christian world into a frenzy against the atrocities that were instituted, mainly on behalf of Queensland sugar, in the New Hebrides in the second half of the nineteenth century. This is the next big factor to be considered in our history. Paton will provide an admirable introduction to this phase and its correlated phase of the warship, which he pioneered.

Paton settled on the island of Tanna in 1857. Tanna had been left alone by white missionaries since Turner and Nesbet had fled, after a few weeks, fifteen years before. Polynesian teachers had been working away there, dying of fevers and clubbings. Prospects were black. Paton was brave to go there, especially as he was a man not without nerves and imagination.

The chiefs willingly sold ground for houses and " appeared to desire missionaries to live amongst them, but perhaps with an eye to the axes, knives, fish-hooks, blankets and clothing, which they got in payment or hoped for in plunder." Apparently " no heathen could be trusted one step beyond what appeared to be his own self-interest for the nonce; and nothing conceivable was too base or cruel to be done. . . . My first impressions drove me to the verge of utter dismay." Paton was not alone. He took out a nice wife. She died within a year.

The great measles epidemic of 1861 broke over the islands. The Erromangoans killed the Gordons. The Tannese became very excited and came in hordes to the mission station saying: " The men of Erromango killed Missi Williams long ago. We killed the Raratongan and Samoan teachers. We fought Missi Turner and Missi Nesbet, and drove them from our island. We killed several white men and no man-of-war punished us. Let us talk over this about killing Missi Paton and the Aneityumese till we see if any man-of-war

comes to punish the Erromangans." At least that is what, months after, Paton says they said. I do not know how they knew about man-of-war punishment like that; the passage may possibly be connected with the shape of things to come. Be that as it may, Paton was in a nasty position. As the epidemic raged, the Tannese grew more excited. Paton says that the sandalwooders helped to spread the disease, then tried to get the missionaries killed as being responsible.

We find interesting references in his autobiography, to experiences with his unloaded revolver. He had been compelled—some months before—to sit up all night to guard his wife's grave. As Brenchley remarks: " It is surprising that so ill-disposed natives should have obligingly left him unmolested during the day." Now, in his own words, " Seven or eight savages raised their great clubs in the air. I heard a shout—' Kill him ! Kill him ! ' One savage tried to seize hold of me, but, leaping from his clutch, I drew the revolver from my pocket and levelled it as for use, my heart going up to my God. I said: ' Dare to strike me, and my Jehovah God will punish you . . . for hatred to his worship and people . . . we love you all.' They yelled in rage, and urged each other to strike but the Invisible One restrained them. At this dread moment occurred an incident which I trace directly to the interposition of God "—i.e. a tornado appeared with certainly miraculous speed and direction.

Paton had been joined by Rev. and Mrs. Mathieson. Mathieson was a man of " the highest intellectual and spiritual qualifications," including a serious consumption, from which he had been sent to " recover in a warm climate." Soon after both died.

Things went badly, and Paton got into a state. Constant talk of murder drove him at last to flee. He left his things and went by night to the other side of the island. Before he left he warned: " My Jehovah God will punish you; a man-of-war will come and punish you, if you kill me." The natives thought they had found a good solution. They only needed to talk about killing and the missionary would soon go. They were wrong: Paton brought a come-back. But

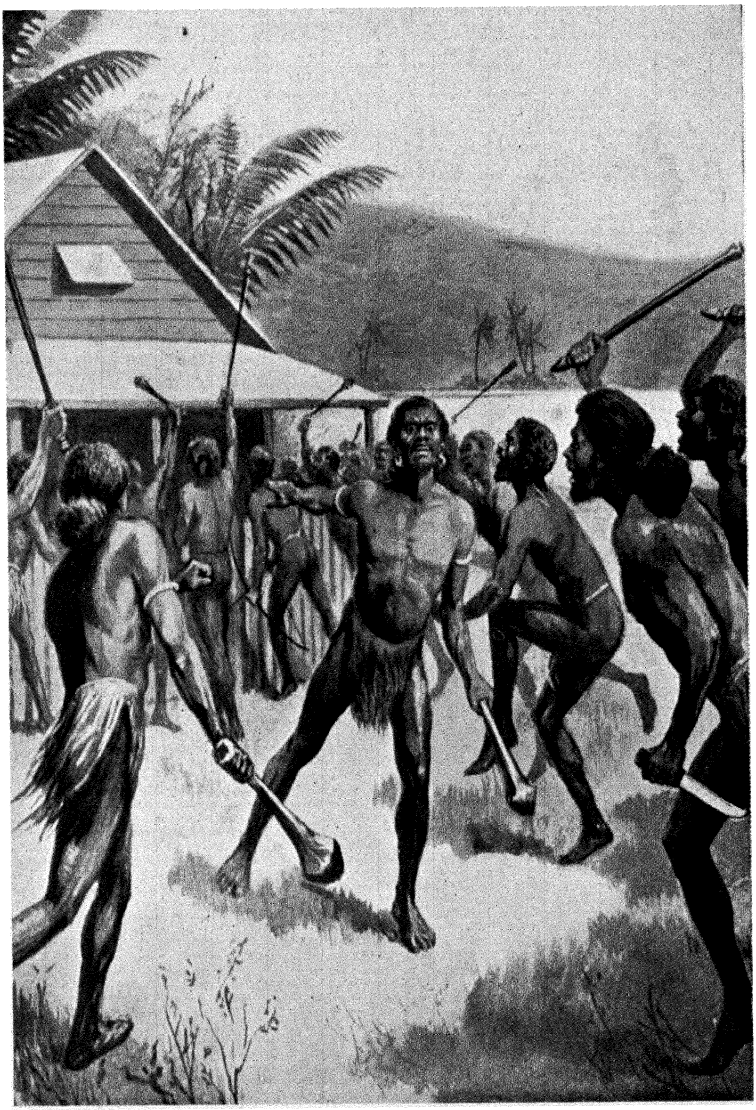
Paton cannot be blamed for going. He escaped on a sandalwood ship, mate Ross Lewin, pirate. He says: "I alone north of Aneityum was left to tell the story of the planting of the standard on Tanna—our mission then numbered but four agents in the field." He came back to Australia and told the story. It soon brought in £5,000, putting the mission financially on its feet. Paton's fund for buying and maintaining a mission vessel, the *Dayspring*, alone reached £30,450 2*s*. 6*d*. from 1865–78.

H.M.S. "Curacoa"

The mission sent in a memorandum on the position in the group, to the Governor at Sydney. As a result of this H.M.S. *Curacoa* was sent out in 1865 with Commodore Sir William Wisemann. He arrived as the annual synod of the mission was in progress on Aneityum. The missionaries presented him with a memorandum on the loss of life and property that had been sustained by the mission on Tanna, etc. Wisemann asked them to accompany him as interpreters; this they agreed to do. They embarked on the *Dayspring* and went down to Tanna behind the *Curacoa*. Let Paton describe the event which, though trivial enough, is of significance in an analysis of group Christianity, while it marks a turning point in Hebridean history—a turn towards official backing for whites, and recognised compulsion of natives.

Paton says: "H.M.S. *Curacoa* had just returned from her official trip to the islands, in which the Commodore had thought it his duty to inflict punishment on the natives for murder and robbery of traders and others . . . and the Christian world . . . thrown into a ferment . . . by certain articles . . . in a leading publication . . . a cry of execration loud and deep and even savage, arose from the Press and was apparently joined in by the Church itself.

"After spending much time using peaceably every means in his power in trying to get the guilty parties on Tanna and not succeeding, he shelled two villages—having the day before informed the natives that he would do so, and



THE ATTACK ON THE MISSION HOUSE

(from *The Life Story of John G. Paton*, courtesy Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton. The native dress has been somewhat puritanised). This plate is only significant when compared with the section "South Sea Saintliness" and the next plate

advising them to have all children, women and sick removed, which in fact they did . . . the Tannese were astonished by the terrific display of destructive power . . . multitudes of Tannese warriors had assembled on the beach, painted and armed and determined to fight the man-of-war. I approached him (the Commodore) and said with tears: ' Surely you are not going to shell these poor and foolish Tannese ? ' . . . He replied: ' You are here as interpreter, not as my adviser. I alone am responsible.' The Commodore then shelled the villages."

Several villages were burned and many canoes. One landing party crept cunningly and stalked a village, until it was ambushed from the rear, a seaman with Indian Mutiny and Crimea service, and a V.C., was killed.

A document was then produced purporting to be the declaration of the chiefs, begging Paton, " Go and plead with the chiefs of the man-of-war. . . . Inform your good Queen Victoria that we will kill no more of her people, but in future be good, and learn to obey the word of Jehovah."

There was a difference of opinion about this affair even within the mission itself. Paton was blamed, as sponsoring the warship's visit. For the first and almost the last time in this history the natives became the objects of pity and sympathy among whites who had in the past and would in the future regard them as little better than animals. Paton had his supporters, however, such as Rev. Macdonald, who said: " Some missionaries go to the *extreme* length of holding that they should not employ force even in self-defence."

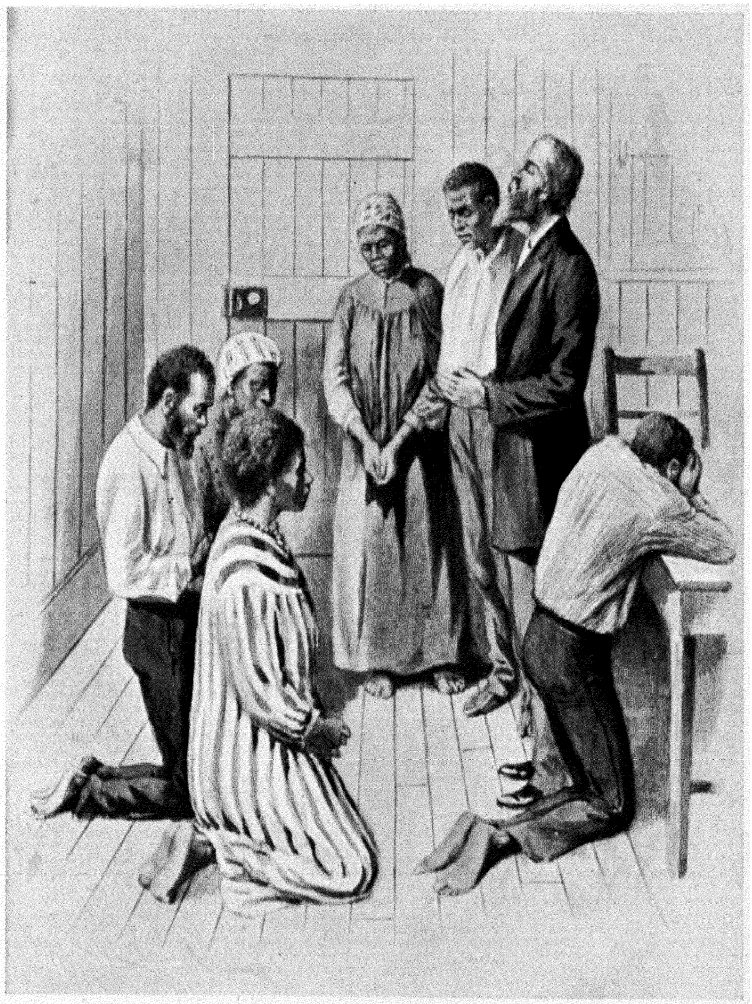
Sir William Wisemann repudiated the suggestion that his movements were directed by missionaries. All is not as clear as it might be, for the wreck of H.M.S. *Orpheus* in 1862, off the coast of New Zealand, had caused the loss of many papers, and had prevented any of Her Majesty's ships from visiting the New Hebrides. The Admiralty had directed him to proceed to Tanna and Erromango. He asked the missionaries to interpret for him, and Mr. Paton went four times to the natives at Port Resolution to urge them to

meet the Commodore. He entreated Sir William to delay firing . . . "the ground on which one of the boldest was standing was pierced by the cannon ball, making the native dance in the air."

Hon. Herbert Read, who was on board, wrote of the affair that: "The impression left on our minds by the missionaries of this society was not altogether favourable . . . they have courted harsh criticism by the unctuous language of cant that makes their conversations and writings offensive to all sensible men, by their exaggerated accounts of sundry attempts on their lives, when according to their own evidence, they were so helpless and unresisting that it seems hard to believe that a really serious attempt could have failed; and, lastly, by calling in the sword of the naval power for the punishment of their persecutors, thereby causing great scandal. I believe these men to be in the main honest and well-meaning, and the present condition of Aneityum (Geddie and Inglis) shows that in the long run they are successful, though they may not necessarily be men of education, and refinement."

The testimony of the eminent naturalist Brenchley, who was also on board at the time: "How much more beneficial would be their action if with their zeal they combined knowledge, if they were men of more cultivated interests and greater social refinement, in one category of which, that is manners, they are often inferior to those they teach." My own not inconsiderable experience of warships in the Pacific makes all this abundantly clear to me. When offered a gin *pahit*, or rather an unending series of gin *pahits*, in the hospitable wardroom mess, Paton and Geddie refuse their alcohol in a marked manner.

Apparently a letter from the ship, which spoke of chastising the natives for frightening a missionary, started one great Press story—that Church of England Bishop Patteson was involved, that he was plump for eating, and why in the devil did he want to get into peril and then appeal for help anyway. A Church historian says: "Every friend or relative of Bishop Patteson knew how preposterous the supposition



THE DEFENCE OF THE MISSION HOUSE

(also from *The Life of John G. Paton*, courtesy Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton)

was." Indeed the Melanesian (C. of E.) Mission has set its face against any such methods. When, six years later, Patteson was murdered (as a result of a blackbirding episode), everything was done by that mission to stop a punitive expedition, and the then acting head of the mission, the learned Codrington, presented to the Commander of H.M.S. *Rosario* a memorandum, signed by the whole staff, protesting against the use of force under any circumstances.

The whole affair is summed up nicely by a trader-white in his own style:

> " H.M.S. *Curacoa* made it lively for the natives in 1867. For some wrong done to missionaries—driving them away, I believe—she shelled the native village and landed her marines and blue jackets . . . later some natives found an unexploded shell, and they wanted to find out its contents. The result of their experiment was disastrous. Nine of them derived no benefit from it."

The Foreign Mission Committee of the Reformed Presbyterian Church thought otherwise: " The action taken at that time by Commodore Sir William Wisemann met not only with the approbation of the Admiralty and the Foreign Office, but was, in all the circumstances, of considerable advantage to the New Hebrides mission."[1]

[1] This type of punitive expedition, legally and humanely unsound, is often useless and may make it more dangerous for the next whites to come along. Many such shellings were to follow. Geddie of Aneityum himself said of the *Curacoa* affair: " For more than eight years previous to the visit of the *Curacoa* not more than five Europeans had been killed in the New Hebrides; she had not been away from the islands for more than six months when the same number were cut down."

The Tannese became known as the toughest natives in the Pacific; this being largely correlated with the presence of the toughest whites there, 1850 to 1875—whites who survived through armed force. The natives specifically attributed much of their savagery to white example, especially to the repeated kidnapping after 1863. They became killers, but selective killers. And not without a certain delicacy, as when they killed Captain Daggett, whom they liked. " They implored him not to leave, and on the morning of his departure he was shot by the chief most friendly to him ! Then they took up the body and buried it, mourning over the grave." In 1877 a native killed trader Easterbrook; this went to the House of Commons. He had sold gunpowder, apparently inciting its use. As a result H.M.S. *Conflict* called at Tanna and demanded,

The whole *Curacoa* business cast something of a slur on Paton's good name. He wisely decided to go on with mission work in the field. He chose the tiny island of Aniwa. He describes graphically how " I resolved by the help of God to sink a well." He made much talk and voodoo about this miracle of finding water in the ground, for the benefit of the sceptical natives. When at last he struck water: " I almost fell upon my knees in that muddy bottom, as my heart went up in praise to the Lord. It was water ! It was fresh water ! It was living water from Jehovah's well. True it was a little brackish. . . ."

He had got the natives into a great state of excitement. Chiefs gathered around the well-head and to Paton the whole thing seemed " a rehearsal in a small way of the Israelites coming round when Moses struck the rock and called for water." Thus the back of heathenism was broken. " Oh ! The intense excitement of the weeks that followed ! Company after company came to the spot, loaded with their gods of wood and stone and piled them in heaps, amid the tears

as had the *Curacoa* twelve years before, the giving up of the men who were responsible for expressing their own rights and claiming the only justice available to them—their own law. They refused. H.M.S. *Conflict* went and told H.M.S. *Beagle* and H.M.S. *Reynard* who arrived in September 1877. By this time Rev. Thomas Neilson had succeeded, on the seventh mission attempt, in settling as missionary on Tanna, having twice been driven out—1866 and 1867; while Rev. Watt had arrived in 1869, also Rev. Gray; no baptisms yet, but the natives tolerated them. Lieutenant Caffin of H.M.S. *Beagle* requested Neilson to act as interpreter, and a reward of £5 was offered for the murderer. . . . Caffin took seventeen natives, including three chiefs who were standing around . . . as hostages. Four days later the murderer Yuhmanga appeared on the beach. Neilson asked him to step aboard. He refused, though he readily gave up his gun. Three sailors were ordered to seize him. He got away. On the seventh day ten of the hostages were released " to quicken the search," and they were told that if the man was not soon found, the others would all be taken to see the Commodore down in Sydney. Four Tannese were killed in trying to take the man, and so bail out their miserable chiefs. Four others were killed in defending him. Then, amid much shouting and acclamation, the murderer's brother was brought. He admitted that he was Yuhmanga's brother. He was tried as an accomplice, found guilty, and hanged on the yard arm. Lieutenant Caffin then addressed the islanders, over the corpse, to the effect that warships would come and punish further murders and other offences (against whites).

In the following year Tanna expressed her disgust by a great earthquake which lifted Cook's Port Resolution into a shallow non-navigable inlet. An old trader who lived there described it: " I had got through two or three bottles of gin, but I didn't think I was drunk till I went outside and saw the rocks jumping out of the water. I thought I had better go in and have a sleep then." In 1907 H.M.S. *Cambrian* threw more shells inland.

and sobs of some and the shoutings of others in which we heard the oft-repeated word 'Jehovah!'"

A Splendid Old Man

I have a queer copy of the *Handbook of the Western Pacific* 1933, whose comment on John G. Paton gives a refreshing angle: "Aniwa is 7 miles by 2, mostly coral and has no harbour. There is good anchorage, however. It is a fertile place and the natives are quiet and peaceful. Dr. Paton, ingly well watered and well wooded. There are various ranges, and the highest rises to . . . A very notable South Seas missionary, settled there in 1866."

After a few years on Aniwa Paton went back to Australia. He spent the rest of his life speaking and agitating for the mission. He never hesitated to accuse or to make trouble. He screamed for England to annex the New Hebrides before France got a stranglehold. He more than any other person was responsible for the belated, niggling, gradual control of the group; he fathered the bastard Condominium. His pouring passionate words, a lather of hope and hate, streaming over his hearers from his wonderful flowing beard and whiskers and long flowing locks (bleached, said his many enemies), all gave him a great position. He addressed the Commonwealth Senate at a private sitting by invitation.

He became one of the most powerful influences in Australia. He lectured across America. He loved taking tea with English peeresses. He became, by the power of beard and words, if not a saint at least saintly. He raised big sums of money for his mission, until it became the best shipped, best housed, best paid. To-day there are Paton funds and indispensable Paton memorial hospitals. The John G. Paton fund is the main support for modern missionary endeavour and thus native medical aid, though the great days of thirty-seven missionaries and four hundred trained teachers are now over. There are two Patons, son and grandnephew, missionaries in the group to-day. One of them has been there over forty years, working incessantly, at the cost of a hand and a leg; yet still with a lot of the old man's fire.

In his old age John G.'s "declining years were largely occupied in persistent efforts to save these same heathen from other savages, the labour recruiters, white and educated, and therefore, to their everlasting disgrace, more culpable than the rude native." He died as the result of a fall from a carriage, still fighting for his cause. He was a he-man of Jehovah, a militant journalist for Jesus.

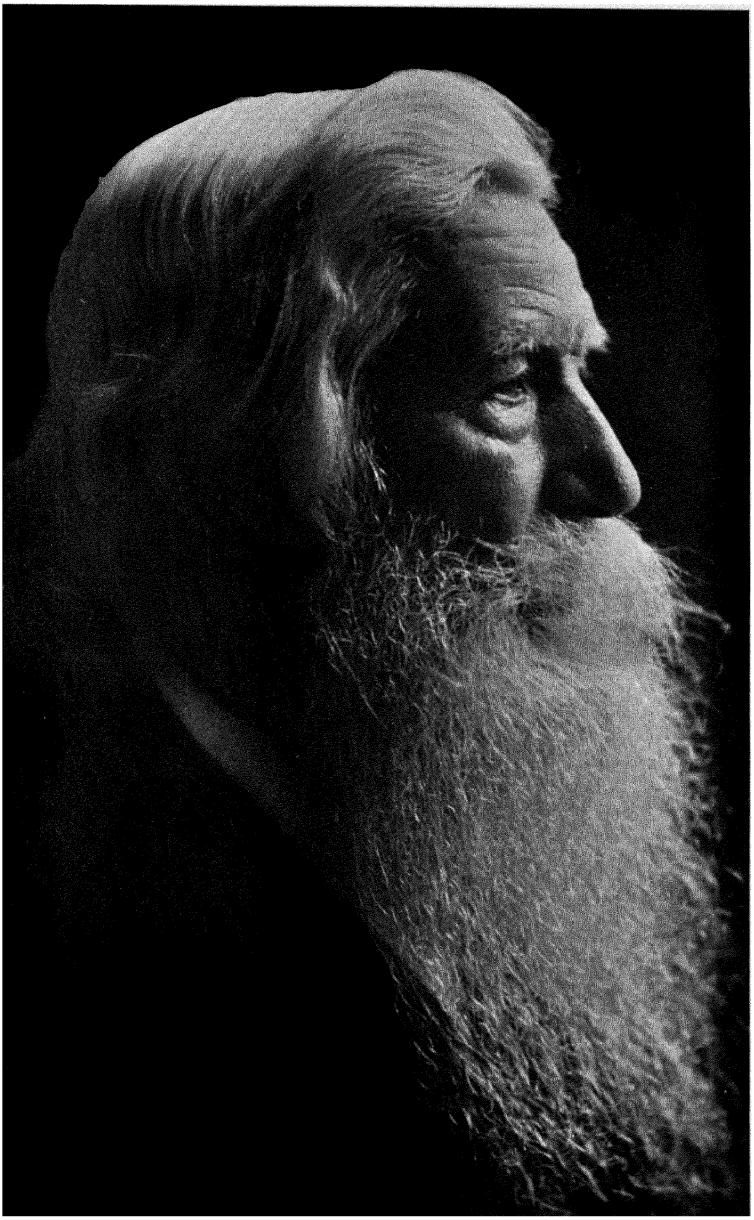
Wawn v. Paton

The labour-traffickers, whom Paton did his best to combat, hated him fearfully. Blackbirder Wawn visits Aniwa and calls on the Patons. "We did spend an hour—perhaps two —in his house; and very sorry I was subsequently that I even went near it. Out of this occasion there arose another scandal. . . ."

And we find Wawn meeting another missionary:

> "'Did Paton tell you I broke into the house?' roared I.
>
> "'Yes, he did.'
>
> "'The next time you see him, you can tell him he's a d——d liar!'
>
> "'A didna come on board here to have that language addressed to me,' said he.
>
> "'No, you didn't, I daresay; and you won't get any more, for if you don't get out of the ship at once, I'll bundle you out quicker than you came.'
>
> "Whereon my gentleman thought it best to depart without more ado."

On the occasion of this visit to Paton, Wawn told him that he had recruited five women owing to a severe war on Tanna: "The reverend gentleman then expressed his satisfaction that we had saved the women from being murdered. . . . Sometime after our visit to him, this gentleman actually reported to the Government that I had *kidnapped* certain women, and that in his own house, in his own presence, I had boasted of my own exploits." Wawn was not the fellow to stand for that at all. Captain Bridge of H.M.S. *Espiegle* was instructed to investigate the matter;

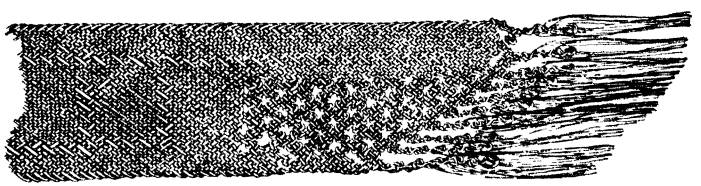


JOHN G. PATON

his report led to fierce controversy in the Australian Press. Paton had certainly exaggerated, and it was written of him that " he appears to combine with enthusiasm in a good cause a perfect genius for scandalmongering and imputing bad motives."

Later Wawn published a statement that, while he was passing a Tanna mission station, the natives fired one hundred shots into his boats unprovoked. We find Paton writing a letter dated March 10th, 1882 (Record Office) to Sir Arthur Gordon, which reads curiously different from the *Curacoa* Paton of 1865. He says: " For this ' atrocity ' a man-of-war was sent to fine the natives. Fortunately the missionary . . . was able to assure the Commander that no such event had ever taken place there. As it would have been almost impossible to make the proud-spirited Tannese pay such an unjust fine, no one knows how much bloodshed and loss of property the presence and aid of the missionary then prevented."

Such childish blood-wrangles were of weekly occurrence in this traditional futile trader-missionary feud that kept (and keeps) these islands hate-vibrant.



ONE END OF A MALEKULAN PENIS-WRAPPER

These wrappers (worn in centre and south of the group) especially offended puritan eyes. They are often beautifully coloured, and hand-plaited

Atrocity ?

The entirely quantitative feeling of the blackbirder in such controversy is shown in a remark of blackbirder Wawn's, which gives an angle on what a labour-trade white needed to happen before he thought the word " atrocity " justified:

"The natives informed us (1878) that a schooner's crew had recently attacked Tangoa Island. That, having landed, they had destroyed all the canoes, burned the village, killed a score of men, and had driven the remainder of the inhabitants away from the island. Luckily for us there was no missionary in the neighbourhood to exaggerate the story and to make another blood-curdling atrocity out of it."

It is now time to consider this traffic.

Sources. Alexander 109, 180. Belcher 59. Brenchley 194–208. Campbell 48. Eckardt 7. Geddie 443. Gill. Goodenough 281, 304. Grimshaw 284, 302. Gray. Gunn. Hansard. Jacomb 103, 174. Johnson 275. Langridge and Paton. Markham 68, 88, 231. Palmer 38. Paton (especially). Rannie 65, 78, 93. Somerville 104. Steel 43, 171. Thomas 208, 229, 289. Turner 19. Tolna 186. Wawn. Yonge II. 102. Help from Oliver Bell.

Brisbane Courier. Fiji Times, 8/10/70. Govt. Report, 1921, 4. *Melbourne Argus. Quarterly Jottings*, Oct. 1935. *Handb. West Pacif.*, 1933, 190.

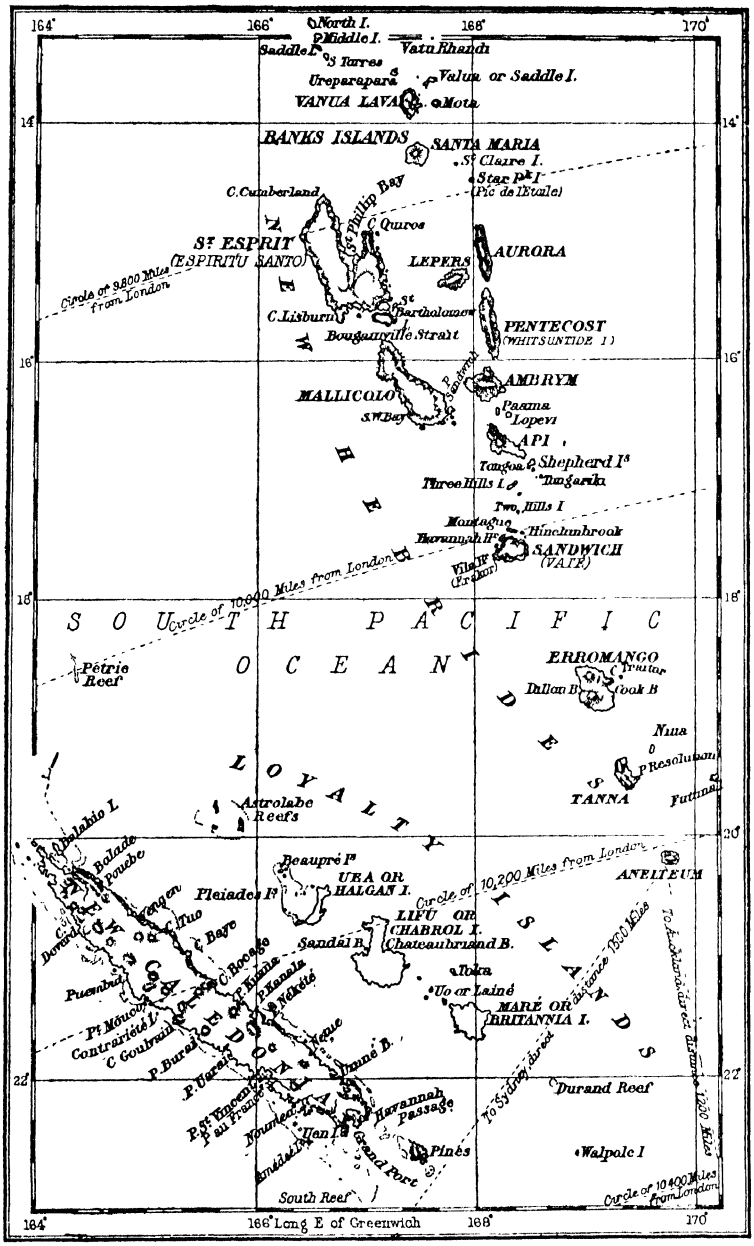
Record Office: 22/2/79. 4/3/79. 27/8/81. 10/3/82. 11/11/84.

IV

(1863–1887)

JEFFERSON DAVIS stimulates new contact: sugar for Queensland; hints to kidnappers. One has wooden legs—but fleshy rump. Death rate 84 per 1,000. Anthony Trollope makes some remarks. There are endless murders and attacks; punitive expeditions and free-for-alls. The course of a sample series of incidents during five years is traced on one of the many islands.

Stone-axe and native health disappear. It becomes comparatively safe for gun traders to settle ashore; plenty are eaten. They prepare the new Copra age, while England and France play soldiers. Flag changing; peculiar diplomatic correspondence of my Lords Kimberley, Salisbury, Granville, Normanby, Churchill and Derby, with assorted Sirs and many Messieurs.



A MISSION MAP OF THE AREA, ABOUT 1880

BLACKBIRDS

Consequences of Anti-Slavery Feeling

As the sandalwood supplies became exhausted by over-exploitation, the ships and men employed in that trade sought new methods of money-making.

In 1847 Benjamin Robert Boyd, variously described in literature as " a cool scamp," " an enterprising capitalist," and " the greatest scoundrel I ever knew," sought to found a rival to Sydney at Twofold Bay in southern New South Wales. He brought sixty-five New Hebrideans on a sandalwood ship, to act as shepherds on Riverina sheep-stations. They died quickly, while the British authorities objected because they had been taken by force. Four years later Boyd went to the Solomons on his yacht *Wanderer*, with the object of forming an independent government under his own control. When he landed the natives killed him.

As a result of anti-slavery feelings, which caused the American War of Secession, cotton prices boomed. In 1863, Captain the Honourable Robert Towns, a Sydney merchant and member of the legislative council, started the first cotton plantation at Townsville, Brisbane. His high position enabled him to re-adopt Boyd's method. Thus began the labour traffic, generally called blackbirding, which was to supply cheap plantation labour in tropical Australia where the whites could not work.[1]

[1] Much controversy still rages over the potential abilities of white men in climates such as that of Queensland, and the matter is far from settled. *See* Cilento, Breinl, Breinl and Young; Gregory *for*, Huntingdon and Haslam *against*.

Flora Shaw wrote in 1893 of the difference between a black and a white working in the tropical sun as " the difference between a humming bird and a sick sparrow." Ref. N.H. Jacomb 52. Wawn 270. Cf. Conigrave, 1936. Valuable summaries by Griffith Taylor (1919) and East.

Towns proposed to let his natives out on hire at 10*s*. a month, and to return them after twelve months. He addressed a letter to the missionaries in the New Hebrides, dated Sydney, May 29th, 1863. It read:

> " Rev. Sir.—Should this meet the eye of any gentleman in that sacred calling, I beg to explain the nature of the voyage upon which I am to despatch the bearer, Captain Graueber, with the schooner *Don Juan*. . . . Suffice to say, I have embarked considerable capital in Queensland in the cultivation of cotton, and as so much depends on the *rate of labour* in the ultimate success . . . I am endeavouring to try out natives from the islands. . . . I with my cotton emigration (returning them every six or twelve months), will do more towards civilising the natives in one year than you can possibly in ten. . . . You may be able to point out to the poor unsuspecting natives that they have nothing to fear, as I will bind myself to return them within twelve months of the day they leave, and more likely in six months. . . . I send an interpreter, a man who says he can speak the language; this is very important to make the poor fellows understand. . . .
>
> R. Towns."

A good letter. Poor fellows. The interpreter-mate of the happily named *Don Juan* was Ross Lewin, who in a very short while gained the reputation of the toughest guy in the western Pacific. At first there was a rush to go—omnipotent iron was the bribe. The traffic became lucrative at once.

Just as cotton-growing was beginning to bring in good profits the American war ended, and cotton would scarcely pay. Sugar cane had been introduced to Mackay, where it grew well. The Hope family took over black labour with success. In 1867 1,237 islanders were brought over. In early 1868 2,107 had arrived. Fiji planters had meanwhile entered the field also, being unable to obtain enough native labour locally; between 1864 and 1868 they imported 1,649 natives from New Hebrides and Gilberts. Missionaries

began to notice the growing traffic with alarm. 1867: from Efate alone it was reported that 250 men had been taken by eighteen vessels in eighteen months, while several small islands were almost stripped of their male population. The Presbyterian mission sent a plea for investigation to the New South Wales Government. Their reports were disbelieved. Governor O'Donnell observed that only impartial investigation would suffice; for fifteen years none was held. Large vested and political interests were behind the rapidly expanding cane fields.

Protests

A Polynesian Labourers Act was put through in 1868, fixing not less than £6 a year wages; clauses relevant to the traffic itself were superficial and could not be enforced in the islands. By then the effects had been felt widely. Bishop Patteson cried: "The scenes to which this unholy traffic were leading were most sad." He urged action. It was reported that in the Banks sub-group, with its small accessible islands, one half of the total male population had gone; one hundred had been "stolen" off little Valua at one time and on Tanna the traffic had become "a serious trouble." On Efate it was "doing more harm than anything else," while on Tongoa it was stripping villages and later took sixty mission scholars. German Samoa, American Hawaii, French Tahiti and New Caledonia were now also in the running for recruits.

Atrocities were common; e.g. the *Young Australian* of Fiji cut off some Paama natives from the shore, hooking a chief aboard with a boat-hook through his cheek. Pushed them all into the hold, where they began to suffocate, so tried to break out into the fresh air. So the crew fired through some small holes in the bulkhead. Three natives were killed and thrown overboard. The old chief was not quite dead, so they split his skull with an axe. This case was tried in Sydney. Native evidence was disallowed on the grounds that there were no oaths binding over such people. But one native was already a Christian and finally his evidence

had to be allowed, for he declared " that he believed that if he kissed the Book and told lies he would go to hell."

H.M.S. *Rosario* was sent to investigate the traffic. Captain Palmer's and Commander Markham's books leave no doubt as to the conditions then prevailing. Markham's preface refers to " almost unheard-of enormities, committed by those engaged in the so-called ' labour trade ' and its attendant organised system of kidnapping." Palmer's preface states that the book is written " with the sole object of exposing the deeds that have been perpetrated among the beautiful islands, by men calling themselves Englishmen." Each gives case after case of bloody white aggression.

Queensland issued (1871) a statement against the warship officers who criticised their laws. Queensland said they were fair laws. In 1872 the Governor of New South Wales and Earl Kimberley corresponded on Captain Palmer's published criticisms about the result of his detention of the ship *Daphne* for kidnapping ; in this case he was heavily sued for damages for illegal detention, because New South Wales refused to take native evidence of what had happened as evidence in a court of law. Palmer publicly withdrew his criticisms.

The murder of Bishop Patteson in 1872, which was proved to be due to the previous activities of a blackbirding ship,—the captain had masqueraded as the bishop and thus lured natives aboard, then sailed off with them,—gave the first front-page publicity to blackbirding. The affair was alluded to in the Queen's Speech of 1872; at once followed by the Kidnapping Act of 1872. For a short while this Act had an effect. Australian papers foresaw the approaching end of the traffic, and the Melanesian Mission said: " The efforts to do away with what was in fact a slave trade have already borne visible fruit." British naval patrols started to go through the islands regularly. They had theoretically a stronger hand; but all the cards were regularly burned at Sydney or Mackay. Foreigners and British flying foreign flags could do as they liked, there being no jurisdiction over them. So, as an eminent Australian historian says, " Kidnapping, massacre, and reprisals continued."

More Blood in the Great Bay

Here is a story told to me by an old native who was a boy about this time. It happened (*c.* 1873) in Quiros' Bay of St. Philip and St. James, a good type locality:

" None of us had ever seen a white man with straight hair, such as we had been told were known long ago. But one morning when I was a boy a ship came, unlike our ships because it had no little one along one side. It stopped at Tavunamalo. Many went out in canoes to see what this ship was. There were some black men and two white men on board, who blew smoke out of their mouths, no one knew how. The white men had pieces of what we now know is iron; these we could not then see any good in. But their fine beads were better than any we had made, larger and many colours. They gave some to us, when we had given them some large pigs and a lot of the red paint we made to paint our faces at dances. These seemed to be better sort of white men than the ones that our fathers had talked to us about in stories. I was not on sea, as I was too young and we had not many canoes on that beach at that time. Then all of a sudden we who were on shore saw the boat cut the several canoes (tied to it), so that they drifted away while our people, who were very many on the beach, so that the beach was black, saw the people who had come on the ship turn upon our people. Then most of our people jumped into the sea. The boat belonging to the ship quickly got between them and the land. It caught them, hitting them on the heads. One man was young and a famous fisherman. He was very expert at diving. He kept on diving about and under the boat towards the shore, so they could not catch him. The boat went away. It all happened soon, farther away than an arrow or spear might travel. Six men were thus taken on that boat. One of them was my father, who was an important man with much pig business in the village and all about. Then the brother of my father said, ' All right. It is the time for them. By and

by one will come a second time and it will be my time.' The brothers of the others said the same thing. No one knew why the ship had done this. The ship that had come long ago had done the same thing, and many thought it was because they needed meat—our pigs were not enough for them. It was not two years after that, on a day, another such ship came. The brother of my father said, 'All right. It is now my time.' All said so. The white men came near the shore in a smaller boat, laughing and talking strangely, pointing with their hands. Many of our people were cold, then, with hate that they came again so openly. They rushed and pulled them out on the shore, they danced about and clubbed the white men with the large stone clubs that we now have no more. There was only one white man with long hair, but the others had long hair too though they were of our colour of Ombans. Some men on the ship fired guns at us; no one took any notice and they were far away. We thought it was only a noise then; only later did we learn that this was the new and wonderful way to kill a man or many men far away. We ate these men and sent pieces to all the many villages. The white tasted sickly. And one year later the first ship came back again with my father and the others, except that one of them had died. And each of them had one of the guns that we had heard before, and all the things needed for it, and calico (very scarlet), axes, tobacco, such things as we had never told or heard before. Then we were sorry for having killed the other white men. For these were good people. Their things were things such as all men now wanted to have for themselves,—for my father showed how the iron axe would cut twelve trees down, while with our stone or shell (such as we had always used) a man could not yet finish one tree. Many men and young men went until the ship could not take any more people, it was black where before it had been white. The ship went to a place called Viti (Fiji). But from those people of ours many did not come back for many years; then many were

dead and others did not bring fine things like my father had had."

Technique

Sugar was booming in Australia, when sudden blight destroyed the whole easy growing Bourbon cane crop; only the black Java cane weathered the storm; this grew better in the warmer north than among the southern valleys. So that the dependence of the white upon black labour was increased; the traffic forged ahead.

"All evidence goes to prove that kidnapping has almost, if not entirely ceased," says an 1873 report.

In 1873 Campbell, an impartial observer, made an estimate of recruiting technique in the southern isles; in 1881 a report with comparable statistics was filed by the Record Office; and, from a detailed study of the literature, I have made my own rough estimate of blackbirding methods averaged over the whole period:

Natives	*1873* *Per cent*	*1881* *Per cent*	*Self* *Per cent*
1 Taken by force	10	5	10
2 By deceit and lying promises, or in ignorance of what they do	20	15	15
3 Sold by chiefs or relatives, or forced to go in return for guns	20	15	20
1–3 *slaving methods, av.* 43 *per cent.*			
4 Returned labourers whose property decayed, tribe broken up, etc.; so sign on again	15	25	10
5 Accompany chiefs, or relations	5	—	5
6 From curiosity or to get guns	20	25	10
4–6 *negative to bad, av.* 38 *per cent.*			

Nc

Natives	*1873* *Per cent*	*1881* *Per cent*	*Self* *Per cent*
7 Drought or hurricane causing food shortage ..	—	5	5
8 Defeated in war or fleeing from crime	10	10	10
9 Because of modern upset, shortage of women, etc., make discontented	—	—	15

7-9 *possibly useful, av.* 19 *per cent.*

There was a gradual evolution away from trickery; trickery grew more difficult. Depopulation and culture collapse sent more young men. As always, the white could often bluff and talk round the native, luring him with wealth.

Maybe we should take some of this movement as a revolt of youth. There are many records of older men trying to stop the young from going to Queensland: in some places they shot at all boats indiscriminately, to keep them away. In most tribes full social consciousness and care only came with increasing years and ascending initiations. It would be much the same if you offered every English schoolboy an opportunity to go to the South Seas, not describing any of its numerous discomforts.

The uncharted waters, sudden hurricanes, long voyages, and (as the trade developed) increasing reprisals on both sides, made this a trade for determined men. The ill-paid "Government Agents," whose job it was to go with the ships and to see that all was well conducted, were naturally not men of high administrative ability or record. While the ships competed vigorously, each striving to get the more labourers, by any means. They would spread frightful rumours about each other, what happened to men who went on board such-and-such a ship. They deliberately stirred up trouble in villages, to get men to leave. Armed one tribe against another. Are even alleged to have sold poison in return for labourers. Deliberately landed men at wrong landings, so that others could rob or kill them; or they could stay safely on board and "sign on" again. Also landing

sick boys and intentionally spreading epidemics, to spite a tribe or make trouble for the next ship. Alleged cases of supplying a chief with an enemy man in return for young recruits. Cutting off bathing or reef fishing parties. Rarely ambuscading a village path (tail of stingray, made supple with coconut oil, sometimes used as weapon to drive natives into the boat). Straight fist fights with natives. One blackbirder laments being shot-up and hospitalled, for when he comes out " my right hand will never full recover its strength and a hit out with the left sometimes causes an unpleasant twinge." The all important and progressive canoe trade of the group was stopped, because no native dared go out to sea in a canoe, where he was at the mercy of any ship that came along and cared to catch him, a process known in the trade as " cutting out."

The habit of paying presents to the elder men for youngsters, especially payment in rifles, worked well and led to much abuse. It was developed by the native just as much as the white; the whites' necessity was the chief's opportunity. As one recruiter puts it: " They lost a few warriors out of each village, but an extra musket in the tribe made up for that." New vistas of killing were opened up by the musket. In 1875 one gun would buy several men, but the price soon became one gun per head. " An unusually liberal gift " was also ten fathoms of calico, pipe and tobacco per man. In August 1879 a Colonial Office Despatch insists that Government Agents always go ashore with the boats to see what happens there (this was not observed), adding: " Then there is the vile practice of giving natives fire-arms to which Mr. Gorrie (Justice in Fiji) has called attention. It is due to Queensland to mention that its suppression is at least *recommended.*"

Tricks of the Trade

Ships always recruited with one boat covering the other, the boat's crew well armed. The natives were wonderfully bad shots. Some thought that the long sights were designed to make the rifles shoot *harder*; so they elevated the sights

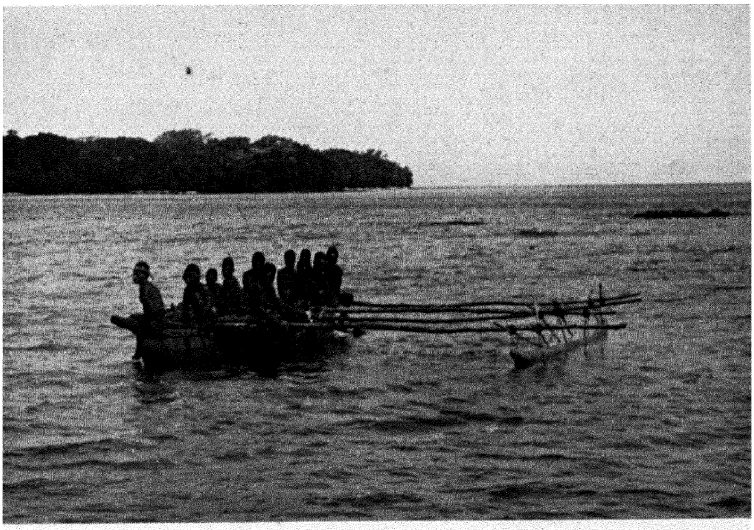
and their bullets went far too high. Others closed both eyes when they fired. While one tribe gave warning of trouble, because when it wanted to shoot anyone all its men had some black material over their right eyes !

To attract attention and notify bush tribes, rockets and blue lights at night were used. Red flares were also used and were " not so ghostly as the ordinary blue light, besides being cheaper." Dynamite was fired.

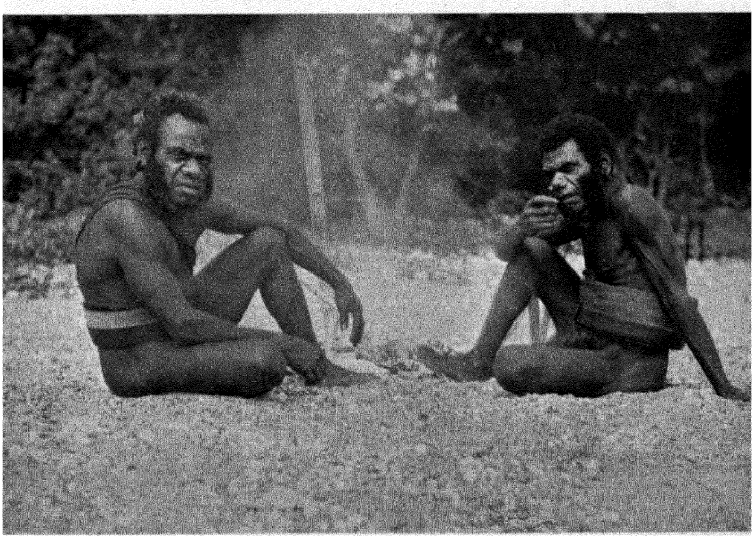
Famous recruiter Jemmy wore Ku-Klux-Klan costume with a big waterproof bag under it. He would appear to drink vast quantities of salt water, which went into the bag, distending him suitably. Or he would sit on the beach, striking innumerable matches until a great crowd was around him. Would conjure; walk on his hands; swim out to sea and pretend to drown. He did not use armed force, but was very successful.

Captain One-Eye used his glass eye to frighten chiefs, by threatening that if many men were not given to him at once, he would make an eye fall out of every man in the island; he would then demonstrate that this was possible on himself. He was probably the origin of the well-known story of a man leaving his glass eye to see that his labourers worked hard. This plan was successful. The natives were afraid to do any wrong or to be lazy while " eye belong master, 'im 'e stop look look me feller." Until one lad got a bright idea and bought a hat from the store. The white man noticed that work seemed to be slacking off. He kept a watch. He saw a native creep up to his eye from behind . . . suddenly pop a hat over it, remarking: " Master, 'e time belong you feller 'e sleep."

Timber-toe Proctor had a wooden leg, screw-on type. He always carried some old legs on board. He would put his foot up on the gunwale of the shore boat, and shoot a bullet through it. Then he would draw a knife and stab his leg as hard as he could, clean through a prepared space in the timber. One day, while Proctor stood grinning with the knife blade through his leg, a native scientist stuck a penknife into the seat of his pants. He was laid up for a



A SMALL CANOE AT TOMMAN ISLAND,
whose inhabitants deform their skulls. The canoe culture was destroyed by blackbirding ships.



TWO MEN OF THE BIG NAMBAS,
who have worked on plantations.

few days. His shipmate Cromar (whose amusing and bloody memories have recently been published) advised him to give up that gag. Proctor said " I guess so. They might try a bayonet next time." Another time the natives invited him inland to meet a great chief who was too sick to come down, but was crazy to see his wonderful leg and give him recruits. . . . When he was well inland they took his leg off and told him to go to blazes; (or tied him to a tree, versions differ). Proctor was working for the French (see p. 231) and a French warship made the natives pay 4,000 dollars for their joke.

Treatment

The annexation of Fiji in 1874 had an effect on the trade. Fiji sugar prosperity had been built up on 8,500 Melanesians imported into the group in labour vessels from 1860 onwards. An 1879 decision to import Indian labour left the New Hebrides free for other countries, in which less control was exercised than in Fiji—especially Australia, whose rivalry with Fiji has grown so intense that pitched battles between their respective labour vessels had occurred. Fiji recruiting continued in the group, even until 1907, but from 1875 on, Australia made most of the running:

NUMBER OF ISLANDERS IN QUEENSLAND

Year	*Brought in*	*Sent home*
1868 ..	2,143 ..	—
1869 ..	313 ..	240
1870 ..	643 ..	597
1871 ..	1,352 ..	750
1872 ..	461 ..	447
1873 ..	994 ..	250
1874 ..	1,503 ..	1,060
1875 ..	2,681 ..	428
1876 ..	1,116 ..	357
Total	11,206	4,129

Of imports, 247 were females, of whom 61 were returned. In 1874–6, 823 deaths were reported; many deaths were not notified. 806 deaths were reported in 1877–8.

In 1886 there were 10,165 recruits in Queensland. Around that time one recruiter alone got 770 recruits in five years. Such traffic was a contributory depopulating factor, especially on the small islands. It prevented any hope of population recovery or stability so long as it continued.

On board ship the captains encouraged sing-songs to pass the recruits' time. One Government Agent was a singular asset, for he would readily dance a hornpipe down in the hold, among the recruits; and this was alleged incredibly to arouse their failing spirits. Thomas paints a charming picture: " I declare that I heard more laughter on board this labour vessel, which the good people of Exeter Hall would have us believe is only a slaver in disguise, than I heard on the whole voyage on any Atlantic immigrant ship." He goes on to describe the equipment on board, the armoury of rifles and revolvers, " useful both for defence and defiance "; half a dozen pairs of handcuffs were carried. He points out how the Queensland Acts, " very comprehensive in non-essentials," insisted that the *permanent* bunks in the hold should be two foot six ins. between the tiers, the ship twelve foot six ins. deck to deck. Adults to have 78 cubic feet of air. A man must have five superficial feet for exercise, but no provision is made as to *sleeping* accommodation, and " consequently our 120 immigrants were crowded together, lying athwart ships side by side, with little if any space between each individual. People, not used to natives, going down the hold, tasting the foul atmosphere, and seeing the natives packed together like sardines, would no doubt be disgusted." Another recruiter tells us how the *Heron* " leaked like a basket," pumps going day and night; the captain did not doubt that he was afloat in " a ripe and rotten old scow." She was incapable of carrying cargo or even the luggage of returned labourers, which in a breeze of wind would have sent her to the bottom. No wonder vessels could only be insured at 18 per cent, for two-thirds of their value, plus

an additional 2½ per cent during the hurricane months. On a life insurance policy an extra premium of 30*s.* per cent was charged for travelling in the islands. But the profits of the trade would, with reasonable luck, return the cost of any ship within two voyages. One freight might be worth £2,400.

From £22 to £27 was paid to the ship for each recruit. There was a £3 Government licence for each recruit. The recruiter would stand to gain £19–£20 clear per recruit. Ships might make several trips a year. Efficient captains received from £30 to £40 a month. Ships were usually 80 to 140 tons. Lads under sixteen were counted two to the adult. Ship equipment was negligible; plenty of native mats (illegally used for blankets), a calico waist cloth per man. The cost of a labourer on a plantation, including wages and everything else, was £22 per annum. Rations were ample but often unsuitable. Yams in the morning, rice in the afternoon, was the usual menu. 2lb. rice, 2 oz. sugar, and ½ oz. tea daily per man was fixed by one Act; tobacco extra if good. Sudden change in diet was believed to be the reason for high initial death-rate, up to 85 per 1,000.

Death

Death-rate figures are unsatisfactory:

1876	.. ..	63·6
1878	.. ..	85·9
1884	.. ..	85·0
1892	.. ..	42·7
1893	.. ..	52·6

This was for a population estimated at 90 per cent young men, the strongest and best from the islands. During 1892–3 white mortality (including infants and both sexes) in the same area was 13·3 per 1,000. In particular when " they were employed in stations, about the towns, and on casual work—mostly contrary to their ' agreements '—they died like flies, at nearly five times the rate of Europeans of similar ages," says an Australian historian. Overwork, bad

diet and lack of medical attention were mainly responsible for these high death-rates. Not cruelty, but carelessness. The Colonial Sugar Refining Company, the vested interest behind the sugar industry, had grown into the largest unit in Australia; minor humane interests could not be considered. The C.S.R. Co. played a part of accidental control and dominance over the New Hebrides in the second half of the nineteenth century, until it was replaced by the closely similar control of Unilever and copra. Both were logical developments of capitalism at its cleanest and most intelligent.

The hours of labour on the plantations averaged ten a day, but occasionally fourteen hours, with one hour for dinner. Standard wage was at first £3, then £6, a year. If a native did not return home after his three-year contract had expired, he was not entitled to repatriation free of charge; later the native's first employer had to deposit £5 to ensure return passage. If the man died the Government did not refund the £5.

Trollope once wandered away from the chastity of *Barchester Towers* to say: " The islanders who are brought to Queensland all return, and not a man of them returns without taking with him lessons of civilisation. On the planters' ground in Queensland they learn each other's languages, they have to cook, to sew, dig, to plant, to hoe canes, to clothe themselves and to be proud of their clothes." He writes also of the fortunate native " who is allowed to escape from the savage slavery of his island to the plenty and protected piecework of a Queensland sugar plantation."

Brown Besses, Very Superior

The labourer spent every farthing before he left for home again (if he ever left). On Malekula a newly returned native comes aboard H.M.S. *Dart* with his naked fellows. He is dressed in a smart black coat, fashionable grey trousers, white shirt, red neck-tie and a bowler; the result of three years' work, with other goods that the officers valued at £20. A few days later, they met this gentleman ashore.

He was dressed only in the red neck-tie; it was around his waist, and there easily supported the rest of his costume. His other stuff had been taken from him by his friends. This usually happens. While he has been away his plantations, huts, pigs and fowls are decayed or gone. He must be put to great expense to recoup his position in the social framework. This has exerted powerful influence in turning natives Christian or half heathen, modifying society to suit the returned labourer and his anomalous position owing to protracted absence, during which time his contemporaries have gained in native wealth and status.

A typical list of goods paid for three years' service totals thirty items, including one gun, one axe, three knives, four tins powder, four jews' harps, one shirt, and scented oil (1869). A missionary inspected a Fiji return outfit valued at less than £4 for three years' work. Queensland whites said that the Fiji return, " if he possessed a box at all, had one scarcely two-thirds the size, with possibly a cheap German shot gun, almost as dangerous to fire as to stand in front of. The Brown Besses sold to Queenslanders were very superior weapons by comparison." But the Fiji recruiters said, " the boys from Fiji, if they did not show any improvement, at least were not corrupted; they met with Christian natives, whereas in Queensland they were brought into connection with low and vicious white men."

Scene on a Race Course

The habit of shifting natives from one area to another, or bartering them outright on board, led to serious troubles. Port Mackay had a very bad name owing to the Mackay race course affair. Bad blood had been brewing there for some time. Some natives got drunk on race day, then went to pay for drinks at a store on the course; they were refused. So one drank a white man's drink and threw the glass into the bottles at the back of the store. Many whites ran for their horses. Then rode into the crowd of labourers. Those without loaded or metal-handled riding crops used their stirrup irons as weapons, striking into the crowd

indiscriminately. No one ascertained how many blacks were killed that day, but it was many. And as a result many revenge murders of whites occurred in the islands.

Natives told Commodore Goodenough (1875) that " port Mackay very bad man ! He shoot he kill black fellow. No all same here ! " Years later a native says " good fella man he belong England, fella man belong Porter Mackai he no good." Recruiters were constantly unable to get men to come there, so they said they were recruiting for elsewhere, and then drafted them to Mackay. This led to new hates.

The *Government Gazette* of April 23rd, 1876, gives new regulations, including a ban on transferring labour from one district to another. But this was permissible " after the lapse of a reasonable time after arrival." The " reasonable time " was not specified, so that, as usual, the legislation was ineffective. In this year the owner of one ship was fined 5*s*. for not supplying flannel shirts to his ninety-seven recruits. Again, a regulation of 1878 to forbid the giving of trade to the friends of natives, and the export of fire-arms—two major abuses of the trade—was not enforced for some time. The whites themselves were " beginning to feel the short-sightedness of the policy which is arming the western Pacific in a way which adds every day to the risk of recruiting." The native demand for fire-arms was insatiable. It is these excellent armaments that have enabled certain bush tribes of the larger islands to repulse naval expeditions and to resist all white contact ever since. The compulsion for every man to carry a gun, for self defence, became absolute. There was no question of wanting to go to Queensland. Guns must be got. Someone must go.

No Instance of Cruelty

Many people now recognised that blackbirding was only an impolite form of slavery. Even within Australia feeling was aroused, largely through the powerful Presbyterian element in the south, headed by Paton. The northern mining population had already shown strong opposition,

for they were afraid that cheap native labour might be introduced into the goldfields. A suitably Select Committee had been set up by the Queensland Government to report on Queensland sugar plantations. It had found that there was no ill treatment, while the Attorney-General of the Colony said, "No instance of cruelty or anything like slavery enforced on these natives has ever been brought to my notice." There was plenty of legislation; there were many memoranda. Thus we find honest Bishop Selwyn of Melanesia sending in protests to the Government, which are dealt with like this (1881) in the Colonial Office:

> "We cannot check the Bishop's reference but I think he has not answered the implications . . . that he lays himself open to the charge of spreading reports in this country and elsewhere on evidence that would be insufficient to enable him to make a formal reference to the High Commissioner. If he has not seen the implication, his blindness is useful but probably no advantage will be gained by continuing the correspondence, and this had better be put by . . .
>
> (Signed) "F. J."

Also during 1881 Commodore Wilson sent in a strong report showing the 1876 recruiting licence to be a farce; that many vessels, through a formula of words, were immune from effective supervision, this involving many natives, "who must consist of many thousands, and it may be correctly said that they are without any protection whatever." His report is one of dozens.

The humane impacts gathered momentum. A Convention of Naval Powers to Regulate the Labour Traffic was proposed in 1882. Commander Erskine sent in a pithy letter (Record Office 28/1/82) pointing out the scheme's ineffectiveness, "bearing in mind that we have no jurisdiction over the natives of the South Seas, and can only proceed against them by 'Act of War' and no indiscriminate slaughter of natives or wanton destruction of fruit trees is to be allowed." For by this time there have been many punitive expeditions, which—as we shall soon see—have shot

up villages and burned gardens in return for the murder of careless white kidnappers or gun-trading beachcombers.

The demand for labour was still rising in 1882, far in excess of the supply. Thirty Queensland ships were engaged in the trade; six had recently been wrecked. Fresh sugar lands were constantly being cleared.[1] 46,000-47,000 (total present population of the New Hebrides) natives were brought into the colony. Head money of £15 to £20 per recruit was an inducement to get men by hook or by crook. This head money was stopped on March 10th, 1884, by "The Act to Amend the Pacific Island Labour Act of 1880"; at once masters' wages went from £15 to £20 to £28-£35 a month, while recruiters got from £4 to £5 a month over and above wages. The customary 5*s*. a head bonus for the skipper had always been a private arrangement. Additional Regulations of June 1887 forbade the master himself to act as recruiter. Ships had to carry a black ball at the mast head and to be painted a dull slate colour. But it was all phrased with "it would be advisable," "two boats may be used," etc.—loopholes to sail a schooner through.

The group was still "black with ships" in 1884. Despite all the Acts, Regulations, Orders, Amendments, International Agreements, the trade was going on *absolutely unchecked* in practice in the New Hebrides, with murder, arson, rape—every crime except coveting a neighbour's ass. The Queensland Government did not wish any obstacle to be placed in the way of the labour supply for its major industry. Australia, with the full knowlege of the British Government during nearly twenty years, during the period in which we featured as the greatest opponents of slavery, made no serious attempt to control a traffic which is a permanent blot on our record of decent concern for the underdog. After reading all that is written, especially the official correspondence filed in the Record Office, I

[1] Sugar prices: 1872, £28 a ton; 1893, £11 15*s*.; 1899, £8 10*s*.; 1925–30, £26 10*s*. In blackbirding days wages averaged 6*s*. a week all classes, whites indoors and blacks outdoors. £10 an acre to clear jungle, £4 to burn off.

find it very hard to believe any more of the stuff we British talk about developing and protecting native races, governing them for their own good. I used to think that at least the high officials and politicians believed in such fine words.

Let us take a short period sample, during the time of maximum legislation, for some of the islands in the group which have not so far featured much in this history. It will give a fair idea of the contact between the Nordic, Christian, Civilised man and the primitive, savage, heathen, cannibal Melanesian.

Tit for Tat

I count the violent deaths of 48 whites and 73 natives directly engaged in the labour trade within the New Hebrides between 1871 and 1884. These are only recorded cases; many are unrecorded; there is no way of ascertaining how many natives were shot ashore in the frequent reprisals, counter-attacks, etc.

Some incidents, from islands that have not so far featured much in this period:

Pentecost: a French ship, 1878, burns a native beach-shelter after a dispute. So the owner of the shelter kills the next white he can lure inshore. As a result H.M.S. *Beagle* tries two punitive trips into the interior, the only result of which is that a native jumps on to the trail and clubs a white on the head; he is shot, but gets away trailing blood. The landing party burns houses; very soon the natives kill the next white man as reprisal for this, and in the following year get ten from the *Agnes Donald.*

Maewo: After various incidents, natives club the pay-master of H.M.S. *Rosario.* They are shelled; four villages burned, and canoes destroyed. Trouble here believed to be due to French kidnapping. As the result of British naval accusations, these are investigated by a Commission in New Caledonia. The accused are allowed to leave the colony during the inquiry. Consul Layard says, "The Commission and its doings are a disgrace to any civilised

community." A few years later Bish. Selwyn and Rev. Bice find the Maewo people are the most simple and good-natured in the group.

Santo: The *Wild Duck* tries some kidnapping in 1871; the whole crew are eaten. H.M.S. *Rosario* imposes a twenty pig fine, which natives do not pay; so burns village. The crew of the American ship *Idaho* are killed in 1880. Next year the crew of the *Isabel* are murdered because of the abduction of a chief's daughter; liver, hands and feet of a white recovered are buried in quick lime with full service. H.M.S. *Cormorant* collects a prisoner, the man whose daughter was stolen, but in doing so Lieut. Luckcraft is killed; official correspondence over whether native be hung or given ten years. In 1882 the ship *Clara* kidnaps; the *Taviuni* of Fiji is massacred as reprisal, and about the same time three Frenchmen from another ship are dispatched. While in 1884 the *Emily* is fired on with fifty guns; but the Government Agent aboard leads a counter-attack, shoots pigs and destroys gardens, burning a village.

Ambrym: A series of murders, including *Borough Belle* 1883, as result of which H.M.S. *Dart* leads a punitive expedition in which the boatswain and an A.B. are killed. Soon after which the *Emily* is attacked; she counter-attacks successfully. Shortly after, two British settlers are killed. At this time the Ambrym natives had a peculiar punitive experience. The natives of Pentecost shot a German as the result of a recruiting misunderstanding about some women. An Ambrym party went over to Pentecost some time later, on a normal native trading (pig and mat) trip. They happened to be at the place of the murder when the German warship *Albatross* came in to investigate the affair. The Ambrym men sat on the beach calmly awaiting the warship party to come ashore; they were, of course, safe from attack, having nothing at all to do with the affair. The warship had its own views. Without a word of warning the big guns aboard opened fire. One man had a leg blown away, to die in agony. A party was then landed, killed some pigs and burned a lodge in the wrong village.

Epi: Epi has done-in several boats during the period, and in 1880 a British-owned boat flying French colours shoots two natives there in a kidnapping raid. As a result of which the crew of the *Dauntless* are murdered, though previously given full warning by adjacent tribes. As reprisal H.M.S. *Stanley* burns, fines twenty pigs, cuts down coconut groves. This causes considerable correspondence between Commodore of the Australian station, High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, Secretary of State for Colonies, Earl Granville and Lord Kimberley. Kimberley objects to the tree cutting; Granville adduces a new use for slender coconut trunks, for " while condemning the infliction of so indicriminate a mode of punishment, would suggest for your consideration, that as the natives were provided with fire-arms there may have been strategic reasons that made it necessary to cut down any wood which might have served as a shelter in an engagement."

So it goes on.

Man-o'-War=Woman

The behaviour of the recruiting vessels towards the warships is often amusing. Thus H.M.S. *Rosario* sights the *Melanie*; she tries to get away; *Rosario* fires across her bows. When boarded the captain says : they mistook them first for a rock, then for a whale ! On another occasion H.M.S. *Pearl* examines the log of the *Jason* on May 1st morning and reads: " Morning broke fine and clear. Noon, weighed and stood over towards Nguna." An officer is sent over to ask the captain what day he thinks it is, upon which the man sticks his hands in his pockets and says " Saturday, May 1st." " Then how," says the officer, " do you make this out when it is not noon yet ? " " What," says he, " you don't know the difference between civil and astronomical time ? I can keep what time I like on board my own ship."

This sort of indirect rule had (in the end) a cumulative effect, aided by missionary and depopulating factors, in stopping the islander from seeking any redress to the wrongs he experienced from the scum of the white race. The small

islands, of course, could easily be shelled up; they soon learned to be good. But it was a very inefficient system. Able seamen were not designed to hunt through jungles, mosquitos and festering coral-cuts, over the often terribly broken country. The naval expeditions were made without any knowledge of local conditions or native mentality, they lacked any coherent plan; in fact were no more than a repeated series of acts of war. The blackbirders showed themselves equally capable of landing punitive parties and burning villages.

To this day there are several thousand bushmen who laugh at the idea of being attacked by a warship party, saying, "Man belong man-o'-war 'e all same woman, 'e no savvy fight nothing altogether."

Before considering the settlement of the islands by resident whites, the struggle for annexation and the eventual Condominium, a brief analysis of one sequence of warship episodes may be valuable, leading, as it does, naturally into these subjects. [The bloodier side of recruiting episodes will be briefly touched on when the traffic ends, page 245.]

"WHAT FOR YOU 'FRAID?"
The natives are trying to lure the boat within gunshot, in this blackbirder's sketch.

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Record Office: 23/1/70. 4/3/70. 18/4/70. 11/1/73. 14/2/79. 26/3/81. 3/4/81. 10/10/81. 28/1/82. 13/2/85. Dispatch 16816 of 1881. Reports from Baron Macklay and others, 1881, etc.; 21/3/87, etc.

On German *Samoa* recruiting: Martin 79, 85. Brittain 119. Wawn 13, 35. Record Office, 23/1/79. 18/4/79. 13/3/85. 18/8/85.

French recruiting for *New Caledonia* was brisk in 1872; 300 one week, price £6 per head; 50 die in few months, nickel mines. Many abuses till 1914. For stories of shootings, of notorious pirate Demoiselle hoisting men into the halyards, etc., see Langridge and Paton 105. Rannie 107, 225. Selwyn 31. Steel 409 Wawn 404. *Moniteur*, 13/9/82. Record Office 6/4/81, 24/4/81, 6/7/81, 26/9/82.

FIVE YEARS ON OMBA

THE PEOPLE OF OMBA are to-day the most civilised and charming New Hebrideans. Their population thrives and increases. There are Ombans with large coconut and cocoa plantations, comparable to many white efforts. There are Ombans who make you China tea on a primus at midnight, dressed in silk pyjamas. They are a fine clean peaceful people. They belong to four religious sects, but many are still heathens. They are prepared to like a good white; they scarcely tolerate a bad one. They will not kill him, but will tie him up and put him in a boat and say " Push off." And push him off.

Back in 1864 an Omba man had been shot by a trader. As a result Bishop Patteson's life was threatened. In 1871 the Ombans did-in a boat's crew from the *Storm Bird*. In

Oc

1874 a South American half-breed, "Spanish Charlie," run out of Tanna, was killed on Omba.

Then came Robert Young, whose conduct was such as was "directly calculated to induce the natives both to kill the offender and fire upon the boat." The confusion that arose from this Young affair would be remarkable had it not occurred in the New Hebrides. I patch together the following bedspread:

One night in November 1878 H.M.S. *Beagle* boarded the English brig *Heather Bell* of Sydney. Her Captain Daly reported that one of his crew, Robert Young, A.B., had been killed by the natives of Omba on November 3rd. The ship's boat had gone to the shore to get yams. Many natives came down, appeared friendly, and brought the yams off to the boat; they were paid in tobacco and beads. Women were also present and this was a sure sign of friendly intention. After a time Young insisted on going ashore, "with the expressed purpose of having connection with a woman." The Omba women are the best-looking in this part of the world. Nelson, the coxswain, told him he had better not go, and refused him permission, but Young, ridiculing danger, jumped overboard and disappeared up the beach. About five minutes afterwards, without any apparent cause, the natives opened fire on the boat. Next day the ship *Mystery* arrived and heard that Young had been killed. It seemed clear that he had provoked the attack by going after the woman. The officer commanding H.M.S. *Beagle* "did not consider that the case was one that called for any action on my part."

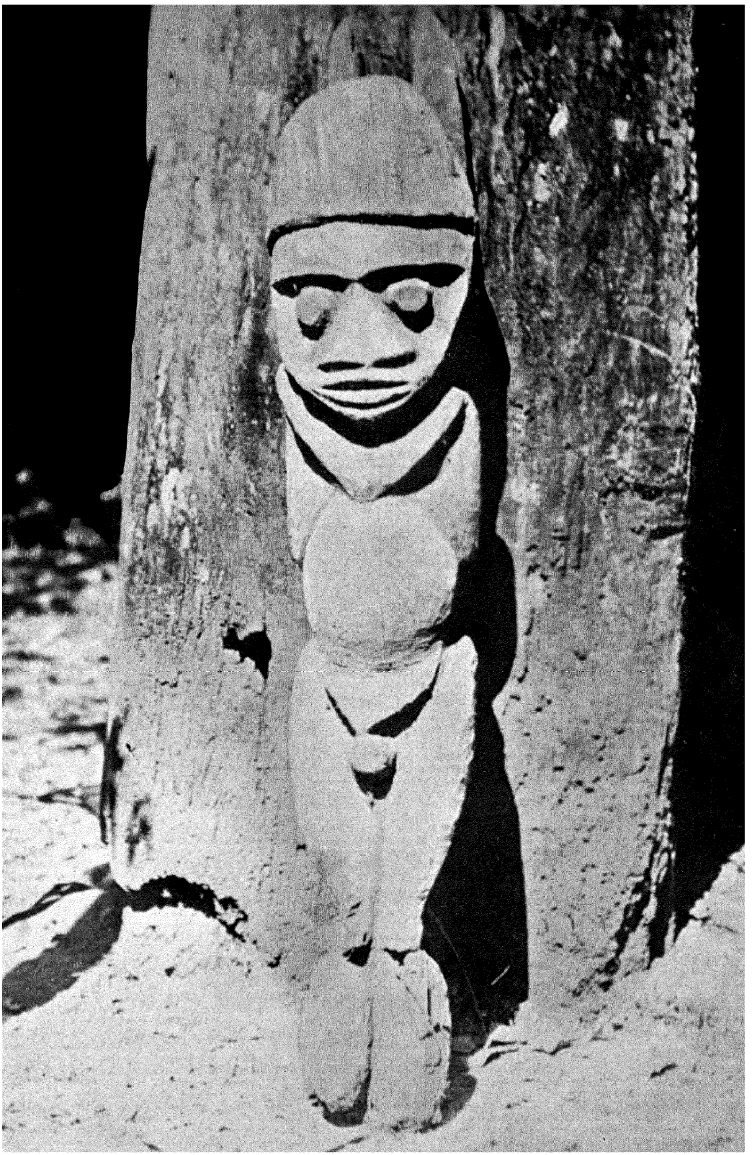
Four months later the Commodore of the Australian station approved of fines imposed on certain chiefs as a result of a visit from H.M.S. *Wolverine* for the murder of James Martin of the *Heather Bell*. For a while this fooled me into thinking that a new murder had taken place, until I turned up a note from the High Commissioner of the Western Pacific stating that Young=Martin, that there is a lot of funny business going on that needs investigation, while the

Heather Bell has behaved so suspiciously that—complaints having also been received from the crew against the brutalities of the Captain—the Consul at New Caledonia has determined to forward her to Fiji for further inquiry. I cannot, however, find that anything came of this line of inquiry, or that the Young to Martin after-death transition was ever explained. It is clear, however, that the Commodore had not agreed with his junior officer as to the negative course of action to be taken against the native in the affair. For H.M.S. *Wolverine* landed a party on Omba, on May 21st, 1879, including Melanesian Missionary Bice, Lieut. Spring, and Mr. Wilson (secretary!). They were met by big chief Boilombu about a mile inland. He was accompanied by " three men fully armed with bows and arrows and clubs." For a while the navy was doubtful " as to whether it was peace or war." Boilombu admitted that Young-Martin's murderer, Tangaru, had come to live near his village after the affair; not because of the murder, only because " his stomach was still bad." He, Boilombu, was " very contrite and promised that he would always be most vigilant in defending and protecting white people." He was therefore fined one pig and a large heap of yams " which he gave in a most interesting manner as a ' sacrifice ' before all his tribe, handing the present to me with much ceremony," says naïve Commander Bridges. The party, pleased with this success, went on to the murderer's village, where they interviewed big chief Arrowseleng, who was hard to get hold of at first, and then would not give up the culprit, saying that he had taken to the bush and could not be found. Therefore, the weather being inclement, and " considering the circumstances under which Martin went to his death, viz. that he had apparently landed for the purpose of having connection with a woman, who enticed him to the beach and then into the bush, Mr. Bice and myself considered that a fine of twelve pigs was sufficient." After this illegal imposition of fines, they sailed away, much satisfied, leaving the natives laughing up anything they had to laugh up. Big white chief Justice Gorrie considered the fines imposed were " very moderate. . . .

The patience and tact shown by Commander Bridges on these occasions seem to have been worthy of all praise." He adds a general ruling that "where any Englishman is assailed by the natives, while in pursuance of his legitimate occupation, and his death may be enquired into without risk of greater evils, that it is right not to permit an act of this kind to pass unnoticed, but I would not be at all disposed to extend the same protection or care to the baser sort who infest these seas when in act of committing offences."

While this pageant of prestige was going on, another trouble had arisen only three or four miles away. You will remember that the *Mystery* came in the day after Martin (=Young) was murdered, and found that he really had been (murdered, I mean). Well, five days after that the natives had captured a boat from the *Mystery*; they had killed her crew of four native boatmen and two white men—Thomas Muir, mate, and John Renton, Government Agent; the latter had narrowly escaped death in the Solomons just before. Nothing was done about this. On April 17th of the following year, 1879, the *Mystery* again anchored near the same place; on the 21st two boats went ashore for the purpose of recruiting. The whites in the boats were Captain Kilgour (shortly before wrongly reported killed on Tanna) and passenger Eastlake. Each had revolvers; their native crew had rifles. As they neared shore they saw the *Mystery's* boat on the beach; after some shooting they recovered it. Then a party of seventeen men landed, set fire to the houses whence shots had been fired, shot pigs and broke up canoes. Eastlake stated that on landing no shots were fired by them except at pigs. A fortnight later an Omba native reported that two men had been shot by the whites.

The *Wolverine*, when it had looked into the Young (=Martin) case, looked also into this affair, in the middle of May. It was learned that a native called Aratuga, who had been five years previously in Fiji, lured the agent Renton down the beach, where, out of sight of the ship, he killed him with a trade axe. Aratuga was assisted by two chiefs. They then went back to the ship's boat and murdered the crew in it.



A VERY WIDESPREAD TYPE OF CARVING

Important in connection with pig-sacrifice on Malekula, human sacrifice on Omba and at Matanavat (page 40)

The *Mystery* could do nothing, so sailed away. The corpses were then cut up, and joints of same sent to all chiefs and neighbouring tribes, being accepted by all but one chief whose name is recorded as Loo. A feast followed, while the boat was sold to another tribe (the village the *Mystery's* party had later burned). The reason given to a number of enquirers, now and later, was generally that the two chiefs Sikeri and Ko-Wari, who had collaborated with Aratuga (he alone could talk English and so lure the whites ashore), wanted to plant a taro bed, and in order that the vegetables should flourish, it was, according to their custom, necessary to inaugurate the ceremony with a banquet of human flesh.[1]

Aratuga himself, however, stated that it was done in revenge for ten men kidnapped and taken to Brisbane.

Judge Gorrie deplored Captain Kilgour's burning and looting of the village which was not the real offender. He declared that "until this private hostility is put down, we shall never be able to bring order out of the confusion or to prevent the natives avenging the deeds of violence committed against them by our own countrymen." A warship was therefore sent to arrest Kilgour and he was brought to Fiji. Gorrie fined him £100; the closing words of his speech in the case were: "If I had proof of your having killed a native, I would have hanged you, sir—hanged you!"

Gorrie and Commodore Wilson decided "it was absolutely necessary that a searching investigation should be made into the facts, that sufficient force should be taken to the spot to show the natives we were in earnest. Time ought to be taken to do the duty well." One native chief should not be used against another; there were to be no hasty raids.

On July 22nd a report was received at Fiji on the further revisit of H.M.S. *Wolverine*, when "the officers displayed great coolness, courage, and forbearance in the expedition into the interior to effect the arrest of Aratuga . . . happily without bloodshed." There then arose the question of the

[1] Codrington, the only ethnologist to work on Omba, emphatically states that human flesh is only eaten from a murderer or detested enemy, to do him insult; "there is the feeling that to eat human flesh is a dreadful thing."

case against Aratuga. The Commodore requested that he be held as a prisoner-of-war, having been captured as an act of war. Gorrie felt that it will make very little difference to the prisoner under what particular designation he was detained; he " would rather avoid a term which might raise questions as to the general powers of officers in relation to the prerogative of the crown to declare war." Further, it was not even clear with what he was charged; it was decided to be " having committed murder on board the boat of a British ship." Moreover, it appears that he was only " captured " on Omba; then transferred from H.M.S. *Wolverine* to a naval armed schooner and taken to Fiji, there to be arrested " on information received from H.M. naval officers." Aratuga came before the High Commissioner's Court at Fiji on April 5th, 1880, eighteen months after the crime with which he was charged. The case was brought only " to determine whether there is sufficient evidence to warrant his being put on trial."

Aratuga was finally accused of having recruited as a labourer on board of the boat of the *Mystery* and of having while on board treacherously decoyed the boat to another part of the beach, where the savages were assembled and where he himself had given the signal for attack by striking down the first of the boat's crew. Aratuga denied having been on board or acting as decoy. He stated that a native had entered the boat and gone round to the other beach in it. Rev. Bice gave evidence to the effect that Aratuga had confessed to him that he had killed a Tanna man on the boat. It was ruled that this confession was not relevant to the case, which was: " That when he killed him the slayer was on board a British vessel in a sense which could [at this point a brief passage in the Record Office report is unfortunately illegible] British jurisdiction within three miles of an island." It then emerged that the officers had arrested Aratuga on information received from Bice who had it from Loo (the one chief who did not eat the men, he said), who in his turn had got it from what he alleged to be general gossip; it was considered possible that Loo was shielding the two chiefs Sikeri

and Ko-Wari. The attack was adjudged to be a general and tumultuous onslaught by an armed body under their chiefs on foreigners who had incautiously approached " the savage shore." " It is therefore the act of a community and the attempt to hold any individual responsible criminally as for an individual offence would lead into great and insuperable difficulties." The chiefs had given up Aratuga, but, as was pointed out in court, " there is not a chief who would not eagerly purchase his immunity from punishment by giving up one of his people."

At this stage interesting new evidence came to light. The naval officers had reported that they went into the village and occupied it. Rev. Bice said they agreed to leave it unburned for a payment of tusker boars. The tusker boar fines were interestingly worked out, from the sociological point of view; ten pigs each for the two whites killed, five each for the native crew who had been killed. It must have given the natives some interesting ideas on the white man and how worth while it was to kill him (when there were pigs to spare). Aratuga now boldly asserted that, after the pigs had been taken, the village *was* burned. This unpleasant allegation was not further investigated. But by making the fine, the hostile actions of Sikeri and Ko-Wari, as chiefs and commanders, had already been dealt with and therefore the judgment was that " I cannot, in such circumstances, look upon the act of Aratuga, who is not a chief . . . as separable from that of the hostile band . . . he must therefore be discharged."

It might have perhaps coloured the Fiji findings, had it been then known that, during the trial of Aratuga, the Ombans had shot a trader called Johnson, while he slept, at a little past midnight. They missed his companion, H. S. Chiffin. The news reached Commodore Wilson at Sydney four days after the Aratuga trial. Perhaps he had rather underestimated the quality of these savages? He contacts the Admiralty and forwards the report of Chiffin, which reads: " The reason they have for killing Johnson is on account of the man-of-war, taking Aratogo away,

one of the murderers of the *Mystery's* boat's crew. The nigger that shot him is Isecary the chief that was at the head of the murdered boat's crew. The Commodore failed to do what he must have known was his duty. He should have hung the three murders on Aoba, instead of fining them twenty four poare miserable little pigs." [1]

Happily, it was found that Johnson was an American subject. The question then arose as to " whether we should take cognizance of the case or leave it to an American man-of-war." However, in April 1880, there are " no American ships at present in the station." While it was pointed out that, if the matter was left unattended, further atrocities would no doubt follow. In another couple of months British naval prestige had another bit of luck which facilitated its holding its unrivalled position. The Under-Secretary of State reports a " United States ship-of-war, which is stated to be expected in the Sandwich Islands." Not, as you might suppose, Sandwich Island(=Efate). But the Sandwich Islands(=Hawaii), a few thousand miles farther away. The final version of the British Government is that vengeance has, as it happens, fallen on an American, but that maybe the arrest of Aratuga is not alone to blame. What (they point out) about the action of Kilgour and his *Mystery* men, who took the case into their own hands and burned a village, which, the official ironically remarks, " as it turned out, was ' not the right one ' . . . but was at least a village in Aoba."

But while these people are drawing their salaries Mr.

[1] This point of Chiffin's about the pig seems to me one that is highly consistent with this enlightened period. Did anyone consider what those pigs felt like ? Torn suddenly from their land, where they had been born and reared with infinite care by women who nursed them, who had maybe given them suck. They had felt their tusks grow and curve round, over. For months the growth had hurt and annoyed them in the heat of the day. But the tusk had gone on, until it had become a perfect curve, to make any pig proud, ready to die at the sacrificial stone for the glorification and spiritual elevation of his owner and that whole community. Maybe he had piglets, too, and grand-piglets ? Then to be dragged into a boat of funny, smelling, coloured men, fed on strange foods in a welter of rolling and a sickness greater than any tusk hurt. Finally to be knocked on the head—*without any ceremony at all*, not even one dance, not a note on a drum—and, oh ! final humiliation, to be put under eggs, shamelessly, publicly, eaten thus in the morning. Talk about a dog's life !

Chiffin is chaffing at the bit. Like Captain Kilgour, he can't see that anything is ever going to be done about it unless he does it himself. Unlike Captain Kilgour, he is not a British subject; as he has no support from Britain, he can hardly be arrested if he does his own job. We therefore find Commodore Wilson getting "a private letter" in January of the following year:

"Mr. Chiffin, seeing that nothing was being done to punish the natives for the murder of his partner, resolved to take the law into his own hands. He accordingly quietly wound up the business at Lepers' Island (Omba) where he had a trading station, and went on board his vessel to live. His object was, before leaving the place, to entice the chief who had murdered his partner on board, in which after some little time he was successful. One day the chief, accompanied by a party of natives, went unsuspectingly on board the vessel, and while talking to Mr. Chiffin the latter took out a revolver, placed it to the chief's head and blew his brains out. The other natives at once jumped overboard, but Mr. Chiffin quieted them by saying he would do no more, that he had avenged the death of his partner, which was all that he wanted. The natives were all satisfied, considering Chiffin quite justified in acting as he did. . . . The name of the chief shot on this occasion was Sigiri (Isecary); it was he who was implicated in the massacre of the *Mystery's* boat's crew, who gave up Aratuga to Commander Bridges and who murdered Mr. Johnson on the 2nd of March last."

So this isolated American avenged, in accordance with primitive law, the ringleader in the last three years of warships and courts. In the next year the harvest of all this good work had been reaped. A visitor noted "the condition of Omba is particularly deplorable." A trader had lived on the island after Chiffin; he scarcely went ten yards from his house during four months, being constantly on guard against surprise attack. His name was Young. A Frenchman had also stayed a while, in early 1881, escaping from his house when the natives set fire to it. Finally . . . on August 27th, 1881, Commander Dawson of H.M.S.

Miranda begs to inform Commodore Wilson concerning the massacre of nine men from the *May Queen*, which appears to have been done absolutely without provocation, while the Government agent Macdonald, killed, was a quiet inoffensive fellow. Where was he killed? On Omba. The son of old informer Loo stated that it was ordered by three chiefs. The *Miranda* landing party went overland to the village, where only seven men, including chief Loiufanua, awaited them. They admitted their part in the killing. The well-built village was burned. Then to another village, near the sea, where they found a boat-hook and some chests containing European clothing; so this village was burned! All the prisoners were then interrogated by the Captain, through interpreters. Here we come to an incident which gains an added horror from the previous fine words of Gorrie and Wilson, about punitive methods; I quote from official papers:

> "An old man complained he had not eaten his full share of the meat, being too ill at the time. The evidence of his guilt was so clear that the friendly natives at war with this tribe on account of these murders at once shot him."

The reports conclude:

> "This lesson will be a lasting one. They have seen dire punishment overtake the chief murderer . . . and they had stood awaiting their own deaths, but to their surprise, the whites . . . more merciful than their own countrymen, had saved them, one strong object being to prevent further massacres." General satisfaction is expressed; "this short voyage of the *Miranda* seems to have achieved in a few days most desirable work. . . . Her visit has been a most successful one. . . . No longer do natives of Aoba Island hail the approach of H.M. ships with shouts of defiance and contempt . . . an impressive lesson has been given to these cannibal murderers."

A blackbirder of the period puts it rather differently: "The raid of the party from the *Miranda* (1881), across Aoba,

certainly gave the natives a better idea of the white man's pluck and energy. However, in that case, the murderers escaped; the shooting of one woman and a few pigs, with the destruction of the village, being all that was effected."

A young Frenchman is eaten on Omba in 1883, and another man killed in a row over a woman.

The *Madeline* does some kidnapping in 1884, and a shooting match results.

Serious fighting occurs in 1887.

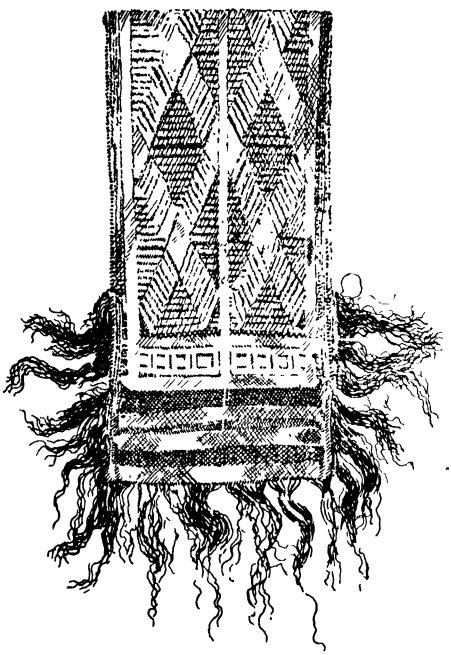
There is still irresponsible shooting at ships in 1888. A chief apologises to a Government agent for shootings at his ship; it is done, he says, just " in the excitement of the moment."

Through all this death we find missionary Rev. Bice going alone, unarmed, unharmed. He only fears " a nasty lizard in the thatch of my house, captured after an exciting hunt. One creeps when these creatures are brought so near one, and is thankful for daily protection from them." He here refers to the grey, ugly, drowsy wall geckos; there are no large or harmful lizards. Of the savages " off Mr. Chiffin's station. . . . nowhere in all my beat are the people more kind and friendly personally."

In telling of the period of Bice's activities on Omba the mission writer Montgomery says " they (the natives) considered that under the new faith they were not permitted to defend themselves against any enemy, but this fatal error was promptly corrected ! " Bice himself says that he " always instructed his people to be prepared for defence." Which is all very interesting, and perhaps something to do with the story.

The last missionary to be killed in the group was shot and clubbed by a returned Queenslander, October 1906. He was Rev. C. C. Godden, who could quote Browning by the hour; was " no small poet himself "; put natives in trances; was beloved; had newly returned with a young wife. The killer,

who got Godden as he came along a bush trail on Omba, had been imprisoned in Queensland days.



Rough sketch of part of a plaited mat from Omba, with purpled designs. Fine work. There is no loom.

The Machine Intervenes

All the time while my typewriter writes in this far quiet pub, I listen to the on and on murmuring of the River Test flowing, a few yards away, through June and chalk; to the sedge warblers who are now losing the best of their song; a snipe bleating wild sound-threads through the blue, over buttergold and green water-meadows, flat, cowful, floodable and there—for things to go over and leave. In the room is the lesser security; tap of the typewriter itself as it approaches time to eat some ham and an onion, beside a Derain brown

glass of cider filtering the sleepy sun at the other end of the table. And the wireless kept on all the time ! Enthralled by the bloodage of Omba, not till a few moments ago did the voice of Professor Coupland, Beit Professor of Colonial History at Oxford, become noticeable, just as his seventh broadcast on the British Commonwealth of Nations ended, with:

> " I have spoken of native peoples as fellow-members with ourselves in one great society—a society whose function it is to enable all its varying parts, within the shelter of a single framework of peace and law, to live and work together for the common good."

My typewriter's soul went out from it with a little tinkle and bump; left ham and onion solitary there. I rode my bicycle into the evening over Leckford Abbess and Mottisfont.

Sources. Armstrong 205. Bice 22, 45. Brittain 119. Codrington 344. Coombe 19. Coote 69, 207. Deschanel 237. Harrisson 300. Montgomery 57. Penny. Rannie 101, 161. Selwyn 11. Steel 134, 319. Thomas 187. Tolna 227. Tucker. Wawn 45, 53, 172, 357, 420. Wilson 50.

Brisbane Courier, 1875. *Fiji Times*, including 19/7/71, 5/4/80. *Mel. Miss. Report* 1882. *Mel. Miss.* 1879, '83, '87.

Record Office: 4/11/78. 8/1/79. 15/5/79. 26/5/79. 22/7/79. 10/3/80. 5/4/80. 9/4/80. 14/6/80. Domest. Nos. 6061 and 8237 of 1880. 12/1/81. 27/8/81. 30/8/81. 27/10/81.

PIONEERS OF £

An Ambitious Company

BACK in the sandalwood days, traders were coming ashore on Tanna and Aneityum, as native demand for white things grew. Some were connected with sandalwood establishments; others with whaling or the pig trade. A precarious existence, settlers by force, armed to the teeth.

The firm Jeremiah How of 209 Piccadilly published in 1846 an extraordinary circular by a Mr. H. Roche, with elaborate title including " notice of the objects, etc., of the New Hebrides Company, and some general suggestions for organising an extensive and lucrative trade, by means of British capital and enterprise amongst the numerous islands and countries lying between our Australian and Indian possessions and throughout the Indian Seas generally, thus opening a new and almost unlimited market for the consumption of British manufacture." This document particularly reviles the Dutch spice monopoly, a " system close and avaricious, cruel and tyrannical, and anti-Christian towards the unfortunate natives." The New Hebrides Company will cultivate spices, will " organise the trade on some regular and remunerative basis," by small vessels from Sydney replacing the lawless traffic that " has inflicted innumerable evils upon the unoffending inhabitants." The islands provide a source of untold wealth, though " it would be premature to go more fully into detail, as the course of action which the Company will pursue must depend, to a great measure, to the countenance that the Government may give it to throw open the existing Dutch monopoly." Nothing more came of the company.

The missionary followed the trader. At first he concentrated, as we have seen, in the south, only after some years going up to Efate, and in the eighties beginning to settle more in the north.

Some Pioneers Ashore

Ross Lewin was the most famous of early traders. He had already featured as interpreter on Town's pioneering labour voyage into the group ; that started the blackbirding days. In the following year, 1868, he apparently went to Tanna with three other whites on the schooner *Daphne*, which was recruiting for Fiji, but was seized by the captain of H.M.S. *Rosario* on charge of kidnapping ; was taken to Sydney. His Honour Sir Alfred Steven dismissed the case; native testimony was not accepted in court. The captain of the *Rosario*

was sued for damages. Nevertheless, Lewin's recruiting licence was cancelled. He settled on Tanna; by 1871 had developed a plantation and was already said to be wealthy. Other whites joined him; the place became notoriously evil. There were shooting affrays, drunkenness. Two drunken men both named Jones shot at each other; Tatchell alias Jones killed a woman (later tried and acquitted in Sydney); drunk man shot himself in the leg and died of tetanus; drunk man exploded a gunpowder barrel, and, incidentally, himself. One man stole a revolver from the captain of a visiting ship, so he was tied to a tree and given six lashes on the bare back, " not as a punishment, but as a disgrace, and to show the native race that white men are equally amenable to punishment as themselves."

The traders gained influence; they bought a long strip of coast for further settlement. McLeod, Bell brothers and Ross Lewin had land well cleared. Lewin had good horses, poultry, much Indian corn; a cotton cargo was shipped by 1870. They employed labour from other islands so that the workers could not run away or be lazy. The women were found to be the best workers. Other residents of this period were Captain Winchester, an important gun trader; Major Carter, late Indian Army; Anderson, Larresky, and Antonio Francisco. In 1875 they petitioned for annexation by France, signatories including Lewin, Sodeh, Sedna, Slea, Lewy, and Milleh! Soon the Bells and Lewin were no more unmurdered.

Another boy of the beach was Bully Hayes. His favourite occupation (while he was alive) was to disappear for many months at a time and spread a report that he was dead, so that when at last a Norwegian cook knocked him overboard with a billet of wood, while they were escaping with a stolen ship and a stolen woman from San Francisco, no one believed the report. He was the son of a Mississippi bargeman. At age eighteen he stole four thousand dollars and came to the South Seas, there he lived by piracy and smuggling. He was bad-tempered, strictly temperate, and justly renowned for his swearing. On board a mission ship he was the only member of the crew to appear at Divine Service on the first

Sunday. He told the missionary to wait a moment, went below, and drove the crew up at the rope's end. He was a very plausible talker; whenever he was arrested, he always talked himself out of it. Once a man-of-war took him prisoner, only to let him go again, with the gift of a cannon as a sympathetic gesture.

Another pioneer British settler was Captain Macleod. He made a settlement on Efate which looked like becoming the centre of a considerable trade in 1870. Three years before, H.M.S. *Falcon* had shelled the natives as reprisal for the massacre of two ships, part of a long series of bloody incidents that followed the sandalwood visits and roasting natives in a cave. Soon Macleod shot his companion, Trueman. He was taken to Brisbane and tried on a charge of murder; case dismissed. He then became a pioneer French settler. In 1871 there were several properties in Efate paying on Indian corn, but the labour position prevented them from going ahead. By 1876 a number of settlers had petitioned for French annexation. Britishers, always the first to arrive, included Young, Salisbury, Hepplewhite, Brown, and Black Harry Palmer. There were sixteen adults resident on Efate by 1881. They considered their property and lives to be perfectly safe, though those of men caught unawares from labour vessels were far from it. Next year several Australians had cleared some bush and landed sheep; but the attempt failed. Efate grew slowly into a definite centre of settled whites, finally to form, at Port Vila, the capital of the group.

A remarkable colony on Efate near the site of the present capital was founded by a man who alleged that he was a great-grandson of Captain Cook on the French side; Cook had no official French side. Great-grandson wished to glorify the illustrious memory. He collected a large party of men, women and children with the approval of the French Government. They were armed with every possible tool, timber and convenience. They arrived, toiled and planted. Malaria, sunstroke and tetanus soon thinned them out. The French Government sent a ship to bring back the remainder.

Dr. Murray was a pioneer settler on Epi. He was owner of the *Carl*. He had turned Queen's evidence in 1872 and disclosed the fearful atrocities aboard his ship. He told how pig-iron was thrown into the canoes, the natives knocked on the head, picked out and then stowed below. Eighty were collected like this. But they started a disturbance in the hold, which was quieted by the watchman firing a pistol. Next night it broke out again; the men were nearly suffocating; and efforts to quiet them failed. They appeared to be breaking down the bunks and arming themselves with this wood; they began to use it as spears to attack the hatchway. The crew fired into the hold most of the night. " I think everyone on board was more or less engaged in the firing into the hold. By daylight it was practically quiet. A Mr. Scott was wounded during the day. By night firing had started again. Mr. Wilson threw lights into the hold to direct the aim. Next day all was quiet, and the slaves were invited to come out. Five came out, unaided; nine wounded had to be assisted; sixteen were severely wounded, and sixty were dead. The dead were at once thrown overboard. The sixteen severely wounded men were also thrown overboard." Some were bound hand and foot, because land was in sight. Then the ship was cleaned, the hold whitewashed; and, just after, they met H.M.S. *Rosario*, for whom they refused to stop until she shot their topsail away. An officer came on board, who reported all clean and nice, with natives on board, only there of their own free will (to read Markham's account of this inspection, knowing already what had happened on the *Carl*, is an excitement). Wilson, a head shooter, confirmed all this evidence, and added that Murray was to blame for everything; the others only obeyed orders. While another seaman said that Murray, during the firing, was singing " Marching through Georgia." Murray could not be tried, but Armstrong and Dowden were tried in Sydney. They " thought it was all honest business." They said Murray gave orders; he read prayers before he told the crew to go and smash canoes. Both men were acquitted.

Settlement was slower on Ambrym, but in 1884 there

were traders there. Bold François Rossier went freely unarmed ; he pointed out that his safety lay in the fact that the natives could get more by trading with him, than by killing him. Soon they changed their minds about that. Captain Belton and good-natured George Craig were also settlers; they pointed out how the natives around them went unarmed. Belton was murdered. Punitive measures satisfied Craig; he was killed shortly after.

Only Mad Dogs and Englishmen . . .

George de Lautour resigned from his labour ship in 1883 because " I object to the drinking that is going on on board, your use of insulting and low blackguard language to me and my Government yesterday. Your crew having been in a state of mutiny for a fortnight, yourself and your mate being incapable of dealing with them." He settled on Aore, where three years later recruiter Rannie had lunch with him. During the meal his son, Willie, came in and said, " Father, a dog has come in the gate." The old man took a gun from the rack and instantly shot the dog dead. As he returned to the table he said, " I would serve the dog's master exactly the same if he dared disobey my orders." Each of the gate-posts was surmounted by a human skull, and under each skull there were nailed to the posts two thigh bones, with a notice on a nearby tree, printed:

NOTICE
DOGS AND NIGGERS ARE FORBIDDEN TO ENTER INSIDE THE PORTALS OF THESE GATES. ANY DOGS OR NIGGERS FOUND THEREIN WILL SUFFER THE PENALTY OF DEATH
BY ORDER OF GEORGE DE LAUTOUR,
BRITISH RESIDENT.

Willie was a popular favourite who went where he liked in the bush. One day they shot his father through the wall. Willie was working at the wood pile. The killers, telling him how much they liked him, said that they nevertheless regretted that—as

he was a witness—they must despatch him also. Some held Willie while one shot him (and finished him with a club). This was the reason for a naval punitive expedition which burned the village, lined up the natives and shot them down one by one. The place is now the headquarters of the Seventh Day Adventist Mission. Aore is to-day the most settled, all-French island. There is one Aore native left.

We have already seen what happened to settlers on Omba in the eighties. On Santo settlement was later still.

These pioneers were daring unscrupulous men who took little account of life, including their own. Few of them died a natural death, or made a fortune. They were often the outcasts of society, as they were the forerunners of civilisation. Elkington draws for us a vivid picture of a naked man "creeping through the jungle, his eyes gleamed with revenge, the very embodiment of murder, his objective a lonely hut, with him there is no half measure, no gentle stabbing, no single shot, but absolute mangling, in a ghastly form"; sometimes an unjust, but more often a richly deserved, death has sooner or later come thus (or unthus) to the other savages sleeping there in their gin-case huts.

Early Barter

Coconut oil is mentioned, traded to the whites, as early as 1853, though copra not till the eighties, when it has grown into the dominant of New Hebrides economics. The early trade was at best a precarious one, shifting to supply needs all over the world; sometimes cotton, Indian corn, yams for labour vessels, spears as curios, pearl shell, trepang or sea-slugs for the Chinese eats' market, turtle-shell.

In 1774 Cook had noted that at first the natives would only take calico and shiny paper, but that towards the end of his stay they began to ask for hatchets and some large nails; "they have found that iron is more serviceable than stone." No further iron supply was available for many years; Cook's pieces had become of fabulous value, were hired out for the day by their owners.

From 1830–1840 pieces of iron, a goat, a cat, would buy a dinghy-load of sandalwood. By 1849 biscuit was popular, tobacco was still scarcely in use, men adored red worsted comforters and were terrified of sheep.

Objects in order of importance in 1860: rifles, powder, caps, fish-hooks, red ochre, pipes, tobacco, shot and tortoise-shell. Iron by then was widespread and sandalwooders had popularised the gun. On Tanna Captain Winchester charged a large hog for a wineglassful of powder or ten gun caps. Red objects remained popular; in 1871 H.M.S. *Rosario's* sailors painted some Malekulans red, with great popular success. At that time an empty bottle bought a pig of over two hundredweight on Vanua Lava. By 1875 stone was almost forgotten on Malo; but a man would not take a handkerchief for a basket; only one man was seen smoking.

On different islands different coloured beads were in demand: white on Ambrym, blue in north-east Santo, white in north-west Santo, black in north Malekula. Two boat loads of fowls could still be bought for "a small box of plaid matches per fowl," costing the ship not a halfpenny each, in 1884; twenty coconuts for a halfpenny clay pipe; a thimbleful of beads per hundredweight of yams; nearly a hundred new Snider rifles were landed by the French ship *Marie* at one place.

Since that time the natives have gained a much more European sense of values, largely as the result of labourers returned from Queensland. The scope of demand has not enlarged much since 1875. A few natives want rice or tinned goods, but their life is full of their own foods; other needs are few. Though tobacco caught on so slowly, it is now universal currency, value 3*d.* a stick. Like gunpowder it is an ideal currency for the trader, a currency that goes up at once in smoke. In north-east Santo a stick of tobacco became the standard fee for an attractive Sakau girl, per night.

French Interest

Settlers dropped ashore without any plan, with much death as they pushed slowly northwards. The intensification

of warship visits in the eighties, and the increasing French colony in New Caledonia (300 miles S.W. of Efate), teeming with the toughest convicts and left wing revolutionaries of France, made a more planned approach possible.

The French had been casting envious eyes at the islands for some years. They had not contributed to the pacification of the group. Now that things were looking safer, they came in vigorously. In New Caledonia there was a reservoir of toughs quite up to New Hebridean standard. The use of Ile Nou at Noumea for penal purposes started in 1864 and went on until 1895; about forty thousand prisoners were transported there, with all the usual horrors of penal settlements.

Admiral Fevrier-Despointes, back in 1853, had annexed New Caledonia and the adjacent islands in rather general terms. France did her best to include the New Hebrides as a part of New Caledonia. French writers since that time have regularly demonstrated that, of course, the New Hebrides are from the point of view of geography, topography, sociology and economics no more than part of New Caledonia. This has not been so apparent to British minds. The 15,000 foot deep Hebrides Basin, intervening, is a good nautical objection.

Some French convicts were liberated, with title *libres*, sent off with a free passage one way, some rum and a gun, into the New Hebrides to make the place French. Naturally they were determined men, who had been taught, by the laws and methods of their own countrymen, that even white men could be treated as worse than animals. If any were embryo Lenins these qualities were absorbed into the great sponge of fever and jungle damp.

But the pioneers of French interests were an Englishman, an Irishman, a Scotsman and an American. In the Pacific the French had shown little colonising ability, where they were away from their women. These Britishers readily put their abilities within the much freer framework of French law; they were allowed to do as they liked, with no missionary interference or relics of Rousseau. Australian interests were by now diffuse; their pioneering days were

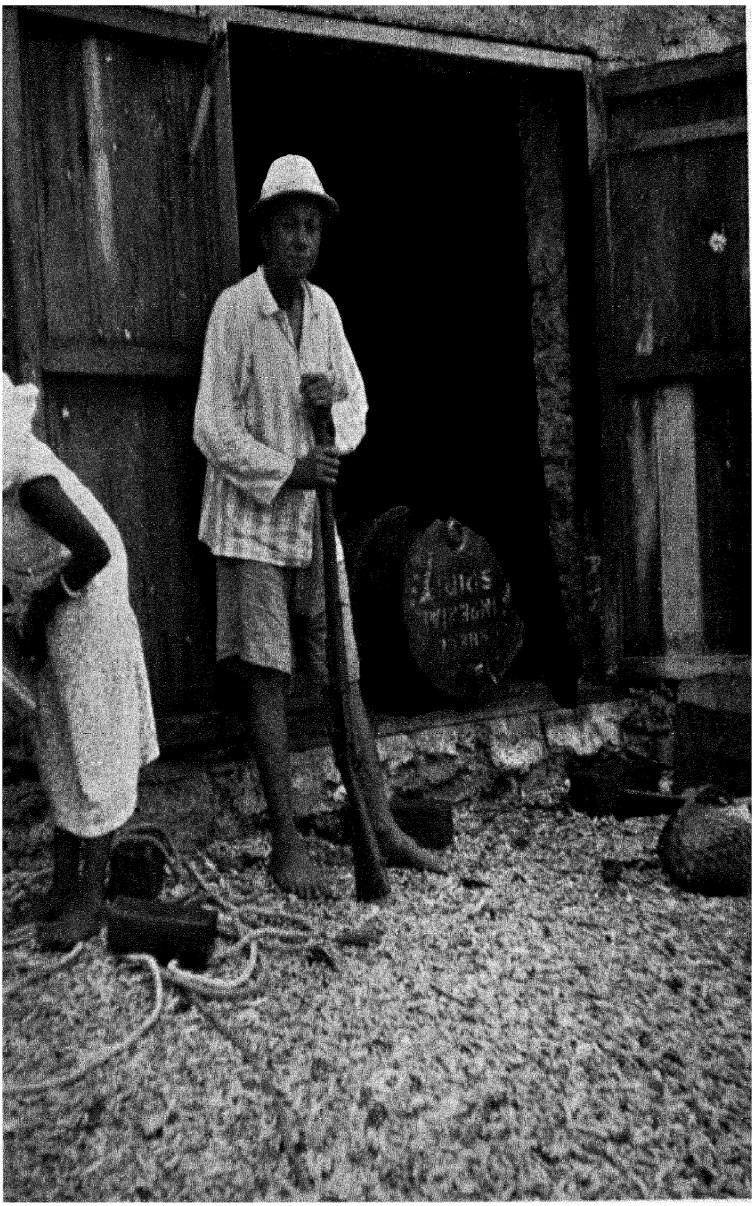
already over. The powerful Burns Philp Co. grew into a constructive force in the islands, but from the first the British plantations and developments have been essentially individual, not highly capitalised. The French went ahead as fast as possible, especially in land grabbing. While the British usually bought only enough land to use and develop, the French would get an old man drunk, he would scrawl a mark on a piece of paper, and they had " bought " several thousand acres.

Macleod's plantation on Efate in 1882 was the nucleus of the first big French company. Macleod's ship the *Caledonian* (=*Calédonien, Ernestine*), which flew three flags in the same year, became the subject of Colonial Office correspondence, and a proposed International Agreement. Flag changing was a popular local occupation. The captain was one-legged Proctor; we have already watched him jabbed in the buttock with a pen-knife.

M. Higginson

An Irishman called John Higginson, who became a naturalised Frenchman, and arrived in Noumea 1859, was chief owner-manager of the New Caledonia nickel mines. In 1878 he was in Paris agitating about the New Hebrides. In 1882 he started a plan to run a French Company, the Compagnie Calédonien des Nouvelles Hebrides, with the object of opening up the New Hebrides, and the indirect view of gaining the best land-claims, thus giving France the needed excuse for annexation. Despatches from Consul Layard at Noumea interpret his deeper motive as the need for cheap and numerous labour for the mines, where mortality was very high. The new company's capital was 500,000 francs. It rapidly got claims on 350,000 hectares. A subsidiary company, the Société Coloniale de Colonisation, sent one hundred unhappy emigrants on to twenty-acre plots. By 1883, over 150,000 francs' worth of copra, cotton, etc., had been produced.

John Morgan was a director, apparently in active charge, while Higginson did the thinking, Macleod the settling,



A TYPICAL TRADER WITH TYPICAL EQUIPMENT

and Proctor the shipping. Two Stuarts were in the van. One expedition on the *Caledonian*, plus a French naval officer, set out with the purpose of marking their land boundaries with stones; it was received with lyrical enthusiasm in the Press.

" Nous faisons les vœux les plus sincères pour qu'elle soit conduité à bonne fin. Nous le disons franchement, ce début nous réjouit, abstraction faite de nous les avantages pecuniares que peut rapporter cette opération. Il y a donc encore place dans les cœurs françaises, pour les grandes enterprises, et pour les expéditions périlleuses. Il y aura donc là-bas, dans quelque jours, des hommes que tiendront haut et ferme le drapeau de la patrie, et qui apprendront aux allemands et aux anglais de ces paysage qu'il exist encore, de par le monde, une vielle et glorieuse nation avec laquelle il faut compter."

Rather un-English—our perilous expeditions, the pioneers slipping off down river one misty evening; colonisers disowned or deported for frightening a pheasant.

Higginson went to Paris again to press the issue for French annexation. His activities became the subject of agitated despatches between Consul Layard, Lord Derby, Lord Lyons, Marquis of Normanby, Earl Granville, Sir E. Malet, Earl of Kimberley, Marquis of Salisbury, Baron de Ring, Sir J. Walsham, Bishop of Melanesia, Sir A. Gordon, the General Secretary of the Free Church of Scotland, Waldeck Rousseau, J. Paunceforte, Governor Pallo de la Barriere, the German firm Godefroy and Lord Churchill. The French Press suddenly sparkled with glowing accounts of the charming climate, harbours and natives of the New Hebrides. Such an article in the *Journal des Débats* ended, " Il ne reste plus maintenant qu'à faire autant dans les îles voisines à Tana, à Mallicolo, et à Santo; nous pourrons dire alors que les Hebrides sont à nous." Similarly an article in *Agence Havas* reported researches of the Minister of Marine into the possibilities of transporting relapsed French criminals into the New Hebrides, which did not belong to any Power and so was a suitable group; this set Lords Salisbury, Granville and

Lyons corresponding some more. While in Australia strong public feeling was aroused. Already Queensland had too much trouble from criminals, including New Caledonia escapes. Missionary activities, headed by John G. Paton, were largely switched off blackbirding in 1884 when there seemed some probability of real redress. So Paton came full tilt into the international field, waving his flag furiously and vituperating against the French. (French literature of the period constantly names Paton as Public Enemy Number One.) The mission had already forwarded numerous petitions to the home Government in favour of British annexation. In 1882 the matter was taken up more carefully through Scotland, especially on the subject of convict expansion into the group. While in Australia a deputation of missionaries, representing four sects and the Western Pacific, waited on Victorian Premier Service, demanding funds for annexation. The Marquis of Normanby, then Governor of Victoria, asked the Colonial Secretary to consider the matter; Lord Derby refused, though he received a deputation in 1883. Britain did not then want France to annex the New Hebrides, but was not prepared to annex them herself. Representations were made to France, lest she take any definite action.

Intricate Manœuvres

Meanwhile in Australia it was proposed to form a company to contest the French land claims. " They will deal with the natives in a *bona fide* matter . . . as there is a comparable trade to be done in copra and planting, properly managed, an Australian syndicate will, no doubt, lead to its success."

I must draw attention to the remarkable activities of a gentleman called Thomas, about 1883. He got all the natives of Tanna to sign a paper asking " the big feller Queen " to send " a big feller ship to fight the Wee-Wees " as the French were then called (=Yes Man). The Tannese seem to have had a perfect passion for battleships. Certainly the French were disliked by many natives. One-legged

Proctor explains this (and thus the major part played by the Nordics in French expansion) with: "A Frenchman never understands niggers. He don't know how to work or to get on with them. He hasn't patience. It isn't that he is absolutely more cruel, but he gets out of temper and bustles them. And somehow they never trust Frenchmen . . . they always prefer English people. For myself, a lot of slanderers have called me a 'slaver.' Everyone of these niggers here know me, but they have no fear of coming aboard my ship. I never broke my word to a nigger yet. I always paid him what I said I would, and if I should ever tell one that I'd shoot him, you bet he would keep out of the way." Proctor was certainly a man, though on the subject of his moral worth Commander Dyke Acland did not see eye to eye with him. He boarded his ship and made some enquiries. A couple of months later the Assistant High Commissioner of Fiji wrote to the Earl of Derby concerning reports that the *Caledonian* had been kidnapping natives from south Malekula—including great chief Nabala, who was caught and pulled aboard while trading fish.

The French have always been less popular than the British; this is probably due largely to mission propaganda. Nevertheless the British in these seas, though they have often been a disgrace to their race have, on an average, been less callous than the French, while their greater patience is an invaluable asset among Melanesians. To-day the British in the New Hebrides are almost, without exception, honest men. This is far from true of the French.

Soldiers—one all but the breeches

The French did a great deal of flag-waving. In 1884 they made some formal gestures for the first time on Malekula at Cook's Port Sandwich. This set off a vivid correspondence. Consul Layard wrote to Earl Granville: "Although no official recognition has been given to these proceedings, I have no doubt that the French Colonial Government are pursuing their old tactics. At some future date, *if necessary*, documents will be forthcoming, proving that the whole of

the New Hebrides were annexed, only that as the French nation were occupied elsewhere, they could not attend to them just then." Twenty days later, Layard sent another stinker:

" I would call your special attention to several remarkable incidents—accidents, let us call them—fortunate accidents. Among the friends that accompanied Mr. Higginson on this pleasure ship (second tour of the isles), was one Monsieur Legros—Capitaine d'infanterie de Marine, qui se trouve à bord en congé. Of course, ' en congé,' no one would dream that he was there in any other capacity *just now*, but why did he sign the ' Procès-Verbal ' as ' Cap. d'Infanterie de Marine '—in other words officially, when he was there as a private individual ' en congé ' ? Time will show ! Quite by accident too, of course, ' une idée lumineuse ' flashed through his brain. ' Se trouve à bord ' by accident of course, among his effects, an officer's uniform ! The ' idée lumineuse ' was to invest the native chief of that portion of the island with cap, coat, and sabre and make him a French officer, all but the breeches. . . . Was it an accident or an ' idée lumineuse,' that caused an old French man-of-war, the *Chevert*, to be towed down there to serve as ' magazin ' and ' blockhauss ' and ' forteresse ' and on which to hoist the French flag. . . . Some of the English residents here who have interests in the New Hebrides look forward to the certain annexation of the whole of the islands by the French."

Murders of Frenchmen on Ambrym, Efate, Malekula, Epi and Tomman in 1886: also shortly before on Tanna and French employees Springfield, miser Booth, killer Peter Cullen alias Brocky Peter; gave the New Caledonians good excuse to land two companies of marines and further press for French annexation. The officers stationed at Port Sandwich spoke with disgust of their surroundings, " bemoaning their sad fate and having been sent to such a heaven-forsaken place." Apparently the troops shot many natives.

France continually put out semi-aggressive feelers and proposals, despite 1878 agreement to leave the group open. Each time, Paton and Layard made an uproar; they must be

acclaimed fathers of the final compromise, the Condominium. But this took another twenty years to materialise. At present neither country cared seriously to strain the position over such a trivial possession. Thus we find Foreign and Colonial Offices exchanging memoranda in the following style, the antithesis of Layardism: " Respecting the action of the New Hebrides Company in Mallicolo, it is suggested that an intimation should be conveyed to the French Government to the effect that Her Majesty's Government take no objection to the proceedings in question because they feel satisfied that they can fully rely upon the loyal observance by the French Government of the understanding that the independence of the islands is to be maintained."

From 1882–1887 such passes and bids went on, with France making the pace and England doing the naval surveys. Neither country wanted the other to have the islands. Not that it was immediately important; but neither Power wished the other to claim the sole right over the excellent hurricane anchorages, so long as they had other and more important possessions that might be threatened near by. By 1887 the position was becoming a little too fantastic; the increasing number of settlers made some sort of organised law for the protection of nationals desirable. The parasitic phase of sandalwooders and labour traders was slowly giving way to the planter, with some capital fixed in the land. The 1887 Joint Naval Commission was set up, and France withdrew her soldiers.

And in the same year William Hesketh Lever, son of a Bolton grocer, went into the soap business, to institute the organisation which came to dominate white hygiene, to elevate cleanliness above godliness. He started with Sunlight Soap " which differed from the great majority of soaps then on the market in that it was made very largely from vegetable oils, such as palm oil, instead of tallow." Copra for soap production soon made coconuts " The Consols of the East." Before these took office, however, the blackbirding traffic had to come to an end; and French influence was extended

into the spiritual plane by the re-introduction of Catholic missionaries.

Sources. *Early Settlers:* Bellamy 105, 140. Brenchley 208. Elkington 71. Frater 90, 130, 158. Goodenough 275, 281, 320. Hamel Smith and Pape. Markham 71, 191. Martin 75. Rannie 80, 159. Roche. Romilly 213. Selwyn 22. Steel 54, 257, 276, 386. Thomas 193, 230. Wawn 25, 40, 110, 141. Young 88, 286.

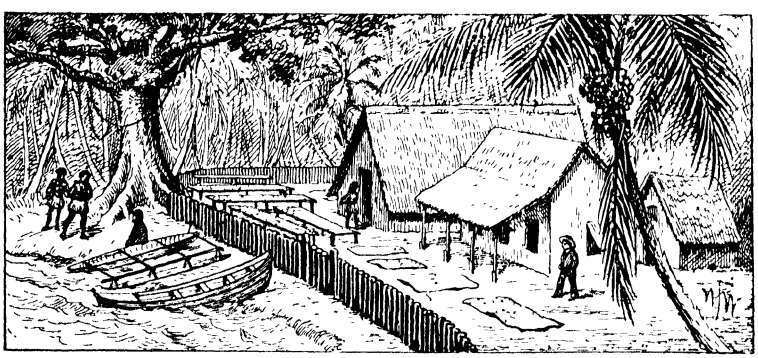
Acc. and Papers 1873, I. 6. 1883 Report. *Fiji Times*, 15/1/70, 8/10/70, 26/11/70. *Nautical Magazine*, 1844.

Barter: Cook 81. Codrington 161. Erskine. Gill. Goodenough 295, 322, 328. Jacomb, 47, 82. Markham 170, 196. Rannie 22, 107, 184. Romilly 172. Speiser 195. Thomas 200. Turner 440.

French activities and international complications have a voluminous and often infuriated literature. I have studied in particular: Alexander 181. Bice 69, 73, 85. Bourge. Chartier 207. Cotteau 273. Coote 52. Deschanel. Dilke I. 433. Ferdinand-Lop. Gervais. Jacomb 92. Langridge and Paton 152. Lemire 51. Martin 84. Peloux. Rannie 127. Russier. Romilly. Scholefield 251. Somerville 164. Steel 389. Thomas 164, 189, 250. Varigny. Wawn 25, 309, 402.

Agence Havas, 7/12/82. *Bull. de la Soc. de Colonisation*, 3/3/87. *Débats*, 9/11/83. *L'Indépendant*, 18/11/84. *Gazette Géographique*, 31/3/87. *Moniteur*, 13/9/82. *Neo Calédonien*, '80's. *Politique Française en Oceanie* II. *Le Progrès*, Sept. 1882, Nov. 1882. *Townsville Herald*, 10/7/86. *Sydney Morning Herald* and *Melbourne Argus*, 1884. *XIX Siècle* 1/1/85.

P.P.: 1884, C 3863; 1885, C 4217; 1888, C 5372. Hansard 2/5/87. Record Office: 27/8/81. 12/9/82. 26/9/82. 20/11/82. 7/12/82. 15/1/83. 8/4/83. 10/8/83. 19/12/83. 16/10/84. 4/11/84. 24/11/84. 25/2/84. 26/2/84. 22/4/84. 14/5/84. 13/7/84. 22/12/84. 30/1/85. 19/6/85. 30/6/85. Advice and criticism from Admiral Sir William Goodenough.



AN EARLY TRADER'S POST
(Sketch by Wawn, about 1880)

R.C.

ROMAN CATHOLICS had tried with Quiros in 1606; again ahead of the Presbyterians on Aneityum, 1848. In other parts of the Pacific, too, the Catholics suffered failure, war, ejection, mass-murder. In 1885 the Marists came back on the wave of French development and potential annexation, the French Company phase. Of this first draft two went to Efate, two to Malekula; and New Caledonian native evangelists to Santo. The French were unpopular with natives; the mission had very little financial backing. They looked like going the same way as the two previous attempts. The French are bad starters. " Moins de trois années de séjour a réduit à l'impuissance ces pionniers de la première heure: les accès de fièvre, le climat et la fatigue les avaient anémié à tel point qu'il fallut les retirer, sous la menace d'une mort prochaine." So *all* the New Caledonian missionaries offered themselves to fill this breach. Old Vigoroux, aged seventy-five, pressed his claims to be allowed to go, begging that he be permitted to " recommencer l'apprentissage de la vie apostolique, dans ce qu'elle a de plus penible pour la nature." In France young fathers and novitiates spoke, if we may trust the historian Landes, with bated breath of this as " la terre de leurs rêves." For fifteen years the mission gained nothing but suffering, sickness and death. It worked mostly in the zone of French influence, the middle of the group, and away from the Protestants. Later the spheres overlapped, considerably and uselessly. There has never been any co-operation between Catholic and Protestant missions, nor indeed between the different Protestant sects. There is no common policy for the general good; that is lamentable.

The islet of Vao illustrates Catholic effort. The first priest on Vao was Père Vidil, " un grand cœur et une noble intelligence." He died within a few months. The catechist Benoit carried on. " J'étais seul, mais absolument seul," he cries at his first Christmas; in 1893 he says, " En janvier, j'ai été comme mort . . . de même pendant le première

quinzaine d'avril; en dernier lieu je ne vommissais plus que du sang. Mes Vaos ne rêvent que porcs et ils sont constamment à courir pour s'en procurer." Benoit died in agony, perhaps from poison. After eight years' work he had no Christian convert. Tayac was next; aged thirty-one, he soon died. He left no Christians. Jammond came in 1903. He says instructively: " A force de patience, de remonstrance amicales, de charité et de support, j'ai pu gagner la sympathie de la population qui, en ce moment, me laisse faire ce que je crois utile." He starts his first school with one single little boy, followed some months later by a second whose parents could not control him; then a third, an orphan. By the end of a year he had six; so on to seventeen. These little children brought the parents into sympathy with him. The baptism of adults commenced.

In 1913 Jammond was still going strong, and Layard says he was " the only white man in the whole group whom I heartily respected." He had then only a handful of converts, mostly women, unwanted children, and a single old man. But, as Layard puts it, " it was to him that the natives came in cases of trouble with the white man, and who took the part of successful mediator between the people of Atchin and the Government in the incident of killing the trader's wife. He really liked the natives and for his own amusement had compiled a dictionary of the Vao language, which he pronounces to be ' presque beau que le français,' which, for a Frenchman, is saying something." At that time Layard did not believe that the missions would ever make much progress. But Godefroy, who followed Jammond, a scholar and amateur anthropologist who laboured twenty years without a break, understood his people and forged slowly ahead. His good work was carried on by Bancarel, an old man who had already toiled for many years on Ambrym, a great scholar and native linguist. He was there when I came first to Vao in 1934. He is the loveliest Frenchman I ever met, and about the only white Christian.

To think of Bancarel's kind fat little face, tense beard and tired yellow skin as he rushes like a happy mouse to offer

his plain chair and knock-out wine, crazy with excitement when I give him a new anthropological text book. To think of Père Bancarel is flashingly to believe that it is all worth while, that his one hundred and sixty insolent Catholics with their pretty church and cool breezes are all right. He has given thirty-five years of his small body to this work, never taking a holiday for one day; receiving only a nominal wage and some wine; celibate; in this land of a thousand false accusals and lies, accused by no one; in a tiny hut by a great church.[1]

The priests live in utmost simplicity. There are forty white Catholic workers now in the group; who ever, when they decried you people, thought of, far less wrote of, the twenty nuns who labour in all parts among the sick, wearing always their long robes and cowls, always pale, yellow-skinned and fiercely kind until they die, isolated by years of labour and two oceans from their homes and people? There are more waiting, ready to come, in the place of those who die.

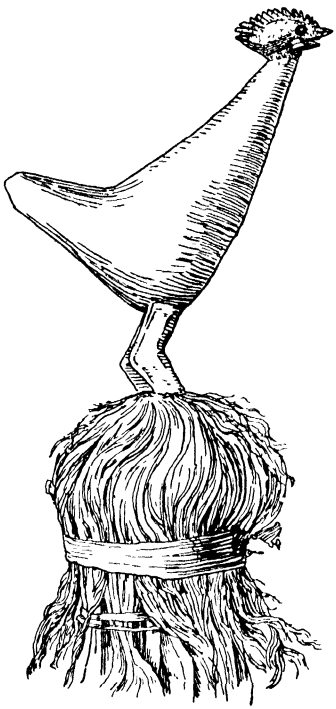
" Monseigneur Douceré (Titular Bishop of Terinuthis= New Hebrides) a pu écrire, et on peut le croire, que cette population reputeé l'une des plus sauvages du globe est capable, sous l'influence du catholicisme, de s'éléver et de produire des caractères beaux, de la vraie beauté morale."

Sources. I would pay tribute to scholarly writings on natives of Monseigneur Douceré, Pères Tattevin and Godefroy. The Melanesian Mission have produced Codrington and Durrad. The Presbyterians in all their unique opportunity only scanty material, such as that of Watt-Leggatt; but much valuable linguistics. S.D.A. nil. It is a great pity that much other invaluable material collected by the fathers during lifetimes of study are never published nor handed on to professional ethnologists. Douceré has also written a history of the Marists in the group, and as this is the only at all up-to-date and reasonably efficient history of any mission in the area, I leave those interested to refer to it, and here reserve more space for the other missions. Let me make it clear, however, that I think the Catholic mission is the best in personnel,

[1] If you see from afar a fine green open space, dotted with cattle, crowned by a large house with red-painted corrugated roof and wide verandas, and a little ugly church beside it, that is a Presbyterian mission station. If you see a spire sticking over the top of the jungle and maybe a little wood shack nestling beside it, that is Roman Catholic. Chapel and house of equal size is Seventh Day Adventist.

ideals, and its technique of working steadily away at one small area, never expanding ahead of true progress. Politically it is a negligible factor. I may add that I belong to no sort of sect.

OTHER SOURCES: Imhaus, Douceré. Geddie. Godefroy. Landes. Jouet. Jacomb 178. Montgomery 53, 65. Somerville 171 pays a charming tribute to Douceré when he was starting at Port Sandwich without apparent success; there is now a successful Catholic Mission there, under fierce Père Chapelle. Rannie 235 and Speiser 133 describe the Catholic station at Port Olry, Santo, 1888–1912, as a failure; it is now flourishing under Brittany peasant Père Ardouin.



DANCE MASK FROM VAO
two and a half feet high

V

(1885–1902 ; and to 1935)

"DAMN SAM GRIFFITH," who (as Queensland's Premier) shows some kindly feeling. An end to the blackbirding traffic—and a new beginning. Germ rampant: the population has fallen from 1,000,000 to under 100,000; but already signs of recovery where there are whites giving medicines (two Puritans in this connection). Theories of psychological depopulation, black degeneracy and white superiority discussed and disliked. What's right with anthropology?

Depopulation finally makes white settlement safe. Lever landscape gardens the coast belt with coconut palms. He develops a vast machine; to the planter this becomes Octopus—as described in "Siller in Sunlight," which reflects this interaction of super-capitalism and a human life; despite some initial heaviness, this piece should be read to its golden end.

Malaria.
July 1936

THOSE RETURNING

" *D.S.G.*"

WHILE coConut and Catholic grow in importance, what has happened to the sugar cane ?

We left the labour traffic at about 1882 to follow the evolution of land settlement through the early trader to the first French company. There were threats of French annexation until the Anglo-French Naval Commission agreed to patrol and administer the group jointly in 1887.

For some time past Samuel Griffith had been a dominating figure in Queensland politics. The first item in his policy was to abolish coloured labour; a White Australia. Opposed to him were planting and other capitalist interests in the colony. As franchise was extended, so democrats feared the presence of a black race which they regarded as incapable of equal franchise; while the workers were able to express their hatred for the blacks, who threatened labour demand and wages. The increasing humanitarian section of the community, especially in the south where black labour was not necessary, continually protested against the nature of the traffic. So long as Queensland was a separate colony, the planters were able successfully to keep their labour privileges. They fought as a resolute minority against the increasingly strong adverse opinion. Their determined and nearly successful north Queensland separationist movement gave to their actions the guise of a crusade parallel to that of Jefferson Davies.

Griffith hastened slowly. He had " a strange trait in his character that he never entirely pleased himself." He seldom entirely pleased anyone, and at the planters' gatherings in

north Queensland the usual toast was " D.S.G.," i.e. " Damn Sam Griffith." As *The Times* remarked: " Sugar does not sweeten the temper of its growers."

Ominous signs of political feeling were noticed by the blackbirders in 1883, though business was as usual. In the previous year Commodore Wilson, who had commanded so many punitive expeditions, had his report published; in this he pointed out how blackbirding scarcely differed from the *éngagé* trade of French colonies in Africa, which had caused such an outcry. " If anything, the African being the more valuable animal, his plight is probably the best." The German Government also drew the attention of the British, in emphatic language, to recent atrocities, some of which had caused native reprisals to be made against Germans.

A Royal Commission was set up by Griffith in January, 1885, to look into recruiting methods during 1884. By this time the depopulation, and the increased settled community in the New Hebrides, had had an influence on blackbirding. Towards the end of the 1870's we find some of them going more often to the Solomons, while in the 'eighties others had been working farther north, around New Guinea. The Commission investigated the records of six ships appointed for investigation—the *Clara*, *Lizzie*, *Hopeful*, *Forest King*, *Heath* and *Sybil* (some controlled by the Burns Philp Co.); all these names constantly feature in New Hebridean episodes. And though in this year their major activities were mainly to the north, Omba and Pentecost natives gave especial evidence before the Commission.

Our friend blackbirder Wawn is concerned; all his recruits are repatriated, as having been recruited by " fraud and force." His licence is suspended; but he is a lesser offender.

In regard to all these ships the findings, in May 1885, after six months' investigation, were:

" Natives were seduced on board by false pretences, some were forcibly kidnapped; the nature of their engagement was never fully explained to them; they had no

comprehension of the nature of the work they had to perform; they attached their marks to contracts that were deliberately misrepresented to them."

The *Sybil's* log was declared to be " a record of drunkenness and incapacity on the part of the master and insubordination on the part of the crew."

The *Clara* made a voyage in early 1884 with 107 recruits who were all " seduced on board by false pretences." On her second voyage of that year, with 137 recruits, it was ruled that a system " of deliberate fraud was practised in the engagement of all the recruits on this voyage." Two of these labourers tried to run away from their plantations; one received one week, another three months' imprisonment. (Bear this in mind in the case of the *Hopeful*, shortly).

The *Lizzie* brought 126 recruits: " Not one of these labourers, brought by the *Lizzie* agreed, when recruited, to serve and remain in Queensland for three years. The method of recruiting was cruelly deceptive and altogether illegal." And on her second trip in the same year, 67 recruits: " some of the natives were forcibly kidnapped, all were lured on board by false statements."

The *Heath* had a record of shooting, drowning and miserable natives trying to escape, chased by Customs launch, hunted by native trackers and dying in the bush.

The *Forest King* had 21 men all " decoyed on board under false pretences . . . none of them were to work on a sugar plantation for any period, much less for three years."

Classic is the case of the *Hopeful*, which arrived on July 17th, 1884, with 103 recruits. The Commissioners " are of the opinion that not one of the recruits upon the *Hopeful* was lawfully recruited "; the history of the cruise is " one long record of deceit, cruel treachery, deliberate kidnapping and cold-blooded murders . . . the number of human beings whose lives were sacrificed can never be accurately known." At one island the natives came out in canoes to trade with the *Hopeful*. Two of her boats were lowered, fully manned. They tried to cut off the canoes from the

shore. One boat was unable to overtake a canoe, so Mr. McNeil stood up and shot at the steersman, hit him and killed him, the ball also striking another native in the canoe who fell overboard and was not seen again. The other canoers leapt overboard and were picked up by the boat's crew as they swam around. The dead steersman was decapitated and mutilated beyond recognition by the whites. Four natives were caught and placed under the thwarts. The other boat meanwhile, commanded by Mr. Williams, cut a second canoe; they picked up five men and a small boy, shooting one other. One man escaped from the boat near the shore; he was chased by Williams with a large knife. The small boy was no good, so two coconuts were tied under his armpits and he was thrown overboard. He was seen to slip from the nuts and drown in the surf. " There is abundant evidence of many other murders."

McNeil and Williams were sentenced to death.

Wawn, the fiercest and most humorous defender of the blackbirding trade, in which he was for so many years engaged, agreed in condemning the *Hopeful*. He says the Government agent was a known drunkard; the captain was a novice; he remarks that the case has " proved a sore blow to the labour trade." Yet the sentence of the gallows for McNeil and Williams raised an uproar. A deputation waited on (now Sir) Samuel Griffith. The Premier asked them what was their plea and whether they disputed the justice of the verdicts. This they did not contest. But cried out for mercy as their plea—on the grounds that these were not the only offenders, it was hard to make these two men the first victims. The matter became a major issue. It was the subject of the largest petition ever got up in Queensland —28,000 signatures. The petition asked that the *Hopefuls* should be freed and pardoned. At the parliamentary election a popular test question to candidates was, if they would vote for the freeing of McNeil and Williams.

The men were set free on February 20th, 1890. They were given free pardons.

Sugar Daddy

This enquiry finally made it impossible to be sentimental about the beneficial effects of the labour traffic. Griffith had, in this report, a useful weapon. The Polynesian Labour Act was amended by the Act of November 10th, 1885, so that the traffic would be brought to an end at the close of 1890. The planters increased the traffic intensity, so that they should have plenty of labour in before the time limit; they could hang on to the black labourers, if possible, afterwards. Sugar prices were falling the while.

This was the sequence of superficial events that led to the cessation of licences for introducing islanders into Queensland, on December 31st, 1890.

The last ship discharged its cargo in 1891 at Queensland.

Griffith has ruined the sugar industry ! went up the cry. The north of the colony was not suitably organised. Big estates would take time to be subdivided into small units that could be worked by whites. Sugar prices were falling and white labour refused to work for cut wages. Sugar was the State. Griffith, who had spent the best years of his life getting the traffic stopped, was screamed at with a new hungry vigour; and he felt the pressure of economics, which play hell with decency. North Queensland raged and petitioned for Separation. In 1892 the Polynesian Labour Regulation Act was renewed temporarily (with no set time given). Within a few months of its cessation, the traffic started again.

North Queensland planters were in a fair way to get separation and autonomy, which would have sent the labour traffic roaring along, when the colony's election of 1893 upset their apple cart. For the new Labour Party, of miners and station hands, polled so strongly that they looked like getting a clear majority, if the north were separated. That stopped the planters, that did.

The labour traffic dragged on from Queensland, but the White Australia policy and powerful socialist movement put constant adverse pressure on the presence of all non-whites.

On January 1st, 1901, the States of Australia were federated into the Commonwealth; the opinions of the south on the labour trade thus found full expression. In that year it was enacted that all importation should cease, all islanders be returned; it was done by 1903.

Some natives stayed on. They are living and slowly increasing as permanent settlers in parts of Queensland:

1911 .. 1,739 and 121 half-castes.
1921 .. 1,859 and 247 half-castes.

Thus Australia finally put an end to a traffic that had benefited a small number of men and damaged hundreds of thousands of others. Though its numerical effects on the island population have sometimes been exaggerated, it definitely crippled all hope of recovery from the earlier white impacts. The British and Australian administrations were fully aware of the conditions. They deliberately acquiesced in a non-policy for forty years, allowing the continuance of the traffic; they gave armed support to the traffickers.

Bye, Bye, Blackbirds

It is with some regret that I bid farewell to the terrible, funny lives of Wawn, Cromar, Rannie, Thomas, and their brood. Wawn's last words are: " I conscientiously affirm that it (the labour traffic) has been, in the main, equally beneficial to the colony and to the islanders themselves."

Time passes, mellows and glosses. Ten years later novelist Beatrice Grimshaw murmurs:

> " The ' black-birding ' days are gone—the gay old times when recruiting schooners simply kidnapped the men they wanted and sold them outright wherever they chose."

Ah, for the gay old times !

Cultural Influences

There were 9,327 islanders in Queensland in 1901, including 361 females; also 181 half-castes. When the traffic

came to an end these folk came back, from out of the shadeless cane fields and concrete corrugated barracks. Some were relatives long given up as lost; 751 had been born in Australia. The homecoming of such people, crowded on brigs and schooners, can only have been curious—their homes had changed, their tribes had died out, maybe, or moved, suffered from the impact of disease and settlement. On the plantations they had commonly been left without any sort of instruction or interest. Certain people, notably splendid Miss Young, had shown them Christian kindness. The natives of Omba took the Church of Christ back to their island, which has flourished into the finest mission in the group. Similarly some Pentecost natives met kind treatment from Catholics in Fiji and made their island a stronghold of Catholicism.

These were only minority influences. Australian Government interest, the expenditure of a few thousand pounds on hygiene, and extra tobacco in plantation evenings could have done much. A good many natives came back with a hatred for the white man.

These returns were pretty sophisticated about civilisation and white values, as had been the other, smaller units, repatriated year by year before them. They knew about money and rice. What impressed them MOST in Queensland was seeing a people living in peace, unarmed and unafraid of each other. Also the material intricacy of white civilisation. These returned labourers had the knowledge of both worlds, the fullness of neither. They questioned the authority of Tagaro and of Jehovah. Yet the way in which they slipped back into the native life was notable. It is the experience of all recruiters that the natives do so with remarkable ease; it is well known that the toughest bushmen and killers of to-day are the native police sergeants of yesterday.[1]

[1] Thus natives notice how white life is dominated by exact timing. When working for a white, a native will soon pick up a high timing efficiency. But Melanesian time is one of sun and moon, through flowers, the coming of birds and sea-worms. A man's age is not counted in years, but in pig progress. Their time is growth and ripeness. It is always born again, does not go on anywhere.

The strongest impact of these returns on the heathen communities came through the time-lag in their own social progress within the tribal framework. While they had been away they might have missed grades in the rank society, secret society initiation, and so on. On the other hand, their knowledge of white things and exchange values commanded respect and could be definitely useful, now that the white contact had become widespread and regular. So these returned labourers were able to modify conditions and make a place for themselves, thus often causing a considerable upset in the established routine of heathenism.

"RETURNED FROM ABROAD"
(from an old blackbirding book)

W. H. Rivers noted (1913): "At the present moment there exists in Melanesia an influence far more likely to produce disintegration of native institutions than the work of missionaries. I refer to the repatriation of labourers from Queensland which has been the result of the movement for a white Australia. Large numbers have recently returned to nearly every island. Some have been many years in Queensland, and have quite forgotten all they ever knew

of their native institutions, some even have had that contempt for these institutions that often accompanies a smattering of ' civilisation.' "

Europeanised Heathenism

A fair example of the both-way action is Atchin islet, where many were repatriated. There they compelled a change in the system of chieftainship, rapid initiation of themselves into the higher heathen rites; thus modifying all these rites and their deeper significance, turning Atchin into a rather communistic and uniquely chiefless community.

There, to-day, they make their old mat skirts and penis-wrappers, trade these over the group; wear white clothes when they feel like it. When a white whom they like comes along, they will put a black handkerchief (always black, 1935) over the penis-wrapper, covering the otherwise exposed testicles. They use the best native medicines and magics; and the best white ones; sorcery has been stamped out, by public action.

The Atchinese have the old interests and dynamics of the savage, without what we call savagery. Theirs is the ideal compromise, *Europeanised Heathenism*. This state, a model

[*continued from foot of page 249*

Only persons do that, across time, which each may traverse along the thin shining archway of the re-curved pigs' tusks that lift him by serried sacrifice up, through everything to over time. The essential in white time is more time, dominating, marked by numbers. Intelligent observers have sneered at the way the native's " sub-logic " causes him to reject the idea of breeding pigs as hard as possible, in order to get a lot of pigs and kill them, and become more important. They do not realise that there is such tabu, procedure, and balance, that to do so would be not only impracticable, but unthinkable anarchy. No doubt the natives would think us fools that we do not each make our own pound notes. A native would think that we threw millions of fresh herrings into the sea and burned boatloads of coffee, so that the ships' captains might gain prestige.

All over Polynesia there is a story of how the god Maui (who occurs also in the southern New Hebrides) delayed the sun so that he might have more time to finish a canoe that he was making with a shell axe. This story is un-Hebridean. But on Omba they tell how Tagaro went to Maewo and brought back night in a shell. When he let it out and darkness crept over the sky, men wept and beat their houses.

This is the fascination of such existence, to the wire-encircled white. Julian Duguid says: " I know more than one man who has fled from the lights of town simply because when he has asked the time he has been told, not 12 o'clock, but an hour and a half till lunch." It is only in a nature-timed environment, after suitable acclimatisation, that one can think all the way through a think !

for the Pacific, has been reached through the worst impacts, including two punitive expeditions with very many resultant deaths (after which they successfully chucked out the white police commander). They are now excellent, peaceful, increasing determined fellows. They were lucky to be rapidly disillusioned while there were still enough people to do something about it; and with a well-meaning ineffective Seventh Day Adventist mission to help them.

Sources. Adcock 285. Alexander 180. Bellamy 124. Bernays 73. Codrington 171. Coghlan. Duguid 87. Gill 199. Grimshaw 200. Harrisson and Layard 300 *seq.* Jacomb 37. Langridge and Paton 16, 95. Rannie 17, 104, 241. Rivers I. 3. Selwyn. Shann 244–258, 362 (a valuable account of sugar politics). Thomas 233. Traill 71. Wawn 323, 360–372 (an incredibly funny account of the repatriation of the 1884 kidnapped islanders and the muddle that ensued). Willard 161.

A.B.C. Aust. Pugh's *Queensland Almanac. Brisbane Courier*, 4/8/85, etc. *British Weekly*, 24/1/90, 31/1/90, 18/7/90, 21/3/90. *Melbourne Argus*, 1885. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7/4/82 and during 1885. *Times*, 12/10/85. Government papers and Queensland Reports, Hansard, etc., etc.

MICK AND PETER

Mick

THE VIGOROUS Norwegian missionary Rev. Oscar Michelsen arrived on the small island of Tongoa, central New Hebrides, 1879. He was sent by the Presbyterian Church in New Zealand. He had been preceded by a Samoan teacher in 1868.

At first it was planned to murder him; but within seven years he had half the population wearing shirts on the Sabbath. In that year the last killing of a Christian by a heathen occurred. Tribal war, that had raged on his arrival, was ended. Soon Tongoa was the most civilised-looking island in the group, with a good road, model churches and villages. Mick was a wide-awake fellow, wasting no time in words or lengthy complaints to home. He told the native what he knew about the white and he made the Tongoans into a thoroughly business-like people. His word was law; as

Admiral Somerville remarked, " a very kind and sensible law too." The natives learned to encourage white traders and ships to come, but did not permit them to plant or to claim land stretches; they learned how to play off white against white. By medicine, elementary hygiene, " gaining much favour by his powers of song," Mick built up the race again while the excellent material was still strong enough to be built upon. He did not make good Christians or very civil fellows out of the Tongoans. He assisted the inevitable turnover in material culture, but left the old character very strong. He made them keen and clever traders; in this they found an outlet for their economic traditions. Every sign of the old ways went in record time. And on Tongoa to-day you meet *completely* " civilised " natives with savage minds. That is why the excellent new missionary who arrived recently at Tongoa, Rev. C. Nottage, found to his horror that Michelsen's all-Christian island was mainly peopled with heathens. The reversion is a negligible transition. I spot Tongoa as perhaps the first island in the group to give serious political trouble,—native pride upsurged against continuous white degradations.

Michelsen's own presbyterianity has been doubted. He was, they say, a man of the world. Ideal man for the job, of course, as long as he is a man of the unpossessive world. You see, Mrs. Michelsen died in 1872. Mick remarried; the new wife died. He engaged a lady assistant, at his own expense, from Sydney. This upset the church of Otago and Southland a lot. So he came to Dunedin and addressed them on the matter at their Synod. The committee proposed a married teacher to occupy the mission with himself. Mick could not see his way to accepting that proposal. Indeed (I quote from official mission records) " he strongly urged the supply of *three* female teachers . . . but in the absence of a female head in the mission house the Committee disapproved." Nevertheless Mick got " a Mrs. Neil from New South Wales " to share the mosquito bites along with him and the first lady. This may seem petty enough, indeed admirable. But you should know that many Presbyterians

will not let a woman into the house if they are single; and that, even with a wife indoors, they don't let the other dame past the verandah unless the wife is alongside. (Can't trust themselves?)

I got a bad shock at a mission station once. An old missionary, who died soon after, had a woman helper around the place, well past excitement, and a close relative. His own wife had died. That night at nine o'clock, on the *exact* stroke of which he had always gone to bed for more than twenty years, he rang a bell sharply and a native boy appeared. The missionary turned to me and said, "You see, Mr. Harrisson, I have such kind Christian planters as neighbours here, that I must have this boy to come and sleep in my room lest they talk about me." Which shows the way Presbyterian morality one-ways. He would have had a shock if he could have guessed the interpretation that an old Harrovian put on his sleeping arrangements.

Digression on Criteria of Mission Success

Is it better to have one devout Presbyterian and no one else at all? Or to have many, thriving physically, growing for the future—but not one devout? I generally assume the latter. But I appreciate that in itself heavy depopulation of these islands means nothing to world history or biology, if out of it one fine flower, however small, comes forth. It is hard to find such a flower—even a pale bird's nest orchis, of botanical interest. Depopulation has compelled other decays, in a culture that depends on there being many people to co-operate, marry, trade and compete. I suppose we do mostly think that if something kills all the people in Oxford except one Professor, well, it is hard on Oxford; admirable Professor is not culturally rich enough to make up for *all* the rest. Oxford (we should say) will only be good again when there are lots of people back there, making Morris cars like they did before. The great valleys and ranges, that once teemed with life in the New Hebrides are not now being used,—even by men of foreign colours.

Thomas Henry Huxley calculated: "If the descendants of one green fly all survived, at the end of one summer they would weigh down the whole population of China."

Down and Up

There is particularly full statistical material on what happened to the population of Tongoa:

1860 ..	*c.* 2,000?	
1879 ..	*c.* 1,200	
1886 ..	1,100	Half at church; blackbirding has been serious.
1894 ..		Grave influenza.
1900 ..	998	
1903 ..		Increase was definite; 950 was lowest in period.
1904 ..	1,105	
1909 ..	1,397	
1918 ..	1,509	1919—Influenza was serious set-back.
1934 ..	1,431	Slow steady increase in recent years.
1935 ..	1,446	Sex ratio 116 males, 100 females.

Here we have a typical and universal decline until the natives gain sufficient disease immunity and the blackbirding traffic is brought to an end. Then, where there is medical aid, comes slow recovery.[1]

Conversely the population of the seven small Shepherd islands of the Nguna area between Tongoa and Efate may serve as a cross-index of the medical (=mission) activities.

[1] Compare South Epi, the large island close to small Tongoa. 1898 Rev. Smaill had 23 schools, population rapidly decreasing; in 1903 at 1,775, and in that year 140 died of whooping cough and phthisis. In 1906, 150 dead in epidemic; 1911 many dead, especially young, and including 13 per cent of church members, 6 teachers and their wives. In 1916 Rev. J. Weir and M. Frater found 529. In a section of the same area observed by Michelsen, 560 in 1890; 240 in 1909; 107 in 1918, and the sex ratio changed from 110 : 100 in 1900 to 144; 100 in 1913. In S.E. Epi 1934, 73; 69 in 1935, with the hopeless dominance of 156 : 100 male : female. This population will die right out. It has had no medical attention for years; it is in too close contact with extensive French plantations and many yellow labourers who increase epidemic chances. Michelsen was "satisfied that the sad decrease is due to a very great extent to their own sins," however.

1845 .. "Most inviting heathen."
1861 .. Terrific measles.
1864 .. One-tenth died of epidemic.
1870 .. 3,500–4,000. They adore two divinities and have no idols.
1884 .. 3,160.
1894 .. 2,167 followed by very serious epidemics, including influenza, pneumonia, whooping cough.
1908 .. 1,361.
1912 .. 1,367.
1917 .. 1,345 and stationary population.
1918 .. 1,375.
1922 .. 1,283 on six islands 6,790: 6,040.
1925 .. 1,475 and steadily increasing since.

Peter

Thus the Nguna area population had fallen in the great decrease period, to come up again in this century, after 1908, slowly (now faster). This indicates an active missionary.

Missionary Peter Milne of Nguna was the strictest of Presbyterians. He would never baptise adults easily, as would Mick. In the four years before Mick got to Tongoa, Peter baptised two adults, this being six years after his 1869 arrival. By 1884, when newer Mick had his men mostly under control, Peter had only sixty-six church members; but 425 what he called "professing Christians," about one-seventh of the population. In 1889 there were 1,603 professors; cannibalism ended. To-day the whole population professes.

Peter was the most Presbyter man in group history. His ten commandments were a little his own. He did not covet his neighbour's ox nor his ass, but he did frantically covet his neighbour's heathen. We find him furiously eager to forestall Robertson in offering for Erromango, which until then had killed all volunteers. He had an incredible row with Rev. Macdonald of his mission, who was appointed to the mainland of Efate, near Nguna.

Two years after Milne landed on Nguna, he refused to acknowledge Macdonald's right to work on the mainland villages adjacent to Nguna (you would think Milne had his

hands full with his *seven* islands, all heathen). In the ridiculous war that followed,—far from the last within the mission,—Mac banned Peter's Bible translations from Efate, while Peter got one village to refuse to accept Mac's teacher. Because of this affair it was several years before Peter would consent to attend at the annual mission Synod, which was meant to be the supreme court of the mission in the group. And, when he did attend, he addressed them simply:

"You call yourselves a court of the Church of God! Synagogue of Satan!" Similarly he refused to recognise the very sensible arrangement reached between the Presbyterians and Anglo-Catholics to divide up the group so that their two spheres of influence, then unchallenged by Catholic or Adventist, should not overlap. He insisted that all the group should and must be opened to the only true faith. He persisted in making voyages, the most daring voyages, in an open whaleboat from Nguna to Pentecost, more than a hundred miles across seas which modern motor launches hesitate before entering. He kept this up for years against all orders and sense.

Trader Thomas is forced into reluctant tribute to the mission's successful activity in this area. Blackbirder Wawn has an amusing row with Peter (1878) in which "I flatter myself he found me a tougher nut to crack than the ignorant, superstitious savages he lived among."

The commandment, "Thou shalt not smoke," headed his list. To the Synod he remarked, *passim*, "all missionary smokers should be drawn and quartered, and after that drowned in the great American lakes!" On Nguna he founded a native "teetotal and anti-tobacco club."

The "Fanny": Tragedy out of Albino

Peter waged bitter war against the blackbirders. H.M.S. *Rosario* was sent up in 1871 to investigate charges against him for inciting the natives to shoot at such ships; the commander found the charges void of truth. They arose out of the massacre of the ship *Fanny*.

The *Fanny* anchored off Nguna, July 9th, to land some Ro

natives who had served their time in Fiji, and to seek new ones in their place. Part of the crew was asked to go ashore by the natives, while other natives stayed aboard to examine the trade room. Then a shot was heard from the shore. The shore party was quickly attacked and killed, one white escaping, only to die of exposure and wounds. At the same time those on board fell upon the crew with their tomahawks, crying, " You came here to steal men, did you ? " The captain and mate, who were below, tried to come on deck and fight. The latter had his chin neatly sliced off; then the hatches were slammed on them. The cables were cut and the *Fanny* drifted ashore. The captain and mate then escaped and hid in the mission house. Rev. Peter and his good wife were away, but there were three trusty Polynesian teachers, as there had been for J. Jones twenty years before. These men succoured the whites. The mate grew delirious, rushed out and was finished off. Soon the ship *Strathnayer* from Fiji appeared, with an official aboard, who buried the remains of the mate. No punitive action was taken, because the affair was thought to be due to the whites having earlier stolen two native women. A party of settlers from Efate thought differently. They came over, and found the mate's body missing again; found it tied head downwards on a post; gave it a second burial. Then surprised the Polynesian teachers holding divine service with a few faithfuls, put them in irons and removed them to Efate, where the poor lambs were put through their paces!

When H.M.S. *Rosario* arrived at Nguna, the village concerned was deserted. A party landed. It was fired on from the jungle, but succeeded in burning the village. Later made contact with the natives, who stated that they had done it " in consequence of one of their women—an albino—the wife of a chief named Marewatta, having been stolen by a white man named M'Kenzie in the schooner *Donald M'Lean*, taken down to Tanna, and there sold for labour." Commander Markham went down to Tanna to see about it.

There the albino, called Lepelow, was found by her white foot seen through the door of a hut. She confirmed the

story; she was delighted at the prospect of returning home, though a little concerned at parting from a native with whom she had been living for the past two months. While she was on the *Rosario* she would never let go of a knife that this man had given her on leaving, nor suffer it to be out of her hand or mouth, in which latter it might invariably be seen. She was repulsively ugly, yellowish hair, blotchy skin, huge mouth and flat nose, receding pinky eyes (like all albino women, who are not uncommon on some islands). Rough weather came up and the "*fair* companion suffered terribly." On nearing Nguna she was clothed in blue cricketing stockings and a scarlet bodice. . . . The Ngunese were delighted to get her back. They forgot about their burned village. They tried to sink the *Rosario* with presents of pigs, bananas and coconuts.

Nice ugly Lepelow!

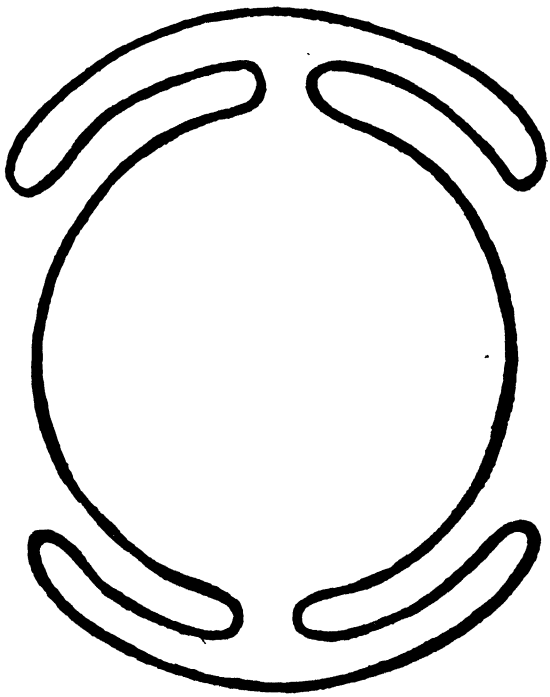
Fine Men

Endlessly him, rigid, humourless—Peter's outer is frigidaire (his inner, I think, softens)—when his island of Mataso, 1876, is honoured by a visit from young C. of E. Bishop John R. Selwyn. "He landed barefoot, with an old pair of trousers on and the latter rolled up to the knees . . . he had evidently made himself ready to swim ashore if it should be necessary." This is not Presbyterian behaviour. One remembers Rev. Geddie's: "As we could not pull our boat near the shore on account of shoals, we sent word of our arrival to the chief, and requested him to come to us."

Another angle on Peter's energy is that between 1880 and 1918 he got natives to prepare and export free, as a contribution to the mission, 58,775 lbs. of arrowroot, profit £1,945. Or, the characteristic trader misrepresentation: "One old cove has been over thirty years translating the Epistle to the Ephesians into the Nguna language, which is spoken by at least thirty natives, all of whom will be dead long before the work is published. That tells you something about the intelligence of the people who actually try to translate the terms of Paulinism into a primitive tongue."

The lion loosed his last roar in 1920, veteran of the islands. His son now carries on excellent mission work on Nguna.

To such a man God and the ends were secondary. According to his belief he did the fullest right: he harmed no man permanently, and benefited many.



DESIGN REPRESENTING THE "DEVIL"
Temes Savsap (Lesevsev)
painted on funeral coverlets in central Malekula

Sources. Brenchley 225. Buxton (1927) 436. Coote 55. Don. Frater 41, 108. Geddie 177. Goodenough 286, 292. Lynch 293. Markham 5, 92, 211, 252. Michelsen. Milne. Rannie 218, 223. Robertson 79, 433. Somerville 133, 143, 157. Steel 235. Thomas 177, 191.
Govt. Report 1923, 6. *Our Missionaries at Work*, 1913; Oct. 1914. *Samoan Reporter*, Sept. 1845.

DEPOP.

As WHITE MEN spread and increased throughout the islands, the native culture crumbled through the influence of the things that were brought by this new civilisation—new objects, illnesses, ideas and savagery. Even more obvious than the cultural decay was the numerical decay of the race.

1800	estimated	over	1,000,000. (See below.)
1846	,,		[40,000,000. Roche.]
1870	,,		650,000. Don.
1882	,,		600,000. Speiser. (close study)
1883	,,		250,000. Thomas.
1892	,,	under	100,000. Colonial Office.
1911	,,	about	65,000. Government.
1920	,,		59,000. Government.
1935	,,		45,000. T.H.H.

The major depopulation occurred before 1870, though it continues more slowly in many parts even to-day, and is still as much as 17 per cent per annum in the interior of south Santo. Early literature of the group is one ghastly list of epidemics and everywhere death, up from what appears to have been cholera in 1836. Pick up any one of the early books about the islands and read the inevitable story. Measles, influenza, tuberculosis, smallpox, whooping cough, scarlet fever, meningitis, diphtheria, in about that order of importance. The natives died like flies, having no immunity and no remedy for such continental diseases. Apart from the direct effect of so much sudden death, the cumulative effect—incomprehensible, meaningless disaster which killed not only man but his certainty.

The common cold was capable of decimating such island peoples. Mumps was widely fatal. As cure the natives would sit in the sea. Their hygiene and magic worked well for their own problems—malaria, yaws, hookworm, which were fatiguing, but not lethal; it could do nothing for tetanus;

but it was worse than useless for these newcomer deaths.

The first well-documented epidemic is the 1861 measles; prior to that time there were no observers making records over the area. Early dated epidemics on other islands are 1847 and 1853. The first missionary on Erromango found (1859) every sign of big recent depopulation, and two recent epidemics, one of which sounded like smallpox[1] and was said to have killed a third of the population. There were then 7,000 people living on Erromango; the 1861 measles reduced that number by a third; it was followed by meningitis and phrenitis. This epidemic swept through the islands, probably killing a third of the entire population, with the help of accompanying complications. Rev. Gordon, writing just before he is killed as result of the epidemic, cries: " This is a season that we shall not soon forget. Some settlements are nearly depopulated, and the principal chiefs are nearly all dead. And oh ! the fiendish indescribable hatred against us ! There is quite a famine. The distress is awful and the cry of the mourning perpetual." Erromango now has a few hundreds.

Similarly, the population of Aneityum fell from about 12,000 to 3,500. It was down to 1,000 in 1880; 800–900 in 1885; 256 recently.

Measles has been the greatest killer. In 1876 a second measles epidemic killed off the natives in thousands; within recent years another epidemic has killed many, though not on the same proportionate scale as in the old days. The influenza of 1919 decimated bush tribes; in 1932 whooping cough carried off a quarter in some bush villages.

There is nothing surprising about the almost extinct populations of Erromango and Aneityum, where sandalwood impacts were fiercest. Far more surprising is the present-day thriving, now unshakeable and increasing population of Nguna, Tanna, of Paama and Tongoa, some now approaching over-population,—as is Meralav, the first land to be

[1] It is probable that epidemics were introduced by whites much earlier. Cook is supposed to have brought dysentery to Tonga, venereal disease to Hawaii, Bougainville ditto to Tahiti.

sighted by Europeans. Or the Big Nambas bushmen of Malekula, one village with over 1,000 people in it, still eating each other (1935); within ten miles of radio station, hospital, police and miles of plantations; to hell with government. That says something for the survival value of the race, its ability to get up on its feet and go on with the fight again. For the fight is not over yet; I have myself wandered down the desolate death trail left by influenza in 1935; but it is only those still holding to their own old ways, who suffer greatly from epidemics now. Plantations, which bring in labour from many islands and later return them (or not), are modern centres of disease dissemination, without quarantine or medical supervision.

Eighty years of major epidemics,—in which it was not uncommon for the dead to be so numerous that the living and dying could not bury them,—are now probably over.

Naturally Vicious Habits? Heads with Grey Hairs?

It is commonly claimed that depopulation had set in before the white man had arrived upon the scene. Many authorities and most whites in the islands believe this. The view is expressed characteristically in a letter to me from the British Resident Commissioner of the group, dated June 7th, 1934: "One must reflect on the extraordinarily good work they (the missionaries) have done in the group during the past hundred years, and on the balance I am sure they come out on top. As a matter of fact I am not of the opinion that the fundamental cause of depopulation is, or was, impact with white civilisation."

A frequent corollary of this belief is the belief in a once great continent in the Pacific. The islands and their inhabitants are thus viewed as a mere residue, insular and degenerate, of a once great nation with a far higher culture. No sound evidence has so far been adduced to support this theory, which is against all geological probability and accepted theories of land mass, unless indeed the exponents of Palæonesia lost their continent at the latest before the Upper Carboniferous. As our knowledge stands at present,

such a continent deserves no more attention than the inhabitants of Mars or submarine men of Conan Doyle. It is quite certain that for a great many thousands of years the general conformation of the Pacific has been in major respects unchanged. Within the period of this history, 1606–1936, the New Hebrides have not been a part of any continent greater than the Terra Australis del Espiritu Santo.

The exponents of the insular, degenerate theory (leaving the continent out of it), are on safer ground. Thus a missionary mentions, " in bygone days, the Pacific was peopled by a race far in advance of the present inhabitants." The idea is that the white men came among a people who were on the decline, bound to go under anyway. The white man only hastened this decline, he is in no way to blame for it; as a matter of fact he probably saved the chaps by coming along as he did. That is how it runs. At least it did run, but now it only walks, because the down-under degenerate is beginning to show a bit more kick (non-white man sort of kick) than he was meant to be able to do.

The difficulty about the degenerate theory is finding any evidence for it, except from the point of view of subjective morality and prejudice. The characteristic argument is " even before the natives came in contact with Europeans, they were decreasing gradually. Their naturally vicious habits, frequent wars and practice of infanticide seem to have been lessening their numbers." A native said to Rev. Geddie: " Before your Samoans came to the islands there was neither sickness nor death among us." Geddie tried to stump him with a cunning counter, by asking where his forefathers were, to which the native replied: " At all events none died until their heads were covered with grey hairs." That is the general native testimony.

This point of view is put in another way by the Rev. Michelsen: " I am satisfied that the sad decrease of the population on many islands is due to a very great extent to their own sins—past, but especially present . . . the only remedy is Christianity as given to the people by the missionary living among them."

Professor Roberts has summarised all the data in a monumental tome. He favours the idea that " on this decadent people came suddenly the new disruptive force of Europe." Close reading reveals that the only evidence for this decadence is of a subjective nature. Thus he finds the key to native life in those days was, in the words of a Fijian, " We see our likeness in the ocean before us; it ebbs and then flows again, and rests not; we are like to it; *we know no rest* " (his italics). This remark he takes as symbolising their decadence. He may be right; if so he damns the world.

Hygienic War?

The bloody wars of heathenism have been the main reason for accusing degeneracy. Roberts particularly singles out the New Hebrides as awful in this respect. Yet I cannot conceive that any people has cleaner wars than the Malekulans whom he specifies. At least my experience is that they fight and eat each other (their enemies) like gentlemen, leave the women and children alone, seldom kill more than three or four men at war, do not seek to conquer; wars can go for months without a death; there is such a surplus of males over females that the welfare of population is not affected; while the outlet and play value of war is an invaluable native dynamic. What has upset the hygiene of war is the replacement of spear by gun; that has indeed become increasingly disastrous. Especially because the coastal people who first got guns, shot hell out of the inlanders. No white who has lived on the islands has been able to describe native war as particularly bloody. Even decayist Rev. Geddie grudgingly gives: " War in the savage islands is by no means as alarming as persons at home might be apt to suppose. In general, the loss of life is but small . . . in fighting times they never interfere with the women and children. This is almost more than we could have looked for among savages."

Professor Roberts is moved when he says: " Infanticide was common everywhere, while the strangling of the aged ranked almost as an institution." The " almost " is well

placed, for the statement could not be applied to much of the New Hebrides, where in fact there is a system that equals ancestor worship and veneration of the old. Immediately after the above sentence he writes: " The existence of these unenviable characteristics of native life serve to explain the decadence which had set in, even before the nineteenth century." Later he devotes another seven pages to the matter: " primarily there was a general racial decline, an indefinable *malaise* of the stock itself." His views are representative. This school of thought has gained the widest public belief and is now a part of all our thought. It fits our superiority feelings and our sense of guilt in the matter. Unfortunately it obstructs an understanding of our own and other civilisations. We just say, " Oh ! yes, they were degenerate anyway, always fighting and stopping having too many children."

Perhaps we can fit it in to the important utterance: " When men fear a righteous war, when women fear motherhood, they tremble on the brink of doom, and well it is that they should vanish from the earth, where they are fit subjects for the scorn of all men and women who are themselves strong and brave and high-minded." Thus spake Theodore Roosevelt.

Eugenics and Anopheles

Infanticide is the most significant and regular charge brought as a sign of native decay (less reasonably of decrease) in pre-white days. Since 1914 there is a curious absence of references to war among the factors adduced as proving native decay. And cannibalism, though repugnant to most whites, was never an important killing factor, or end in itself (within the period of white contact), essentially an adjunct to killing, an insult or a sacrament after the act ; many tribes, and the whole Banks sub-group, were *not* cannibal. Infanticide has, in fact, been grossly exaggerated. A great many tribes have never practised it. In others it was an occasional part of the social framework, unimportant except in times of hurricane or drought, when food supplies in the densely populated areas were inadequate. It was an

eugenic measure, a result of population increase; cannibalism sometimes arose under similar pressure.

The importance of sex ratio, the dominance of males which is so curiously common in birth sex ratios of humans in the New Hebrides, is a real factor which the decayists have not realised. This *can* have a purely mechanical depopulating effect, if the birth-rate is not higher than the death-rate. Unfortunately we do not know how far male dominance is pre-white. Rev. Gunn makes a typical remark in this connection: " The proportion of men to women in 1860 *before* the measles was 42 per cent women. Now the per cent women is 37·3. Such originated in heathenism; while it exists it is impossible to maintain the population." Admiral Somerville notes the big male predominance on pre-war Efate and adds: " One of Nature's methods of extinction when it has run its appointed course." That time Nature made a mistake; the population of Efate increases.

The high male dominance has hindered population recovery in many tribes. The Sakaus of north-east Santo have one of the highest known ratios, 160 males to 100 females. The Sakaus very rarely permit infanticide.

Malaria is an endemic disease which has made the natives more susceptible to the ill-effects of introduced epidemics. Like sex ratio and recruiting for plantation labour, it hinders population recovery. A growing body of evidence suggests that malaria has been very important in causing cultural decline or racial apathy in many parts of the world. But where the disease is endemic, it is not apparently a serious factor in itself. The malaria mosquito *Anopheles punctulatus* seems to have spread into the Pacific from the north. There is some native and white evidence that malaria has spread within the group in the last hundred years. In areas which are free from malaria, such as small islands with no standing water, the population is at the present time almost invariably increasing, sometimes rapidly.[1]

[1] Hippocrates; Huntingdon; Ross; W. H. S. Jones; Gregory; Douglass; Holdick; Anderson; Shaw; on climatic fluctuations and effects on civilisations such as Greek, Roman, and Maya; cf. Unwin, sexuality and culture expansions; also *The Times* 14/8/36, malaria.

Leprosy, which was at first confused with yaws, is of uncertain origin, perhaps from Chinese contacted in Queensland. It is increasing in the islands; there is no attempt at segregation.

In recent years Asiatic labour imported by the French has brought several diseases that do not appear to have been diagnosed, while this source has been responsible for very severe epidemics of amœbic dysentery.

1,000,000

I spent much of my time during two years studying the past population by methods of mythology, archæology, genealogy, mathematics, and survey. I calculate, from the most careful considerations (details of which will be published elsewhere), that the population at about the time of Cook's visit was over 1,000,000. This is probably too low. The greatest populations were on Santo and Malekula, which still have a third of the group total, though you may often travel for two and three days through hills and valleys which held many villages, now only represented by a few native stories and a peculiar type of flora. Even if one takes only the 1935 total of 45,000 and calculates back down the recorded epidemics, it is impossible to keep under many hundreds of thousands. Two and a half acres will support a *family* permanently. This will allow 5,000,000 people on the islands. Quiros estimated 200,000 on Gaua; that is rather fantasic. But Gaua can support over 50,000. Where Quiros and his company described thousands of people, smoke from innumerable fires rising inland, you could land to-day and be lucky if you saw anyone, though there are still 647 scattered among the miles and miles of stone walls and house foundations of a once-teeming population. The small islands of Paama and Tongoa, about the size of Lundy Island, to-day each support over 1,000 and continue to increase; their distribution of population, if applied over the group, would run into many millions.

At least it is certain that there was a vigorous and abundant native population in the New Hebrides before the

white man came. Very much larger than it is now. All stone age and heathen and he and she. They were constantly receiving new minor influences. Their whole culture was a shifting kaleidoscope of infinite detail. It has been widely stated that the native culture was isolated and non-progressive, but the recent researches of a few ethnologists have already shown, as future work will increasingly show, the incredible complexity of influence and advance in the western Pacific, which even continues at the present time among the natives, unknown to the white men in their islands. The evidence will not support common belief that, in Robert's words, " the cessation of these migrations, while allowing the culture to become stereotyped, and while not altogether exhausting the possibilities of physical combination, meant racial decay—decay merging into death even when the first Europeans came." At least this is no more true of Malekula than of Ireland. We can say that Pacific culture is all degenerate because the only megalithic script, that of Easter, is lost; that Easter had a "higher" civilisation. On this scale, popularly used for " savage " places, Cairo 1936 (inc. Heliopolis) must be regarded as no more than a degenerate relic of Tutankhamenism; our Wiltshire as a mere Druid-detritus. Why not, indeed ?[1]

That Curious Despair

These people were mentally active, before the white came physically busy and capable. This brings us to another facet of decayist thinking (of taking the blame off ourselves, and incidentally expressing our conviction of our own innate superiority), which has been even more widely

[1] An astonishingly advanced view is that of Dr. J. D. Lang, senior minister of the Scots Church, who writes of the Pacific:

" Philosophy is equally at fault whether she condemns them on the one hand to hopeless debasement and speedy extinction or attempts on the other to point out the proper mode of elevating them in the scale of humanity. I have already shown that the supposition of their being naturally inferior in point of intellect to the white race is not only gratuitous but absolutely opposed to the evidence of facts. . . . If the Indo-American is of radically inferior race, so is the South Sea Islander. If the one is doomed to hopeless extinction, so is the other. . . . I cannot, however, subscribe to either of these positions."

This was written one hundred and two years ago.

accepted. This is the theory of psychological death, of racial decay before the mental impacts of high civilisation. It is now incorporated in our most advanced attitudes, administrations, intelligentsia novels and education. W. H. R. Rivers popularised the view. He said:

> "This dying out of the native races depends in the main on loss of interest in life; that the diseases and poisons to which the decline of population is usually ascribed are only the immediate agents and produce their dire effects only because they are acting on people with so little interest left in life that they succumb at the first breath."

He made this statement in 1921; it proved very acceptable. All physical causes (among natives, that is) are believed to be subsidiary to the psychological. The native, when confronted with white civilisation, lies down and dies. As one might expect, Roberts whole-heartedly subscribes to the Riversian hypothesis: "The physical causes were contributory to the wider psychological ones . . . but the root of the matter lay in that curious despair that dominated the native mind and dominated his every action and thought. Under these conditions, depopulation is easy to understand. The difficulty is in allaying it."

Put in another way: "From the snow-summits of Dutch New Guinea to the gulches of the Marquesas, in the minds of Melanesians and Polynesians alike, this psychological despair is found, and the natives just die by wasting away . . . the native, making up his mind to die, forces his body to keep pace with his mental pessimism and dies. . . .This death-disease, as potent as it is intangible, is the dramatic protest of the islander against civilisation."[1]

[1] The classical case of such dramatic protestation is Woolaston's from the mountains of Dutch New Guinea, where he met natives who could not cross the terrible ridges, "they just gave up and died, as natives can." This has been quoted all over the world. Unlike most of those who have quoted the case, I looked up the original reference. It reads: "What I imagine to have happened was this: these people set out on their return journey to the mountains not in the best of condition after varying periods of inadequate food; they were encumbered with women and small children, whose rate of progress up and down the innumerable ridges to be traversed was painfully slow. There was no food of any sort, except the hearts of occasional palm trees, and faced by several hard days travelling before them, and growing weaker daily, they just gave up and

In an exhaustive search of the literature I find one relevant record from Melanesia. It is by a missionary: " Mr. Bice tells me that on one occasion he was in a bamboo house at Opa (Omba), when a man walked in. . . . Bice knew that this man had recently murdered one of the mission people; whereupon Bice fixed his eyes sternly on the newcomer. The man . . . retired from the house, walking backwards for some fifteen yards, then turned round and vanished. He went home and said to his people ' The man looked at me ' and in three days he was dead." Unfortunately this is a circumstantial statement; Bice feared a manslaughter charge?

One observer, Romilly, speaks of labourers in Fiji dying of home-sickness. This is a different matter. Outside the group, in new climates and meaningless drudgery with sugar, death may come more easily. Certainly the native dies quickly when something (sorcery, or specific disease) falls upon him, and there is no known remedy. But in the days before psychology none of the many writers—who almost without exception spoke disparagingly, often disgustedly, of the natives—ever noticed them just lying down and dying of despair. They saw them waste away from consumption, go away in labour ships, or fall after a volley. The native has not our type of stamina, because in his own life it is seldom necessary. But I reject the idea that any normal New Hebridean, under any circumstances, will lie down and die of despair without specific cause, including in that cause native magic and witchcraft by suggestion, which are definite things in their sense, backed by all their ancient traditions of death, though these do not occur at all in some areas (e.g. of north Malekula). When they grow ill from some unknown cause it is natural that they should soon give up hope, because

died, as natives can. They did not appear to be extremely emaciated, but still their deaths can only be accounted for by weakness and starvation." The extraordinary " Vailala Madness," of which I found a form in Santo (see p. 381) should be noted here as a dynamic native reaction to continuously damaging white contact. It is an embryo anti-white religion. In connection with it Haddon has said: " The weakening and disruption of the old social order may stimulate new and often bizarre ideas, and these may give rise to religious movements that strive to sanction social or political aspirations. Communities that feel themselves oppressed anticipate the emergence of a hero who will restore their prosperity and prestige."

there is no hope worth mentioning, without medicines or knowledge on the subject. I doubt if the psychological factor is much more important in the New Hebrides than it is among the poor people of South Wales. And in analysing its extent in New Hebrideans, one must be particularly careful to appreciate the significance of malarial infection and of a 94 per cent hookworm infection, both handicaps to a person recovering from some other sickness.

" *Ra-ra !* "

Wyndham Lewis has crystallised the most reasonable line of thought developing out of Riverism thus:

> "Remove from a 'Ra-raing' Yale student his 'Ra-ra !' —and put nothing equally stimulating there in its place— remove all his illusion about himself... remove all these, or even an appreciable part of them, and your student will lose his zest for life just as the Melanesian did when deprived of what were for him the equivalent of those satisfactions."

If only one could go up to a fellow and say " Give me your 'Ra-ra !' will you, old boy "; and then, if one were tough enough, give him nothing back in its place. There was nothing disillusioning about the native life until the white contact. Then it came through the direct and obvious depopulating factors and the white man's material culture. There are many New Hebrideans to-day who have had *no* direct contact with the white, who *do* retain their illusions and their very " Ra-ra ! " These are the people who are still dying out, for they have no protection against the germs which wander up from the coast.

It reminds me of a story they told me up in the mountains of central Santo, where no white man had been seen before:

The little green white-eyed warbler Lala had a lovely voice. It sang often all day, and even by night in the jungle. Its voice was very much admired. The purple-crowned fruit-dove Kasumba had only a husky pigeon sort of grunt. One day there was a concert held of all the birds. The white-eye was so busy collecting small insects for its family, that

AGED ABOUT 45, THIS MAN IS OLD FOR THE INLAND OF THESE DAYS. HIS EYES ARE LUMINOUS. HE IS DYING OF T.B.

it could not go. The dove, who just picked a big fruit and swallowed it when he was hungry, was keen on concerts. But he had no voice to sing with. So this time he asked the white-eye to loan him his voice. The white-eye, who was good-natured, readily obliged. The dove had a big success at the concert, singing with his borrowed voice. He was pleased. When he came home and the white-eye said, " Could I have my voice back now, dove, please ? " the dove replied, " No, I always wanted a voice. Now I have got yours; I'm jolly well going to keep it." Poor white-eye ! he had no more voice. And to this day he is the poorest of singers, the only small bird whose voice is not music.

But the white-eye did not die without his song. And he is now busier than ever, *much* the commonest bird everywhere, in the jungle, in the gardens, around the houses, along the sea-shore.

At the time when Rivers put forward his theory there was a boom in psychology. People were far too ready (still are) to accept anything with a Viennese explanation. But the mentality behind this theory, and its ready acceptance, is in itself of profound psychological interest.

Lord Olivier expresses precisely my point of view when he says: " Mysterious law of Nature, which causes native races to die out before the white . . . the causes are only a mystery at a distance. On the spot they are easily recognisable as violence and starvation, and civilised drink and diseases."

My own studies (personal census of 20,000 natives) show that the New Hebridean is decreasing most rapidly in the interior of the large islands which are never visited by white men, where all white contacts are reduced to a minimum, but where, of course, the current epidemics have their full effect (there are always coastal natives trading inland to the sub-coastal, so to the central, and out again the other side). In this I only elaborate and confirm the findings of Dr. John Baker, who on a smaller scale did the first sound statistical study of depopulation in 1927. He concluded that introduced epidemic disease was the main depopulating factor, while he

pointed out that the coastal natives were decreasing less rapidly, where they had daily contact with white men. I found that on the largest island of Santo the natives were increasing in three places, and those three places were the three places where there were missionaries.

The most valuable activity of the missions has been the provision of medicine (though not nearly enough), of simple advice and suitable hygiene to resist introduced diseases. Another of their valuable activities, which links with the school of psychological despair, has been the unconscious one of providing the natives with a new series of illusions. On to "Ra-ra!" has been added "Allelujah!", a prettier, more civilised cry. When the germs had knocked the bottom out of native certainty, the doors of the chapel were opened for the man who would work long enough, at something a white man wanted, to earn a pair of black pants. As depopulation and introduced objects overwhelmed the people,—especially in the southern islands where the first white activities (whaling and sandalwood) were concentrated,—the loss of old customs was automatically effected. The missionary gave something in their place. Where I differ from current theory and many eminent authorities, is not in that I deny the psychological factor, but that I do not accept the place it has been given within recent years, namely first place. Living among the natives in as nearly as possible their own way, I have been forced to reapportion the various qualities of feeling which have been attributed to them by well-to-do men with the highest intellectual qualifications. The psychological factor is one that must be admitted; but it is subsidiary to many others, it should be moved down towards the bottom of the form.

Ping-pong

There are some curious by-products of depopulation. The process was instigated by the trader and his activities, but he alone of the whites did not benefit from it. It benefited the permanent resident and administrator, because as the natives became less numerous they were more easily beaten into

shape. But depopulation most favoured the missionary, by breaking up the old heathen unity and organisation. This, in turn, favoured the trader, who sold the mission natives the cheapest shirts, from which they got skin and bronchial diseases that kept up depopulation. A fine reciprocal ping-pongery was set up and is only now collapsing, leaving both racquet-holders rather in the lurch, because the black net is growing higher; it is harder and harder to hit the frail shell of a white ball over it.

Some readers may by now have wondered at my delicacy in not mentioning venereal disease. There is a good reason for this, and this reason will serve admirably to end this section, in showing how missionary helps trader and trader helps depopulation and depopulation helps missionary, who then stops depopulation and so the music goes round and round. This time it comes out of Kava.

Rhythm out of Kava, Peace Drug

Kava is a drug, from the plant *Piper methysticum*, a sort of pepper that grows well under cultivation in damp places in the New Hebrides. Its cousin is *Piper betle*, used with betel-nut, the drug of the islands farther north. It is the only native drug; it is widely used in the group.

In north Malekula they pull up the plant, which is the size of a small bush; smoke dry the root in the rafters of their palm-leaf houses over smoky fires. When it is dry and hard, crusted with soot, it is taken to the club-house, which may only be entered by men—nowhere in the group are women allowed to have anything to do with kava. Two or three men take it at evening, when all are assembled for the long evening talk and flowing of words over everything that has and is. They chew the roots, taking small bits at a time into their mouths until their cheeks bulge, almost explode outward with fullness. After twenty minutes or so the root is pulp, a big green fid in the hard thrusting cheeks, plastically weaving. Then the chewer goes on all-fours to a palm frond trough set on four little posts at knee height by the little square crawl-in door of the great dark club-house. The hut is

lit now with a long flaming torch of wild cane, throwing jagged shadows up into the hard arched roof, into weird bundles of leaves, bones, turtle-shells, a string of bush turkey shells slung like a necklace, everything and person black, except away in one corner the greyed dolmen of coral slabs with three or four white gleaming skulls, heads of the chiefly line. The chewer spits out his load into the trough. Each chewer does. From a long bamboo a youngster pours water slowly into the trough. The ugly green fids shake and slither to pieces of floating fibre, then quickly sink—a thicker-than-pea-looking soup. The water comes out of the bamboo in chortles and plomps; there is a wad of leaf in the bamboo mouth to stop it hopping out all of a rush. The lad pours, while another deftly flips the still floating fibres off the surface of this soup, his hands quick, thick, dirty. When all is ready the senior man present rises silently from the few sticks which are his bed close along the side of the house, where leaf-eaves touch ground. He comes and kneels on the damp earth floor, puts his mouth to the kava surface (only the surface), and sucks up as much as he can with as much noise as he can in one breath. When he takes breath, he must stop. What sort of a he-man and well-bred fellow he is, one judges, easily, by the quantity of liquid and quality of noise he can do. (I benefited enormously from being a travelled fellow. I could make nice, new, jazzy, farmyard noises while I was drinking. Thus I gained prestige.) Each man sucks up and burbles. Meanwhile others chew and a new round is ready, when the original brew is too weak to be any more re-watered. Within half an hour fellows are beginning to feel good. The effects are interesting.

Kava negatives the legs. You cannot walk any more when you get enough of it on board. Your arms later get almost unliftable. But you can usually crawl over the soothing earth floor to get another suck at the dope. Your head is affected most pleasantly. You feel like you feel when you are in your first year at Cambridge and a policeman comes up and tells you you had better go home and you talk to him like as if you weren't drunk and you think like hell I'm clever all

right and do I think quick and I'm fooling the old Robert what, and he is so used to it and picked for this because he is so godarned good-natured and he just says "All right, sir; the proctors are around, you'd better be pissing off, sir." You don't get drunk on kava. But it speeds up your increasing slowness. Thoughts come cleanly. You feel friendly; not beer sentimental; never cross. The world gains no new colour or rose tint; it fits in its pieces and is one (easily understandable) whole. Talk, talk, talk, the world becomes a beauty of voices mellowed against the jumpy wall shadows, out of dark faces that push mouthfuls of white teeth or green fid over the Malekulan earth, under your feelingless bottom. You cannot hate with kava in you. And so it is used in the making up of quarrels, and in peacemaking. It would change the face of Geneva.

Fall then asleep. You will wake up in the morning fresh and without any hang-over, maybe a little stiff in the legs. But so hungry and mentally *up* that you will shake that away, quick. You may do the same next night and every night. It is part of the male life, the pub, with words as darts and skittles. Some of the most pleasant evenings of my life have been spent drinking kava, listening to the endless running flow of words, the trivial described as only the "lowest" savage and the highest genius can describe it; so that every angle, incident, word and thing appears again to conjure up a scene not simply of "He said to me, I said to him" (our way), but with all the materials of reality arranged by the teller into his own pattern. I had not previously realised that talk could be more than conversation, quite probably boring if at all elaborate. Talk can be a people's highest manifestation; a fact we whites have forgotten since Dr. Johnson.

I did that for a year, and it gave me much friendship, pleasure and prestige—especially as at the end I could drink any Big Namba under the table. From the day I left I never craved it any more. So it is not habit-forming. It never did me any harm. Every white who had lived on that coast before me had soon died of blackwater fever. I didn't. Kava

is a major diuretic, and keeps the bladder and kidneys going like a fire-engine.

On some islands they use it green. Then it is liable, if taken in excess, to cause skin disease. It has no such effect if used smoked.

Grog Out of Kava

Well, the missionaries met kava first go-off, of course. It is a centre in social heathen life. The missionaries got together to stamp out kava, symbol of Satan. On Aneityum in 1856 the missionaries "resolved to eradicate the plant from the island." It wasn't till twenty-five years later that the natives, taken by surprise on that occasion, had been able to grow the old stock up into form again. But in many places the missions did succeed in stopping kava drinking, though later some of the Catholic priests wisely took to it themselves.

The consequence of this Christian success was interesting, though not extraordinary in these islands where everything is topsy-turvy.

Firstly: Alcohol rarely appears in the records of early group history. That seems funny until we try kava. Kava-drinkers are satisfied with kava. Without it, they need, as all people seem to, some time-changer, something to modify reality without ritual or undue expense. As long as the people stuck to kava, there was no alcohol need. As mission influence grew, kava became labelled as something heathen ; it was often obliterated. So, towards the end of the last century, alcohol came into its own until it became a principal trade item in the group, through which the trader got his greatest control over the native, holding him to the necessity of pro-white produce or work, so that he might satisfy this craving. Many natives died of drink. These were great days, when traders lived in houses made solely of gin cases, the cases on their sides, the bottles pointed inwards. Gin was the popular want. Every sort of new and benzened brand, mostly named after large carnivorous animals. Making the people want to dance, dance, dance on the deck of the

indifferent ship sliding into the moonlit tide for distant other lands, smash more, splash; more; turning the bottle up—into fires burning, new eagle claw tearing inside . . . oh, yellow-eyed, oh, burning fiery wave, roll down, roll down into, in up my burning mine, into the reefs of the bottled bay-blue water, boyohboy!

Many murders and atrocities followed on grog-selling. In 1913 Speiser put it as first cause of depopulation. To-day much is traded illegally by the French, but it is no longer a menace, the Government has been able to control it to a fair extent. As with kava, alcohol was always tabu to women. So its effects have gone mostly on to the males—perhaps on to the sexually dissatisfied surplus. A good deal of it has gone into the traders themselves, as one tells us: "Frank was powerful on gin. He once had a hundred cases entrusted to him to trade with. He sold fourteen cases, and drank the balance." The same man makes an illuminating remark: "It is a mistake to suppose that much liquor is traded to the natives. They are not sufficiently civilised for that."

V.D. Out of Kava

Secondly: *Materia Medica*, page 310. KAVAKAVA: "In small doses it is a stimulant and a tonic; in large it induces intoxication of a silent and drowsy nature accompanied by incoherent dreams . . . it is pleasant to take and does not derange the digestive functions." It was formerly extensively used as a curative in cases of gonorrhœa.

Kava-drinkers very seldom get gonorrhœa. If they do, the kava itself cures it in time, always keeps it under control (coupled with the highly suitable native diet). Gonorrhœa was introduced by the earliest ships, and still is renewed at regular intervals. But in many islands it has never spread, and those are the kava islands. In others, where kava is not drunk, especially on Malo and south Malekula, gonorrhœa has had terrible results. Maybe it would be better to let the boys have their kava and quiet evenings.

The other venereal disease is also, by curious chance, rare in the islands. For the endemic disease yaws (*Frambœsia*), is apparently toxic to syphilis, which it very closely resembles. Yaws is the common disease of native childhood, soon recovered from in most cases. Now the missions are controlling it with Neokarsavin injection, to which it readily responds. If it disappears altogether, syphilis may come into its own.

As things are : the only people who do anything, muddled though it is, to help native health are the missionaries.

If five all-white men went into the islands, to Malekula and Santo, with lots of medicine, a sense of humour, no white man's burden, no urge to hobnob with the whites of the group, and no objection to being bitten by fleas, they could in one year do untold good to the natives in every sort of way, could stop the rot among the fine inlanders, could make the interiors of these islands world reservoirs for the " uncivilised." The Rockefeller Institute helped for a while. Now there is nothing.

Epiloguery

A blackbirder: " If I got a chance to carry off the lot of 'em I'd do it, I don't deny but killing is my creed."

Another : " By Jove ! I said to myself, this is easy work. If it was all like this, I'd depopulate the group, and then come back and shift the islands themselves ! "

Sources. Alexander 311. Baker. Bellamy 136. Brenchley 195. Brown 279. Buxton. Cheesman. Campbell 98. Codrington 344. Coombe 18. Deschanel. Don 164. Eckardt 12. Elkington 45. Frater 38. Geddie 265. Gill 193. Gordon 138. Gunn 268. Harrisson 123. Humphreys 147. im Thurn 524. Jacomb 99. Lawrie. Lewis 40. Montgomery 57. Morin. H. Murray (1925) 250. Murray 169. Olivier 36. Paton 334. Perry 231. Pitt-Rivers. Rannie 121. Rivers. Roberts. Roche 52. Romilly 177. Somerville 131. Speiser 137. Steel 18. Thomas 179, 306. Turner 295. Wawn 89, 271. Wedgewood. Wood 184.

Hansard 1921, 1935. Govt. Report 1923, 5. *Lancet*, 3/1/20. *United Empire*, March 1921, 193. 1873 Report. 1883 Report. Record Office, 10/8/83.

And many accounts of epidemics, especially the literature up to 1880. Information from Dr. J. Baker, Prof. P. A. Buxton, R. H. S. Crossman. Criticism from Noel Porter.

THE SIMPLE GONG-RHYTHM OF SOUTH MALEKULA THAT SAYS:
"A MAN OF MY PLACE IS DEAD"

SILLER IN SUNLIGHT

DEPOPULATION helped safe settlement, and was helped by it.

Copra is made from coconuts. Copra is made into soap, margarine, cattle food, nitro-glycerine, etc. Coconuts take about eight years to mature. One ton of copra is got from about two and a half acres per year. When the ripe nut falls, the big husk is ripped off on stakes, the shell cracked, the flesh deftly twisted from it, soft heart thrown away. The flesh, in small pieces, is dried in the sun, or over the fire by smoke; the latter method produces copra of inferior quality, but in the New Hebrides it is generally necessary owing to the climate.

The First Coconut

Copra came into prominence in the seventies; Lever organised and made it of primary importance. But perhaps there never would have been a "hulme" on the end of his name nor that million building on the Embankment (on the site of Bridewell Prison), had it not been for a snake. It was like this.

> Very long ago a man came out of a *puil*-tree, out of a hole in it. He tried various plants to eat and found that yam was good. He soon was tired of living inside his parent tree, so he tried making houses of different sorts of leaf until he found that cane grass was good. At that time a girl had been born from another parent not very far away. One day she saw the smoke of the man's fire on a hill. She crept up to investigate; snapped then a twig. At which the

man, who was cooking a yam, looked up and saw her. Both laughed; and each was awfully thrilled by finding the other's body different. She came near; the man hid the yam. She asked what he ate, and soon he showed her. She ate it and it was delicious. She told him what a bad time she had with the eats, living with her mother, who seldom ate anything; it was no good talking to mother; she did not understand talk. The woman came each day to the man, at night went home to sleep with mamma.

Then the man built a house for her because she wished to come and live near the yam food. The man showed her his parent, the *puil*-tree, one day.

Then she asked if he would like to see her mother and he says: Yes. He built a house ready for her. When it was ready mother came rustling and rushing in, she absolutely filled the whole house, right up to the roof. Then the woman called the man to come and look. He looked; this then is her mother? He is sickened; he is disgusted; he nearly dies. For his mother-in-law is a gigantic snake. He asks, "Is that really your mother?" She says: "Yes." He nearly dies.

Next day while she worked in the yam gardens he stole back and set fire to the house. The great snake was totally burned up. The snake's ashes fell on the woman working. She, understanding what the man had done, was very sad. She, weak woman, could do nothing about it.

That night the snake came to her daughter in a dream and said that she was giving her daughter a present, on the place where she was burned. Seven days later a green shoot appeared there. Soon, while it was still quite low the tree bore fruit. The woman did not know how to deal with the coconut, which was this fruit. So the snake came again in dream and told her how to break the top with a stone, drink the water, then crack the nut and eat the tender white flesh. The woman drank and ate and was delighted. She was very, very grateful to dead mother snake.

That is why ever since it has been said that the yam is from man; the coconut from woman.

This is a story from north Malekula; it is found in similar form over the Pacific from Tahiti to New Guinea. In many places the coconut has arrived by canoe voyages within the last few centuries; in many places it is very sacred and subject to much tabu. In the central part of Malekula the fruit is associated with the mythical white culture hero, Hambat, in the great annual ceremony of the Making of Man. It will be remembered that Quiros in 1606 described the quantity and the usefulness of the coconut in Santo.

The Malo Cocktail and Suchlike

At first, in the New Hebrides, copra was traded from the natives. The French company of 1882 was the first step towards organised coconut planting; though by 1888 there were only 400 hectares of all crops under white cultivation. Land was becoming valuable. (Throughout the group there is a shortage of good anchorages and reasonably healthy sites, with fairly level land in the vicinity. Land transport is generally impracticable without heavy capitalisation, owing to jungle, mountains, rains or intensely broken coral country.)

Land-grabbing became imperative. The Joint Naval Commission of 1887 had express orders *not* to interfere or enquire into disputes into land titles. The technique of buying and claiming land became fantastic. It has been the source of endless disputes since, including many shoot-ups,—in a few cases deliberate extermination of local natives; there has been a systematic pushing out of the natives over the whole of some desirable planting areas. On Santo so much land is claimed by Frenchmen, although none of the claimants has been more than a mile inland, that before all can be satisfied a volcanic upheaval will have to throw up a very extensive area at present unfortunately under the sea. Obviously it is now impossible to check the land deeds of fifty years ago; the native signatories are dead. Any anthro-

pologist could demonstrate that most of them are fantastically impossible. Nowadays the native, where he is increasing, is constantly finding that he cannot expand; if he tries, at once a planter calls in the mechanism of government to push him back, even though the land disputed may be miles of uninhabited jungle.

The Malo cocktail was invented by a planter on Malo, to solve some of these problems. The Malo cocktail contained most conceivable drinks soaked in a dozen bottles of rum and gin, with opium to flavour, the whole mixed in a four-gallon kerosene tin. Booze, so long delayed, came fully into the picture early in the twentieth century. It paid to train the local natives to be booze addicts.

To the native this new plantation phase was only one more trouble. He was irrevocably harnessed to the wheel of making things which were to him pointless, things to be manufactured in other lands into stuff for which he had no use—chocolate, pearl studs, coffee, eyeglass rims, margarine, nitro-glycerine or soap—things of our progress, the unessentials that build this staggering civilisation.

So Clean

At the beginning of the twentieth century copra demand was forging ahead, Lever organised it out of early anarchy. By 1887, three years after he had gone into soap, Lever's weekly production had risen from 20 to 450 tons. Town life and modern hygiene developed the soap market. Lever understood the public mind; he set the policy of Levers in heavy advertising (on which they now spend hundreds of thousands a year). It was in the interest of copra and advertising that he made the first (1880) of many notable art transactions. He bought a picture by W. P. Frith, the notorious Victorian Academician, famous for his " Derby Day " and " Paddington Station," now so much appreciated as jig-saw puzzles. Frith painted a picture of an innocent-looking little girl in a white pinafore. Lever bought it, and reproduced it widely in his Sunlight Soap advertisements under the title " So Clean." Copra boomed.

Lever's issued share capital was:

1917	£15,202,799
1936	£61,369,584

I estimate that the capital of the entire Unilever group is now over £200,000,000. Compare Imperial Tobacco, £50,000,000; Imperial Chemicals, £72,000,000. Unilever include firms all over the globe in their subsidiaries; especially major interests in whaling, groceries, dairies, tinned foods, soap, Moor Park Estate, West Africa, nitro-glycerine, ice-cream, shaving cream.

Hang-over

Wages and land costs were extremely low in the New Hebrides. Treatment on the plantations was usually reasonable, by the beginning of this century, though without Government supervision. It was clearly in the planter's interest to keep his natives alive and efficient; if many died, other recruits would not come to work for him. Natives from other and distant islands were always used, so that they could not return home when they were tired of the drudgery; copra-making is pure drudgery. On the plantations the natives were isolated from either Christian or heathen culture, it was a sort of economic strange interlude, almost a conscription ; work for two or three years, so as to get gun, axe and tobacco.

Careless or cruel masters could do as they liked; were especially inclined to keep their labourers for years after the promised date of repatriation. And eventually the natives of their tribe, waiting years, would kill a white in revenge. Then a warship would come, shoot and burn. Depopulation was making it difficult to find labourers. There were not more than 20,000 adult males in the whole group by 1900. On these the prosperity of the planter depended. The planter who was unpopular, as many Frenchmen were, *must* get labour somehow; or land development was held up.

Thus the system of recruiting was much as in the later blackbirding days. Two armed boats' crews to protect each other; dynamite exploded to attract attention; various gags, such as dressing men up like women, thus luring the lads aboard; gun payments to chiefs; increasing the use of alcohol in such matters. Trouble resulted, shootings, everywhere suspicion. No white dared to go ashore at places like north-west Malekula, where many ships were shot up. Some planters disregarded any law; as will shortly be seen, the New Hebrides Government (arrived 1902) did not bother much about little things like that.

Currency confusion in the early planter days was considerable. In popular use were French and a local New Caledonian issue, English, Australian and American silver. Some planters contributed their own currencies, worthless plaques with which they paid their labour, who could do nothing but spend it at their particular plantation stores, which expected to make 300 per cent profit. Thus the largest plantations were built up. One great planter seldom returned his labourers; as his site was an unhealthy one, the natives died like natives. They used to bury the dead near the hibiscus ground off the point. Such a beautiful place. The hurricane seas came tactfully in to scoop the bones away among the coral.

All this, and much more, was a hang-over from the bloodier days of sandalwood and blackbirding. It had (and has) nothing to do with Lever, whose interest was as middleman or manufacturer. It still goes on, as I shall presently show from my personal experience; in the first half of 1935 I came across more than fifteen cases of illegal recruiting or near-enough kidnapping. I met three white murderers who had never even been charged.

100,000,000 Francs

The rapid expansion of French interests was given every assistance by the French Government. The development was too rapid, over capitalised; the fallow capital of a coconut plantation is heavy, for it takes nine years from clearing to

trees reaching full bearing. It was largely a forced expansion, in order to gain a moral claim over territory; the Protestant missions behaved very similarly. Development went on away ahead of secure foundation and paying results—the antithesis of Leverism. Eight companies had capital nearly 100,000,000 francs. Even in a boom year like 1924, the big Societé Française des Nouvelles Hebrides failed. Australian interests are alleged to have been offered to buy out its 543,000 hectare land claims; but French banks and patriots got it going again as the Compagnie Française Immobiliere des Nouvelles Hebrides.

The companies floated loans, founded on patriotism and suretied by palms. Millions of francs were lent to men who were unsuitable for the handling of it. Some of these left somewhat half-caste sons to run the place, while they went and blew up magnificent hells of good-time in the local Parises of Noumea or Papeete. No one took thought for the day after to-morrow. The consequent debt has been a crippling influence on French development; few French plantations in the group to-day stand four-square. As the Government Report, 1931, puts it: " Following on prolific borrowing for purposes of expansion during days of prosperity, practically the whole of the French earnings are absorbed to pay interest and consequently imports have had to be cut down to the various necessities of life." The French Government has constantly stepped in and, with the Bank of Indo-China, largely controls French plantations. Many sound plantations built up by Australians were bought by the French, before the disastrous fall in copra prices of 1931 pushed over their tottering edifice.

Depressing

That the group's settlement developed mainly on copra is exhibited by the following figures: the New Hebrides averages ·071 per cent of world production, ·098 per cent in 1930, ·044 per cent in 1933.

The figures are worked out from the scanty data available (cf. page 313).

COPRA PRODUCTION IN THE NEW HEBRIDES

Year	Total Production Tons	Total value	Price per ton Paid to planter	Percentage of whole Exports by value
		£	£ s.	
1898	2,000	16,000	8 0	54
1904	2,512	—	*c.* 12 15	—
1920	3,002	105,070	35 0	43
1921	5,353	90,601	17 0	59
1922	5,717	85,755	11 0	46
1923	6,302	113,428	18 0	52
1924	6,792	125,652	18 0	48
1925	7,370	162,154	22 0	53
1926	8,382	184,318	20 0	49
1927	10,204	205,090	20 0	51
1928	12,682	208,954	16 0	60
1929	10,787	147,460	13 10	52
1930	11,883	130,573	11 0	52
1931	10,005	69,886	7 0	57
1932	7,032	36,306	5 0	47
1933	7,045	23,864	3 8	33
1934	6,939	24,600	3 11	30

New Hebrides copra is nearly all smoke-dried, of lowest quality. There is no system of grading or organised marketing in the islands. The first sufferer in all market declines is the inconveniently placed New Hebrides product. The following table compares prices on the spot and in London also:

Year	Month	Price per ton c.i.f. London South Seas Sundried	Price per ton on British plantations in N.H.	[1]Profits of Lever Bros.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£
1931	Jan.	14 7 6	7 0 0	5,749,658
	May	10 17 6		
1932	Jan.	14 10 0	5 0 0	5,903,497
	May	13 17 6		
1933	Jan.	13 10 0	3 8 0	6,478,162
	May	11 2 6		
1934	Jan.	8 0 0	3 11 0	6,200,698
	May	7 12 6		
1935	Jan.	9 5 0	*c.* 3 10 0	7,257,966
	March	12 2 6	rising	

It had cost about £4 a ton to make copra in the earliest days; average profit £5 a ton. About 1883 the natives were

paid £7 of trade, this copra fetching £15 in Sydney, £20 in London. A copra trader could make between £18 and £20 a month and himself do very little work. In 1935 planters could just make copra at £3 10*s*.; at £3 it was not worth making (prices have never sunk that low). At £4 10*s*. the planter could make just enough profit to keep the place going decently, and have enough cash for odds and ends over and above the bare necessities of life. At £5 copra was worth making; though if you had told a planter that in 1927 you would have heard some foul language.

It is hard to realise what it has meant to the planters, particularly the pioneer British planters, who have built up plantations in these unhealthy islands, out of the jungle and with their lives, to see their long work go skywide while shareholders, who have never seen a coconut with the husk on, get good dividends three thousand miles away. To the planter Levers has become obsession, a terrible octopus. Yet Levers is only the full flower of the whole growth that has whitened the islands and brought these little faded planter-white daisies, who so soon wither. When they revile Levers they perform a fantastic parabola. Levers are O.K., 1936.

The New Hebridean planters have never been organised or co-operating. The previous Planters' Union broke up on the reef of malarial temper and climatic disinterest. None of the planters anywhere on the Pacific have been able in any way to alleviate their conditions, or even raise a voice of effective protest—even if such a protest is justified from them. Any sensible planter can at least keep alive on fruit, yams, cattle and pigs on the place, numerous fish. While the copra price-fall has stimulated development into other produce.

The French were assisted by their Government, who could not afford to let them go bankrupt. They received a bounty per ton which always kept copra well above production costs. Here the British were at serious disadvantage; at once they lost all the native copra trade which they had developed and which totalled about a quarter of production.

To

The old flag-changing manœuvres of Timber-Toe Proctor came in again. Everyone wished to be French. " In the opinion of many competent observers, it is only a question of time before the New Hebrides will be entirely taken over by France . . . to Australia must go the blame for the loss of the New Hebrides," says the *Pacific Islands Year-book* of 1933. People have been saying that since 1882 ! Within the past few years some Britishers have managed to benefit from French Government support; there is scarcely a Briton in the group to-day who would not become a French citizen to-morrow, if it were possible.

There is no big coconut future for the New Hebrides white, who left the sea for the land because of the coconut. The coconut did the white proud for forty years. The impending war will favour copra, through nitro-glycerine and margarine. Recently the huge whale oil surplus, that has crippled the market, has been bought by Germany. This has eased the situation. The great fall in copra prices has crippled the whites. The native sees that the white, once thought to be supernatural, long thought to be wonderfully clever with objects, cannot even apparently keep up this cleverness; for no visible reason, materials fail him. Comparing British and Omban native planters in early 1935 one is happily able to contest Aldous Huxley's remark, that " in every tropic land the poorest people are always the inhabitants." The natives have never been the poorer in life, art, or humanity; now they are not always the poorer in the things of Europe.

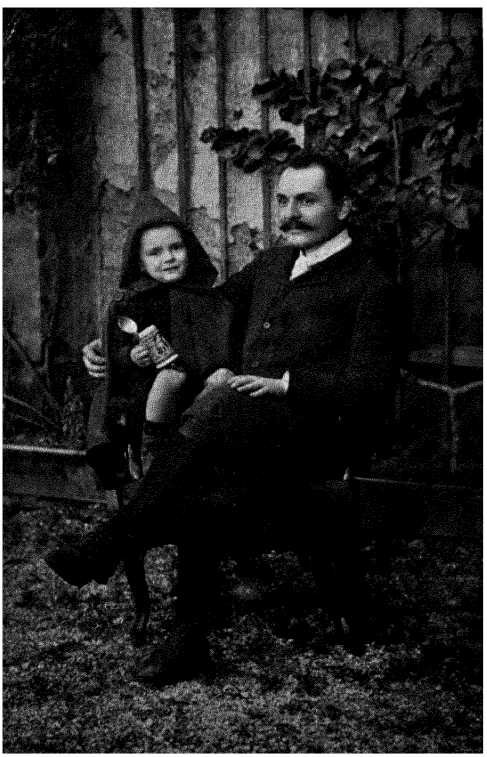
The Famous Carp

To understand all this Pacific white life, all life, consider the Famous Carp.

There was one who lived thus: Last of the Junkers, Antonio Bruno Siller. I came down the long uninhabited west coast of Malekula to South-West Bay. I did not know there was any white there. He was a forgotten one.

Huge, wide shoulders, sergeant's moustachios. His face lined against its tan with a delicate pattern of white stripes. On

COCONUT COASTAL LANDSCAPE, SOUTH-WEST BAY, WHERE SILLER DIED



VIENNA, 1905. SILLER WITH HIS FATHER

the wall of his tiny hut, perched on a high cliff looking over this lovely treacherous bay, three faded photographs of faces streaming with blood, and above them his student's corps cap and a student pipe. There was a rough chair, a table, some books, a boot, sea shells and two native mats. When I came panting up the cliff and up the narrow ladder to his one room, he leapt off the bed and roared at me in five languages before he found, through my mass of two-year beard, that I was an illinguistic Englishman.

He had left Austria some years before, on a point of honour over three pots of jam; he had not completed his medical degrees at Vienna. He had come to Sydney, then a job in Burns Philp had taken him to Port Vila, and then—like so many jobs in Burns Philp, he had drifted out into planter or trader, in the days when things were still good enough. So he came in the slow stages that are a part of New Hebrides culture drift, bounce to bounce, into this one-ship-in-three-months bay. He was thirty-five. When I met him he had been there two and a half years, had had blackwater fever once. That was usual enough on this coast. What was peculiar was that he had recovered. . . .

He took some rice out of his little ramshackle grass store, and there was a lot of cold tea with one huge battered tankard to drink it from. Tea he had made three days before. His voice filled the hut and this country as he roared words in his pleasure of talk again, especially of talk with one who remembered Europe and Dickens and poetry. He had not spoken thus for two years. For two days he talked. I wanted to go on, over the green high hills behind and into the country of the pygmy people, unvisited. Yet I could not deny him words. At night I lay on the floor under his bed, so that I could get (from his mosquito-net) some fever protection. His words came all the same, down through the copra sacks which, slung between two poles, were his bed; booming out: " Harrisson, I tell you, it's all right here, I'm doing fine. But my God, Harry, old man, sometimes I want to see a white woman, a gramophone, or laughing. . . ." So I would gather again and make

broad Junkery jokes until his joy had smashed away, lifted the shadows of him that came on me again and again, until he would break this pattern, leap out of bed on to the floor or my arm, to gollop a great draught of tea from the tankard. Sometimes he was quiet, when he entered his accounts or studied to improve his Italian. Then a native would come: threepence for a stick of tobacco from the store; or a sack of copra, worth five sticks of tobacco. When I could bear no more to see this fly upon the web, I took my sleepless self on to the hills behind and travelled for days, mud coating my colour. Indeed when I came out to the coast again away at the other end and side of the island, I had been reported eaten.

In February the next year, when everything was hottest and wettest, I got the word that he was down with blackwater again. I was at the other end of the island. I crossed it, came hell for leather canoeing down the west coast, infuriatingly slow in the winding still-water within the reef. The swifts that flew in thousands out of the coral caves at the tap of the paddle, the silly slender egrets balanced on the casuarinas, made me too angry. A big thresher shark passed so near that I threw my paddle and hit his funny waggling tail top. He changed in one instant from clumsy reef wallah to swift efficient fish, as he went for his life, leaving his pride on the surface.

It is easy to say that you will never forget. Happily one does. I hope I will forget coming into Siller's hut the second time. The sun was sliding its quick slot machine into the faraway over the bay. Its last pink shining through the everlastingly open back door, where I went in. The floor was just black and teeming with the bodies of maybe forty natives, squatting there watching the big body on the bed, now vivid yellow and falling in. And the air, too, was alive, with the few thousand bluebottle flies who whirred an incessant orchestration to the low-spoken words which passed in whirlpools among the still bodies. I threw them out; outside they settled again on the carcase. This was only their sympathy.

It took Siller seven days to die. I hope that I shall never again see blackwater death.

He told me to do something about his papers. In this loneliness he had been writing poetry, and plays and stories. A suitcase full of them, in tiny German script.

We buried him quickly, behind the pig-sty where he had kept his one old sow; in the starting of a house he was making in his "spare time." He had started the house for his girl friend, with whom he had quarrelled when he had left Austria. Clumsy half-burned coral lime and kerosene cases at the edge of the jungle, among the tall coconut palms, in which the scarlet honeyeaters sang and sang. Now it was no longer ludicrous. One notebook was full of plans for houses to build there.

In another black book there were several itineraries of his return to Vienna, which he was always to reach on December 20th. The version of three months before his death went:

December 20th—In Vienna, third-class in an old worn-out suit. Am received by all the family as the lost son. Everybody grumbles at me. We do not go out to town, are going to bed very early. Arrive with only one suitcase, the remaining luggage shall be fetched to-morrow at the station.

December 21st—Early in the morning I go out under the fallacious pretext of looking for a job. I meet my Labadens, take all my luggage and have it sent to the new house.

Orders previously given to Labadens:

1°—to book a first-class room with private bath.

2°—to engage a married chauffeur: teetotaller, first-class mechanic, first-class driver.

3°—payment of all the debts.

4°—to visit all the nicest houses, villas, castles or palaces in Vienna, must be very big.

5°—to get information concerning the most elegant up-to-date types of cars: Vauxhall, Daimler or Mercédès.

Explain to the house porteress that until Christmas I will come only during the daytime and later take definite possession of the house. I change and go to buy a car, registering and insuring. Letter of credit to the bank and opening of a cheque account. Go to take Hertha at her office, in my own car naturally. After one delicious hour I come back to the house to change. In the evening or thereabout I go back home in the worn-out suit and am grumbled at. During the night I escape, meet Hertha and we go to have a good time. The car is naturally in order and at our disposal. Maybe we shall go to Baden.

December 22nd—I keep my incognito . . . etc., etc. In the evening I stay at home and play " the poor dog." I go to bed early.

December 23rd—It is more and more difficult to hide the truth. My brother and sister stick to me like honey. I tell everything to Lilly and from her learn what mother needs and I buy it . . . show her all the presents.

List of Christmas presents I shall offer:

To Father: a *gold cigar-box* with two hundred Coronas.

To Mother: a yearly income of 50,000 schillings.

To Lilly: a yearly income of 30,000 schillings until her marriage and then a dowry of 100,000 schillings.

To my brother: a yearly income of 30,000 schillings.

To Hertha: a Vauxhall car.

To her father: a smoking set in silver.

To my Labadens: anything he wants [this was written in English].

December 24—Last purchases and preparations. In the evening I go to bring Hertha's family and the doctor and we all meet at home; we eat *the famous carp* with salad mayonnaise. I give the order to the chauffeur to bring the presents. While he goes to look for them my Labadens makes a speech in which he discloses the secret. Lilly brings the sparkling drinks and everything ends in love and gaiety.

On another page we find the results of his six years in the group:

Assets: £52 7*s.* 9*d.*
Liabilities: £23 12*s.* 7*d.*
Actual capital: £28 15*s.* 2*d.*

The actual capital includes some faded books (*Martin Chuzzlewit*, Goethe, Wodehouse) valued at £1 10*s.*; and the ground valued at £4 10*s.* which I later found did not belong to him—it was lent to him rent free by a kindly native; by the way, he did not drink or gamble.

The intricacy of his dreams. There are books of dates and fixtures for world tours. His wine cellar will include 24 dozen Voslauer Goldeck at 2,500 schillings; 12 dozen sherry at 9,000 in its 211,300 schillings contents. His staff to run the house will cost him 61,200 schillings a year. And there is an entry " Pocket-money for the little Toni 77,000 schillings." His capital will be 9,000,000 schillings (but I do not think that would have been enough). At his rate of earning it would have taken him at least three thousand years to earn that. See him pop back to the nearer seas:

" We dive at the place I know for the trochus. We bring back 65 kilos and the bloody sunstroke. If everything goes on I am satisfied."

His account books were perfect, with three books—Cash, Venture, and Ledger—kept up to the day before blackwater knocked him down. Here is a recent copra venture.

To cash paid	Village	Kilos	Cross reference	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
28. ix	Labo	10	CB/11	0	0	9	By Dubain,			
29. ix	Labo	14	V/11	0	1	3	trader	0	11	10
2. x	Biliers	60	V/12	0	4	9	By livestock	0	0	9
6. x	Lambatip	16	V/13	0	1	3				
8. x	Lambatip	16	V/33	0	1	3	Shrinkage	0	0	0
12. x	Wintua	40	V/13	0	3	3				
16. x	To profit and Loss	65	J/13							
	Profit	.	.	0	0	1				
		162.5 kilos		£0	12	7	162.5 kilos	£0	12	7

You will see that on that he made, as a result of hard work—and he was not a lazy man, but a dynamic one—the profit of one penny. Subsequent ventures in the three months following brought a total balance at a loss of three pence. With sandalwood at that period he made £2; burghess shell, 3/8; curios, 8/-; cocoa, 3/3. The trochus he dived for himself, reef festering hands and sunbright sting-rayed waters, salt burning the eyes and the deep water wearing your skin and pressing your ear drums dazily. On trochus he made his big profit of £10 15*s*. No other white dives for his own trochus. With trochus the world makes its pearl studs for white shirt fronts and mayonnaise with the famous carp.

In one of his plays, act three, scene one, house of the trader in the South Seas, Toni, the hero, monologues:

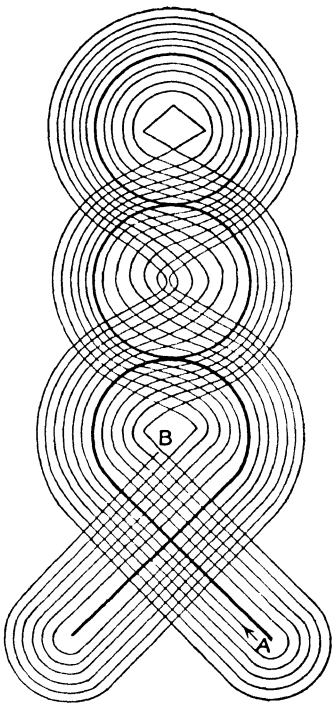
Ah, here thou art, foul spectre of malaria of whom I am the prey. How my teeth click and know no way to dominate this shuddering. How it aches in the bowels. Quinine, oh friend and saviour, help me anew. How many times have I filled and emptied thee to subjugate this enemy? How many times will I yet empty thee?

The radiant sun in the sky, admirably blue, laughs on the peaceful surges of the sea. Ah! Ah! Ah! . . . That is how they lure the inexperienced dreamer. Yes, firmament with nucleus of fire. Yes, innocent animal which diligently conveys this poison.

I am cold. Only one thing is good, the febrile dreams where one imagination chases another, one dream chases another. And now it is only the prelude. How the muscle tightens. . . . How cold I am. . . . As in eternal ice . . . and help? Where? From whom? and when? The nearest doctor fifty miles, the nearest village five, the nearest neighbour. . . .

What a radiantly beautiful panorama. Greeting palms, orchids in full bloom strewn by the hand of God. The greeting palm, yes. That and the orchids: rotten grass and tares. Become to me obsession.

Why writhe on the bed? . . . Everything is alike. . . . Stand up, man. . . . Stand up as long as you can. . . . Here you are.'. . . You've lost, as always, bad luck . . . the dream undreamt . . . the dreamer awakes . . . and with



THE FROND OF THE COCONUT PALM

A continuous-line sand-drawing on Omba.
It starts at A, ends at B.

what for a headache. . . . I have to struggle along alone until one morning they will find my putrid corpse and will slightly bury it over there behind the pigsty.

My friend. We did not slightly bury it.

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Lever Annual Reports. Unilever Annual Reports. *Stock Exchange Year-book*, 1936. *Statistical Year-book, League Nations*, 1934/5, 114. *Brisbane Courier*, 6/1/85. *Economist*, 17/4/35, 11/5/35. *Financial Times*, 31/9/29. *L'Oceanie Française*, Feb.–May, 1918. *L.R.D. Monthly Circular*, March and April 1921, Oct. 1929. *Pacific Islands Monthly*, 1934. *Rabaul Times*, 2/2/34. *Soap Magazine* (U.S.A.), Nov. 1933. *Southern Cross Log*, Oct. 1911, May 1914, May 1920. *Times*, 11/5/29, 2/9/29, 3/9/29, 11/12/29, 1/5/30, 21/4/32, 27/4/34, 11/9/35, 11/5/35, 16/9/35, 7/5/36. *Tropical Life*, May 1913.

Much help from Oliver Bell. Documents left in my charge by A. B. Siller, in the translation of which I have been helped by A. Guthmann and D. Sorel.

I shall publish a full account of Copra and Combines elsewhere, in due course, when my researches are complete.

VI

(1902–1935)

THE FIERCEST black and white impacts are over. The unique and incredible Anglo-French Government staggers along: pure musical comedy. Peculiar group economics. White culture diffusions and the persistence of instability, of earthquake unrest, and impatient volcano (1913). The yellow man comes up, on another curve in the cycle of many migrations; these are considered, with some new evidence. Native character and art are examined; banana skin slapstick, the dance of life, art with rules. The power of growth in all this: where is it going? Black Hope. . . .

During this century the maps of the New Hebrides have not been much improved, and in some parts Cook's original surveys remain unchallenged. There are innumerable reefs and banks and sudden rocks; many ships are wrecked. The two maps on the end folder cover the content in this section.

PANDEMONIUM GOVERNMENT

THE WIND FILTERS THROUGH the coconut fronds as they wave their fine-boned fingers against the sky. In Unilever House, costing just under a million pounds, endless chaos is reduced into one sense, touching even to desert oasis. The greeting palm fronds dance in time to this monstrous, magnificent white orchestra, crowned with its four-faced clock. Smooth running millions flow from such far-away flickers and uplift arms . . . five thousand dialects and dialectics, diastase and dietetics, Four Coconuts, Oh Marx and Marx Brothers. An aeroplane writes Persil in the sky.

Condom

Copra made settled life important.

The "Joint Naval Commission, charged with the protection of the life and property of the two nations in the islands," 1887, was the first attempt at government. The Commission was composed of two officers from each of the English and French warships in these waters and was presided over alternately by the British and French commanders. This compromise shelved annexation; it was no more than a compromise in a 450 mile archipelago with few anchorages.

Britain appointed a short-lived consul in the group. He asked to whom he was accredited, and after peculiar complications settled at Port Sandwich, Malekula. This incensed the French. On Christmas Day, 1888, French and British fought about the matter, without loss of life. After eighteen months the office was silently abolished. Consular instructions, flags, stamps and seals arrived after eighteen months.

The increasing number of planters and settlers soon began

to find what an ineffective system naval government was. There was no civil law, no machinery for enforcing contracts. Might was right. Committees of residents tried to make some sort of order out of this chaos. One such formed Franceville.

A remarkable petition was sent to New Caledonia asking (once more) for French annexation and stressing French economic dominance and decency. Forty-two British and fourteen aliens signed, representing, they said, 1,650,000 acres. On Efate, August 9th, 1899, Franceville informed Australia, Fiji, the British Navy and others, of its status as an independent Commune, through its Agent General J. J. Rendle, whose colleague was M. Dahlia. Franceville suddenly denied French bias; the New Caledonian municipal council had contributed 1,000 francs, but this "contribution que ce corps a généreusement suscrite etait dénué de toute significance politique." The mayor was F. Chevillard, the deputy Comte Maurice de Nolhac; and other "gentlemen capables et intègres"; they had drafts of procedure and an interesting flag, half blue, half red, vertically (like the "H" of commercial code), with a blue square in the centre bordered by red and white, and five blue stars. All long forgotten.

The planters set up an Arbitration Court for themselves in 1895. The navy vetoed and dissolved it. But increasing vested interest, dissatisfaction and mission agitations, at last gave them what they were asking for. One big French company tottered in 1901. Australian interests apparently offered 450,000 francs. French patriotism rallied to the defence, and retained the land for France.

In 1902 France appointed a resident commissioner to come ashore at Vila on Efate. The English did the same. Captain Rason, R.N., arrived a short head behind his colleague. This was the first land government and the last white interest to arrive. By this time the native population was still decreasing, at about 75,000, but not so fast as before; and on several small islands the decrease had already come to an end. The missions were now at their strongest.

For several years the two nations sat down side by side at Vila and looked at each other. Eighty-four Frenchmen signed another petition for French annexation, January 1903. On April 8th, 1904, an Anglo-French " Declaration " was made about the group. On October 20th, 1906, a Convention between the United Kingdom and France concerning the New Hebrides was signed by Sir Edward Grey and M. Paul Cambon; ratified January 9th, 1907 (compare later correspondence M. Poincaré, Earl of Elgin and Lord Hardinge). This was, they said, " an arrangement which shall put an end to the difficulties arising from the absence of jurisdiction over the natives of the New Hebrides and settle disputes of their respective nationals in the said islands with regard to landed property."

One passage is about the natives:

Article IX, *Civil Status of the Natives*, which provides for natives to register births, deaths and marriages and " all declarations of the same character that natives may wish to make for the purpose of acquiring civil status . . . entries so made should be kept in a general registry and the Registry of the Joint Court." . . . I confess myself defeated by this; its only relevant corollary is " no native shall acquire in the Group the status of subject or citizen or be under the protection of either of the two signatory Powers "; which seems somehow emphatic.

The curiously Biblical commandment nature of this Convention is illustrated by significant Article XLIV: " Employers must treat their employees with kindness. They shall refrain from all violence towards them."

Each nation now appointed its own Government officials and services, maintained its own residency and staff at Port Vila on Efate, police units and white officers on other islands—Tanna, in the south, Santo in the north, and (recently) Malekula. Each had its own native police, prison, hospitals and ordinances. This duplicate effort was centred in the south, and exercised no effective control in the northern half of the group.

It was also decided that all foreigners then in the group,

or subsequently entering it, must become nationals of one nation or the other. They should be allowed to choose whether they should be British or French; once decided, no one might change over to the other side (oranges and lemons). The Joint Naval Commission still existed to " assist or replace the civil police when circumstances require it," but " except in cases of urgency " must not act on its own initiative; with the characteristically Condominium rider, " You will, however, be careful not to interpret too narrowly the words ' except in cases of urgency.' " For a long time the Naval Commission was the only body which could settle inter-native cases. The ships left the group in November and stayed away for the six hurricane months. Any native arrested after the Commission had left, had to wait in prison for trial. He was treated as a guilty person.

The King of Spain Makes History

Sir Everard im Thurn heralds in this proud land era with his address at Vila on December 2nd, 1907. He takes a flying start:

" Your Excellency the High Commissioner for France, ladies and gentlemen, especially those resident in the New Hebrides: We meet to-day to make history."

He goes on to say:

" We are, to-day, starting a remarkable and absolutely new experiment in the joint yet separate administration by two great Powers of one area. . . . Henceforward Frenchmen and Englishmen will live intermingled, each enjoying the benefit of the laws of his own nation and submitting matters of inextricably common interest to the Joint Administration and both joining together to rule the natives of these islands."

While " for the first time in history the natives of these islands will be brought under civilised rule . . . it should be clearly realised that this rule over the natives will be as much to their own interests as in the interests of the white men who have settled among them . . . and this, to my mind, is a matter of supreme importance . . . they will be

protected against each other and from exterminating each other."

He ends up by telling everyone that right now the King of Spain is choosing a man to preside over the Joint Court; he ought to be here within the next year.

The Pandemonium Government

For the key, co-ordinating point in this ideal of international co-operation, is the Joint Court, the most carefully thought-out part of the whole mechanism. There are British and French judges, appointed from Fiji and Noumea, fully qualified. The President is appointed by the King of Spain; no provision has been made for Spanish revolutions, which lead to some complication. The king's appointee for many years was, suitably, the Count de Buena Esperanza. He received £900 a year, free quarters, paid vacations, fares, and £1 a day plus expenses travelling allowance. There is also a Public Prosecutor, appointed by the King of Spain, who once nominated a Dutchman. The Public Prosecutor acts for the President in his absence. If he also is absent he is acted for by the Registrar, who must therefore be neutral also; he is appointed by the President. Oldish men do not do well in this climate and are always getting bouts of fever. When the President gets ill, who can prosecute, and if he does prosecute, who can registrar, and so on. Vila soon became a popular place for neutral lawyers, who hung around the law courts in the rainy season.

The Count was weak on English and French. This kept him neutral. He was distinctly deaf; that made him hard to get at. Court proceedings were sometimes tedious; on the other hand more neutrals were provided with interpreting jobs. No one understood most of the native witnesses.

It soon appeared that the French were not at all ready to admit the jurisdiction of the Joint Court over French citizens. The court had no executive power, it could not arrest or enforce. Whenever a Frenchman was liable for court prosecution he took the steamer to New Caledonia.

Between April 1911 and November 1912 the total number of fines inflicted (mostly for selling alcohol to natives) on British subjects by the Joint Court was £28 8*s.*; of which £16 19*s.* was collected. On French subjects £456 14*s.* 8*d.*; £65 13*s.* 6*d.* collected. At this time the Government chartered s.s. *Tathra* to convey the Joint Court around the group to try cases. The trip cost £700. Many cases were heard. Fines collected: alleged 8*s.* A Frenchman was convicted on sixteen charges in November 1912. He was fined £8 but pardoned by the French Commissioner. Another man was fined £2 for several distinct breaches of alcohol laws before the Joint Court. He wrote to the court and told them he had been selling booze to the natives for over ten months, and that he had cleared £500 on the job. Bishop Wilson saw fourteen cases of absinthe in one Omba store; he describes his vain attempts to bring a case against the trader. In the Ambrym hospital, cases of d.t.'s and alcohol paralysis were far from uncommon.

Such inaction caused booze-selling to flourish from its 1879 inception into a profitable trade which was a heavy factor in assisting depopulation or delaying recovery. On a smaller scale, it continues. Similarly the fire-arm traffic went ahead. Australia even suggested that Britain permit the sale of drink and fire-arms as long as the French did so. For in all these abuses, it was the French who led the way after 1883; and during the present century the British on the whole have had (by New Hebrides standards) a decent record.

The Joint Court especially dealt with illegal recruiting episodes. The day of the blackbirder was over. Here are two whitebirding cases, just before the war.

Public Prosecutor v. *Galmes and Constant*

British Judge Alexander says this is a typical case:

Eight natives, men, women, children, were brought before the court. They " described with a simplicity and naïveness which carried conviction," how they had gone to the beach from the bush in which they lived, had been intercepted by Galmes and Constant, ordered into their

THE JOINT COURT OF THE ANGLO-FRENCH CONDOMINIUM IN SESSION

Left to right: The French National Judge; the Spanish Public Prosecutor; the Spanish Neutral (deaf) Judge President; the Dutch Registrar; the British National Judge

whale boat at the point of guns, and taken to another island. The case for the defence was an exception that it was only judicable before the French National Court. The Joint Court held that it had jurisdiction to the maximum extent of fining Galmes £20 and one month, Constant £10 and fifteen days. Criminal action must be taken in the French Court; none was taken.

Alexander asked himself " if he was living in the twentieth century."

Public Prosecutor v. *a Frenchman*

A Frenchman, with his ship, went into Big Bay, Santo, in 1912. He induced natives to come on board and trade the knives and leather straps that he said he had there. He gave them food and drink aboard; hoisted sail; and up anchor. They expostulated; were ordered below. One lad jumped overboard to swim ashore. The Frenchman drew his revolver and is alleged to have shot him dead through the head as he swam away. Another boy he felled with a blow from the butt of a revolver. These charges were established.

The Joint Court gave him their maximum sentence: £20 and a month. In his national court he was tried on the criminal charge, found guilty of assault and sentenced to one year's imprisonment. He was let go at once, on the First Offenders Act.

Three other persons concerned in this case had previously been brought before the courts on similar charges.

The Answer is in the Negative

The records are full of such cases. One was brought before the House of Commons. Another, the kidnapping of a woman, before the League of Nations; at last she was repatriated, with gonorrhœa. Judge Alexander says that abuses " were of frequent and constant occurrence throughout the group before the war." The administration was " calculated to drive one to distraction." For once, all the Protestant denominations got together with a 1913 manifesto: " A Plea to the Anglo-Saxon Race to Insist upon

Fair Play for Black and White"; also the pamphlet "Under Two Flags; a Hopeless Experiment and a Grave Scandal." *The Times* and *Truth* took the matter up. Even a French paper admitted that "slavery is, in fact, re-established." A French delegation waited on M. Lebrun.

All this agitation stimulated the Protocol of August 6th, 1914, which strengthened the constitution. War intervening, it was not ratified until March 1922. In the House of Commons, Mr. Inskip asked (1921): "Whether the Anglo-French Condominium in the New Hebrides has been denounced as entirely ineffective, both by France and Great Britain; and whether any offer has been made to France to exchange her interest in the group for territory in other parts of the world." Mr. Amery replied: "The answer to both parts of the question is in the negative."

On May 21st, 1935, Lady Astor asked whether anything is to be done to put an end to grog-selling on Epi, Ambrym, Malekula, Tanna, Santo. Cunliffe-Lister said: "It may not be possible to obliterate the traffic entirely."

The King of Spain made history.

Law for Everyman

The Protocol had provided for Courts of First Instance in the islands, "to have jurisdiction over infractions of the Protocol except those concerning the recruitment and engagement of native labour." The new British Resident Commissioner notes in his 1927 report that: "Unfortunately various difficulties have manifested themselves in the Constitution of these Courts." The Annual Reports have mostly the same formal wording on such subjects from year to year; but this sentence is out in 1928. I should not exactly say that the difficulties had manifested themselves, but that they had always been manifest; and not so much various as innumerable. The French Government Agent on Malekula and myself were to have a Court of First Instance in 1935. We had to have some independent "assessors" to decide whenever we had a dispute, which was rather often, as there were many mosquitoes and he

was three times my age. The assessors were planters living far from either of us. And (for every preliminary discussion) I had to walk down seventy miles of unpathed coast and burning sand beach, swim a couple to a dozen (varying) rivers in flood, ornamented with sharks and stingrays, very rapid. We never finalised on the Court of First Instance. In fact, before we could get within three months of it, we were no longer on speaking terms, after a fight about a native woman !

But I see that the British Commissioner got in another fast one in 1928 under " Courts and Justice." He wrote: " The relative provisions of this Convention (1914) do not admit of accurate summary." *That* is out of the 1929 Report. By 1934 the Commissioner has got the hang of the business; the title of the Report has even improved, from " Colonial Reports Annual No. 1533 New Hebrides Report for 1930," into " Colonial Reports, Annual No. 1600, Annual Report on the Social and Economic Progress of the People of the New Hebrides." And he gives us a lucid exposition of the five types of court now in operation. Of the Joint Court he says: " Broadly speaking, and subject to certain exceptions, its civil jurisdiction is confined to certain proceedings over rights over movable property." There is no appeal from its decisions. Its three judges give eight judgments during the year. Incidentally the British national court has a heavy burden, as explained in non-legal language: " In civil cases the jurisdiction over actions between non-natives belongs in some cases to the Court of the Power under whose law the contract was concluded, or the act or thing in question originated, and in other cases to the Court of the Power to which the defendant belongs."

After this careful analysis, we find in the list of the year's cases that the most busy courts, sixty cases, are the " Resident Commissioners' Courts." They are not mentioned in all the explanations. I suppose the unhappy Commissioners have to do something, and so have set up their own courts.

Notes for Philatelists and Philanthropists

It is scarcely necessary to demonstrate further the complications of the Pandemonium Government; they extend throughout the machinery. The experiment has always been and will always be a failure, until such time as Frenchmen are no longer French, and Britishers no longer English, the New Hebrides no longer worth visiting. Though one must dislike the Condominium for the abuses it tolerates, at the same time one must be grateful to it for tolerating things which we have put down as abuses in other colonies. Only under the Condominium could cannibalism thrive a few miles from a Government officer, radio and hospital. Students of economics should gratefully welcome the opportunity of studying, there, a complication of exchange and money values which I cannot pretend to understand. The philatelist has his two sets of stamps, though perhaps he does not realise that on the spot you do not buy them at face value in certain currency manœuvres. To make up for the absence of banks, both French and English systems of weights and measures are used side by side. The customs are fantastic; opium is extensively smuggled. While in the New Hebrides I have authenticated what I believe to be a unique record: a British judge arresting a man himself!

The cost of the pandemonium in 1934 was £23,362 on Condominium, i.e. joint services, only. The total revenue for the group was £10,719 (mainly from import dues; also 226,500 letters and packages). In addition to the Condominium expenses, each nation has its own establishments. Britain's cost £8,615 in 1934 (£16,048 in 1927), from Civil Estimates, Vote for Colonial and Middle-Eastern Services Class II, 9. There were 216 British and 763 French in the group.

The British Government yacht, a floating joke, was given up; its upkeep cost £36,822 from 1921–6. Each year it cost twice the British land offices, white officers and outstations put together. This finally isolates government in

Vila; but it makes little difference, as the yacht cruises were ineffective. Incidentally the Melanesian Mission is a keen yachtsman; in 1932 the new *Southern Cross*, costing £25,000, was wrecked at Aneityum, on her maiden voyage at the same spot where the first Presbyterian ship, *Dayspring*, was wrecked in 1873; a new one floated through the group in 1934. The Presbyterians have given up big boats, and thus saved much money for better purposes. The John G. Paton Fund of the Presbyterian Mission budgeted £4,529 in 1935. It was mainly responsible for British medical services.

This unwieldy and expensive machine is now dominated by French influence. It should be preserved. It should be studied and visited by those who wish to do more than *hope* for world peace, who wish to see, under laboratory conditions, the problems that they are up against and how (if at all) they may be circumvented.

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"LOOKING AT THE CONDOMINIUM"

ECONOMIC

Depressed Area

IF NEW HEBRIDES politics is complex, at least the economy is simple. Plantations run by white men or half castes; employing labour who are paid around £12 a year and spend all this money in the plantation stores buying goods. To a lesser extent native plantations on a few islands, and a good deal of trade done by small ships which exchange European objects for small quantities of native produce.

In the native class trochus and burghaus shell, reached a maximum at £4,910 in 1934; sandalwood also reached a maximum for this century at £2,391; also a few hundred pounds of sea slugs, trepang, for the Chinese market. The value of this type of native produce has increased in recent years, as prices have fallen for plantation produce,

which also requires planning and some capital. White men do not go after shell and sandalwood personally; it is such hard work. There is thus evolving, at least temporarily, some differentiation of function in white and black. For the white must continue to concentrate on the plantation.

The following table shows produce in order of importance; shows the decline from high prosperity of 1928 to bedrock in 1934; figures represent nearest thousands of pounds' value. The index figures in the last columns show the price falls 1920 cf. 1933, which are usually even more striking than produce-value falls, because quantity of produce going up obscures the real fall in these:

	Value of Produce in Thousands (£)							Prices per ton of principal products, reduced to a common index with 1930 = 100 in each case	
	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1920	1933
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Copra	209	147	131	70	36	24	25	325	31
Cocoa	78	89	73	31	28	29	32	265	47
Coffee ..	6	7	8	6	7	14	16	128	71
Cotton and cotton seed	45	33	27	11	4	1	½	60	27
Maize	2	4	4	½	0	0	½	—	—

Wool is produced on a single station, on Erromango, where the climate is temperate and there is suitable parkland. Castor oil seed, planted for a while, has been hindered by lack of centralising machinery. During 1914–18 cotton was a major feature; natives made fortunes in it; in 1921 cotton exports valued £75,000, as compared with £500 in 1934. Though sugar-cane is endemic, all sugar is imported. Tea might very well grow in the highlands of large islands. No planter has ever been up there; 3,000 feet is too far to climb.

The ground is capable of producing anything tropical. Difficulties of topography, hurricanes, labour and health are handicaps which can scarcely be overcome under the Condominium system. For the British in particular, hampered by disinterested officials, the difficulties are serious. The lack of any organisation among the planters, and their frequent antagonisms, hinder advance. Fifty-eight per cent have hookworm infection, average 84 worms per head;

this, plus malaria, must greatly decrease efficiency. France still encourages settlement with grants of 100-hectare plots, free to old soldiers.

Mineral discoveries would ease the white position, complicate the native. No prospecting is done.[1]

Beer, etc.

The general economic status of the group is reflected in the following table of exports and imports since 1921. Before examining this, one must bear in mind that loans to French planters run into many millions of francs; recently, many have been unable to pay the interest on these. The figures are in thousands of £ to the nearest thousand :

Year	Imports	Exports	Total Revenue	Condominium expenditure, joint services *only*
1904	55	53	—	—
1920	159	245	—	—
1921	133	152	26	17
1922	111	188	26	14
1923	85	218	33	25
1924	92	261	11	8
1925	218	307	14	25
1926	148	374	12	8
1927	308	398	24	18
1928	375	346	28	29
1929	300	286	29	26
1930	158	251	19	28
1931	80	122	13	24
1932	82	79	10	20
1933	86	72	11	19
1934	91	83	11	23

Exchange is very complicated, artificially fixed at 124 frs. to the £ sterling after 1927.

[1] Incidentally the Government reports have, with depressing regularity, the sentence: " It is believed the New Hebrides are rich in mineral wealth." Quiros in 1606 shared this belief, with his Minister of Mines. Phosphates have been reported as payable. Tanna sulphur is 47–58 per cent. Sulphur on the volcanic springs on Vanua Lava has been worked, intermittently, by a French company. There is iron and syenite in west Malekula; gold traces in central south Malekula, where there is also a patch of doubtful coal. The Société Française des Nouvelles-Hebrides have a subsidiary Compagnie Agricole et Minière des Nouvelles-Hebrides to exploit the subsoil. It has not yet done so. The natives fear prospectors or anyone who looks at their stones.

Revenue is nearly all raised by indirect taxation on imports and exports. The Government machine does not allow of much economy. The Condominium expenditure is only one of the three budgets in the triplicate system, which totalled about *half* the whole value of exports in 1934.

The principal imports are food for whites and trade for natives. The fall in prices forced down imports of the former until it caused some distress among traders; planters were usually able to keep up a fair standard, because they could exert pressure on the creditor companies to supply them with enough to maintain produce vitality. The high proportion of missionaries and officials with guaranteed incomes, and the fact that there are still practically no exchanges of money between white and black (all in trade goods), make import figures seem relatively high. There are many natives on Omba to-day better off than white traders.

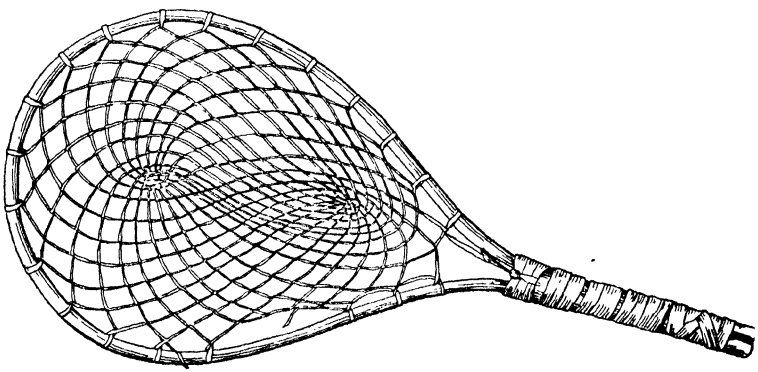
An analysis of imports gives some line on life on the islands. Figures are hundreds of £:

Item	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933
Year's total imports (in £100's)	3,000	1,175	800	816	855
Gunny bags (for produce) [index of expected production quantity]	103	28	49	37	42
Wines	134	62	51	39	38
Beers and spirits	100	27	28	41	28
Tea	—	—	12	8	12
Soap	—	11	8	6	6
Rice (for Tonkinese labour mainly)	311	227	113	73	45
Tinned goods and groceries	292	117	49	29	33

Liquor and tobacco imports in slump year 1931 were 17 per cent of total, down 7 per cent; all other imports except gunny bags down 25–60 per cent. Beer actually went up 20 per cent. Beer went up again in 1933; but a big drop in French wine, probably due to exchange favouring Australian imports (which have risen from 19 per cent to

62 per cent). The number of settlers is slowly rising during the century to 979 in 1934, but in 1935 the number of British is less than in 1904, while French have decreased 10 per cent since 1931.

In times of prosperity whites produced everything for export and ate imports. They scarcely touched local produce; did not try succulent purple grubs taken from rotting wood.



A diet of sea-worms is part of native economy at certain seasons when the Palolo-worms suddenly swarm on the reef in (literally) millions. Then they are caught in these delicate (squash racquet) nets. A combination of wind, tide and season controls the Palolo movements each year. In many islands the native calendar is based on the Palolo swarms which are exactly anticipated,—a time for ritual and festival indeed, the turn in year.

Depopulation has seriously hindered white development. The whites never seem to realise that their prosperity depends on a flourishing native race. The Government has also failed to appreciate this. I have often heard whites wish that all the natives might soon disappear, the bastards. Perhaps the failure of introduced coolie labour, so long believed to be the panacea for all economic difficulty, will cause the whites to study their problem. I doubt it.

Fifty years ago Sir J. B. Thurston said of the Hebrides: "Why think any more of them? I have been all through them, and they are not worth discussing as a serious problem

in loss or acquisition." This goes for now, too. It adds lessness to the point of a century's civgunization.

It would not matter to any broad interest, if all white plantations in the New Hebrides were wiped off by a tidal wave to-morrow. It would not be a headline story.

Sources. Allen 509. Eckardt. Ferdinand-Lop, x. Fletcher 56. Fontpertius. Imhaus. Lambert. Lemire 50. Regelsperger and Pelleray. Valbert. Colon 12/7/89. Govt. Reports. *Journal Officiel de la Nouvelle Caledonie*, 25/5/29. *Times*, 14/8/36. P.P.Cd.3876.

TWO LITTLE WHITE LIES

THE DOMINATING CHARACTERISTIC of planter and other white life in the New Hebrides is gossip,—taking a basis of truth and submerging it until it is all base. There is nothing else for the white man to do. Some have horses. These they can ride on the beaches in the cool of fine days. Otherwise there is talk. It has been worse in the last few years when low prices have depressed the whites and given them no hope of the old style holidays in Sydney or Tahiti.

Selling a Pup

A small planter, noted as a fiendish talker, had a habit of coming away for holidays and staying with people weeks. He had been good to us one time, so we told him to come over and stay at our base camp; if we were not there, then to help himself to anything there was. We never thought he would come; he lived on another island.

I was unfortunately at the base for a few days when, a month later, I saw our friend coming up the hill. He had got a lift across in a launch. My companion at that time, Jock

Marshall, was away on Elephant Island doing some bird work. I scribbled off a note to send to him by express canoe, saying " for Christ's sake come back, Jock, and help me. This godawful bastard of a bore Freshwater has appeared and is going to bitch up all my work. We must both bear the brunt." Then I decided not to send it; let the thing be. Just as he came into the hut I crumpled the note and threw it away. Then went to get him a drink.

That afternoon I lent him a man to take him over to the Government agent and a planter at Hog Harbour; he wanted to see them about some business. He came back. Soon Jock came back. We stuck him for a week. By then we had no decent food or drink left, and we never had a moment's peace. We knew that he was a trouble-maker. And Jock had been down to the plantation and had received a cold reception that puzzled him. In fact we seemed to be in a boycott. Queer. So we suggested to Freshwater that we go a bush trip to a Sakau village, for a big dance. A couple of hours along the path we faded quietly off the landscape and left him in a maze of paths with two tough bushmen who could not speak a word of pidgin English, and had orders to take him a roundabout way to the south across the river Sakata, and leave him there, on the edge of a Frenchman's plantation, two days away. That Frenchman was so good-natured he would welcome anyone.

We reckoned without God, who made so much rain that day that the Sakata went into major flood. When the bushmen came to it, they looked once, turned and faded out, leaving poor Freshwater there, able to see in the distance a plantation. Nothing for it but to wade. He took all his clothes off, except his shirt; put them on his head and waded. The current swept him off his feet. All his clothes went whirling away. He came out the other side with a short cotton shirt. In this, barefoot, he had to walk to that plantation, where the Frenchman, his wife and two half-caste daughters were having supper. Sensation.

We might have felt bad about this, except that in the meanwhile we had found out what the hate against us in

Hog Harbour was about. Freshwater had swiftly picked up and pocketed my crumpled note when I went to get him that first drink. He got the shock of his life when he read it. He had always thought that everyone liked him enormously. That was why he had gone off to the Government officer and others that evening. He had taken my note and demanded that something be done about it. He had coloured it by saying that I had started writing it, in a marked manner, the moment he came into the hut; and had then left it deliberately for him to see. Having raised a hornet's nest of planter feeling against us (the college outsiders), he came back without turning a hair to eat us out of heart and home.

So far, therefore, one trick all.

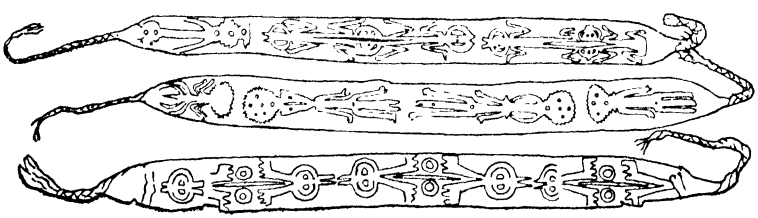
But his ludicrous appearance at the Frenchman's needed some honourable explanation. He said we had pressed him to stay and stay. Then one night tied him up in bed, taken him up and turned him loose in the bush without anything else but his shirt. By the time this story reached Vila, we were nearly charged with attempted murder. One up to him.

A couple of months later, a small boat came in with mail. We managed to get the white in charge very tight, and then extracted Freshwater's mail. There were three letters. Two of them from Australian women. They got better answers than Freshwater had ever given them and more to the point. I shouldn't be surprised if both immediately sailed to join him. The third, by marvellous luck, was an offer from a retired schoolmaster to buy the plantation, asking him for a full description. We gave a description of the best plantation there will ever be. Freshwater grew his own "Three Nuns," Flake Cut, in the shade of his verandah; while he had the Hatcha-Wallah tribe so controlled that they had given up throwing spears at him in the evenings and were working night and day manufacturing smutty curios for the tourist steamers which visited him on their world cruises. There would be no need to bring out any supplies, because the natives grew lavalavas, while beriberis and rumbas

provided adequate hunting. Japanese tinned salmon rose to the wet fly in every river. Freshwater was further prepared to hand over five guaranteed pure black wives with the estate. Labour was the worst problem, said Freshwater to end up his letter. But luckily a persistent man should be able to solve this in a few years with the aid of these women, who bred very fast, while the climate, of course, was ideal for children to work in. After that we always felt better when we heard the latest Group story about ourselves. All very childish . . . shows how the climate gets one. . . .

A Pre-War Example

A new missionary came out, to work near one of another sect. The word "*mate*" means sick and also dead in the native language; similarly in pidgin English dead means sick, and when a man is dead in our sense, in pidgin English he is "dead finish." A native came and reported to newcomer A that old B had just baptised a native who was "*mate.*" A let out a terrible cry. Caught, *in flagrante delicto*, baptising a dead man! He wrote off a furious letter to his committee including a denunciation of the whole opposition mission. All of which was published in their mission magazine.



"*Tamate,*" sickness, is also a word of the spirit, and in the Banks is used of a large group of semi-secret societies, with badges such as these belts. The lowest belt, three feet long, is that of *Tamate Kwat*, a very important society named after the brother of creator Tagaro, relative of the legendary white Ambat

Sample passage from typical letter, one white woman resident

in the islands to another white woman resident in the islands:

> " Nothing seems to happen here. I'm still slugging at the machine sewing up trousers and dresses for Plachet's store, and as fast as I sew them up so they sell and it doesn't give me much of a spell. Fancy Mesulame dead of blackwater, poor chap, and Siller too. Trust you have quite got over the shakes. I have been having them myself, been off tucker for a couple of weeks, put it down to the rain we're having all the time, darn it. That Harrisson must be a fool . . ."

The interest of these word exchanges and considerable mutations lies in the fact that they parallel the way in which ideas and opinions have been spread, modified, and complicated within the framework of *native* culture.

Sources. Jacomb 182. The Freshwater story is slightly modified to avoid giving excessive offence.

TWO VOLCANOES

Virgen Maria; Dead Fire

IT MAY BE AS WELL, before we reach the last influence in these islands,—a subsidiary of the ill-named Yellow Peril, to review for the last time the course of the impacts that have built up the present insecure white position. Gaua was the first island to be landed on by any known white, 1606 Quiros.

Gaua had for long a reputation as unfriendly and savage. Apparently they were not cannibals. To-day it is much the largest island in the group without any white man living on it. Quiros named this Virgen Maria; he estimated the population at 200,000, and said, " In the centre it is rather

high, and thence its slopes extend in all directions towards the sea, so that it is a massive, with only the part towards the south a little broken by ravines. It is a land of many palm trees, plantains, verdure, abundant water and thickly inhabited." It is about twelve miles in diameter, the centre a huge volcanic crater, with an eight-mile-long, crescent-shaped lake. Mount Gharat stands over all. It is covered with hot springs and mud boilers, the Steaming Hill, which Zita Baker and I climbed for the first time.

Bligh must have seen Gaua on his open boat voyage after the mutiny on the *Bounty*. Bishops Selwyn and Patteson came in 1856; Patteson again 1862, when, " they had never before visited without being shot at, he walked inland wherever he pleased . . . the great crowds of men armed and suspicious of each other, were all friendly to him." Later the Bishop held a peace-making ceremony to which so many came that he had to climb a tree to be seen and heard by the crowds. By this time mission work was well under way on the adjacent islands, the Banks sub-group. On none of them had there been any physical resistance to the Jehovans.

Blackbirding started in 1867. Gaua was not as seriously affected as the smaller islands. In 1877 a Jew settled there. Fortunately for Gaua he moved to another island, where he died with a revolver in his hand at a ripe old age, leaving an enormous family and a pile of official correspondence, summonses and warrants in Vila, 250 miles south. Up in the Banks, the shooting is free. A French trader arrived a few years later; he persisted in cheating prices and in breaking tabus, so he was shot.

Native teachers from other islands brought the good news to Gaua. By 1874 there was a school attendance of four hundred; soon " an edifying demand for calico, all last year's calico being in full wear." The mission reports of this period named Gaua as a prize piece. The native population had unfortunately suffered greatly from introduced epidemics; some had been brought by the mission yacht

TUROSA FOUND IN THE DEEP JUNGLE ON THE GREAT CRATER ISLAND OF GAUA

The only stone effigy known in the islands. He ate our banana, I think. Or was it the 20,000 ?

Southern Cross. The population was probably somewhere about 15,000. Epidemics then followed in 1875, 1876, 1882, 1886 severe; so on,' 1928 measles, 1935 flu.

Marostomata was the star native teacher, 1878, on the east of the island. Native wars continued on the west. H.M.S. *Miranda* gave them a punitive call, when in 1884 some natives fired on a boat from H.M.S. *Flora*. Marostomata was ordained in that year. Only four years later he starred in a different capacity. The mission historian puts it:

" He who had done so much and such excellent work, whose influence and tact had so often stayed war and bloodshed, had now, under the direct influence of an evil (black) woman, lost every token of his own finer self, and the whole thing was bitter in the extreme." The population continued to decrease; it was around 2,000 in 1895.

The first resident missionary was kindly Rev. E. Tempest, 1918. He found population 1,250; he stayed five years until invalided out by blackwater. Soon after, the bishop found apathy returned to the mission natives, two villages back to heathenism. Rev. A. A. Butchard arrived 1928 and did five years. Though much liked by his parishioners, he accidentally started an intense hostility between two village groups over a minor matter; this split mission influence. He left.

It is hard to see what advantages the white has brought to 1935 Gaua. The population is down to 679, still decreasing. No medical work is done. Lately the mission has seldom sent over a missionary on visit. The one leader of thought and life, teacher Stephen, who was running the whole mission as best he could, was taken away to Omba in 1935 so that he might have a year's higher religious training, and be ordained deacon. Eighty years of effort, miles of type, reports, sermons and offertory, the regular support of Gaua teachers by Wycombe Abbey Girls' School and the Hon. Mary Fremantle, have faded in crossing oceans into black faces peering through tin-rimmed spectacles at hymn-books sung without music, someone on watch outside the grass church for black-faced tin-rimless snider-bulleted, tame

but peevish heathens; clean villages (a good Melanesian Mission thing) with the lovely Gaua women who foolishly giggle in 1934 as cheerfully as they worked in 1856. Perhaps they giggle at 20,000 heathen lost souls. Their giggles tinkle among the stone *witchingvat* bowls, piled at the feet of great banyan trees by the extinct tribes of old; the images that stood on the stone walls through the villages are fallen; there is just the one ugly little beauty Turosa, away in the jungle alone. We went one day and gave him an offering, although we were hungry on the long track: a banana. When we came back it had gone. We thought maybe 20,000 lost souls had reached up for it. A soul might have sung the old Gaua song:

Appoint your messenger . . .
The people have forsaken me.
I am like a cockle-shell on the beach, I have no companion.

I am a floating cloud; I have wandered hither to you.
Howl. My voice has reached the shore.
It has pierced the withered breast, the breast of youth.

Volcano Alive

Climate, wind, bad anchorage, mosquitoes galore, isolation and damp all make for irregularity; compel it on weak character.

Gaua, great quiet volcano, holds no monopoly. The fires of Ambrym smoulder on and roar. Ambrym is a Presbyterian island; lately also Catholic and Seventh Day Adventist. Here is what I can piece together of its Presbyterian history:

1883 Rev. W. B. Murray and wife, missionaries.
1884 Rev. W. B. Murray resigned, lung trouble from volcanic ash, and died.
1885 Rev. C. Murray and wife, brother of W. B.
1886 Mrs. C. Murray died.
1887 C. Murray resigned, ill health.
1888 S. Wilson offered.
1889 S. Wilson withdrew.
1890 Rev. Fairlie and wife. Wife died. Fairlie ill and withdrew.
1892 Dr. R. Lamb, M.A., M.B., Ch.M., B.D., and wife started hospital.
1893 Lamb's twin babies died.
Serious hurricane. £900 New Zealand Relief Fund.
1894 McDowall resigned.
1895 Lamb resigned, lung trouble.
1899 Mansfield resigned.
Dr. J. T. Bowie and wife arrived; a very fine surgeon.
1900 Mrs. Morris, nurse.
1902 McNaughton and wife, assistants. Wife died. McNaughton left.
1903 Bowie serious breakdown.
Dr. McCausland took his place. Thomson, assistant.
1904 McCausland resigned, wife very ill.
Rev. T. E. Riddle arrived.
1905 Thomson resigned.
1906 Gibbins, assistant.
1907 Gibbins resigned.
1908 Hargrave, assistant.
1912 Mrs. Morris resigned, ill health.
1913 Hargrave resigned, ill health.
Rev. Weir arrived.
December 7th. *Great volcanic eruption* wiped out whole hospital area, killed many natives and changed whole land. Bowie (who had returned) heartstrain. Some natives refused to be saved rather than leave the patch of ground they called home.

To-day there is no hospital; Rev. Wilfred Paton carries on the Presbyterian tradition. There are three Catholic priests, three nuns, two Seventh Day Adventists, several planters and traders. In 1923 there were 3,153 males to 2,438 females, mostly heathen. Not noticeably decreasing.

Plan

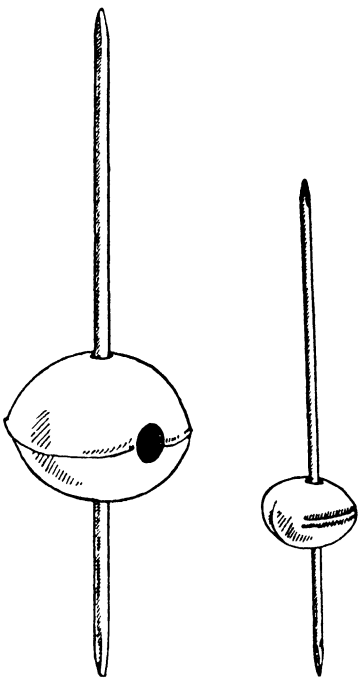
So Gaua and Ambrym chip and change. In the earliest days Rev. Geddie noted: " If a village is left unvisited for a few months, the natives are apt to become lukewarm," and " when teachers are left long alone, their piety is apt to suffer, and their interest in their work declines." Those eighty-year-old words are proved true each day. Steady attention equals stability and vitality. Intermittent white visits and a native-run mission are worse than nothing, than full heathenism, from all points of view. The lesson is not learned, except by Catholics. The others seem to have no pattern or forethought. Maybe one should blame those who do not give money to the missions; and those who give, but do not insist that the spending be administered by capable organisers in the islands.

Representative is the text quoted at the head of each number of the Presbyterian Mission's *Quarterly Jottings*, from an utterance by Rev. Inglis, second pioneer of Aneityum: " The New Hebrides Mission was commenced and has been carried on without any prearranged plan. God has originated movements and raised up agencies."

Gnats

No white man lives on Gaua. But there is Japanese Nugami. We spent many nights, squatting with his mangy cats in the hut that was centre of his considerable plantation. A huge picture of the last but one Mikado, the only ornament; behind the hut the graves of other Japs who had died in this lonely spot; carefully tended. Dear Nugami, he took our last whisky one night, to make offering at each grave; to come back staggering. The floor of the hut was usually covered with cracked crockery. For in those excellent

evenings we lived through the Russo-Japanese war, its terrific climax in the taking of Port Arthur, in which he took part. He told us how the Russian machine-gun emplacements mowed down the Japs over and over again. How the Japs must get to the foot of the fort and place their mines. The ascending piles of dead acted as cover for advance. Wave after wave went over the top. General Nugi sent a desperate message to the Mikado, he frantically messaged the Mikado that there would soon be no more men, the



BUT THE NATIVE CHILDREN PLAY WITH HUMMING-TOPS

death could not go on. He wished to commit hara-kiri for shame. The Mikado replied, as reported by Nugami, in our common language:

"What name, you cry out all same, Nugi? Never mind man 'e dead. 'E got plenty man 'e stop along Japan, 'e no

dead yet. You feller go go go, fight 'im white man finish. 'E got too much man 'e stop along place here, belong fight."

Sources. Armstrong. Baker 297. Buxon (1929) 437. Dton (especially Ambrym). Coombe 44, 67, 102. Durrad. Frater 41, 108. Geddie 394, 400. Jacomb 169. Markham. Montgomery. Rivers I. 78. Robertson 432. Selwyn. Speiser.
Govt. Report 1923. *Mel. Miss.*, 1881, 44, 56; 1883, 12. *Melanesia To-day*, 6. *Our Missionaries at Work*, Oct. 1913, Jan. 1914. *Quarterly Jottings*, April 1936. *Southern Cross Log*, May 1914, Jan. 1928.
Help from Zita Baker. Information from K. Coates, Père Bancarel, J. Fleming, Rev. E. Tempest.

PERILOUSLY YELLOW[1]

ASIA has power in numbers.

Monsieur Lançon imported Indo-Chinese coolies to his plantation on Epi in 1921. For this he received the award of the Legion of Honour.

Until 1921 the number of natives in white employ had risen from 600 in 1908 to nearly 4,000, a twelfth of the group population. Labour was therefore difficult to get. Asiatics had come into the islands, a good deal before this, though they are not much in the records or in group writings—their ability to keep out of them is a major element in their success. None came direct. They came from south or west, via Sydney and on stray ships from Queensland into New Caledonia or Port Vila, as stewards or stokers; they dropped ashore and got off the pavement when a white came by. Japs formed small colonies on outlying islands, never alone. They went in especially for shell-diving and selling booze. The Chinese went in for agriculture around Vila. Their

[1] It is possible to omit the rest of book VI, which is (some of it) a little intricate, more the concern of the student or specialist,—though it must be included for completeness. There is no absolutely essential loss to the "ordinary reader" who turns straight on to book VII.

inconspicuous extension was much helped by the coolie importation of the Tonkinese. The figures for these are:

Year	Tonkinese	Asiatics Co-opted British and French Subjects	White French Subjects	White British Subjects
1898	—	—	160	126
1900	—	—	297	176
1904	—	—	401	213
1920	—	—	954	262
1921	—	—	—	—
1922	—	—	—	—
1923	832	(144)	745	303
1924	1,471	(113)	750	274
1925	2,250	(100)	660	259
1926	3,620	54	692	232
1927	4,500	55	734	223
1928	5,106	61	842	228
1929	5,396	84	814	240
1930	4,853	96	950	232
1931	3,300	65	836	247
1932	1,813	70	834	234
1933	1,136	71	821	199
1934	1,181	140	763	216

The figures are kept in a very irregular fashion, especially those of French subjects, which sometimes include native wives. The earliest Asiatic figures, in column two, include a considerable number of temporary imported workers. Not included in the figures are 304 Chinese indentured coolies in 1928, 44 in 1931. There were about fifty Javanese from 1923–1933; in 1934 there was one. Among the Tonkinese the percentage of women fell proportionately as the total number declined again. The other Asiatics had only native women; official statistics give two Asiatic women to 140 men in 1934.

Many planters gave up native labour altogether when the Tonks arrived. Many Frenchmen made themselves so universally unpopular among the natives, that they could no longer find any who would come near their boats. These men leapt at the opportunity of an assured labour supply, sent down on five year contracts (subsequently reduced) through the French Government in Indo-China. As usual,

it was not all plain sailing. Some wrongs were done by planters to their Tonks; at least two were kicked to death. The Tonks murdered one planter. Then burned the largest French store in Vila. Old Mother Guillotine was set up in the dusty Vila street and some Tonks were publicly beheaded. The Government in Indo-China then insisted on observance of a complete labour regulation code, with 100 frs. clear wages per month, proper supervision, and bond to be deposited. Tonkinese labour became rather expensive. The Tonk was a better worker than the native at skilled jobs, though not at pure routine. He could not be bullied or overworked.

For a while the imported yellows enabled the planters to accelerate expansion, in a way they could not have done on local labour. When prices fell in 1930 the French were left with a great deal of half-cleared, half-planted or immature material; and with heavy debts.

The British, who were not permitted foreign labour, and whose recruiting had always been handicapped by more rigorous regulation than the French (including the fantastic King's Regulations of 1926, with 15 forms of schedule), but who were better liked by the natives, expected this immigration to favour them. But the general boom of that time was causing the natives to make their own small plantations of copra or cotton; these gave them increasing independence, a tendency that continues, though very low prices are against it. When prices are very low, native labour is plentiful; then no planter wants it. Then the native grows angry with the white, who has forced him to seek guns and tobacco, yet can no longer supply them.

Perilously Yellow

About 360 of the group's thousand odd whites live around the capital, Port Vila. By 1925 a considerable colony of Chinese were supplying these with vegetables, as well as with a source of artisan labour, cheaper than the white and more efficient than the native. At that time even unskilled day labour was up to 7*s.* a day; this for men who had

worked in the canefields of Queensland at £3 a year. The yellows were getting from 10*s.* to 18*s.* a day.

The Government Report for 1931, after a list of big stores, mentions "in addition there are numerous small shops in the hands of Japanese and Chinese traders." The little Jap, 1931, is the big Jap of 1934. Yet in the 1934 Report we find the same phrase, with one significant addition "in addition there are numerous small shops in the hands of French, Japanese and Chinese traders." You might suppose that the French were getting in on the small store game. That is not so. Yellow stores have got bigger and better and cheaper. By early 1935 Japanese goods were undercutting all others and swamping the group. In the northern islands it was difficult to buy anything that was not Japanese.

Living on a few pence, breeding like lemmings, dropping off steamers, discreet, polite, the only people in the New Hebrides who do not talk too much or get worked up over trivialities, the yellows make everything pay, get on with the natives, get their women, gain all along the line. Asia is waging a great war in the Pacific. A really modern war, in which you could hear a pin drop. This is the first bloodless contact in the New Hebrides. The only serious political crisis that could happen within the group to-day would be a yellow strike: it could dislocate trade, shipping, food supplies and skilled labour.

There has only been one peril in the Pacific, the white one. The yellow is only a repetition of inevitable cycles. Long before 1066 and all that, apparently Mongoloid peoples, yellow skinned and long haired, were impacting all over the Pacific in their wonderful exploratory voyages, especially strongly 10–14th centuries. It was probably such people from somewhere up north-west who brought the newer conception of one good god, the bird-of-prey as a higher idealism, redness so sacred. It was probably such explorers who came to Omba and Atchin long before Quiros; who may have reached America 700 years before Columbus.

Exam.

And anyhow, *why did the whites first come in numbers into the New Hebrides?* I hope you remember ! . . . . . .

The whites came to get sandalwood so that China might smell it, burn it, or use it as medicine. Tagaro came before Jehovah; Confucius created Ross Lewin and killed the six martyrs of Erromango.

TATTOO ON A TANNA WOMAN

Sources. Best. Bywater. Etherton and Tiltman. Fletcher. Fornander. Gulick, 284. Howorth. Kawakami. Roberts 7. Roosevelt. Scholefield 231. Smith. Williamson.
Govt. Reports. *Pac. Isl. Monthly*, 19/12/34, etc.
Information from M. Ballot, M. Habulot, E. Lançon, L. Wright.

MIGRATION

South and East

THE CHINESE AND JAPANESE are the latest movement into the new Hebrides. And, like all *known* movements before them, this one has been sporadic and indirect, from various directions except the north, though this was their place of origin. Throughout this history the white (Ambat or European) or black has come from the east at first, later also from the south. Sometimes, later, to a lesser extent from the west.

From the east came Quiros, Tangaroa, "Manu Kura," red colour, Bougainville, Cook, Alain Gerbault, Jack London, Douglas Fairbanks, first sandalwooders, first Jehovans, first government. From the south came blackbirding, first Bishops, warships and soldiers, Catholics, John G. Paton. Mission work, traders, planters, spread slowly northward within the group. There is no record of any pioneer contact from the north of the group. There are extremely few records of any contacts to the north at all, though the Solomons are much nearer than any group to the east, and have a teeming native population, a history almost equal to that of the New Hebrides, a British government and many mission sects, plus great Lever plantations, The Solomons have lived, within known history, independent of their neighbours to the south. The New Hebrides have at one time and another been closely linked and regularly ship-connected with New Zealand, Fiji, Samoa, Tonga; still are linked with Norfolk Island, Sydney (but not the northern part of Australia that lies to the west of the New Hebrides), New Caledonia and Tahiti. All are east or south or west. There is to-day no contact to the north. Within the group, influences have regularly spread from island to island, from east to west or from south to north. The New Hebrides have evolved their last century and a half of culture change without northern influences. (This does not mean that there were not earlier northern influences.)

North

All accepted theories of New Hebrides and Melanesian culture say, without hesitation, that it was built up by waves of immigrants, first probably pygmoid (on rafts ?), coming down from the north, passing eastward over northern New Guinea and then turning south-east to the Solomons and on into the New Hebrides. Different authorities have theorised their own different waves, through their studies of certain aspects in material or immaterial culture; these have not so far been synchronised and cannot of course be demonstrated positively.

When I started to write this book, I took these migrations from the north for granted, but as I went through the data it all grew more doubtful and puzzling. I found that the reason anthropologists had decided that such movements had occurred was mainly because there was a black-skinned, woolly-haired race in western Pacific, but not in the east. These folk, the Melanesians, were thus clearly best to be explained by a steady move down the western chain. The pale-skinned Polynesians, of the eastern Ocean, as another wave or series of waves that kept farther east.

But (1) Why did the Melanesians come south; the Polynesians keep east ?
(2) How did the Melanesians get south ?

(1) raises an almost hopeless problem, in so far as we can never fully understand the urge that peopled this ocean, reached islands that can only be reached by voyages which, when undertaken by a modern white, result soon after in a book with four photos of the ship concerned (different coconut trees in the background). One can easily understand two great movements following in the same direction, along connected lines of islands at first, such as occur in the part they would first enter ; *with* tide and wind, and, in particular, towards the rising sun. It is much harder to understand why one stream should turn south against wind drifts and into unhealthy islands; one take one direction

and one another. Little consideration has been given to this problem.

(2) is more difficult. The reason why, within history, there has been no northerly influence in the New Hebrides, is because wind and current are against it. The pilot books, meteorological maps and United States quarterly wind and drift maps, show an overwhelming strength and persistence of winds through the New Hebrides from east and south (including the south-east trades) through the year. Only in January to March are there any north-westerly winds, backwash of the north-west monsoon; at that time, too, the current drift that sets to east and north through the islands (up to twenty-five knots a day) is fairly negative.[1] A Melanesian canoe has no keel; it may perhaps sail with wind full abeam. In order to reach the New Hebrides from the Solomons it seems almost essential to go during the first three months of the year, when there are about 12 per cent calms and 30 per cent possible winds. The sailors must be skilful and run first south-east and then south-west, about six hundred miles, with no large islands or high land ahead to lead on the voyager. On the other hand this is the hurricane season, of frequent very bad seas in the New Hebrides area; men keep off the sea at this time, though the early pioneers may not have done so. As for raft navigation from the north—it seems hopeless. Paddles help; they would negative the drift, if worked day and night.

I am no yachtsman, though a fair canoeist. Yachtsmen, who have examined the data before me, tell me that it would be a very tricky hit-and-miss business, making this voyage. Much more so when the earlier voyagers cannot have known where they were going or whether there was anything ahead, with huge expanses of sea in which even the whole New Hebrides can easily be missed.

These considerations make a wide and continued series of purposive *waves*, such as theory often requires,

[1] At about two miles above the earth the anti-trade winds blow evenly; these may largely influence the distribution of insects, birds, and wind-spread plants.

more difficult for the non-anthropologist to accept. To the Polynesians such voyages would be almost a challenge. But the Hebridean Melanesians are the worst canoed and least nautical of Pacific islanders,—not at all as one would expect if they had made the most difficult journeys; rather as if they were the detritus of the worst voyagers, driftaways and suchlike.

It is easy to bring in people from the east, or to bring people into the eastern Pacific if they enter well to the north of the equator. All recorded drifts into New Hebrides have come from the east; Dixon points out that of many recorded Polynesian drifts in the east, only one is from west to east. There are recorded drifts from Japan to America; and into the Carolines. As also a drift from Tonga to Vanikoro, between the New Hebrides and Solomons, 1,500 miles; fifty men, all killed on arrival, about 1820. Two boys drifted from the Gilberts to the Carolines, 1,300 miles in 1918: they were at sea ninety days, living on rainwater, six sea birds that they caught, and one small shark.

There is better agreement among theorists in Polynesian migration waves. It appears that there was an early stock, about which practically nothing is known, the Manahune; followed by two major waves, Williamson's pre-Tangaroans and Tangaroans; Handy's Old Tahitians and Arii; Stimson's Ioan and Tangaroans; Sullivan's Caucasians and Mongoloids; Churchill's Protosamoans and Tongafiti; Dixon's Palæ-Alpine and Alpine. Some seem to have made Fiji, in the central ocean, a diffusion centre about A.D. 450.

West

Pacific waves are supposed to have originated far northwest, and the Easter Island=Mahenjo Daro script evidence relates the remotest and most easterly of all Polynesian islands (which has strongly Melanesian physical strains) with the culture of a 2000 B.C. buried city in the Indus valley ! It is interesting that years ago Fornander, the greatest scholar on Pacific mythology (which has scarcely been considered in the building up of Melanesian theory), deduced from legends

that one Polynesian home was in N.W. India, among an Aryan stock (Hitler note) long before Vedic eruption, a Cushite civilisation obscuring Aryan traits. Smith follows his technique; he associates an upheaval—due to the Buddhist reformer Gautama—with the setting out of these Proto-Aryans. One great outpush seems to have started eastward about 450 B.C., reached Java 65 B.C., on through Borneo to Hawaii, in the second century A.D. Other authorities have adduced Brahmin (Kio), Hindu (cremation), Buddhist [but main influences pre-Buddhist], American Indian (certain clubs, various vegetables), Ancient Peru (art forms), Kwantung Chinese (Tan-kah-lo = Tangaroa), Aino of Japan, Philippine (on Reao Is.), and Madagascar (negroid, language and navigational) influences. Many New Hebridean traits are clearly distant relations of culture features with far wider distribution, including ancient western civilisations, certainly far westward. Fornander has analysed many myths of the eastern groups and their parallels in Bible legends; he associates the Hawaiian myths with Hebrew-Chaldean. Naturally some have gone as far as to locate lost tribes of Israel, including one on Efate in the central New Hebrides. As Rivers has said—see the quotation on the first page of this book—in the New Hebrides there have been preserved samples of cultures which have contributed to the building of some, perhaps all, of the great historical civilisations of the world.

It has been suggested that Polynesians may have introduced the outrigger back to India in pre-Dravidian times; that some Melanesians may have been living on American coasts when the Spaniards arrived; there is much other chaos of uncertain ideas.

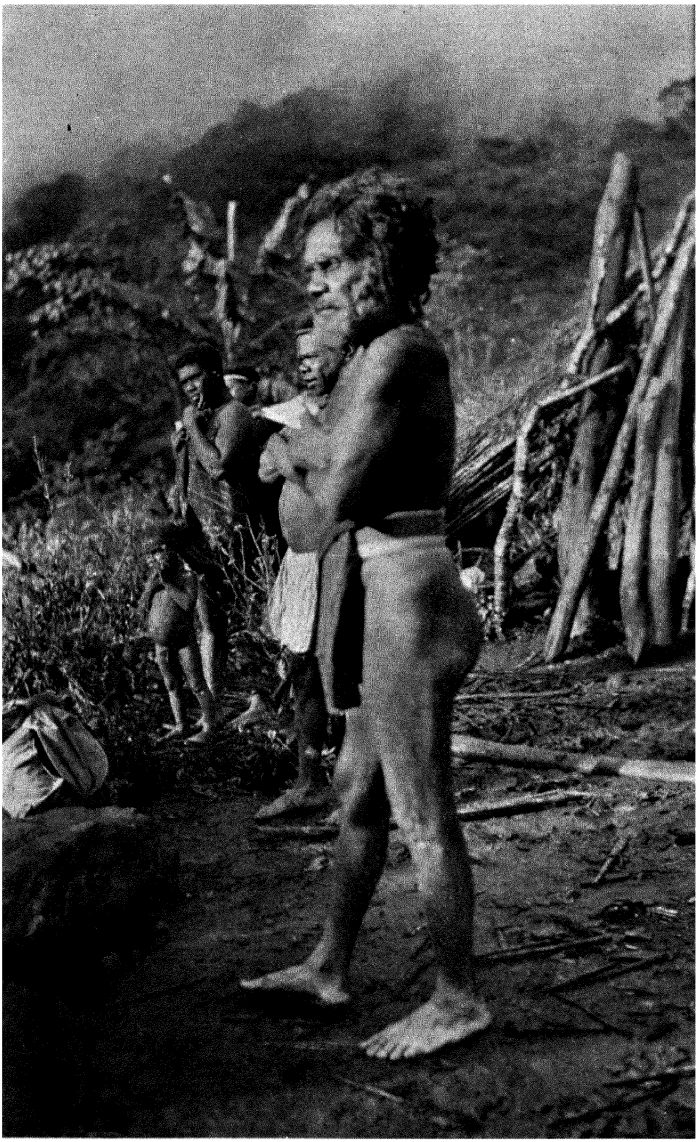
It is certain that *some* major Pacific influences have come from the distant north-west, and that one of the latest of these includes a section of the present Polynesians. It is also certain that there has been no Pacific continent, or important change in wind and currents, since the Pleistocene glacial period. (Incidentally it is extremely unlikely that there has been a major change in Pacific formations

since the Upper Carboniferous.) Winds and currents support New Hebridean native mythology and known history, by bringing many new influences into the Hebrides largely from the east.

Possibilities

Some of these movements were deliberate, perhaps, *Manu kura* or land quests, such as are known in mythology. Others, undoubtedly, accidental drifts. I believe that the part played by drifts and accidental movements has been greatly underrated, while it is seldom remembered that one man and woman are enough to have populated an island. The general theory, of big waves, from the north, needs re-examination; single canoes and vagrants are often more probable. It is possible that some of the Melanesians came into the Pacific along somewhat the same route as the Polynesians, keeping eastward; that they came through Polynesia, then passed westward via Fiji on wind and current into the New Hebrides in this great circle, which is nevertheless an easier route. That the Polynesians came later in their movements, along the same track, to encounter these Melanoid people (the Manahune ?), and to conquer or absorb them. That the Polynesians had not yet reached the New Hebrides (backwater) to the same extent as had their predecessors, when the white man arrived. In fact that the arrival of the white stopped a gradual westward expansion of Polynesian racial influence and dominance, which had also not yet swamped the Melanoid strain at the other edge of the ocean, at Easter Island and some of the easterly Tuamotus.

I believe, really, that every sort of impact and to and fro happened in the western Pacific, to build up this extraordinarily complex and locally differentiated culture. Thus, for example, patrilineal kinship and megalithic evolutions have gone on and spread even since the whites came. Theory has made Melanesian culture complex; not complex enough. This is a tangle which cannot be sorted out on the basis of our present knowledge. Current dogmas do not cover the ground, or the sea, nearly well enough.



MOUNTAIN FOLK OF SANTO, SHOWING SOME OF THE EARLIEST PHYSICAL STRAINS

The first man is a chief and he looks quite Australoid. The second is noticeably pygmoid. Women in the background—and the inevitable mists

Accepted theories make little allowance for internal evolution within a tribe; for individual effects, accidents, neurotics, misinterpretations, the terrifically complex criss-cross of ideas and objects that is for ever going on (particularly as a result of the reciprocating system) in the New Hebrides. Some idea of these factors may have been gained from my accounts of native culture, already given, and to be given in the account of Big Nambas cannibals (to follow).

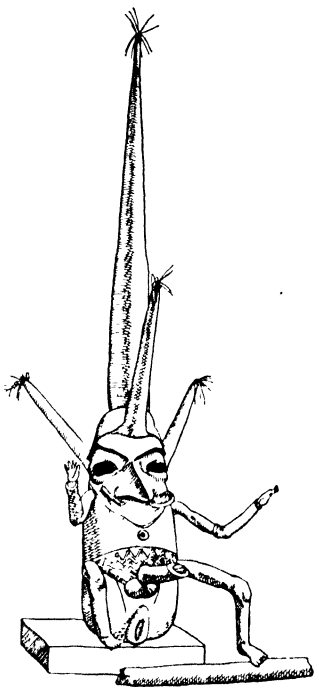
The standard work on the area is Rivers' *History of Melanesian Society*. This has been regarded as a great scientific work. That is a mistake. It is only great prose. It is a brilliant piece of circular subjective reasoning and creative literature. It is the result of a short study, mostly among mission natives on board a mission yacht. Volume one is filled with anthropological data. Volume two, the same size, contains the theoretical chat about the first volume. Everything in the New Hebrides is explained (though large areas are still culturally unknown) on a perfect pattern of logic (was Quiros logical?). Everything is brought by migrations of people, "kava people" and "betel people" especially (Rivers never studied the botanical distribution of the betel palm, and the fact that kava *Piper methysticum* is an exceedingly close relative of *Piper betle*, which may throw simple light on the reason why the " betel people " did not get far south. Kava-chewing may easily have developed as a betel-substitute, without any separate " migrations"). The earliest people are apparently allowed no culture of their own, it is all brought to them by waves of kava or betel or cremation or sitting-internment or other people; or as the result of the interaction of others with them. They are not even allowed to have a bird, the Megapode, *Malau*, who has already come into this story as the sacred peace symbol of Matanavat (page 55). Rivers came across a reference to the possible domestication of this bird and its occurrence on lonely Niuafou Island, between Fiji and Samoa, where it is called *Mallow*. So he says (this is typical of his method):

" It is most unlikely that the bird was carried from the New Hebrides to Niuafou or *vice versa*, and according to

the scheme of this book its presence in these two places is the result of an immigrant culture common to them, viz. that of the kava people."

If I had not happened to have specialised in the birds of that part of the world I should not have noticed anything wrong with that crack. What is wrong is:

(*a*) That the Niuafou bird is *Megapodius pritchardi*, the New Hebrides one *Megapodius layardi*, and they do not happen to look anything like each other.



TEMES MALAU, THE MEGAPODE SPIRIT

A wooden mask eight feet high which reaches half-way down the thighs of the wearer

(*b*) There are seventeen forms of *Megapodius* occurring in the Pacific. To allow that they were introduced from one stock by the " kava people " (who are comparatively late-comers) would revolutionise the whole of current evolutionary theory.

Even Rivers would perhaps hesitate before adopting the only course open to him when faced with this difficulty—seventeen different immigrations of kava people, each with its own special kind of *Megapodius*. But:

(*c*) Even if he did, it would not do much good, as the genus is confined to the Pacific and Australia. So where was it introduced from? But then, the same may be said about his "kava people": where did they bring their pleasant kava habit from?

There is a widespread native story. They had no drug in the islands. One day a man saw a rat nibbling at the root of a bush. While he watched, the rat began to wobble, to totter around; then fell fast asleep. Altogether a very foolish performance. The man was interested. He tried a leaf of the same bush; it had no effect. Then the stem; that tasted sharp and interesting. Finally he dared the root. In a little while, having chewed up a bit of root, he began to feel dizzy; soon he thought nice long, wavy, intricate, unearthly thoughts. Until he fell asleep by the rat. Thus man found kava.

Sez who?

Sources. The above negative conclusions have only been arrived at after consulting a great deal of literature, including: Ballard. Bastian 283. Barnard. Beazley. Best. Biasutti. Brown. Caillot 8. Chartier 207. Codrington 351. Cook 295. Deacon. Dixon 369. Fornander. Foster 244, 259. Friederici. Frobenius. Gill. Graebner, Handy. Hevesy. Henry. Hocart. Hooke, Hornell. Howorth. Imbelloni. Joyce 245. Keane 415. Lacoupérie. Lang 5. Leverd. Macdonald. Mawson. Mead. Rivers II. 461, etc. Ross. Roberts. Rose 176. Sarasin. Schneider. Schmidt 1021. Shapira. Sittig. Skinner. Smith. Speiser. Stimson. Stokes. Suas. Sullivan. Tattevin. Taylor 70, 340. Thilenius. Tischner. Thompson. Treager. Williamson. Most of these, including those with no page references, deal at length with culture origin or migration. Information and criticism from Dr. A. C. Haddon, F.R.S.

Animals and Plants: Berland. Blatter (1916) 333, (1926) 471. Buxton (valuable summaries). Cheesman (1936) 19. Castillo 274. Lister 749. Meyrick. Rebel. Schmeltz 74. Seeman 260. Spilsbry. Taylor. Watt 291. *Cat. Birds, Brit. Mus.*, xxii. 462. Information from Dr. J. G. Dandy and N. B. Kinnear.

Tides and Geological Problems: Born. Daly (many papers). Dana. Harrisson 102. Holmes. Imhaus 126. Reeds 71. Rue. Schucert. Vaughan. Vissher. Vissher and Hodge. Wegener. Wood 26. *Pacific Pilot.* Philip's Mercantile Marine Atlas, 1923, 27. U.S. Hydro. Surveys and Quarterly Charts. Information from Terence Bird (Air Ministry), Rear-Admiral J. Edgell (Senior Hydrographer, Admiralty), J. Marchant, Prof. J. Proudman, Michael Spender (especially).

CHARACTER

" *The White Way* "

A PERSON with a public-school background can understand the ideas and attitudes of a cannibal Malekulan as easily as he can understand those of a Welsh coal-miner or a Bessarabian. The intricacy of Malekula is in its economics of piggery, its dancing, legends, and its relations with nature and spirits. With some study and enough direct experience it is not difficult to understand the rather simple *material* conditions that limit much native behaviour, that simplify the problem, as compared with any similar study in Europe. While in Malekulan character there is reflected much of the unity and sequence which is their life, a rather single track life for the individual, with few intense complications or alternatives, wants or repressions. There are important differences in outlook, behaviour and method, between, say, an Englishman and a Pole. The Malekulan has perhaps more differences. Yet I doubt if it is possible to label any of these as distinct or incomprehensible.

I reject the (now unfortunately widespread) school of thought, sponsored by D. H. Lawrence and Sherwood Anderson, that the native way of thinking cannot be understood by the white, that the black way is fatal to the white way; a reverse development of Riversism (cf. page 269). This view has, of course, the validity of any mysticism; also it is true for unbalanced men; while we may agree that no two human beings can ever understand each other without some serious emotional upset, like love or drink or prayer. The Balliol way is fatal to Billingsgate; certainly fatal *in* Billingsgate ! Dancing and war are the Malekulan approaches to understanding. So it is necessary to dance and to fight before you may understand fully.[1] One only

[1] T. E. Lawrence wrote: " Then madness is very near, as I believe it would be near the man who could see things through the veils at once of two customs, two educations, two environments." Against this we must put another remark of his: " I was not modest, but ashamed of my solitary unlikeness, which made me no companion, but an acquaintance complete, angular, uncomfortable, as a crystal. With men I had a sense always of being out of depth."

needs to watch a "savage" becoming "civilised," to see how ephemeral many of our superficial criteria are. The missionaries, who publish their competitive lists of conversions, are over-stating the fact: that there is no difficult transition between "cannibal" and "Christian." Environment and education are the determinants in Malekula, as in Mayfair or Wapping. When these are understood at first hand, much that to the scholar in New York or Munich seems illogical, prelogical, or something of the sort, turns out to be an ordinary part of the life of the people who lead it. While straightforward misunderstanding results from our easy confidence, our belief that we are the only civilised ones.

Thus, many observers have accused the Hebridean of ingratitude. When a Hebridean is given a present, he shows no gratitude. The explanation is simple; he shows none because he feels none. In this society, where every man can have more than enough by his own effort, the exchange of presents has been raised into a system of rivalry, a process of over-production by the more vigorous who give to others, who must then strive to return the gift. By this means, no man is content with enough; everyone lives on his toes, competing in giving. What is a miserable bushman to do if a white man gives him, for no reason at all, a very nice axe? He cannot repay. He loses face. So he is justly angry. And the white is justly angry.

Many such misunderstandings have arisen through the mental attitudes of the whites. Even the tenets of anthropology lay no stress on approach. It is the anthropologist's custom to detach his daily life from the people among whom he is working, to eat his own foods; he should not even wish to dream his own dreams, if he is to see past the notebooks full of intricate and interesting superficials, which he will take home for the benefit of his adolescent science. There is so much of interest that one can spend all day writing notes; but the wood gets lost for the trees. What oceans of error we should have been spared if those who wrote about the "savage," primitive mentality, had done more primitive living! If Lévy-Bruhl had spent a fortnight among savage

fleas, Rivers gone ashore more often from the *Southern Cross*. Surely recorded customs have no standing and point unless the conditions and necessities which determine them, which cause and are caused by them, are well understood. A man should keep his notebook out of the way until he can do (moderately well) at least two things peculiar to the people he is living among.

The savage is no longer savage when he is no longer fighting and fearing and making. Yet it is on missionised or pacified " savages " that most of our modern theory is based.

Havelock Ellis

A good description of Hebridean life in general is this: " He who carries farthest his most intimate feelings is simply the first in a file of a great number of other men, and one becomes typical from being to the utmost degree oneself." If this means anything definite, it means (among others) Malekula. The phrase is the *leit motif* of the *New Spirit* by Havelock Ellis.

Havelock Ellis has also written, in *The Dance of Life*: " If we are indifferent to the art of dancing, we have failed to understand not only the supreme manifestation of physical life, but also the supreme symbol of spiritual life." In the New Hebrides this understanding is in every man and woman. Excitement and ecstasy gather on a slow fire here, rarely sudden, but built up over months of preparatory ritual and ascending interest to flower from the blood of sacrifice into hawk dances or *Na-leng Longtisaba* (page 36). In describing his eugenic world of high culture, Croce and Ballet, Dr. Ellis has brought our civilisation round that full circle, where, in its own good time, it will follow him, who is simply the first in a file. As the *Shorter Oxford Dictionary* puts it: " *Civilise* . . . to make civil; to bring out of a state of barbarism; to instruct in the arts of life. . . ."

Is

The primary conditioning of native life is *tradition*. What is not done, is *not* done. Without writing, memory is perfect, tradition exact. The growing child is taught all that is

known,—hundreds of songs word perfect, minute details of rites, a name for each living thing and the growth of the jungle. There are painful initiations and pig payments, into higher education. No people were ever more exact in their observance of etiquette: your attitude to your mother-in-law or paternal uncle, whose jokes you laugh at—for there is lots of laughter, especially over the slip-on-a-banana type of slapstick; silence before elders; whose paths you may use and where you may run; how you may balance your spear in the presence of a friend; when you can make a hole in the ground; which bird or fish may be killed in which month. There are hundreds of such regulations, almost as arbitrary as the " privs " of Harrow, but often backed by fascinating stories or feelings, and never (even secretly) broken by ordinary folk.

Morality is rigorous, there is short shrift for the adulterer or thief—if he is found out; such transgressions, however, are against individuals or their property (land and wives). Therefore they are not backed by the law of tabu to the same rigorous extent as are the less obvious sins against etiquette, against group-procedure. The complexity of behaviour is tiring to the novice, until its compensating belief is understood. This one-faith one-track system, works well among a people who have little time to investigate their environment. They are too busy living, and each individual is a complete master of life. He knows how many eggs each sort of bird lays. He does not ask why one sort lays three eggs and never more than three eggs. A bushman once asked me to explain my coming so far to a strange people, just to find out at what time of year parrots lay their eggs and flying foxes bear their young—for that is what our expedition's objective boiled down to. He knew it already. Didn't we know all about such things in my own country? he asked. He considered the white man quite mad, as do all good Hebrideans. So much hinges on the question *How?* All our own problems have started from How; from the time when we found that man might beat nature.

In the old native societies there was no discontent, nor free

thought, except by those men who had reached such eminence that they were not bound by the restrictions of earth. Unlike us, these folk do not criticise each other as characters, as abstract personalities related to some vague ideal of what a man should be and what the speaker is. Discussable happiness or unhappiness, words that now obsess us, are not a part of these people. They have no monstrous illusions about human decency and freedom. Because they are. Each is an *is* and a *will be*. When he is dead he is still an *is*; not a *has been*.

Life is hard work. For months of the year very hard. Iron has enormously lightened this work, saving time which was not meant for other than gardening or carving; thus giving an impression of lazy. The native with iron would still think a vicar, or an undergraduate, almost unbelievably lazy. If you come into a heathen bush village any time from late morning to late afternoon, and find people about the place, be sure there is something wrong; it may be better for you to get out again.

When there is not hard work with the body, there is more than enough for the mind.

The village is a team of strong individualists; the chief is the captain. There are no classes. There is no communism, no dictator—only a dictatorship of the past.

A man's private life is in his huts and his women; into these he may put much feeling. There is much jealousy. Native male sexuality is much the same as our own. Women are far more dynamic than in Europe, almost always the instigators of adultery. Thus they may cause serious trouble and war. In fact, through the body, women stir up discontent, combating masculine complacency. The women live lives with much less emotional fullness than the men; it is hard to assess this side of female life, how much they feel their restrictions; females live mostly away from the men, and they never bother about such an abstract problem. I do not think that the women feel inferior or downtrodden. They have the advantage of being in a minority, therefore much in demand.

MY FRIENDS KALI AND MORKATE, WAR CHIEFS

Both men of ability, intelligence and dynamic vigour. Morkate has killed two dozen enemies; he is the most feared cannibal in north Malekula

The culture of the islands is not at all stable. It has always been receptive to new accretions and interactions. Reciprocation, exchange and acquisition have built up the social structure, with the purposive or accidental arrival of strangers, through accidents, neurotics and misinterpretations, or the actions of men who have risen so high on the social pig-ladder that they are no longer of earth; they are hawks, unconfined by earthly rules.

The drive from behind of tradition, the vigour of competition and prestige, the importance of keeping the village and individual end up, and equal (and better), with occasional impacts and changes, keep many bush tribes to-day mentally powerful and themselves, despite the white civilisation that has been milling around them for a century, and has undermined their true balance of health and of labour with stone.

Humans

I may sum up this interpretation—it is of course my personal interpretation of a very difficult subject—by quoting from a paper to the Royal Geographical Society:

> " Tradition confines the native between, as it were, two parallel lines. One line bounds the spiritual and ghostly beliefs, often vague; the other determines down to the tiny details of domestic and food relationship. Within these confines the whole community is pushed by the forces of psychology in one zigzagging progression. It is as if the whole of England were one class of business man."

A class who were never vandal, anti-social or mean, who never controlled the physical destinies of others. And I wound up that part of my paper by saying, perhaps not very coherently:

> " The New Hebridean, as I know him, is something like Spengler's Apollonean man, but that his life has something of the Faustian (modern) conflict and inner development, organised and ritualised into an almost conflictless involuntary process. From the point of view, say,

of a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, a New Hebridean is not an attractive fellow; but we must remember that to a Hebridean, a Fellow of this Society would seem at least as unpleasant, ill-mannered and ignorant. There would be less chance of the Hebridean openly showing his dislike."

I talked about this to a person whom I thought ought to know a good deal about life in the broad view, and he, H. G. Wells, said: " It seems to me, after all, that human beings are all very much the same."

That, also, is my view. But what they are—well, God knows. . . .

Opinions

A small selection of other white men's opinion of the New Hebridean will re-angle the above.

An admiral in 1840:

" They, monkey-like, no sooner comprehend that they could, without serious displeasure, annoy me by the vibration of the ground at the moment of (survey) observation, than they commenced simultaneous poundings with billets of wood, and threw stones high in the air, which fell near and risked the instruments . . . they appear to be very low in the scale of human beings, little inclined to traffic, filthy, insolent, and troublesome as a people. Of course, there are exceptions. . . . It is very probable that another day's sojourn would have made us better acquainted."

A Presbyterian missionary (Paton):

" Exceedingly ignorant, vicious and bigoted, and almost void of natural affection."

Lady novelist:

" Worse fiends in hell or out of it than natives, not the wildest imagination of madhouses could picture."

German ethnologist:

" The manners of the crudest (Hebridean) savages are far superior to those of most of the whites they meet."

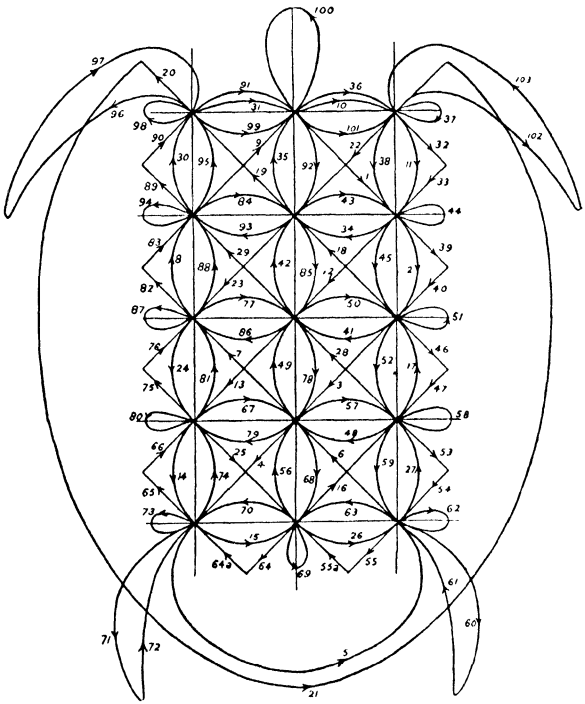
An independent observer (1872):
"They are as low and degraded a people, inferior to almost every barbaric race that I have heard of."
An eminent biologist:
"Some of the finest men I know are New Hebridean natives."
Another Presbyterian missionary:
"The natives have the reputation of being the greatest liars on earth . . . lying is almost universal."
Church of England Bishop:
"They were remarkably honest, and I found that I could leave my house (on Maewo) open, with all my stores for days at a time, and no one would take anything."
More lady novelist:
"Treacherous, murderous and vindictive . . . he is almost inconceivably clumsy and stupid in a house: almost devoid of gratitude, almost bare of natural affection . . . yet there are a few things to say in his favour; he is wonderfully honest."
A Melanesian missionary:
"Another man I found quietly seated alone with his head bent down and the tears falling one after another to the ground, the very picture of deep and silent sorrow."
Wife of a pioneer settler:
"They are untruthful, lazy and ungrateful. The more you do for them, the less they will do for themselves."
A blackbirder:
"Guileless persons love to represent the South Sea Islander as a grown-up child; but he is one who would prove a deal of trouble to his parents!"
A Presbyterian:
"They have a good deal of the guile or power of deceit you sometimes find in children; but they have also the fidelity of children and the affection that no change in outward circumstances can shake."
A blackbirder:
"When middle-aged he cannot be altered, except for the worst. Take him away from savagery as a child, and *you can make him what you like.*"

An unmarried lady:

" It will be an excellent thing for the youth of the island when they learn all that fatherhood and motherhood should imply."

Bishop Selwyn:

" When this girl died her mother said she did not want



CONTINUOUS-LINE SAND DRAWING OF A TURTLE

Follow the sequence of lines (as numbered) and you will get a glimmer of native character. Compare the super-modern art of Paul Klee, which Leopold Zahn describes as " going for a walk with a line"; Herbert Read as " the open page of imagination, the wider margin of what Freud calls the preconscious mind "

to survive her, and implored her own sons to kill her and bury her with her daughter . . . they obeyed her, and wrapped her up alive with the corpse, and then her sons

trod her life out. And this was going on as I was quietly sitting at tea three hundred yards off."

Sources. Baker (1935), 211. Belcher 60. Bice 43. Campbell 142. Coombe 96. Elkington 84. Goodenough 238. Grimshaw 184, 221. Jacomb 90. Markham 85, 239. Paton 73. Perry (1935) 332. Rannie 76, 161. Rivers (S.O.) 15. Selwyn 24. Speiser 210. Thomas 194, 271. Wawn 16, 48, 76.
Mel. Miss., 1878, 42; 1879, 22.
Criticism from Havelock Ellis and Clive Entwistle.
Most observers agree that native savagery was increased by white impact: Frater 137, 147, 160. Goodenough 296, 333. Jacomb 113, 219. Markham 228. Romilly 16, 179, 187; also Alexander, Baker, Cheesman, Cook, Coote, Don, Erskine, Milne, Palmer, etc.

ART

THE NATIVE is first an agriculturist, second an artist: never a scientist. He accepts what is known, without further question. There is no artistic native or great artist or respect for art: because all are artists and their art is an essential branch of their green uniform tree. Naturally some will be finer carvers, more exquisite dancers or especial story-tellers. They may be paid for their services. No man is unable to carve, dance and tell stories.

The impulse to art form is tradition, via ritual (and religion). The object of art form is the satisfaction of function or of ritual; and the intensification of life beyond mere necessity into beauty, fury or ecstasy. It plays its part in a whole cycle of pre-birth to after-death, in sacrifice and resurrection especially—into this pattern all things fall. Creative art is very rare; tradition dominates this part of life as it dominates all parts. In any tribe the war-clubs, for example, are of only two or three types. One of the commonest has four knobs at the end, always and only four knobs; not three knobs or five knobs. No man would consider the making of other than four.

The method of art is exact imitation through training, with tabus that must be respected during the period of art-work. Intangible things co-operate in every effort of making, from human conception to canoe building. A man does not carve a bird figure; he partakes in the carving. In every incident of life, except marriage, some art form is concerned.

The art of dancing is, in their own view, their highest. By now that should be clear to the reader. The Na-leng dances (page 35) include dramatic performances and improvised pantomime, sometimes exceedingly funny. Dancing is not done independent of ritual. Music is used almost exclusively with dancing, not as a thing in itself. There are ten sorts of musical instruments, notably the slit-gong, pan-pipe, nose flute and musical bow. Flute music has (for me) a simple fairy charm; gong music depends on volume, rhythm, and incessant clamouring for physical action. Gong rhythms are so complicated that no white seems able to learn or transcribe them. Song is similarly intricate, forceful. The musical system is on a high descant, pentatonic principle with modal variations and undivided semitones. I have never heard music with more social content or physiological effect.

Songs are a form of story-telling. Words are a native art with an intricate circular pattern. The lay-out and content in the thousand myths which every child learns (often word perfect, and one story may last hours) are a whole library. While every incident in daily life can form a story. Any native may tell you, for a couple of hours, about how Taveta tried to steal Karai's woman. He will describe exactly how the missionary came, he picked up a piece of orange peel, just here, he held it in two fingers, these fingers, so, talking, there, and he said the following words. . . . And his right foot was against the far side of the root, just out of sunlight, the left foot was wearing a groove as deep as a thumb nail, he seemed to be nervous; some hairs, grey ones, were over his ears, etc., etc., on and on, incredible observation and detail—yet so well done that it does not get boring, the hearers are held in a web of spun words.

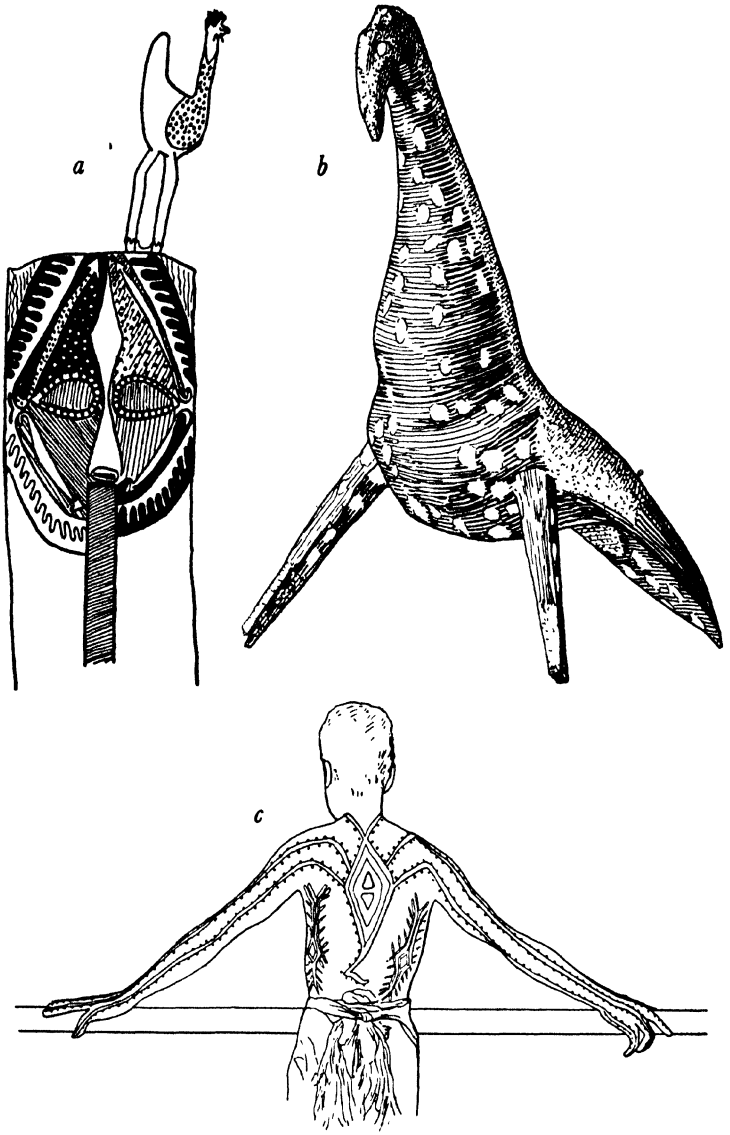
Conversational wit and repartee are rare. The essence of good Hebridean talk is monologue. A conversation or council is a series of uninterrupted monologues—a good arrangement. The natives easily learn to write after white impact. They regard it as a curious and useless performance. They say: " Cannot a man remember and speak?" They will also point out: " Missionaries say they brought writing to here. They brought a new sort with more marks to be made to have meanings. But there is a writing belong black man." They call, in particular, simple angular marks on the lips of Santo pottery " writing." Also the extraordinarily elaborate continuous-line sand-drawings (p. 350). The angular patterns on clothing mats are, in a way, writing. Each type of system of lines tells a story; represents a grade, a privilege, a payment and legend. So do the angular patterns of bead armlets. On such objects, woven or strung by the women, patterns are always angular. There is no loom in most islands ; the mechanical difficulties thus exclude curvilinear or representative designs, for work which is slow and intricate anyway. Garments and ornaments are not made without designs, nor is pottery. There is no potter's wheel; pottery is moulded flat at Wus, built up in layers on a cross-section of bamboo at Prespea a few miles away.[1]

Curvilinear design is rare in most parts. An acute angle of about 40 degrees predominates. Houses and lay-outs are angular. The people are angular-minded. But on Erromango, in the south, the houses and many things are circular, as in much of Polynesia. Spirals derived from frigate-birds' beaks have become a dominant art form in north Melanesia, as also New Zealand. In the New Hebrides a sacred banner, in

[1] Pot-making seems to have died out a considerable time ago in many areas. Wherever the jungle is cleared, pottery will be found in fragments all over the place. In many parts there is no native name for pottery; it is called *nesaucepan* ! Possibly scanty clay supplies may have been exhausted or dried out. The tabus on pot-makers in Santo, where it is women's work, are very elaborate. They include long periods of seclusion indoors, peculiar diet, periods when urination is forbidden. If any tabu is broken all the pots will break. Cf. Harrisson 300, where pottery is further discussed; Layard and Deacon, who ascribe pottery in south Malekula to the white culture-heroes Ambat; Goodenough 322; Quiros mentions pottery in Big Bay, Santo, in 1606; Rivers 193; Perry (1935) 131; Haddon; Schurig.

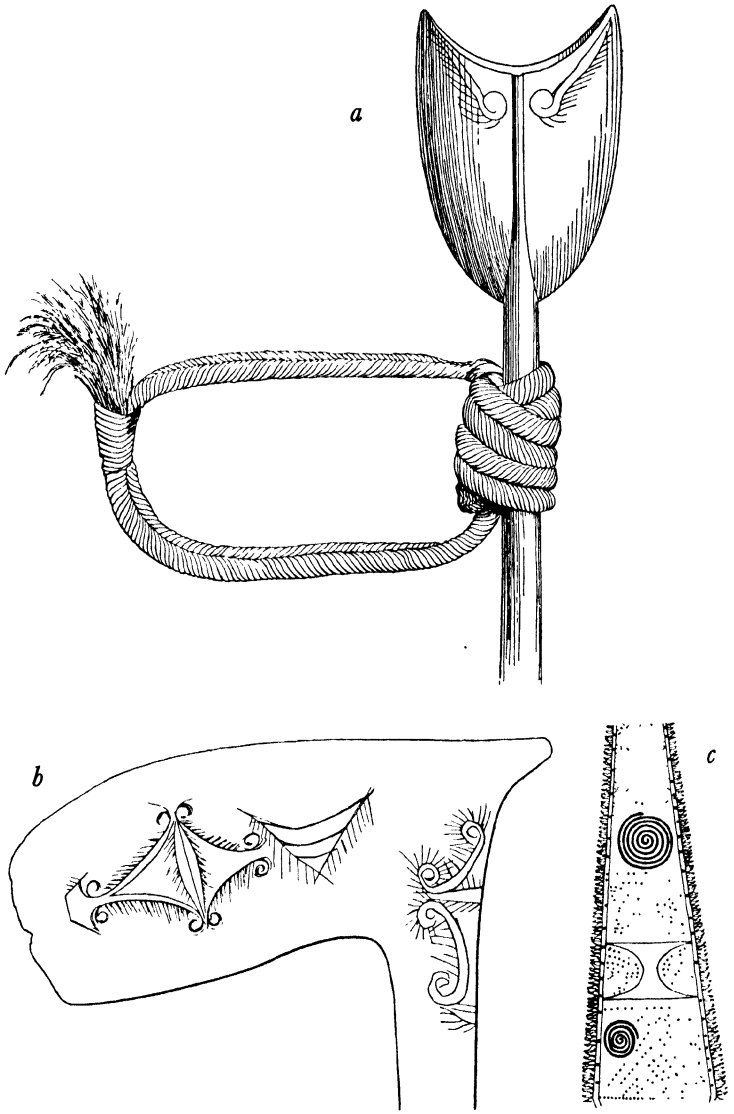
north Malekula, has such a spiral, and some are found among petroglyphs on the rocks of Aneityum; also some spirals in tattoo, which is absent in most tribes and is only well developed on Omba, where some women are tattooed all over. The frigate-bird or the hawk is most important in the central islands; its beak does not seem to have influenced art form, though it is possible to trace close resemblances (however they arose) of beak motifs right through the Pacific, specially in the Solomons and northern New Hebrides, Easter Island and on ancient (B.C.) Peruvian pottery. (Examine the Pacific Gallery in the British Museum and the Ethnological Museum at Cambridge; cf. Balfour 356; Bastian 283, for Egyptian comparisons.) The frigate-bird or hawk is the commonest subject of representative carving in the Hebrides: in sacrificial effigies, house ornaments, canoe heads, masks. Representative art—i.e. recognisable likeness—is rare in most islands. Human effigies are common in the Banks, rarer as one goes south, where the human form is often conventionalised into a lozenge pattern, sometimes a frog, though frogs do not occur in the group. Many tribes have acquired human effigies by purchase from others within the past two or three centuries; some still pay adjacent tribes to make such effigies when they are needed (page 38). On Gaua human figures were made in stone, while stupid giants of yore are said to have made their queer stone bowls, similar to vats in the Assam hills and Celebes.

Monoliths, dolmens, stone walls and traps, stone piles and forts are widespread in the islands. The more vigorous heathen tribes keep up complicated stone-works to this day. Stone may be dressed and faced, arranged often in decimal systems which may record happenings, generations, etc. Stone-work is frequently associated with ten petromorphic culture heroes, fratricidal brothers, who by treachery caused the youngest to be caught by a giant clam on the reef. But his soul flies out as a blackbird or dove; seeing this, his sweetheart hangs herself before the hunger of those nine brothers can reach her. The tide goes down; the youngest



BIRD DESIGNS FROM MALEKULA ISLAND

a Carved and painted gong face with wooden cock; centre of ritual in central Malekula (cf. Deacon 359). *b* Peculiar bird figure, nine inches high; red, green, black and white; used in Na-leng type of dances, south Malekula. *c* Frigate-bird design on body of a Na-leng dancer. Another is painted on the chest. (After author's data in north Malekula; Atchin photo by John Layard; cf p. 102.)

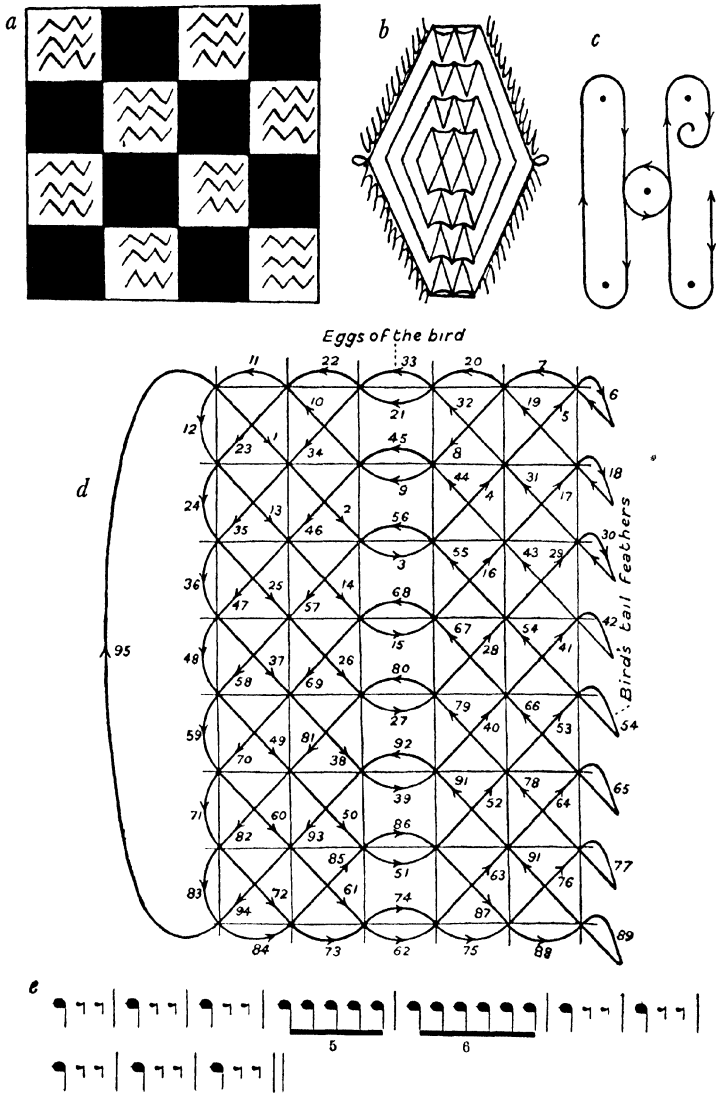


BIRD DESIGNS FROM MALEKULA ISLAND

a Head of a Big Nambas sacrificial club, four inches wide, called "the tail of the hawk"

b Frigate-bird designs on a ceremonial wooden hammer-club (nine inches wide) from Atchin

c Patterns on a very large frigate-bird banner used in graded-society rites of Small Nambas in north Malekula (author's sketch, and Atchin photo by Layard)



BIRD DESIGNS FROM MALEKULA ISLAND

a "The falcon in the square"; red squares and black lines on a secret-society screen *b* "The bird's eye"; design on a secret-society hat. *c* Simple continuous-line sand-drawing: a snake coiled round five white-eye warblers

d "The nest of the hawk"; a sand-drawing. The sequence of lines numbered 1 to 95 (see Deacon and Haddon). *e* Many gong rhythms are based on bird-calls. This simple one is *Nambal Kavaravar* (Nambal = hawk) and signifies a grade of pigs' tusk (cf. Deacon 502)

escapes, comes back and breathes new life into his girl. He is too strong for his brothers. All become stone (on Atchin).

The devil Lesevsev is often in the form of a stone, which blocks the way to the after-life and seeks to devour those who come, unless they have killed enough pigs to satisfy. Stones are vital in magic—which is really a whole art of its own. The most important rites of south Malekula centre round phallic stones, like the stone called the penis of Ambat.

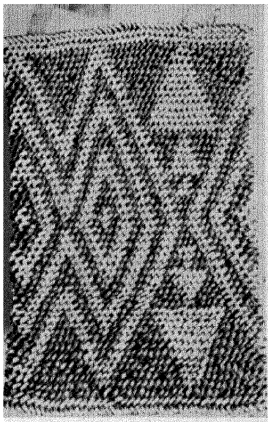
Stone is employed usually in the more important rites. The dark different Sakaus of north-east Santo do not use stone. They concentrate on fine gardening, with bright coloured flowers and leaf crotons. The people of Santo in general are excellent gardeners. They make stone terraces and irrigate large areas, divert streams through ditches and pipes, scatter vivid coloured plants through the vegetable greenness of taro. Flowers and colours are needed by all men and some women.

There are local fashions or traditions in colour—as in all things, the chief men are its arbiters. The colour vocabulary is limited; it must be remembered that the tribes who live away from the sea live in a world that is overwhelmingly green with grey skies. Six colours are commonly made: yellow, red, purple, blue, white and black, from vegetable concoctions and certain stones. Purple and white are the most frequent, red the most sacred (cf. page 102). Colours are not mixed to make shadings. Some interesting effects are got by bleaching in sunlight and firelight. Faces are often painted blue. There are especial face-patterns for different occasions, grand body-patterns in colour for dances.

Flowers and feathers co-operate in ornamentation. Flowers are put in the hair, coloured leaves in the belt. Some birds' feathers may be worn at any time, others only on ritual occasions or by high-ranked men. Magnificent headdresses of fowl, parrot, swift and dove feathers occur in the central group, and feathered belts from honey-eater and shearwater. There is nothing so elaborate as the *Kura* feather-cloaks of Polynesia, which seem to resemble rather

A

B



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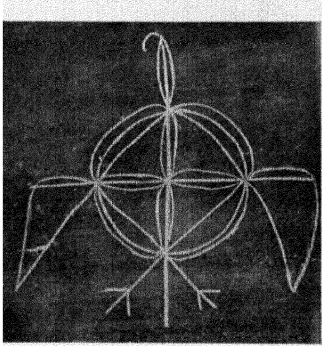

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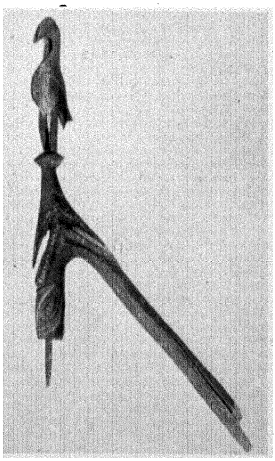


BIRD DESIGNS, MALEKULA

(A) TOP OF A CLUB HOUSE
with twisted roots=hawks

(B) SHELL-BEAD ARMLET (8″ across)
designs represent several animals. The series of white triangles form the face of a hawk

(C) CONTINUOUS-LINE DRAWING

(D) HAWKS OF NATABOL ROOTS, OVER HUMAN EFFIGIES AND SACRIFICIAL STONES
Wing-span ten feet

(E) RITUAL ADZE WITH TWO-HEADED BIRD
two and a half feet long

closely some from ancient Peru. It is probable that the feather cult was developing in the New Hebrides when the white man arrived, as were bird conceptions in general, especially those of a bird-of-prey with associated representative and curvilinear, as well as angular, art forms.

It is not quite safe (on the available evidence) to say, with Rivers, that conventionalised angular forms arose after representative (page 360). There were apparently periods of form development, some very surréaliste, some rather academical. Probably the developments were far less coherent and defined than has been supposed. Only a full study of form throughout the Pacific would justify any new contribution to the chaotic discussions. The white artist has *entirely* neglected the Pacific, except for a steady pilgrimage, twenty painters a year, to Tahiti. Gaugin went there, you know. None seem to have realised that there are a few thousand other islands, a whole race that has never been painted, sculptured, choreographed, music-ed or poem-ed. Perhaps the innumerable shades of gloom-green in damp jungles are too powerful.

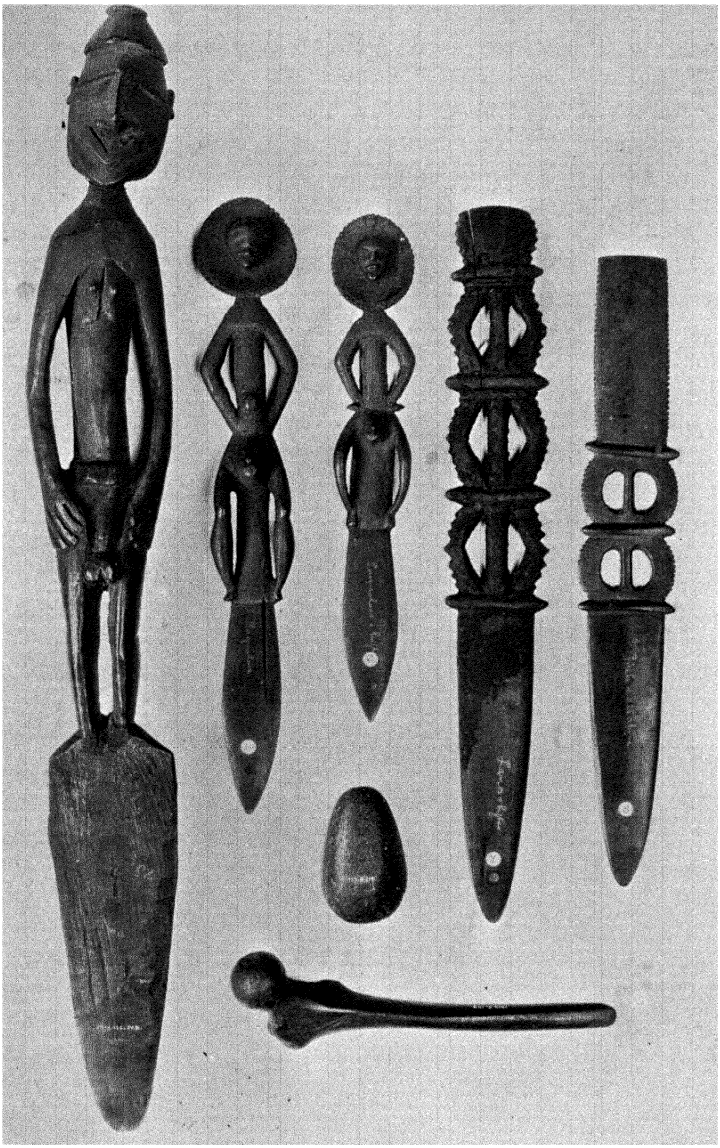
Tools are of the simplest. These unscientists have not sought better ones. For centuries that was their success, in slow growth from firm roots. Stone implements imposed their simplicity upon the things made. The Hebridean seldom greatly elaborates material objects; he reserves that for ideas, for dances and drawings in the sand which are his dramatised labyrinth, in some sense the same as the Labyrinth of Crete. He complicates inwards.

North and south of the Hebrides are the more ornate, "finer" carvings of the Solomons, New Caledonia and New Zealand. We should call the Hebridean a crude performer in the manual arts except in weaving (the work done without a loom is often remarkable, cf. page 183), and in making deadly implements—especially binding on arrowheads with tiny bush-ropes; while he excels in rope work of all sorts, from fish-nets to house lashings, as he must in a climate which rots with rains and tears with wind at any weakness. His canoes are the crudest in the ocean, though fully seaworthy. But the

Hebridean does *not* not see his work in this way. When shown pictures of other art forms he is puzzled; those spiral, beautifully intricate boards and prow heads of a Maori canoe; why do it? Are those a people who neglect their pigs? At the same time he reacts to some extent to this richness of texture; because some men have it, he feels he should have it. But, in all his relations with whites, his functionalist utilitarian outlook on material objects has been apparent. The white has yoked the Hebridean on to iron, mouth-organs, guns and tobacco, which have a definite effect; calico has been in demand where the natives wish to join the mission or to cease making their difficult mats. The native has scarcely increased his range of demands in 110 years of trade contact. He wants the harsh-cutting axe blade, the quick-killing gun; never mind the twiddly bits, or ornamented handles. Yet, in immaterials nothing can exceed the twiddliness of graded society rites, or the continuous-line drawings—so like Paul Klee.

On Western standards the Hebridean is definitely a crude artist in the tangible arts, a fine artist in the dance of life. I doubt whether it is safe to judge a culture by its "highest" art, its minority passions. The integration of art and every individual in the community must be considered—art in its fullest sense. In the New Hebrides *every* man is a simple material artist with keynote efficiency; Art is from *ars*—skill; art is practical skill guided by rules. So I am assured by Mr. Skeat; and by Mr. Chambers in his *Twentieth-century Dictionary*. Mr. Nuttall tells me, in his *Standard Dictionary*, that arts are those occupations which require skill and ingenuity. Hebridean art is skill guided by rules—the rules of the past and of purpose, with religion and care in control. Individual creative art would be against the whole training of native life; it would disrupt its basic assumption of permanence.

It is only by accident of form, by a dream that visits a man of high enough status to defy minor convention, by introduction from without, or by way of an epileptic believed



WOODEN KNIVES

Showing (left to right) the conventionalisation of human representation. The largest, 2 feet long, is used in Atchin pantomimes, the others are from Ureparapara, used to cut puddings. The lower knife is of human bone, incised. Also a stone axe-head, characteristic type

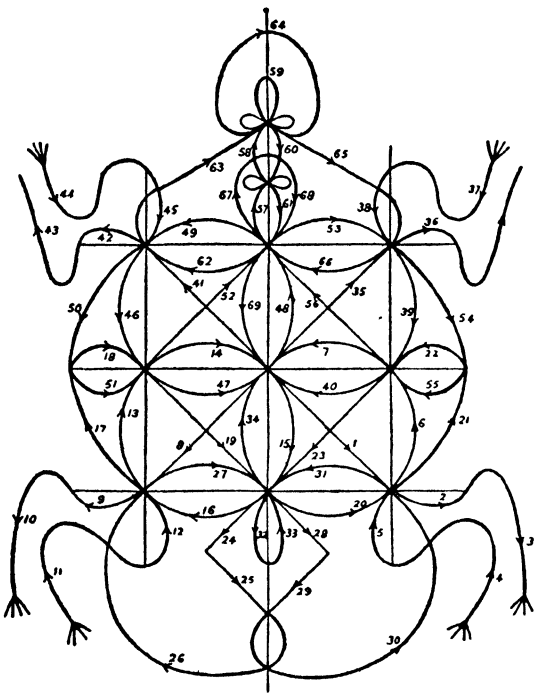
to be almost unearthly (he is genius) that new forms are added.

Internal anarchistic gestures by ordinary people are in the same line of departure as scientific questionings of why, is it really true? And the development of abstract conceptions, into terms represented in wood and stone, is rendered extraordinarily difficult when the tools are shell or stone, that travel so slow, while there is other work to be done. Much of the so-boosted "abstract thinking" which is said to differentiate civilised man from the primitive savage is due to speed, to the implements which have made it possible for the former to *express* (the word is significant) his "abstract thoughts" in other media, quickly. These implements have been evolved by the method of science, by curiosity out of a cumulative knowledge about Nature's insides. Sculpture in stone is an obvious illustration: technically it is the slowest and "artistically" the least "progressive" of modern arts. Epstein and Henry Moore do not differ so enormously from some Malekulan efforts.

I had almost forgotten the art of love. As there are no great artists in this equal land, so there are no great lovers. Love implies a certain abstraction, an emotionalism which in the Melanesian seems to be reserved for and concentrated on ritual performance with a communal power function. Only the youths seem to get very sex-worked-up. Some older men have very strong feelings about their women. One might call it intense possessive affection. There is no public display of such feeling; there is no kiss. The death of a dear spouse or only son may cause the survivor to leap from a high cliff on to the rocks below. On some islands, widows always committed suicide; the wives of a chief still do so in Sakau, they hang themselves after a great dance into ecstasy. Local tradition determines the behaviour of the sexes. In one tribe the men may be extremely jealous of any approach to their women; in the next they will consider you intolerably rude if you do not try to fornicate with the lot.

There are many sexual refinements, unsuitable for

discussion here. There is much love magic; many love songs. Throughout the group women are the dynamic in sex. Some are insatiable. On Malo I met one notable dame who must have been seventy; she was still exhausting young lads. Most women, as they grow older, look eagerly at young men, despite adultery penalties. Few feel sexual after thirty-five; by then they have had twenty years sex life. The women of Gaua and Pentecost are expert in



A RITUAL SAND-DRAWING
from central Malekula, entitled Netömwar, Adultery

contraception, abortion and permanent sterilisation, by several methods—tangled chemistry, mechanics and magic.

Masturbation is considered ludicrous. Homosexuality and Lesbianism occur in some tribes as a traditional feature; in

the last part of this book I shall describe one such tribe. The general absence of perversion corresponds with the absence of revolutionary artists and genii.

BLACK HOPE

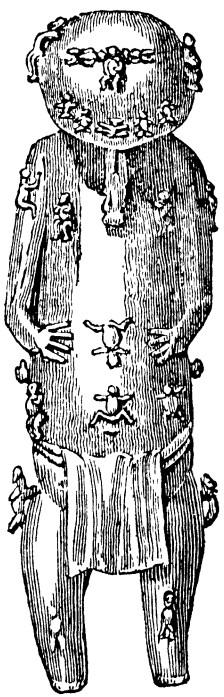
GROWING IMMUNITY to the lethal effects of continental diseases, with the medical and other advice given by missionaries, are making the native strong again on the smaller islands and coastal places where there are healthy breezes. There is no possibility of the sophisticated New Hebridean dying out. These blacks are rallying, and as they grow they, with their great power of slow ascent, will come again towards their hawk soaring over the wide cane-brakes and unbroken jungle. The white way is spent of its first vigour. Yellow again now. Black coming up. So the endless fluctuation and compromise. For in this tangle of islands and chaos of peaks there has never been peace. The volcanoes steam away, the earthquakes come and the hurricanes hurricane; each year a huge banyan at the edge of the dancing glade puts down another root. The sea breaks white on the reef.

Here, as in many parts of the world, the black is on the come-back. He is showing a tendency to think anew, independent of the white men to whom he is, nevertheless, tied through material need. A new thing, a Europeanised heathenism, is forming among the increasing tribes. This is a fragment of something world wide, a dialectic, a demonstration of the truth on which Jules Romains based his *Hommes de Bonne Volonté.*

No stone-axe or pure mind survives from the native civilisation. The force of iron and gun cannot be resisted; that is the history of our civilisation. There is little reason to credit Europe with any advantage over Malekula ;—cf. 1936 Italy or Spain or Rhondda Valley. This people have long thrived in their own culture, whence they can each one dance beyond earth and understanding, where their wars are

clean and male, there is more than enough for everyone, yet none are content with only enough, always striving around such words as those of the Gaua song:

Oh I am an eagle. And I have soared to the furthest dim horizon.
An eagle that has flown, has alighted at Mota.
An eagle soaring with wings whirring round the mountain.
I have gone, island after island, away into the west, to the base of heaven
Sailing in circles, oh I have been strongly set. An ill wind
Has drifted me away, away. . . .



A POLYNESIAN HARDWOOD CARVING, FOUR FEET HIGH, OF THE GOD TANGAROA, KINDLY CREATOR

In this history it has been the white man who has needed an advocate; for we cannot justify his bloody actions, they

are not a part of what we talk about as our civilisation. The black needs no advocate, only a doctor. He has been decimated from millions to thousands; his culture wiped off the slate in most places.

The old fire made with firesticks still flickers bright in the high hills. The cannibals cannibal, and these I will soon describe from my own experience. They too are doomed. I am sorry. Either the real native will die out from lack of the white attention, which white civilisation has made essential, or else he must make a compromise with the white—the calico compromise. One can only hope that by some inconceivable luck or some improbable development among the white race (towards humane and intelligent interest in those who are unlike ourselves and yet not animals) this compromise may be a fair one for these last cannibals. Carelessly we obliterate what we do not understand; but what is, nevertheless, basic, human, and necessary to be understood.

The Phœnix Feeds on Frankincense, Sweet-smelling

The Phœnix rises from blood-red fire, volcanic ashes. A Phœnix with claws shining, curved beak. The Phœnix does not feed on fruit or flowers, but on frankincense and odoriferous gums, say the Assyrians. It is the size of an eagle and has a purple body, but the tail is azure with intermingled feathers of rosy hue, says Pliny. The Phœnix crept into Christianity as symbol of martyrdom, human sacrifice, crimson red, the palm; ultimately to signify the resurrection of Jesus, says Philipe de Thaum. To the Chinese it represented the cardinal virtues of uprightness, humanity, honesty and sincerity.

And the story was in the first a parable for the common people, invented by the sun priests of Heliopolis to explain their solar cycle. Or, as they sing in the islands:

The sacred Kura mounts into the far blue dome of boundless sky,
Shimmering bird of scarlet throat, your tail cleaving the sky,
Your angry talons wait for our killing: a sacrifice. . . .

Mounting, *Maltanas*, mounting. On we all go . . . but over what, where to?
The Greeting Palm? An axe as profit made in Sandalwood?

Sources. Krywicki. Saunders 295. Thompson.

IRONIC

WHAT are we striving for? Where did it all start, what is happiness, what is there common to all men? What is human? What is the L.C.M. of life, and the H.C.F.?

Nobody knows. As far as I can see, so far, nobody cares. We have applied study methods of science to everyone except the man in the street and the man in the jungle. Soon we shall have to study the normal, look for the common factors. Black shirt or red are transitory furies.

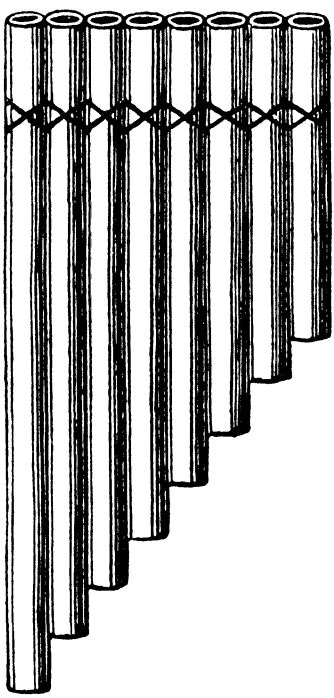
We have bird sanctuaries; sanctuaries for hippopotami.

This material civilisation of ours with its whirling advance in a number of *things*, methods of killing and keeping alive, has blinded us to the steady core of man and mind which weathers all things. Science has brought us to the edge of an abyss; we gaze into it. It will take one more of our wars to bring us from the edge, back to this question, a consideration of all humanity and its " progress."

Before we can have world peace or prosperity we must learn how, for example, two nations can administer one unimportant small area together in decent co-operation.

It is going to be very difficult for us to study this matter, because we are more prejudiced on this than any other subject. One best way of study is under the (to us) laboratory conditions of peoples who have nothing of Plato, Lever, influenza or steel. Such exist now only in central New Guinea and north-west Australia. It looks as if we are going

to push that off the slate too, without any record through physiology, ballet, picture and sound. The loss will be irreparable, never again will we have the chance of examining man free of the speed and the clocks and wires which we were once free of, back in our own Stone Age. All our data on "primitive man" has been gained when they are ironised. Iron is the key to a whole new order. There are still no wheels or arabic alphabet inside Malekula or Santo, where I shall now take you. But the same study must come to the Rhondda and to Westminster in this dawn of another great step forward in our progression—the Gas Age.



PANPIPES

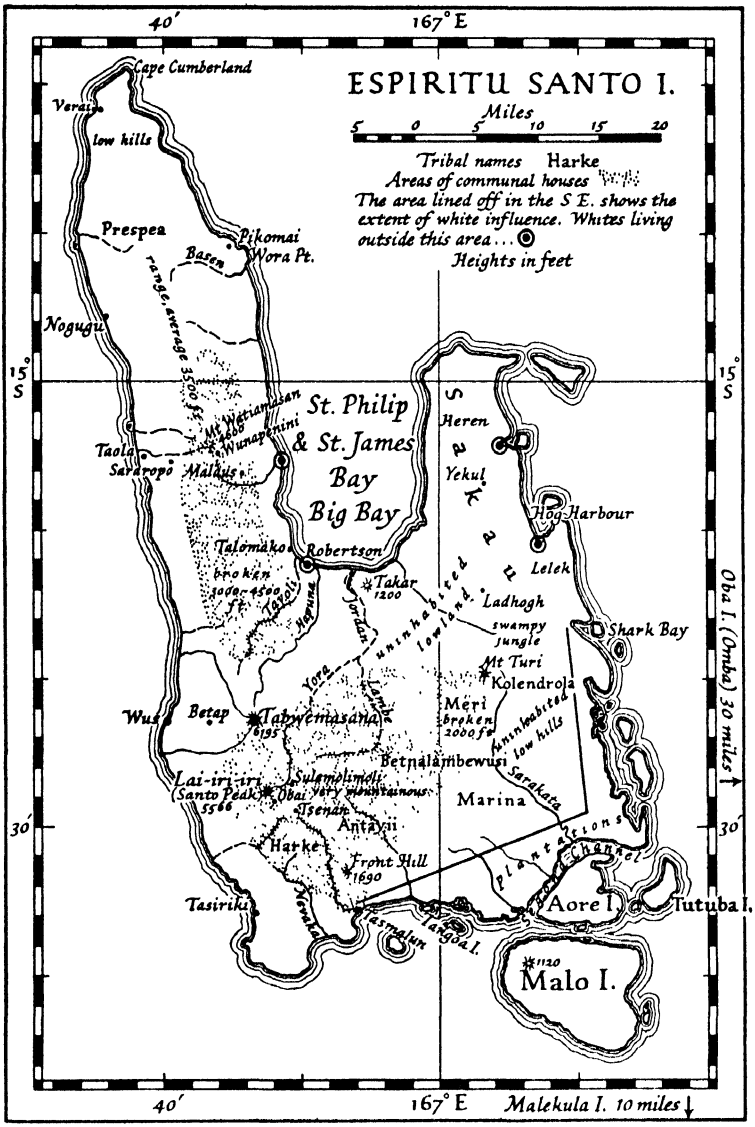
the only musical instruments that are often played at odd moments, for fun, without meaning

VII

1933–1936

DESPITE all this history, some of the older order survives. There are still full-blooded cannibal heathens in the unvisited mountains. Three thousand of them within ten miles of wireless station, hospital, Government posts and three sects of missionary. The author gets friendly with these people; does successful pig business; climbs the high mountains; finds new species of birds; writes a try at a poem. He learns a good deal about island life, by experience rather than observation or question. He travels a curious personal track: biologist —" gone native "—civil servant—film star; he meets the finalisation of Western civilisation.

A shoot-up in mid-ocean suggests that it should all be written down; then this mind may be free again, to continue a purer research.



AUTHOR'S MAP OF SANTO

(redrawn and reproduced, courtesy Royal Geographical Society.)

TABWEMASANA, 6,196 FEET.

CORAL CONTINUALLY GROWS. And the green weed waves on the bottoms of southern crosses and residents' yachts, corrupt sunk silver, where the poison on the reef in autumn poisons even the fishes—which you must stomach feel to testify. The curly woolheads bob among the fish-sharks, pearls of white water as they shovel up pearl-shell for studdery. Salted flowers. The priest, waving in triumph his long green hair. The thud: the nuts drop on the bonefull earth or deadhead.

Maggotry

In the two years that I spent in these islands I covered new ground. The first year I spent on the largest island, Espiritu Santo.

Santo is a glorious island that rises on all sides, gathering up into a great pattern of mountains, serried higher and higher, to be crowned, without any effort, by Mount Tabwemasana, 6,196 feet. That was a challenge. John Baker had been out and tried to climb it before, but had failed. This time he took me along, partly because someone told him that, if I was pointed uphill, I usually kept on until I started to go down the other side. No native had been to the top. The name meant Mountain of the Double Sea-Shell. And the two twin peaks were called Tauku and Levini, a woman and her brother. They were shaped that way.

Quiros sailed and settled under this mountain. It dominated all life in the islands, haughtily among the ever-wet clouds, the only unbeaten thing in this green world. This alone had resisted the impacts from the east.

But one day, six weeks before we were due to start from our base, I bruised my shin. I did nothing about it. Next morning it had festered into a breaking sore. That day I put my blankets out to dry in the occasional sun. Things get so damp and mouldy. The flies buzzed. In the night my leg hurt. Next morning it was hurting more. I had a look. Out of the small opening of the sore something wriggled. It was white and wriggly. My leg was full of maggots. The flies had laid some eggs on the blanket, as they often do. The eggs had hatched in a few hours, as they do. The maggots had found food right on the spot; had gone into my leg nearly on to the shin bone. The other two men (John Baker and Terence Bird) had gone off on a reconnaissance trip into the mountains, leaving Zita and me to read the meteorological instruments. Zita put carbolic and stuff into the hole. The maggots came out. It was a nice game—to get the maggots to come out, and not die in there. When John and Terence came back after a fortnight, they sent me quickly down to the Segond Channel fifty miles away, in a ghastly little launch. We lost the rudder in the worst tide rip.

The French doctor gave a gleeful howl when he saw my leg. For several days he injected me from every known angle—a French habit in the Pacific. A nun threw alleged cocaine on my leg, and then burned the flesh for a while. Happily after a week they lost interest; it is hot in September.

I had sworn I would be around the foot of that mountain somehow in three weeks, the latest date the chaps could start, if I did not come; because then the rains would make the rivers that flowed in hundreds out from the hills, impassable in flood. Sores take months, even years, to heal up here; so they did not expect me. But I was too clever for this one. I got a trader to hire me his launch, from ten miles down the coast, and I sneaked out of the hospital. It took two days to travel up that terrific Santo coast, one hundred miles in almost a straight line without a white man living there, only the mountains falling into the sea. There used to be mission stations, but as the native population dwindled,

VIEW FROM 4,000 FEET NEAR MT. TABWEMASANA

the missionaries had readily abandoned them on this unhealthy coast. Cactus grew above high-water mark.

My idea was to come over the ranges from this west side. The others were going inland from Big Bay on the other side of the island. It would take them five days to reach the 4,000 foot spur where we proposed to camp for the final assault. I estimated that I could just make it. But as we came along the piled-up coast it was misty and drizzling. The peaks were endlessly overhead. I had nearly forgotten how to walk, and my leg was a mess.

We came to Wus. A last stronghold of the old native pottery art. Once a great mission centre; hundreds of hill-men had been brought down to pray here; malaria, tuberculosis and meningitis had left an old woman working away at her pottery. Beyond Wus I had good luck. On a beach we saw some little hairy hill folk, round a huge fire. They were down from the mountains, making salt by throwing sea water on to the fire. They lived, they told me, in the far-off hills. They would take me into the far-off hills.

Far-off hills hold the secret.

The Far-off Hills

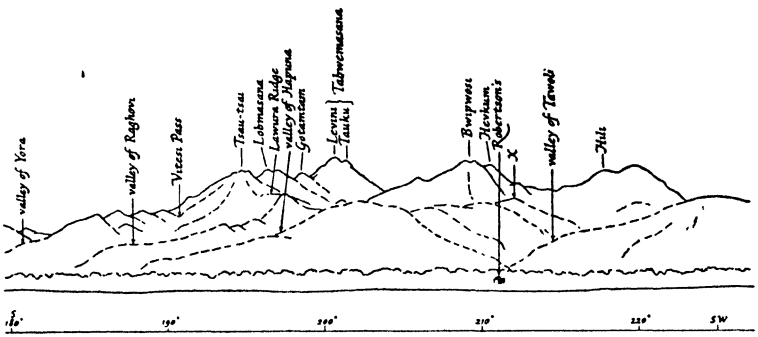
We spent two days closing down a village at 1,000 feet above the sea. Influenza had been through, and snuffed out the last old man of Wantasali. We gorged on the taros from his excellent fields, irrigated and terraced, whole rivers diverted with stone walls and bamboo pipes into chequered squares and ditches. All planted with bright flowers, croton leaves and a sort of spinach among the big lily-leaved taros. We cut down his coconut trees " to bury him good," led his daughter and wife and pigs for a day up and down over the break-back of hill and ravine, at last out of the jungle into great cane-brakes, across one place where a moss green log spanned a two hundred foot tree-ferned ravine. On that day I saw by the path, in the low jungle, now wet and mossy, a queer little brown bird, thick like a Wryneck, alert like a Starling. It was altogether a new sort of bird and I did not mind anything any more.

Now there were many flame trees, tree ferns and staring white orchids. We slept on the high hills, and straight ahead up the wide valley Tauku and Levini were waiting. There I made my first bush friend, Uka. He could speak some pidgin English, and he refused to let me sleep in his low smoky hut, where his three women were cooking. For, he said, " 'E got too much louse 'e stop." I slept in a tiny bamboo yam shelter on high stilt legs, at the edge of the gorge falling thousands of feet into the river Pualapa, a white roaring ribbon below. The night wind whistled down from Levini, rocked my hut lullaby a few inches from the edge of the gorge. When I went down from the mountains a month later, I gave Uka my lovely scarlet Borneo sarong. He wore it slung over his shoulder, fine little highlander, tough muscles and always a smile. We left some biscuit and tinned meat up there; two years later I met a mountain boy down by the sea in south Santo. He said they would not touch that food. It waited until we came back; should another white ever come, they would hide it.

I got to that spur an hour after the others. Two days later we got to the top. I spoiled my best Borneo sword helping do it, cutting and cutting up into the dense pandanus and lantana. But I knew the old Kenyan sword-maker up in the head of the Rejang river 2,000 miles away would be happy to see its ivory handle part from the crocodile-curved blade in such a useless cause.

On Jarn Mound, at Oxford, early that year, we had all four gone in the night and simultaneously swung on to the top of the mound, hand in hand. This is what we shall do to the top of Santo, we said, so that no one shall be first. But it was hard to find the top, it was all creeper and wind-swept bushes, a six-foot tangle over the earth. So we performed our ritual like monkeys.

On top of the western Pacific with everything below spread visible and remote, there was nothing else strong against one in these islands; now it was possible to do everything.



Panoramic view from St Philip & St James Bay, 1 mile off Robertson's plantation.
Vertical scale exaggerated 1¼ times
Oxford Expedition ; John Baker

Sources. Baker (1935) has given a full account of our Mount Tabwemasana ascent.

PIECES OF ESPIRITU SANTO

THE EXPEDITION went back to Oxford in February, 1934. I volunteered to carry on the work, meteorological and sexological. It had become of enthralling interest. One-armed Australian Jock Marshall came out to join me; after an initial period of intense Anglo-Australian misunderstanding, we hit it off fine. When a hurricane had blown us out (a few days of hurricane blow is so trying—like living under a tram), we went around into Big Bay, to find a single planter there, kindly Robertson, washed off a sector of the earth by a series of tidal waves. By the time we had finished with that mess, the trees had recovered from their tattered brown wind-sickness, into new greens of ever-ready growth. Jock went back to our base and I spent the rest of the year wandering about. So much happened.

To me the most important thing: that I found I could

live native, or near it. Their food and sleep, kava, meal-times and laughter suited me. I never have been a shoe wearer, or natural shaver. This was useful. Because I soon spent the scanty money Oxford had given me to come home with. And then I was able to live on without; a year cost £4.

I did the best trips with a steady Sakau tribesman called Ragh, who never got tired or timid, only occasionally cross. One trip, wallowing through low wet forests and pig tracks overgrown with stinging nettle bushes, for three days signs of a past population everywhere, now not one man. At last we came upon a tiny village. There were six men in one hut. They had some unripe bananas; some ripe pig with the maggots dropping out. Hurricane had smashed up their yams; and their old chief had died. They had fled from that place where they had lived for some centuries, because now it was, it seemed, poisoned against them. They were making ready to ambush a path to a garden of far away village Ladho. Ladho had a terrible sorcerer, the old man with a sore leg. He had done them this evil. They would kill one man from Ladho. But was not Ladho a very powerful village, too powerful for them? Yes, that was so, they would have to run away when they had shot a man. Ladho would find them, and kill one man too. Then they would exchange pigs and it would be over. Kindly people, sharing those few green bananas and white pig maggots.

Another time, out of endless mud wallow, our feet swollen from bruises against hidden stones, we came into a great pond of mud with huts all around. We stood hidden at the edge of the forest, looking with pleasure into this, the only clearing we had seen in days. For there were two dozen little children playing, naked black little boys and girls, rushing one after another down a fallen tree trunk and jumping with whoops of laughter thump into an enormous hogwallow two feet below, falling over each other in muddy merriment; their mothers looking on, suckled the younger ones, even up to two years old.

Here they were mad on string games, two people playing together with hands and toes. Some of them were very sexual string figures and everyone laughed a lot. Exciting was the owl chasing the rat; usually he caught the rat. One was like " the Eskimo house " figure. They had a sort of quoits too. They threw plaited rattan loops over a post with amazing accuracy; and as hard as they could throw, no deck-game drop-shots.

It was marvellous on top of 5,500 foot Lai-iri-iri, Santo Peak, where Ragh and I spent a night with a reluctant bushman. Just for one night in that rough shelter, it was good to be cold and fogbound again; Sir Douglas Mawson had tried to get here and failed. In the dawn the fat mountain pigeons all around with their deep throaty burbles, and through rents in the veil of whirling clouds—glimpses of distant islands, all over the lovely archipelago, of wide valleys of unbroken green on all sides below, except where the rivers went swirling white. There no white foot had been. A peregrine falcon came over the cliff edge with a whine like a shell, sending a party of yellow and green parakeets screaming and jittering all over the mountainside. Such glimpses tied me to Santo, to the finding of intricate ways over the hills into these backwaters, where there were people who traded women into the lowlands; houses where the menstruating women were kept in cages at one end and fed through the bars on bananas; where no one could talk any known language: we spent days trying to get out and into the next valley.

The high mountain folk were fascinating. Unlike all other Hebrideans, they have no man's club-house, no sex segregation. The village was a communal house, wide and low roof to the ground, two tiny square doors, fires everywhere, smoke smarting the eyes—that was the hardest thing to get used to. No partitions or curtaining. In the night, if you were careful, you could get anywhere. Life was good in these houses. In most parts one did not see enough of the

ordinary life of the women. Here one saw more than enough. Many of these people had never been down to the sea, which they saw every day and all day, miles away down below. They said the sea was poisonous. To them it was, for here there were no mosquitoes, elephantiasis, fever or T.B. Some had gone to the missions or plantations down there. Few had returned. One had gone up to a horse from behind, to steal a hair out of its tail.

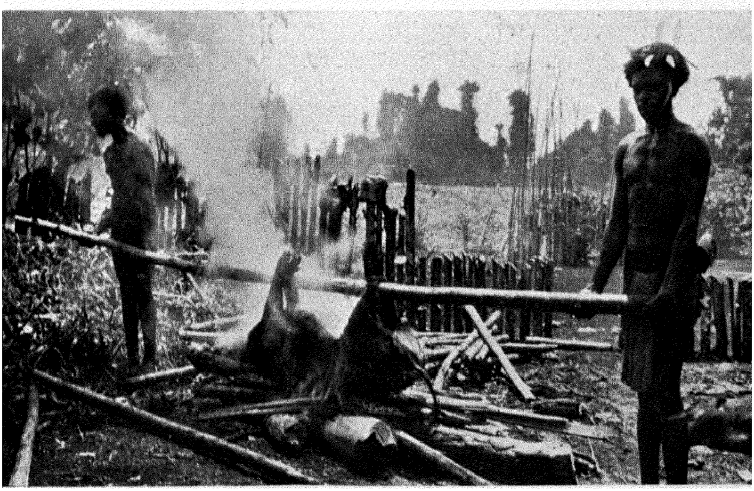
The hill folk knew a lot about food. They made tasty and metallic black salt from the roots of a palm. Sedge tops cooked in a bamboo with this salt were delicious. They even made fruit-bats, flying foxes, taste all right.

They made nets for the flying foxes. Some were thirty yards long and six broad, all beautifully made of black fibre, woven by the men, with yards and yards of stout sennit rope, work any sailor in sail would have been proud to have done. The nets were slung high on poles over the scarlet flame trees that coloured the hills; among the trees little grass huts in cleared glades. At evening the hunter goes into the hut, where he holds ropes which run over pulleys and weights up into the net in the tree tops. As the sun sinks the foxes come in with their eerie flight, to feast on the flowers. When enough are there, the net is let go and crashes to earth over them. It is exciting and difficult. Whenever I did it, I caught nothing. They told me that the foxes smelt me, that the smell of the white man was too strong, the foxes would not come.

At a coast village I spent three days watching an old man make a small fish net, with a sort of shuttle and loom, from strips of a plant like an onion.

Dynamiting fish was better, when one had money. You could catch a canoe load. But had to dive quick for them, keeping an eye for the sharks coming. Also controlling the conceit of throwing a shorter and shorter fuse. Most of the whites in the group seemed to be missing some member from a too-late throw. A Jap held the matches in one hand,

SAKAUS CLUB THE PIGS AFTER AN ALL-NIGHT DANCE
Heaps of yam and coconuts ready for the feast



THEN PIGS ARE ROASTED WHOLE

a stick of dynamite in the other, lit the fuse, and threw the box of matches.

One time in the mountains I was never away from dying. Influenza and colds were going through. At each village many were in mourning, daubed in mud and soot, their faces vividly white with wood ash. Every few minutes the blowing of conch-shell trumpets would shudder against the opposite hills. Because they knew I liked their things, the blower would sit beside me. Every few minutes of the night he would blow, till the walls of hut and head bulged outward with sound, must surely float over the cool earth.

Then I was with one Vishiravi, a card. At each village we had to look at the latest corpse, crouch by the door of the hut and cry, wailing and moaning as hard as we could go. That made one feel better, doing the right thing like that.

Vishiravi had to leave me by Obai, because he had shot a man there.

At Obai, under Lai-iri-iri, on an elbow at the head of the valley looking far back down deep gorges and out to the straits of Bougainville, with Malekula in the far distance, a man had just died. When they had killed me a fowl and made a place for me to rest on the floor of the hut, and I had drunk kava, they brought out the dead man's estate, or that part of it likely to interest a white man . . . some revolver bullets and one pair dark glasses. I exchanged some sticks of tobacco for the former, because Jock would be glad of them. I thought no more of the latter.

Next day I was kept busy. The 'flu had killed people all over the place. The natives thought it was bad magic; it is very lucky for the white, they do not blame him. They were suspecting a nervous peculiar fellow who lived with two women alone down the valley, and had boasted, as such fellows will, that his power would soon rub out this valley, none would live to eat the taros they had planted this year; which was, as he must have known, signing his own death warrant. One charming man came a day's journey to see me. He brought me some of those amazing blood-red mountain

bananas as big as small marrows, soft like strawberry ice—the real old "banana belong before, time white man 'e no come yet." He told me about his wife, a young girl whose breasts were still very hard and she was a great worker, he had paid too many pigs for her, two with the tusks nearly grown in one complete circle. Why had she died so soon? He did not wish to kill in revenge. The Government had come to the island, he had heard; this was a time for men to be friends, to make all strong and the place to grow again. But the Government came only to kill, was that it? He had heard there were many policemen on the coast among the plantations. Could not they walk about as I walked about, and help them.

I heard that talk so many times. A few months later three natives were axed to death behind Big Bay for sorcery reasons. Because they were near the only white there, and he wanted to show that he could command interference (lest any native get saucy to him), he raised hell. A French officer came, arrested assorted peoples and took them away to prison. They all escaped. The Government hunted them for days through the bush. One they found by his smell. He had hung himself upon a broad teak branch.

When I came to Hog Harbour again, I told the British agent about central Santo. The only thing on his face, that time, that was not dead white was a pair of dark glasses. He had just had his third go of blackwater. That reminded me, I said I wished I'd brought him a pair I had come across up in the mountains, rather queer a native having these things. Salisbury was interested; then remembered.

Obai was the village that had killed Clapcott.

This was one of the more curious murders that has happened on Santo. It arose out of depopulation and careless administration. And it was, though no one noticed it, a faint flicker of a hidden flame fanned by one first black man who saw the whole picture in something like perspective. He was Ronavura, who had been trained at the Presbyterian central school on Tangoa islet, where he got wise to many

things; they do. In a short while a new talk went through the bush: that too many black men had died, soon there would be none left. There was a way to bring back those who had died. They could all come back on a great white ship, from far land where the white man's coming had sent them. They would come laden with valuable things. A great place should be made ready for them and a great feast. When all was ready, they must kill all the white men. That only would bring back their fellows. The talk caught like fire on a cane-brake; ran through the bush. All very "Sanders of the River."

Late in July of 1923 a white trader living at desolate Tasmalun in the south-west of Santo climbed up the little ladder to a shelf in his store, for calico to supply some natives. Thus they shot and clubbed him. As he fell from his ladder, his dark glasses fell from his nose. They treated his body in such and such a fashion.

What was left of Clapcott was found before the flame had spread. The natives, as yet, have no unity or organisation—too many chiefs and languages. H.M.S. *Sydney* rushed up. Shelled the bush and rounded up some of the participants, largely through the courage of Salisbury. Three men were hung. The man who had died at Obai, the day I came there, was the last man alive of all who had been known to participate.[1]

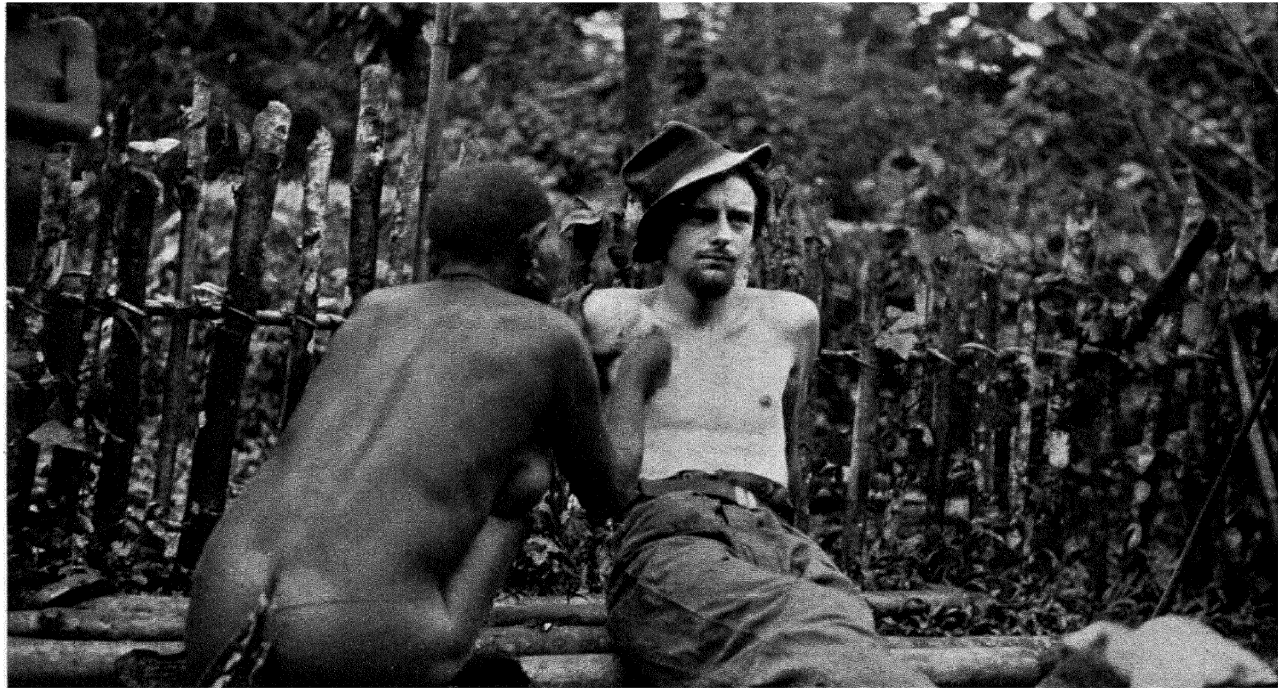
Each year warships come into the group. I happened to meet H.M.S. *Diomede.* I came aboard with no shoes, one year's growth of hair. At the time it never struck me as a curious thing to do! Captain Cosmo Graham talked the first fresh white talk I had heard. And, as always when I hear the news after months out of touch, everything in Europe was crisis, impending, chaotic and urgent. Just a year later I met an intelligent white man again. This time I floated into Tahiti, the only passenger on an overluxury yacht.

[1] A similar cult developed in New Guinea and elsewhere some years before, the so-called "Vailala Madness"; it seems to have spread through the Pacific. Cf. Chinnery and Haddon in *Hibbert Journal*, xv, 1917, 448; Terr. of Papua, "Anthropology Report," No. 4, 1922; Williams 100. Moyne (Preface) and "Essays presented to C. G. Seligmann."

There was the *Diomede* again; and those tolerant officers filled me up, once more, with enough gin to last me a year.

Jock and I got all mixed up in a war that broke out in the Sakau peninsula, the day the *Diomede* left there. I was in a village just one mile from the Government headquarters, largest British plantation in the group, and a central Presbyterian station since 1897. I was woken by a mighty daylight roar. Twenty-five men had fired off as the first man came out of the club-house, to relieve himself. He received a nasty graze. The village countered by ambushing an enemy man that afternoon, shooting him inside out. The shooting is incredibly inefficient, with 1860 Tower Muskets. Some men shut both eyes.

The Sakaus are unlike all other Hebrideans. Their legends trace descent from a stone in a cave, and a late coming canoe which tried to settle in Big Bay but was driven off, so colonised this newer coral plateau. They are tall, very black, slender muscular bodies, flowers in hair, an all-tied-up language; they alone cultivate sweet potato in large gardens, planted here and there with vivid hibiscus and crotons. They cut and cicatrice their bodies simply but beautifully, with sharp pieces of stone; some of these cuttings they made on my chest as memorial. Their rather simple, dual (matrilineal) culture is based on an intricate system of hermaphrodite pigs, of which they have established a true breeding strain, with named variations according to the extent of maleness or femaleness. They have a nice legend about the hill of creator Yetar at the mouth of the Jordan river. On the way the spirit meets a wooden man Nelo, whom he must fight with a club and beat, else he cannot pass. The most important days in Sakau life are those when the young men are initiated into this method of club fighting. They have fern fronds in their belts and woven in a garland around their mops of hair. With clubs shaped like hockey sticks they make formal passes, epee and foil, swift body turns, tapsticks and thumps on the ground. The Sakau women have fine slender figures and are liberal-minded to visitors. For adultery within the village the offender



THE EMACIATED AUTHOR IS INITIATED (1933) INTO SAKAU MANHOOD BY A CHIEF'S WIFE, WHO CICATRICES A PERMANENT PATTERN ACROSS HIS CHEST

should be eaten. But there are three men to every two women; a chief with several wives will let out the younger for pigs. Some women are blonde. Many bleach and lime their hair to get blonde. A pregnant woman eats baked cakes of red earth to ensure a successful delivery; it tastes quite nice.

Sakau war is fun and hygienic. The only white who ever tried to butt in, got a bullet in his bum. The successful man-killer is embraced and paid pigs by his chief, with a mighty feasting and blowing of conch trumpets. They no longer eat one another. This is due to a belief which has had a widespread effect on the islands, namely, that a man shot with a gun is possessed of an evil spirit; the bullet may come out again and kill anyone else, especially anyone who eats. This is one of many indirect effects of white material objects. Here a dead man is not buried, but laid on the earth in the hut with his relatives sitting beside him for 100 days. A ditch between them and the corpse cannot be crossed by crawling things.

In the head of the Jordan river is the village of Sulemolimoli, named after a big monolith, the Stone of the Most High Chief. Their chief certainly was most high. He insisted on spending a whole night beside me, with a couple of less high assistants to relieve him when tired, stroking my face, telling me what the hell of a fellow I was and how high he was and would I give him a wad of tobacco and then he would pay back the honour by killing a pig, one fine fat pig (a female of course, they don't eat them) for the *next* white man who comes along. I cannot recommend any white to make that long trip to that tiresome village in the hope of that sow. The upper Jordan people gave me the willies. All New Hebrideans are acquisitive, but these surpassed everything. When I wanted to take a piece of quartzite that interested me geologically, they said that they knew everything about gold and that the stone was worth a pound; had I a pound; it must be a gold pound.

They had fine pigs, and seldom thought about anything

else. While I was there a woman hamstrung her husband with a knife, because he accused her of neglecting his pigs !

No one lives now on the lower reaches of the Jordan. But at one place where the river boils out from a granite gorge on to gravel flood flats, at that season a green place of grass and casuarina, we found a banana leaf shelter. Here we dallied with the one male inmate. He offered me a fine fat wood grub, food I like. This one, though, was rather overhung, and as he held it out on his hand, which had leprosy (thus his isolation), I felt bad. But it would never do to give offence; we needed to cadge some fish and breadfruit off him. Ragh gave me a tough look. I got it down, squeezing those squelchy purple insides through the holes of the grub's big doped eyes. My host, watching, showed pleasure; gave us a large eel.

There was one pygmy alive in the mountains. And he was chief o a village of ordinary men! He was nearly covered with black and white shell-beads and armlets, badges of high rank. He carried a carved stick twice as high as himself, with which he beat at dogs which came within reach. He was a great one for laughing. He had little enough to laugh about. He was the last of his people in Santo. There are a few on Omba, and several—still wild but sadly decreased—pygmoid tribes in south-central Malekula. All that is left of probably the first of the Hebrideans. These fierce gay little folk went down when the big men living nearer the coast got guns, before those living inland could get them. Until then, through their bushcraft, the pygmies had been well able to hold their own. Twenty years ago a terrible epidemic had hit them. They were mixed up, too, in a ruthless strong armed war that was waged between the missions in Big Bay, fighting for converts to Christ early in the century.

A Presbyterian missionary established his own mission police, did some amazing things. Where there had been a Quiros' " cathedral " 300 years before, three sects now engaged in bitter struggle. The white planter there, Fysh,

was a Freethinker; he was also a free speaker and doer. He loathed the missions and led the planters against them. His blustering voice and aggressive personality, with his unlimited boozing powers, made him beloved of French and English planters. When he ran out of booze, he would recall the eau-de-Cologne he had given to his team of native women, and drink that. The missionaries represented Fysh to their people as the Devil himself. So Fysh started his own mission, which centred round a communion with gallons of rum and free tobacco. He got all the missionaries out of the bay, and for years ruled unchallenged. The missions kept up out-stations; but there is now a sad mess. The natives, as usual, have suffered for the white man's fun and gain.

At Wora point, twenty miles up the west side of Big Bay, survived a relic of a once great tribe.

The great chief sat at one end of his great club-house. The floor was partitioned with bamboos into thirteen divisions, each with an oven, ashes and a tree-trunk stool, one for each pig grade in the rank society. You must not use another grade's partition; the visitor, such as myself, without any local pig status, has a thin time, for he may not take food or light from any fire. He must live only in the lowest partition, there make fire with the fire-sticks and cook on new stones collected fresh from the sea-shore and thrown away after each cooking. The great chief sat at one end, the high end, of his long house, perhaps thirty yards long, with its rows and rows of pigs' jaws down the rafters—the pigs that had brought this venerable old man so high, until there was no higher grade for him, every other village must have a separate tabu house for him. It was raining outside. I sat at the other end of the house, almost outside in my lowness. I shouted at him, and he quavered replies. There was nothing and no one between us but the ashes of long dead fires and this history.

I had never been better put in my place.

Near here there were some bushmen whose language had no point of overlap with mine. They indicated to me that

they had something they *must* show the white man. He would want to see it more than anything in Santo. It was way up in the hills and they were sending two men for it. They fed my curiosity on chicken in coconut cream for a couple of days before the men returned, carrying an albino baby.

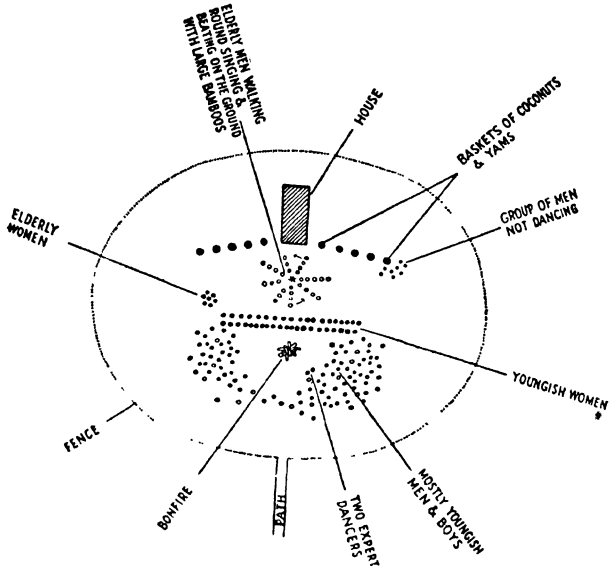
About this time two French planters beat two natives to death.

Death in Santo is inclined to loom even larger in my memory than the glory of the tangled mountains and monumental valleys, the moments of bright pleasure in some new village which I am not writer enough to describe. To me the meaning of those mountains and valleys is in the people who should, I calculate on some obscure sense of world balance, be living there still in thousands in their own unique, fearful way. There is still a relic—4,100 natives on Santo; on the south coast there are no natives, only a hundred French and their many labourers.

In three places only in Santo the people are not decreasing; those are the three places where there are resident white missionaries. The central hill folk could be saved by medicine and other attention. Since we explored the interior, grandfather Rev. Bill Anderson has made trips through the bush, giving some injections and medicines. He is a man. There is no more fitting combination than medicine and Christianity . . . but I deplore a governed land where to the bushman the two are inseparable, and where, with very few exceptions, the native must join the mission to get this help.

Santo may depress; smaller Malekula with 10,000 increasing natives is cheering, while Amok on its hill defies all comers. But first, I have a different word to say about Santo.

Sources. For other angles on Santo compare: Baker. Bird. Deacon (1929) 461. De Beer. Goodenough 337. Harrisson 300. Montgomery 64. Rannie 164. Roberts 43. Speiser 136. Tolna 229. Williams 100.
Govt. Report 1933. *Melbourne Argus*, 15/2/25. *Quarterly Jottings* (regular Santo notes from missionaries). Cf. section "The Last Conquistador."



PLAN OF A SAKAU (SANTO) DANCE ; AND THE REFRAIN OF MALE CHANTING IN THE DANCE
(cf. Baker 26)

"COCONUT MOON"[1]

But that isn't the whole story. . . .
No, not by a long chalk
Stretching forth into the corrugated school
Whose ministers undress the souls of Sunday men
Or Monday boys.

[1] " Coconut Moon " is the only part of this book that was written in the islands. I kept no diary and wrote no general notes.

In time these
are MelaNesian Gentlemen—
Knowing calico, pigs, paraffin, the quiet petrol fume
lingers on hung purple fired hibiscus
Before the Master takes up his duster
To wipe the blackboard everlastingly clean.

Where is Hog Harbour? The blackboard to my hand
slide on. For I have a brother, a black hard brother,
away in the bush where no white bibbler goes.

Meet him:
Stamping, stamping it, stamp, oh lift now
the shapely charger of your two black feet
hand down and up, hurt spear, now stamp,
Stamp
and in the last thick stacāt remember how
small rushes warm black blood,
(rushes that cut) the hand. The small spear
gathers its way, stamping the oxygen
and hydrogen or ever the carbon monoxide.

Oh! gather together the terrible relic of our hate of our
Heren enemies
Lift
Lift curled head for your fury
For the longing to kill, for the quivering shudder of death in
a chief.
Circle the fire. Men hurling to rush,
Men stamps, rushes, back again.
Drum drumming drum drumming drunken
As the women shuffle and stomp, lift, one two, small feet,
slither in slots.

While the darkness wides and firelight swells
Long spear lengthens, sweat pours down to the sea from
those dark faces—

ebony people shining naked by the firelight of a wooden fire.
Midnight drops on to earth
held glistening on the backs of the fearful bodies daubed
against the dark
Take it, fathers, it is our war, take us into your dead hands
where you sit in your spirit trees;
Take our burned offering and our sweating bodies while we
stamp our belief into coral, into tetanus earth.

For, we will dance and the feeling is now beyond understand-
ing only you and
the whirling rush stamp the fire, women shuffle
beyond if we die we have none—ghosts on a tree
but now kill pigs, we will kill you any fine pigs, fine tusks; we will
feast on you as lie on our women
until we fight.

The pigs tethered straining in a hut by the firelight,
shoulder off the midnight and murmur to each other.
" Why ? We aren't real pigs.
Why can't they kill the others ? We
can't breed, we're intersex.
Rawa, runedh, selet, ghorhor, ghara, narsogh, ra,
we are pigs with funny somethings and they treasure
us to die."
But a wise old rasa said:
" When your tusks are as long as mine are,
and have grown in a circle so that it hurts, you'll be
glad to leave
a land where black devils knock your top teeth out
and scratch your back."
And a childish pig whistled: " We are the intersex
The aimless useful intersex
Sitting sexless in a mudbath in the sun.
When a Sakau wants to die,
Fight, be chief, marry, or why,
It's an intersex whose neck is for the fun."

See them, then, moving about their business
Correct in dark uniform of a titled cad.
Straight bodies defy correction, hair
Like great freckles, curly for fingers to catch.
After-day sit in long houses
Tabu for women, long and muddy,
A few sticks, a hole full fired, tusks and (creeping in)
First European talisman—a knife or tin.

There in the long days of the year or wetness the talk of Dhingaru
or about pigs and pudding,
While out in the gardens the women work gathering
Yams for the day in the very hot sun—
until rhythm again on the pounding stakes beating the yam, crashing into the yam,
utterly routing the yam into yam pudding
with coconut oil all squeezed over it; equals—" laplap."
All the time the children eat and are loved;
everyone loves them and they are loved;
though a kind yellow Presbyterian told me they kill 'em all,
heathen, infanticide, cannibals, copulation.
" That's all they live for, Sex," he said (wriggleskin)
—but stomachs receive attention
and they do not think: they *are*.

My word
it's excellent to be an ARE.
Just spit and sit and be
Look gaze at flies, snip at fleas, pick out the lice and am.
Occasionally look at the non-existent map
and will. But will is humour,
And suddenly evening, or a joke,
Up. Splash bang wetherty pop, in one dark explosion of movement.
Where was is? Jumping cannibals.
Racing about like idiots in tree tops,

running on leaf roots, chase pigs,
shoot arrows at nothing, so nutS on
Actiqn—until hookworm reclaims the kingship of ecstatic laziness.

So in the quiet a nation dies.
Where there were thousands there are ten.
Quiros, Torres, la Perouse, Cook and Bligh
came and were greeted (by arrows or offerings).

See now;
Small white a house with the Pacific breeze
thinning the leaves, where a little heap
has fallen—borer beetles turning wood to dust
And the coconut moon slides like a dancing smile
Over the parapet filtered between long fingers
frond on the palm trees, strong against the breeze
(they can hold—even a hurricane)
and he rises to take the book, green with mould,
in the corner: his Bible.
Johnnie's father is a fine white man and everyone admires him
straight, clean, strong, can-stand-his-liquor-like-a-man and he met
Johnnie's coconut mother under the coconut moon (he standing his liquor);
Fat little blackywhite Johnnie
Was taken by a missionary in a white house by himself,
reading Hosea on Half-castes.

Once they ran out seriously saying
" Look through your magic glass at this our poisoner ";
So he took the glass gladly and gazed
through the Royal Geog. Soc. clinometer
until all was still and then with a sigh
pronounced her innocent, to the general good.

And there was the land and Cobb giving
after six weeks of living one cigarette.

ALSO often I wonder if Nebv got shot
With his two battered bullets to the others' five—
Then he said his village should not fight—
Grrrr! the village rattled, and the bolts derisive answer.
Nebv with his matted hair, some day they will kill you where
you stand in the path in the morning;
Who have killed three men, and he has two bullets.
I wish I had a bullet to give you Nebv.

THEN Punu, like a tiger, running to throw mud;
Oh, Tilli diving deep down into the coral
to show fish barred, fish gilled with
scarlet and spikey shells, shells
whom one will forget.

Jump carrop whoo, capillary heart—
The airy music of mosquitoes
playing their thread violins; ashtwinkletray
harmlessly all day, violently night,
squiggle in hotty pools, waiting in horde
hatching, immediately catching
a soft neck. Behind the ear,
anywhere, quick prick and the man is mine.
Ten days the sickness will come and the man will lie
sweating in his hut, huge douches of
icyheart, soaking sweat, yellower,
ears roaring buzz; quinine joins
the mad orchestra
And though the fever be over the sickness will never be done—
coming again anytime, wet or cold,
helpless.
(Cross the colour bar, yellow man and wanderer.)

And will you forget that shout of the missionary (those
heathen cuts on my breast)?
"Mud sticks, young man, mud sticks."
Carried over his hibiscus hedge until
it ricochets up to the top of the edge of the evening

Drops falling behind. . . .
Oh; and I caught one as it fell;
holding it now brown and nice, is comforting.

Listen to the crazy waves slapping the coral,
tide creeping over the starfish blue;
as clocks in spikes.

At night before Bird and I said good-bye
We sat on the too-white sand by a boat
discussing rot—damp rot
over excellent whisky.
Later dancing on whisky feet
A ballet of the mosquito and the planter,
Forgotten was the air and the water round us
Leaving the hardness of man and body;
the lamplight snapshot killed the planter lean and gonorrhœa
obsessing him against a gramophone.

To-morrow you shall not be here.
Shall one study savages?
and collect new specimens and glorify science and me?
While the crazy breakers roll across the bay
and inches by millimetre the footprint
tracks its toe-lost way across the daylight into death
—a meeting place for brothers black and white
(kava to square face, guns in ginless teeth). Maybe the last
great warrior
furious with his woman for she bear no child
shall lift up the arrows of freedom. . . .
and fling them far far into the night. . . .
as a testament to the word:
to the say-say of the white man who brought the new
message of heaven
heaven in the Pacific
a better paradise (with margarine).
Maybe one of those arrows, twisting among the pigs and
parrots

(the parrots, scarlet and green)
will whine its way into the heart
to penetrate the prince in his Embankment office in the
afternoon in a temper
or the shaft lie on snow in the shadow of Kremlin.

Polish the agate till it slide into the ocean,
a peaceful resting-place in some turtle's flipper.
But Mr. Yellowman, remember (as you dive and gather in
pearlshell, and grow fat on fathoms)
to gather it all.

Leave me though one village,
one small nobody's place
away in the hills a place, away in Tabwemasana,
Up high there on the mountain among the tree ferns—
a handful, untouched, uncared,
Whom none shall educate and rule and road
So that in time I may take my uncalico belle
and dance for a day in the pigwarm dust——

(for Zita, 14/2/34)

A LONG-HEADED SAVAGE OF SOUTH MALEKULA ;
WITH CIVILISED EAR

CANNIBAL, 1935

Mount Lombenben of Tagaro

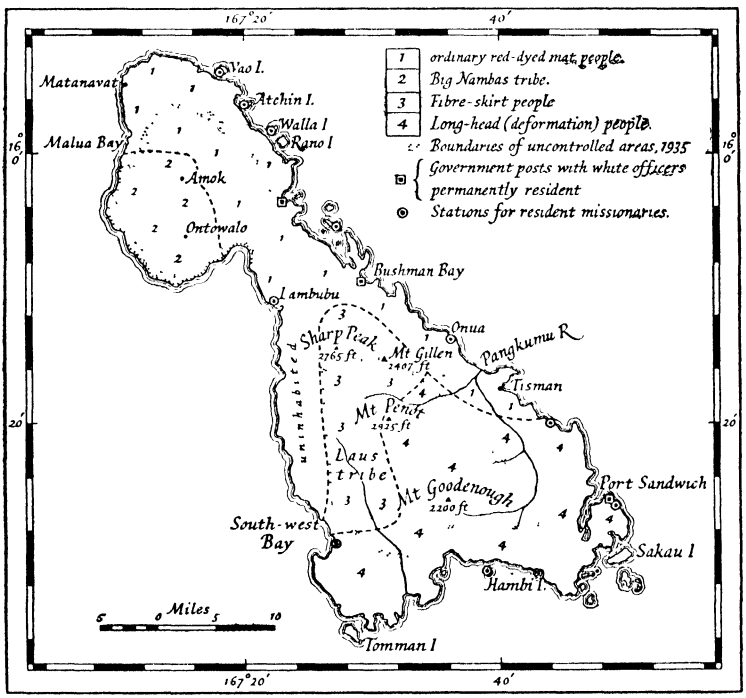
WHEN THE EXPEDITION FINISHED in August 1934, after one year, Jock went home. I had no money. And I was fascinated by the islands. I hopped a lift eastward to Omba, where I found the natives Europeanised but splendid people. I climbed Mount Lombenben, home of the great god of the group, Tagaro. There explored huge volcanic craters and lakes. Unfortunately arrived too late on Omba to witness a French planter kidnapping the Bishop of Melanesia. Then I went to Aore to study Seventh Day Adventist methods. To Malo for census work and studying the Marimatsa secret society, initiation into which is by killing a blood relative. All this time I was hearing about the Big Nambas tribe of north Malekula—how they would recruit to go to white plantations, but were strongly anti-white on their own ground. They were constantly fighting among themselves and eating each other. They would have nothing to do with missionaries. The island was only a few miles across Bougainville straits from Aore, where settlement had reached such a high pitch that it had been able to achieve the planters' whole ideal of abolishing the once-numerous population of the island. All this cannibalism and hate was happening within a few miles of some hundred whites. I went to looksee. It was, for once, true.

Big Nambas

The Big Nambas and related tribes live in the north end of Malekula, on about 300 square miles of very broken hill country, jungle and grass; the central part roughly a plateau, largely of cane-grass, around 2,000 feet.

The Big Nambas are difficult to approach not only because of their own fights, but because they hate the white man, for reasons sufficiently evident to anyone who has read this book. High hills and large villages enable them to enforce this hate, and no punitive expedition has punitived them.

The charming chief of Tonmaru was, however, more friendly; he offered a line of approach already opened up by plucky Miss Cheesman. This I followed up and developed by patience, by looking and behaving as unlike a white man as possible, by establishing myself as a hunter, and above all as a kava booze-artist of first rank (cf. page 275). Thus I was



AUTHOR'S MAP OF MALEKULA
(reproduced courtesy Royal Geographical Society)

able, after a while, to move freely and unarmed all over this country, even between villages at war with each other, as also among the smaller but even wilder cannibal tribes in the mountains of the southern part of the island.

There are about 3,000 cannibal natives in this hill country, divided into tribes and their villages, each with a hereditary chief and each potentially opposed to others. The Big

Nambas tribe is much the largest; it has no unity in action, only in dialect and custom. The village is the unit, divided into from ten to twenty "lodges," each with a sub-chief. The name Big Nambas is derived from the extraordinary garment they wear. This is a narrow strip of scarlet matting wound round the base of the penis. The fibre of the matting is not fully plaited; all the ends are left free to form a great plume of scarlet threads. These come up from the mat strip, covering the penis, and are twirled into a thick bunch which is tucked into the belt around the waist. The belts are about eight inches wide, made of bark; from three to ten are worn one over another round the stomach. The belts bulge out in a funny way as a man walks or sits; like a silent concertina. The most striking feature of this costume is that it puts into the more-than-daylight the man's testicles, left elegantly hanging and exposed. Round his neck the man wears a string of black, shiny material, from orchis stems. The women wear similar necklets decorated with glittering pieces of beautiful pearl shell.

Wild Women

The women are more clothed than the men; in fact, the most clothed people in the group. Low over the hips they wear scarlet mats, with free threads hanging all around the edge. The mat is kept up fore and aft by long training and the hand of Tagaro. More conspicuous than this haphazard garment is the coloured headdress, a purple-stained strip of matting, decorated with surréaliste zag patterns and herring-bones, folded in piles on top of one another on the head. Both edges of the matting are left free unplaited, to cascade down the women's firm shoulders and back, to the waist—long purple hair.

When the women see a strange man or tabu relative such as their husband's brother, they let out a little squeal, crouch on their heels by the narrow edge of the path, covering their faces with their false hair, so that from head to foot they are like some rock left hanging and wet with purple anemones and brown weed from the slob of a receded wave. When

they are at work in their gardens, or when they are carrying heavy loads—the husband gracefully behind, free to lift at any moment his necessarily cocked and loaded gun; then they tie their hair threads into a rough bun—for all the world old English. But the most remarkable thing about this head-dress is that they never take it off. Night and day they live in it. To remove it would be Major Sin, endangering the welfare of the whole community.

To complete their sinister appearance the women seem to specialise in keeping their faces as dirty and soot-stained as possible—and in the wet earth of the yam gardens, the smoke-filled huts, it is possible indeed. When they smile, which they often do, there is revealed, in many of them, a gaping grin hole, where their two top front teeth are missing. When you see a woman with that gap, you know that she is a good worker and probably also a moral wife. For before these teeth can be removed the husband must pay numbers of pigs to the chief, relatives-in-law, and tooth-removing experts, while the wife is secluded for a period in which secret female rituals are performed. He will only pay for this if his wife has pleased him; she takes this teeth-removal as high privilege.

The head-gear is put on by little girls. And when they are about twelve they are often married; that is, the pigs are exchanged for them, at some point in the bush between the two villages. The marriage is not consummated until the girl is in their estimation mature, which (in this climate) is about fifteen.

Despite their funny clothes, hard work and dirt, these women are full of fun, often roaring with laughter. They make noises of surprise which I can only describe as remarkable. Cluckings and long basic sexy sorts of OOOh-Er. As they squat, which they do in male company (they must never pass a man or be passed by a man with their heads and shoulders higher than or equal to the man's), they look out from under their head mats and in the shadows of these, against their dirty faces, the whites of their eyes are round, almost enormous; they roll the whites when they get worked

up. They used to get worked up when I was around, because by that time my hair was so long that it fell all over my shoulders; which was of intense interest to them, with their artificial long hair. A sure wow for me was to jerk my head to and fro, sending hair to cover all my face and then clear it again. The women would go half crazy with interest until their jealous husbands got too jealous. There are bits of my hair, yanked suddenly out of my scalp, all over the plateau, maybe still being worn by some romantic maidens, next their woolly, lousy heads.

The women are old at twenty-five—bad-breasted in this brassiere-less land of over-suckling; the older ones, the really old women, are often fascinating, very worldly-wise characters. They are good mothers and very fond of their children, as are both sexes. Never beat or hit them. The young women are very *gauche* and coy sometimes.

An Interesting Trade

Red is the colour of the best garments in the group; and in many tribes is only used on sacred and chiefly things. In the Big Nambas red or Roman purple is the colour of all clothes; and this is the only tribe with real autocratic and hereditary chiefs. But the fixative to colour these mats is not found anywhere at all in north Malekula. This very important dyeing industry is absolutely dependent on a supply from the little island of Tangoa twenty-five miles to the north. The Big Nambas have no canoes or sea villages. They come down on appointed days to meet the canoe folk from Matanavat at the north-west corner of Malekula. The Big Nambas give them pigs whose tusks have grown more than one complete circle—that is, have curved over after the top teeth have been removed, gone round in a complete circle, passed right through the lower jawbone, and come out into the mouth again in front. These pigs are never used in sacrifice by the Big Nambas. Indeed, they regard them with great awe ;—the tusk symbolising the evil of the snake. (But these are the pigs most essential to the north-coastal Malekulan rites.) The Matanavatese look them over and if they

like them say O.K. and push off again. They then take their shell-bead money, which they make very well, to Malo, where shell money is especially valued, and extensively worn around the loins of important men's wives. The Malo folk have mats which they have got from Omba, and small intersexual hermaphrodite pigs which have been traded from the Sakaus of north-east Santo down through Mafia and Tutuba islands. They take these to Tangoa, where they get the *nese* reddening leaf in exchange. They pass this on to the Matanavat folk, in bundles of standard size per so many arm spans of shell money. Matanavat take these to the Big Nambas, and for quite a small quantity get an over-circled pig which is worth, if they trade it on to Atchin Island, more than a woman. So the red clothes, which the Big Nambas always insist on, set in motion this chain, which links up all the central islands of the group. And there are, or were, many other such links throughout the group.

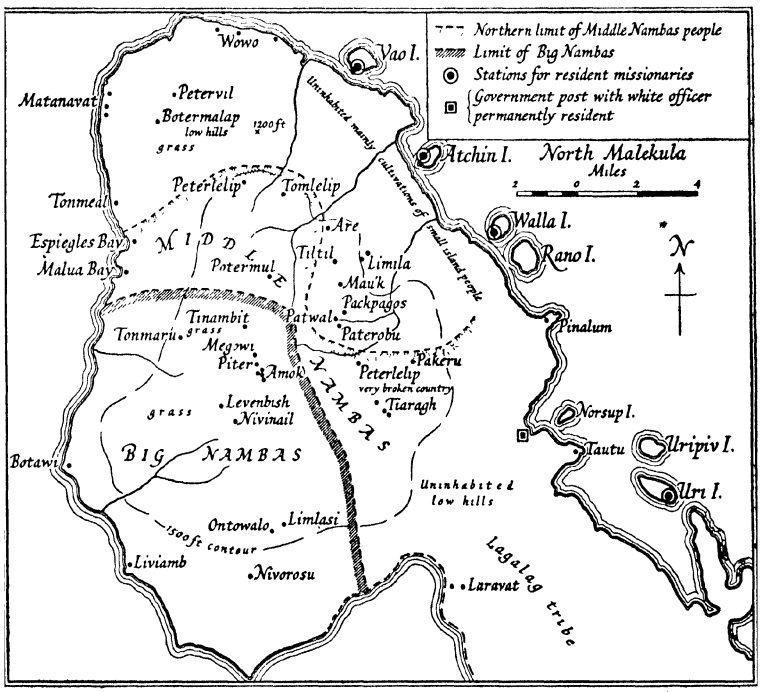
The savage has his illogical fashions just like we do. In its way this little trade is as complex, illogical, and over-profiteered as the passage of sandalwood from Erromango to the upper Yangtse which started one ball rolling over this landscape, and brought the days when many islands could no longer go on trading, because they were afraid to put out to sea in their canoes,—lest they meet a white man's ship.

Cherchez la femme

The " red-haired " women are well able to look after themselves, though they may look downtrodden. The marriage regulations give them an easy solution to domestic discontent. For each group of two or three villages has a common ancestor; and descent is through the father, not through the mother as in the northern islands. No man may marry a woman of his own ancestry group. So he must marry a woman of another village group. If she gets fed up with him, she just goes home. And if her people are satisfied that her action is justified they will keep her, though this will almost surely mean war. War or no war, no self-respecting

village will see one of its children misused. Divorce is not complicated; the pigs are returned to the husband. But this the woman's parents will rarely do.

War is the main feature of Big Nambas life. Its ramifications are endless. One lives always in the shadow of war. It is more like big-game hunting, however.



AUTHOR'S MAP OF NORTH MALEKULA
(reproduced courtesy Royal Geographical Society)

As in all decent war, women are at the bottom of it; though they supply rather the superficial motive, fanning the flame of endless immemorial feuds. Wars start over other trivial incidents too. A visitor accidentally treading on the chief's dog; someone frightening a fowl chick. One, while I was there, through a woman wanting a passing man who refused, so that she in a rage rushed home and accused him. The

best part of it is that the women can go wherever they like in war. They and their children are not harmed. Because if you shoot a woman you can never see who she is properly; it might be your own sister; anyway you would not be killing a person who, on your system of calculating relationship, belonged to that village; and you would infuriate her parents in another village, which would come in against you. Women thus go freely. They are commonly used for carrying kava branches to try and make peace, or, more commonly, for sending to and fro, between chiefs, insulting messages. Nesai, the megalomaniac dictator of 800-gun Amok, who after a while wanted my flesh, held such a correspondence with me. For weeks we sent to each other descriptions of what we would do to each other and how and when. The women would deliver these messages to a crowded reception committee of infuriated bucks; and never turn a purple hair.

The women have their own paths. One time with some men, going to a dance at Tinambit, we used a woman's path through miles of cane jungle—it grows ten feet high, and the sharp edges, when it is wet, web the skin with a thousand fine smarting cuts. We thought there were some Tomlelip men waiting up in an ambush off the big path, which was maybe two feet across. The woman's path was just like a roedeer's track, and one old man in the party, dragging a pig on a rope, slipped on to his bottom for the sixth time and nearly cried. It is considered foolish to fall.

Warpath

If a chestnut cuckoo gives its cicada rattling call on the track when you are going out on such an expedition, you must shoot the bird and let it lie rot; or return home. For it is the bird from ancestral graves, giving ill-warning. The trouble is that when you open fire to shoot the bird, the sound reaches over the plateau, the gongs start booming in another village, the news is carried round and on for miles; everyone knows a party is on the move and where. No one likes anyone else to know that sort of thing. These customs

were formed in the days when there were only spears and arrows.

In the year I was around the plateau, thirty men were killed in the various wars that were going on. The technique of war is ambush or stalking. Never conquest or rush. A war party may spend days out in the bush, scarcely moving, never speaking or lighting a fire, near the enemy, village waiting for a stray man to wander their way; or creep up before daylight and wait, guns trained, outside a house at the edge of the village. Any man of the village will do as well as the next. Usually the war party is of about six men. Some are noted shots and killers, such as fine white-haired Morkate of Tinambit whose personal aggregate is twenty-eight. They do not stroll out light-heartedly to kill. There are days of preparation; most elaborate invisibility magic; sexual abstinence and a close attention to omens.

Cannibal

A pole is ready, with bush cord ropes, and if there is time the body is quickly slung on this; the party race away, with rearguard pairs enfilading the path behind them to cover the rather slow retreat. It is not easy to get the body away; out of the thirty killed to my knowledge, seven were successfully eaten. When the successful war party returns, men rush to beat the great upright wooden drums with their evil carved faces, and in a few moments the dancing-ground, overhung with great banyan and teak trees, is changed from a place of sleeping jungle-damp into a place vibrating, alive.

The rhythm, beaten on five drums, with an extraordinary complexity and speed, is taken up all over the plateau until the whole land is overwhelmed with a tide of nerve-shaking sound.

The victim's body is hung on the largest drum, hollowed out from a whole teak trunk. All that night the men, shining with coconut oil and perspiration, dance and dance and dance. Not a " dance of death " but a dance of victory. Not a dance of " savage abandon," but of vigorous aggressive movements repeated in one pattern over and over again,

with chants improvised now by one, now by another, telling in song the story of the victory, down to that minutest detail which only people without writing can attain.

Towards dawn the hanging body is beaten by strokes from sharp-edged hardwood clubs, shaped like canoe paddles; these break the bones. It is taken down, cut into large pieces, wrapped in leaves and put to cook in a native oven. After some hours the oven is opened.

Every man must eat a portion. The taste is like that of tender pork, rather sweet. Some men are noted flesh-lovers and eat as much as a whole limb. The natives recognise, as I do myself, a peculiar greasy look about the eyes which characterises such men. I have known only one man who definitely hungered after human flesh; he had eaten more than one hundred legs. In general a small helping is enough, for this is a very filling food. The inner part of the thighs and the head are the greater delicacies.

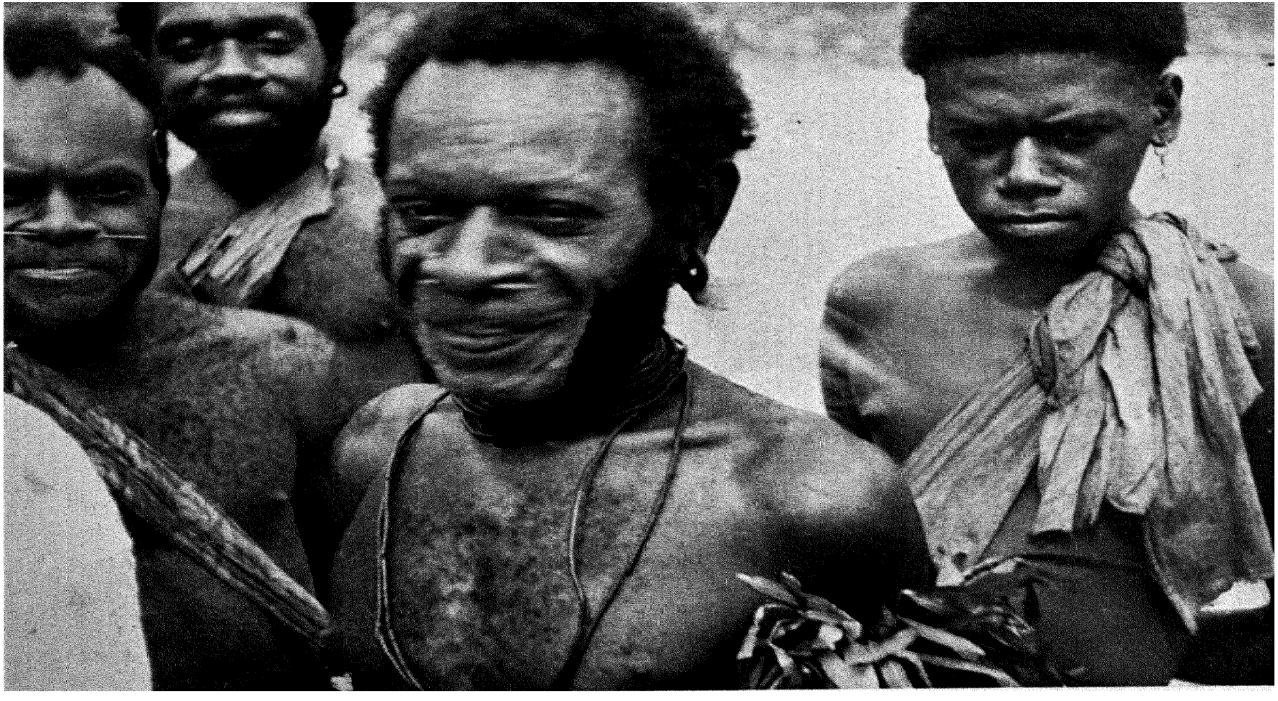
The important feature is the communal nature of the participation. However much he dislikes the taste a member of the community *must* partake, and in so doing a vague " power " is added to the whole community. This addition is at the expense of the enemy community, whose spiritual and ideal life is interfered with by this treatment of one among its dead. The partaking community thus rises one step in the ever-ascending " ladder."

Biologically, cannibalism has not now much significance, because people are not killed specifically to be eaten, and the eating is only a non-essential climax to the killing.

Bodies are always divided and sent out to other villages on all cannibal occasions. The recipient of a portion has, of course, to reciprocate it in due course or lose face; this is the cause of many apparently pointless wars; it has also caused the sudden murders of unsuspecting whites.

Grey Faces

The village of Peterlelip, which is down in a deep hollow with very steep hill-sides rising all round, got the free gift of a breakfast. A war party surrounded the village before



THE CANNIBAL SMILE

Plus nose-stick, tortoise-shell earrings and orchis-stem necklace

daylight, camped in four pickets on the hill-sides in the cover of the jungle. Tense and ready as the cold light came into the east, one heard a movement, just below him; saw a shape and opened fire. His victim let out a shriek and went rolling over and over down the hill-side, careering on to the dancing place of the village below, right up against the killing-stone monolith. The war party ran as hard as they could go for home, to avoid the Peterlelip people cutting off their return by some shorter route of their own. When they got home, very pleased and celebrating-conscious, someone asked " But where is Kali ? " Then they knew that the man they had shot was their own man, Kali.

The Big Nambas are not very good at these organised tactics. They get so eager and kill-ready, that the slightest thing sets the trigger off. Later I saw Kali's leg bone hung over the lodge door, and his hand dried with a *You have been warned* look, stuck on the gong. When a native's face goes sort of grey on the flesh over the cheek-bones, that is the time to say the Lord's Prayer twice. Every face in Peterlelip went grey when I rolled in for the first time. I was quite surprised when I found that I was still seeing enough to see grey rebrown, after a few silent minutes. The reason for this colour performance, I learned later, was that the first and last time they had had a white man in that area (north-east hills) was when, in 1916, they had been down to the sea near Bushman Bay in the east, had cut a trader called Bridges and his half-caste children to small pieces and eaten one of the latter, in revenge for a kidnapping in which the administration failed to see that the men were returned. The administration decided, as usual, to punish the natives. But it required some skill and knowledge to arrest the right man ; and, as they had neither, they decided on an indiscriminate punitive expedition in the old group tradition. The party consisted of H.M.S. *Torch* and the French cruiser *Kersaint*, with one hundred Australian marines and a detachment of New Guinea native police, sections of the British and French constabulary, in addition to the sailors. The leadership, too, was in the Condominium tradition, thus: (1) The

British Resident Commissioner. (2) The French Resident Commissioner. (3) Commander of H.M.S. *Torch*. (4) Commander of the *Kersaint*. (5) Commandant of British constabulary. (6) Commandant of French constabulary. (7) Officer in command of Australian marines. The seven commanders marched their men into Malekula; destroyed a village in which they found one old woman, too lame to get away. A party of police were left to safeguard the route, on the way up. They were ambushed, all massacred except one British sailor. The main party was worn out by the very difficult mountain up-and-down country and dense bush. On the way down the natives were waiting for them. They shot from prepared trenches, jumping up to fire and falling back after each shot. The natives captured a good supply of biscuits, and a number of rifles and much ammunition. Also a fine sailor's hat. One native was wounded.

The punitive expedition was a farce. Until then the whites, though hated for their kidnapping and killing were, to some extent, feared because of their warships. Since 1916 the north Malekulans have not even been afraid of the warships, which on two other occasions also shelled ineffectively into the Big Nambas. The people of Peterlelip felt the utmost contempt for the white. They subsequently killed and ate six missionary teachers sent up into the bush to convert them, and on another occasion just missed a missionary doctor whom they lured inland. No mission native nor white ever looked in there since. They fight the coastal tribes, who are kept under Government control, because they live on tiny islands which any warship can attack successfully. (These islanders cannot retaliate or they would be arrested.)

That is why they greyed when they saw me. But they were so surprised that, as often with natives, they cooled off before they could decide.

Domestic

Not many villages are in such difficult country as Peterlelip and the villages near it—Tiragh, Packpogos and

Pakeru. The western villages are, where possible, in small patches of jungle surrounded by wide areas of cane. This makes it very hard to get away from the village quickly, while the cane can be fired and flame sent racing in a few moments after the killers. Villages right in the jungle clear the dense underscrub in a wide belt around, so that none can approach unseen, or take cover.

The village is a rabbit warren of huts in small fenced enclosures, scattered among coconut and breadfruit trees, scarlet hibiscus, bananas, bright-leaved crotons. The triangular huts, with palm-thatched roofs, eaves to the ground on both sides, had the ends filled in with bamboos and logs, except for one small square hole on the ground at one end, which is door, window, chimney and ventilator. You must crawl to get through. And in the fence around each house there is only one small square too, placed halfway up the fence. If, as is usual, the ground on each side, (bare mud) is slippery, it is tricky getting through. A native going through just behind me with his rifle, of course, in his hand, caught the hammer on the top of the hole as he slipped; he sent a fine lethal dose of shot into a tree some inches away from my right ear. These cane fences are usually eight feet high, tightly woven. While the roofs of the houses here are so well made and the leaf so tightly packed that it is impossible to fire a gun through the roof and hit anyone sleeping on the ground inside (a popular method in Santo). Between each house enclosure are narrow paths flanked by cane fences; these run here and there in all directions, so that it is difficult to find your way around; a strange village is like a maze. And the chief lives well in the middle of it all, for all that he is sacred and not to be shot by any enemy.

The men's club-houses are very fine here. They slope up from the back end to maybe thirty feet off the ground in front, the front ridge pole capped with a large carved face of treefern, heavy Jew features, great cheek lines for all the world like an Indian totem. Looking down over the door it sees a hundred tough black buttocks a day, bend and enter.

Inside, at first you see nothing, feel only the smoke smart in your eyes. Then begin to pick out—twisted sticks hanging from ascending angles of the roof, neat woven baskets, pigs' jaws stuck in the layers of thatch, a cuttle, two bows, bundles of wild cane tied ready for torches. A big palm frond bent and sown into a kava trough. All smoke polished into coppered harmony with the innumerable leaves of the bullet-proof roof. Under the eaves along the sides of the hut, a few rough beds of old sticks, placed anyhow parallel. In one corner the whiteness of dolmen and ancestral skulls, for here they are kept in the house, and near them no fires are lit. On the bare earth, that is floor, are several holes where the food is cooked: fine yam and prawn puddings; banana mush with whole eels threaded through; a sucking pig stuffed with shoots from a cabbage tree; all wrapped up in leaves and covered all round with red-hot stones, then piles of earth and more leaves and stones on top, a mound which smokes through innumerable strata, slow as the crater of Ambrym.

There is plenty to eat. Yams grow to three feet long, and a man may have an acre under yams in one year; most tribes think a quarter of that is enough. Sugar-cane thrives. But wet fruits do not grow freely, for the plateau is dry, there is no water. It is impossible to wash; drinking is down to a minimum. To the natives a white's way of drinking (so much) seems obscene.

Coconut water is used; especially when a chiefly man dies. Boys attend his corpse and wash his face night and day in coconut water until the flesh peels away easily. With solemn rites the skull is removed from the body. There follows the fascinating ceremony of yamming the brother. Four wild coconut trees—long slender tree trunks they have —are planted at four corners and a high fence is made around them. In this enclosure, many yams are piled up, to a height. On top of them is tethered one fine pig, and to get it the brother must climb this unstable pyramid. When he is near the top the crowd open fire with yams. He has to earn that pig, all right. This represents the final expulsion

of the threatening element in the chiefly spirit, which might harm the living.

Boy Friend

Sham fights with fruit are quite frequent; popular cannibal fun ! Hoaxes are always in favour. At the circumcision of boys (nowhere else in the western Pacific is true circumcision done), which happens every few years in a village where there are enough boys ready—that is, around ten years old—they are secluded, after the operation with stones and sharp bamboos, for one hundred days in a lodge. There they are subject to every indignity. They are rolled in dung; terrified by ghosts who are men weirdly decorated with luminous fungi; beaten with stinging plants; men dance in relays all night inside the house, trampling on them and kicking up dirt. They are given fake fruit. Made to jump series of thorn creepers. A man is laid on the ground outside in the twilight, his head concealed cunningly, so that he looks as if he had been decapitated. Those outside let out a scream " Oh ! Oh ! The enemy have been and beheaded the father of Lorali." The boys, who are allowed with permission as far out as the fence round the house, rush out. Awful noises of spirits are made, by night, with leaves. Day after day new hoaxes, funny or semi-brutal. If any lad cry out, his father forfeits a pig,—and shame on them both.

The whole process is the making of boy into young man. A trial of character and an education in patience and determination. One got it at prep. school and public. Those who have gone through this mill together have thereafter a close community of feeling, as men of the same year when they have gone down from the varsity. And at the end of the hundred days—Oh, boy !—the proud lad comes out, feathered and coconut oiled, wearing for the first time his *nambas* penis-wrapper. That is a proud day for parents and mother's brothers who have come over especially. What a killing of pigs and making of fowl pie. Mountains of banana and sugar-cane. Towards evening the gong music

roaring up. This night is the one for the women. Let go ! They have the right to rape, or anything else, any and every man in that place. They do just that.

That night the boy has put behind him childish things. Among other such, he has changed sex. He is no longer the boy friend. . . . During the hundred days of initiation he had the last hundred of that. During those hundred each boy had his *tombat*, a grown-up male, in attendance, sharing his mat. *Tombat* is the last flicker of the man who has been his lover for the past few years. The first thing one notices among the Big Nambas is the way the men go around behind the boys, and the boys are as fond servants to the men. This homosexuality system is ancient, with its own technique and nomenclature, relationship regulations as to which boys you may like. Each man has his boy, if he can get one; he guards him more jealously than his female wife. The two often grow very fond of each other. Many men who have boys have one or more wives and children. There are more children per head in this area than any other bush part of Malekula. The women have developed a parallel pleasure system of their own, less elaborate than the male.

War Over Boy Friend

While I was there the people of Tinambit village and of the great central village Amok, were at war. Indeed, Amok was at war with everyone. They were pleased with themselves because they had perfected a new technique of shooting. The Government was trying to enforce the law against importing rifles. This was making them more expensive, smuggled, for the planters. So the planters had started big business in ·410 shot guns, which will fire a Winchester bullet—at some risk to the shooter, though after surviving the first few times one gets quite a kick out of each subsequent uncertainty. Amok, advised by a half-caste trader of judgment, found that a 12 bore shot gun, with a load of light nails, glass, fish-hooks, etc., muzzle loaded on to the top of a buckshot cartridge, made an even better weapon;

it was so much harder to miss. Several men were blown up in the experimental stage, acting under the orders of too-powerful Amok chief Nesai. They pressed the super-charge too tight in the barrel. Eventually, however, they got it right; one man went and put a load into a Tinambit man and woman standing together; also killed a new-born babe the woman was suckling. This outraged all tribal lore, and was probably an accident really, the shooter only expecting to be killed himself. Tinambit were enraged. So they went one better. By daring exploit a Tinambit party shot Nesai's favourite boy (he had six, and forty wives). This started a terrific hate and an unfortunate collapse of old war morality; it made it hard to defend war as any more a hygienic native thing. In fact this led to my urging Government intervention; then being made governor myself, and making a damned fool of a peace.

Harrisson's Peace

Pig-killing rites are on a great scale in the Big Nambas. They are not between individuals but between villages. They are done, theoretically, to cement peace. On anthropological paper, to bring about a pig exchange and sacrifice in the right way is the ideal and only antidote, of fairly lasting nature, to war. So with (I thought) considerable cunning, I brought such a rite, pending some years, into fruition at Tinambit; after many preparations and pig intrigue on a monstrous scale. One day the women dancing, red-painted and leafy, as trees of the forest; as banyans, bamboos and cycas palms; beating weird-waving rhythms on hand gongs, waving hands in accord, sway as patterns, shiver as trees in the storm. Next day, separately, the men in practised patterns of lines and formation, jump, kick, dodge; they are painted with circles, on their heads masses of fowls' feathers, arms held stiff out to the side for the wings of a hawk soaring.

Three hundred pigs, many of value, were involved. Unknown to me the erratic and wall-eyed boy chief of Tinambit, Lorambit, who is always giving and taking insult,

arranged with the chief of Tonmaru, Ringapat (who was to act as delegate killer, in accordance with local custom), that most of the pigs should be given to small Megowi village. This would be a good joke, repaying a similar incident done at the expense of Tinambit when Lorambit's father was chief. When the time came for the pigs to be killed, after three days of final dancing and feasting, the Tonmaru and Tinambit chiefs—painted and carrying their newly face-carved killing clubs, conch-shell trumpets blowing, gongs booming, everyone rhythmically stamping and shuffling forward in a tight column, myself contentedly in the wake—went round the long line of pigs tethered to monoliths, right the way round the village, and to the amazement of everyone, pointed pig after pig for Megowi. Worse, they clubbed most of them dead on the spot, though it is usual to touch them with the club, which renders them technically dead,—of no further use ritually, but easier to carry home. The Megowi men staggered to and fro to carry about six large pigs per head, custom compelling this before the sun went down. They were wild with fury as they toiled along under the decomposing burdens which they could never eat, while the large village Piter had barely enough for one decent meal. Thus the alliance which I had hoped to consolidate, I did in fact weaken; this affair soon led to fresh serious trouble. This pig-business is theoretically a peace-making, in practice the cause of temporary truce and high-feeling centred in acts of peace, liquidated into new semi-hates and male stimuli.

Autocracy

In such incidents we see the autocratic power of the hereditary chiefs, often lads and irresponsible. For their fathers make way for them when they are of age, and are pleased to do so. A man reigns only (at most) twenty years. Though this often leads to trouble, trouble has always been good, I think, until modern gunfire ruined the ethics of war. The chief has a pipe-carrier and someone always ready to cook for him. If he is annoyed he raises both his arms above

his head; someone must at once rush to bring him a gift of a tusker pig.

There is a drug given to the chiefs as youths. This leaf concoction makes them, in a very short while, become exceedingly fat. So fat that they can only with difficulty move around, can scarcely walk uphill. The idea of this is that the chief is so sacred that he should not move around much, everyone should wait on him, his public orator do his ritual work and hospitality. Nowadays the young chiefs are not keen on the idea. They are better fat and sedentary !

Dance for a Daughter

The chief of Tonmaru's eldest daughter was married in June 1935. Then the men of Tonmaru did the most basic dance I have seen.

A chief had special duties to his first-born male and female children both before and after their marriage. Like most females, the daughter was married while yet a child, age about nine (the marriage is not consummated until age about fourteen). The young son of a lesser chief from Tinambit was the bridegroom, a boy of eleven. The final stage in the affair was two days of dancing, leading up to the pig exchange. Like all Big Nambas dances that I have seen, these were of the Na-leng type; only one sex danced at the same place and day. The movements were all perfectly synchronised by a highly-trained chorus, decorated with bright leaves and magnificent feather headdresses, bodies painted vivid black and red, shining with coconut oil. In four ranks of intricately moving muscle, to the accompaniment of chants and tapped sticks, with scarlet ginger buds which they push and pull through their hands, they go through a long series of actions clearly symbolic of the future sex-life of the couple. The women dance on the following day, crouching as they chant an erotic, almost interminable chant about the family history of the bride and her innumerable relatives, virtues, blue-bloodedness; in their high descant. All this went off very well at Tonmaru until it was time for the Tinambit folk to bring over their

pigs. The bride price demanded by Ringapat had been fifty tuskers; Lorambit of Tinambit had insisted that in these hard times it was impossible to offer more than forty; such a price was hardly enough to satisfy a proud father. But Ringapat had already given his second son to Lorambit as his heir, in order to cement an alliance between these two powerful villages against mighty Amok and its possible confederates. He was anxious to avoid offending Lorambit, and so causing the break-up of an arrangement advantageous to his family. He therefore accepted. At the appointed time of midday on the big dancing ground, all the Tonmaru men " lined up "; no one came from Tinambit; no one came at all until late afternoon. Then a mere handful of Tinambit men appeared, bringing a mere handful of Tinambit pigs. That was all; perhaps thirty low-grade pigs. It was a direct and deliberate insult to Ringapat. It looked for a few moments as if Tonmaru would take the law into their own hands and do some shooting on the spot. Danger accumulates slowly here: Tinambit got away with it for the time being. Lorambit had the satisfaction of knowing that he had made Ringapat lose a very big slice of " face "; and before the white man too, with whom he had always put on so many airs, as self-appointed " King of the Big Nambas." That he had destroyed incidentally a valuable alliance, formed with much intrigue, did not bother Lorambit a blow. Which shows how individuals can influence communal life, though not custom.

This daughter of Ringapat's was a sweet-smiling, dirty-faced imp. She demonstrated the danger of life among cannibals by getting up a bank behind me and hurling an enormous lump of pigmud on to the back of my neck; not only was this a hearty rabbit punch, but a stick (I was trying to make fire with) missed going into my eye by a fraction.

A Beat-Up

Though there was trouble over the girl, for a while Tonmaru and Tinambit had to stand together in my

all-village entente against Amok. Amok was making hell with every village, breaking all rules, and shooting anyone anywhere. We had them held in check for six months; they could not even safely get down to the sea to get more illegal ammunition from the recruiting ships. Tonmaru shot up six Amok men landed from a plantation ship, while on their way up to the village. But there was no question of direct attack or hand to hand. That does not occur. One of the queerest things about it was that Amok was fighting the villages of Megowi and Piter right alongside it. The central dancing ground of Piter was a buckshot from the huge third dancing ground of Amok, with its line of men's club-houses along one side. Yet casualties were rare.

One night a Megowi party went right into Amok and dug up, and carried out, the largest of Nesai's gongs—total length about eleven feet, circumference ten feet, of heaviest teak-wood—without being seen, or even barked at by one of a hundred available dogs. This gave Amok a sock in the eye when they woke up. Each gong is a very sacred thing. Each takes two years to make. Has a special dance made for it—a beautiful dance in which the men form tight circles, are covered with sacred cycas palm, bend, jerk, stoop, stagger and sway as if all the winds of the world were orchestrating the palm groves. The gongs are of much value, at least five fine tusker pigs sacrificed at erection; spiritual feelings. It was the hell of an idea to steal that drum. I got a deal of pleasure by beating out the kill rhythm on it from over by Megowi. And though Amok had more men and guns than all the other surrounding villages put together, they could not do anything about it.

Ordinary

There is peace and quiet, too. Only a minority are making war, and though for men the fear of sudden death around the next corner of the winding bush trail is always there, yet,—there it is, and that is it. The women and children keep on weaving mats, digging yams, feeding the pigs every evening, war or peace. House-building, wood carving, dance

rehearsals, offerings to ancestors, the hundred and one ceremonies of conception, pregnancy, birth, childhood, circumcision, New Year, yam harvest, flowering of the flame-trees, marriage, debt, trade, kava, sickness, death and after-death.

This life is so full and busy that in the day there is little rest. The day's work over, as the power of day fades to the night breeze soft from the hills, the women set about the cooking of the big evening meal (there are two meals a day); through the low doors and thatching of the roofs smoke wanders up into the evening. The men gather around the lodge house, talking out the day and its full incident with that accuracy and pattern of beauty in words we have lost. That is the time for kava and friendliness, stories and songs back beyond memory. Each knows enough, needs no more. There is a peace, where no bells ring, where no wheel has marked this earth's face, and no man seeks for something. Here, almost alone in the world, there is nothing made for, or by, Unilever.

The Clam Woman and Warbler Man

Over the kava trough stories flow on across the wavering light from the cane torches, that pattern wild shadow on to white skulls and dark bodies. The stories I heard would fill many books. This is the kind of thing they tell about. This is how the first man came to the village of Tuwai.

There was a giant clam-shell on the reef of the west coast of Malekula. And in this shell there appeared the first woman. She lit a fire inside the shell. The smoke curled upward. And there was a leaf warbler, smallest of all the birds, with its delicate hanging nest shaped like a mango, spun of spiders' webs and coloured lichens. The leaf warbler, who had no woman. He saw the fire from his tree on the mainland. It smoked up from the reef far away. He made a bow and very many arrows of wild-cane. He shot the arrows of wild-cane one after another towards the clam, so that one arrow went into the next and they grew to form one long

path. Then the leaf warbler walked along the path to the clam shell. The woman in the shell told him he must cut through the powerful hinges of the shell, before she could be free. After a lot of trouble he got her free. They both went back along the arrows. Then the bird became a man, the first man. He had been nearly a man before. And he took out the two top teeth of the woman. They married and had a son, who became the first chief of Tuwai, and started that place.

The story goes on to tell how the couple get tired of eating wild fruit, so cut up another son into small bits and planted him, the bits growing into many different sorts of yam, which were cultivated. And so on . . . .

The Rest of Malekula

I learned this and much more about the Big Nambas. I did not neglect the rest of Malekula, which I censused and surveyed, often with incident. Once I came to a village on the fringe of the war-like Laus pygmoid tribe in the southern interior. When they saw a white leg through the door of the hut, all the men inside made one leap, burst the far end wall, and bolted. My guides bolted, too. It took days to get that mess sorted, especially as I could not talk a word of their language. My long stay inland, and the story spun by my ashamed runaway guides when they reached the coast, caused me, that time, to be reported eaten. The worst part of it was that these little folk kept their pigs tethered inside the houses, just the right distance away from the walls, for them. I was, regrettably, a foot taller. The pigs licked my feet (or sucked my toes) through the night.

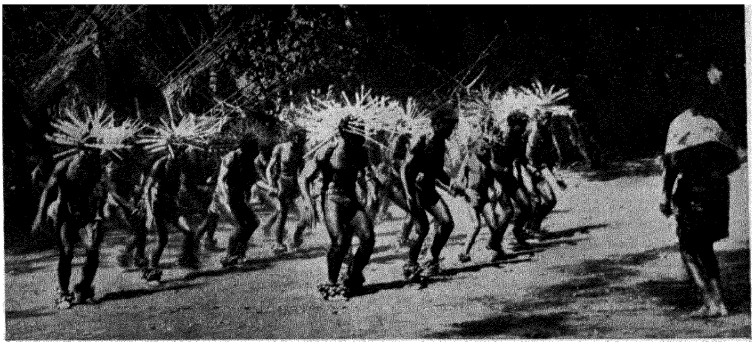
I went a good deal among the interesting long-headed folk farther south. They deform the skull in infancy; and make grotesque effigies on which they put the skulls of the dead, with bright coloured faces in clay, and good spiders' web hair. The dancing place is full of fine carvings, mostly sexless, some twenty feet tall. I walked one day into a long-head village in the southern interior, where they were having a secret society rite. A cardinal rule

of this society was that it kill any non-initiate who saw what they were doing. After discussion, they generously waived this rule in favour of the fool white, who did not understand that those leaves and cleft sticks on the track meant " Keep out." I was only detained as a prisoner until the rites were over. They included weird masked dances Nevinbur, bodyless heads on bamboos made to dance from behind high leaf fences: Punch and Judy. There was sacrifice on high platforms in trees. Unholy sounds. Formulæ for stupefying an enemy, enlarging his anus and drawing out his intestine. I swore to keep their secrets, which I did not learn from payment or voluntary information, as I had on Malo or with the Vinavina ghost society of child stealers in Santo.

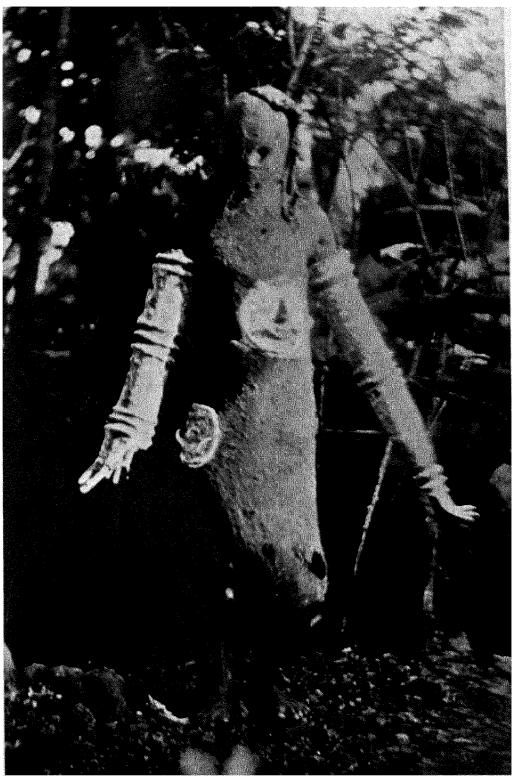
I spent several weeks at various times exploring the Pangkumu river, which I found was the largest in the islands. At the mouth its shingle and sand bed is over a mile wide, largely lagoon. The wide bed runs back for five miles, with big expanses of giant-reed harbouring duck, rails and coots; and a new sort of grebe, almost the same as our English dabchick. Inland it narrows into winding gravels and pools, with cascades between the high hills. There are too many fish—the natives swear there are sharks quite a way from the sea—pigeons, wild pigs and wild tomatoes; not too many mosquitoes, only a few too many flies and fleas. But beware of a sharp-horned shell that easily pierces the toughest foot and sets up a poisoning if not at once removed. The native food speciality in this area is a delicious pudding of manioc and coconut with whole eels, prawns and assorted fruits scattered around inside. A part of the river rises in Mount Penot, where live the powerful Botowut tribe.

News

When I arrived at Botowut, the news was out over the hills at once. It was sent in the nicest way news can be sent. A man stood in the centre of six upright slit-gongs, from two to eight feet high, and with a small log in each hand beat out in tones and times a perfect harmony describing me, my guide, my objective (counting people and talk-talk),



MALEKULANS DANCE



A DANCER CLOTHED ENTIRELY IN A CLOAK OF SPIDERS'-WEB
Special cones are put up in the houses, on to which spiders spin

calling in every village to see me, to examine my hair. At no time have I heard music so satisfactory and so absolutely in keeping with its environment. The sound runs over the echoing hills of my memory and down the green Pangkumu valley, from this vigorous little community perched in a tree-fern tangle of hills, whose dripping forests surround one like a sponge, in which it seems that no impression or use can ever be more than ephemeral. There were two club houses at Botowut. One was tabu for the group chief, an important person, impressively unpleasant. A peculiar female effigy indicated his tabu. The house in which I slept was swarming with hundreds of blue-bottle flies which zoomed and buzzed in the darkness, looking for native sores and dampness. Into the roof of the house were stuck the heads of dead men with clay-moulded skulls; these had, with their cobweb hair, a swarthy Red Indian sort of countenance. For an hour after sunset this desolate pocket of the mountains, deep in dew and mist, was made (if possible) more eerie and away from all that I had grown to be among, by the swinging of bull-roarers, the blowing of *nalawan* horns, noises from coconut shells filled with water on to which air is blown through a bamboo. A fine range of ghostly sound; part of the rites of youth seclusion.

The Wild West

Several times I came by canoe along the almost uninhabited west coast, with its continuous line of reef and wavebreak. Here there are multitude colours, fishes, beautiful beaches with a feeling of utter desolation and shipwreck which is, if anything, heightened by the rough shelters sometimes left standing in the wind after a visit of a shell-fishing party from the hills behind. Caves full of screaming esculent swifts; blue egrets nesting on tiny casuarina-clad islands; shy sudden turtles. In the deeper water outside the reef, sea bats, giant rays, ready to drown whole canoes with their lazy angel wings. Scrub-turkeys nest here in the sand. And about November turtles come ashore in scores. During that month I ate my way down the beaches for three

gargantuan days. I can eat thirty turtles' eggs—tasting of omelette with sand.

Officer

The east coast was well known and settled. There had been British and French Government officers and police there since 1925. But of the inland the Government knew nothing. They decided that it was worth employing me, as acting district agent for six months, while the permanent agent had a break from the view off his east coast verandah. I was grateful for the job; my health was beginning to show signs of liking a change from this bush life, and now I would have the money to pay my fare home if I wished.

I was specially commissioned to report on conditions in north Malekula, and there attempt pacification by friendly means.[1] It was clear to me that all the bad elements in the native war situation were due to illegal operations of whites with guns, drink, woman-stealing, non-repatriation and illegal recruiting. The natives were themselves tired of the modern style war; but if they *did* stop quiet, would the

[1] The only legal right to interfere with natives in the north is under Article 60.3(2) of the 1914 Protocol, a fine of £2 (or 248 francs) or 21 days' imprisonment for a native " proved to be in a state of intoxication in a public place."

But the missions and other whites obtain Government intervention in purely native affairs when it is in their own interest. On the coast, and on small islands, the natives are now all peaceful; for if not, they are easily shelled into order. There is no solution for ordinary inter-native disputes in these areas. There is no way of enforcing pig repayments, marriage rights, property titles, moral law, which were respected so long as chiefs and war held the authority. It is a clear responsibility for a government, that forces them to be quiet, also to arbitrate in disagreements and authorise punishment where necessary. The present position degrades the native; but greatly favours the missionary.

The prestige and authority of the Government and the white can only be built up on such minor justices. My common experience was to receive messages, after my appointment, from bush chiefs, such as " If you come back here, do not come as the Government. Come alone and unarmed. We do not need such a Government. We are the government of the bush. The white Government is salt-water Government." Another favourite: " Well, govern the white man first." Nevertheless the Condominium often talks about " The prestige of the Joint Administration."

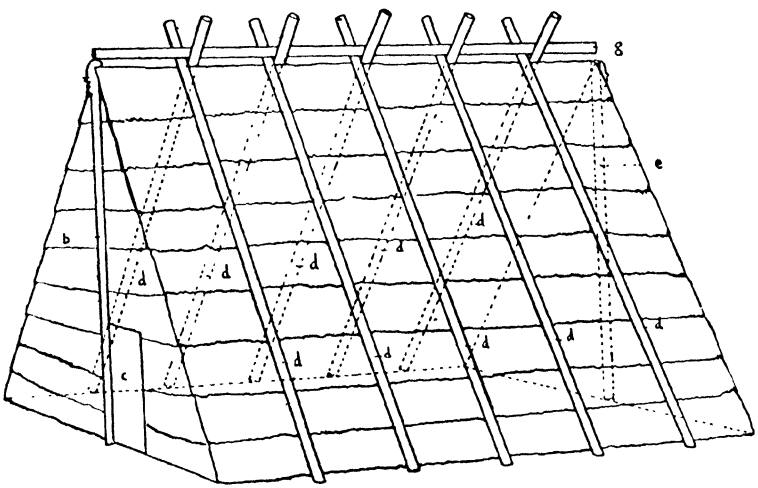
It is unintelligent to intervene only in cases where blood is shed. Then there is nothing to intervene for; the problem has been solved. Yet this is the latest tendency. The loss of blood, even the wiping out of whole tribes—are we to believe that these are any concern to an administration that makes no effort to use its resources to stem epidemics, enforce existing pro-native laws (what there are of them), or do anything else of constructive value ?

Government punish the aggressor? Experience said no. Places like Malua Bay, on the west coast of Malekula, have become the best feared and bloodiest places in the group; there they recently bagged a whole boat's crew that they had been waiting twelve years for. This sort of thing developed as a protest against continued injustice from whites; it could be stopped in a few weeks by proper Government inspection of the plantations and their labourers on Santo and Aore. I reported many cases of illegal recruiting, land-grabbing, booze and bullet selling, nearly all by French subjects. I was in more danger of being run down accidentally at sea in my canoe, by a French launch, than I had ever been of getting someone else's bullet in the bush !

I pressed for medical help from the large available resources. No good. I urged control of mission activities. The Seventh Day Adventists had been sending inexperienced missionaries along this coast. North of the Big Nambas country they made several hybrid coastal villages, in terribly unhealthy sites. And as they did not let their people keep pigs, in this ill-drained area there was no sewage system. The pig is the sewer of savagery. These villages had become a refuge for tribal outcasts and law-breakers, soon a centre for trading women out to the hungry recruiting ships. The bushmen then shot up the mission; the mission teacher shot his own brother. The recruiters panicked two hundred people into leaving Malekula, settled them on the land around their plantations on other islands, and there held them in miserable bondage, away from all their life and meaning, making them work so many days a week in return for their bits of jungle. While the bushmen back in Malekula had a fine time, blotting out the deserted houses, cutting and burning—a process happily synchronising with a particular esoteric period in their own religion, in which this type of vandalism is necessary. I did manage to get one ordinance passed, forbidding the recruiting of women, this being the cause of much bloodshed. I was delighted when the news reached me, weeks after the ordinance was passed (naturally recruiting ships deliberately withheld it). Until I found that

it was so framed that it defined the area down to a certain cape, which on the map might conceivably have been taken for the limit of the country to the south, but which in fact left the main coastal exit of the largest bush villages free, for recruiters to do as they liked. If a woman did try and come aboard north of the point, they asked her to step around the corner !

Constructive co-operation between French and English



MALEKULAN CLUB-HOUSE (*Deacon*)

a=the " face of the post " (*noon numbou*)
b=the " man post " (*numbou morot*)
c=the door, the " mouth of the *amel* " (*nimbongon naamel*)
dd=*naai huhu*
e=the " woman post " (*numbou milamp*)
g=the " fruit ghost " (*navan temes*)

middle classes is the last co-operation, especially where (as in the New Hebrides) the French dominate.

Into this horrid mess, to save me from the only bitter despair I have known, floated one day a section of another, extreme, world. I passed out of this blot on white history, one of the few that we have not covered with white absorbent paper to suck up the darker stain. I left behind, to bear this burden of sympathy for these queer cannibals, my friend

Apon. He was a Christian man, one of half a dozen Christian men in the islands. He was also a Presbyterian teacher. His station was at Liviamb, right on the coast of the Big Nambas country. Within a surprisingly short time he had begun to gain converts. I did not approve of Apon's activities in the mental sphere, and particularly the way he tried to get bushmen to come down from their healthy hills to live by the rude chapel in this desolate, fever-infested spot. But in this he was only obeying the orders of his mission. As a man and friend I doubt if I shall meet a finer person. He was of invaluable assistance to me, as guide, adviser, interpreter, in visits to the southern villages; he was aware that things could not go on as they were. When I was ordered by the Administration to attempt pacification by peaceful means, he gave me full and daring support. We were two impotent, impudent microcosms; we could influence to some extent the smaller villages. But the great bush village, Amok, thought we were just a good joke; they told us so—after tolerating our interference for a while, told us they would eat us. Ontowalo also got fed up. My job finished, but Apon stayed on to make all these men friends and brothers. Soon after I left they got him.

Civilisation . . .

We have brought these fine people low, with our twin curses, the germ and the gun. There are two hospitals, highly-paid doctors, nun-nurses, fully-equipped missions of three denominations (with ten white missionaries), three Government officers and police detachments, two wireless stations (run at regular loss)—all within a few hours' run on any one of the fifty or sixty motor launches and cutters available for the purpose; the maximum journey across open sea is ten miles, a voyage made every day by some canoe, some recruiting or trading ship out in its own interest. Nothing is done to help the most interesting, in many ways the most admirable, people left in the Pacific. These men and women have all their old zest and vigour, all the will to live, their

old enthusiasm and dogmatic pride. It is only the physical impacts of "civilisation" that have tainted them; the savage mind remains. The savage mind has no remedy for whooping-cough, which killed more than six hundred Big Nambas in 1932; nor for influenza, which scored about one hundred dead in 1935.

It is lucky for the complacent whites in the New Hebrides that there is an infinitude of tribes, sub-divided to villages, each with its own chief or chiefs, no one of whom acknowledges the authority of any other. If one man arose who could weld together even a part of the potential armed native power, directed towards the goal that each non-co-operating individual seeks, things would go very differently in these remote islands. The combined Big Nambas alone could still be really formidable.

So, carelessly, we obliterate humans who are unlike ourselves. It is ghastly.

Sources. Caillot 511. Frater 138. Gillan 73. Grimshaw 225. Haddon 364. Jacomb 124. Johnson. Lynch 200. Sebbelov 273. Somerville 192. Watt-Leggatt 96. They give some Malekula information. Deacon's work on the "long-headed" culture of coastal south-west Malekula is the best stuff so far produced on Melanesia. He died there after a year, of blackwater fever. His grave is less than a mile from the grave of another true person, Siller. Deacon has some Big Nambas data, obtained second-hand, about homosexuality; this differs from my version; his account may refer to another tribe or part of the tribe, as much confusion has existed in tribal definition here (cf. Harrisson 103–123 and maps).

HOLLYWOOD (HO! HO!)

LIFE was an ascending fantasy. To fail in two universities and come out on behalf of a third whom I had just assaulted in print; to come out as a biologist; deflower the highest peak, last virgin thing; to drift into bushcomber, "going native"; rise from the ranks to a signed-up civil servant, sworn to bring about the end of the savagery which I most admired; finally to deform the ultimate desecration, film my cannibals, drift home for Hollywood.

My entrance on to the picture, that is *real* picture, was sensational. What I subsequently learned to be called by the director " dramatic "; or, by the cameraman, " left to right." The curse of it was that for the next two months (for purposes of film continuity), I had to keep on going left to right, until I feared for my overhand fast bowling.

Apparently the Australian Press had got hold of me as a story. A bright reporter had written an " Oxford in the Jungle " story around a picture of a chimpanzee in Whipsnade. Hollywood read about it; it thought it ought to be included in a world tour.

It nosed around the group to find me. Anchored twin-Diesel, thousand-tonner yacht *Caroline* in Bushman Bay, east Malekula. I was coming down there with a couple of tough prisoners, who had over-provoked me. I was feeling pretty good. They were the chief trouble-makers on populous Vao islet. They had said that if the Government man came on Vao to stop their beating up the Atchinese, they would tie him up and put him on the reef. I had gone ashore there in a canoe in the middle of the night; hid up by the sea. And, dash it, the ringleader himself had come down to the sea before daylight. From the shadows I had watched him spitting kava spray out to sea, not knowing that this was the magic for keeping me away ! Then nabbed him. And established myself as major magician. These two gentlemen in handcuffs, with other assorted natives, all from the white point of view naked, and myself (in front) only one step off it, came out, after a long day's travel, through the mangrove swamps into Bushman Bay.

I had made up my mind, two years before, to leave the group on a private yacht. I was glad to see it there. I was ready to go. With the stars and stripes flying against its glistening white, it certainly looked good to me, as I waded and splashed along the water's edge to cool my hot feet. Apparently I looked good to the ship, too. For the moment we came well out into the open, there was activity on board, and in a few moments a speed-boat came roaring across the

bay, smashing that peaceful blue. A sort of natty chauffeur at the wheel, driving an exquisite languorous object and a little swarthy fellow who looked about fifty and bounced off the front of the ship in his pugarees to help the languor, in scarlet-flowered beach pyjamas, out into the solid wall of flies along the tide line. The wall let out a glad cry. The man said, " I'm Douglas Fairbanks, Senior, and this is Lady As——" (I didn't catch the rest). "I guess you're Tam Harrisson."

Having staved-in the speed-boat on a bit of reef, I floated off on the *Caroline*. It was fantastic to have stewards sliding "gin slings" down my ready throat; everything electric, or something better than electric that had been invented in the past few weeks. The ship cost millions. Everything on board seemed to cost a million something. There were no thousands here. The decks were said to be about the best in the world. There was nearly mutiny on board among the entirely Scandinavian crew—who were not "sailors," but "yachtsmen "—when I caused three enormous native gongs to be brought on board to fill up some open spaces. Only on the upper deck was the keynote simplicity. It was also the keynote Fairbanks. For this wide expanse of perfectly kept rear deck was adorned simply with one thick ju-jitsu mattress and an ordinary pair of parallel bars. But these had been arranged, by the master-hand of someone with years of experience in sets, angles, shots, montage, etc. The mattress and bars gave the fullest impression of a gymnasium and of physical fitness.

Doug has got this keep-young-and-fit thing on his nut. There was the set again, not quite so effective, the other day in his lovely suite overlooking the fountain outside the Dorchester. And on that occasion Doug read out a letter from a man who pointed out to him that his position on the bars, as photographed by some paper, was lousy.

Doug had his production manager and pal, Chuck Lewis, along. He liked shaving his chest; lines on the face were a worry. Doug's evening hobbies were rummy and jigsaw puzzles. He had just pulled off a very dull-looking difficult

one. Was so pleased he had it framed, and fixed on to the place of honour over the dining-saloon mantelpiece forrard. One could see that it was clamped over a picture. They only knew it was an O.K. picture, had cost—was it a million something ? A steward, who was a man of culture with the cultured broken accent advantageous in Hollywood contacts, said that it was original early something. Maybe.

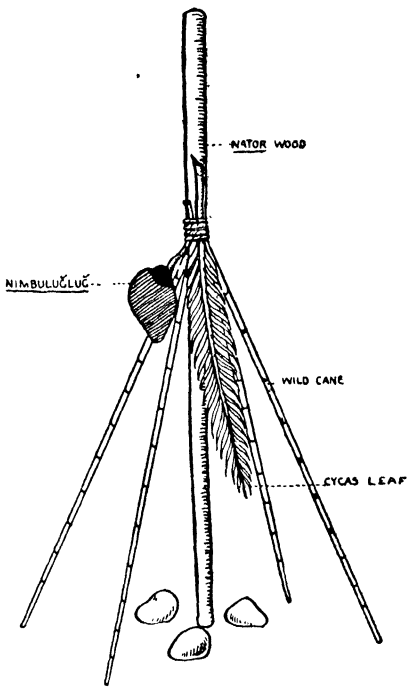
Two fascinating nights we spent talking real pictures. Doug would go on and on, with immense vitality, pouring out words mixed up with what the public wanted, Ramsay MacDonald, and he acting Othello, a snatch of Black Pirate, Dickens—he could do anything. A terrific, dynamic, solid little fellow. The ideal film, he said, he had realised as the result of a lifelong experience, consisted of Subject-Predicate-Object.

He thought a lion and a tiger fighting in the wild state was the last great thing, the ultimate ambition of the film. I think he was right. This great man, in the Northcliffe–Hitler–Lever way of being at the best in the l.c.m. of mind. This vibrating multi-millionaire, bitten crazy by the hurry bug, which takes him streaming all over the globe's dull face. He is the ultimate creation of civilised man and his machinery. He is probably the best-known individual in the world, at the moment, with the possible exception of Jesus. He is a real person, complete modern man.

It was just right that he took me out of the other end of his scale. And just natural that the natives liked him at once —appreciating at once that simplicity of incredible mystical complexity, humour, and generosity over small things, so easy for them too—if you see what I mean ?

Doug was a terrific impact, set-off to all this civilised savagery. Soon his hurry bug took him on, pelting for Shanghai, Tokio, Hawaii, Los Angeles, the Yukon or Budapest—world without end. To tell the World Press some nice stuff about me; and how he escaped " this strange tribe of cannibals and pygmies who do not go in for eating ordinary white people because they taste too salty, but they eat white missionaries in the belief that they give them strength." He

must have been reading Sweeney Agonistes (as on my fly-leaf). Doug left Chuck, the two boats, cameras, lots of money and trade, every sort of medicine, food, furniture and camp comfort. He commissioned me to get 20,000 feet of native film, said he would get a plane at Java and send the yacht

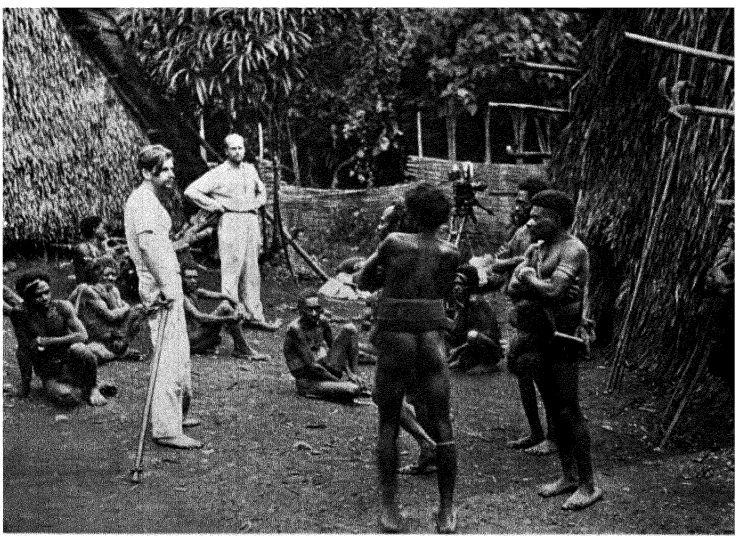


A TABU MARK

back for us, those few thousand miles; it could take me to Hollywood.

The seven weeks taking pictures with Chuck was funny. He could not get used to people who would not be bought into doing a thing that did not amuse them. We spent most of our time coming up against tabus, because he always wanted people to do what were to them impossible things; the Hollywood idea of savage. No person in Hollywood ever having seen a cannibal, far less his "feast," they had their

BIG NAMBAS WOMEN WITH THEIR NEVER-TO-BE-LIFTED HAIR HEADDRESSES
In the centre our Garbo. The child is the chief of Tonmaru's daughter, who married



ON THE SET
Hollywood Harrisson instructs some of the cast in the next sequence. The Bell-Howell and Chuck Lewis in background.

own cannibal dogmas. These include stone altars; cracked dances; spears about fifteen feet long, quite unthrowable—but easy to see on the film, I suppose. He taught those cannibals what they ought to be. They took it well, too. I had no idea what I had let myself (or them) in for, when I said I'd see the thing through. I was star, director and ten other things. Four of us did the work of two dozen, in rotten weather and the worst health place in the group. Chuck refused to take any medicines; I saw him getting sick. He was, he said, an Olympic athlete and had never been sick. Most tough guys go on that way. Chuck, as a result of less than two months in the islands, has so far been a wreck for a bit under a year. The worst of my job was that Chuck would take a scene, and want it done over and over again. That is not the native idea of life. I got roared hell by both sides. Otherwise the performers hardly reacted at all. Those who wanted tobacco came along. Life was not disorganised. Nor was war. The traders and recruiters were. They were mad, furious because we were supplying their best labour market with enough stuff to keep it quietly at home for a few years. That made me feel better about the thing.

We got some good film when I took the first step into the chiefly society and erected a great new gong. The best dances in the island, and some of the best pigs, came out in honour of that occasion and its Hollywood feast.

But it soon became evident that the Malekulans were not Hollywood-conscious. In Santo things were easier. The real thing is too nice ! Hollywood prefers to design its own savages. The sort of thing that happened: I had mentioned to Doug that on some islands the women often suckled the piglets. He said " Get that." The trouble we had getting that ! The women were naturally shy about it, directly they realised it meant something different to the white. And when that was fixed, Chuck decided that a man, the evil savage husband, leering, matted hair, carrying a huge club, was to come along to his wife, the kindest-looking woman available. She was to be suckling her baby child. He was to wrench it

away from her and ram a piglet into the place of honour—pigs are more than men: graphic illustration. When he had found the right woman and man, they would not co-operate for a long time; and then no one would give up their baby to this unknown conspiracy; and then only in private away from the village, secretly. When finally we got over all these complications, there was a rehearsal, at which the star, the piglet, bit the woman's breast in a nasty way! While the baby misbehaved under emotional pressure, and the woman struck. Finally it was done with a faked baby, made out of yam. The piglet had his snout securely tied.

It seems unreal now, until I look at the place where the full weight of a Bell-Howell camera on one of its metal-tripod claws, passed through my foot. That fine scar is my only guarantee that such a world exists. They have not given me the lecture reel they promised.

I do not know what has happened to the film, or care. I hope they cut out me starring as Oxford in the Jungle, and put Franchot Tone in, when and if it appears. No doubt they will. But it taught me a great deal, snapped me out of my awful Condominium depression that was almost suicidal, and merged the end of my island stay into laughter and the outside reality!

When the *Caroline* came back we went to Tahiti en route for America. We had very dirty weather and "stood to" several times. Things on that super-luxury ship went wrong. There were no fans, lights, air conditioning, radiogram, running water, or place staying still enough to sit on. No fresh air could be let in anywhere, else the Pacific came in too. I plumped for something heavier and dirtier. At Tahiti we came in on the Fall of the Bastille fête, when, for a week, that glorious place gets even more gloriously than usual. I stopped there for three months. The latent fever and chaos within me kept me in bed for most of the time. But I never ceased to thank the Lord for the no-mosquitoes, for women who washed, and a land free from fear. After three months, evil things grew again. I began to hanker for chaos, despair, dancing or savage death in the danger of war. So I took

ship for Europe, riding for two months over a cargo of copra —away from the greeting palm, but ever nearer the famous carp.

SAL ÉPERVIER

SLUGGING across two oceans we were too copra-laden to move on the waves. The moon made glittering dead nights. Copra bugs flittered. All that too-short voyage I wrote a vast wordy scientific paper on the significance of birds-of-prey in Pacific culture. I worked at night and slept by day. Once I took notice of my fellow passengers.

Somewhere between Marquesas and Panama, days from land, as I was getting up in the uncontrolled sunset, I saw through the porthole a bird swing up and over the ship. It came clean and swift, wings beating scythes from its strong slender body. The bird one may see all over the world: a peregrine falcon. God knows what he was doing here, out and remote. He came low overhead looking to land. And as he upped his talons to ease on to a cross-stay on the foremast, I heard a short report, and with a dull wing lunge the bird went up again. From the deck above a thick French millionaire had fired his shiny, monogrammed revolver. The hawk swung low past, to settle once more; he fired a second time. By now there were a dozen of French people up there, urging him on. I could hear their chatter, while the hawk gave a few fierce clattering " Kaik kaiks," that hit me with all the cliffs of Lundy and St. Kilda. He fired again. It was growing past dusk, and to the bird we were life. I rushed out in my pyjamas, pushed through the passengers, the captain, the elegant doctor and white dumpy purser, to the shooter. I said:

" Sir, need you shoot that bird? Of all birds it is the finest, and if you must shoot, you can shoot so many shearwaters; or wait for an albatross. In a few days there will be

the pelicans of Panama. I am informed that they are excessively friendly and tame as they sit on the buoys. You cannot miss."

France hung suspended on silk braces and shoulder straps. Then the revolver said:

"Mais, Monsieur, c'est un sal épervier; il mange les autres oiseaux."

BIBLIOGRAPHY

THE FOLLOWING are the principal references directly concerned with the subject matter of " Savage Civilisation." Newspapers and parliamentary papers are referred to in the *Sources* for each section. Many specialised or generalised contributions have had to be excluded. I have used simple abbreviations for the names of journals. *Anthro*pology, *Ann*als, *Aust*ralia, *Ent*omology, *Hyg*iene, *Med*icine, *Mem*oir, *Mus*eum, *Proc*eedings, *Pub*lication, *Roy*al, *Soc*iety, *Trop*ical. *B.P.B.M.*=Bernice P. Bishop Museum; *J.R.A.I.*=Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute; *J.P.S.*=Journal of the Polynesian Society; *Geog. J.*=Geographical Journal (pub. of the Royal Geographical Society).

I thank Jill Bray, Mary Corbett, Robin Hale, Daphne Lombard-Hobson and Katherine Pares for clerical help in different phases of this work. The forthcoming anthropological volumes by John Layard (Chatto & Windus) will be an important contribution to the subject. My restless tendencies place a geographical bar on my revising the proofs of this bibliography; this I regret.

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SUMMARY

I ASKED that a space be left in this book, after the index; six pages. With the whole book in print, I could round it all off, gather together all the threads, put civilisation in a coconut shell. But to-day I am twenty-five and maybe I don't know quite enough, after all. I had better head for central somewhere and learn to cut down a tree with a stone-axe while there is yet time.

Time for what?

Time (at last) for a quick one. . . .

September 1936.