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BY-LAWS

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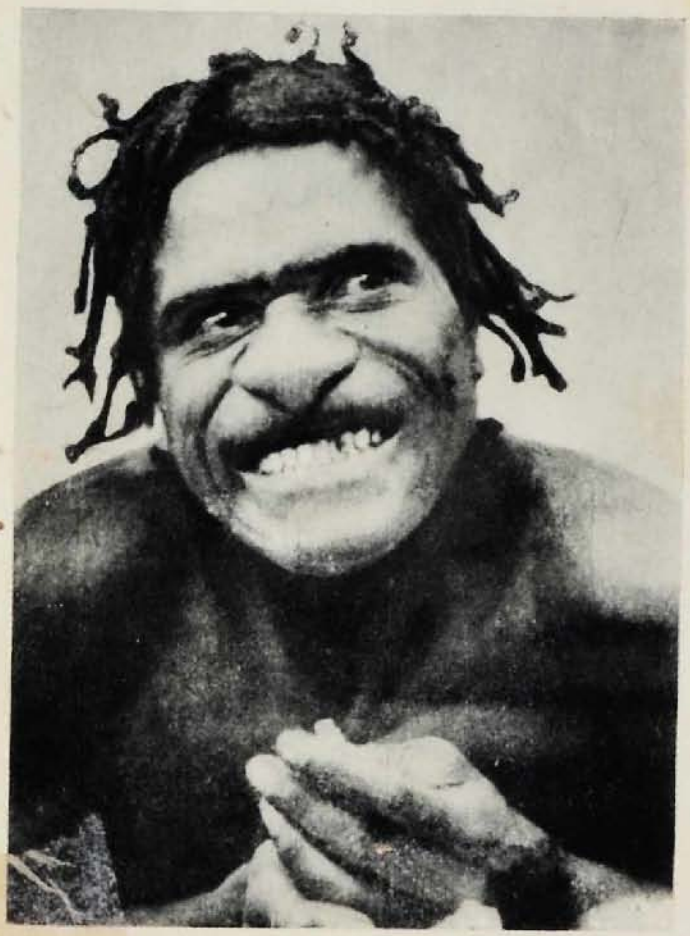
M. Edmond Demaitre, who has travelled through the unexplored regions of New Guinea, paints a fascinating picture of primeval jungles with their giant orchids and birds of paradise, and of the cannibals and head-hunters among whom he lived.

An interesting feature of the book is his account of gold-mining in the interior of the island. It was long known that considerable deposits were to be found there; but the difficulties of communication were insuperable until C. J. Levien, a young Australian, solved the problem by means of aerial transport.

"NEW GUINEA GOLD" is remarkable for its studies of native character and customs, which are both interesting and amusing.



"You like see my country?"

Head-hunter of the Sepik region carrying his bleeding trophy

NEW GUINEA GOLD

cannibals & gold-seekers in New Guinea

by

EDMOND DEMAITRE

GEOFFREY BLES
TWO MANCHESTER SQUARE, LONDON

1936

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ILLUSTRATIONS

The photographs reproduced in this volume were taken by Messrs. Edmond Demaitre, I. Kingsbury and A. Gibson, and by the patrol officers I. Penglasse, Harry Downing and G. Greathead, who accompanied the author during his travels in New Guinea.

PART ONE
THE GOLD-SEEKERS

I. JOHN BULL IN NEW GUINEA

After sixty years the King of England had more subjects on his foreign plantations than the Spaniards in two hundred years.
SIR JOSIAH CHILD

On the 12th of September, 1914, the inhabitants of the town of Rabaul and of the country round were summoned to assemble in a large meadow at the foot of an extinct volcano. At this meeting a representative of His Britannic Majesty, after taking his seat on a stand, above which floated the Union Jack, read a solemn manifesto drawn up in pidgin English. This form, rather unusual in official communications, added a fanciful touch to the ceremony. The representative of King George expressed himself in the following picturesque terms:

'You look him new feller flag. You savvy him? He belonga British, he more better than other feller. British new feller master he like him black feller man too much. You look out place alonga with him, he look out place alonga with you. You no fight other feller black man, you no eat man, no kill, no set fire, no be bad boy. No more 'um Kaiser. God save 'um King.'

As they were anticipating a substantial reduction in the taxes imposed by the Germans, the natives listened com-

placently to the speech, and the manifesto met with noisy and unanimous approval. The little black men applauded the orator raucously. Suddenly a glacial silence indicated a notable diminution of enthusiasm.

'You no steal Mary belonga other feller.' It was like a cold douche. But the band played loudly, and the distribution of presents was proceeded with. The Kanakas forgot this tiresome suggestion and shouted: 'We good boys,' to the accompaniment of drums, and brandishing their spears and shields. They were thinking of the villages they would pass on the return journey, and of the pretty smiling girls waiting to be carried off from their homes.

In short everyone seemed pleased that the former possessions of the Emperor William—Kaiser Wilhelm Land and the adjoining islands—with their volcanoes, cannibals, palm trees, lepers, sharks and crocodiles, had become British. The German inhabitants of the islands made no resistance. It would have been useless, in view of the superior Australian force landed a few weeks after the declaration of war. The German planters, officials, hunters and missionaries lost no time in swearing allegiance to the new Government. The few German soldiers were put into a concentration camp somewhere in Australia. Ships flying the German flag were seized, and life continued exactly as before. Now and then the distant crackle of machine-gun fire could be heard from the shore, and even an occasional sound of gunfire from English ships chasing sometimes sharks and sometimes Count von Lückner, the 'red pirate', who, before being finally captured in the Fiji Islands, had at times managed to slip in among the islands of the Bismarck Archipelago.

While Count Lückner was playing this game with the

English, occasionally sinking a ship within a few miles of the shore, his colleague, Captain von Detzner, was worrying them on the mainland, having penetrated the Papuan jungle to avoid being made prisoner. Detzner was trying to cut his way through the virgin forest to the coast, where he hoped to be picked up by a German ship. Although this plan failed, he succeeded in crossing a considerable area of unexplored New Guinea. In the course of his journey he made copious notes, which were published a few years after the War. Unfortunately, he often mingled facts with native reports, which he did not always trouble to verify. His book consequently loses much of its value. There is, however, no doubt that von Detzner crossed districts where no white man had ever set foot.

While at sea von Lückner was contending with English cruisers, and von Detzner on land was battling with head-hunters and mosquitos, the British at Rabaul were reorganising the administration of the former German colony. When the Armistice came their plans were completed. The Treaty of Versailles having given a mandate in the former German colony to Australia, it only remained to carry out overdue administrative reforms, in particular the unification of the Archipelago. For this purpose Australia received a mandate in New Guinea, including the former Kaiser Wilhelm Land, New Pomerania or Birara (now New Britain), New Lanenburg (now Duke of York Islands), New Mecklenburg or Tombara (now New Ireland) New Hanover—islands to the north-west of New Ireland—and some islands of the Solomon group. The capital was transferred from Herbertshoehe to Rabaul, on the north of the Gazelle Peninsula. A good many mountains, lakes and

rivers were renamed. These changes were disconcerting to the Kanakas, who continued to call the places by their old German names, as far as possible. It is necessary to qualify this statement, since a cannibal could hardly be expected to make much of a name like 'Schopenhauergebirge'.

The new masters of the Archipelago were faced by a difficult task. The Germans, who cannot in most cases be accused of neglecting their colonies, had not shown much energy or organising talent under the Southern Cross. A few plantations along the coast and a few missionary stations in the jungle were all that the English found on their arrival in New Guinea. The Germans had not even taken the trouble to send scientific expeditions into the interior, and except for some excursions by one or two energetic Governors, like Hall and Hagen, most of the exploration up to 1914 was done by geologists, who represented mining and metallurgical interests. This may be a reason why New Guinea and the Bismarck Archipelago are among the few places where cannibals, head-hunters and a population living in conditions similar to those of the Stone Age are still to be found.

At the beginning of the British occupation there was not much change of conditions in New Guinea. The Germans left, the English took their place, and in the bars of Rabaul, instead of a vast amount of beer a vast amount of whisky was consumed. Except for this change in drinking habits, the life both of whites and natives seemed to be exactly the same as before. The planters looked after their cocoa-nuts, the soldiers looked after the planters' wives, and the few officials seemed to have nothing to look after. In the virgin forest the Kanakas continued to kill and eat one another, to

Kanakas spearing fish with lances

head-hunt, and to strangle such women as, by reason of their age, were useless for sentimental purposes or manual labour. Near the harbours, at the mouth of the river, crocodiles and Customs House officers, having nothing else to do sun-bathed on the tropical beach. In short life was an idyll, and the colonial Budget showed a constant deficit.

But it would be unfair to the British and the British mentality to suppose that they would govern their new colonies without an effort to extend the limit of explored territory and develop the fertile soil of these volcanic islands. After a few months of inactivity the spirit of the 'Empire-builders' was aroused. The traveller who lands today at Rabaul will look in vain for the old idle, easy, and careless existence. Everything is now transformed, and there is no resemblance to the New Guinea of former days. Crocodiles have disappeared from the Gazelle Peninsula, and the Customs House officers no longer sun-bathe on the burning sands, but make a very thorough search of the cargoes of ships calling in this remote corner of the world.

The whole place has become a bustling scene of feverish activity. Roads are being laid out, shops opened, dams built, mosquitos exterminated, expeditions organised to explore the dense jungle, and progress is being made in the definitive conquest of the islands. Missionaries with their Bibles, explorers or adventurers, gun on shoulder, penetrate the virgin forest. Although these pioneers frequently lose their lives in the deadly air of the tropical nights, and are killed by wild beasts or men worse than wild beasts, more and more tracks are being cut through the almost impenetrable creepers of the jungle, and cannibals and head-hunters are being driven back to their last retreats. New Guinea

is awakening, is being developed, and the conquest of the deadly bush is beginning.

The British are not content with setting up counting-houses along the sea-coast. There is every intention of conquering, organising and administering the whole territory, and filling in all the white space on maps of New Guinea marked 'unexplored'.

What is the reason of this ardour for exploration? The British are born explorers. One can understand men of science, in search of knowledge, and missionaries, willing to sacrifice their lives in order to bring civilisation to remote regions. But one must be very simple to suppose that whites or half-castes, American, Asiatic, or European, or bearded trappers from Canada, or mariners from San Diego, or professors exiled from Central Europe, or sturdy giants from Siberia, land in New Guinea with the sole object of carrying the 'torch of civilisation' through the virgin forest, and of teaching the Kanakas that it is wrong to roast and eat one's enemies, friends or relations. The rush for the jungle, which has been going on for the last two decades, has nothing to do with civilisation, or religion, or zeal for pacification, or with scientific curiosity. The British are organising and exploring the islands because it is their duty, because it is one of their passions, and, in short, also for political reasons. But the others?[1]

If, at present, cannibals, mosquitos, yellow fever and malaria are being combated, virgin peaks climbed, and swamps drained, if a desperate struggle for a life, which,

[1]In 1929 the inhabitants of the mandated territory, exclusive of Kanakas, numbered 3,928—of these 1,808 were British, 1,253 Chinese, 41 French, 328 German, 213 Dutch, etc.

there, is hardly worth living, is being carried on, if people die like flies in this accursed country, it is because, a few years ago, some wandering adventurers found in the jungle a few grains of the yellow metal. . . .

While it was a German colony, engineers and geologists preceded missionaries and government officials in the bush. Today English patrol parties are everywhere preceding missionaries and prospectors. Gold-seekers are becoming more and more numerous, and are enlarging the area of the rule of the white man. Land which for ages had remained completely savage has now been conquered by the determination and tenacity of men willing to risk all to gain a fortune by the discovery of gold.

Three things are of vital importance to an Englishman: the Empire, the Bible—and tea. . . .

As soon as he sets foot in any place, whether at the North Pole or under the Equator, he begins by organising its defence and its trade. Then he builds a church and starts a club. His colonies, inevitably, bear the imprint of his mentality, from which, just as the snail cannot live without its shell, he can never free himself. It is a reason, perhaps the chief reason, why every English town in every quarter of the world—Brisbane in Australia, Calgary in Canada, or Durban in S. Africa, is like another, and why one always has the impression of being in a suburb of London or Birmingham.

Rabaul, capital of New Guinea, is no exception to the rule. It is like any little provincial town in Sussex or Hampshire, the only difference being that it is very hot, that there are palm trees and natives everywhere in the streets, dressed

in the many-coloured aprons which they tie round their waists. There is a tennis-court, a golf course, shady avenues, where one rides on Sundays, a chemist's shop, a hospital, a law court, a tea-shop, two hotels, three restaurants, two clubs, churches, cemeteries, a library, lawyers, doctors, odd-looking officials, old women, who know all about everyone, schoolmasters, a journalist, women who are misunderstood, men who are bored, family gatherings, marriages arranged, dinners and evening parties, at which girls write down the names of their partners on a program with an illuminated heading of mauve turtle doves. The men keep a top hat and a moth-eaten frock coat in tin lined wardrobes, the women think and talk of the marvellous time they had at Sydney or Melbourne, the girls flirt with their fathers' secretaries and assistants, in expectation of the time when the young man may get promotion and an increase of pay which will enable him to marry. At the little music hall the usual frequenters are there in force: the people whom one does not call on, the well-informed person, the incorrigible Don Juan, the woman who deceives her husband, and the man who drinks because he is unhappy.

The town is picturesque. It is tucked away in a little valley opening on to the sea between green hills. With its white bungalows half hidden behind the thick foliage of poplars, cocoanut palms and strange trees resembling the cassowary, with its broad avenues bordered by beds of exotically-scented flowers, with its extinct volcano at the back, looking like a cross old hunchback, with its rock-strewn beach, where the emerald waters of the Pacific come to rest, Rabaul gives the impression of being an earthly

Paradise. At night a fresh breeze caresses the tall trunks of the palm trees, roosting birds rustle in the leaves, and giant turtles emerge from the sea and crawl slowly over the sand which glistens in the moonlight.

It might be imagined that the lot of people living in this Island of the Blessed, with the beauty of its wild surroundings, far from the din of cities and the daily worries of a great metropolis, would be a happy one. Nothing should disturb an idyllic and care-free existence. Alas! It is not so. The inhabitants of Rabaul, and those of the whole island, are victims of a disease which tortures them, which poisons existence and makes life unbearable. The gold-fever torments their soul and malaria destroys their body. Of the two the former is the more dangerous.

A victim of malaria shivers, has fever for a few days and calls in the doctor. Recovery is possible. But for the gold-fever there is no relief. It takes and holds its victim fast. It induces visions and hallucinations that never leave the patient. It obsesses him night and day. It turns the strongest and most practical men into dreamers. It ends by driving those who are infected by it from their homes, leaving family, business, children and profession, to seek in the ominous silence of the jungle the only cure. . . . Gold . . . Pebbles and yellow dust.

It is the subject of every conversation. Everyone thinks of it. Doctors after a consultation, lawyers when leaving court and shopkeepers, after closing their shutters, go home to consult maps, notes, drawings or musty documents, in order to locate a mountain or river where gold may be found—always gold. Men and women, old and young, are absorbed by the thought of adventures and tales of fabulous

wealth acquired by prospectors who had struck a rich vein, and by hopes of making a fortune.

The day after my arrival I dropped into the Rabaul bar, which was full of men, dressed in ducks, emptying glass after glass with lightning rapidity. 'Where do you come from?' asked my neighbour, and before I could answer added: 'Whisky or gin?' At Rabaul bar it does not matter what you answer. Your nationality, religion, colour or history, none of these really interests anyone, not even the person who asks you. Out of politeness the newcomer is asked one or two questions, and the ritual, then, is to ask you to have a drink. When the white or amber-coloured drink has been consumed, conversation begins, this time seriously, on the only subject which interests the inhabitants of these shores.

I emptied the glass handed to me by an ebony-coloured waiter. My friend, looking me in the face, enquired: 'Tell me: how many grains of quinine do you take a day?'

I felt relieved. Up to then, wherever I had landed, the first and last question always put to me was: 'Will there be a European War?' and if so: 'When?' I had had to give little lectures on politics and economics in the palaces of Indian Maharajahs, under the tents of Chinese pirates off Amoy, and in the tea-houses of Japanese Geishas. I felt therefore grateful to my new friend for showing some interest in me personally.

I did not at first imagine that this enquiry had any other object. My neighbour continued to ply me with questions, and within the next five minutes I had to supply precise information on a variety of points, of which the following are the chief ones: 'Where did you buy your quinine tab-

lets?' 'What kind do you prefer?' 'How much do you pay a hundred?' 'Have you had malaria?' 'Have you ever been in a country infested by mosquitos?'

Finally he asked me to show him the box in which I kept the precious tablets.

I produced it from my pocket. We were at once surrounded. Six or seven men got up from their chairs to have a closer view of the tablets, and, after a careful examination of the box and its contents, an animated discussion arose. A man with only one ear declared that the brand of quinine he used was more effective than mine. He pulled out a little bottle, and his example was followed by others. The bar was soon littered with little boxes, bottles, tablets and white powder. For quite half an hour they talked chemistry and medicine, while drinking their whisky. Arguments began, each championing his own particular brand, and one man banged his powerful fist on the counter in his efforts to persuade us that black-water fever was not a very serious disease.

Suddenly an old man, whose bronzed face was surmounted by a superb head of hair, white as snow, advanced towards me and said quietly:

'Don't pay any attention to them. What do malaria and quinine matter? It is congestion of the liver that will finish us all off. Inevitably. The heat and whisky! Do you understand? Go away from here. Much better. If you stay, at least avoid drink.'

The advice was excellent, but, frankly, it came a little late. We had emptied several bottles, and before opening another, my neighbour, whom the others called Jim, asked me:

'Of course, you are going there?'

'There? Where do you mean?'

'You are going to look for gold, aren't you?'

I hesitated a moment and replied:

'I must admit that I am interested in gold.'

Jim smiled, placing a heavy hand on my shoulder:

'Not worth it, old man; not worth it. Be frank. We know that everyone who comes here is looking for gold. You can speak out. All of us have been through it. Look at that old bird, one-eared Bill. At one time he had twenty thousand pounds. Ask the boss about it. Do you suppose that he has always been selling whisky? No, Sir. In three years he washed fifty thousand pounds worth of gold in a river near the Watut. And me? Look, I still have . . .'

He opened his shirt, exposing a broad sunburned chest. Next his skin he carried a small snake-skin bag attached to his neck by a piece of strong string. And in the bag were nuggets.

Small stones, blackened pebbles, calcined earth, which could be held in the hand without noticing the yellowish streak that ran through them like the veins of a leaf. Gold! Seven hands, trembling under the combined effect of alcohol, the awful heat and emotion, were stretched out to take the pebbles, which passed from one to the other.

'This one comes from Morobe,' declared the man. 'That from Ramu. Here is a nugget from Waria. . . . Sixty per cent. . . . Forty per cent. . . . Amalgam. . . . Alluvial formation. . . . Hydraulic extraction.'

As about quinine, the discussion became animated—about gold now. Each of the seven men claimed to know all about it, and each maintained that he knew more than

the other six. The discussion, of which I understood very little, continued.

Then I turned to one-eared Bill and said to him:

'You are all after gold, but do any of you here at Rabaul bar know exactly where gold is to be found?'

'No, Sir, not yet. . . . But a friend of ours left four months ago for the Markham valley. As soon as he has struck anything he will send us a message, and then we shall go to join him. We are waiting. . . .'

Waiting! That is what everyone is doing at Rabaul. For a sign, for a miracle, for gold!

There are also white women in Rabaul, wives, sisters and daughters of the officials, planters and prospectors. Although most of the country is closed to white women, they may be seen in the towns and villages 'completely under Government control'. At Rabaul, at Wau, at Salamaua, at Lae and at other centres of the goldfields. But their presence on the islands has not failed to raise a delicate problem, the gravity of which is recognised by all white men domiciled under the Southern Cross.

Once at Wau I saw a horrible sight, In the prison yard a native Kanaka was being given twenty lashes on his bare back. Tied by both hands to a post, he uttered a piercing scream as each blow of the executioner's whip cut into his shiny skin. He fainted at the fifth stroke, and remained hanging by the wrists, with blood flowing from his wounds. His whole back quickly became one open sore, with the flesh hanging in strips. Eighteen . . . nineteen . . . twenty . . . counted the sergeant aloud. The twentieth stroke caught the back of his neck and left a deep red mark.

Then two men picked up the inanimate body, put it on a stretcher and carried it to the hospital. . . .

'Is he a murderer or a cannibal?' I asked the officer who was with me. He looked at me in astonishment:

'A murderer? but murderers are never flogged. . . . This man hid in the bathroom of a prospector's wife, to look at her while she was having a bath. That is why he was given twenty lashes. . . .'

'Had he outraged the lady?' I asked.

'Not at all. He simply looked, never having seen a white woman—how shall I say?—in nature's simplest garb. If he had assaulted her he would have been given fifty lashes, and, if he survived that, he would have been sent to prison for the rest of his life. That is the law!'

It is a curious fact that the murderers of patrol officers and prospectors, cannibals and head-hunters are almost always pardoned by the Government in Canberra, while natives who dare to look at a white woman are flogged and sent to prison, where they rot and die after a certain number of years. Formerly punishment was still more simple and summary; the husband of the outraged woman had the right to take justice into his own hands, a hundred lashes, and a bullet in the head if the man survived his flogging. A few months ago a planter at Bougainville acted thus, oblivious of the fact that there were magistrates in the Solomon Islands. He was sentenced to six months' hard labour. Europeans living in the Archipelago thought it very unjust, saying that if Kanakas can kill white men in the jungle white men ought to be allowed to kill Kanakas, if such action is called for.

It can, however, be argued that in most of the cases of

assault on white women by natives the former are to blame.[1] On account of the great heat they go about almost naked in the house in front of Kanaka servants, who are for the most part sturdy lads of fifteen to twenty years old. As women are the same all the world over, whether in New Guinea, at the North Pole, or in the Sahara, their vanity is flattered when they see themselves admired by black men. Distractions are few, and the game amuses them. A smile, a kind look rewards the servant's mute admiration. The latter, completely ignorant of a white woman's psychology, puts a wrong interpretation on this harmless encouragement. And so misfortune happens. One day the Kanaka inevitably loses his head. The woman generally gets off with a scratch or two, but the man receives the traditional flogging; then he goes to prison, where, working twelve hours a day in the sun, at tasks made still more exhausting because of the heavy iron fetters attached to his legs and arms, he has no leisure to dream of white women.

One day, after looking at some records of recent trials at Rabaul, I asked one of my friends, who has lived there for at least ten years:

'How do you explain that cannibals and the murderers of patrol officers are so indulgently treated, while Kanakas, who forget for a moment the importance of the difference between the colour of their own skin and of a woman, are punished so severely?'

[1]In the course of one year (1931) the Central Court tried thirteen cases of rape, one of attempted rape and five of indecent assault. In the same year the Courts for Native Affairs tried 208 cases of violation, eight cases of seduction, eight of unnatural sexual relation, one of seduction of a girl under 17 and one of seduction of a girl under 12. The 208 cases of violation form ten per cent. of the total number of cases tried by the Courts.

'It is quite simple,' replied my friend, who like most Englishmen had a sense of humour. 'We have a great many patrol officers: last year there were three thousand candidates for twelve vacancies. But women, on the other hand, are scarce in New Guinea. . . . If there were three thousand young women wanting to come here every year I can assure you that the Kanakas would meet with more indulgent treatment for having the same tastes, the same desires, and the same passions as we have.'

This Freudian point of view in justification of the law also explains several interesting particulars of life in New Guinea. For example, district officers in the goldfields area have recently promulgated a decree forbidding white women to appear on the tennis court without stockings, or in shorts, a Wimbledon practice, which some up-to-date ladies wanted to imitate here within six degrees of the equator. Unluckily, their appearance in these scanty costumes produced such a commotion among the natives that the district officers were compelled to use all their authority to make these ladies understand that the wearing of shorts, although justified by the heat, might endanger the white population of the goldfields. So shorts disappeared from New Guinea, to the great disappointment of the Kanakas. They even protested to the district officer at Wau how sorry they were to see 'Mary's whites again in lap-lap'.

The white man is conscientious about preventing natives from being exposed to bad influences. Only certain selected films are shown, after strict censorship, to natives. The censors' task is not an easy one. They must suppress any reference to love-making, murder, robbery and crime in

general, as well as war themes or the exploits of cowboys. The native must not see a white woman being kissed, or a house being burgled, or how quickly a gun or pistol can be fired, or how it is just as easy to kill a white man as a Kanaka. One can imagine how much of the film shown in Rabaul at half past six on Wednesday afternoons to a packed audience is left. There is a second show at nine in the evening, but natives are not allowed to go to this performance, which is given without cuts.

The Kanakas love the Cinema, and have no idea that the film shown to whites is not the same as that which they have seen. It is, moreover, a characteristic of the civilised—or, as the English call them, '*sophisticated*'—natives that they have entire confidence in 'master', and would never imagine that the latter could show him an incomplete film. While living under the same roof as master, perfect equality, except for household duties, exists between them both. At least the Kanaka thinks so. I had an amusing experience of this. I was working one evening on the verandah of my bungalow, when one of my boys came and seated himself on the steps. I supposed that he was waiting for one of his companions, to go back with him to their quarters a few hundred yards off. About an hour passed and the boy was still there, his eyes fixed on me. 'Why don't you go to bed? What are you waiting here for?' I asked. The boy replied in the most natural tone in the world: 'Me come have talkie-talk with master.'

One of my friends, living at Salamaua, told his boy that he was going to be married. . . .

'All right,' said the young Kanaka. 'Me ask money that master keep for me.'

'But why?' said the other. 'Do you want to leave me?'

'No, no, master,' replied the boy, 'but if master marry, me marry too. . . .'

One day I was away in the bush near Ramu, at the foot of a mountain where the forest is notoriously full of cannibals. The proximity of these formidable warriors to our camping ground filled our little band of carriers with alarm. They never left the clearing, where our armed boys were camped, for an instant, and they kept anxiously peering into the jungle, terrified and trembling whenever a dead branch cracked in the forest. My cook, a native of Thalasea, kept close to me, glancing nervously to right and left. Seeing how frightened he was I asked him jokingly:

'Tamari, now that it is dark, and the Bush-Kanakas will not be able to see you, go up to the top of the mountain by yourself, to have a look round.'

The gallant fellow gave a start.

'Me go mountain?' he cried. Then, after a moment's silence, he added decisively:

'Me no go. Me very frightened.'

'You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Tamari,' I said to him. 'Why be afraid of Bush-Kanakas? I will go with you to show that they are quite harmless.'

'All right. All right,' replied Tamari. 'If master come too, me no afraid. Me go everywhere with master.'

But to avoid any possible mistake he hastened to add:

'Master and big gun.'

The confidence which the natives have in their white masters is a characteristic of the psychology of the 'sophisticated' Kanaka who, while less interesting than his brothers

in the bush, offers, however, a problem full of mystery and local colour to those who take the trouble to make a study of him. I am convinced that it is easier to understand the psychological characteristic of a Kanaka living in a state of primitive nature than those of a native who has been in contact with civilisation, whose first savage notions have been influenced by new trains of thought, in part incomprehensible to him. A good many well-informed writers and explorers have successfully traced a psychological portrait of negroes in the African bush, of the Bashkir and Tcheremiss nomads of the Steppes of Siberia, or of Kurds living on the borders of Persia and Asiatic Turkey, but I know of none who has completely understood the soul of those half-civilised, half-savage peoples, whose mentality and psychology form an unintelligible and hybrid tissue of half-forgotten traditions and newly acquired but not assimilated notions. Knud Rasmussen is perhaps the solitary exception, but Rasmussen, who has given us such a superb portrait of the half Christian, half pagan Eskimos, was himself an Eskimo, and this explains his success.

The different opinions held by whites about the Kanakas is the best proof of how superficially they understand the 'sophisticated' native. According to some, the boys are thieves, liars, cowards and rogues. According to others they are honest, intelligent, hardworking, truthful and willing to sacrifice their life for their masters. For my part, I think both views are exaggerated. It is true that the boys will often steal small objects, but it must be remembered that their notions about private property are very vague.[1] They

[1]In 1931, 332 natives were tried in the Courts for Native Affairs on a charge of theft.

work fairly well when one keeps an eye on them, but on the other hand they are very lazy when left to themselves.

On this subject a story is told of a planter who had the misfortune to have only one eye. He had to leave his plantation for some hours every day, and noticed that as soon as he had turned his back the native labourers lay down under the shade of some cocoanut trees to take what they considered a well-earned rest. So one day the planter called his boys together, and said to them:

'Me go away, but you work. To see if you are working or not I leave my eye here. It sees everything.'

He then removed his glass eye and placed it on the top of a box. The Kanakas followed this extraordinary operation, much impressed. The first day they never stopped work. When the planter returned he was pleased to see that under the superintendence of his glass eye the boys had all worked steadily.

But, alas! his pleasure was short-lived. A few days later he discovered that the boys were again stopping work as soon as his back was turned. The glass eye was no longer effective. In order to discover the cause of this, one day he pretended to go away and concealed himself in some grass near the clearing where the natives were working. He saw one of the boys go up to the eye and cover it with a hat. The others looked on, and, as soon as the operation was completed, went to sleep.

In spite of the little zeal shown by the Kanakas for work, it is undeniable that most of the whites living in New Guinea have a high opinion of them. The boys with few exceptions are good fellows, likeable and childish in their naïve ideas and language, pidgin English, which contains

phrases and expressions not without a certain primitive charm. The mere fact that most of the nouns employed are monosyllables, repeated, adds a childish grace to their conversation. It is both amusing and picturesque to listen to such nice-sounding words as *lik-lik*, *lap-lap*, *puk-puk* or *tul-tul*. But it must be added that although pidgin English has only a vocabulary of a few hundred words, the Kanaka language is both colourful and forceful. Many chapters of the Bible, and even some classical English poems, have been successfully translated into pidgin English.

Occasionally violent polemics arise between the partisans of pidgin and the purists who want to have this 'monstrous' language replaced by classical English. The Kanakas, knowing nothing of these discussions, continue to talk Pidgin. In the first place the language is easy to learn, and I believe that some of its peculiarities harmonise very well with the psychology of the 'sophisticated' native. For example, a Kanaka can never understand the use of the possessive adjectives *his*, *her*. These are replaced by the formula *belong him*, *belong her*. When they ask what is the meaning of 'his' they are told that it means 'something which belongs to someone'. They then ask: Why not say quite plainly 'something belongs to someone'? So, to avoid any misunderstanding, they say '*nose belong him*' instead of 'his nose', by a simple suppression of the article *the*, of the relative pronoun *which*, and of the verb *is*, for which they see no need. From their point of view what matters is: to know precisely that the nose has a definite owner.

Englishmen talk of the Kanakas as 'fellers'. As the latter believe that inanimate objects have a soul, and although incapable of movement are as much alive as human beings,

they replace the article *the* by the word *feller*, added to every substantive. You do not consequently say in pidgin English, 'Bring me the glass', but 'Bring me one feller glass'. Curiously enough they add this word even to the substantive *Mary*, meaning a woman, saying, for example, '*Me meet one feller Mary*'.

On account of the extreme poverty of the language they express themselves in the simplest form, and add to every phrase the words 'All right' to indicate the end of one sentence and the beginning of another. 'I went to fetch water, and on the way back I broke the jug' becomes: 'Me go fetch water. All right. Me come back. All right. Jug break. All right.' Making use of short sentences, and repeating incessantly the words 'All right', they render their conversation unexpectedly realistic by the use of objective and positive statements, to which no answer seems to be expected.

As we have already said, it is curious that notwithstanding the lack of certain expressions, they succeed in making themselves understood in a way which is both picturesque and matter of fact. Here, for example, is the reply of a native suffering from dysentery to the doctor's enquiry as to his symptoms:

'Me sick. All right. Guts belong me walk round me all time.'

It goes without saying that, like all primitive races, their faculty of observation is limited to externals. Thus being incapable of learning most English proper names they give their masters names of this kind: 'Master Big Moustache Belong Him', 'Master Short Legs Belong Him', 'Master Lives Big House', etc. As I am rather bald, in New Guinea I received the complicated name of 'Master No Grass Be-

long Him'. The word grass in pidgin meaning hair. And speaking of a young widow living at Rabaul: 'White Mary No Man Belong Her.'

To return to their psychology. For the most part they are the children of cannibals, who have passed most of their youth in the jungle, where only force counts. It was therefore rather difficult to convince them that hammers, which they saw in the house of a white man, were not intended to smash the head of an adversary. But, as the result of the perseverance of the missionaries, and the strict discipline of the patrols, they finally accustom themselves to the idea that no man can be his own judge, and that there is a white man's law which replaces that of the jungle. On the other hand, it is a fact that, whenever they think that they can escape the consequences, they do not hesitate to go back to the 'old' methods, if they wish to be rid of a dangerous enemy, or of an undesirable rival. It happens often enough that the dead bodies of boys murdered by their comrades are found by the roadside, or in the forest. It is generally a case of vendetta, what the English call 'paying out', which proves that the 'sophisticated' natives, while riding bicycles, playing football, knowing something about electricity, motor cars and aircraft, retain, fundamentally, the same instincts, passions and traditions as the Kanakas of the virgin forest. There is no hypocrisy in pretending to conform to the law. Their conformity is sincere, but as soon as their passions carry them away primitive feelings emerge, which make them completely forget all law and discipline.

When once they have recognised that the white man is not an enemy they are proud of being employed by him, of sharing his life, and above all of wearing the uniform

given them by their masters. They become faithful servants, blindly carrying out orders given them, and sometimes, to speak frankly, they even exaggerate respect and obedience. Sir Hubert Murray relates that he was once transporting two natives, found guilty of murder and condemned to be hanged, to Samarai in his yacht. The boat had anchored somewhere in the Gulf of Papua before reaching Samarai, and the two prisoners, quite naturally, went for a walk on the shore. A few hours later, when the boat was about to leave, the prisoners were nowhere to be found. As Sir Hubert could not wait, orders were given to weigh anchor and leave them behind. The boat was just steaming out of the bay when the two men were seen hurrying to the shore, shouting and gesticulating wildly. A dinghy was put out and brought them on board. They told the Governor that they were very, very sorry for coming back so late, but that while walking in the forest they had not noticed that the time for re-embarking had passed. Sir Hubert in surprise asked why they had not remained in the forest. Their reply was:

'But you no say go with you Samarai to be hanged?'

Sir Hubert adds with satisfaction that, as the result of his representations to the competent authorities, the two Kanakas were pardoned.

They almost always submit with a certain philosophy to punishment, although rarely understanding why what they have done is a crime or offence: above all when it is case of vendetta, or of theft. A prospector working in the goldfields, where whisky is a precious commodity, noticed that the contents of his whisky bottle, while apparently the same in quantity were, due to admixture of some foreign element,

inferior in quality. Suspecting what had happened he called his boy:

'You damned Kanaka,' he said. 'You have drunk my whisky and put dirty water in the bottle?'

'That no true,' replied the boy proudly and indignantly. 'Me go fetch clean water from cistern. . . .'

I think that these little stories, absolutely authentic, explain the attitude of the sophisticated native towards justice, morality, obedience and respect for the law, better than any long dissertation. There is only one other point which requires elucidation. What is the effect of Christianity on their character and mentality?

From a strictly spiritual point of view the task of missionaries working under the Southern Cross is easier than that of those in Asiatic countries. In China, India, or Japan, before the introduction of Christianity, the missionary must demonstrate that a religion already existing is false, and that a dogma with century-old foundations is inadequate. He has to attack and demolish a complex *Weltanschauung*, and a more or less reasonable moral code, the outcome of a complete religious and spiritual system. In New Guinea, on the other hand, and the islands of the southern Pacific, he has no such obstacle to overcome. Before the dawn of Christianity the Kanakas only practised a sort of devil-worship, which can hardly be called a religion. Of course, this does not mean that his task is not both difficult and dangerous: but, if he is lucky enough to escape poisoned arrows and the spears of native warriors, and to succeed in winning the confidence of savage tribes, the rest is easy enough. With the exception of the witch-doctors, the Kanakas have no objection to being baptised, and to re-

placing their old beliefs by a new religion, of which the first generations understand neither the dogma nor the significance.

I must apologise for making use of an expression which may have a curious effect when applied to Kanakas living in Rabaul and other semi-civilised centres of New Guinea, but I think that the Kanakas become Christians out of snobbishness rather than for any other reason. The 'sophisticated' native is not only afraid of his brethren living in the jungle, but has also a profound contempt for what he disdainfully calls 'Bush-Kanakas', and in order not to be mistaken for one he ties a *lap-lap* round his waist, smokes, has his hair cut, and goes to church on Sundays, in imitation of the whites, whom, whether consciously or unconsciously, he wishes to be like, inasmuch as it is the white man who, in his eyes, represents influence, wealth and authority. In these conditions it is comprehensible that the Kanakas should often act in flagrant contradiction to the precepts of Christianity, and, at the same time, make a boast of being a Christian, this being an attribute which gives him some sort of social distinction.

I have often heard a native say to another in course of a dispute:

'Hold tongue. . . . Me Mission boy.'

And generally the other ends by being reduced to silence.

I would like to tell a story of an experience of Bishop Vester of Kokopo,[1] the zealous and adroit Director of the Catholic Missions of the Holy Ghost. After baptising a good many members of the tribes living on the Gazelle

[1]Formerly Herbertshoehe and the official residence of the German Governor of New Pomerania.

Peninsula, the bishop founded a church, built of bamboos, somewhere on the shore, for the new converts to hear Mass in on Sundays. In order to encourage the religious zeal of his flock the bishop decided to make a distribution of tobacco to them after Mass. They were of course delighted, and for a whole year the little church was full to overflowing every Sunday.

'Now that they are good Christians,' said the bishop, 'they will come to church because they feel the want of it. The tobacco may be stopped.'

Next Sunday there was no distribution. A week later the church was empty.

The bishop, annoyed, went in person to the village and asked the head tribesman, who spoke a little pidgin English, what had happened. After listening to the prelate's reproaches he shrugged his shoulders and said:

'Finish tobacco, finish hallelujah!'

There is no need to comment on this reply, which is often quoted. Finish tobacco, finish hallelujah. . . . This is the religion of the 'sophisticated' native. . . .

The Rabaul natives do not give the whites, who treat them well and try to understand them, much trouble. There is no race problem in New Britain, in spite of the fact that the dining room of the German club is decorated with an enormous portrait of Chancellor Hitler, presented to Rabaul by the Minister of Propaganda in Berlin. It is curious to see this portrait—six degrees south of the equator—surmounted by a swastika. It is much bigger than the other portraits hung in the club dining room, being twice the size of that of Bismarck and four times as large as that

of Hindenburg. It should be added that Germans living in Rabaul have no idea of what Hitlerism means, in spite of the efforts of the Ministry of Propaganda in Berlin to send out a continuous supply of books, newspapers, tracts and leaflets published under its auspices. All this Hitlerite literature is carefully numbered and placed in the library, where no one reads it, most Germans having become so English that they prefer *The Times* to the *Voelkische Beobachter*, and Bernard Shaw to Hans Heinz Ewers. They live with the new masters of the islands on the best of terms. When I went to their club in the evening I found it difficult to distinguish between British and Germans seated at the same bridge table. Only their glasses showed which was which, for, on the gastronomic side, Germans are true to tradition, and while becoming loyal subjects of the Empire, they prefer beer, which recalls far-away Prussia or Bavaria, to whisky.

Politics are never talked at Rabaul, and this makes collaboration of old and new easier. The white man being in a minority, a generous spirit of conciliation replaces racial and religious prejudices, everyone being convinced of the need for mutual co-operation. Loneliness, the distance separating them from the rest of the world, the struggle with nature, with disease, and with races who are much more numerous than themselves, create some sort of solidarity among whites living under the Southern Cross, a solidarity as unshakable as it is courageous and sincere.

But, alas! This good feeling can easily be turned into jealousy and fierce hate, when it is a question of gold. Then belief in the solidarity of the white man is quickly forgotten. Lies, deceit, treachery and quarrels prevail. Brotherly

love, faith and friendship exist no more. The gold fever is like the madness which makes the native Malay 'run amok'. And the air of Rabaul is charged with the miasma of a fever, the victims of which are fatally drawn, one day, to leave palm-trees, club, bungalow, wife, children, 'sophisticated' natives and sandy shore, to rush to those magic mountains where dank caverns, swift streams and dark forests conceal the only precious treasure in a land of cannibals: gold. . . .

II. ROCKS OF GOLD AND MEN OF IRON

Etonnants voyageurs! Quelles nobles histoires
Nous lisons dans vos yeux, profonds comme la mer.
—BAUDELAIRE, 'Le Voyage.'

In 1528 a Spanish navigator, Alvaro de Saavedra, gave the name of the 'Golden Isle' to what is now known as New Guinea.

The 'Golden Isle'! Saavedra[1] discovered the yellow metal in the estuary of the rivers where he landed. But it is a significant fact that the Spaniards and Portuguese who followed in his steps, although well aware of the mineral wealth of the island, never made a serious effort to colonise New Guinea, or to extract gold or silver from the barren rocks forming the triple chain of the Morobe Mountains. It is well known that Spaniards and Portuguese did all they could to gain possession of the Spice Islands, and countries of South America where they had discovered silver mines: they must therefore have had some good reason for doing nothing in New Guinea, where, however, the soil concealed more precious objects than sulphur or silver. Four

[1]Saavedra was a kinsman of Cortes sent to Mexico in search of Loyasa. He was wrecked off New Guinea with one of his ships and from there made two attempts in 1528 and 1529 to go back to Mexico.

centuries later the Germans showed the same indifference in regard to New Guinea as the great colonising powers of the Renaissance period had done. It is true that, at the beginning of this century, the German Government sent a scientific expedition to the Gulf of Huon, under a well-known geological and mineralogical expert named Dr. Schlentzig, who found gold in New Guinea. But he contracted malaria and bilious fever there, and this cut short his voyage of exploration. He hurriedly left the hateful country in order to look for platinum in Siberia. Later he discovered precious stones in Sumatra, gold in South Africa, coal in China, sulphur in America and lead in the Belgian Congo. He is now camping somewhere in New Guinea, where he is prospecting for gold, in the hope that this time he will find something better than fever. I left him in the Gulf of Huon, the very place where he had gone thirty years before. When I bid him *au revoir*—or good-bye—Dr. Schlentzig, passing his fingers through his grey hair, muttered:

'I am sixty-four. I intend to remain here for three years, in the jungle. Then I shall go to Russia to look for oil. Afterwards to Europe, when I hope that we shall celebrate my seventieth birthday together.'

When this remarkable man left New Guinea in 1906 his successors attempted to complete the work that he had begun, but the reports sent by them to Berlin were so unfavourable that the German Government decided to waste no more money in searching for gold. Up to the declaration of war only a few private syndicates had sent mining expeditions to Kaiser Wilhelm Land, but, like Schlentzig's successors, the leaders of these expeditions reported that the

exploitation of the formations which they found near the Markham and Waria rivers would meet with insurmountable difficulties. For a while they thought of opening up communication between the gold area and the nearest port by way of the Markham river, the estuary of which is in the Gulf of Huon. Unluckily, experience showed that the Markham river is not navigable, and that by land it is equally impossible to reach the valleys of the interior, it being necessary to cross a triple chain of mountains covered with virgin forest, and inhabited by savage tribes.

The golden jungle of the cannibals would therefore have kept the secret of its incalculable treasures for ever, if gold miners, prospecting in Papua, close by, had not found that their supplies of ore were giving out.

Exploration and methodical exploitation of Papua was much easier than any mining research in Kaiser Wilhelm Land. A man from New Caledonia, known as 'Jimmy', had discovered gold in 1877 near Port Moresby,[1] and this discovery gave rise to the first great rush of gold-miners and adventurers to the Isla del Oro. But, long before Jimmy's time, travellers had found considerable quantities of the yellow metal. The great rush of 1877 was, in part, due to the decline of blackbirding.

Blackbirding was a nefarious trade plied on too big a scale during the last century by the adventurers, ne'er-do-wells, outlaws and escaped convicts scattered throughout the islands of Melanesia. These desperados formed bands of ten or twenty, who, armed with rifles, descended upon native villages along the coast of the Gulf of Papua, or in the lonely islands of the Archipelago. After disarming the

[1]Now the capital of Papua.

'blackbirds' they brought them chained on sailing schooners to Queensland, where they sold them to the planters. A profitable business, as Australian planters had great difficulty in finding labourers to work their estates. They therefore paid good prices for slaves imported from across the Torres Straits. As a result of these raids, whole islands and districts were completely depopulated, in spite of the energetic measures taken by the Government to suppress the blackbirders. Unfortunately, the practice was so lucrative that a few severe sentences failed to put a stop to the activity of these vultures of the Pacific. Among them there were some who amassed a vast fortune in a few years.

While slavery was practically stamped out by the end of the nineteenth century, blackbirding still continued on a small scale up to the War. In these conditions the discovery of gold by Jimmy had the effect of a whip on the blackbirders, who were deprived of their occupation by the vigilance of British ships patrolling the Torres Straits and the waters of the Archipelago. No great persuasion was needed to induce these men, who were leading a miserable existence, to join up with business men and nondescript speculators collected from every corner of Oceania, and start on another adventure.

During the fifty years that have passed since the first rush, gold has been found in considerable quantities, especially near the Lakekamu, Jodda and Purari rivers. But in that half century no prospector had been bold enough to cross the frontier of Papua and Kaiser Wilhelm Land, a region inhabited by the formidable warriors of the famous Ku-ku-ku-ku tribe. A German prospector, Dammkoehler, who had lived for years among the natives and had an intimate

knowledge of their language and customs, attempted to reach the unknown sources of the Purari, by following the Markham valley upstream. He was accompanied by a friend named Oehldorff. At first the two prospectors seemed to be in luck, and they found gold. But the jungle-men already had their eye on the invaders. . . . After two or three night attacks the two whites found themselves alone. Half of their carriers were killed in skirmishes. The other half had fled into the bush, or had fallen into the hands of Kanaka savages. Dammkoehler and Oehldorff, without carriers or baggage, retreated toward the coast. But the deep sound of the tom-tom called the mountaineers to arms. Crawling through the grass they followed in the tracks of the two men, attacking only at night, when they could approach without exposing themselves to rifle fire. The prospectors, with strength increased ten times by the discovery of a gold-vein, their vein, cut their way through the jungle, undergoing indescribable hardships. Twice, thrice, four times, they repelled attacks of the cannibals, but at last, one night, Dammkoehler fell with an arrow through his heart. When Oehldorff saw that his comrade was dead, he stopped shooting, plunged into the *kunai* grass and got away into the forest. Although seriously wounded he managed to escape, and reached the coast a few weeks later in a half-demented condition. He did not conceal the fact that he had discovered a gold-vein, but, naturally enough, he did not reveal the exact location of the claim, from which he hoped to make a fortune. As soon as he had recovered from the effects of his journey, he set about organising a new expedition to go back to the jungle. He fitted out a schooner, intending to take the Markham river route,

but the very day that the boat reached the estuary of the river his schooner caught fire and was completely destroyed with everything on board. Oehldorff tried to escape by throwing himself overboard, but he was caught in the surf, and disappeared for good and all, carrying with him the secret of his discovery. Since then no one has succeeded in locating the spot where Dammkoehler and Oehldorff found the gold which cost them their lives. Several prospectors afterwards crossed the area visited by the two Germans. Search was made round their abandoned camps, but with no result. The forest has kept their secret as effectively as the dead men themselves.

Human life counts for little in New Guinea, and the tragic end of Dammkoehler and Oehldorff was soon forgotten. During the next few years, several prospectors and bird of paradise hunters tried to penetrate into the interior of the island, but all their attempts failed, owing to the hostility of the natives.

Members of expeditions were massacred, one after another, their heads were cut off and hung up in native huts, to be discovered there, years later, by other expeditions, or by learned anthropologists engaged in studying the ingenious methods employed by the Melanesians of preparing human heads for preservation. But, in spite of death and reverses, the pioneers never lost hope of obtaining a clue which might reveal the secret of the gold of the cannibals. Rumours spread around of very rich veins of gold in the Bulolo valleys, and acted as a spur to the activity and determination of persons living on the coast, who were only waiting for the first opportunity to plunge into the deadly bush.

A year before the War, an Australian prospector from

Papua landed in New Guinea. Arthur Darling had been looking for gold for years, and had the reputation of being a bold and determined man. Having saved a little money in Papua, Darling organised an expedition of a dozen armed boys and carriers. He refused to listen to the Germans who tried to dissuade him from carrying out this dangerous plan.

'I do not know whether there is gold here,' said this lean bony man with the face of a Don Quixote, 'but if there is, I tell you, I'm going to find it.'

In the spring of 1913 the Darling expedition reached the Koranga river, after passing through a completely unexplored district. Beacons, lighted by savage tribes, blazed from every mountain top, and arrows fell thick round Darling's camp. In spite of fever he pressed forward. Ill, extenuated by fatigue, short of food and surrounded by head-hunters, he continued to examine rocks and search river beds, to put up washing pans and collect dull grey pebbles, in which he thought traces of gold might be visible. Finally, one day, at Koranga Creek he came across the formation he was looking for. There was gold, much gold, and Arthur Darling after pegging out his claim, proudly gazed, with fever-stricken eyes, on the golden shores which henceforth became his own property. Content, almost restored to health, the pioneer little knew that he was not the only person there to be impressed by the beauty of the scenery. Hidden behind thick branches, the enemy outposts had never lost sight of him, and were only waiting for a favourable opportunity to launch the final attack.

A few days later, Darling, leaving dead and wounded, boxes and baggage behind him, retreated with a few native

Gold-seekers near Koranga Creek

porters. Two barbed arrows were lodged in his shoulder. and the head carrier was compelled to cut away muscles and tendons with an ordinary pocket knife, to extract them from his master's bleeding flesh. Although they were followed, the faithful carriers succeeded in bringing Darling down to the coast, where the wounded man was taken in by missionaries. When an officer came to see him to ascertain details of the attack which had cost the life of most of his carriers, Darling showed him some blood-stained nuggets and said:

'I promised to find gold, if there was any. Here it is. As soon as I am strong enough I shall go and get more. I am rich, very rich.'

Darling never went back to the jungle. He died soon after at the mission station. They placed a cross on his breast, and, when they tried to fold his hands, they noticed that his stiffened fingers were clutching something. Darling still held a few nuggets from Koranga Creek, from which, even in death, he would not be separated. The missionaries muttered a prayer, then closed the dead man's hand, leaving Arthur Darling to take his precious nuggets with him to Paradise.

Darling is dead. But what does that matter? Gold-seekers have no family. What was more important was to know for certain that there was gold in Koranga Creek, and that nuggets, genuine nuggets, had been found by Darling before he carried them with him to the grave. Then, unluckily, came the War, and the gold-seekers went away to enrich the soil of far-off countries with their blood. Von Detzner and the Australian troops sent to deal with him were confronted only by Kanakas. Von Lückner threatened

the coast, and the New Guinea islanders had other things to think of than the gold of Koranga or Bulolo.

Three years after the Armistice, a strange individual arrived in New Guinea. He had long been well-known in the Archipelago. Marvellous tales were told of the exploits of this man, thickset and endowed with the strength of a Hercules. Exactly how he lived was a mystery, as Park, who was in turn sailor, hunter, prospector, *bêches-de-mer* dealer and pearl-fisher, was constantly changing his occupation and headquarters. The only thing that was known for certain about him was his remarkable intelligence and extraordinary flair: it was said of him that he could extract money from a turtle, so superlative was his talent for business. That is why he was known throughout the Archipelago by the name of 'Shark-Eye Park'.

On hearing of Darling's discovery, he decided to make a closer inspection of Koranga Creek. He thought that there must be a gold formation there, and wanted to get hold of the wealth of which he had dreamed in the solitude of the jungle.

In 1921 he started on the great adventure. With some native carriers he went into the bush. His progress was less than two miles a day. To complete the programme that he had set himself, he had to work sixteen hours a day, felling trees, and cutting through a thick and almost impenetrable curtain of creepers which impeded all progress. But neither trees, nor creepers, nor mosquitos nor cannibals could break the stubborn will of Shark-Eye Park. Following the valleys of the Francisco and Bitoi rivers, he crossed the Kuper mountain ridge, reaching an altitude of sixteen thousand feet. Three times he was at death's door. First he

was wounded by a spear, and then he fell a victim to malaria. Finally typhoid fever nearly finished him off. But Park had himself bound to two planks and still went on. . . . In 1922 he crossed the Bulolo valley, and at last reached Koranga Creek.

He examined the river bed; gave a shout of joy, and had all the sensation of having suddenly become a millionaire.

Washing with half-a-dozen natives Park got out twenty ounces in one day. Twenty ounces a day! Before this, a rifle, a pair of boots, breeches and a shirt were all he possessed in the world. He still had fever, but he worked incessantly, and in every little drinking-house far away on the coast the news spread that 'Shark-Eye' had discovered the Rocks of Gold.

Seven sturdy and resolute men left Salamaua to look for gold in the neighbourhood of Koranga. Their rifles and tools were found later in the villages of some head-hunters. But the spell of the Rocks of Gold continued unceasingly to attract others from Australia, from Papua, from the New Hebrides, and even from California. In 1925 there were already some fifty prospectors working in New Guinea.

An output of at least ten ounces a day is required to cover cost of transport. The journey from the coast to the gold-fields took two months, through completely unexplored country. In the prospectors' camps a bottle of whisky cost ten pounds, and the price of a box of tinned provisions was two pounds. A hammer was worth thirty shillings and a shovel two pounds, and these sums were paid without a murmur. Men were making thousands of pounds.

In 1926 six prospectors, who went by the name of the 'Big Six', under the leadership of Bill Royal, reached Edie

Creek, where veins richer still than those at Koranga were found. This time again the news spread rapidly, and created a regular stampede of gold-seekers in the direction of the Morobe Mountains. English, French, Italians, Germans had joined the crowd of Australians. The jungle was silent no longer. The Kanakas became more and more restless. Barbed arrows, poisoned with the germs of tetanus, were showered upon the lonely caravans heading for the Promised Land. In the search for gold every minute is precious. No time even to bury the dead, whose bodies were left in the open, or thrown into a river. Before the end of the year the ranks of the prospectors were decimated, and those who were not victims of the arrows and spears of the natives succumbed to cholera, typhoid and dysentery.

Men in the bush, or on the coast, waiting for a favourable opportunity to follow in the steps of Park and the Big Six, were seized by panic. Some reduced to desperation blew their brains out in their lonely tents, and on river banks, where birds of paradise fluttered among the trees. Corpses were washed ashore in Salamaua Bay. A silent, embittered, mudstained and threatening crowd retreated down the paths which had been cut through the forest, at the cost of so much suffering and of so many tears, and of so much loss of life. . . . The golden dream seemed to have vanished for ever behind the white peaks of the Great Chain.

It was at this moment of anguish and distress that a man named Cecil John Levien had an idea, as happy as it was audacious.

III. ASHES IN BULOLO

To search is not to find, if we search for what is outside ourselves.
—MENG TSEN VII, 3.

There is no one in the Antipodes who has not heard the name of Cecil John Levien. He is praised, or he is abused. He is spoken of almost as a legendary hero, or as a dangerous and brutal man of business. His name is on the lips of everyone. His biography, written some years after his death by Ion Idriess[1], is among the best-sellers in Australian book-shops. Collectors compete for the manuscripts of his letters and the reports addressed during his lifetime to Canberra. Gold-miners are proud of possessing a rifle, or a shovel, or a map which belonged to him. And the Cinema producers of Sydney are bringing out a film picturing the extraordinary adventures of the great pioneer 'C. J. L.' For like George Bernard Shaw, Cecil John Levien became such a popular figure in his own country that he is spoken of or written about by his initials, as in England the author of *Man and Superman* is known and sufficiently described as 'G. B. S.'

Few remember the names of Alvaro de Saavedra,

[1]Author of *Gold Dust and Ashes*.

Antonio Abreu, Francisco Derram, or Jorge de Meneses,[1] the discoverers of New Guinea. But everyone in Australia knows the story of Levien, who ranks as a rival of the *Conquistadores*, of Cortes or of Pizarro.

Cecil John Levien, the conqueror of New Guinea, was born in Sydney of modest Jewish parents of the commercial class. But for the War the future pioneer would probably have ended his days in his native town, after a life spent within the four walls of an office, dealing in the purchase and sale of haricot beans or cotton. On the declaration of war he was seventeen, and joined up with the Australian expeditionary force as a volunteer. This changed his whole life, and has made his career one of the most remarkable of the present century.

At the beginning of the War C. J. Levien lands in France with Sir John Monash's famous Brigade. He is a fine soldier, is mentioned on several occasions in despatches, and, although twice wounded, remains at the front up to the date of the Armistice.

At the end of 1918 he returns to Australia to look for a job. He is twenty-one. With the help of family connections he enters on a business career, but without enthusiasm. He makes an effort to adapt himself to the surroundings among which he has been brought up, but in spite of self-discipline he feels out of place and restless. He realises that war has spoiled him for other occupations, and that it would be fatal to continue at work which is uncongenial to him. He had been too long hearing every day, and at all hours, the hum of aeroplanes, the groans of the wounded, the whist-

[1]Portuguese Governor of Ternate, reputed discoverer of New Guinea in 1526.

ling of bullets and the scream of shrapnel to be able to accustom himself to the routine of office life. He cannot remain tied to a desk. He must be up and doing. His nerves are on edge. To 'live dangerously' is a vital necessity for him, and all the time that he is boxed up in a Sydney office he continues to dream of a virile life and of heroic exploits.

He listens to stories about head-hunters of the Archipelago, and cannibals in New Guinea. His imagination is fired, and one day he decides to offer his services to the Governor of the Mandated Islands. The Governor offers him employment, and appoints him to the post of 'patrol officer'.

He is first sent to Buka, a small island in the Solomon group, whose inhabitants are celebrated for their ferocity, their wood carvings, and their dark skin. From there he is transferred to New Guinea, where he leads a patrol in the watershed of the Sepik, Markham and Snake rivers. His duty is to patrol the jungle, pursue cannibals and thieves, arrest murderers and witch-doctors, open up roads, explore mysterious valleys, and exterminate snakes and wild beasts.

Everywhere Levien works miracles. He overcomes the resistance of savage tribes, arrests murderers with unheard-of speed, and penetrates farther into the interior than any explorers or patrol officers have done before. But, on one occasion, near Bulolo, he falls into an ambush. Several allied tribes attack his convoy, and after raining a shower of arrows on the patrol and carriers, the Kanakas sweep down upon the survivors, uttering their terrifying war cry: HA-HA-HA-HA. In the hand-to-hand encounter that follows Levien fights like a tiger, in spite of being wounded in the shoulder by an arrow. At last he falls. A Kanaka, club in

hand, rushes on the senseless body of the white man to smash in his head. But, at the very moment that his hand is raised to deal the fatal blow, a native fires at the blood-crazed Kanaka. The latter drops his club, and falls dead on the body of Levien. The soldiers expect to find two corpses. But Levien still breathes. A few hours later he opens his eyes, and in his delirium asks: 'Where is my gun?'

His convalescence lasts some weeks. Unable to leave the Bulolo valley Levien spends his time in examining pebbles brought by his men to his tent. He makes huge excavations in the rocks, and scours river beds. It is also said that he then met Shark-Eye Park, who came to visit him in his camp. Other versions state that his discoveries were not made at this time, and that he knew of the existence of gold earlier than the date of this memorable fight. Whichever account is true does not much matter. As soon as he is able to walk he retires, goes down to the coast, resigns his commission from Rabaul, and returns to Australia a few weeks later.

At Adelaide Levien meets a friend whom he has known in Flanders. He tells him what he had seen at Bulolo; he shows him his nuggets, and at the end of a fortnight his friend puts at his disposal a few thousand pounds. They plan, they draw up contracts and make maps, and when all the documents are duly signed and sealed Levien returns, full of impatience, to the jungle. This time he does not trouble about head-hunters, only hoping that they will leave him in peace. He is looking for gold. . . .

He finds it near the Bulolo river, and in abundance. The 'pockets' contain millions. His men work with shovels, and although the auriferous sands are very rich Levien impatiently thinks of the fortune to be made if it were possible

to treat the ore with machinery. But how can material weighing tons be brought up when even a few cases of provisions can only be transported with immense difficulty? The problem seeming to be insoluble, Levien and his men go on washing for gold, whether they want to or not.

The washing process is very primitive. The gold-bearing gravel and sand is put into an oblong box, about six feet long, inclined at an angle of 45°. While the gravel slides down the inclined plane it is subjected to a continuous stream of water, through a pump if there is one, or by buckets. The gold subsides to the bottom of the box, which has previously been treated with mercury. The precious metal forms an amalgam, and in a subsequent process is extracted by distillation of the mercury. The procedure is slow and costly. Only alluvial gold can be treated in this way, which is useless for auriferous quartz—a 'reef proposition'—when recourse must be had to hydraulic crushing. A reef proposition is of course much more valuable than alluvial 'placers', as it is only in ore formation that gold is found in large quantities.

Levien knows this, and it makes him think. However full the boxes may be, his thoughts turn to ore. Epidemics rage in his camp, and with no medicines, men die like flies. When these conditions result in a state approaching panic, Levien realises the impossibility of doing anything in New Guinea until the problem of transport has been solved: transport of men, provisions, and of the gold.

For weeks he remains in deep thought, making calculations while seated at the door of his tent and watching birds circling over the distant peaks. Then, one day, he gives mysterious orders to his native workmen. He wants to

create something never seen before in the Bulolo valley, or in these latitudes. Workmen are ordered to leave the boxes, and instead of washing the precious metal they cut grass and fell trees; and when this has been done are surprised to learn that they are to go down to the coast.

On the coast Levien is met by a man—and by machines. The man is named Mustar. Levien has made his acquaintance in France, where Mustar was engaged in bringing down German aeroplanes. He is a skilled pilot, and afraid of nothing: neither storms nor forests, nor even altitudes of sixteen thousand feet, which have to be reached before arriving at Bulolo. On the 18th of April, 1927—an historic date in New Guinea—Lieutenant Mustar climbs into the cockpit, and a few minutes later the aeroplane disappears into a thick mist.

The same day, natives working in the camps near Levien's are terror-stricken. A bird, more formidable, and a hundred times bigger, than a vulture, is flying over the valley. It hovers over the camp as if to swoop on its prey. On seeing it draw near the boys throw down their weapons and flee into the bush.

From their concealment they can see the plane with Mustar on board come down in the Bulolo aerodrome, in the midst of forests and mountains which are the haunts of the last anthropophagi left upon the earth.

The conquest of what Paul Morand might call the 'cannibal air' was made, and with it the conquest of gold. . . . A few weeks later three-engined aeroplanes, each carrying hundredweights of cargo, brought machine parts for ore treatment, to be put together on the spot. There were days on which as many as thirty planes landed at Levien's camp.

An aeroplane in the Markham valley

Here a whole army of engineers, architects, geologists and mechanics from Australia were collected, blasting rocks, building viaducts and operating enormous drills, which, like grotesque and terrifying animals, rose at the foot of the mountains. Epidemics ceased as soon as medicines and fresh food could be brought to men who previously had been living on taro and sago bought from the natives. Pioneers, who had been living alone, cut off from the world where relations, wives and friends had been left behind, felt themselves again in contact with civilisation. When night descended upon the green valley men were to be seen seated round a fire, reading letters which they had just received, and scrawling a few lines on a scrap of paper to an old mother or a young wife: messages full of hope, of optimism and of promises. Up to then men in the bush were lost, imprisoned in the jungle, without any sense of time, living in a world of the imagination, and returning to their people almost like ghosts. But, thanks to the aeroplane, the isolation of the pioneers was at an end, and Bulolo camp began to look like a small provincial town. Wooden bungalows, with gardens, sprang up, a barrack which received the name of The Restaurant, as well as laboratories, and a chapel where the psalms were sung every Sunday.

Outside the camp there was no change. The natives of the surrounding mountains realised that any attack would be repulsed by the whites, who seemed definitely to have installed themselves in the valley. They were left in peace, and so two quite distinct communities continued to live side by side in the Bulolo valley. The one, looking for gold, lived surrounded by machinery, tools and ultra-modern apparatus, while a few hundred yards away the other con-

tinued the primitive existence of the savage. Now and then the body of a carrier, who had wandered too far into the bush, was found. As the head was always severed and carried away it was difficult to identify whether it was that of a Buka carrier or of a Kanaka. Nor was much trouble taken to discover the status of the victim. There was no time to do this, and after a summary inquest the body was hastily buried near the river, under the shadow of giant trees.

The journey from Port Salamaua, which formerly took over a month, can now be completed in an hour or seventy minutes. To reach the goldfields it had previously been necessary to organise an expedition of twenty men, each white man having to be accompanied by ten armed guards and ten carriers, before it was possible to venture into the interior. Peaks covered with thick forests had to be climbed, and protection provided against crocodiles, mosquitos, snakes and poisoned arrows. After Mustar's arrival the life of the prospectors was very much simpler, as, to avoid these perils, it was only necessary to reserve a seat in an aeroplane, and to rise a few thousand feet, where the atmosphere was pure and transparent, and where the sun gilded the clouds of mist which floated over black mountain tops.

Prospectors willingly paid fantastic sums to hire planes of the 'New Guinea Airways Ltd.'—a company formed by Levien—or for a place in one of the three-engined machines. When Levien and Mustar started their venture, a fare of one hundred pounds was charged for the journey to the mining area from the coast; and it was worth it. From statistics published in New Guinea it would appear that there is practically no one living in the goldfields who has never flown.

After New Guinea Airways, the Holden Line was started by the Australian 'ace', Captain Holden, who was killed a few years ago in an accident at Sydney. Now there are eighteen aerodromes in the Morobe district, one at Madang, and three in Papua. Seventeen machines keep up a regular service between the aerodromes, with a carrying capacity of thirty-five tons. Cost of transport has come down since Levien's time. Charges are now £5 for a white passenger, fourpence per lb. for goods, the same rate applying to coloured passengers. Under this tariff, it is superfluous to add that, in the selection of their boys, prospectors prefer those who do not suffer from obesity.

Flying conditions over the New Guinea jungle are not quite the same as those experienced by the great European Air Lines in traversing more populous countries. In the first place, from midday onwards, for two hours every day, banks of cloud cover the horizon. As all the lines have to fly over mountain ranges rising to a height of ten thousand feet, machines sometimes crash on the rocks and are reduced to a heap of wreckage and smoking cinders.

Of the difficulties encountered by pilots in New Guinea I had an unpleasant personal experience. I was flying to Salamaua from the aerodrome on the upper Ramu. The plane rose without a hitch, and after about ten minutes we were rapidly flying over the Ramu valley. The weather was perfect. No sign of fog, no wind and no clouds. I was absorbed by looking at the jungle which lay below us, like a rich green carpet, adorned with the silver arabesques of the river, which crept like an immense serpent under the arches of trees. All at once, as we were passing over the

summit of a volcano, big patches of mist began to spread over the bush, and a few minutes later the machine plunged into a thick fog. Unable to see anything we tried to climb. We were not alarmed, knowing that we were at a sufficient height to be above the mountain peaks. The machine rose a few thousand feet, and at last we emerged. The rays of the sun lighted up clouds below us, which looked like little mountains of cotton wool. Cruising between the sun and clouds, without a glimpse of the earth, is a curious sensation. The machine was flying at high speed like a golden winged bird through a sea of light. The orgy of colour, the lazy movement of the clouds, the luminous darts flashing from the metal framework of the machine had an eerie and almost fairylike effect, the unpleasant part of the journey only beginning when we had to land on the Salamaua aerodrome.

What was to be done? The Salamaua aerodrome, like all those in New Guinea, is placed in a dip surrounded by mountains. It would be dangerous to come down, as that might mean colliding with a mountain peak. It was therefore impossible to attempt a landing, although we knew that we were somewhere above the aerodrome. As the mist might still continue for twenty-four hours, a way out must be found. Fortunately, we still had enough petrol to fly seawards; and when the pilot thought that we must be clear of land he dipped into the clouds and returned below them to the aerodrome, where at last we came down, a little scared, but safe and sound.

In New Guinea forced landings are seldom practicable, since even if a valley could be reached the ground is so broken that the machine would probably be dashed to

pieces. And if, by a miracle, all were to go well, the crew, lost in the bush, without guides or porters or equipment, could hardly escape a slow and painful death, devoured by insects and themselves with nothing to eat.

Only one instance is known in the whole territory of a successful forced landing. The pilot's name was Ross. He started one day from Salamaua with a mechanic. When over the Kuper range his engine petered out. As the plane was a relatively light one, Ross decided to attempt a landing on the tree-tops, the branches of which might form a kind of spring-board.

His attempt was successful. The machine rested on the trees. Although Ross and his mechanic could free themthemselves from the cockpit, as they had no ropes, they were unable to reach the ground. The trees were more than thirty feet high, and there were no lower branches. They remained there suspended between heaven and earth, like the coffin of Mahomet. A rescue party found them still in the same position two days later. They were saved, but the mechanic had lost his reason, and ended his life some years after in a lunatic asylum.

Curiously enough the natives, although scared and very sick when they first fly, quickly become accustomed to travelling by air, and some even show a real passion for aviation.

Once I took three natives of Ramu by air to Salamaua. They knew nothing of civilisation, and I was the third white man whom they had seen. They were terribly frightened when the machine left the ground, but they soon got over this, and were quite happy when they landed at Salamaua. At the aerodrome we hired a lorry to go to

the nearest village. One of the natives sat by the chauffeur. He listened with great interest to the engine starting up, thinking it was another kind of aeroplane. When the lorry began to move he clutched his seat, expecting us to rise once more into the air. When he realised that we were not leaving the ground, he waved his arms, and pointing to the clouds showed clearly that he wanted to fly.

Alas! the experiences of natives in the air do not always end happily. Mr Kingsbury, one of the best-known geologists in New Guinea, told me that he had one day met a remarkably intelligent native near Mount Hagen. He took him to the nearest aerodrome and brought him to Salamaua. There he spent a fortnight before returning to his village. A few months later, as Mr. Kingsbury was passing through the same village with his party, he asked where his protégé was.

'He is dead,' they told him.

And a villager showed him the fingers of the dead man —who was his brother—tied round his neck, in accordance with the customs of Mount Hagen. After a long palaver, in which the whole village took part, it appeared that Nanu—the name of the native—had been murdered.

'Yes,' said the chief of the village, 'I admit that we killed him. But he was mad. He wanted us to believe that he had flown through the air like a bird, and that he had seen somewhere a pig, as large as five ordinary pigs, with feathers on its neck. Tired of hearing his lies we gave him two days to bring us the pig, and to fly in front of us. Naturally he came back without the pig, and he could not fly like a bird. We cut his throat—and we were quite right, as he was *long-long* in the head.'

If the question were asked, which are the busiest airports in the world, one would probably answer: Croydon, or Le Bourget, or Tempelhof.

One would be wrong: the biggest aerodromes in the world are actually a little south of the Tropic of Capricorn, at Wau, at Lae, and at Salamaua, on the extremity of an island two-thirds of which are inhabited by cannibals and head-hunters.

It is dangerous to walk two miles outside these aerodromes without an armed platoon as escort. Ten minutes after leaving the ground one is flying over unexplored country, and, at times, a machine rests by day in a place where natives come down at night from the neighbouring hills, light log fires and dance round them until dawn to the maddening rhythm of drums.

Yet at Wau, Salamaua and Lae aeroplanes arrive or leave every four minutes. And it is not white and black men alone who make use of this means of transport. I have often seen horses and cows hoisted into a three-engined machine, for delivery at the camp of some prospector far away in the bush. The animals are first placed in a kind of wooden cage, which is hoisted by a powerful crane, and, before they know what has happened, their temporary home is on the aeroplane. I asked a pilot if he had ever seen horses or cows suffer from air-sickness. He replied that they are very 'air-minded' and travelled well—which is not always the case with dogs, and natives.

It is more important to note that after the ore-crushing mills at Bulolo, for which machinery had been transported by air, had been completed, the example of Cecil John Levien was followed by two other enterprises. A crushing

mill, and then a second huge building for treatment of the mineral by the cyanide process, were put up at Edie Creek. Machinery weighing several hundred tons was brought by air to a place seven thousand five hundred feet above sea level. Where a few years ago savage cannibals held their palavers and the shrieks and groans of victims sacrificed to bloodthirsty idols used to rend the air, today panting turbines, and the whistle of steam engines are heard; and chimneys, laboratories and gigantic workshops throw their shadow over the valleys where five years before Levien and his companions found only rocks, trees and wild beasts, —a jungle, threatening and impenetrable.[1]

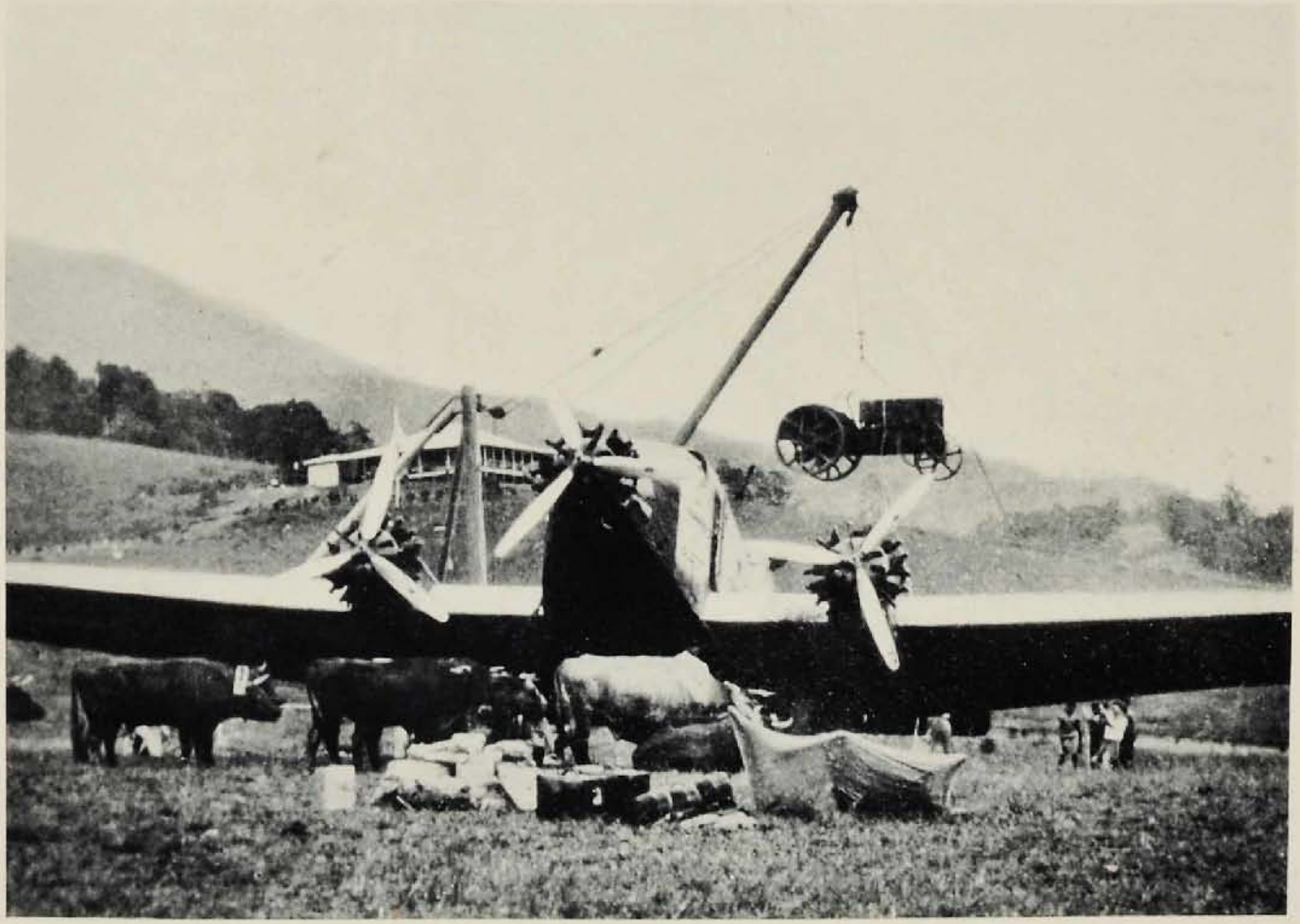
But Cecil John Levien did not live to see the triumph of his idea. A few months before work at Bulolo was completed he felt that his strength was failing. Old wounds opened again, and the pioneer left the bush in a state of collapse. He reached the coast, where he died as he had lived, like the *Conquistadores*. The little black men—his boys—were in tears round his bed when they closed his eyes.

'The shares will go to ten pounds.'

These were the last words that he uttered, and the Kanakas imagined that the white man was offering a prayer to his unknown gods.

Months passed; the works at Bulolo were finished. Representatives of the Government at Canberra arrived by aeroplane. Long official speeches were delivered, and the

[1]Under the Regulations of the goldfields, claims of 120 yards from bank to bank are granted in the case of a vein running under a river, and of sixty yards by thirty yards in the case of alluvial formation. Reef concessions are in lots of a superficial area of 200 acres.



In New Guinea the cows travel by 'plane . . .

huge machines which had risen at the foot of the cannibal-infested mountains were set going.

Just as the wheels of the machinery were beginning to revolve thunderously, an aeroplane, piloted by Mustar, appeared over the valley. A hand was seen at one of its portholes. It scattered a small packet into the wind that caressed the banks of the Bulolo river.

And the ashes of Cecil John Levien disappeared into that azure sky beneath which lies the accursed land . . . the land of gold. . . .

IV. THE HUMAN BALANCE SHEET

Why?—(A question often asked by writers and thinkers, ancient and modern.)

Two statistical figures will give an idea of the effect of aviation on the development of New Guinea. The value of the gold produced in the island up to 1926 was £75,000. Between 1927 and 1932 production was valued at £1,400,000. This is the most important item of the balance sheet of the goldfields, to be found in the year book published by the Government of the Australian Federation, and in the reports on Mandated Territories submitted to the League of Nations. The balance sheet also gives details of the amount of gold lost in the process of refining, of how many Australians suffered from dysentery, and of the number of natives inoculated against typhoid fever.

As we were saying, this balance sheet is full of interesting details. But to study it there is no need to undertake a two months' journey. The documents may be bought in London or Geneva, and studied comfortably seated in an arm-chair, far away from mosquitos, scorpions and cannibals.

But if we want to know about the other balance sheet of the goldfields—the human balance sheet—we must go to Rabaul Bar, sleep in the wretched huts of the gold-miners,

and climb as far as the gorges of Edie Creek; one must eat, drink, laugh and cry with the men at Morobe—listen to their stories, gain their confidence, and share with them their short-lived dreams. In this way, and in this way only, can the tragic balance sheet of this golden land be struck.

My first contact with gold-miners living in the bush at Edie Creek was when I went there on a horse kindly put at my disposal by my friend Harry Downing, district officer at Wau. I shall never forget that journey. In spite of the horse being the property of an official, and thus, in a way, itself a public functionary, it was none the less animated by an inveterate spirit of opposition. A spirit particularly dangerous in the case of anyone having to go by road from Wau to Edie Creek.

Edie Creek is seven thousand five hundred feet above sea-level. The track leading to it through the jungle is from a foot to a foot and a half wide. On either side of it are precipices nine to twelve hundred feet deep, and their bottom is strewn with rocks sharp as needles. When I add that the road is frequently obstructed by heaps of stones deposited there by storms or by kindly natives, that sometimes for a distance of several miles rain may have transformed the path into a muddy track, where one's horse is knee-deep in mire, that, in the valleys, prospectors blow up rocks with dynamite, the explosion of which is enough to scare any animal, that the horse, 'man's noblest friend', which I was riding was restive, was on the look-out for trouble, and insisted on prancing whenever we came to rough ground, it will be realised what a delightful and varied experience the ride to Edie Creek had in store for me.

On the other hand the trip was well worth the trouble. Edie Creek, where a few years before Bill Royal and the 'Big Six' had found the richest gold formation in New Guinea—is perhaps the most picturesque and remarkable place in New Guinea. Three small streams are divided by two hills. Their banks are dotted with the huts and tents of the gold-miners. Here work is still carried on in the most primitive way, with the help of natives who wash yellowish-coloured pebbles in a pan. By the side of the 'boxes', half-naked white men, their bronzed faces partly concealed by immense straw hats, move about. Dogs, resembling beasts of the Apocalypse, lie sleeping at their feet or, now and then, jump into the green water of the little stream to cool themselves.

Two hundred men are living there in a day temperature of well over a hundred degrees, and at night of five or six degrees of frost. Add to that malaria, a police camp, a '*lik-lik* doctor', much dysentery and an inn where one can get a more or less decent meal, and you will have a fair idea of what Edie Creek is like. It is true that there is also gold —and in such quantities that, after the river beds have been twice worked, enough still remains for it to be worth going over them again, thus providing occupation for a few years more. It goes without saying that the inhabitants of Edie Creek work with a persistence and determination that would make the most industrious ant green with envy. They are up at five a.m. and toil unceasingly until sunset. For the taciturn men in the goldfields are working not only, or rather not entirely, for themselves. The majority are what are known as 'tributaries'. This means that a big company goes through the deposits two or three times, and then

sublets them. The tributaries set up their own pans, engage their own men, contract their own malaria or dysentery, and pay forty or fifty per cent. of the gold they find to the company which owns the reef.

Recruitment of boys is strictly regulated by a special law, which must be respected by all prospectors and explorers, if they do not wish to get into trouble with the patrols and district officers. In view of the diminution of the birth rate in certain districts, these are 'prohibited territories', which no adult native may leave, and into which recruiting agents are not allowed to enter. Only certain special officials can contract to provide native labour and they alone may transfer to the prospectors such hands as may be wanted. In the labour contracts not only must the rate of wages be stipulated, but also the quantity of food, tobacco and number of blankets, knives and plates which must be provided for the boys. Corporal punishment is strictly forbidden; even bad language used in speaking to them is sufficient ground for cancellation of a contract. This shows with what tact the bush boys must be treated, to guard against desertion in mass, which would mean a sentence of death without appeal.

A good many recruiting agents work without permission in distant villages. Their action gives the patrol officers trouble, these sham recruiters being for the most part unscrupulous men who sell, so to speak, natives under conditions that are not permissible. If boys have the misfortune to fall into the hands of these men. it is more than probable that they will never see their village again, or, if they do, it is quite certain that they will never get their wages paid. One can imagine what kind of reception a white man will

meet with, when he goes to a village in which this has happened. Many patrols have been attacked, and many lives lost on account of the sham recruiters, who are a discredit to the white man wherever he is.

The natives are cautious, but alas! The modern blackbirders are sharper than the sons of the jungle. Here, for example, is a story of what happened to the missionary, the Reverend Bayer of Malolo. Travelling in the neighbourhood of the Frisco river he decided to pay a visit to the Misim tribe, with whom he had for long been on the most friendly terms. To his surprise he was received by his friends with so much hostility that it was all that he could do to get away safely. But the reverend gentleman, being brave and obstinate, decided at all costs to clear up the reason for this sudden change of attitude. He learned that a recruiter had come to the village accompanied by another man wearing a missionary's frock: they said he had been sent by 'Papa Bayer'. One can imagine the rest. The good missionary immediately notified the authorities, but the impostors were never traced, and took good care not to repeat a coup that had been successful once.

But to return to the 'tributaries', who do not perform their rude task at Edie Creek solely for the sake of the few pounds coming to them at the end of the month. They stay there with an eye to organising expeditions into the jungle, and in the hope of finding a gold formation which may become their exclusive property. Although recruited from every social class they all display the same tenacity and the same zeal when it is a question of exploring a little patch of earth which may contain the precious yellow metal.

In going from tent to tent I used to enquire from whence, how and why men had come to this country to spend their youth in an unfriendly jungle, where boredom and loneliness were even more unbearable than insects and the arrows of the natives. Among them I found ex-smugglers and slave-dealers, who had once sold blacks to the Queensland planters. A Russian had landed here after countless adventures. He had been implicated in the Father Gapon affair at St. Petersburg. There was a Frenchman, a certain Mangin, whose companion, another Frenchman named Logier, overcome by hardships, fatigue and despair, committed suicide. I also made the acquaintance of a Swiss named Joubert, who used to sail about the Archipelago in a small boat; of a German, Siebenburg, one of Dammkoehler's companions, who had returned to New Guinea after an absence of twenty-five years; of an Italian, Pietro Pianto, who is one of the richest men in the goldfields, and of the Austrian Isenberth, who while living at Surprise Creek had for a long time been compelled to hang thick rugs on the walls of his bamboo bungalow to protect himself against arrows while in bed.

In the hut of a prospector named Abbie I was surprised to see fashion drawings showing exceptional talent, worthy of any Parisian artist, and, on his table, books on medicine by Dr. Abbie, professor of Sydney University. My host, a man of fifty, spoke French fluently.

'I am a retired naval commander,' he said, 'and at present I am working a small vein just outside my house. My daughter is a pupil at the Sydney School of Art. My son is engaged on scientific research. They must complete their studies, and that is why I am washing for gold.'

Each of these men has his story, tragic, comic or—worst of all—tragi-comic. Ghosts of faithless wives, children in tears, ruined careers, vices, passions, crimes, disappointed hopes, evanescent dreams hover among the trees and along the banks of Edie Creek, where strong men try to forget by day the groans, tears and poignant memories of the night.

They arrive for the most part between the ages of twenty and twenty-two. They are full of hope, and as Pat Holmes, the sympathetic dictator of the goldfields, says, when they are given their 'Miner's Right' they think they have gained the keys of Paradise. And those who have not, between times, gone to their grave, say good-bye to the cannibal mountains when they are over fifty. They came as youths, and go away old men. A man who has spent thirty years in the bush is a tired, sick and disillusioned being, a human wreck, with nothing to look forward to but death.

Sometimes they have found gold. In this case they can afford the luxury of a first class burial at Sydney or Melbourne, where they generally end their days. The funeral procession is an imposing one; the undertakers' men put on their best clothes, the horses' heads are decorated with handsome plumes. But no mourners follow the hearse on its way through an indifferent crowd. A few old women make the sign of the cross as the convoy passes.

That is all.

Such is the funeral of a gold-miner. For these men live and die in solitude. Some perhaps bring with them to New Guinea a keepsake of the distant countries from which they come—a portrait which they hang on the wall of their miserable hut, or a flower pressed between two pages of their Bible. But these are exceptions. Most of the gold-

seekers leave the civilised world at an age when the only affection they knew is that of a mother. Later, when youths grow to manhood, when they begin to dream of a wife, of children, domesticity and a home, their dream is bounded by barren mountains, impenetrable forests, and savage cannibals.

There are no women in the goldfields. A womanless country, haunted by frail phantoms, a country of hundreds of men, whose thoughts and sighs go out to unknown women. A country where men only talk of women, think of women, and where the whole atmosphere is filled with burning desires, desire for a caress, for a kiss, for romance, for a gesture of affection or for a little friendship.

At sundown hundreds of men collect in little groups round the little fires which are lighted at night, from the Gulf of Huon to the crests of Edie Creek. They dream the same dreams, knowing that they will never come true. In the daytime they talk of gold. But when the shadows fall they leave their 'boxes', and seem to forget the yellow metal that corrodes their existence, or if they mention the name of gold it is to describe the colour of the hair of a girl once met, far away, at Santa Barbara or at Nijni-Novgorod. Whisky bottles circulate freely, and the stories told tend to grow more sentimental and more melancholy with every emptied glass.

I knew a miner called Tiger Bill, because in a fight with a cannibal he had once killed the man by fixing his teeth in his throat. Tiger Bill had been the Strong Man in a circus in Australia, then a pearl fisher in Ceylon; he had been a gun-runner in Mexico, and shot elephants in Uganda. In New Guinea he became a gold-miner—and sentimental.

We were seated round the fire somewhere near the Markham river. After emptying a first bottle of brandy Bill told me the story of a fair haired 'Mary' who dances in a night cabaret at Singapore, but 'who loves only Bill, and will marry Bill as soon as he finds gold'. The Tiger was in tears when he told me this story, and I do not know why he talked about himself in the third person.

Towards midnight, after having finished a second bottle, the Tiger went to sleep moaning: 'Mary! Mary!'

His boy wrapped him up in his rug, and said, shaking his head:

'Master drink much much. Master sleep. Kanaka come. Cut head belong Master.'

I have often seen this sort of thing, and regret that Professor Freud never troubled to come to this remote spot to study the psychology of men whose sentimental life bears a curious resemblance to that of a prisoner in jail. Only in New Guinea men are free, theoretically at least; and this is why their life offers such tragic contradictions.

They come to the jungle to win gold, and it is the gold that wins them. They come with the idea of offering it to a woman, and the woman is then sacrificed to the gold, the attraction of which is stronger than sentiment, dreams and desires. And they grumble, they drink and they weep, because in their hearts they know that they are held captive in a golden prison, in these accursed mountains, the pitiless weight of which crushes everything out of them, even memory of the past.

Men live there alone. Only three women, Mrs. Booth, Mrs. Peadon and Mrs. Rex accompanied their husbands to the goldfields. They are the exceptions. There are indeed

very few women who could resist the fatigue and the deadly climate. Apart from this, women are prohibited by the Government from going farther than the Ramu river, although, it being unlikely that fresh discoveries of gold will be made in the Bulolo area, most of the mining camps are now beyond the Ramu in the direction of Mount Hagen.

But what does solitude and sickness matter when it is a question of gold, the attraction of which is such that men like Schlentzig and Siebenburg return to the bush after having been twenty or thirty years away from the jungle? On this subject I remember what a certain Mr. Britten, who lives in Rabaul, and is known as the 'Sole Survivor', told me.

Titles and honorary distinctions are different in different latitudes and longitudes. In Ireland, for example, if one wants to introduce someone in terms that are complimentary, one describes him as 'Mr. Pat O'Brien, condemned to death in the last revolution but one'. At Bias Bay, headquarters of the pirates of the Yellow Sea, a certain Mr. Wong was introduced to me as 'A great man. Three times sentenced to penal servitude for life'. In New Guinea it is 'Mr. So-and-So, sole survivor of such and such an expedition', or perhaps 'Mr. X., who spent two months in hospital with a poisoned arrow wound'. At about 2 a.m., when whisky has had time to produce its maximum effect, one is even admitted to the privilege of inspecting the most horrible scars.

Before meeting Mr. Britten I had only seen heroes of the jungle on the screen. They were splendid men with the features of matinée idols, wearing clothes the shoulders of which had been well padded by their tailors. I consequently

imagined that it was impossible to go into the jungle without being the possessor of a shining, curly head of hair and teeth of dazzling whiteness. I must confess that Ernest Britten, the 'sole survivor', disappointed me. He did not look in the least like a lion- or man-tamer, or, in short like a man who revelled in exciting adventures. He is actually now employed as a magistrate, which explains why he is at Rabaul, and not at Hollywood.

This simple, quiet father of a family and conscientious official has, however, passed through experiences as cruel as anyone could imagine. This magistrate had been in the jungle, and spent three days and three nights there, every minute of which was one of agony and indescribable terror. Just because he had one day been told that there was gold in New Britain.

'My friend Nichols', began Ernest Britten, 'was an extraordinary man. At the age of fifteen he joined the Australian Force as a volunteer, and took part in the operations in Palestine, where he made the acquaintance of a certain Marley. Six years after the Armistice Nichols and Marley met in New Guinea. Nichols was in Government service, and Marley was looking for gold.

'One day, in 1926, Marley told Nichols that he had information of the existence of gold on the southern coast of New Britain in "uncontrolled territory". After talking the proposition over with their friends, Page, Collins, Thurston and Fischer, they decided to organise an expedition and try their luck. A few weeks later the expedition left Rabaul in a little schooner, which in three or four days cast anchor a few hundred miles from here. The white men with their boys and carriers landed and struck into the bush.

'Their first encounter with natives had unfortunate results. Although an attack of the Kanakas was finally repulsed the party lost several porters, and Thurston was seriously wounded by a spear. His condition grew worse, and they decided to send him back to Rabaul. Nichols was chosen to go with the wounded man, while the others camped on the shore to await the return of Nichols.

'When he reached Rabaul he came to see me, and suggested that I should take Thurston's place, and join Marley, Page and Fischer with him. They said that gold was plentiful. I accepted, and we started.

'On reaching the spot where our friends were waiting, we set to work at once. For whole days we tested the soil, cut down trees, and examined the bed of the little river where we hoped to find gold. Although the natives prowling round our camp showed no signs of any intention to raid us, guard was kept, day and night, by our boys, who were armed with rifles.

'Our relations with the Kanakas seemed to be becoming more and more friendly, and we thought that we had nothing to fear. One day, a Tuesday, we were preparing for dinner. Nichols had left the camp to fetch wood, Fischer and Marley were busy looking at some nuggets, and the boys were dozing in the shade of a palm-tree. All was quiet, when suddenly a fearful cry, from hundreds of throats, rang through the air. We recognised the war cry of the savage Bainings and Sulkas when head-hunting. From the *kunai* grass, which a moment before had been still as a pond, showers of arrows rained into our camp. I saw Collins run to the place where our rifles were stacked. An arrow pierced his neck. He stopped, fell, and another arrow

hit him full in the chest. Within a few minutes the camp became a shambles. The corpses of boys were heaped round the bodies of Collins and Fischer, who had been killed. Marley carried an automatic pistol in his belt: he managed to kill five of the natives before they finished him off with their clubs, his head being reduced, literally, to a pulp.'

Very pale, Ernest Britten stopped speaking for a few moments.

'When the attack was made', he continued, 'one of our boys was sitting just in front of me. An arrow hit him and went through both cheeks. In spite of his horrible wound the gallant fellow was able to whisper to me to escape into the *kunai*. As the attention of most of the cannibals was taken up by Marley, who was firing at them, I was able to throw myself into the long grass, without my disappearance being noticed. While lying in the grass I could see the whole party being massacred, the camp pillaged, and the corpses mutilated. I do not know how long the devilish scene lasted. I had fainted.

'When I had regained consciousness, the Kanakas were camped a few yards from me. I saw that my only means of escape was to crawl through the grass and slip into the thick jungle. My position seemed desperate. My only weapon was a pocket knife. However, I managed somehow to reach the bush.

'From Tuesday to Friday I remained in a swamp which was swarming with crocodiles. It was dark when I found myself in its perilous waters. I clung to a branch out of reach of the crocodiles. Unluckily, the tree was a mass of thorns, and my body was terribly lacerated by them.

'Some friendly tribesmen found me at midday on Friday. I was almost dead. For some days the natives looked after me, and when I was a little stronger they carried me on a palm-leaf litter to the coast, where I was lucky enough to be picked up by a passing schooner.

'The Government sent a punitive expedition to the place where my luckless companions had been murdered. A stout resistance was put up by the natives, and losses on both sides were heavy. Finally, rifles prevailed against poisoned arrows, and some dozens of men from the tribe that had attacked us were captured and brought to Rabaul to be tried. Four or five were condemned to death.

'During the trial I got to know these men, and made a study of them. Strange is it may appear, I did not find them fundamentally bad. They kill and practise cannibalism as part of the rules of war. This is why, on hearing that they had been condemned, I telegraphed to Canberra, asking for a remission of the penalty. The Government agreed, and the five natives were pardoned.

'That is my story,' concluded the 'sole survivor', lighting his pipe. 'It is only a memory. It is over now. . . . Today circumstances have changed. I have a wife, children, a house and a garden. All around me is quiet and peaceful.'

'One question, Mr. Britten. What would you be doing if you had no family, house or garden?'

The 'sole survivor' reflected for a while; then said unhesitatingly:

'I would go back to the jungle to look for gold.'

It was a frank confession. They all go back—to disappear some day or other. And in the evening, sitting round the fire, their memory is recalled. How often have I listened to

the same story, on the Markham, or the Vatut, at Bulolo, and in the silence of the Bismarck Mountains.

Helmuth Baum, from Germany, was with us a few months ago. Today his skull is hanging in the hut of a head-hunter.

And the little French engineer, Logier, whom everyone called 'Louise', with the terminal 'e' accentuated. What an attractive person he was! He went mad and committed suicide.

And that brave soldier, Captain Bernard MacGrath, killed by natives on the Ramu with poisoned arrows. How well he sang!

And Naylor and Clarius—the inseparables—who met death together in the hostile land of the Ku-Ku-Ku-Kus!

And among those of an older generation Martin Dabney, who had his skull smashed in the Goromanis country, and the Frenchman, Lucien Fiolini, killed, as the natives said, because he was 'much, much dangerous' with their women.

And Dammkoehler? and Darling? and Page? and Collins? and Fischer? and Marley? And Dawes, who blew his brains out because, having no more boys, he could not go on working his seam. . . .

Young Dawes committed suicide the day after I arrived in the Upper Ramu Base Camp, and I gave evidence to Patrol Officer Norton, whose men had discovered the body of Dawes, lying in his tent in a pool of blood. Dawes had often had disputes with his boys, who accused him, not without justice, of brutality. The patrol officer had often had occasion to remind him of the regulations forbidding corporal punishment, and after continued complaints the officer had, at last, been compelled to allow his boys to

break their contract, and return to their villages. Dawes was left alone with his boxes, and the next day he shot himself. His body was found lying across a table on which he had left a short note: 'No more boys. No more gold. It is all hopeless.' Norton placed the bloodstained slip of paper in his note-case. He then wrote a letter to an old lady in Sydney. He read and re-read what he had written, then tore it up and began again. 'I regret, Madam, to inform you that while cleaning his gun your son . . .'

These are among the dead, who fell on the field of gold. . . . And the living? They become embittered, surly, and sick men; they grow old, and regret their youth when it is too late. They drag themselves from one camp to another, from one mountain or valley to another, pathetic phantoms of Morobe, waiting for their end and means of redemption —from a knock on the head from a club, or from malaria. A shovel, a gun, a few packets of cartridges, some nuggets sewn up in a little leather bag, is all that is found by the side of their dead bodies . . . and perhaps a few lines addressed to some woman who is expecting—or not expecting—the return of the man who has promised her gold: the gold of the cannibals.

And the lucky ones? Levien is dead, and the 'Big Six' have squandered all their fortune in Australia. Back again in Sydney after so many years of privation, they seem to have lost their heads. They gave dinners to a hundred guests; they lived on champagne and fresh caviar. Following the sacred traditions of gold-miners, they lent money to anyone who asked for it and refused help to none. Today they are without a penny, and Bill Royal, the well-

known millionaire, is at present working as a 'tributary' somewhere on the Meri Creek. There was a time when he is known to have lent a hundred pounds to a complete stranger. He had a racing stable, houses and country estates. Today a gold-washing pan and a rifle are all that he possesses.

One man of them all has kept his fortune: Shark-Eye Park, the man who discovered the goldfields. He retired to Canada, where he lives as a millionaire. Having house property in Sydney, he returns there occasionally to see to repairs. 'One is never so rich', he says, 'that economy is unnecessary.'

He will never come back to New Guinea, but others—those who have lost their fortune—constantly return. Stories, told in the bars of Rabaul and Salamaua, of miners being murdered, or dying of hardships, or disease, or cases quoted of persons committing suicide or going mad, are of no avail; the rush for gold continues ceaselessly, and serried files of bold and determined men still press forward into the forests where their hopes are centred.

On their way they meet little mounds of stones which mark a grave. They stop a moment, perhaps say a hurried prayer. . . .

Then, forward, to mountain peaks bristling with native spears, to where streams and rivers conceal their gold, the gold for which they live, fight and suffer, and for which they are ready to die.

PART TWO
WITH THE LONE PATROLS

I. FLOWERS, BEASTS AND MONSTERS

. . . the discomfort may be great . . . But to the botanist and naturalist there are still unbounded possibilities. The ethnologist has ample scope for the discovery of facts to support his own theories or to demolish those of his rival.—J. H. P. MURRAY, 'Papua or British New Guinea.'

'I undertake not to enter uncontrolled territories without an escort of ten men, of whom at least two must talk pidgin English, and at least four must understand the use of firearms.

'I undertake to place the necessary rifles and ammunition at their disposal.

'I undertake not to recruit porters among the inhabitants of uncontrolled territories.

'I undertake not to enter native villages or encampments during the night, except in case of extreme danger.

'I undertake to be inoculated against typhoid.

'I undertake to supply my expedition with adequate quantities of cotton-wool, tincture of iodine, bandages, corrosive sublimate and tincture of opium.

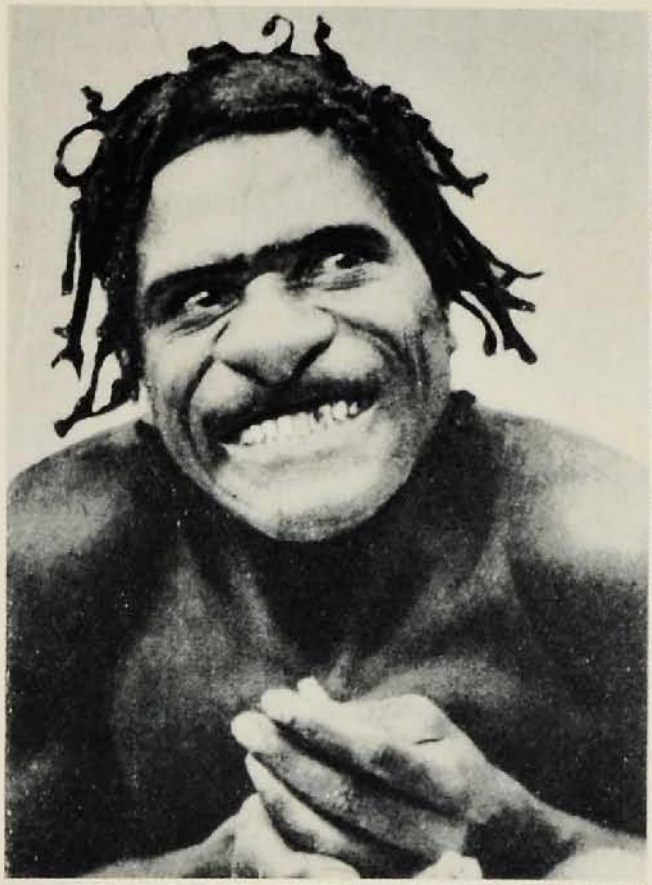
'I undertake not to camp near native villages.

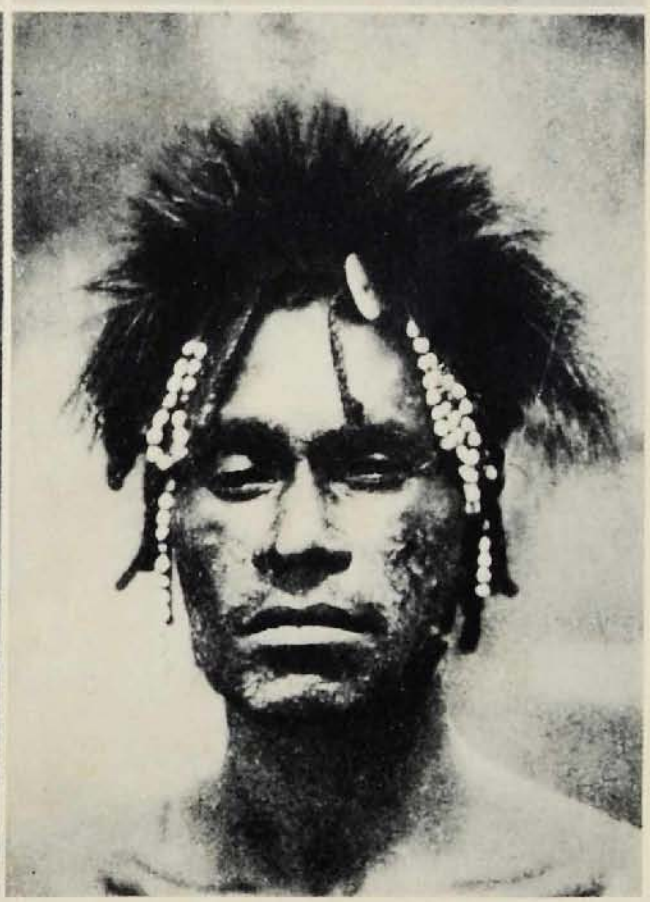
'I undertake to accept full responsibility for accidents of any kind which may happen to me in the course of my journey, and I take note: that neither His Britannic Majesty's Government, nor the Mandatory Power guarantee my personal safety.'

I read through the printed form, and then duly signed it. A Government clerk affixed several stamps, and handed me a copy. Henceforward I was authorised to go into the jungle of New Guinea.

To understand this document one must know a little about the geography of this extraordinary country. New Guinea, the largest island in the world except Greenland, has an area three times greater than that of England. The southern part, situated between the Gulf and the country of the Ku-Ku-Ku-Kus, is called Papua. It is a British Colony. The western end is a Dutch Colony. Finally, the northern and eastern portion, formerly Kaiser Wilhelm Land, is actually a mandated territory, governed by Australia. The Dominion is represented at Rabaul by General Griffith, an amiable man, known by the whites as 'His Excellency the Administrator' and by the natives as 'Master Guv'nor'.

The mandated territory is divided into several administrative districts, and into four areas indicated on maps in four different colours. There are *territories under the absolute control of the Government* which means that unarmed police can enter native villages in this territory to effect an arrest. If the police must be armed the area is called *territory under partial control. Territory under the influence of the Government* indicates that its inhabitants are not too hostile when a patrol passes through it. Finally, *uncontrolled territory* means





1. Native of Papua
2. Native of New Britain
3. Native of New Guinea
4. Man wearing the 'homicidal disc' in his hair

that before entering it an armed expedition must be organised.[1]

I received authorisation from the Government of New Guinea—to whom I take this opportunity to renew my sincere thanks—to join a patrol that was to start from the Upper Ramu, and follow a valley in the direction of the Purari river. To reach the goldfields first of all, and then the camp at Ramu from whence the patrol was setting out, I had to travel partly by air, and partly on foot, in the Markham river and Snake river areas, frequented by tribes who have by no means given up the practice of cannibalism.

I crossed districts inhabited by natives who eat the remains of the enemies they have killed, and dance round their corpses until they fall down senseless, exhausted by frenzy and intoxicated by the smell of blood. I have been in villages of head-hunters, where human skulls, bleached by exposure to the sun, adorn huts and the 'Men's Houses'. But to avoid misunderstanding I must add that, although I passed through fairly dangerous countries, the reader must not expect a romantic tale of travel. To be more precise: I have never been captured by anthropophagi; no one ever attempted to cut my throat; the largest snake that I saw was not more than two feet long; and I was never asked to be King of the Bena-Benas or of the Ku-Ku-Ku-Kus.

The white man accustomed to the noise and bustle of a large town, who goes for the first time into the jungle, is

[1]The area of the territory is 93,000 square miles. 28,785 square miles are under the absolute control of the Government. 7,920 square miles are under the influence of the Government. 4,080 square miles are under partial control. 3,910 square miles are patrolled. The rest is unexplored.

likely to have a quite wrong idea of life in the bush. He has been leading a comfortable existence in surroundings where all his actions are regulated by custom and by law. His views are influenced by acquired ideas, and it is rare that he can free himself from them entirely. Therefore, almost invariably, he makes the mistake of judging the moral, historical, biological or social standard of the jungle by that of civilised nations. This is why most people who go there form opinions that are summary and highly superficial. When they see, for example, a tribal chief buy a wife for one of his men, and the man marrying her without a murmur, although he had perhaps never even seen her, they may sigh: 'How barbarous!' forgetful that the tribal system is the only protective force in a primitive community, and is the only means of insuring the eventual progress of the race. If the barbarous custom of buying wives did not exist the whole race would long ago have disappeared. In the same way they are worried when they see ants attacking trees, insects eating ants, birds devouring insects, men slaughtering birds, and crocodiles killing men. 'The law of the jungle,' they say or 'the law of force,' without remembering that it is simply a 'law of life'. Ants, insects, birds, men and crocodiles must eat, irrespective of the philosophical aspect of their activity; and although it must be admitted that the life of a man is more important than the life of a crocodile, it must also be remembered that this is purely a moral or religious consideration, which has no meaning to the crocodile.

Anyone living in the jungle, and observing beasts, plants and flowers daily, must, inevitably, come to the conclusion that there is no such thing as a bad animal or a useless life.

There is a reason for the existence of the ugliest animal, and when one knows the circumstances in which it lives, one can only once again accept the ancient thesis which maintains that all beings, no matter how revolting they may be, exist in order that the balance of nature may be preserved.

It is in virtue of this law, which is as compelling as all the provisions and codes of modern legislators, that each of us lives, multiplies and disappears. But, to understand this fully, one must observe at close quarters the various manifestations of life in the jungle, which although, apparently capricious, anarchical, confused and cruel, yet have a precise and definite object in view.

This object, of which those who have attempted to solve the problems of nature are well aware, is a double one: self-preservation and race-preservation. Whether it is animals, insects, molluscs or plants that are under consideration, these two forces always determine form, colour, scent and, in short, every manifestation of life. In the jungle numbers of creeping plants entwine themselves, like gigantic snakes, round the trees. They are so like snakes that I have on many occasions heard boys give a cry of terror after stepping on a liana which they mistook for a serpent. Why do these plants instead of creeping along the ground try to mount upwards, enlacing one another, the strongest and thickest choking the smaller, in an inextricable confusion, forming an almost impassable barrier, which must be cut through by boys with well-sharpened knives? Why has nature provided such an obstacle, especially formidable to natives, who have no steel implements? The answer is simple. What we see in these dense tropical forests is a phase in the struggle for light. The creepers raise their

heads in search of this light, which the foliage of trees keeps from the ground. Hence the lianas start to fight their way to the rays of the sun. As in all fights there are conquerors and conquered. The strong are able to support themselves on the surface of this sea of verdure, while others, completely deprived of light, die and rot below. But as nothing goes to waste or is objectless in the jungle, the decaying mass of 'conquered' lianas forms a bedding which engenders tiny fungoids, and they in turn provide nourishment for the finest flowers that flourish in the bush—orchids, which give a fairy-like aspect to the jungle, till it seems bathed in dazzling waves of colour.

As we have said, sometimes the creepers are so thick that twelve or fourteen hours of work are required to advance a couple of miles. Fortunately, snakes are comparatively rare, and most of them are harmless. On the other hand there are a great many crocodiles. But danger and toil are amply rewarded by the enchanting effect produced on the traveller by the flowering orchids. There are some species whose roots are six feet across, and which have five to six thousand blooms. Others seem to float in the air, without support, without stalks or root, forming a huge pink or mauve coloured splash against the dark background of trees. There are small orchids and large ones, of every shape and colour. Up to now as many as six thousand kinds have been named, and we are still far from knowing them all. I was told that certain English collectors have sent expeditions to New Guinea with the sole object of bringing back unknown varieties. Some lucky 'hunters' have been paid as much as £50 to £100 for a single plant, for it must be remembered that collectors can produce a whole series

of flowers hitherto unknown from one new species, thanks to a perfected system of crossing and artificial fertilisation.

Natives show very little interest in these superb flowers, and, while 'sophisticated' boys and mission girls like to adorn their hair with wild flowers, I have never seen a genuine Kanaka wearing an orchid. While there are some districts in which orchids are more appreciated than in others, the natives in general are afraid of these flowers, of which they tell the weirdest stories. 'No good', one of my boys said to me once, pointing to a giant orchid. 'Him eat Kanaka much much.' I had tried to explain to him that, except for certain fungi, orchids do not live on other plants, much less on animals or anything so indigestible as a Kanaka. But my eloquence was wasted. The boy declared that he had known another boy, who had a cousin whose grandfather was caught in the leaves of a giant orchid, which had held him tight until the unfortunate man 'die finish'.

'And I tell you', I replied, 'that the cousin of the Kanaka who was a friend of yours was a big liar. Besides, I do not believe that either the cousin, or the Kanaka, or his grandfather ever existed. It is your friend who has been telling you stories to make you *long-long*.'

'No, Master,' retorted the boy indignantly. 'Him never lie. Him mission boy, and sing church.'

Before this clinching argument I had to give in, and admit that the venerable old man had indeed been devoured by an orchid. The story is characteristic of the mentality of the natives, who believe that if a flower with quite a small root can kill a fly caught and imprisoned in its petals, a plant with a root a thousand times larger can do the same

to a creature a thousand times bigger than a fly—a man, for example.

I have heard that in some districts the natives specially revere the roots of certain orchids, which look a little like miniature human beings. These roots are regarded as talismans of extraordinary efficacy, and are employed in certain magical rites. I have never seen these talismans in the possession of a native, but, if it be true that they are used for such a purpose, it would be interesting to establish whether any connection exists between this belief and that which was popular in Europe during the Middle Ages, that the root of the mandrake, which also resembles a human being in miniature, could produce miraculous effects.

Beliefs and superstitions concerning the life of plants and animals in the jungle are innumerable, and some of them, directly or indirectly, are a cause of trouble for the Kanaka. For example, there is a legend that the feathers of a certain species of bird of paradise protect their owner from wounds and from the unpleasant consequences of puri-puri magic.

It is therefore natural that in pursuing this valuable bird natives frequently venture into the lands of a neighbouring and generally hostile tribe, even at the risk of life. A murder provokes reprisals by the injured tribe, and the quarrel degenerates into an interminable series of vendettas, by which whole districts are often depopulated.

Certain customs concerning domestic animals have results difficult to appraise at first, but which may be disastrous. For example, I was much surprised, when passing a village near Tabouri—in Papua, not far from Port Moresby—to see young women giving suck to dogs and pigs. They were acting as wet nurses of these animals as if it were

In Papua the dogs are suckled by women. Note the coloured tattooing with which this woman, photographed at Tabouri, is decorated

'Embroidered' tattooing in New Britain

a quite natural thing to do. Astonished, we asked one of these women why she was suckling her animals. She replied quite calmly:

'Dogs and pigs must be well fed.'

'You speak truly. But haven't the dogs and pigs their own mothers?'

'They have,' she replied; 'but when we feed them they don't leave the village.'

'Evidently. But how are the piccaninnies to be fed?'

The woman shrugged her shoulders, as if I were asking a stupid question, and said:

'Piccaninnies? But they eat taro and sago.'

This reply, while an explanation of infant mortality, also shows that the natives attach more importance to their animals than to their children. It is true that the fauna of the island is extremely poor, and some scientists affirm that at one period in all New Guinea there were no mammals. Today a fair number of black pigs are to be found in the forest, and a kind of rodent called jungle rat, in still greater numbers. These animals, while innocuous, are extremely unpleasant, having a disagreeable habit of crawling over tents and roofs of the bamboo cabins. At night they can be heard scampering ceaselessly, gnawing and exploring boxes and the inside of one's boots, and one is lucky if they keep away from one's bed. During the first night that I slept in the jungle one fell on my head. Not knowing what animal it was that was attacking me I gave a scream, which woke up the whole camp. The boys seized their guns, the fire, which was almost out, was relighted, and they all rushed to my rescue, expecting to find at least a dozen head-hunters in my hut. My companion, who was also

woken up, when he saw the boys hurrying in, said to them:

'Big big snake attack Master. Go quick hunt big big snake.'

While the boys were beating the grass round the hut with long bamboo sticks we sat down to have a drink.

'It was a jungle rat,' said my friend.

'I know, but why did you send the boys to look for a big big snake, when you knew as well as I do that it was a rat?'

'Exactly,' replied the Australian, 'but you would not want me to tell the boys that you were frightened by a rat? Your prestige would be gone, and they would call you "Great-Master-White-Who-Scream-In-Night-When-Him-See-Rat-Come".'

'You are right. It is rather too long a name for me. I prefer the other one about my hair.'

And ten minutes later when the boss-boy came to say that no snake had been found I said to him in a surprised voice:

'That is strange. But it was a very very big snake.'

To be panic-stricken at sight of a snake seems to the natives quite natural, comprehensible and excusable at the same time. They themselves are terrified by these reptiles, and a boy who will face half a dozen cannibals without flinching would run away if he met a snake a foot long on his path. For this reason the great explorer D'Albertis always carried a good-sized harmless snake about with him, and used to produce it from a box when he wished to impress the savages. He coiled the beast round his neck, then covered the head of the 'nice creature' with kisses. This never failed to fill the spectators with enthusiastic admira-

tion, and after that they looked upon the Italian as the most potent wizard in the world.

Most of the snakes found in New Guinea being harmless, it is not easy to understand the terror that they inspire in the natives. Their fear of crocodiles[1] is more natural. These swarm, particularly in the Sepik river region. As they often cause the death of natives who venture into the ponds and swamps, they are looked upon by most tribes as malevolent deities. This quasi-religious belief has inspired the artistic imagination of the primitive tribes, who decorate their 'Joss-houses' with wood figures, admirably carved, representing the gaping jaws of a crocodile, sometimes life-size. In certain districts a crocodile's jaw appears as a decorative design on a variety of objects: even on bowls used in mixing a preparation of betel nuts for consumption the form of this beast is reproduced. Tail and head are decorated with deepish incisions to increase the realism of the carving. To make one of these bowls requires two or three days' work, but the natives are delighted to exchange such works of art for a twopenny packet of tobacco.

Travellers in India or in Africa speak of the many legends current among the natives there about the little bird which is the inseparable companion of the crocodile.[2] It is asserted that these birds serve both as 'beater' and sentinel to the saurians, either informing them of the presence of an easy prey, or notifying the approach of an enemy. In India these birds are said to act as dentists, and to enter the crocodile's

[1]The New Guinea crocodile is the *Crocodilus bifurcatus Gray*.

[2]It is curious that in the case of the alligators of Santo Domingo a little bird named *Todus Cireneus* performs the same duties as the *Pluvianus Aegyptius* in the case of the African crocodile.

jaw, extracting with their little beaks bits of meat collected between the teeth. A remarkable collaboration between bird and saurian, as the latter must die of starvation if its teeth are destroyed by decaying fragments of meat. It should be added that the crocodile shows its gratitude to its dentist, since it never takes advantage of the bird being in its jaws to swallow a delicate morsel! If, on the other hand, it inadvertently closes its jaws, forgetting that the bird is there, the latter gives a vigorous peck, Leviathan gently opens its mouth, and the bird quietly continues its occupation.

Although New Guinea is the richest country in the world in birds I have never seen the *Pluvianus Ægyptius* there, and I ask myself who looks after the *puk-puk's* teeth in the Sepik? I cannot say positively that the bird does not exist in the island, two-thirds of which are still unexplored. I can only state that while I saw a great many *puk-puks* I never saw one of their guardian angels, and that the natives whom I questioned on the subject declared that they had never seen a bird of this kind. One can imagine the stories that the Kanakas would tell if they saw a little white bird come out of the jaws of a crocodile: their silence therefore seems to prove that the *Pluvianus Ægyptius* is unknown in these parts.

Speaking of birds, it must be observed that even persons living there hardly know how rich the New Guinea jungle is in birds of paradise. Although latterly their number has much diminished, some dozens can still be shot in a single day. There are villages where every man is the owner of as many as fifteen plumes, which he is ready to exchange for a pocket knife or a looking glass. It is true that to gain pos-

1. Native with head-dress made of bird of paradise feathers

2. Native carrying *kundu* drum

session of these precious plumes only a little walk in the forest and the sacrifice of a few three or four-headed arrows are required; arrows with one or two heads being reserved for black pigs. The natives, since they have learnt their value, love to deck themselves with feathers, and this perhaps is one of the reasons why the number of birds of paradise, while still considerable, is less than in the times of the first explorers. It is also true that white men in their turn have largely helped to kill off these superb birds, as, long before the discovery of gold in New Guinea, the pursuit of birds of paradise had already attracted adventurers to these perilous regions of the southern hemisphere in the hope of making a fortune in a few years, even at the risk of death, alone and abandoned in the depths of the jungle. The pursuit of this bird was, in fact, as dangerous as the search for gold is today. The cannibals fight for their birds as keenly as they defend the bush and mountains which conceal the yellow metal. A few years ago on the Anglo-Dutch frontier of New Guinea some tribesmen captured four whites who had been hunting the royal bird. Their four skulls, duly preserved, were found a few weeks later in a joss-house by the expedition sent to search for them.

But the most extraordinary story is that of the Hungarian Mikulitch, killed in New Guinea a few years before the War. Mikulitch was hunting in the Sepik region, where he was on friendly terms with most of the tribes inhabiting the neighbourhood of this river. After four successful trips, which brought him in a small fortune, he returned a fifth time with the object of procuring a specimen of a bird of paradise, of the existence of which ornithologists were still uncertain. His expedition was fully equipped, too well

equipped, in fact, as Mikulitch, like all his compatriots, being an ardent lover of music, had taken a violin with him in his luggage. In the evening, on returning from a day's shooting, Mikulitch, surrounded by his porters, used to sit by the fire and play the sad melodies of his native land on the violin.

The natives of the surrounding mountains, while very friendly, none the less did not fail to surround his camp with watchers. Hidden in the grass, or in the branches of trees, they kept an eye on what was going on in the camp of the white man. One day, on returning to their village, they reported that the white man was practising some kind of sorcery by striking a box of sounding wood with a stick. The chiefs consulted their sorcerers, who were of opinion that the matter was serious, and that in all probability the white man was intending to cast a spell over the whole district.

Some months elapsed. . . .

A German expedition was despatched to the Sepik river to ascertain in what circumstances the natives had killed Mikulitch, his armed boys and his carriers, of whom only two had escaped from the butchery.

The members of this expedition found the violin of the unfortunate sportsman hung up in a joss-house.

'We had to kill him,' explained the chief of the tribe, 'because he was going to let loose puri-puri upon us with the help of an evil spirit shut up in this box, who used to answer him immediately, in an unknown tongue, when he touched it with a stick. . . .'

Today it is no longer worth while to risk one's life for a few dozen plumes: which reminds me of an amusing con-

versation that I had with a certain Mr. Wright, a stocky, taciturn Australian, whom I met in the thick forest bordering on the Snake river. That day the good Wright abandoned his usual reserve in order to explain to me the grievances of the Corporation of Bird of Paradise Hunters. He said that the arbiters of Paris fashions were wrong, in his opinion, to forget that a woman 'is only really pretty and well dressed' when she is wearing the plumes of the royal bird.

'I assure you, Sir,' the gallant sportsman declared, 'that the pre-war ladies whom I often saw in the theatre at Sydney and Melbourne were superb. I used to go there between my trips, with invariably good results. What lovely creatures, Sir! What clothes! And now, Sir—let me tell you that they are ugly, and that is why I don't go to Sydney any more.'

Wright was not telling the whole truth. His reason for not going to Sydney any more was that business was bad, and the journey was an expensive one, to say nothing of the stay in Australia, where money is spent freely after a few years in the bush. It was a typical case of a profession being affected by changing fashion.

'Only think,' he went on. 'Before 1914 and even after, I was able, in a few days, to shoot a sufficient number of birds to sell three hundred pounds worth of plumes. There were months in which I made as much as a thousand pounds, before the number of birds that might be killed was restricted. Sometimes also I bought from the natives dozens of birds for which I paid one *kuma-kuma*[1] each. In Australia I could sell them for between ten and twenty pounds.

[1]Native shell money, worth about sixpence.

Later, when the Government controlled the shooting, there were still means of getting away with it. Who can control the jungle effectively? And there were always people ready to take the feathers to Australia. Today? No one wants them any more. And they tell me it is because of the Paris dressmakers and modistes.'

I only reproduce Wright's statements concerning birds of paradise, and cannot write certain phrases, short, but very expressive, indicating his personal opinion of the intelligence, taste and morality of the leading Parisian fashion houses. If Wright spoke in the same way in the presence of Kanakas I would not advise prominent Paris dressmakers to come and spend their holidays in the neighbourhood of the Snake river.

At present the pursuit of birds of paradise is only carried on by natives, and a few ornithologists—there still being a fair number of unknown varieties. Except for professional ornithologists, no one is allowed to shoot these birds, or —to be more accurate—no one may export the feathers of this beautiful specimen of the feathered race. In spite of the prohibition travellers do sometimes kill them, as their flesh, although not very good, is eatable. In the jungle some gastronomic concessions are inevitable.

Among the numerous varieties of birds of paradise the most beautiful, but not the rarest, is the 'Royal'.[1] It is to be found fairly often in the jungle, where it builds its nest in trees of moderate height. It is a brilliantly coloured bird—the beak dark brown, neck ruby red, head an orange yellow, stomach greyish white, breast metallic green, wings a mixture of brown, red and green, and its legs a blue like

[1] *Cincinnurus regius Vieil.*

that of the sea. Alas! This bird, the psychology of which is somewhat feminine, is as stupid and vain as it is beautiful. As if conscious of its beauty it only thinks of showing off as much as possible, and of exciting the admiration of its worst enemy—man. When it sees a man the royal bird selects the most conspicuous branch that it can find, and perches on it, as if to give the sportsman an opportunity of admiring it at leisure. Unluckily, in most cases, man, whether white or black, is not always inspired by a sense of the aesthetic, and if he has a gun or bow and arrow the pretty bird generally pays for the brief pleasure of being admired with its life. It is the old, old story, thousands of years old, but the royal bird is incorrigible. It is a pity that La Fontaine never went to New Guinea. . . .

One day we were camping in a clearing surrounded by thick jungle. I was opening a case, when one of the boys made a sign that there was something to look at in the forest. I noticed three or four birds of paradise perched on a branch; they seemed to be very interested in what we were doing. Wishing to look at them closer, I told the boys not to shoot. They put down their guns, and we approached within a few yards of the trees where the birds were fluttering.

Now, one of our party was a native whom we had brought from the Markham because he spoke several local dialects. Among our porters some knew the language of the Markham tribes, and we hoped by this chain of interpreters to be able to converse with the local natives. His name was Udo, a very nice boy, who frankly confessed that he had practised—and very actively practised—cannibalism. He belonged to an extremely primitive tribe.

When Udo saw the birds he made it clear that he had an urgent communication to make to me. The interpreters set to work, and Udo pointing to the birds gave us a complicated lecture on the habits and importance of the royal bird.

'Him say', translated the interpreter, 'that him know bird too much. Father belong him. . . .'

The reference was to Udo's father, and, as usual on such occasions, I had to listen to a long family history of the lecturer. Having told me what Udo's father had done when a Kanaka 'of other mountain' had carried off one of his wives, he came back at last to the bird of paradise. According to Udo it had no legs, it fed on dew, it could fly 'ten times ten moons' without resting and finally, if a warrior wore the feathers 'belong bird' in his head-dress no weapon could wound him, and even a rifle could not harm him.

To tell the truth I was not particularly enthusiastic about the last part of his lecture, it being unwise to destroy the belief which natives have in the efficacy of fire-arms. I said to the interpreter:

'Tell him he is *long-long* as a snake, since ten times ten times ten times ten feathers could not protect him against a rifle bullet. If he does not believe this, we will see which of us is right. We shall give him as many feathers as he likes, he shall stand at the foot of this tree, and I will fire five shots of Big Feller[1] at him. We'll begin after *kai-kai*.'

During dinner we were much amused to observe the excitement of the natives, who were delighted at the prospect of so sensational an entertainment. One of the boys brought a Mauser rifle and ball cartridge. He showed them

[1]Pidgin English for a Mauser rifle.

to Udo. The latter examined the rifle carefully. Then a conversation began between him and the boy. Finally the latter came to us:

'Master,' he said, 'let me fire shot empty tin. Bush Kanaka want see Big Feller.'

As we knew that the boy was a good shot, and would not miss, he was allowed to proceed with the experiment. He set up an empty tin on a box and fired at it from a range of ten yards. The box was holed by the bullet and fell off. They picked it up and gave it to Udo to show the effect. The Kanaka examined the tin closely, and then an animated conversation with the boys began. After a lengthy palaver my boy came to me and said:

'Bush Kanaka say feather not good against Big Feller. Big Feller too much big for him.'

This declaration settled the matter very satisfactorily for us, but less satisfactorily for poor Udo, who, after that, became the butt for the boys' sarcasms. Happily, Udo had a philosophic nature and was easily consoled by a few packets of tobacco, which I gave him after he had publicly recanted his dangerous theories.

Udo was not the only native who affirmed to me that birds of paradise have supernatural powers of prolonged flight and of healing wounds. It is difficult to trace the origin of these legends: they are probably derived from the imaginative faculty of one or several of the village sorcerers.

To be just I must add that the Kanakas are very fond of adding to the effect of their stories by unexpected details which they have heard 'from men come very far, see father belong man dead long ago'. Of course, when one tries to verify these stories, it almost invariably happens that the

witnesses have 'die-finish' many years ago, or else have gone to live somewhere in the bush . . . where it is impossible to trace them.

From a scientific point of view, however, the tales of the natives must not be regarded as completely valueless, as, often enough while the details may be inexact they may still furnish explorers of the jungle with useful information. Thus, for example, a white man would smile when a Kanaka described to him in great detail a legendary animal which resembled a crocodile, but was much more ferocious and dangerous than a puk-puk, because it was said to climb trees like a monkey and to run like a wild boar, but he would be very surprised to learn that an expedition in a Malayan forest had captured an animal exactly like the prehistoric lizard described by the Kanakas of New Guinea.

Here is a story of a sea monster which natives living on the coast declared they had seen in the course of a voyage. Men of science may be sceptical. . . .

One day the Archbishop of Navarre was walking on the shore of Yule Island when he saw rise from the sea a terrifying monster like one of those, the sight of which used to alarm sixteenth-century navigators. Beatrice Grimshaw relates (I do not know whether she was an eye-witness of the scene) that as soon as the boys saw the monster they threw down their guns and ran away, leaving the archbishop to fend for himself. Whether out of consideration for his holiness, or merely because the beast was not in the habit of walking on the shore, after showing itself three or four times on the surface of the water, the monster disappeared, to the great relief of those who saw the apparition.

To the successful capture of a giant lizard must be added the discovery of the haunts of a race of pygmies near Lake Murray, and of another tribe which had often been talked of but had never been seen. It was a patrol officer, Taylor, accompanied by a gold-miner named Leahy, who revealed the existence, in the country of the Bena-Benas, of a people numbering some thousands. Curiously enough, this mysterious race seemed to have reached a higher stage of civilisation than any other of the inhabitants of New Guinea.

In this connection we note that the existence of 'villages' and 'mysterious races' may be explained by the fact that the lianas, which grow with extraordinary rapidity, often block all the paths leading to a little village in the jungle, until the latter seem to have disappeared altogether. It may therefore easily happen that the traveller who stayed once in a village may, on his return, be unable to pass through what has again apparently become part of the virgin forest, which seems to have entirely swallowed up the little community. The village does really exist, but its inhabitants see no use in depriving themselves of their isolation, which is a better protection than any weapon against foreign invaders. It may also happen that villages exposed often to raids by a powerful hostile neighbour really disappear, the survivors selecting a safer place in which to plant their household gods. They take with them their wives, their children, their implements and their own methods of manufacture, and it sometimes happens, for instance, that terra-cotta objects are found in a place where previously they were quite unknown.

While on the subject of mysteries of the jungle I must, parenthetically, mention the story of the Devil-Pig which,

although the scene is laid in Papua, is well known throughout New Guinea.

Mr. Monckton, one of the most famous pioneers in Papua, was marching at the head of an expedition in the direction of Mount Albert Edward. After travelling for some weeks the expedition came to a track, and Mr. Monckton sent two police boys, Oia and Ogi, to see whether it was practicable or not. The two natives started, but failed to return. Finally it was decided to fire a few shots as a signal for the boys to come back at once to the camp. A good many cartridges were expended without result. At last some shots were heard in the jungle, and a patrol, which set off in the direction where the firing had been heard, found Ogi, and a little later Oia, both in a deplorable state. When they were brought into camp Ogi related how he had met two beasts, each of which was 'five feet long, three and a half feet high, and had a tail and hoofs like those of a horse, an almost black skin, and a very long nose'. When he saw them Ogi fired a shot at the two 'monsters', but as his hands were trembling from fright he had missed them. As he was going to fire a second shot a carrier who was with him shouted, 'They are devils, not pigs'. This was enough to extinguish the courage of the unfortunate Ogi altogether. After throwing away his gun he had been '*too much*' attacked by the beasts. It was only with great difficulty that he succeeded in escaping and rejoining Oia, whom he had left half an hour before meeting the Devil-Pigs.

The story sounds fantastic, but there is no doubt that several animals exist in the interior of New Guinea which white men have not yet succeeded in capturing, or killing,

or even seeing. For long it was thought that the jungle harboured a fairly large number of rhinoceros and buffalos. D'Albertis and Sir William MacGregor, former Governor of Papua, while exploding these legends, believed, however, in the existence of a graminivorous animal with the hoofs of a ruminant.

Police Constable Ogi had probably met one of these strange animals, and anyone with some knowledge of the mentality of natives would not be surprised at Ogi imagining that he had met a devil and his wife in person.

It would be an error to suppose that the imagination of the bushmen is only stirred by strange animals. They tell many tales about apocalyptic monsters with a human form, of which the most picturesque are undoubtedly the creatures they call 'The Dog-Man', 'The Giant-Man' and 'The Fish-Man', all applied to the same category of beings, although the latter monster has been less commonly 'observed' by the Kanakas than the first two, which enjoy much notoriety throughout the territory.

During the whole of my travels I lost no opportunity of obtaining information about 'The Dog-Men', but, to be frank, the light thrown on their own psychology by the answers given by my informants, interested me more than the monsters themselves. It is extraordinary to see with what audacity a Kanaka is ready to describe the smallest details of the anatomy of the Dog-Man. The bad faith of some is evident: they think that to obtain a reward from the white man it is enough to say that a monster, about which they are asked, lives in a mountain close by. On the other hand I have met a good many natives who, in my opinion, were firmly convinced of the existence of this

extraordinary tribe. A few miles from Ramu I went through a village, the inhabitants of which were unanimous in stating that the haunts of the Dog-Men were in the heart of the virgin forest hardly two days' journey away. They said they had met them, and that they had tails of imposing length, and lived in the trees like monkeys. When I asked what the Dog-Men did when they met a Kanaka, they replied unblushingly:

'As they are Dog-Men they bark like dogs when they see us.'

That decided me. I had, in fact, previously received a similar answer, when two boys sent out from our camp to collect brushwood returned empty-handed. On being asked why they had not brought in the precious fuel, they said that they had met a band of Ku-Ku-Ku-Kus, who, as we have already mentioned, are a very ferocious and formidable tribe of warriors.

'And what did the Ku-Ku-Ku-Kus say?' we enquired.

One of the boys cast a furtive glance at the other and replied:

'They looked straight at us, and said "Ku-Ku-Ku-Ku".'

It should be explained that the name Ku-Ku-Ku-Ku was given to the tribe by the patrols, and is, I believe, of pidgin origin. Consequently the Ku-Ku-Ku-Kus themselves do not know of this name: it was therefore very unlikely that they introduced themselves to our lazy boys by it. But it is natural for the natives to imagine that if someone is a Ku-Ku-Ku-Ku he would call himself one; similarly, if someone is of the race of Dog-Men, by the most elementary rules of Kanaka logic it is evident that he must bark.

It was a sign of the times that my informants, while

alleging that they had talked with Dog-Men, emphatically denied having had any other intercourse with these monsters. Some years before, the Kanakas were bolder; it is true that Government influence was then less. Thus, when Sir Hubert Murray asked the Papuans whether they had ever met Dog-Men, they told him that teasing these monsters was a favourite pastime.

'The Dog-Men', they said, 'live in cabins built in the trees. They make holes in the floor, through which they put their tails when they sit down. We go underneath them and tie knots in their tails. When that has been done one of our men begins to shout. The Dog-Men are scared, and try to jump up, but being unable to withdraw their tails fall on their backs. We find it very amusing, and that is why we like this game very much.'

Sir Hubert was not quite satisfied with this description, thinking that the Kanakas might be 'pulling his leg'. He put several questions to his informant, until the latter, finally becoming impatient, exclaimed:

'Me not know Dog-Man? Me eat him many.'

This argument, conclusive as it might appear, failed to convince the Governor, who, naturally, had never been able to trace a Dog-Man, although he had long been looking for one.

My own belief is that the origin of this legend is a dance of the Australian aborigines, in which they tie long feathers on their backs and move, on all fours, round a fire as if they were dogs. I have never seen a dance of this kind in New Guinea, nor has anyone whom I have asked about it, but this does not exclude the possibility of a New Guinea islander having seen it, and of imagining that the dancers

were Dog-Men, which would be enough to convince most of the islanders of the real existence of such monsters. It seems to be a case of a mixture of legends, lies, and auto-suggestion, not to mention the motive of avarice, for the Kanakas are, in fact, convinced that their reporting zeal will be generously rewarded by the explorer in search of the extraordinary—whether in beasts or men.

In addition to scientists, patrol officers and explorers, there is another class of men on the lookout for monsters in the jungle. These are the representatives of the big circuses, in particular Hagenbeck's and, formerly, Barnum's, who often come to New Guinea to discover and bring back freaks to Europe or America.

Their quest is not very difficult, as, by reason of the numerous diseases from which the inhabitants of this country suffer, monstrosities are to be found everywhere, human abortions, dwarfs, half-wits, hydrocephali, and degenerates with heads reminiscent of gargoyles.

Among other abnormalities albinism is of common occurrence in the jungle. One can imagine the surprise of a Kanaka couple, whose marriage has been blessed by every pagan rite, when a lily-white child appears on the scene. As prospectors frequently pitch their camps in the neighbourhood of a village the birth of a white baby might give rise to some scandal in the bosom of a native family. I hasten to add that, in such cases, the husband would be wrong to suspect the fidelity of his wife. White children met with in New Guinea are not half-castes, but pure Kanakas, with all their racial characteristics.

I speak of white children, because in most cases albinos

die before adolescence. If they do not die, so much the worse for them. They are treated by the Kanakas as outcasts. They live in separate huts which are isolated from the others and avoided as much as if they sheltered a leper. Missionaries who visit villages where there is a white child sometimes take the unfortunate creature away with them, which is easy to do, the natives being delighted to be rid of an 'evil spirit'.

These albinos in New Guinea afford an excellent example of the truism that everything in this world is relative. Travellers in the bush are well aware that a white child in a black family is no less undesirable than a black child in a white family. In fact, it would appear that excessive originality in this direction is nowhere appreciated.

II. PALAVERS OF BLOOD

When strangers whom they deem of any account come to visit them, these skulls are handed round, and the host tells how these were his relations who made war upon him, and how he had got the better of them; all this being looked upon as proof of bravery.
—HERODOTUS, Book IV, 65.

On my way to the Patrol Base of the Upper Ramu I passed through a district situated a few miles from the Markham river. As among the native soldiers with me there were some who spoke the Markham dialect as well as pidgin English, I took advantage of this circumstance to converse with the natives of a region where cannibalism is still secretly practised.

One day we were passing through a village composed of a dozen miserable huts, the inhabitants of which greeted our convoy with apathetic indifference. Hunters of birds of paradise formerly had visited these parts, and the natives were therefore aware that it is rash to attack white men, at least in the daytime. They knew that the White Faces brought with them curious long weapons, which make a prodigious noise, and spit fire as soon as any games with arrows and clubs are started in their presence.

So we passed on in peace.

On leaving the village we came to a clearing surrounded

by high trees. In the middle of the clearing I noticed some enormous blocks of grey stone, blackened by fire. I was not paying much attention to them, when one of my porters, a native of Russell Island, came up and said to me:

'Look, Master, the *iaggega*.'

'What is that?'

'The *iaggega*,' he repeated. 'Kanakas sit and *kai-kai*[1] man.'

I immediately understood what he meant, and gave orders to return to the village that we had left. Our boys looked to their rifles, and we turned back.

In the middle of the village we halted. The natives, bow and arrows in hand, were looking at us in evident alarm. The armed boys formed a semicircle round me, and the carriers set to work to open one of my packing cases. When they had opened it I took out some strips of tobacco leaf, a few knives and half a dozen shells, which I placed near me, while I stood with my rifle in my left and a whip in my right hand. I had already learned something about the psychology of the anthropophagi.

'Call the *luluai*,'[2] I said to the interpreter.

After a few minutes' palaver the natives pushed a man called Bevu in front of me. He was about fifty and carried an enormous stone axe on his shoulder. I would not have been in the least surprised to learn that he had eaten his own mother without the smallest qualms of conscience.

'*Luluai*,' I said to him, 'I come in peace, and hope that you are not going to place a banana leaf before my tent and spit, which I know would be a declaration of war. If you and your men keep quiet this tobacco is for you.'

He did not move a muscle. It was only when I made the

[1]Eat. [2]Chief of the tribe.

gesture of handing the tobacco to him that he took a step —backwards. He turned to his 'subjects' to ask their opinion, and, as the majority seemed to be in favour of fraternisation, he put out his hand and accepted the present. The first, and most difficult part of the business was over.

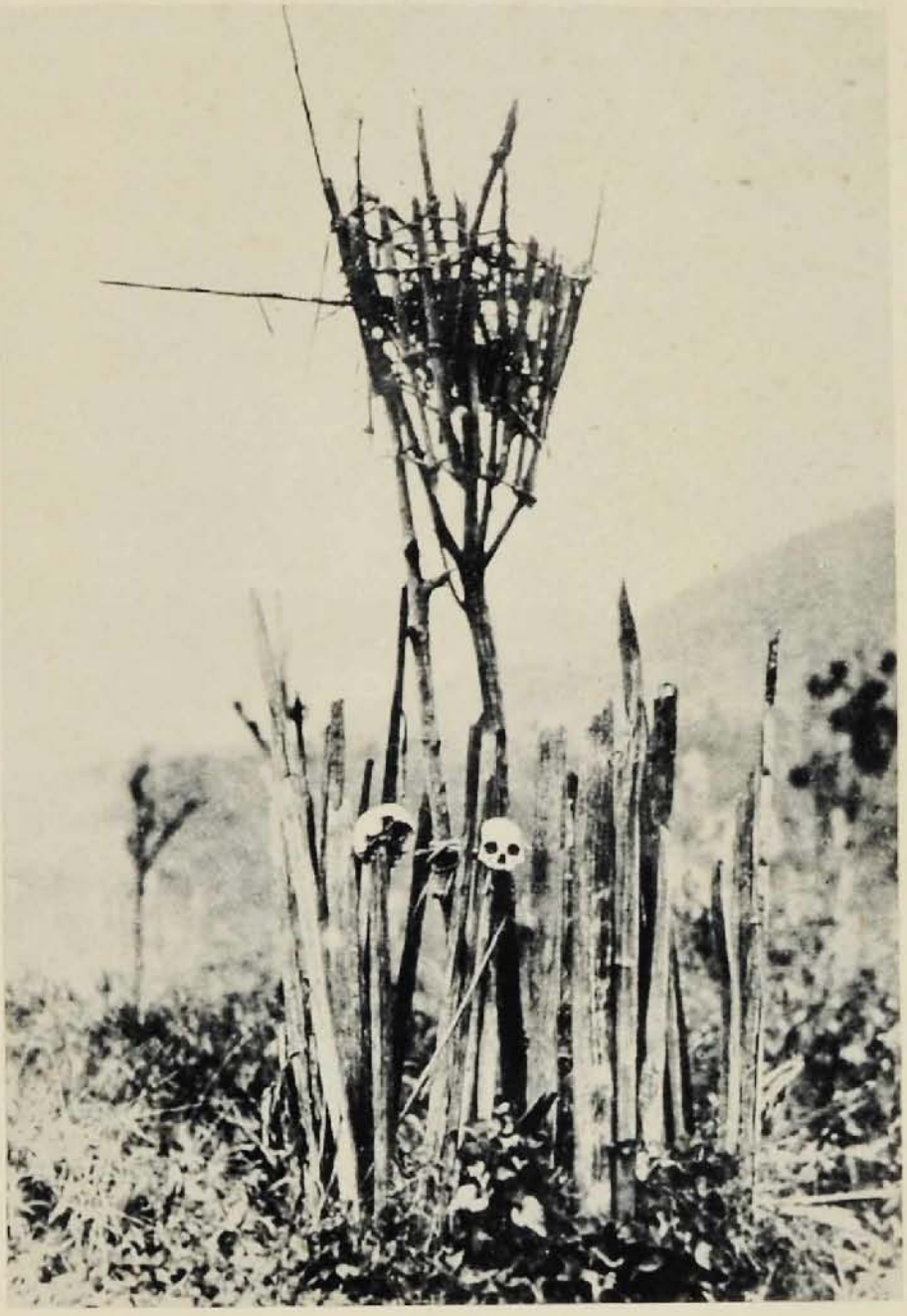
'*Luluai*,' I continued, 'I have seen your huts, your pigs, your wives and your children. They are very fine, which proves that you are a very great Luluai. But I have also seen the *iaggega*, where they *kai-kai* men. . . . All right. . . . I do not ask whether you *kai-kai* man. . . . All right. . . . Nor do I ask who was the last of your tribe to *kai-kai* man. All right. . . . But I want you to tell me what others do when they *kai-kai* man?'

I did not use the words 'All right' so often to make the Kanakas think I was an Englishman, but because, as I have said, they are employed in pidgin English to indicate the completion of one sentence and the beginning of another. The interpreter translated my words. This time the chief turned right about, and went back to the group standing a few yards off. After some talk he came forward again, and mumbled a short sentence into the interpreter's ear.

'He say', translated the boy, 'they know nothing about *kai-kai* man.'

It was necessary to alter my tactics. And I made the following little speech:

'Look, *luluai*, I am a very powerful *luluai* of a country where all the other *luluais* tremble when they see me. I am richer than all the *luluais* put together. I have ten times ten times ten times ten times ten pigs, and as many wives. Now if you will tell me how they *kai-kai* a man, I will give you



'Still-life' at the entrance of a head-hunters' village

one of my most precious treasures. But if you lie, I shall tie you to a tree, and you shall see how I punish liars.'

While this speech was being translated I took out a mirror. The effect was tremendous. When the chief saw his reflection in the glass he jumped and yelled. The others followed his example, and the cheap mirror passed from hand to hand. Women and children came running up. It was a scene of wild excitement. Finally, the chief came back to our group, and the interpreter announced that he was ready to speak.

The first question I put to him was:

'How is the man's carcass prepared?'

'We cut it in pieces, like a pig,' he replied in so many words. 'The intestines and bowels are removed. Then the stones are heated until they are red. When the stones are hot enough the *kai-kai* is wrapped in taro leaves and put on them. But of course *we* never do such things. It is the tribe living the other side of the mountains that *kai-kai* man. It is from them that I have heard how it is done. . . .

'I know that there are some tribes near the river who instead of roasting men only boil them in water. Our neighbours living the other side of the mountain call that a very bad habit.'

'Tell me, *luluai*, have the men living on the other side of the mountain ever said what part of a man they like best?'

The man put a black hand on his shin-bone, which was covered with ulcers. Then I knew that he was telling the truth, as Dr. Brennan, of the New Guinea Medical Service, had told me that all the cannibals whom he had questioned had agreed that the shin-bone was looked upon by all anthropophagi as a special delicacy.

I noticed that my man carried a kind of dagger with a very sharp point, tied to the cord which constituted his gala uniform. As I collect native weapons I asked him to show me the dagger. After a moment of hesitation he handed it to me. It was made of a human shoulder blade. I carried it away with me in exchange for a box of matches.

By evening we were already far away. I was waiting while my tent was being pitched.

Tamari, the boy who served as cook to the expedition, squatting in front of me at the fire, said to me in a tone of reproach:

'Pity Master give pretty mirror to Kanaka. Me know more than Kanaka. Me *kai-kai* man. But not now. Now me Christian. . . . But before me baptised me *kai-kai* man much.'

And he added with evident pride:

'Me come from Thalasea.'

'Very well, Tamari,' I replied. 'As you are such a good boy, tell me why cannibals never eat a white man? Do they think his flesh is not good?'

'No, no, Master,' protested Tamari. 'We no eat white man. . . .'

He lowered his eyes, and concluded, obviously embarrassed:

'Because white man smell much bad.'

Holy Scripture, Homer, Herodotus, St. Jerome and Marco Polo can all be brought as evidence to show that cannibalism is as old as the world, and that barbarians of all times practised it, at least occasionally. Our own ancestors are no exception to the rule, since the learned Spring asserts

that among the bones of primitive man found in the caves of Chavaux those containing marrow had been artificially opened, a clear proof that the edible contents had been removed. The folk-lore of European peoples is full of allusions to ogres and monsters, which show conclusively that thousands of years ago anthropophagy was as common as —perhaps commoner than—it is today among the savages of the Pacific Islands. Herodotus states that races practising cannibalism inhabited the banks of the Danube, and St. Jerome asserts that the early natives of Gaul were notorious anthropophagi. It is therefore comprehensible that scientists who aim at reconstituting our past history by a close study of the customs of savages are specially interested in this ghoulish detail of the life of primitive tribes. But their task is extremely difficult, on the one hand owing to the decrease of the numbers of cannibalistic tribes, and on the other to an idiosyncrasy of all Governments, when it is a question of enquiring into the practice of anthropophagy. They would rather admit that native populations confided to their care have become extinct than authorise an explorer or anthropologist to institute an enquiry into cannibalism.

Happily, the Governments of New Guinea and Papua are exceptions to this general rule, and Sir Hubert Murray has not been afraid to give numerous details concerning anthropophagy in his excellent book, published a few years before the War, which still furnishes the best documentation on the subject. The authorities in New Guinea recognise that cannibalism is still practised in certain districts, and, contrary to what might be expected, allow investigations to be made into this delicate subject. That is perhaps the

reason why New Guinea today, of all places in the world, is the most frequented by scientists and explorers working on the problem of anthropophagy, the most monstrous of human crimes.

The word cannibal is of Spanish origin, and was used to designate Carib Indians of the Antilles, who today are almost extinct. As these Indians were much addicted to anthropophagy their name became a synonym for the practice.

It must be added that the Caribs were far from being the only people of the New World with a taste for human flesh. The Aztecs of Mexico, and Peruvians of the time of the Incas, although in some respects highly civilised, were none the less as cannibalistic as the Tupis, or primitive inhabitants of the basin of the Amazon, and the Iroquois of North America. Today cannibalism is only practised in South America by a few tribes in the Amazon district and the unexplored interior of Matto Grosso. On the other hand, it is still fashionable in certain parts of Africa, in several of the islands of the Dutch East Indies, and finally in certain of the islands of Melanesia, Polynesia and Micronesia. It is remarkable that cannibalism has ceased on two islands which formerly had the worst reputation of all from the anthropophagous point of view—namely Fiji and New Zealand.

The greatest difficulty which I met with during my investigations into cannibalism was in drawing a line between merely fantastic reports and genuine information furnished by natives. At first I used to spend hours in listening to the bewildering stories of some Kanakas, who in the hope of a generous reward went so far as to declare that they had

devoured their own father and mother. For example, it was only after long and troublesome verification that I found out that one Kanaka, who pretended he had taken part in cannibalistic banquets, had been brought up by missionaries since the age of two, and had never left controlled territory. He would consequently have had to have attended such banquets before he was two years old. New Guinea youths reach maturity very young, but it is hardly likely that babies are admitted to these feasts, in which only a limited number of men take part.

On the northern coast of New Britain I met an old native called Nuri. The good Nuri, on learning that I was on the look out for information concerning cannibalism, immediately declared his willingness to initiate me into the secrets of anthropophagous rites.

'Forty years ago, when I lived in the bush,' he said, beginning a story which brought in a whole series of murders, vendettas and details of anthropophagous orgies, far more astonishing than anything that Baron Munchausen could have invented. We could see at once that this was not the first time that he had given an account of his blood-curdling exploits. However, we allowed him to finish; then I asked him the following questions:

'When all that happened you had never even seen a white man?'

'No, never. I had lived in the bush,' replied Nuri calmly.

'Good; another question. What did you do to make the human flesh good to eat? Did you sugar or salt it?'

'That depended on circumstances,' replied my informant diplomatically. 'Sometimes I used salt and sometimes sugar.'

As these bush Kanakas who have had no contact with

whites know nothing of salt or sugar it became clearer than ever that Nuri's revelations, likewise to employ diplomatic language, were 'without foundation'. There was a missionary with us, so I suddenly put this unexpected question to Nuri:

'Tell me, Nuri, you who have eaten so many men, have you ever eaten a missionary?'

Obviously embarrassed by this indiscreet question, Nuri cast a furtive glance at the missionary and replied, his eyes on the ground:

'No, Master, never.'

'Then I am sorry,' I said. 'There is no present for you. They are reserved for Kanakas who have eaten missionaries.'

This was too much for the old rascal. He was evidently greatly upset, and said nothing. With a hang-dog face he joined the group of natives who accompanied us to the outskirts of the village. But before we left, he came up to me and whispered:

'Excuse me, Master, I lied to you.'

'Very well, Nuri,' I said. 'Then you admit that you never *kai-kai* man?'

Nuri looked at me astonished, then exclaimed:

'No, no, not that. Me say me *kai-kai* much much missionary.'

I had to give him a present, for fear lest, although a 'sophisticated' native, he might eat the next missionary that came his way in order not to have another disappointment similar to that which he had just experienced.

A somewhat similar case occurred in the port of Samarai where, of course, I was not looking for anthropophagi, but where, soon after disembarking, I saw a remarkably beau-

tiful Papuan girl. She was naked to the waist, as is the fashion there, and her pretty velvety skin was richly and artistically tattooed.

I asked her to allow me to take a photograph. She consented willingly, but when I begged her to come nearer, this wild flower of an exotic land said:

'Not good here with boxes behind. Go where be palms. Me lean against tree. Photo plenty more pretty. I want one shilling.'

I relate these stories to show that in studying the life and habits of natives one cannot be too careful, as most Kanakas who appear to know a great deal, really only know one thing, namely how easy it is to dupe the white Masters. Above all in so delicate a matter as anthropophagy, in which religious factors play a very important part, statements of cannibals, who in most cases are only pseudo-anthropophagi, must be accepted with the greatest reserve.

In studying the problem of cannibalism two questions must first be asked: how and why is it practised? As we shall see, it is more difficult to obtain an answer to these two questions than would at first appear to be the case.

From conversations which I have had with hundreds of natives on the one hand, and with patrol officers on the other, it seems that, as my Markham informant told me, cannibals have only two methods of preparing human flesh. The inhabitants of the mountains roast the carcass on stones that are heated until they are white hot, while on the coast it is boiled in the same way as fish. In both cases the body is previously cut up, and certain parts undergo a special treatment, according to the importance which is attached to them from a gastronomic or religious point of

view. For, as we said before, most tribes prefer the calf of the leg, whilst others—for example, certain tribes living on Easter Island, or in the neighbourhood of the Kikori river in Papua—look upon the arms, and above all the palms of the hands, as the greatest delicacy. Mr. A. Melrose, who had just been exploring certain districts of New Guinea, told me that he found a tribe near the Japandei river, the members of which used to eat the livers of dead bodies. We insist on these ghoulish details because it is only by knowing them that it is possible to attempt an explanation of the multiple reasons for anthropophagous habits.

I must regretfully confess that in the course of my travels I never had an opportunity of tasting human flesh: no doubt the inhabitants of the jungle considered me to be a person of too little importance to be admitted to one of their banquets, so frequently organised in honour of journalists—of both sexes—passing through the bush . . . if the latter are to be believed.

Unluckily the Kanakas never accorded me this honour, thereby depriving me of a rather rare sensation and, at the same time, of the esteem of some of my readers, as several of these, after seeing some of my articles on anthropophagy, sent me letters, showing some bitterness, in which they said that it was 'Really not worth while to have gone so far, if you were afraid of practical experience of cannibalism.'

To compensate for this lack of first-hand information, I enquired of a good many natives who had practised, or still practised, anthropophagy, what human flesh tasted like? As usual I received the most astounding replies: some Kanakas, for example, said that it was like the flesh of the

kangaroo; others that '*kai-kai* man and *kai-kai* pig same thing'. For my part I believe that man's flesh must be rather like that of a horse, and have a slightly sweet taste. All cannibals agree in this, without being able to compare it with horse-flesh, of the existence of which they do not even know, and still less what it tastes like. It is doubtless to neutralise—or give a relish to—this taste that anthropophagi cook human flesh with taro, or with the leaves and roots of two bitter herbs resembling the egg-plant, and called in Fiji *malawi* and *borodina*.[1] The latter is considered to be a narcotic, but I was never able to ascertain whether it possessed this property.

I must here revert to the fact that even the most incorrigible cannibals never eat the flesh of white men killed, or who die, in the bush. Instances to the contrary, like that of Missionary Bayer, eaten by the natives of Fiji, are exceptional, and do not affect the general rule that a white man's flesh does not appeal to the gastronomic taste of anthropophagi. To quote only the best known cases, when patrols discovered the bodies of Missionary Chalmers and the prospectors Baum and MacGrath, killed by different tribes at different places, it was seen that the Kanakas had not even attempted to eat the remains of these unfortunate men. They were content to kill them with clubs and arrows. And the circumstances of these three murders exclude the hypothesis that the murderers had any special regard for their victims—an hypothesis suggested to explain their 'unusual' abstention after killing the missionary and the two prospectors.

It was due to a sort of repulsion on their part, and, when

[1] *Tropis* and *Solanum Anthropophagorum*.

one knows the Kanakas, it must be admitted that this repulsion is very strong. The explanation given me by my boy Tamari, when he said that 'white man smell bad', while interesting, is not quite satisfactory, as the cannibals of New Guinea, from the gastronomical point of view, have a real passion for Chinamen, whose racial smell must, however, be at least as unpleasant as that of the white man. Are the Kanakas impervious to the peculiar smell of the sons of the Celestial Empire? If so, it would be a curious phenomenon, which might further increase the number of theories which have been put forward on the subject of the origin of the peoples of Oceania.

As for the predilection shown by cannibals for Chinese it will suffice to quote the case of the 326 shipwrecked passengers of the *St. Paul*, captured by the inhabitants of Russell Island. This happened towards the end of last century. All the passengers were Chinese. When four months later the French steamer *Styx* arrived there, 325 Chinese had already been eaten, and the Russell Islanders showed extreme annoyance when the last survivor was taken away under escort by French sailors. The Chinese residing in the Archipelago know this story, as well as the preference of the cannibals for themselves. It is perhaps the reason why it is very difficult to persuade any Chinese cook to accompany expeditions into the bush.

Students of the habits of wild beasts in Asiatic jungles are aware that the most formidable of them, the tiger, will only eat a man when it has become too old and feeble to obtain other food. But in contradiction to this assumption some natives maintain that a tiger that has once eaten human flesh will never look at anything else, and that it is

its passion for this food that makes the beast a man-eater. To admit the accuracy of this deduction would perhaps involve an overestimate of the quality of our flesh. It is not so much the greed of the tiger as the fact that, after a first trial, the tiger realises that man is an easier prey, and offers less resistance than, for example, a sambar or a cheetah. The beast becomes therefore a man-eater primarily out of necessity, and then because less effort is required in the pursuit of its prey.

I have quoted this example of the tiger, being convinced that the legends current in the islands of Oceania about the taste of anthropophagi for human flesh are as inaccurate as the legends about tigers. If they were true, a tribe of cannibals unable to draw their food supplies from other tribes would end by cutting the throats of, and devouring, their own women and children. But I have never heard—and I think that it has never happened—of women and children being killed for food. If they die a natural death, or of hunger—as in the case of old men driven out of the villages—the corpses are eaten as a matter of course; but in such cases there is no premeditation, meaning that anthropophagi accept the body as an unexpected present from the good spirits, and cannot be accused of killing one of themselves for food.

This observation throws a special light on the problem of anthropophagy—and above all on the causes that contribute to it. Scientists have for long developed the most diverse and often the most contradictory theories. Some assert that anthropophagy is due to hunger only. Others attempt to explain it on religious grounds, or by the beliefs of primitive peoples; finally, some attribute it to juridical

sanctions. It is more probable that no one of these theories, isolated from the others, is correct. The problem cannot be solved by attributing anthropophagy to one particular cause. The causes are many, and as varied as the regions and countries inhabited by cannibal tribes.

Most explorers and patrol officers are inclined to think that anthropophagy, in New Guinea and Oceania generally, is due to scarcity of fauna. It is easy to understand that a man who has never in his life eaten anything but taro and sago, or occasionally a very little pork, will be ready to eat any flesh—even that of his neighbour. This theory is supported by the fact that the Maoris of New Zealand only took to cannibalism when the moas,[1] the large birds on which they had previously fed, had disappeared from the island. But this argument, while specious if applied to Oceania, can hardly be valid in the case of African and South American tribes, living for the most part in districts where game is plentiful. Besides, if anthropophagy is due solely to scarcity of nourishing food, how is it to be explained that, except in very rare cases, women are never allowed to take part in these banquets? That is to say that human flesh is as much *tabu* for them as are the communal houses, the *tambaran* houses, the war canoes, or the enclosures where the ceremonies of secret associations or *dukduks* are held. This restriction shows clearly that hunger is not the only motive for anthropophagy, and that cannibals attach a certain religious importance to it. I have never personally heard that women were allowed to eat human flesh, but Sir Hubert Murray knew of a native named Avai who asserted the contrary. This man Avai was charged

[1] *Dinornis Owen.*

with the murder of a woman called Laura of the Baroi tribe, inhabiting Maimuru in Papua. When cross-questioned, Avai made the following deposition before the magistrates:

'Bai-i told us to kill three of the Baroi tribe. He told us to go in a canoe, which we did: at Era Bay we caught three Barois, namely Aimari and his two wives, Laura and Aipuru. Kairi killed Aimari. I killed Laura, and Iomu killed Aipuru. I killed her with a dagger made of a Cassowary bone. We put the three bodies in the canoe and brought them to Maimuru. I did not bite off Laura's nose. One does not bite off the nose of a person whom one has killed. If I kill a man it must be someone else who tears off the nose with his teeth. Ana tore off Laura's nose, Kwai Aimari's and Omeara Aipuru's. We tear off the nose with our teeth, and never cut it off.

'Before setting out to kill someone, we, we consult the spirit of Kopiravi; the spirit comes out of the *ravi*[1] to the canoe, and if the canoe moves it means that the expedition will succeed. The spirit is invisible. We arrived at Maimuru during the night, and until dawn we left the bodies in the canoe. Then we took them to the ravi; we put them on a platform outside. We cut them up into small pieces, then we roasted them with sago. After that we wrapped the pieces in *nipa* palm leaves and distributed them. *Women and children may eat human flesh.*

'I ate one arm of Aipuru, but I did not eat Laura because I had killed her. We do not eat people we have killed. But if, after killing a man you sit on a cocoa-nut, with a cocoa-nut under each heel, and your daughter boils the heart of

[1]Men's house.

the man who has been killed, you may drink the water in which the heart has been boiled, and eat a small piece of the heart, provided that you remain the whole time seated on the cocoa-nut. Otherwise you must not eat any part of the man you have killed. In the evening I went to the ravi holding a torch in my hand. Standing on the platform I called out the names of Kopiravi, and threw down the torch; after that, anyone living in the village might have connection with my wife. . . .'

In this deposition of Avai, which was verified by the authorities and found correct, three details are worth noting: the cocoa-nut detail, the point about the heart, and, finally, the statement that a man never eats the flesh of someone whom he has himself killed. The last point is perhaps the most important, because it lessens considerably the probability of the assumption that cannibals kill and eat men because they are hungry. If this were the case, why should they not take part in the banquet if they were responsible for the killing? Or why should they not show the same abstinence in the case of a pig or a bird? As a matter of fact I have often seen natives kill a pig in the forest, when the sportsman's companions may consider themselves lucky if a few bones are left over for them after he has eaten almost all of it. It is therefore absurd to state that human flesh is looked upon by cannibals just like any other food. The special rites which accompany an act of cannibalism show that it is more than a mere matter of gastronomy.

Without being able to say what are the reasons for the employment of cocoa-nuts, it is clear that they are of some spiritual significance, and in this connection it may be noted

that they also play a part in marriage ceremonies among the natives of New Britain. Finally, the fact that the killer may eat the heart of his victim also proves the interdependence of cannibalism and primitive beliefs, because in eating the heart Oceanians, like the Aztecs of Mexico, believe that they inherit all the virtues of their victim. The case of the Easter Island natives, who prefer the palm of the hand, must be somewhat similar, as, this part of the human body being especially tough, the strange preference can only be explained on some spiritual grounds. The discovery by Mr. Melrose of a tribe whose members eat the liver of enemies whom they have killed, also furnishes a strong argument in support of those who look upon spiritual beliefs as the primary cause of anthropophagy, it being certain that the cannibals of the Japandei river, when acting in the way observed by Mr. Melrose, are inspired by a belief of Oriental peoples, who, like the ancient Hebrews and Japanese, supposed that the vital centre was placed in the abdominal parts of the body.

Among the Batta[1] tribes of the interior of Sumatra anthropophagy is practised as a form of reprisal, and is an additional security in the case of the death penalty. The Tupis of the Amazon employ this means of revenging themselves on an enemy. But I do not think that either of these motives has anything to do with cannibalism in New Guinea, since the religion, or rather beliefs, of the Melanesians do not require burial, or disposal of corpses by other means, in order to ensure eternal rest for the dead.

It can therefore be affirmed that various reasons, of al-

[1]The Battas consumed the liver and heart of executed spies and of prisoners of war, and also of anyone who seduced the wife of a rajah.

most equal importance, induce the inhabitants of New Guinea to take to cannibalism: hunger, the need for action, the will of the spirits, and finally the hope of inheriting the qualities of an enemy, above all his strength. Hence it is not enough to introduce various quadrupeds into the country; the natives must also be convinced of the fallacy of their beliefs. It is in this way that the work of patrols and of missionaries can be interdependent, thus heightening their effectiveness.

It is very difficult to explain to natives why they must not eat human flesh. Patrols and missionaries alike agree that an answer must be found to the invariable question put by Kanakas:

'You say that we must not *kai-kai* man: Why?'

What can one reply? Juridical, moral or religious arguments are useless to convince people who have no laws, no religion, and no morality in the strict sense of the word. What use is it to talk of brotherhood to a race whose members not infrequently eat their own relatives? Or of wild beasts to people who have never seen a wild beast? It is useless. One is therefore reduced to a much too simple form of answer, quite inadequate to satisfy the intellectual curiosity of these good people:

'You must not *kai-kai* men, because you must not *kai-kai* men.'

That is all that the genius of the white man has so far invented by way of argument. The cannibal condemned to penal servitude for life therefore never understands why he is not allowed to go back to his village. But what is more serious is that members of his tribe do not understand it either, and consider it to be a case of what we might call

arbitrary sequestration. Henceforward they look upon the white man as an enemy, which, in the bush, means something more than hostile looks.

In the interest both of natives and pioneers an end should be made of the comedy of dealing with cases of cannibalism in the law courts, and instead of taking the cannibal to Rabaul to be tried for a murder committed hundreds of miles away he should be punished on the spot, in the presence of his fellow tribesmen. This would not fail to make an impression on the most inveterate offender.

About this a pleasant story is told in New Guinea, which, if not true, is at least well authenticated. A delegation went to Geneva to interview a member of the Committee for Mandated Territories on the subject of legislative reforms in the islands. Among other requests, the delegation asked that patrol officers should be authorised to have natives guilty of murder or cannibalism executed on the spot.

Only in this way, said the principal delegate, can an example be made. Otherwise it is labour lost, since the tribe to which the culprit belongs will never know what has become of the latter at Rabaul.

'Yes,' interrupted a venerable member of the Committee, 'but what about the newspapers?'

Alas, in the bush the press is an institution completely unknown; although the Kanakas do possess a highly developed 'telegraphic' system, to which I shall refer later.

In New Britain murderers who have been sent to prison are simply looked upon by their relations as dead, and this is not the worst. It also happens that a native after serving his sentence returns to his village. Having learned, probably, by that time, to talk pidgin English, to understand

the use of matches and the looking-glass, and the art of seasoning soup with sugar or salt, the ex-convict, aided by this profound knowledge and by his good luck, will soon succeed in exercising a dominant influence over the tribe, and, on the death of its chief, he may quite well become his successor. It is in this way that the gallant Ku-Ku-Ku-Ku who clubbed Helmuth Baum now exercises with distinction the functions of chief of his tribe. When I was introduced to him by a patrol officer, the latter said to me with a smile:

'You see that to have a successful career among the Ku-Ku-Ku-Kus to have killed a prospector or patrol officer is qualification enough.'

This was, perhaps, a slight exaggeration, but it is only too true that by following the present policy the bloody dramas which from time to time are enacted in the mysterious depths of the jungle will never be stopped. Energetic measures are indispensable if the population of New Guinea is not to share the fate of that of Easter and Choiseul Islands, the inhabitants of which are nearing extinction, as the result of anthropophagous orgies, butcheries, and everlasting inter-tribal wars or head-hunting, which for centuries have been decimating native races.

Head-hunting is a sport—or a religion—still largely followed in New Guinea. According to native belief the head of a man generates spirits of good and evil, *tambarans*, who bring good or bad luck, and preside over human destiny. It is in this belief that cannibals decorate their 'joss-houses' with skulls. The possession of these, while keeping alive a form of ancestor-worship, is considered as a protection for

the whole tribe, not only against evil spirits, but also against *puri-puri* or sorcery, which plays an important part in the life of the natives.

In this connection an incident occurred near Ramu, close to a village the inhabitants of which had massacred the unfortunate Mack some months earlier.

As we knew that this tribe was one of formidable warriors, who had had very little intercourse with white men, we wished to avoid crossing their territory. But unfortunately, having lost about half of our transport, we were forced to enter into relations with them in order to obtain provisions.

On approaching the village we found that the inhabitants had already been aroused by the beating of *tom-toms*, by which their outposts had notified our arrival. With the help of our field-glasses we could clearly make them out. They were engaged in evacuating their women and children, a sign that an attack is expected. We also saw that the men were preparing their bows and spears. They all seemed to be in a state of great excitement. There was nothing for us to do but take up a favourable strategic position and await the assault, which seemed inevitable. It was six o'clock in the morning.

One hour, two hours, three hours passed without any attack being made. We could not understand what was happening. Finally, we decided to send two native police to negotiate with the Kanakas. They appeared to be still very excited.

Half an hour later our police, who had taken various presents with them, brought back a grim old man with his nose perforated by an enormous cassowary bone. After

presenting him with a number of precious gifts, which he accepted with obvious pleasure—we tried to ascertain the cause of the villagers' excitement.

'We were afraid', he said to the interpreter, 'because we did not know whether you had with you a good or evil *tambaran*. We have seen white men before, but we have never seen anything like that. . . .'

And he stretched out his arm in the direction of my head.

Not very plentifully endowed with hair under normal circumstances, in the jungle I was in the habit of shaving my head completely, to avoid offering flies and mosquitos a comfortable nesting place. The sight of my bald skull had alarmed the warriors of the advance guard. They had brought in news that a 'white man was approaching with a death's head on his shoulders', and, when one remembers the importance which cannibals attach to the head, it is easy to understand how they had been seized by panic.

We burst out laughing. Then I took the hand of the old man—which was trembling like a leaf in the wind—and placed it on my head.

'Very good *tambaran*,' I said. 'You have only to touch it to become the possessor of more pigs than the richest man in the mountains. Go back and tell your friends that you have seen the best *tambaran* that you ever came across in your life. And, if they can provide us with vegetables, we will give them a bag of precious shells. . . .'

He went away, and after a lively palaver with his fellow tribesmen returned:

'We will give you taro,' he declared, 'but you must first come to the village, so that the male children may touch your marvellous *tambaran*.'

And so my bald head became a miraculous charm in New Guinea.

I seated myself in the centre of the village, a policeman on either side, while lines of pot-bellied infant cannibals defiled before me. Each placed a hand on my head, with cries of surprise. . . . They saw that my head was like any other human head—except that there was no hair on it.

It was a relief when the ceremony was over. I must confess that I was glad that infant mortality in New Guinea is high. But for that, the procession might have lasted for a couple of hours.

Encounters with amateurs of human heads do not, of course, always end so happily. Some years ago cannibals captured four white men who were hunting birds of paradise in the jungle between Dutch New Guinea and the Mandated Territory. All four were massacred, and a punitive expedition later found the four heads, duly preserved, hanging on the wall of a 'joss-house'.

These houses, the name of which varies in different places and dialects, are huts built out of posts sunk in the ground, sometimes vertically, and sometimes at an angle of forty-five degrees, so that the extremities meet in pyramid form. The house is covered with leaves, and the space between the beams is filled with bamboos. In front of the hut a sort of platform is usually erected, where the Kanakas come to sleep when there is no room to lie down within the sacred precinct.

But in certain districts the 'joss-house' is not used as a club, and no one, except sorcerers and tribal chiefs, is allowed in. These claim that they hold long palavers with the spirits haunting the place, which appear as soon as they

cross the threshold. Any other person trying to enter, or to converse directly with the *tambarans*, would be liable to the death penalty. It sometimes happens that a native, annoyed at being exploited by the sorcerers, one day makes up his mind personally to implore the divine intervention in his favour. This generally ends in a Grand Palaver, as the result of which the delinquent is slaughtered and his remains are devoured by the judges and by the male members of the tribe.

Within the precincts of the joss-house are kept the skulls of ancestors and of slain enemies, and sometimes also a number of masks, and anthropophagous figures carved in wood, which are often interesting specimens of primitive art. The natives are ready to sell these figures and masks for a few dozen shells, or at most two or three axes; but it is almost impossible to persuade them to sell any of the precious skulls to a white man. Should the latter, in spite of this, succeed in acquiring one, he would, at least indirectly, be responsible for one—or several—murders, since as soon as the patrol officer has gone away the Kanakas will want to replace their lost treasure by fresh heads, perhaps from the nearest village. I remember attending the trial of a tribal chief, whose men had attacked and killed four or five natives, near the Snake river. The enquiry having shown that the chief had given orders for the murders, the patrol officer, surprised, said to him:

'But I have known you for years as an honest, peaceable man. How can you have done such a thing? Have you suddenly become mad?'

The Kanaka raised his ugly face in protest, and replied indignantly, as translated by the interpreter:

'Me no *long-long* in head. Lightning strike *tambaran* house. All burned. Skulls burn too. Must get other skulls. Skulls no swim in river like fish. Skulls on necks belong man. So me have them cut off and put in *tambaran* house. Me do nothing more. . . .'

The logic of this plea was undeniable, for it is obvious that if skulls cannot be fished from the river the only way to get them is to remove them from the trunk of their legitimate owner. But the patrol officer was not convinced by this daring argument, and after ordering irons to be put on the chief's arms and legs he said:

'I shall take you very very far with me, to a place where you will have to stay until human skulls swim in the river like fish. Then, but not before, you shall be free. All right. The palaver is ended.'

I do not know whether the chief was actually condemned to penal servitude for life. If he was it would be a pity. He should have had the benefit of extenuating circumstances, since when the joss-house was burned the poor devil was placed in a critical position. As tribal chief it was his business to prevent evil spirits from striking the sacred hut by lightning; and if the spirits paid no attention to him it was because they were annoyed with him, or, for some reason or other, he was unable to gain their favour. In any case he was mainly responsible. It was only right that he should undertake to make amends by procuring fresh skulls for his tribe. Only two courses were open to him: to allow himself to be killed by his own subjects; or to send them out to kill those of another chief. Each alternative had its drawbacks; but as his injured subjects were on the spot and there was no likelihood of a patrol officer hearing anything about

the 'hunt', the four heads were obtained in accordance with tradition and with the universal law of opportunism.

The collection of skulls to be found in the heart of New Guinea are, from the 'artistic' point of view—if this expression may be employed—less interesting than those to be found in the Sepik river district, in the Solomon Islands or in South America. Here the heads are not 'stuffed', as in certain parts of the Archipelago, nor 'shrunk', as in the basin of the Amazon. The natives merely clean them with an alkaloid, and dry them in the sun.

I have often heard it said that tribes which collect skulls are specially anxious to enrich their collection with skulls of white men. It has even been stated precisely that three native skulls can be exchanged for one white man's. On the strength of this I brought with me some skulls bought for a few dollars from a medical student in China, in the hope of exchanging them in the bush for good specimens of specially prepared heads. But the natives definitely refused to accept my skulls at the rate arbitrarily fixed by my informant, and, although I explained that they were those of white men killed by me personally, there was nothing doing. The Kanakas had, it seemed to me, definitely stabilised the value of 'black' skulls at parity with 'white', irrespective of the fact of it being much more difficult to obtain the latter than those of natives. 'White man?' translated the interpreter, 'him say *maskee*,' which is the pidgin for 'I don't care a damn'.

If savages rarely admit that they have practised cannibalism, on the other hand they speak freely, even with a certain pride, of their head-hunting activities. Some years ago a patrol, having entered a village the inhabitants of which

A trophy in the New Guinea jungle

had just come back from a little trip taken to enrich the tribal skull collection, one of the hunters kindly allowed himself to be photographed. He even posed, with his disfigured and bleeding trophy held in his right hand, facing the patrol officer as if it were the most natural thing in the world.[1]

I remember once meeting a native of very martial appearance, whose features Lombroso would have loved to study. There was something indescribably bestial in the ferocious expression of eyes half concealed by swollen and drooping eyelids. His body was tattooed in so many colours, and he was bedecked by so many cassowary and pig bone ornaments, that I did not notice a little disc attached to a lock of hair on the right side of his forehead. While talking to him I asked about the different objects tied to his belt, and the weapons he was carrying. We did not talk of the disc, because I had not noticed it.

Before our conversation ended the native said something to the interpreter.

'Him say,' translated the latter, 'Master ought to look stone disc.'

I looked, without, to be truthful, much interest, thinking that it was some kind of ornament. My indifference seemed

[1]See frontispiece. When first published in a Paris newspaper a distinguished author thought it his duty to be the mouthpiece of some disbelieving readers. According to them the Kanaka head-hunter must have been one of my patrol made up for the part, and the head held in his right hand a camouflaged cocoa-nut. I wish, therefore, to state that this photograph, taken some years ago—I believe in 1927—by a patrol officer, was presented to me in May 1934, in the course of my travels in New Guinea, by Mr. A. Gibbon, head of the Government Stationery Office at Port Moresby in Papua, himself a former patrol officer, and that its origin was vouched for by him.

to annoy the savage, who again made a little speech punctuated by violent gestures.

'Him say him very brave warrior,' said the interpreter, 'and get disc for killing man and cut off head.'

After listening to a long story I asked the man if he would let me have the disc.

'No, Master, him no give disc. Disc belong man who kill other man.'

'Tell him', I replied, 'that I have killed dozens of men, and that I will give five shells for the disc.'

After another long palaver the interpreter turned to me:

'Him say, if Master kill men, Master must show heads.'

As unfortunately I had already disposed of the skulls brought with me from China, I could display no trophy, and the Kanaka went away—without any shells.

The same night our boss-boy, while making a tour of inspection of the camp to see that the sentinels were not asleep, was nearly killed by an arrow, which, after missing him by a few inches, lodged itself in a packing case. I am convinced that it was our friend of the afternoon, who having received no shells wanted at least to earn another disc, awarded in the Purari district to any man who has put an arrow, preferably a poisoned one, into the throat or chest of anyone he may meet.

I have often wondered why human life is so cheap between the tropic of Capricorn and the equator? How explain the easy, not to say indifferent, gesture of a Kanaka stretching his bow, or raising his club to bring down, not only an enemy, which would be comprehensible, but also

a friend, a relative, a wife or a child? In a country where, in consequence of intertribal wars, numbers count for more than anything else in the struggle for predominance, it is difficult to understand why a native is so ready to kill a member of his own tribe. If it were a matter of having a good *kai-kai* or of a, from the Kanaka's point of view, legitimate wish to replace a skull which has been lost or stolen, one could understand it. But how can one explain the mentality of a native who, disturbed while sleeping by the cries of a child, gets up, and with a blow from his club smashes the skull of the child's mother? And what can be said of another Kanaka who, having been given an axe by his best friend, two minutes after killed that friend with it? Because, he said, he wanted to see whether it was a good one, and whether it was equal in value to the pig that he had given his friend a year before? And how can one explain the psychology of the native who killed two of his children and told the patrol officer sent to enquire into the motives of this double murder: 'I was feeling sad because I had just heard that my chief was dead'? And what is to be thought of the swarthy warrior with whom I had an interview in the prison at Ramu, accused of having ripped up his wife's stomach? 'Did she deceive you?' I asked, employing a very expressive pidgin English term applied by Kanakas to infidelity. The prisoner shook his black head: 'No, Master, and her work much much.' 'She had no children?' 'Yes, Master, her have three children.' 'Was she ill?' 'No, Master, her never be ill.' 'Was she a witch?' 'No, Master, her no witch.' 'Did some other woman tell you to kill her?' 'No, Master, me kill her quite alone.'

'But, damn it all, Kanaka,' I cried, 'if your wife was

healthy, hard-working, young, faithful and not a witch, why did you kill her?'

He shrugged his shoulders.

'Me not know,' said he calmly. 'Me too much angry.'

'So you were angry? Why?'

He looked at me with an expression of astonishment:

'Me not know,' he replied. 'Me just very angry.'

I must add that this native was a quite normal man, in possession of all his mental faculties, whom the patrols knew to be honest, hard-working and trustworthy. But all these good qualities had not prevented him from killing his wife in a moment of ill humour. His case is not unique. . . .

In making a study of the psychology of Kanaka murderers I came to the rather paradoxical conclusion that the very large number of murders without motive can only be explained by the optimism of the natives, and their poverty. The Kanaka thinks that this world 'is the best of all possible worlds', and that nothing is more natural than happiness, prosperity, health, strength, good humour and peace of mind. He is convinced that all human beings—at least those of the dominant sex—are destined by nature to enjoy a happy and comfortable life. Misfortune, poverty, disease, weakness, failure and death are consequently quite abnormal, caused either directly by enemies, or by their intervention with evil spirits. A Kanaka therefore, suffering from illness, is a prey to nervous depression; if his pigs are eaten by crocodiles, and his children die, the first thing he does is to look for the person responsible for these misfortunes. He will never realise that his father, grandfather, and all his ancestors suffered from the same ulcers, the same tumours and the same fits of depression as himself; that

pigs are lost because they go too near a swamp, and that children die because they are given too much taro to eat. Instead of this, a Kanaka decides to go to sleep, when he will be sure to see, in a dream, the person or thing that was the cause of the death of his pigs and children. Or, perhaps, one of his friends comes to see him, and tells him that Such-a-One had mysterious confabulations with a sorcerer on the very day that his misfortune happened. He is the responsible person! And a few hours later the responsible person has to pay for it. . . .

How? By death, of course, for justice in the jungle knows but one sanction: capital punishment. It makes no difference whether the accused has stolen a couple of arrows, or has committed a quadruple murder: the penalty is always the same. It is in the natural order of things, the natives being too poor to make good the damage, or pay a fine. What use would it be to confiscate the clubs and arrows of the thief or the sorcerer and burn his house? In two days he would make new arrows, and with the help of his wives would, in a few hours, build another hut better than the first one. Inflict corporal punishment? Flog them, for example, as the whites do? As soon as the criminal had recovered from his stripes he would not rest until he had taken vengeance on his executioners. There remains then one sanction only, namely to take the most precious, the only treasure of a native in the bush: his life. And this is why, after all these palavers of blood in the deadly jungle of New Guinea, so many souls flit heavenwards.

III. ON THE MARCH IN THE JUNGLE

We carry the torch of civilisation into the jungle. Good. But when our boys collapse we have also to carry the packing cases. And that is not pleasant.—Extract from the correspondence of a patrol officer.

At six a.m. the camp was awake.

Two bamboo cabins, one belonging to patrol officer Norton, the other occupied by cadet Greathead; some huts where the boys slept; a tent, where shovels, cartridges and tins of provisions were kept; finally the thatched *calebush* where a few murderers were confined until they could be sent down to the coast—these shanties composed the base camp of the Upper Ramu, overlooking the plain covered with thick *kunai* grass. Hills and mountains rise on the horizon, with dense forests on their summits looking like gigantic manes, continually caressed and agitated by the monsoon and by tropical storms. In the valleys, swiftly running streams, emerald-coloured, and foaming round brown rocks, follow their mad course towards the Ramu, which like an enormous silvery snake winds its way lazily towards the virgin forest.

Sergeant M'Gwali was holding a review of the boys.

Naked to the waist, thickset, muscular, strong as an ox, a flat cap on his head, a bamboo cane in his right hand, he watched them file past him, yelling and shouting from time to time with an energy that the most cross-grained Prussian *Feldwebel* might have envied. He inspected the rifles, bayonets and cartridge pouches of his boys with scrupulous care, paying little attention to the uniform of the police, which was in fact no more than a regulation cap and a khaki *lap-lap*, reaching to the knees and tied to the waist by a broad leather belt. When bayonets were all fixed, and the boys had formed line without a hitch, Sergeant M'Gwali hoisted the Union Jack on the flagstaff and then came to the patrol officer, to announce that the column was ready to start.

The outline of the huts and tent had hardly disappeared behind us when a short halt was called to allow the patrol to reform, as we were about to pass through a territory where the natives had not yet submitted to Government control. Six months before, another convoy had followed the same track that we proposed to take; it was the unfortunate patrol of Jan Mack, who, mortally wounded by Kanaka arrows, had died on the very bed on which I slept during my stay at the base camp. Although the death of Mack had been avenged, as a warning to the inhabitants of Ramu to treat white men with respect, we had to proceed with great caution in crossing this corner of the territory, where we might be exposed to unpleasant and dangerous surprises.

Two native police marched at the head of the column, as scouts. Up to the shoulder in the *kunai* grass, which was in places six feet high, they advanced slowly, examining the ground, and scrutinising bushes where Kanaka advance

posts might be hiding. The officer and I followed a few hundred yards behind, escorted by four police. Farther in the rear were the carriers with tents and packing cases, followed by a dozen police under the command of the sergeant.

Until ten a.m. the patrol marched in this formation, crossing the plain at the foot of the mountains which dominate the banks of the Ramu. The country was deserted; there was no sign of natives or animals; only a few small rodents, that live in the *kunai*, jumped out and ran away when our scouts beat the grass in which they were hidden. A fresh breeze was blowing across the silent plain, and the column advanced cheerfully. But in the east the sun was rising higher, and we knew that a suffocating heat would soon be making it almost impossible to breathe, and would be weighing on our chests like a burning avalanche. . . . We were six degrees south of the equator. . . .

Before climbing the mountains, behind which were the villages that the patrol was to visit, we had to cross the little Ankoi-Nu river. We were pressed for time, wishing to reach the forest before midday. We could not therefore stop to build the rafts which are used everywhere by the patrols for crossing rivers, even when their depth is not as much as two feet, on account of the many crocodiles infesting the rivers of New Guinea. As there seemed to be none of these voracious beasts, the patrol officer gave orders to cross by wading. And to encourage the boys he took a bamboo stick, threw it into the river, and sent his dog, which had been following him panting with its red tongue hanging almost to the ground, after it. The dog swam swiftly to the stick, seized it, and brought it back to

the bank. The operation was repeated three times; then he said to the boys:

'*Puk-puk* like eat dog hundred times more than like eat Kanaka. If *puk-puk* no come when dog be in river, *puk-puk* no be in river.'

The experiment was convincing, and the boys, followed by the carriers, summoned up courage to cross, shrieking with terror when one of them stepped on a stone that moved. One lost his balance and fell; the others stood on the bank laughing at him, except Sergeant M'Gwali, who was again bellowing like a bull.

Here I must digress. It would be a mistake to believe that the boys are devoid of courage, and run away from danger. On the contrary they are gallant fellows, very brave, fighting like heroes, and their fidelity is proverbial. But being, all the same, Kanakas, their courage fails them when they are faced not by a man, but by a wild beast, a plant, or a portent of nature.

A boy who is ready to dash into the *kunai* and attack a band of cannibals with the bayonet, who would stand by his master to the death, will run away at sight of a snake, and climb a tree rather than crush a spider with the butt of his rifle. And the same boy, who has distinguished himself in many a hand-to-hand encounter, will tremble with fright like a six-year-old child on seeing a flash of forked lightning, and, forgetting all about missionaries, his baptism and his psalm-singing, will call upon all the good *tambarans* for help. . . .

Many are the prospectors and patrols whose lives have been saved by the boys. I have told the story of Levien, whose boy threw himself on his body to ward off the blows

with clubs and the spear thrusts of the savages. This is not the only instance. When Harry Downing's patrol was attacked by a cannibal tribe, a hand-to-hand fight took place before that officer's tent. At the outset he had been wounded in the thigh by a barbed arrow. While the engagement was at its height one of the boys ran up to Downing who, although exhausted by loss of blood, was still firing at his assailants. The shoulder and right arm of the boy were pierced by arrows, which, being barbed, he could not extract.

'Look, Master. Look arrows,' cried the boy, 'and look what me do with Kanaka.'

And with a bayonet in his left hand he threw himself upon the leader of the advancing cannibals. Both fell, and the patrol officer, knowing that the boy was seriously wounded, dragged himself towards the spot where they were struggling on the ground. But before he could reach them the boy got up brandishing his bloody bayonet:

'Me show dirty Kanaka', he gasped, 'that he no kill Master. Me kill him.'

Then he fell. But after the fight, when the wounded were being collected, the gallant boy was still alive. He survived, and some months later was promoted to the rank of corporal.

Although it is a very old story, which everyone knows, I must repeat that of Corporal Sedu, killed with patrol officer Green near the Mambare river, in Papua. Green and Sedu were building a hut near the base camp, the neighbourhood of which was infested by hostile tribes. Before starting Sedu warned the officer to go well armed. But the latter ordered the native to leave the rifles behind, adding that if he were afraid he could stay in the camp. Sedu

obeyed, stowing away the rifles in the hut, but later followed the officer out of concern for his safety.

At the time of the attack Sedu was on his way back to the camp to fetch tools; it would therefore have been easy for him to escape. But, although nearer to the camp than to the scene of the attack, Sedu began to run in the direction in which he had seen the natives shooting their arrows at Green. A few minutes later he fell at the side of the officer, whom he refused to leave in the hour of danger. The story seems to justify Moreri, who, in his Dictionary published two centuries ago, wrote in an article on Papua: 'The valour and fidelity of the people of this country is so highly esteemed, that many princes of neighbouring islands take them into their pay, and enlist them as bodyguards.'

But to return to the river Ankoi-Nu, near which we found a completely deserted village. When the natives think that their fighting forces are insufficient to protect them against foreign invaders, and when, on the other hand, they feel no inclination to make friends with the latter, they suddenly leave their huts, taking with them their live-stock, wives and children. Curiously enough, they had in this case found time to block up the doors of all their huts with bamboos attached to the two lateral door posts. It was therefore not possible to examine the interior of the huts without breaking down this barricade. But, as we wished to return by the same route, it would have been unwise to do this; our action might be misinterpreted. And, as such misinterpretation may provoke trouble and even bloodshed, we thought it advisable to pass through the village without attempting to make any ethnographical investigations.

To reach the next village we had to climb a mountain, the height of which did not appear to exceed 1,200 feet. Although the mountain was covered with *kunai*, making progress very difficult, we expected to reach the top in two or three hours. But we were too optimistic, by reason of a curious optical delusion, well known in New Guinea, which makes it impossible to estimate heights and distances accurately. It often happens, for example, that from a mountain top one can clearly distinguish a village, and even enter into communication with its inhabitants by using one's hands as an extemporised megaphone. But when it comes to walking, the distance which seemed so short turns out to be five or six times greater than one had expected. This happened in our case. While we had at first thought that only a hill of a thousand or twelve hundred feet had to be crossed, it was in reality a mountain of between three and four thousand feet. Not wishing to reach the village after sunset, we decided to pitch our tents at the top, near a little forest which covered the crest of the mountains.

Three tents were pitched. One for the patrol officer and myself, one for the police boys, and one for the carriers. A little way off our 'kitchen' was set up, consisting of a deep hole in the ground filled with branches and dried leaves with a kettle of imposing size hung over it. A log-fire lighted between the tents was to be kept burning all night to frighten away jungle rats. Two police, armed with rifles and fixed bayonets, mounted guard. Every two hours the sentinels were relieved, and once or twice were inspected by the sergeant. As no sounds disturbed our well-earned slumbers I concluded that our guards had not been asleep

when M'Gwali made his round as silently as a cat in pursuit of its prey.

As soon as the tents had been pitched one of the police planted a very long bamboo, thin and straight, like a huge capital I, in the middle of the camp. The boys lined up below the mast, and M'Gwali hoisted the Union Jack. For a minute, thirty silent and motionless men turned eyes right and fixed them on the flag. Floating in the evening breeze, its red and blue stood out against a pale background of sky, like a strange bird with wings outstretched. As the sun was about to set, the flag would only remain hoisted for a few minutes. But it was hoisted just the same, so that whites and blacks when returning to their homes to rest might know that they belonged to the Empire, and that the Empire was watching over them and protecting them in this far off savage corner of the world.

Next morning, shortly before the tents were struck, the sentinels, who had been ceaselessly pacing round the camp, noticed something unusual in the grass. Phlegmatically they reported to M'Gwali. The latter looked round with an air of indifference as if what they said did not interest him in the least. A few minutes later three police went out in the direction of the forest, with rifles carelessly sloped. Arrived at the edge of the clearing, where the grass ended in bushes and trees, they suddenly halted. A few yards separated each of the boys, and with the two sentinels they now formed a complete circle. The five men plunged into the *kunai*, advancing towards the centre of the circle, where something seemed to be moving. There was a sudden cry, and we saw a Kanaka appear and make for the forest; but escape was barred by the boys, who threw them-

selves on the native. He was only armed with a stone axe, and made no resistance. A second or two later another black face rose from the grass. It was a comrade of the prisoner; both were scouts sent out by the tribe living in the valley where we wanted to go after sunrise.

The second native carried a big drum. It was made of a single piece of bark, very narrow in the middle, and broad at both ends—something like an hour-glass. Across the broad end the natives stretch a skin, forming a resonant membrane. The monotonous drone of the drum serves both to enliven the Kanaka feasts and to operate the strange bush-telegraphy, which they make use of. By means of these drums the natives are able to transmit news with surprising rapidity. They are, it is true, favoured by nature in this respect, since, as we have already mentioned, acoustic conditions enable the voice to be carried great distances without much effort. Most mountain tops in New Guinea serve as observation posts for native scouts, whose drums are continually heard outside the civilised regions. The most curious thing is that the scouts by means of their *kundus* can not only transmit short signals, but also long and complicated messages, regular reports on the movements of convoys under observation.

The two captured scouts were brought to our tent. They were evidently very frightened, and one of them, whose nose was pierced by a cassowary bone, and forehead decorated with some white ornaments, seemed particularly angry with M'Gwali, who had confiscated his big axe. The interpreter, a sort of pigmy, not as much as four feet high, came up, and the cross-examination began.

It took about an hour before the two natives finally per-

suaded by presents given to them by the patrol officer, could be induced to reveal their identity and the nature of their mission. The inhabitants of Umunifentina having recently been fighting with those of Aimontina, and no peace treaty' having been concluded, they were still in a state of war. It was therefore natural that the chief of Umunifentina should want to know the intentions of the patrol, whose approach had been reported to him. The two scouts had been sent out for this purpose, and one of them was armed with an axe. He stated that the only object of his mission was to 'look see', as our interpreter put it.

'Very well,' said the patrol officer. 'Look and see. I will give you back your axe and let you go. Return to your village and tell the chief that I am coming with an army ten times ten times ten times stronger than that of Aimontina. I shall come to him within three days, and if I find that there has been too much much bloodshed, it will be the worse for him.'

The two Kanakas were off at once, glancing timidly at the police, in fear of having bullets put into their backs as they left. As soon as they were a little distance from the camp they started to run, and went down the steep hill with extraordinary agility, and in a few minutes were out of sight. The incident was closed.

After reaching the valley we struck off in a north-easterly direction, crossing some very rough ground. It was swampy, and we were up to our knees in mud; we had, moreover, continually to cut our way through thick creepers, which made progress almost impossible. Armed with long sticks to which razor-like knives were fixed, we struggled on with the greatest difficulty, attacked by swarms of

mosquitos and other insects of every size and colour, whose sole object seemed to be to imbibe as much blood of the invaders as possible. When after two hours we at last succeeded in crossing the swamp our bodies were covered with swellings from bites and stings, to such an extent that we had to halt to open our medicine chest and distribute to boys and carriers a good supply of iodine and solution of alkali, which is used in New Guinea to relieve itching. The patrol, with faces and bodies smeared with iodine, looked, ten minutes later, as if they had just come out of a fierce fight.

But crossing the swamp had particularly unfortunate consequences for the patrol officer and myself. After a few steps we realised how difficult it is to walk over rough ground in boots full of mud. We wanted to change them. But on opening our kit we found that the boy in charge of the baggage had forgotten to put in a pair of spare boots. There was nothing to do but follow the example of the Kanakas and walk barefoot, which has no sort of attraction when one is not accustomed to it. Within half an hour our boots were dry again, but I shall never forget that walk of thirty minutes through the jungle barefoot. It seemed interminable.

I insert this trifling detail, not because I think it of much interest, but because such apparently insignificant inconveniences show how hard the life of patrol officers is. It only happens once or at most twice in the year that they are attacked by cannibals and head-hunters, but the minor miseries of the bush have to be endured every hour and every minute. Against attacks by natives one can defend oneself with Big Feller, but how can one avoid the heat, mosquitos, swamps, scorpions, crossing makeshift bridges

over chasms a thousand feet deep, the innumerable dangers and inconveniences which seem trifling or laughable when talking of them seated in a comfortable armchair, but which are very real and exasperating when one has to face them continuously? Anyone who doubts my word may easily check my statements. They have only to take a little walk barefoot over stony ground. I will let them off the scorpions and mosquitos.

Arrived at the village, which was situated about two miles from the swamp, our carriers remained in a clearing with their packs, guarded by four armed police. The remainder of the patrol marched towards the huts, where the inhabitants were waiting for us without any signs of hostility. As women and children were mingling with the men it was clear that for the moment at least the natives had no warlike intentions.

It is difficult to get into touch with a native tribe, and the welcome given by Kanakas to a patrol depends upon various circumstances. It may happen, for example, that the arrival of a patrol coincides with the death of a tribal chief. The patrol officer is then almost sure to have arrows shot at him, since evidently he was the cause of the death of the chief, and has come to usurp the dead man's position and authority. Or again the natives may attack a patrol because some of their pigs have been lost. But the most important factor is: what the sorcerers think. If, for some reason or other, they consider the presence of a white man in those parts to be undesirable, the most pacific tribe will not hesitate to take the offensive against him.

The attitude of the Kanakas will of course also depend

upon their previous experience of whites. To say nothing of blackbirders and other desperados, whose operations have seriously impeded the work of peaceful penetration, by exciting the anger of the natives against all foreigners, their distrust and hostility may have been aroused by acts which do not come within the penal code. For example, there are some travellers and prospectors who are unable to resist the charms of the Kanaka women; as in the case of Lucien Fiolini, killed by Papuans because he liked their women '*too much much*' and they too liked him '*too much much*'. A little conjugal misfortune suffered by one of the Kanakas during the passage of a patrol is enough to provoke an attack and massacre on its return to the village; or the next patrol may come in for a shower of poisoned arrows. Consequently the patrol officer on entering a village must carefully examine rifles and cartridge pouches. He must also take steps to prevent his boys from taking too much advantage of their caps, belts, cigars and pomatum pots, which never fail to fascinate the ladies of a cannibal village. I shall refer later to the massacre of the Britten expedition. It was proved that at first some of the chiefs were opposed to an attack, but had to give way when those in favour of a massacre let it be known that one of Britten's boys had seduced a native woman.

It may also be unfortunate to arrive on the heels of an expedition, members of which may have exaggerated a little in order to impress the natives. For example, when on one occasion a patrol officer showed the Kanakas a patent lighter, they looked at it contemptuously:

'That is nothing,' they said. 'We know a white man who can set rivers on fire.'

The famous D'Albertis, who as well as being a great scientist and explorer, also possessed a sense of humour, had, when passing through the village, put some petrol on a bucket full of water and set light to it, informing the natives that he would do the same to their river if they did not do as he told them to.

Needless to say he got all that he wanted from them, but his exploit has made it more difficult for persons coming after him, with less imagination, or not so well supplied with petrol.

Luckily the natives of the village which we entered had not been spoiled by demonstrations of this kind; they were delighted and astonished at everything. They admired our packing cases, our rifles and our belts with equal enthusiasm. The patrol officer and I had an enormous success; our complexion and arms, although tanned by the sun, were white enough to excite their keenest admiration. The children, especially, gave tangible proof—in the literal sense of the word— of the interest they took in us, by touching us repeatedly, and shrieking with delight when they found that our arms really were arms, and might be touched without unpleasant consequences. I should add that when once friendly relations had been established with the chiefs the latter condition no longer held good, as, in order to assert our authority, we chased the children away when they went so far as to stick their dirty fingers into our hair: or I should say perhaps the patrol officer's hair.

The chief of the tribe received us in the centre of the village, surrounded by natives, some of whom carried bows and arrows. The chief himself was unarmed. He was a man of about fifty, rather under-sized, and wore a neck-

lace made of a heavy triple row of boar's tusks, doubtless very precious. His followers were all indescribably dirty, and their shins were covered with tropical ulcers. A little apart from the group stood a strange creature who looked like a freshly-boiled white man. It was an albino about twenty years of age, the only one as old as this whom I saw in the course of my travels.

The patrol officer addressed a few words to the chief, which were translated by the interpreter. Then, before transacting business, he proceeded to make a distribution of presents. The chief received a little tobacco and a red coral necklace, the men were given shells and the children some glass beads. The women, as is the custom, received no presents, to avoid risk of domestic trouble, which may sometimes result in the woman being killed if she refuses to hand over her present from the patrol officer to her husband.

As soon as this important stage of peaceful penetration was concluded, the patrol officer explained the object of his visit to the chief. He said he had been sent by the most powerful chief in the world, who wished to extend his protection to the inhabitants of the village. He promised to protect them against their enemies, disease and crocodiles, in exchange asking only one thing: namely that they should never again *kai-kai* any men, or cut off any more heads. And, if a member of another tribe should commit such an act, reprisals were to be avoided; the patrol officer would come, and then let those whom he touched with his 'stick' beware!

In order to prove the power of this 'stick', a black pig belonging to the chief himself was brought. The chief

was given an axe in exchange, and the pig was tied to a tree. The boys examined the ground round it to see that no one was behind the place of execution of the unfortunate pig. When all was ready, the patrol officer knelt down and slaughtered the animal with a rifle bullet.

The effect was tremendous. Most of the Kanakas fled panic-stricken—among them the chief—to say nothing of the women and children, who screamed as if they were being flayed alive. It was ten minutes before the boys could restore order, by explaining that this was only a demonstration of what would happen to all evil-doers who continued their malpractices. The Kanakas, reassured by this explanation, examined the dead body of the pig, to ascertain the cause of its premature demise. Their surprise was changed to delight when the patrol officer told them that, although the pig was his, he made a present of it to the tribe.

We must here contradict the legend of the excessive hospitality of primitive peoples. I readily admit that the sons of the desert of Arabia, and even the blacks of Central Africa, are very generous to strangers in the way of offering shelter, food and even the favours of their wives. Among the Kanakas I have never seen the least signs of such a tendency. It may perhaps be easy to persuade them to sell their huts, their masks, their taro, or even their wives or daughters, but I have never known a Kanaka offer anything to a stranger without receiving something in return. Consequently, when the pig was cut up and roasted a few hours later, it never entered into the head of these good children of the jungle to offer the smallest morsel of it to us.

On the other hand, another amusing incident arose out

of the pig's execution. The iron axe which the patrol officer had given in exchange for the animal excited the keenest admiration of the whole tribe, whose members possessed arms and utensils of polished stone only. The axe was really worth as much as three pigs, and, consequently, the Kanakas were envious of the chief having made such a good bargain. The incident was discussed over and over again by the men, while an attentive audience of women and children looked on. Suddenly a man got up and went round to the back of his hut. A few minutes later he reappeared with a black pig in his arms. He spoke to the interpreter, who translated to the patrol officer:

'Him say', declared the boy, 'him not there when Master kill pig. Him not believe that Big Feller kill pig. Him want Master give axe and kill pig belong him.'

As our supply of axes was limited the request of the sly Kanaka could not be granted. He wandered round us for a long time, clasping the pig in his arms, in the hope of doing a deal all the same. Finally, when he saw that the patrol officer could not be persuaded to give him an axe, he changed his tactics.

'Him say,' announced the interpreter, 'although him not see, him all the same believe in Big Feller if Master give him *kuma-kuma*.'

To be rid of this pertinacious bargainer we gave him a *giri-giri*, a collar made of small snail shells. The Kanaka was delighted, and after hanging the *giri-giri* round his neck went off to put his pig in a safe place.

While the patrol officer was preparing his papers to take the census I took various different objects from our baggage: a little salt, some sugar, a pencil, a looking glass,and a

pair of boots, which the boys had finally unearthed from the case containing our provision tins. I spread them all in front of me, an operation which the natives watched with the liveliest interest.

The object of this odd exhibition was a very simple one. I wanted to find out whether the Kanakas understood the use of these objects, and if their intelligence was more highly developed than, or at least equal to, that of a white child of three or four years.

'These are marvellous treasures,' I said, 'and they shall belong to any one who can tell me what their use is.'

When what I said was translated, the natives began to hustle one another round me. Each wanted to examine every object, without allowing anyone else to do so. The boots, the pencil and the looking glass attracted them most. They seemed to be suspicious of the salt and sugar. At last one daring fellow came to me with the looking glass in his hand, and said:

'This for make *puri-puri*.'

A circle was immediately formed round us, each of the natives wanting to know whether the man had really guessed what the mysterious object was. When I explained that the looking glass was not for use in *puri-puri*, because there was no such thing, there was a murmur in the audience, most of whom disapproved of what I said. The patrol officer, who was looking on, said to me:

'If you don't want to provoke the sorcerers and leave your bones in New Guinea, I advise you not to play at being a missionary. It is a missionary's job to prove that there is no such thing as sorcery, and it is our job to hang the sorcerers. It will be better to get them to eat the salt.'

Unfortunately, this was quite as difficult as to convince the Kanakas that it is stupid to believe in *puri-puri*. Thinking that the white powder had poison in it, it was hard to persuade them to taste it at all. At last, by way of encouragement, I ate a little sugar. The ice was broken. The natives tasted both the salt and the sugar—and one of them wanted to eat the pencil too. When I asked them if they wanted more they asked for more salt, which they liked better than the sugar. One of them showed more vanity than greed, as, instead of eating the salt, he smeared his face with it, in spite of the fact that it was already adorned with painted arabesques, berries and a pig's tusk stuck through his nostrils.

'Him say', suddenly declared the interpreter, pointing to a Kanaka, 'him know boots, and say boots used put feet belong Master.'

This surprised me. I did not understand how a Kanaka, ignorant of the use of salt, sugar, pencils and looking glasses, knew what boots were for. I gave him some tobacco, a looking glass and a pencil, and then asked him how he knew what he had just told me. The Kanaka simply pointed to my boots, which were like the pair that I had put out.

It was not the only time that I noticed that the natives are observant. I remember, for example, a native of the Purari district coming one day to our camp to announce the arrival of some men of his tribe. The man was a very primitive type of cannibal. He had tried to run away when I focussed my camera on him. The patrol officer and a boy had to hold him before I could take a photograph. The same afternoon I took several snapshots of him, and in the

end he realised that the operation was less dangerous than he had thought. The next day, when the others arrived, I wanted to take a group of them. Then, to my astonishment, I saw my Kanaka take his friends by the arm and lead them to a place where they would be facing the sun.

The Kanakas had great fun admiring themselves in the glass while the patrol officer seated himself at a table to take the census of the population. Although the village only contained about one hundred inhabitants it seemed as if questions as to who was the son of whom, and who was the father of whom, were never going to be settled. The tribe was much in-bred, and everyone seemed to be related to everyone else. It was all very complicated, as the men, while refusing to admit that they had anything to do with their wife's relations, claimed absolute authority over the entire families of their own children.

A man of about fifty, but looking seventy, presented himself before the officer. When the latter asked him to produce his family, the old man brought forward two women, one of about the same age as himself, and the other rather younger. With the latter was a little girl about twelve years old.

After establishing the civil status of the father and two wives, the officer enquired:

'And the girl? Is she the daughter of the first or second wife?'

'Her wife number one,' said the interpreter.

'Is that woman her mother?' asked the officer, pointing to the elder of the two wives.

'No, no, Master,' explained the boy, seeing that the officer was going to make a mistake. 'Little girl be wife num-

ber one. Old Mary be wife number two, and very old Mary be wife number three.'

'Lucky man,' muttered the Australian, dipping his pen into the ink pot.

This work done, it remained to ascertain the number of lepers in the village. Luckily there were none, but, on the other hand, there were many cases of tropical ulcers. The boy who acted as medical officer disinfected and bandaged some horrible sores, explaining to the Kanakas that the liquid he gave them was not to drink, but for external use only. The precious bottle was presented to the chief, who made his appearance next morning covered from head to foot with tincture of iodine.

Before leaving the village, the patrol officer gave the chief a cap, and explained that henceforth he was *luluai*, chief of the tribe, recognised by the Government as such, and responsible for all his subjects' acts. His attention was specially called to the fact that patrols, who in future would frequently pass that way, would remove not only murderers, but all those who had given orders for anyone to be killed or for an attack on a neighbouring tribe. When the time came for the patrol officer to signify that the palaver was over, a rather touching, and at the same time grotesque, scene took place. The chief, obviously very pleased at receiving such a nice cap, came up to the young patrol officer and taking him by the arm called him: 'Papa, Papa.'

Next morning, about midday, we arrived in the village of Umunifentina, which was at war with Aimontina. Diplomatic relations had therefore to be re-established between the two enemy camps, so as to complete the census peacefully, vaccinate part of the population and conclude the

ethnological enquiry with which the patrol officer was entrusted in the valley of the Ramu.

Inter-tribal wars are continually being waged in the jungle, originating, like most wars, in economic problems. When a tribal chief has lost wives or pigs, as a result of the many epidemics, they have to be replaced, in order that he may keep up his authority and maintain the cultivation of his taro plantations. While he could dig up a few of the *kuma-kuma* necklaces buried under his hut, and buy fresh wives and pigs with them, this is a solution which the chief never thinks of. Instead he holds a palaver, in the course of which quite different action is decided upon. Spears are furbished, and a few hours later the men disappear. When they come back they bring with them the number of women and pigs required.

When they are interrogated by a patrol officer they shamelessly declare that the sorcerer of the tribe, having done whatever was necessary, they went to a certain spot in the jungle, where, by a miracle, they found women and pigs sent there by the good *tambarans*. If the patrol officer has plenty of ammunition he will not believe this story. On the other hand, if his men are decimated by fever and there are only a few cartridges left, he passes on gnashing his teeth.

Those who have least belief in this kind of 'miracle' are the men of the raided village. War-beacons are lighted and the chief puts on his finest bird of paradise feathers. At nightfall they crawl to the village of the marauders and set fire to a few huts; some heads are cut off and they carry away as many women and pigs as they can. This is the manner in which the interminable inter-tribal wars always begin.

In the first of the two villages they do not try to regain possession of the women and livestock they have lost. On the contrary, the relatives of the men killed in the second fight swear to avenge the death of their totem brothers. They hide in the forest, and kill the first man of the enemy tribe unlucky enough to meet them. This time the relatives of the new victim demand vengeance, and so the war, or rather vendetta, goes on for years, decimating the population, spreading terror through the district and creating epidemics. . . . All this for the loss of three or four women and as many pigs.

Before going into the village of Umunifentina we sent Sergeant M'Gwali and some police to bring the chief to our camp. At the same time we despatched others to fetch the chief of the Aimontinas.

'I won't say anything about the women,' declared the first chief when he arrived. 'They were old, but the Aimontinas must give back the pigs.'

'The pigs have already been eaten,' stated the other. 'But we will send back the women if they will give a pig for each in exchange. Besides, we did not know that these things belonged to them.'

'What?' said the patrol officer. 'But your men took them from the village of the Umunifentinas.'

'Yes, but they might have been stray women and pigs, which happened to be in the village of these evil spirits. That is what we thought.'

After two hours of this sort of discussion, an agreement was reached under which the Aimontinas had to restore two women, and the Umunifentinas to supply the enemy chief with two pigs on account of some of his men having

1. The author among the Aimontinas

2. Showing an illustrated magazine to the native women

3. 'White-Master-No-Grass-Belong-Him'

been killed. Peace was made, and gifts presented to the two high contracting parties. Before withdrawing, the Aimontina chief turned to his adversary and in a low voice said a few words to him.

'What does he say?' we asked the interpreter.

'Him say. Get back women; get back pigs. Cut off head, cut off arms, cut off legs, when Master go.'

Although the era of peace was beginning so inauspiciously, the patrol officer decided to take no notice, for fear of compromising the results obtained after so much trouble. The natives of Umunifentina were called together, and the officer addressed numerous questions to them concerning their marriage customs and rules of divorce and burial. The Kanakas answered all the questions readily enough, although they had sometimes to be repeated several times and in various forms, in order to check not only the answers, but also the accuracy of the interpreter's translation.

A difficulty arose when we asked about the punishment imposed on an adulteress. These questions are very awkward to put. In order that the interpreter may understand, they must be explained in a very brutal way, to the delight of the carriers and boys, who, while taking very little interest in ethnographical science, always follow this part of the interrogation closely. On the other hand, the natives are very reserved in talking of their laws, for fear of arousing the anger of the patrol officer. If they answer, it is always with the qualification that it is a custom observed by a neighbouring tribe, and known among themselves in '*time belong before*': that is, in the past. As for the penalty inflicted, the chief stated that at present adulteresses were not pun-

ished, but that formerly they were executed with three-headed arrows, kept for this special purpose.

'Good,' I said after listening to the explanation of the chief Torniwe. 'But I suppose that, all the same, you have kept some of the arrows as a souvenir?'

'No, Master,' translated the interpreter. 'Him no have arrows.'

'What a pity, because I would willingly give a packet of tobacco for every three-headed arrow.'

Torniwe's face revealed a good deal of emotion. Then, without saying anything, he left us, to think it over quietly. Ten minutes later I had my arrows.

I should observe that the disarmament of savage tribes presents exactly the same difficulties as the disarmament of civilised nations, because, first of all, it can only be carried into effect if all the tribes are disarmed at the same time. For instance, a tribe hands over its arrows and clubs to a patrol officer. The officer goes away, and a week later the disarmed tribe is attacked by one that is armed. The patrol may return within two or three weeks and inflict a severe punishment on the aggressors; but alas, with the best will in the world they cannot bring the murdered men and children back to life. On the other hand, to effect the total disarmament of all the tribes, the number of patrols would have to be increased, since at present one man is often responsible for the organisation and superintendence of several hundred square miles. He is therefore unable always to respond, at once, to the appeal of a tribe whose village has been raided by an enemy. The first business of the victims of an aggression must, therefore, be to make new arrows and clubs, which will be carefully concealed if a patrol arrives.

After spending a night near the village we set off at dawn to join another patrol, which we were to meet a day later. We were crossing a mountainous region which had not yet been fully explored, and the convoy halted frequently for the officer to make a sketch map, and examine plants and rocks found on the road. For the patrol officer who travels in unexplored districts of New Guinea must be omniscient, he must know how to handle a gun or a sextant equally well, and he must understand mineralogy and geology as well as botany, not to mention the innumerable ramifications of anthropophagy. If I add that he must be able to make maps, treat a dozen or so different diseases, dress wounds, talk pidgin English fluently, and know some of the most generally spoken dialects; that he must know how to build a house, cut lianas, fell gigantic trees without letting them fall on the boys' heads, construct rafts of tree trunks, and make-shift bridges from branches and fibre; that he must be skilled in all the methods of extracting sago, and know how to relieve cases of malaria—I think I shall have explained nearly all the theoretical and practical knowledge which is indispensable to anyone wanting to become a patrol officer.

It is unnecessary to insist on what patrol work means in the way of pacification of savage districts, of fighting disease and infant mortality, and of bringing moral and religious salvation to a race hampered by barbarous, inhuman and cruel institutions and customs. It will be due to the efforts of these courageous and determined men if the swarming natives of the New Guinea jungle definitely break with their past within twenty or thirty years.

This is not all. The patrols by opening the path of civilisation in the jungle are contributing to the rapid progress of a science, the aim of which is to clear up the mystery enveloping the nebulous past of humanity. It is a question of anthropology and especially of ethnography, about the labours and progress of which most of us know nothing. These are beset by innumerable difficulties, of which the first, and most important, is want of money. The institutions which can at present send scientific expeditions into the bush to study the life, psychology, laws and customs of races living far from civilisation are few. Fortunately there are the detailed reports of patrol officers which, although incomplete, form a basis for enquiry by scientists; and the latter, thanks to the observations and discoveries of the patrol officers, have already cleared up many of the problems relating to the origin and affinities of the Melanesian and Papuan races.

To quote only one example, the most important ethnographic discovery of recent years, of great scientific value, was made by patrol officer I. L. Taylor, who, accompanied by prospectors M. I. and D. I. Leahy, penetrated the unexplored districts between the Purari and Mount Hagen, where he revealed the existence of a people until then unknown. Taylor and the brothers Leahy left Bena-Bena near the Purari river on the 28th of March, 1933. They crossed broad valleys, some sixty miles long, and were able to establish that the Purari river—contrary to what had been supposed—cuts across the frontier, and probably debouches in the Gulf of Papua. Following the course of the Waghi river they came within ten miles of Mount Hagen, where they pitched their camp. In May, June, July and August

they explored most of the valleys, and on climbing Mount Hagen discovered a big wooded tableland stretching westwards from that point.

Mr. Taylor estimates the native population between the Purari and Mount Hagen at two hundred thousand; the brothers Leahy put it at three hundred thousand. In any case it was proved that this district, which was believed to be a desert, is actually the most densely populated in the island. But the most interesting detail is that the inhabitants of this area, although they have never had dealings with other tribes, and still less with white men, are much less primitive than most of the other natives. While completely isolated in the centre of New Guinea these people have attained a certain degree of civilisation, above all in agriculture and horticulture.

Mr. Taylor was able to enter into relations with the native Waghis and Bena-Benas who, with rare exceptions, were friendly disposed towards the patrol, but he states that the Bena-Benas are inclined to be distrustful, and practise cannibalism. He was allowed to examine their gardens, their potato and maize fields, etc., and was surprised to observe that they had a highly developed system of drainage and irrigation. After an examination of the soil and atmospheric conditions, Taylor reached the conclusion that the very fertile country of the Bena-Benas was suitable for the cultivation of cereals, such as wheat, barley, and rye. A few decades ago such a discovery would certainly have brought a rush of pioneers to this area, but today, when most agricultural countries are unable to dispose of their produce, no one is willing to come to New Guinea to dispute the savage rule of the Bena-Benas and Waghis. The importance of

Taylor's discovery is therefore purely scientific, unless his companions, the prospectors Leahy, can discover rich veins of gold between Mount Hagen and the Purari river.

It will probably be a long time before scientists will take advantage of Taylor's discovery. The photographs brought back by the prospector, as well as the descriptions given by him of the natives, prove that he has found a race the existence of which may introduce a new element into the theories hitherto held about the racial development and civilisation of the inhabitants of the Mandated Territory. The fact that the natives whom Taylor met employ sea shells as money; that the features of many of them seem to be of a Semitic type; that they not only cultivate gardens but understand the art of laying out parks with alleys and lawns; that they understand drainage and irrigation as a means of increasing the productivity of their land—does not all this support the theory that the Kanakas are related to oriental races, in particular to the descendants of Ham or still more of Shem? Otherwise, how is the negroid character of their ornaments to be explained? Unlike other races, also, they do not eat betel nor even seem to know of it. These are problems which certainly do not mean much to persons uninitiated into the mysteries of anthropology, but will always interest and inspire the imagination of scientists.

It is not every day that the patrols are able to discover the existence of new tribes and unknown races in districts thought to be deserted. But, without sensational discoveries, every report which the patrol officers send to their Government contains information of the greatest interest: information often obtained by the patrol officers at the risk of their life. Selecting one of these reports at hazard, here, for

example, is one from Mr. Robinson, who attended last year a ceremony of initiation in the neighbourhood of the Sepik river and was the first white man in the country to witness that curious rite.

Mr. Robinson obtained permission from the natives of the village of Angerman to be present at the initiation of some young men. On his arrival at the village he was taken to the communal house, round which a palisade made of the trunks and leaves of cocoanut palms had been erected. Mr. Robinson and his companion Mr. Walsh were placed on a platform from which they could see in comfort all the phases of the ceremony.

'Soon after our arrival,' Mr. Robinson's report states, 'music began to play inside the enclosure. The musicians were invisible, but I noticed that they were playing different instruments. Then the door in the middle of the enclosure, which represented the gaping jaw of a crocodile, opened. Through this door came men in groups of from two to ten, carrying drums. They were followed by two men holding a thick staff of carved wood, which they struck continually with a second smaller staff. Another party of drummers came behind them, the entire group consisting of 80 to 100 men. When they had passed the barricade they were joined by the women, and the door closed again.

'The men were painted from head to foot in different colours. On their heads they all wore marvellous ornaments made of bird of paradise and Gura pigeon feathers. The women were decked out with shells and all sorts of native money tokens.

'A slow dance began, during which the group passed through the village from one end to the other. This lasted

about twenty minutes; then the women, one by one, separated from the group, the men passing through the crocodile door, which remained open until they had all disappeared behind the barricade.

'At about 5.20 in the afternoon we were brought into the enclosure, and told that the real ceremony was about to begin. We had taken our places where we thought that we should be in safety. We saw the parents bring in the candidates for initiation, leading them by the hand. Four of them were boys of between ten and twelve, and the fifth must have been not less than twenty-two. The latter had been absent from the village for a longish time, which accounted for his not yet having been initiated.

'We then noticed that all the men had small sticks in their hand. A little later the door opened, and the parents came in with the boys. A "battle" immediately began, in the course of which the parents were vigorously belaboured. No one touched the boys. This scene lasted about twenty minutes, after which everyone became quiet. They all appeared very good-humoured, in spite of their bruises, which showed that in the course of the "battle" a good many hard knocks had been exchanged.

'Five little canoes were then brought in and placed on the ground about six yards apart. Next each a wooden bucket was placed, containing a shell in payment from the father of the candidate for initiation, as a fee to the initiator. The five boys were fetched. They lay down in the canoes, where they were "marked" by means of a sharply pointed bamboo stick. Three round incisions were made on the chest. The arm and back were marked from shoulder to ham with incisions from a quarter to half an inch long. The operation

must have been very painful, as the boys all screamed continuously, while some of them even fought with their executioners, and had to be tied to the canoes.

'The operation lasted two or three hours, and when it came to an end the newly initiated, and the "surgeons" as well, were covered with blood. The victims rested for a few minutes; then their parents took them down to the bank of the river, where they were washed from head to foot. They were then taken back to the communal house and placed on mats, where their parents dressed their wounds with *tuat* oil.

'I was told that the boys must remain in the communal house for three months, during which time they may only converse with men who have been initiated. Their food during the three months is brought to them by men. After another less important ceremony they go back to their homes and proudly exhibit their wounds, particularly to the women.

'The crocodile is a very important factor in the ceremony. The incisions in the body represent scars caused by the teeth of this animal. The door represents the crocodile's jaw, and the explanation of the "battle" is as follows: the crocodile must have a victim, which is symbolised by the beating of drums. The parents endeavour to save their children, but in the course of the "battle" the beast seems stronger than they, and finally the children fall into its jaws.'

It would be labour lost to look for sensational elements in the reports of the patrol officers. They are simple, modest individuals, who think and write clearly and only care about one thing: to study the life of the natives down to the smallest details, to enquire into the origin of their mys-

terious rites, and to understand Kanaka psychology. What they aim at doing is not merely, whip or gun in hand, to occupy and administer vast territories, but, by encouraging mutual understanding between natives and whites, to establish relations which will make the education of this primitive people possible without destroying their individuality and characteristics, some of which are not without dignity or nobility. The patrol officers are, fortunately, not of the type of colonists who would have the natives behave like recruits in a Prussian barrack-yard.

It may be remarked in this connection that pidgin English contains but a single German word, the only one which the Kanakas still use: it is 'rouse', otherwise *heraus* or 'Get out', an expression which Sergeant M'Gwali always employed when he was angry.

This good will of the patrol officers, added to their courage, their disinterestedness, their industry and their endurance, is far from being adequately rewarded; but what is stranger still is the lives of their men are not protected as they ought to be.

Patrol officers are formally prohibited from using their arms, *unless they themselves have been wounded.* It is not enough for poisoned arrows to have whistled past them: they must wait until blood has been shed.

When one remembers that the strategy of cannibals consists in occupying hills or climbing trees from which they can pour down showers of arrows on a passing convoy, one can understand that it is sheer folly to let them take up such positions without dislodging them by force.

The League of Nations does not allow the patrols to do this.

This is how three members of Harry Downing's patrol, five of Melrose's, more than ten of Ted Taylor's, without counting the patrol of the unfortunate Mack, almost annihilated by cannibals, were massacred.

Downing was hit in the leg by a barbed arrow, which had to be forced through the wound before it could be extracted. When he gave the order to fire, some of his men had already been killed. And, if Ross's patrol had not happened to pass that way the next day, Downing would certainly have succumbed as the result of his ghastly wound.

And when Ted Taylor, the most popular, and, without a doubt, the finest patrol officer in New Guinea, went to arrest the assassins of Captain Bernard MacGrath, he lost ten men by conforming to the regulations of theorists. Yet Canberra and Geneva signified their serious disapproval because seventeen Kanakas were shot when he gave the order to fire. Had he been allowed to fire as the Kanakas were advancing, there would only have been one or two casualties in all, and the murderers of MacGrath would have been arrested. But Taylor's patrol had to wait till it had been attacked. There was a death roll of twenty-seven, and the murderers escaped.

MacCarthy's patrol went to arrest the Kanakas who murdered the prospectors Naylor and Clarius. As they had to wait until they were attacked, he lost six men and was himself wounded by an arrow. He brought back five prisoners, who were condemned—to learn pidgin English.

Patrol officers Kyle and Penglasse were attacked several times and lost several boys. Patrol officer Ubank was wounded in the head by a club. In short, I do not think there is a single patrol officer in New Guinea who does not

bear the marks of at least two or three wounds from native arrows, clubs or spears.

They never complain. They only ask whether the League of Nations could not pass a resolution *to protect the life of white men* whose only aim is to put a stop to the murder of widows, to head-hunting, and to cannibalistic practices in New Guinea.

Any exaggeration, of whatever kind, is wrong, and while it is quite right that natives should be protected against the misdeeds of planters, prospectors, or recruiting agents, it is no less right that the white man should be protected against the natives. At present head-hunters and cannibals only are protected. But even if we want to proclaim all these noble principles, is there any need to subordinate them to the application of this one:

'*Que messieurs les Cannibales commencent!*'

When the steamer enters the Gulf of Huon, and the silvery line of the New Guinea coast is visible on the horizon, one passes a threatening and solitary rock, on which the waves break, seeming to bar the passage of the ship.

There, on this rock where the sea birds rest, facing this mysterious and cruel land, a monument should be erected, majestic in its solitude and in its simplicity.

And ships that sail towards New Guinea should dip their flag and salute this monument to the Unknown Patrol Officer.

PART THREE
THE STONE AGE

I. SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF A KANAKA, WHO WAS HANGED

You are condemned to be hanged by the neck until you are dead ...
—Sentence pronounced in the High Court of Rabaul.

Some sixty miles from the coast of Gasmata, a little village was sleeping in the heart of the virgin forest. A pale and silvery moon, scarcely visible in the blue of the sky, seemed to be flying from the rose-coloured light of dawn. The fires burned low, men were snoring outside the huts: all around was at peace, save for birds chasing insects in the spreading foliage of the palm trees. Far off on the pathless hills, a thick bank of mist rose and broke into innumerable little clouds, lighted up by the rising sun and floating over the jungle like strange transparent beasts.

Suddenly the wild shriek of a woman broke the silence. Still half asleep, the men jumped to their feet; sinewy arms were stretched out to seize bows and arrows that lay beside them. Then, remembering what the women had told them last night, they put down their arms, threw fresh logs on the fire, and lay down again on their beds of dry leaves. But the women ran towards a hut from which the sound of cries now came. An old man, unable to sleep, squatted close to the fire, chewing his betel and gazing at the vill-

age as it became more distinct in the rays of the morning sun.

An hour later the women came out to the chief, who was holding a palaver before his hut:

'A son!' they joyfully exclaimed.

An expression of pride spread over the features of the chief. He made a gesture to indicate that he wanted to see the child.

They brought it whimpering to him. The chief took it in his arms, and, his eyes fixed on the warriors grouped round him, he said in a hoarse voice: 'It is my son: may he be strong, may he hurl the stone axe with skill and mightily draw the bow.'

He gave back the new-born child to the women. Before him a young palm-tree raised its head to heaven. For a moment the man's stern eye was fixed on the leaves of the tree waving against the sky. Then he spoke:

'My son shall be called Tolama: he shall be tall as this cocoa palm.'

The women retired. The chief entered his hut, and came out again carrying in his left hand bow and arrows, and in his right hand an axe. A murmur arose.

Shortly after, his men were on the war path.

Suspended to his mother's side, Tolama fixed attentive eyes on the women who were hurrying, in Indian file, to the fields. He loved these morning outings under the cocoa-nut palms. Above all, the rhythmic sound of his little legs, monotonously flapping against his mother's side, was a constant delight. It was like the music that came from the huts where the men slept at night and soothed him to sleep.

Tolama liked this music which kept him from thinking of the monsters hidden in the forest waiting at nightfall to fly over the village, swoop down on him, and fix their claws into his flesh. Dozing on his bed of leaves, in dreamland, he could no longer hear the chatter of women at his side; but the sound of tom-toms came to him in his dreams, and seemed to drive away the evil spirits that rode in the clouds. He did not know from whence came this music, nor how it reached his ears through space, but there, where it came from, were men stronger than he, on the watch to prevent the forest monsters from leaving their lairs. Reassured, he fell asleep.

Arrived in the fields, where plantations of taro and yams covered the ground, his mother placed him in the shade and gave him a big leaf which he at once began to suck. Seated comfortably on the soft grass, he gazed at his mother as she turned over the soil with bent back, cutting stalks, or watering the plants which had curled up in the burning heat.

He lay near his mother, looked at her while she worked, or straddled her leg while he received his food from her rough black hand. He did not often see his father. Now and then a man took him on his knees, and one day he placed a necklace of shells round his neck. This man, like his mother, was naked to the waist; but Tolama saw that they were not made alike. He was told it was his father, and Tolama knew that his father was very strong and very powerful, the strongest and most powerful of all the men who were encamped before the huts.

One day when he was seated in the shade, his mother having just left, a boy next him took away the leaf which

he was holding. As the other boy was putting it into his mouth, Tolama struck him on the head with all his might. The little fellow bellowed and began to cry. The women at work heard it, but paid no attention. His heart beating wildly, Tolama waited till his mother came back. He held the leaf which he had regained possession of; but he was not sucking it. He looked at the other boy who was still crying, his hand on the place where Tolama had struck him. The other women now came up and took away the children without a word. Tolama was surprised. . . .

Next day, which had been like every other day since he was born, he was seated at the same spot. Near him, four or five boys were playing with yellow mud, from which they were making balls, little mounds, and even animals copied from the black pigs of the village. Tolama looked at his little friends. Suddenly he remembered the scene of yesterday. The boy whom he had struck was building a miniature hut of mud and bamboo twigs. When he saw Tolama looking at him he was frightened. For the first time in his life Tolama felt that someone was afraid of him. The blood rushed to his head, and before the boy could get up Tolama fell on him and struck him as hard as he could. Then, when the other ran away screaming and crying, Tolama trampled down the little hut which he had just built. The bamboo twigs were crushed underfoot. Tolama felt happy.

Later on he ceased to go out with his mother. When the women had gone, Tolama and his friends, armed with toy bows and arrows, made by their fathers from bamboo fibre and flexible wood, met in the centre of the village. For,

latterly, Tolama and his friends had gone out with the men, running after them, and listening to the tales told by them, seated round the fire, when night descended upon the village. There he learned how, far away, where the river enters the sea, there was an island, where lived gnomes, monsters, savage beasts and little green flies, each of which is the spirit of a dead man, cast into the hell of Jakupia. No one had ever reached this land, not even Tolama's father. The child often gazed at the muscular arms of the chief, his broad shoulders, and hands strong to grasp the stone axe, or draw the stiffest bow. Why could he not go to the enchanted island? Why was he frightened by the green flies that flashed through the air like living jewels? Tolama knew that in his hut his father had many skulls of enemies he had killed. Sometimes he saw him come back to the village all splashed with blood, his head and his broad chest scarred with wounds. If he were not afraid of the men living beyond the high mountains, who often ravaged the countryside down to the coast, why was he afraid of going to the island of the green flies, where great treasures must certainly be buried under rocks or in the beds of rivers? Lying on his bed Tolama, before going to sleep, often thought of the island, and he made up his mind that, when he had a real bow and a real club, he would go there.

In his dreams he often saw himself returning to the village with the heads of monsters, which he had cut off. 'Where did you kill those beasts?' his father would ask. 'In the island of the spirits,' he would reply, and next day he would take him to the place where the dead monsters lay among the rocks with the hidden treasures.

One day, when they were seated before their hut,

Tolama asked his father: 'Why don't you and your men go and look for the treasures of the island?'

'There are, indeed, many treasures in the Accursed Isle,' replied the chief, 'but they are guarded by spirits who kill all who come near. And of what use are treasures to a dead man? Go and play. Think no more of the island.'

'Of what use are treasures to a dead man,' repeated Tolama. And suddenly he remembered he had never seen a dead man. He had of course seen pigs knocked on the head with an axe, and heard them squealing. But how does a man die? What does he do? What does he say? What becomes of him? The boy took his bow and went into the forest. He did not want to play any more. Lying in the grass he watched the clouds floating slowly towards the distant mountain tops.

It was night. Tolama was sleeping in his father's hut. He covered himself with leaves. A fresh breeze came from the forest. The moon was shining in all its splendour. The chief slept peacefully before the door of the hut.

Tolama heard a sound. Was it a leaf rustling in the wind? He gave a start. He was in a cold sweat. Was it the spirits wandering through the village by moonlight? He remained motionless.

Two outlines were visible in the darkness. They looked like human beings, but he felt sure they were spirits from the island. Two shadows crouched near his father.

The latter woke suddenly: before he could get up the men were upon him. One thrust his fist into his mouth, the other raised a club. Tolama clearly heard the voice of the

one who was brandishing his formidable weapon: 'If you wake the village I will smash your skull.'

The chief's body stiffened. But with an effort in which he concentrated all his strength he shook off his assailant, and freed his mouth and throat. A loud but short cry rang through the village. Tolama heard the dull thud of the bludgeon. Then came shouts of the warriors, and cries of women and children were mingled with the groans of the wounded.

Tolama thought he heard his father gasping on the ground. The sound gave him courage. He rose slowly, and advanced on all fours to the door of the hut.

A moonbeam lit up the motionless body. Tolama timidly placed his hand on the shoulder of his father: he seemed to be sleeping peacefully.

His trembling fingers touched a greasy liquid which covered neck and shoulders of the unfortunate man. He shook him; he called him by name. But the chief seemed not to hear the boy's voice of anguish. Tolama, tears streaming down his cheeks, gazed at the warriors who in the dim light of torches had hurled themselves on the invaders.

He knew that his father was dead. He remembered the raised club, the shadows at the door of the tent. Was that death? Controlling himself with a supreme effort, he dashed to where the warriors of his tribe were massacring their prisoners and finishing off the wounded. He heard the death rattle of the dying. He was no longer in tears.

An old man was adorning the head of the dead chief. 'He saved all our lives,' he said. Another hung a precious

necklace of boar's tusks and bones of the cassowary round his neck. The body, smeared with paint, was attached to a post in a sitting posture. Round the corpse bamboos were stuck in the ground to form a fence concealing what was behind it. The women wept, and covered themselves with ashes. At nightfall all was over.

Tolama sat before the hut where every night men had gathered to palaver with his father, or to tell tales of monsters and spirits which haunted the forest.

That night no one came. The men had met before the hut of the new chief. Tolama's uncle. The boy waited in vain. Then, frightened to be alone, he went and sat near the group gathered round the new chief of the tribe.

Days and weeks passed. Tolama had thought that everything would be different after his father's death. But there was no change. The women went in the morning to work in the fields; the men palavered, or sharpened their axes, or tried their bows; the boys ran behind them; and the old men told terrifying tales of the hell of Jakupia. Tolama went sometimes to the end of the village where the tomb of his father was. He gazed at the bamboo fence, and thought how the dead man had been the protector of his tribe. Should he go and hunt for treasure? The tribe would be rich, very rich: they would buy axes and bows, they would find allies, and track down the man who had wielded the deadly club.

One day he went to his mother.

'You knew my father's father?' he said; 'what became of him?'

'He has long been dead,' she replied. 'An arrow killed him

A cemetery in New Britain. The corpses are surrounded with bamboos

when his men were on the warpath beyond the mountains. You were a tiny boy.'

So, most of those whom he saw working or sleeping there had fathers and grandfathers who had been killed, some by arrows, others by clubs. But the tribe still went on. Tolama met his uncle. He asked him when was he going to be initiated?

His eyes were still full of tears, his wounded body still hurt terribly, but he could not wait for the last part of the ceremony. In a clearing of the forest the men were dancing. Tolama could slip away without his absence being noticed. He ran to the village, where women and girls were talking over the day's great event. In one of the groups M'Vala was seated with her mother. He stopped before the girl, and showed her the wounds still bleeding on his arms and back.

'Look, M'Vala. I am a man.'

The girl made no answer. Crossing her rounded arms over her little bare breasts, she gave the boy an admiring glance. He sat beside her. The women went on chattering. Tolama remained near M'Vala. They did not speak.

The men followed the path to the little river in silence. There they divided into two groups. One lay concealed behind the hill, and the other advanced towards the village. Tolama grasped in his hand a dagger which he had made from a cassowary bone by rubbing it against a polished stone. He crawled very slowly, taking care not to move even the smallest pebble. The outline of the sleeping village was already visible. It was dawn. He saw a watchman on

guard, bow in hand. His back was turned, and his eyes were fixed on the forest at the foot of the hill.

Tolama could not see his face, and he did not want to see it, so that he might believe it to be that of the man with the club. He *wanted* the man he was going to kill to be the assassin of his father. Slowly he crawled nearer to the motionless warrior.

For a second he wondered if he was afraid or not. Then his thoughts turned to his tribe, to M'Vala, to the Accursed Isle, where lay the longed-for treasures. If he were ready to face monsters, how could he be afraid of a man? Of a man who had killed his father? The watchman turned suddenly, and Tolama saw his broad scarred face, his flat nose, his nostrils perforated by a bone. It was not the murderer he was looking for.

There was no time to think. It would soon be light; and the attack must begin. With a catlike bound he threw himself on the watchman and plunged the dagger into his heart. The man fell dead. Tolama struck him again and again. 'It was the man with the club,' he told himself. When the body ceased to move, the young warrior set off to rejoin his companions; he threw a last glance at the place where the corpse lay in a pool of blood. Then he broke into a run.

'They deserved their fate,' said the chief, as the spoil was divided before his hut. 'We have six more skulls, eight women, and a score of pigs to the good.'

Tolama's share was two pigs, a necklace and an axe. Whilst the victors retired, to show the proceeds of the raid to their women, he remained seated in front of the chief.

'I killed two men,' he said, 'and can build myself a hut. Buy me a wife.'

He hesitated, reflecting for a moment, then added:

'Buy M'Vala for me.'

The chief shook his head.

'I will buy you a wife when the moon is full,' he said calmly, 'but I cannot buy M'Vala for you. For many moons we have owed a woman to the tribe which lives on the coast: they are called the Men of the Three Palm Trees. If I do not give them a woman they will come and take her by force. As they are a powerful tribe, and mighty fighters, it would be dangerous if they make war on us. I will therefore give M'Vala to them, and I will buy you a woman of the tribe of the Bald Mountains.'

Tolama answered nothing. He looked round him as if for help. The chief was unmoved:

'The tribe . . .' he said.

But Tolama was not listening. He rose and went to his mother.

'What is the matter?' she asked.

'Nothing. Tonight I will stay with you.'

The envoys went through the village; they left bows and axes behind before they started on the narrow track leading from the forest to the huts where the armed men waited. The chief was deploying all his forces; the situation was critical. Three neighbouring tribes had joined together to take vengeance on the warriors who, led by their chief and Tolama, had sacked their villages. Before attacking, the allies decided to negotiate with the enemy. They knew him to be formidable even against a superior force. So they sent

two men to Tolama's village to endeavour to obtain reparations: the negotiators were old men, too old to fight. If they were killed they would be no loss.

The two men advanced to the hut of the chief slowly, to show that they were not intimidated by the warriors massed along the road. Children threw mud at them: a woman insulted them; warriors followed in their tracks, and they all came to the huts before which the chief, unarmed, sat near the fire, where the Grand Palaver was to take place.

'What presents do you bring?' asked the chief when the men were seated before him.

'We have brought none,' said the first envoy. 'The presents must come from you. We demand ten women, ten times ten pigs and as many necklaces. Also the heads of three of those who killed our chief and our warriors, and stole our women.'

Tolama, standing near the chief, remembered his father and the fate of his grandfather, he knew that his tribe was too weak to reject the offer of peace. Would they surrender his head? He looked at the old man who was speaking without hostility.

'In all the village,' replied the chief, 'we have not ten times ten pigs. As for women, I will give you ten widows. But to deliver the head of a warrior is a thing unheard of. If your men want the heads of those who killed your chief let them come and take them. But remember I have as allies two tribes who will come to our help.'

'That is a lie,' the second envoy interrupted drily. 'If we make war on you no one will help you.'

'Even if I am left alone, I can fight, for our sorcerer has found a talisman that makes our warriors invulnerable.'

'Where is the talisman?'

'That is our secret; the talisman is buried, and we shall only use it when your men come.'

'If that is so, and you have this talisman,' replied the old man, clearly rather perturbed, 'you shall have peace if you give us five times ten pigs, ten women and two heads.'

'May I be eaten by the beasts of the Accursed Isle if I give you five times ten pigs and two heads. You and your men are dogs, cowards, devils, insects upon which I spit, and whose heads I would cut off, if I were not at this moment in search of a treasure buried under a very old tree. When the moon is new, I shall go in search of this treasure. That is my reason for wanting peace. I offer you twice ten pigs, and ten women whose husbands are dead, but you shall have no heads and I expect your chiefs to send me many presents.'

The sun climbed into the heaven and descended again: the Palaver still continued. Taro was brought and they all ate. Next morning at dawn the negotiators left, taking with them twenty-five pigs and six old women. Tolama went with them as far as the forest. For a long while he looked at the two old men who were driving the pigs before them. They had wanted his head. Tolama smiled, and thought of his tribe. He remembered the chief's words in speaking of M'Vala. . . . That night he felt happy: he danced round the fire to the monotonous rhythm of drums.

'Where are you going?' his wife from the tribe of the Bald Mountains asked him. Tolama took up his bow and axe. He said:

'I am going to hunt the white bird in the forest. I shall be back in a few days.'

He went without telling anyone. Once in the forest, he looked round to see that he was not observed. Then he changed direction. He plunged into the *kunai* which covered the mountainside and climbed, using hands and feet like a monkey, to the hill tops. He crossed a thick forest where he killed birds and roasted them at night on a fire lighted beside a great white rock. Next day, having risen at dawn, he continued walking, until he reached the edge of a little stream which trickled lazily in its narrow bed.

He followed its bank. Walking was difficult in the clayey soil; the rocks in the sun were so hot that Tolama almost cried out when his feet touched them. Now and then he thought he saw the form of a terrifying animal lying at the bottom of the river, which was as clear as the rivers of the Bald Mountains, where Tolama had been to find a wife. At one place, where the stream made a sharp bend, he entered the water cautiously to see how deep it was. He arrived in mid-stream without the water reaching above his shoulders. What he had seen must have been a rotting tree trunk blown down by a storm.

He saw no one; the country seemed deserted. Tolama knew that since the Great Spirits had left the land no one had ventured into these parts. He was the first man who had come to hunt the monsters, and seek for the treasures hidden in the island by the spirits. He wondered if the green flies with luminous wings would attack him. Would he be able to come near the monsters which sat on those rocks, and destroy them with his arrows? Certainly he would. If not, he would die, as his father had died and his grandfather, and the watchman whom he had killed at dawn.

'No one has cast a spell on me,' he said to himself. 'Therefore even if I die, the evil spirits will have no hold on me.'

He advanced quickly, thinking how the tribe would meet, to look at the treasures; and where he should go in order to hunt down the man with the club. He halted. The river had broadened out, and in the middle he saw rising from the waves The Accursed Isle.

Calmly with his axe he cut a long bamboo, and waded until he was up to the waist in water. He advanced with difficulty; his feet were entangled in weeds at the bottom of the river, so that he thought he could never free them.

'Perhaps the monsters are in the water,' he thought, and stopped.

He took his bow and shot. The shaft disappeared into the water. Tolama, a little reassured, waded to the place where the arrow had disappeared. A few minutes later he reached dry land.

Cocoa-nut palms, which bent over the river, as if to gaze on the reflection of their tops in the water, fringed the shore. Birds twittered in the thick foliage, and a huge bird with many-coloured wings flew away through the bushes that grew under the shadow of the trees. Tolama pushed aside the branches, and went on. Now he felt frightened. He looked at the quiet river and wondered whether it would not be better to go back to the opposite bank.

'If I tell them that I reached the Accursed Isle,' he thought, 'they will say I lied. The treasures must be found.'

A large insect, darting and buzzing, seemed to be looking for an easy prey. Tolama's fingers tightened round his axe. The insect flew on.

'It was not green,' the warrior thought.

Lianas hung like curtains from the trees. Tolama advanced through the green shade. Suddenly he thought he heard a voice. He stood still; then cautiously he crawled towards the sound. The bushes that barred his path opened on a little clearing. Tolama, hidden by the branches, still went on. There were rocks in front of him.

They rose in the middle of the clearing: three or four enormous blocks overshadowing a little stream that flowed below them. Under the rocks Tolama saw the guardian of the treasures. He looked like a human being except for his feet, which seemed a black misshapen mass. The rest of his body was quite white, 'white as death' thought Tolama. His face looked like a skull, but was surmounted by red hair, like that of the devils whose effigies are preserved in the houses of the *tambarans*.

A little open box lay on the grass, near the bush where Tolama was hiding. He paid no attention to it. Fascinated, he could not keep his eyes from the thing seated almost in front of him.

'He has a human shape,' he thought, 'because he is a spirit from Jakupia. But where are the green flies?'

The guardian of the rocks got up and came towards the box: but Tolama thought he was making for him. For a moment, he felt as he had felt on the night when he heard the voice of the man who killed his father. The thing drew near. The grass rustled under his feet, and a great fly rose, startled, from a blade of grass. Its green wings, flashing in the sun, seemed to be on fire.

Tolama bent his bow. The arrow pierced the chest of the white man. He fell to the ground with a terrible cry. Another figure rose behind the rocks. Tolama heard a noise

louder than thunder: fire flashed in front of him. Cries rose on all sides. Tolama threw down his bow and fled. A burning pain shot through his shoulder, from which blood was pouring down his back and his panting chest.

'You are a great liar,' said the chief, and a murmur of approval came from the men round him.

'I wanted to find the treasure,' said Tolama. His shoulder was swathed in a bandage of cocoa-nut leaves.

'You went to steal the pigs of the Three Palm Trees men,' interrupted the chief. 'They shot you in the shoulder with an arrow, which you pulled out of the wound. If you had really met the spirits they would have killed you; they never let their victims escape. Besides, the spirits living in the island are not white-skinned.'

'That is so,' interposed Gala, the sorcerer. 'Spirits have oblong heads. They crawl on the ground, their skin is very dark, and they have teeth like axes. But it is true that they breathe out fire. I know this from my father, who was a great sorcerer, and appeared to me two moons after he died.'

'That is the truth,' summed up the chief. 'If the Three Palm Trees men come to claim the pigs, which you probably stole, they shall be paid from your pigs. I will not go to war for a liar.'

He stopped for a moment, and then went on:

'It would have been otherwise if you had shared the pigs with us. But as you have hidden them, we are not going to fight for you. . . . The Palaver is at an end.'

Tolama went back to his hut. For two days and nights he thought and dreamed of the island. His body shook and his

teeth chattered with fever. Oblong-headed monsters crawled towards him, putting their misshapen feet on his chest. Thousands of green flies buzzed round him. A thunder clap woke him. His wife, scared by the storm which had burst upon the village, and by the devils which seemed to possess her husband, stood beside his couch and fixed black staring eyes on him.

'I was in the Accursed Isle,' groaned Tolama.

His wife shook her head, and said in her calm voice:

'Where did you hide the pigs? Tomorrow I will go and fetch them.'

The chief listened attentively to the sound of tom-toms ceaselessly droning from the hill tops.

'Three white men, twice ten blacks. . . . Three white men, twice ten blacks,' drummed out the tom-toms; and the news spread from the Three Palm Trees village to that of the Bald Mountains.

'*White* men?' enquired the chief, after summoning the sorcerer. But, as the approach of twenty blacks was also announced, he ordered bows and axes to be made ready. The men adorned their heads with feathers and smeared their arms and legs with red and yellow war paint. Tolama the Liar did not get ready to fight; he knew that it was the spirits who were coming to carry him off for having set foot in their island.

'They will kill me in the village,' he thought. 'I shall be buried under the hill, and they will know then that I did not go to steal pigs. They will also know that I killed one of the guardians of the treasure.'

A man passed before him.

'Tolama the Liar, do you not hear the tom-toms?'

He did not stir. He was too weak to fight.

'The men of Three Palm Trees will also hear the news,' he thought. 'M'Vala will know that I am dead.'

He was still seated before his hut, a few hours later, when a patrol entered the village.

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'Where are the presents?' the chief sternly asked the patrol officer.

'I have brought many presents,' replied the latter, 'but before giving them to you and your men, you must hand over the assassin who killed a white man two moons ago.'

'None of my men has killed anyone for many moons,' said the chief. 'No one has ever seen, or killed, a white man such as you.'

'If you lie,' replied the patrol officer, 'you shall have no present, and I shall take you away to a place from which you will never return. Two moons ago one of your tribe killed a white man in the island which men of the Three Palm Trees call the Accursed Isle.'

'Since you bring me presents, which are surely very precious,' declared the chief, 'I will tell you that no one has gone to the Accursed Isle, which is guarded by monsters and evil *tambarans*. True, one man of the village pretends he went there and killed one of the spirits. But what he said was not true. He is a stealer of pigs called Tolama the Liar.'

'Where is he?'

The chief looked round. Amongst the men standing behind him he pointed to Tolama, who remained motionless.

'That is the man I killed,' thought Tolama. 'His spirit has come back.'

His eyes turned to the feet of the patrol officer. He noticed the familiar misshapen mass. He was surprised to hear no buzzing.

When the police put fetters on his hands he thought they were going to kill him. Behind the chief he saw the head of a young warrior, and he remembered the little mud hut which he had trampled down. It seemed to him suddenly that his father was still alive, and in the evening would tell him of the island and its treasures. In the group of women he saw his mother and wife crying. His eyes seemed to search for another face, but M'Vala was far away.

The white man spoke a few words. A black policeman clipped the chain which was round Tolama's ankle to his wrist. At every step forward the chain clanked.

Tolama lowered his head. The policeman tightened the chain and the prisoner stumbled on, surrounded by a black escort, on the way to the coast.

He thought they were going to take him to the island for execution. But the march was long, and he never saw the little river with its cocoa-nut trees and shady banks. They passed through villages and across strangely shaped mountains until they reached a broad valley. In it there was an immense village and lines of huts unlike any that Tolama had ever seen. They halted before a large building. Tolama was taken in, and shut up in a cell.

He felt lonely. By day he worked in the court-yard, watering the plants as if he were a woman. At night he was left to his thoughts. He knew that the men with pale faces were not monsters. He knew too that the place where he was, was not the Accursed Isle. It was very different there.

He decided that when he went back to his village he would say nothing of what he had seen. They should no longer call him 'Tolama the Liar'. He would take with him axes made from an unknown material which he saw the police had, and which was much harder than cassowary bone. He would also take a knife of the same material, and when M'Vala was a widow he would buy her with this marvellous weapon. Two wives, perhaps even three, a great many pigs, and big huts; and, perhaps some day he would become chief.

One day, instead of taking him to the garden to water the flowers there, the police took him to a large hall, where men with hair like silver looked at him gravely. They talked of the Accursed Isle, and when they asked him why he had killed the white man who had been going to pick up his box, he replied:

'I killed him because the green fly was buzzing round me.'

He spoke the truth. After a short deliberation by the judges he was condemned to death.

A fortnight later he was executed. In his own village, in the presence of the tribe for which his father had died, to which he had sacrificed M'Vala, and for which he wanted to gain the treasure of the Accursed Isle, he would have died with fortitude. But being alone, abandoned among strange men, he cried out when the rope was being fastened round his neck.

The executioner was adroit, and Tolama died painlessly.

II. RACIAL SECRETS

Secrets are not miracles.—GOETHE.

For more than a century the most various and sometimes the most astonishing theories have been put forward by scientists about the origin of the peoples of Oceania. The interest now taken by the world in ethnographical problems has given an impetus to the speculations of theorists, which is, perhaps, why today there are a dozen contradictory views as to the origin of these races. Each thesis, although supported by plausible arguments, is incapable of definite proof. It is therefore assailed and defended with equal vigour. But in all probability, in spite of the diversity of theories held, and of the difficulties in the way of solution, a categorical answer will eventually be found to these questions, as far as Melanesians and Polynesians are concerned, since within the next twenty or thirty years no part of the islands will remain unexplored. This will greatly facilitate the task of scientists. For the time being, new discoveries (like that of Taylor, for example) which reveal the existence of unknown civilisations, may demolish the most plausible theories; we cannot therefore regard the problem of the Oceanians as definitely solved, even if scientists adduce apparently irrefutable arguments. But, although we are still only on the uncertain

ground of hypotheses, research, theories and experiments show a marked progress towards a more accurate knowledge of what the jungles and mountains of the Pacific may still conceal.

But as yet the origin of these peoples remains obscure. It is not known how they reached the Antipodes or from whence they came. There is indeed evidence of a kind to support various views: that they are of Asiatic descent, that they are related to the natives of South America, that they are Caucasians whose bone formation has been modified by the lapse of centuries, and many others. We are not even yet in a position to state whether they are part of a young race making its first appearance in history or whether, with a remote and eventful past, they are now declining into a feeble senility.

In vain have the measurements of skulls of Kanakas from the Solomon Islands been taken, axes and pottery in the Fiji Islands examined, the Sepik dialect learnt and the mysterious ceremonies of the races on the coast of New Britain studied. Research, observations and experiments have certainly thrown light upon the purely material life of the natives, but they have not raised the curtain which hides the mysteries of the spiritual life of these people from the eyes of the scientist or explorer. But if one does not know all the details of their traditions, beliefs and cosmogonic legends and superstitions, it is impossible to trace the route which the Oceanians followed before arrival in their present homes. An axe or a bow may have been found on a canoe that had been wrecked. The method of constructing their huts may have been learned from a stranger who had been stranded on these shores. The existence of these arms,

or a vague resemblance between Polynesian huts and those of the Amazon valley do not prove conclusively a relationship between the Kanakas and one or other of the primitive peoples inhabiting a distant continent. To quote only one example: the *poncho*, or fibre cape, which the Oceanians wear attached to their shoulder, is also fashionable among the people of South and Central America, where it is also known under the name of *serape*. But that is hardly sufficient proof of the relationship between the two races.

It is otherwise with deduction from practices arising out of native legends or superstitions. If one could prove that the beliefs of two races are more or less identical, this would be a surer indication of a common origin than similarity of arms and implements. May not one of the arguments in favour of a Caucasian origin of the Oceanians be that Hawaians and New Zealanders revere the white god Lono, who long ago disappeared but promised to return to earth?[1]

Is it not strange that traces of the Deucalion legend have been found in Samoa? Finally, how can one explain that according to certain Polynesian legends the generator of mankind is a certain Vatea, half man, half fish, exactly like the god Oannes of the Chaldeans, and the 'fish foetus' of Anaximander? And what is to be said of the legends of the Australian aboriginals, who seemed to know the myth of Cupid and Psyche?

It may be objected that these legends might have been 'imported' into Oceania, like pottery or bows. This is improbable, as the Kanakas, while ready to adopt unknown procedures which seem to them useful, have certainly not

[1]It was in this belief that Cook was revered by certain islanders as a God.

accepted vague explanations by foreigners endeavouring to reveal the mysteries of the Creation to them.

Unfortunately it is very difficult to obtain full knowledge of the religion of primitive races. The first and principal obstacle is ignorance of their language. Generally, an explorer or patrol officer entering into relations for the first time with a tribe living far away from civilisation, does not speak their language or dialect. He depends upon the services of a chain of interpreters, whose translations are generally confused and inexact. Interpreter number one talks pidgin English. How can he be expected to translate accurately such words in the Cosmogonic legends as 'Deluge', 'Dragon', 'Goddess', etc., which are not to be found in the *lingua franca* of the Pacific. One has to be satisfied with a very vague and uncertain translation, the scientific value of which is still further diminished by the reticence of the Kanakas in speaking of their rites and superstitions. As for the linguistic disabilities of the patrol officers, this is natural enough. The Kanakas have innumerable dialects, and the inhabitants of two neighbouring mountains may quite well speak two different languages. Then, how can an Australian be expected to learn languages like that of the Dungerwabis, which is relatively simple, but in which the word for 'ten' is *ambutondambutonambutondand*. . . .

The first thing which the white man learns about the Kanaka religion is that the village sorcerer is in control of supernatural forces, that he very often converses with the 'spirits', and finally that a very brief ceremony is enough for a man to 'die-finish'. The influence over the natives exercised by the sorcerers is unlimited. They are aware of their power and take advantage of the credulity and blind

submission of the Kanakas to exploit them to an appalling extent.

While staying in a village in the Gazelle Peninsula, I was present at the funeral of an old native named Vili. The corpse was tied to two posts, and decorated with a good many feathers and shells. The wives of the defunct, their bodies sprinkled with ashes, wept by the side of the body which, painted, stiff, and covered with feathers, looked like a bird of the Apocalypse. In the course of the ceremony, men brought sea water, which was poured over the head of the dead man, whilst others put earth and fruit on his shrivelled legs. Then one of his relatives—I think it was his son—came forward and distributed a number of *tabus*.[1] When he came to a man, about fifty years old, who was standing apart from the rest, he gave him four or five times as many *tabus* as he had given to the others. This favoured individual was the sorcerer of the village.

'The dead man will go to *Tingenatabaran* (Paradise),' the sorcerer told me when I asked him the meaning of the ceremony. 'There he is received by the Great Spirit Tulumean, who asks him: "Where are your bracelets and how many *tabus* were given at your funeral?" The dead man has to answer this question.

'If the Tulumean considers that the number of *tabus* distributed was not enough, he casts the dead man into Jakupai, which is the most awful of hells.'

'Suppose,' I said, 'that the sons of the deceased, while not having distributed enough *tabus*, have, however, given

[1]Money made of shells pierced in the middle, and tied together by passing a string through them.

three or four to the sorcerer. Will the dead man go to Jakupai, or will he stay in the Paradise of *Tingenatabaran*?'

'In that case,' replied the sage, 'he will not go to Jakupai.'

Then, to guard against any possible misunderstanding, he added after a moment's reflection:

'But it depends upon the number of *tabus* that the sorcerer has received.'

Another day, I was passing with a patrol near the country of the Ku-Ku-Ku-Kus. In a village, the men told us that for some time past 'miracles' had been performed at a little stream that ran a few hundred yards from their huts. A man, it appeared, had in fact gone to Kori, the sorcerer, and the latter had invited him to throw a *giri-giri* into the river at a place which was exactly indicated. The sorcerer told him to go there the next morning, when he would find two *giri-giris* instead of one. The man did so and found two necklaces of berries. Naturally he told the story to everyone, and Kori's hut was two hours later literally besieged by persons wanting to throw *giri-giris* and *kuma-kumas* into the river. The sorcerer was equal to the occasion. Within twenty-four hours nearly all the natives of the village were twice as rich as they had been the day before. The Spirits seemed to be obedient to Kori's orders.

This was repeated during the following weeks, and Kori —the great Kori—appeared to be infallible. Finally, after a Great Palaver, it was decided to collect all the fortune of the tribe, all the *giri-giris*, all the *kuma-kumas*, and throw them into the water, to find them doubled, or perhaps tripled, the next day, as might be agreed upon between the Spirits and Kori. The villagers' only regret was that

they could not also throw their women and pigs into the river.

And so the village remained without *giri-giris* and without *kuma-kumas*, which was very regrettable, complained the chief who told us the story, for that very day 'the Spirits were angry and carried off everything. And what can be done to Kori? He will place us under a *puri-puri* . . . or he may refuse to make it rain. . . . And so we shall be still poorer.'

'Kori,' said the patrol officer to the sorcerer, who had been summoned in haste, ten minutes later, 'I am going away now, and shall come back in three days. You must talk to the Spirits, and persuade them to bring back the garlands and necklaces which were thrown into the river. If a single necklace or a single garland is missing when I return, this will prove that you are no longer in favour with the Spirits. Then I shall load you with chains and take you away, very far, to the edge of the great waters, where the remainder of your days shall be spent in chains, and where perhaps you will be lucky enough to find the good *tambarans* again.'

Kori lowered his eyes, and threw a furtive glance at a heavy chain which a policeman had in his hands. . . . And so ended a great financial career in the country of the Ku-Ku-Ku-Kus.

The Kanaka is lucky if he escapes from the clutches of the sorcerer with the loss of a few *giri-giris* and *kuma-kumas* extorted by the good friends of the *tambarans* from him by means of some tale or comparatively innocent trick as clever as it is audacious. Unfortunately, as often as not, the sorcerer's little game has more fatal consequences by reason

of the native rules requiring that a *puri-puri* should be countered at once by a still more effective *puri-puri* than that which brought about the death of the first victim. And this is one of the most devilish chapters in the harassed life of the New Guinea savages.

Cannibalism, head-hunting, leprosy, tuberculosis, malaria, typhus, wars, scorpions and an endless number of skin-diseases: there are only too many ways of losing one's life in this Pacific Hell. But the list is not quite complete. There are also cases of death from fright.

One day a native carrier, a sturdy fellow from New Ireland, came in fear and trembling to see a patrol officer:

'Master, me die now. Me caught by *puri-puri*.'

The officer examined the man, who appeared to be in perfect health. No fever, no signs of ulcers, blood tests satisfactory, nothing wrong with his lungs, stomach in good condition, heart sound.

He was given a harmless powder to soothe him, and a few minutes later they forgot all about him. Three days elapsed, and they then heard that the man had died early that morning.

'Of what?' asked the patrol sergeant.

'*Puri-puri*.'

The sergeant shrugged his shoulders.

When such incidents occur near towns like Rabaul or Salamaua there is an autopsy to discover whether death is due to poisoning. Sometimes even they take the trouble to send the viscera to the Medical Institute at Sydney. But neither autopsy nor analysis have ever revealed anythnig.

When natives think that they are victims of *puri-puri*

they die because they want to. They want to die because they know that there is no earthly remedy for *puri-puri*.

All those who have dealings with the *tambarans*—such at least is the native belief—can cast a *puri-puri* on anyone by muttering a few fatal sentences, holding in their hand any object with which the victim has been in contact. A little mud with the imprint of the feet of the person they want to kill is enough. For a trifling present, any sorcerer will teach no matter whom the formula required to cast a *puri-puri*, and once this has been pronounced there is no way, not even for the most powerful sorcerer, to save the life of the victim.

Natives believing themselves to be victims of these formidable machinations fall into a state of extreme apathy, refuse all food, have terrible hallucinations at night, and, finally, die of exhaustion, a prey to a kind of madness, the symptoms of which are something between melancholia and frenzy.

When patients die of fright, men of the same *totem* meet and decide to kill or cast a *puri-puri* on the person responsible for the death of their brother. A few *giri-giris* are given to a sorcerer, and the curse is pronounced. Another man dies, and a fresh vendetta begins. The same routine has gone on for thousands of years. Men kill one another, and the sorcerers, who are the real culprits, grow rich on the presents which natives, in their lust for vengeance, heap on them. Wrinkled, old, wicked and sordid, the sorcerers batten on the natives like repugnant wild beasts, or vampires in a nightmare, spreading death and destruction wherever they go.

Some years ago, near Madang, a sorcerer had a dispute

with five natives about a pig. A few weeks later several children died in the village from an epidemic. The sorcerer took this opportunity to wreak his vengeance on the men who had refused to make him a present of the pig. He persuaded the villagers that the five men had cast a spell on the unfortunate children. Within a few hours the huts of the 'assassins' were set on fire, and they themselves were put to death with unbelievable tortures. And, for having freed the village from evil spirits, all the property of the victims was granted to the sorcerer.

I must add that *puri-puri* will not only kill, but also may produce paralysis of the limbs, which in the jungle means a slow and cruel death. Happily, the white men, who can do nothing against a *puri-puri* involving death, have effective remedies for paralysis of the legs or arms. As this is generally a nervous disease, at first it was dealt with by purely scientific means, more or less on Freudian principles. Psycho-analysis, however, when faced with hypnotic influences and the complexes and reflexes of cannibals, proved quite ineffective until Doctor Brennan devised a very scientific, and at the same time a very simple, treatment, which is employed with complete success.

'A boy aged about twenty', he informed me, 'was once brought to hospital unable to walk as the result of a *puri-puri*. I made an examination, and found that he was perfectly healthy, but was under influence of a fixed idea. He thought that he was condemned to remain lying down for the rest of his life. I tried to cure him by massage, by hydrotherapy, and finally by electrotherapy, but with no effect. He kept on telling me that he could not stand upright!

'He was a nice boy, and I was sorry for him, I therefore

decided to put him under a rather drastic treatment, which, I thought, might be effective. I made him sit in a chair, stood behind him, and took an iron bar which had been heated white hot. I touched his back lightly with it. My patient gave a terrific shout, jumped up and began to run as fast as he could. The burn was insignificant, and the cure was complete!'

Puri-puri may, thanks to the activity of the sorcerer, have direct evil results; but often the superstition of the native and the beliefs induced by it lead, indirectly, to the murder of the most peaceable natives. A man dies from *puri-puri*. His brother applies to the sorcerer to find out the name of the author of the crime. The sorcerer gives him a powder called *pe-pe*, which he must take as soon as he is back in his hut. The native, after presenting gifts to the sorcerer, goes home, and in accordance with instructions swallows the powder, which is a soporific composed of various plants. The first face that he sees in his dream is that of the man who killed his brother. A few hours later he wakes up, remembers his dream, goes to look for the man and breaks his head with an axe. The affair, as far as he is concerned, is settled. It is then the turn of the relations of the murdered man to avenge the death of their father or brother.

In cases of cannibalism, head-hunting, women suckling dogs and pigs, and nearly all the barbaric, inhuman and revolting customs that degrade natives of the bush, the sorcerer is nearly always responsible. Being the only persons with a knowledge of the secrets of creation, of the mysteries of death and of the places where the *tambarans* appear to the native; and as the dispensers of good and evil, and of life and death, these sinister old men reduce whole tribes to

moral slavery, and are followed and obeyed out of fear of provoking the wrath of the spirits, of whom the sorcerer is both servant and master. It is sufficient for a sorcerer to give a hint and the most avaricious Kanaka—capable of killing his own brother for a *giri-giri*—will give up his best pigs.

The sorcerer has only to say a word for the timidest man to go at night into the jungle to palaver with mysterious spirits. A gesture is sufficient for the most jealous warrior to hand over to him his wives or his daughter. Why? Because the Kanakas, whether avaricious or open handed, brave or cowardly, jealous or indifferent, old or young, rich or poor, are all equally afraid of death, of the annihilation of the body, of the inevitable end of all life and activity. These mysteries continually haunt their troubled imagination which has never had as consolation the idea of redemption and the hope of another life.

In the course of my travels, I often asked myself if the sorcerers, who claim to possess supernatural powers, are really able to perform acts which are beyond the limits of our comprehension. I met many sorcerers—or men who had the reputation of being sorcerers; I questioned closely those patrol officers with whom I travelled; and the conclusion I reached was that sorcerers, however cunning and rascally they may be, hardly reach the level, from the supernatural point of view, of a second-rate juggler, hypnotist or charlatan. Before going to New Guinea I travelled in India to make a study of the 'miracles' performed by Yogis and Saddhus. While convinced that there was no question of 'miracles', I had to admit that Yogis have certain powers of which we know nothing, and can perform acts which we can neither imitate nor understand. But in the bush, 'super-

natural' manifestations, such as those with which the Hindu Yogis astonish the faithful, will be looked for in vain. The Melanesian sorcerer, corrupt, abject and vicious, has two qualities only: of being relatively more intelligent than his dupes, and of having the courage to laugh at the *tambarans* of whom others stand so much in fear. He merely makes use of them to provide an easy and comfortable livelihood for himself. The clumsiest juggler, performing in a village fair, could give points to the most powerful and notorious sorcerer.

This is what happened a few years ago in Papua, where the sorcerers were displaying so much activity that the Government became anxious and decided to intervene. One patrol after another, one missionary after another, were despatched to the villages infected by the sorcerers. But the representatives both of temporal and spiritual power equally failed to free the district from this plague. The Papuan Government which, apparently, is never at a loss for expedients, sent a telegram to Brisbane, and ten days later a man who looked neither like an explorer nor a gold-miner disembarked in New Guinea.

The Kanakas with their wives, children and sorcerers were invited to a Grand Palaver. Hundreds of them accepted the invitation of the Government and assembled on the sea coast. In the daytime, presents were distributed, and a copious *kai-kai* was given under the shade of the palm trees. The natives were delighted. When night came someone made a speech, in which it was announced that the greatest sorcerer in the world had just placed himself at the disposal of the Government, and that it was he who would in future be in control of the fate of dead and living alike.

Papuan sorcerers wearing their ceremonial masks

The sorcerers present murmured, and the Kanakas seemed sceptical. Then the man from Brisbane came forward holding a sword in his hand. With one stroke he cut a pig in two; then, after wiping the bloodstained blade, he swallowed it. A shout of astonishment arose from the admiring crowd. But that was not all. The great sorcerer lighted a torch and swallowed it. Then he breathed out fire. Finally, turning to the sorcerers who were present, he asked them to do the same. Whether they liked it or not, the sorcerers came forward and carefully examined both sword and torch. The one was very sharp and the other was still burning. A week later there was not a sorcerer left in the district.

To be fair, I must add that my views on the influence of sorcerers are not those of every white man living in New Guinea, or who has travelled in the country. Some among them do believe in their supernatural powers and in an exceptional telepathic gift among the inhabitants of the jungle in general. Here, for example, is the story told by a protestant missionary in Woodlark, a little island of the Louisade Archipelago, to the east of New Guinea, who vouched for its authenticity:

'I had a native boy', he said, 'who formerly had been in the service of an English planter on an island a couple of hundred miles from here. One Sunday, when walking under the palm trees, I saw the boy lying on the ground sobbing loudly. I asked him what was the matter.

' "Me very sad," replied the boy, still crying, "because white Master other island him dead."

'I asked:

' "Dead? but when and how?"

'And the boy answered:

'"Now, just now."

'I had forgotten this scene when five days later a schooner arrived and brought news that the planter had died on the previous Sunday. A miracle? No. I think that it was telepathy.'

Nearly all the white inhabitants of the jungle relate similar anecdotes when the conversation turns to bush telegraphy, the extraordinary instances of which no one has yet quite explained. During my travels I was often surprised to discover that the *luluai* with whom I was talking knew what road we had followed the day before. I was able to verify, on at least a dozen occasions, that bush telegraphy exists and functions marvellously. I have met natives who gave me an exact description of a place I had camped at five days before. Yet it was impossible for them to have been there, as to reach the place they would have had to cross districts occupied by hostile tribes.

'For three days I have been expecting you,' said a tribal chief to me near Ramu. 'I knew you were coming.'

When I asked him about it he proved that he knew the exact number of my armed boys and carriers. He even knew how many tents we had pitched at night.

I assume that the news was transmitted from one tribe to another by means of their drums, the monotonous droning of which always seems to follow patrols and expeditions into the innermost depths of the jungle. But this explanation is insufficient for several reasons. In the first place the tribes are continually at war with one another. It is therefore improbable that they render one another reciprocal services, unless there exists among them a tacit agreement

that makes the transmission of all news obligatory. Besides, in New Guinea, one can go fifty or sixty miles without meeting a single human being. And the sound of a drum will hardly carry more than three or four miles. How is it that news can travel through uninhabited districts? That is the question put hundreds of times by patrol officers without an answer ever having been found to it.

Man living in close touch with nature, as patrol officers used to tell me, has qualities which we do not possess. Among them is telepathy. It is waste of time to examine the *kundu* drums, as they only serve for the transmission of what we may call local news. When they want to send news to a distant place the Kanakas are popularly supposed to employ telepathy.

Although I have heard this statement dozens of times, I do not believe it, never having met a native who gave any signs of possessing this telepathic gift. I believe it is simply a system of perfectly organised telegraphy, and that telegraphists are to be found even in districts supposed to be uninhabited.

But to return to the sorcerers. In the Gazelle Peninsula there are still some, who go by the name of *tena-papait*, who are skilful in the use of a kind of trepanning. Among all the sorcerers in the Archipelago, without a doubt the *tena-papaits* are the cleverest, as they practise trepanning with remarkable skill. They are the only sorcerers who are not content to cure their patients by incantations and miraculous draughts, but who carry out surgical operations. It is true that this remedy is misused, and that they trepan without any regard for the nature of the illness. If the patient has fever, they trepan; if he has a stomach-ache, they

trepan; or if perhaps he is suffering from rheumatism, they trepan. In New Britain there are entire villages where every man of a certain age has been trepanned, for the younger men prefer to go to the head of the medical patrol, who, whilst being a very great 'sorcerer', uses the knife as little as possible. In any case it never enters into his head to trepan a native suffering from intestinal ulcers.

The following is a characteristic example of native mentality: An old Kanaka with a deep scar on his forehead, having, like nearly all the men of his tribe, been trepanned, said to me one day:

'*Tena-papait* open head let out bad devil make me ill. Him tie *mailan* (a kind of amulet) on me and me quite well.'

'But he might have tied the *mailan* without opening your head?'

'No,' replied the Kanaka, '*mailan* only good when head opened.'

Curiously enough, the operation is almost always successful, although Kanakas of course know nothing about anaesthetics or antiseptics, and trepan with a knife of bone or bamboo. The wound is then washed with *kubika*, extracted from cocoanuts, which might perhaps act as a disinfectant, if it were not applied by the dirty fingers of the *tena-papait*. Parkinson, who had the good fortune to be present at one of these operations, states that it was performed under indescribably dirty conditions. In spite of this the Kanaka survives. In this respect they are like camels, which will go for days without food, drink or rest, facing sand storms, a blazing sun by day and the icy cold of desert

nights, and yet die within an hour from an undigested tuft of grass or a scratch on the foot.

It would be a mistake to suppose that the worthy sorcerers of Melanesia are content to excite their flock to cut off heads to please the *tambarans*, or restrict themselves to boring holes in the head of a Kanaka suffering from a cold or a skin disease. Far from it. Their activity in the matter of heads is boundless, and many are the tortures which they inflict on natives in the name of sacred traditions and rites. Some require, in certain districts, that the heads of newborn children should be elongated, while others call for the disfiguration of young men on reaching the age of puberty.

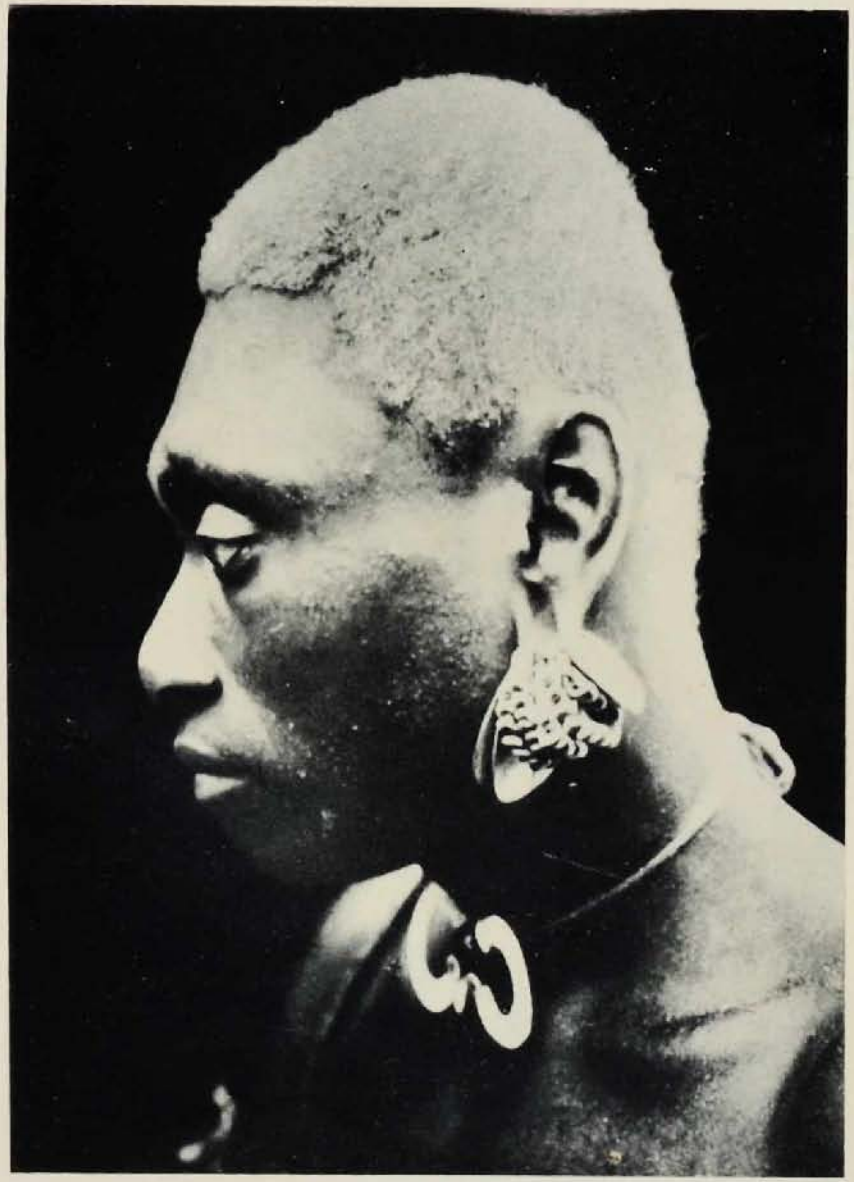
It is on the coast of New Britain that I first came across men with elongated heads. Having seen two or three dolichocephalic individuals I supposed they were rare exceptions due to a freak of nature producing a few oblong heads among numbers of round ones. But when I met the fourteenth or fifteenth native with a head of a form peculiar, according to racial experts, to the Nordic and Aryan races, I was forced to conclude that it could not be an accident. For, to be accurate, the form of these oblong heads was not quite normal. The men appeared to have undergone a mysterious operation, in the course of which the surgeon, by a sudden impulse, had raised a little cupola over the forehead.

It was only after going into the next village that the mystery of the oblong heads was cleared up. We noticed there some women carrying babies whose heads were wrapped in enormous turbans made of bamboo and bark.

At first we thought that the children were ill, and that it was to protect them against the sun that a loving mother had provided this extraordinary head-dress. On closer examination we noticed that the head was tightly bound with bandages of bark, to prevent the bone from developing in a horizontal direction. By placing the skull in a kind of vice, the bones were made to develop in a different direction, vertically instead of horizontally, in flagrant violation of the elementary laws of ethnographical science.

It goes without saying that the unfortunate babies, thus constrained to form an exception to the rule that Kanakas' heads are round, seemed to suffer greatly from the constant pressure. With eyelids and cheeks swollen, pale and emaciated, they lay almost inanimate in their mothers' arms. But, curiously, we learned from conversation with adults that the torture undergone in childhood had in no way impaired the development of their intelligence. Natives of this district were by no means inferior in this respect to Kanakas whom we met elsewhere, and whose normal growth had not been interfered with. What one would like to know, in reference to this custom, is the infant mortality in the district round Gasmata and Nakanal, where oblong heads are very fashionable. If it were possible to obtain such statistics I imagine that the rate would be rather higher than in Scandinavian countries!

The reasons for this abominable custom are to be found in the recommendation of sorcerers, who insist that oblong heads bring good luck, and that their owners have nothing to fear from evil *tambarans*. That at least is what the mothers told us in a tone of conviction. And when I asked one of them whether she was not afraid of her baby dying



Dolichocephalic native of Nakanai in New Britain

At Nakanai and Gasmata the children's heads are bound in turbans to lengthen their skulls

from the abrasions caused by the bandage, she replied philosophically:

'If picaninny die, it be because *puri-puri*, and if be *puri-puri* baby must die.'

Unfortunately it was only after leaving New Guinea that I heard of an interesting theory held by the eminent Macmillan Brown. He makes out that, in elongating their heads, the Kanakas wish to resemble their remote ancestors, who had oblong heads, and were probably of Caucasian origin. To be dolichocephalic would therefore, among the Kanakas, appear to be a sign of aristocracy, a sort of proof of descent, in short a genuine seal of nobility. Being far from New Guinea when I first heard of this hypothesis I could not go into it. But if it is a fact it is a confirmation of the other theory, based on the belief in the god Lono, which assigns a white and dolichocephalic origin to the people of Oceania.

The method of disfiguring boys is everywhere more or less the same. The faces of the initiated are beaten with bamboo sticks until the skin is lacerated and blood flows freely. Boys must endure this stoically without any cry of pain, thereby proving that they are no longer children, and can bear pain. The blows are given horizontally, and leave deep marks. The Kanakas are very proud of their scars, round which a red or yellow circle is often painted to attract attention, above all that of women, to these glorious wounds. Among the Kanakas there are some whose entire face is covered with scars, even across their lips and nose. Although this gives them a truly diabolical appearance, it makes them very popular with the ladies. In every clime

and every race women have a profound admiration for those who have endured the worst sufferings in their honour.

It is not only men who show extreme coquetry and submit stoically to torture in order to display their glorious scars. Women too are willing to submit to painful operations in order to adorn their persons with scars that sometimes entirely cover their back and breasts. In Papua they tattoo themselves in colour, while natives living in Mandated Territory seem to prefer 'embroidered' tattooing. This operation is generally carried out by the sorcerer with an L-shaped bamboo. The point of the shorter arm is placed on the body, and this is hit with some heavy object, preferably a club, until the skin is pierced by the bamboo. The wound is washed, and then a kind of ointment, the composition of which varies in different districts, but must contain some calcareous substance to ensure uneven cicatrisation, is applied.

To give another example of the activities of sorcerers, and the many strange practices due to their influence, I must mention a custom, of which there seems to be no explanation, observed by me among the inhabitants of the Purari district. We were entering a village where the population gave us a very friendly reception. The men, women, children, huts, pigs, weapons and ornaments seemed to be exactly like those which I had seen in other villages. But one thing excited our curiosity: it was a long, flexible switch, tied so as to make a hoop and carried by the men on their backs. At first we imagined that this strange instrument might be used for the capture of an enemy, like the

net of a Roman gladiator. Unluckily, we had no interpreter with us who was able to speak the local dialect: we therefore asked what these enormous hoops were used for, by means of signs. The Kanakas seemed to understand us, and in reply raised their hands to their mouths. We supposed consequently that the hoops were used to catch pigs, or jungle rats, which would be no doubt the *pièce de résistance* on the tribal bill of fare.

Great was our surprise when, after distributing little presents to them, we saw the men take a hoop, put one end of it to their mouth and begin to swallow it. I can state without exaggeration that some of them managed to put a six-foot reed down their throat. When they had swallowed enough they withdrew it all at once; then, after a few minutes' rest, they began this strange operation over again. They grinned, they danced, they shouted and gave us to understand that they were swallowing the reed because they felt happy. When by signs we asked what was the meaning of this strange procedure, they produced a withered little old man who appeared to know all about the profound causes underlying their action. It was the village sorcerer. But in spite of his appearing to be very wise, to judge by the number of bones which decorated his hollow chest, his linguistic talents were no greater than those of the other villagers. So we had to leave without knowing why, in the Purari district, they thrust six-foot sticks down their throats when they are given a present!

Among the many mysteries which surround the life of the natives that of their secret societies is especially interesting.

These societies flourish everywhere in the Far East, above all in China, where the famous White Lotus Society still exists. It is probable that the institution of secret societies was imported into Oceania from the East, as it is almost unknown to most Polynesians, but on the other hand it is much in vogue with the Melanesians, who alone had relations with Orientals. It is very prevalent in New Britain and in certain islands of the Solomon group, and, finally, on the eastern coast of New Guinea. Although these associations have lost much of the importance which they formerly possessed, they still form a serious obstacle to the civilising activity of the colonists.

The most important secret society is called 'Ingiet' or 'Maravot'. As the result of vigorous action taken by the Government against natives affiliated to this association, and the severity of punishments inflicted during recent years on the Ingiets, its members are few, in spite of the efforts of the sorcerers to resuscitate the society from its ashes. Patrol officers have told me that formerly it was easy to pick up in any village a dozen *taba-tabas* (the full name of which is *taba-taba na kaiya*): they are carved-wood figures of sloths, indispensable for the rites of the Maravots. Today only a few specimens are to be found in the possession of collectors. As for the natives, if they have any they will not allow the white man to see them. The society of Maravots has become secret in the strictest sense of the word.

The objects of this formidable association are numerous, but the basic programme of the society of Ingiets or Maravots is as simple as it is ingenious. It consists in *moramora*, that is in being 'happy'. It is not, of course, this part of their

programme which has involved them in trouble with the authorities. The Australians in fact have no objection to the natives whom they administer being merry. But they have been exasperated by the way in which these worthy Ingiets apply *moramora*, and other precepts of Kanaka hedonism.

The hedonism of bushmen, though it has little or nothing in common, in its details, with the teaching of Epicurus and the Attic sages, has nevertheless, in essentials, a remarkable resemblance to these ancient doctrines. But while genuine hedonism in advocating physical enjoyment also leaves room for intellectual pleasures, the Kanaka mentality only knows three pleasures capable of contributing to perfect human happiness: wealth, peace and love; proving once more that these people are not so stupid as they sometimes appear to be.

One might suppose that a Kanaka professing such a faith would endeavour to cultivate his fields diligently in order to become rich; that he would avoid war and quarrels in order to live in peace; and that by payment of a few pigs he would provide himself with a sufficient number of wives to cool his amorous ardours. Unfortunately such 'complicated' solutions of the problem never occur to him, and instead of working, living in peace and buying himself wives, he prefers to become an Ingiet in order to attain his desire for *moramora*. How?

As for wealth, that is simple. Everyone on becoming a member of the society must pay a subscription of a few *tabus*, which the older members of the association divide amongst themselves. But as these *tabus* are insufficient to assure a fortune to all of the Ingiets, they compel non-members to pay an annual contribution to the society. If

a man refuses to pay this contribution the Ingiets serve a summons on him, generally in the form of the head of a defaulter in arrears with his quota. If outsiders persist in refusing payment, their mutilated bodies will most probably be found in the forest by the next patrol which comes that way. Consequently, however fond the Kanakas may be of their *tabus*, they prefer to part with them rather than have their heads cut off. This is how the Ingiets become rich. . . .

As for peace, the Ingiets have an excellent method of contriving the disappearance of those against whom they have a grudge, or by whom they are threatened with a vendetta. It is a kind of *puri-puri*, of remarkable efficacy, called *ingiet na matmat*. To cast this *puri-puri* on anyone the Ingiet must obtain a *puta*, that is any object that his intended victim has touched. With the *puta* before him the Ingiet holds the *taba-taba* in his hand and cries:

'May you die on the road.'

This ceremony concluded, the Ingiet announces that So-and-So has been laid under an *ingiet na matmat*. When we remember that a simple *puri-puri* is enough to make a Kanaka die of fright, one can imagine the effect on a native of such an announcement. In despair, he will leave his village and fly into the forest where, haunted by hallucinations and exhausted by fatigue, he will die of hunger in a few days. Should his death be delayed too long, it will be hastened by a blow from a club, administered by one or several Ingiets, who track down their victims until the *ingiet na matmat* has had the desired effect. And in this way the Ingiets may live in peace.

As for love, it must be admitted that in this respect the

Ingiets show extreme delicacy since, on the authority of Parkinson, they never make love to women who are legally and honourably married. On the other hand, they require that at their meetings, which always take place in a clearing in the forest, widows and girls from neighbouring villages should be collected a few hundred yards away from where their mysterious Council is being held. As soon as the ceremony is over the Ingiets join the ladies, and thus *moramora* may also provide the supreme happiness which love brings.

Alas! The patrols in these parts put the worst interpretations on the activities of the Ingiets, which they call simply blackmail, murder, witchcraft and rape, and instead of appreciating the beauty of the *moramora* doctrine they send the Ingiets to penal servitude or the gallows. This is perhaps why, in spite of all my efforts, I was unable to make the acquaintance of an Ingiet, and if I ever mentioned the name before a native, he hastened to declare that 'him be mission boy and go to church every Sunday'.

On the other hand, I did manage to make friends with members of another great secret association that flourishes in New Britain. This is called Duk-Duk, and its members are more or less well known to the authorities who, while energetically stamping out the Ingiets, are constrained to tolerate the activity of the Duk-Duks. The Duk-Duks hardly ever murder, and only practise witchcraft in very exceptional cases. They are blackmailers, but on payment of a few *tabus* they consent to protect uninitiated natives against the cupidity of the sorcerers, or that of richer Kanakas, who often abuse the power that the possession of many *giri-giris* and *kuma-kumas* gives them. As for rape and

seduction of women, patrol officers representing the law, which punishes adultery severely, resemble injured husbands and very rarely discover offences of this kind.

It may therefore be asserted that, contrary to the opinion of some travellers, the Duk-Duks are comparatively inoffensive from our point of view, but not from that of the natives, who readily submit to the painful ceremony of initiation, and would certainly be very annoyed if anyone prevented them from becoming members of this distinguished society.

Finally, it must be borne in mind that the Duk-Duks operate in a district where the institution of tribal chiefs is unknown: consequently it is their chief, the *tubuan*, who is the representative of the 'legislative and executive' authority in this area.

I was fortunate to have been in New Britain during the month of May, when the festivities of the Duk-Duks take place. To meet members of this secret association we left Rabaul, following the coast of the Gazelle Peninsula, which is bordered by frequent plantations of palm trees. We were about fifteen miles from the last mission-station when we saw two strange beings advancing towards us. Except for their legs they looked hardly human. Their bodies disappeared under a grotesque costume of leaves, and their heads were concealed by an enormous mask, nearly three feet high. Leaping from side to side, and occasionally squatting on their haunches, the two Duk-Duks looked like those alarming monsters which figure in Chinese mythology. When I saw them, I understood at once why natives pay their contribution without protest when a Duk-Duk comes to their hut.

Duk-Duks in New Britain

A family of fishermen on the coast of New Britain

To make friends with the Duk-Duks was relatively easy, as they put out their hands at once towards us indicating their readiness to accept any pretty presents. After we had given them a little tobacco they consented to go to their *tubuan*, whose permission we required to attend an initiation of some new members that evening.

After waiting some hours, the two men came back and informed us that on payment of ten times ten twists of tobacco, ten times ten knives, and a few dozen *tabus*, the *tubuan* would have no objection to our attending the ceremony. We gave them about fifty twists of tobacco, two axes and a knife, and the matter was settled. We spent the rest of the day in a village where they initiated us into the mysteries of fishing with 'native dynamite'. This sport is a very curious one. The Kanakas have a plant called *wun*, which has an extraordinary effect on fish. The fishermen, after giving a good dose of *wun* to some small fry, in a bucket, throw the fish thus doped back into the sea. There they are at once devoured, with extraordinary rapidity, by bigger fish. Unluckily for the latter their enjoyment is short-lived, as a few seconds after enjoying a good lunch they feel, like Orientals, in need of a siesta, if such an expression can be applied to the afternoon rest of a fish. To cut the story short, the big fish are, in their turn, affected by the *wun*, so that the natives sometimes catch a dozen sleepy fellows with a single cast of their net. *Wun* has no effect on human beings, and a few minutes after the fish have been caught they are handed to the women squatting by fires on the shore, and boiled in a large clay pot.

At five o'clock in the afternoon we were camped near the fishermen, when the two Duk-Duks who had served as

liaison officers returned to take us to the *tarain*, where the initiation ceremony was to take place. We followed the two men whose shadows, elongated by the setting sun, moved under the palms like black monsters fleeing from the light. The sands of the sea coast disappeared and we came to a dense forest. Duk-Duks appeared from all sides, and joining us marched in silence at the head of our column. From time to time we thought we heard what sounded like the fluttering of invisible wings: it was the rustle of the innumerable leaves which composed the Duk-Duk uniform. Now and then a jungle rat jumped from the bushes between the palm trees. Our boys were a little nervous, fearing an ambush, and advanced cautiously with their rifles at the ready.

The shades of night were falling on the forest by the time we reached the *tarain*, which was situated in a large clearing. In the middle, a space of about one hundred square yards was enclosed by long bamboos placed horizontally between low posts. A score of Duk-Duks were palavering peacefully in the enclosure, grouped round a man whose head-dress was a little taller and more ornate than that of the others. It was the *tubuan*.

'If you come into the *tarain*,' he said to us with much dignity, 'you must pay me ten times ten times ten times. . . .'

'Please don't trouble,' interrupted my companion. 'We do not want to go inside, and consequently shall not pay anything. We will give the presents, as agreed, to attend the initiation.'

When the presents were handed over the *tubuan* relaxed a little and, in the hope apparently of receiving more presents, seemed disposed to be more amiable. While our

boys were fixing our tents in a clearing close by, we sat down beside the *tubuan*. I asked him how he had obtained his high rank.

'I bought it,' he said distinctly. His voice, from behind the covering of bark which concealed his face, sounded rather pleasant.

'I paid much much to become *tubuan*, because I am very rich,' he continued with evident pride.

Then he added: 'Tonight I shall give a *tabu* to all the new initiates.'

'You are a very great *tubuan*,' I said, 'but if you always give a *tabn* to the new initiates, some day you will be very poor.'

'What you say is not true,' he replied indignantly. 'I give one *tabu* to the initiates, but their fathers each give me four *tabus* in order that their sons may come to the *tarain*. So you see that I shall continue to be rich and powerful.'

'Under these conditions you will certainly always be rich. But, however many *tabus* you may have, I am still richer than you. And without asking for *tabus* I will give you one if you will tell me what are the advantages of being a Duk-Duk.'

'Where is the *tabu*?' he asked. On receiving the garland of shells he examined it closely, turning it over in his hand. Then he said:

'It is a very very great secret, but I will tell you everything, because I know that you will give me more *tabus*.'

He took a long time explaining to me the secret of the Duk-Duks; that is, if phrases and words which often had no sense can be called an explanation. He talked of the Spirits, but denied having practised witchcraft. He de-

clared that he had never killed anyone, but that enemies of the Duk-Duk might die *by chance*. As for collecting *tabus*, he said that it continued for two months after the birth of a Duk-Duk, and this took place on the day following the initiation. When speaking of the objects of the society he was extremely vague. 'Very very important,' he said. 'Why?' 'Because it is very important. The Duk-Duks are under the protection of the Spirits. Their pigs do not die and their nets are always full of fish.'

This was about all. Although there was nothing very precise. I let him talk for an hour, in order to find out whether he wanted to keep his secret, or whether it was merely that he himself did not know what were the objects and program of the society whose destiny he controlled.

I believe the latter assumption to be the true one. The Duk-Duks, while believing that to be a member of the association brings luck, only enjoy two practical advantages. They certainly do less work than those who are not Duk-Duks and, what is more important still, they excite the admiration of the women, on whom the costume of leaves and the masks have exactly the same effect as military uniforms on white women. If they had the necessary implements, before the arrival of Duk-Duks in their village Kanakas would take the same precautions to preserve the chastity of their wives as Crusaders were supposed to have taken when away in the Holy Land, and, having no knowledge of history, their slumbers would be undisturbed by any feeling of anxiety.

But I had not much time to meditate about the Duk-Duks' secrets. It was soon dark. Torches and fires were lighted, and the ceremony of initiation began. The Duk-

Duks assembled in the middle of the *tarain*, where they danced to the sound of drums, occasionally uttering long-drawn-out cries. Then, on a sign from the *tubuan*, after marching two or three times round the enclosure, they squatted on the ground. Suddenly, in a corner, we saw some Duk-Duks with three boys. These were led into the middle of the enclosure, where a small fire was burning. The dance began again. The scene was not without a certain savage beauty. Dense smoke from torches and fires rose into the sky, yellow flames flickered in the darkness, and the monotonous sound of drums, the terrifying masks of the men, their slow and rhythmic movements, all gave a strange and mysterious aspect to this ceremony performed in the depths of a tropical forest. The three boys, slim, trembling and casting anxious looks around them, stood near the fire like animals waiting to be sacrificed on the altar of some strange and bloodthirsty god.

A shriek suddenly rang through the night air. The Duk-Duks had stopped dancing, but the drums were now beating furiously. A masked man struck the boy nearest to him. The unfortunate youth bounded backwards; his face was covered with blood. From all sides raised sticks rained blows on the three novices. Drunk with blood, the Duk-Duks shouted, leaped and waved their gory sticks, while the three boys lay senseless in a pool of blood.

All night the sound of drums continued. As we lay in our tents we heard the cries and yells of the Duk-Duks, which continued until dawn. Next morning, when the sun appeared above the horizon, the Duk-Duks, tired out, assembled on the shore. A war-canoe painted in bright colours approached from the sea. On it stood the Duk-Duk,

the personification of the Spirit to whom his three new children were to be presented. The latter, spattered with blood, back and chest bruised and wounded, seemed in spite of everything to be quite happy. The boat drew near, gently rocked on emerald waves which were lighted by the first rays of the rising sun.

Standing quite motionless, the Duk-Duks fixed their eyes on the strange phantom standing stiffly upright on the canoe. A fresh breeze from the forest rustled through the dresses of these enigmatic men who, immobile as statues, seemed at this moment to me to be masters of weird and bloody mysteries, which they would never reveal to us.

A few minutes later the prow of the boat crunched on the sand. A loud shout arose, and the man descended from the frail canoe. Drums were beaten, and their sound rolled out in a formidable crescendo.

It was broad daylight.

A Duk-Duk had been born.

III. WOMEN, PIGS AND OTHER TREASURES

There is in life a principle more powerful than life itself.—BALZAC, 'Physiologie du mariage'.

Most of the navigators who, in ancient times, visited the islands under the Southern Cross, when they came back did not fail to spread the most flattering descriptions of the bewitching beauty of the women they saw on these distant shores. Their enthusiasm has been shared by several writers who, tired of civilisation, chose an island in Polynesia or Melanesia as a place of refuge in which to lead the peaceful and idyllic existence of primitive man. Judging by their reports and by the romantic tales of the navigators it is to be imagined that Oceania is an earthly Paradise, where in the shade of a palm tree, under a clear sky, women with sylph-like figures and velvety skins languish, listening to the eternal murmur of the sea waves, in which they dip their rounded and gleaming limbs. It is to be supposed that, where man lives in a state of nature, regardless of rules, laws, and prejudices, which hamper a free existence, that, where flowers and beasts love and reproduce themselves in endless harmony, life is one long round of love, passions, idylls, caresses, kisses and thrilling pastimes, and that all

these combine to fill the calm and stupefying atmosphere of these enchanted isles with delight.

Unfortunately the reality is very different from what I expected before visiting Oceania. It is true that in some of the islands, particularly those frequented by writers and poets, who have sung the praises of native women—Samoa, Hawaii and Tahiti—these women are undoubtedly pretty. As for the others, navigators must have spent many months at sea to have been able to appreciate the charms and beauty of the native women. Above all, in Melanesia the women are so remarkably ugly that they might well compete with the gargoyles of Notre Dame. By comparison, African negresses and Eskimo women are divinely beautiful. Undergrown, misshapen, indescribably dirty, with shaven heads, flat noses, swollen bellies and wrinkled faces, these flowers of the tropical jungle would drive even the most amorous of men into a monastery. By I know not what miracle, they manage to be hideous from the age of puberty onwards. Once or twice only, in the course of my travels, did I come across a little girl of ten or eleven who, although her body was encrusted with the usual filth, was not altogether repulsive.

White bachelors living in Melanesia never think of engaging a Melanesian 'housekeeper'. They import them from Tahiti, Fiji or Samoa, just as British officers quartered on the North-West Frontier keep Burmese women as 'housekeepers'. Under the Southern Cross Samoa enjoys the same distinction as the country where all roads lead to Mandalay. Samoan women are really very beautiful, which explains why it is, perhaps, the only native island where white men marry native women. It should be added

that Samoans have long been civilised and that the ladies of Apia, instead of going about in a lap-lap, on their way to church wear hats and dresses inspired by the latest Australian fashions.

I have met no half-caste whose mother was not a Samoan. This island was the home of the famous Queen Emma, daughter of an American father and a Melanesian mother. She enjoyed great celebrity in the countries under the Southern Cross. Remarkably handsome, possessing great energy and intelligence, Queen Emma married an European and settled in New Britain. After some years she succeeded in amassing an immense fortune by the purchase of plantations, by investment of capital in exporting business, and by the purchase and sale of building plots, mines and ships. At one time her fortune was estimated at over a million pounds and, as she was her own sole manager, she went by the name of 'Queen'. Rumour has it that this extraordinary woman sometimes made long trips into the jungle with a few carriers, and that on more than one occasion she fought, rifle in hand, against savages. What is certain is that the presence of this woman, as beautiful as she was enterprising and courageous, did not fail to provoke quarrels between white men who were desperate rivals for her favours. Their jealousy at last led to a tragedy. Two German officers were at the time engaged in the pacification of New Britain. Both were admirers of Queen Emma, and this had the effect of embittering their relations. One day one of the officers had to go into a hostile country, which was very thickly populated. In case of attack the other was to come to his assistance with every available man. But, as invariably happens in tales of

adventure, he omitted to keep his promise, and waited calmly for the patrol to be massacred by natives. This duly happened. But, although wounded, the German succeeded in escaping and to complete the romance married Queen Emma, who had divorced her first husband. The second marriage was as unfortunate as the first, and a few years later the beautiful half-caste left the country. After many wanderings she settled down in France. She was found dead in a palace on the Riviera some years ago.

In New Britain, of course, the most fantastic stories are told about her death. The most probable explanation is that, weary of a life of adventure, neurasthenic, and seeing that she was beginning to lose her looks, she poisoned herself. A logical end to the life of the only *femme fatale* ever known in Oceania.

To return to the fascination of Melanesian women, only two cases are on record of white men having fallen victim to their charms. The first was a former Australian aviator, wounded in the war and subsequently trepanned—which explains a good deal. He married, with all due native rites, a Kanaka, and installed his wife in a village near Madang, where he lived like any other native of the tribe. In spite of his protests he was ordered to leave the territory, the government considering that for an Australian to 'go native' does not tend to increase the white man's prestige in the jungle.

A Protestant missionary, Penzer, was repatriated for the same reason. Although a missionary, and pure German by birth, this did not prevent him from eloping with and marrying a young native girl. He even went to live with

the tribe to which his wife belonged, and succeeded in so completely assimilating himself with the Kanakas that when a patrol came to look for him, the worthy missionary —his body painted in all the colours of the rainbow— threatened the officer in command with bow and club. Happily an armed conflict was avoided at the last moment, and Penzer went back to Germany a few months later. His example and that of the Australian aviator are always quoted with astonishment, and this explains why gold-miners and patrols call New Guinea a womanless country: a severe, but just, appraisal of the beauty of cannibal woman.

In New Guinea there is a tradition which requires that a father, immediately after the birth of a son, should take the child in his arms and pronounce these words:

'Be strong, hurl the stone with skill, and mightily stretch the bow.'

If it be a daughter he says:

'Be strong, that you may toil diligently in the fields.'

When they have passed the age of nine or ten, Melanesian women begin to work, and they toil unceasingly until the day of their death. Since the men are occupied at home in making arrows and clubs, and spend the rest of their time head-hunting and preparing for feasts, it follows that the women must be continually at their tasks. They provide the men's food, at the same time keeping an eye on the children lest they should fall into the jaws of a crocodile. They work in the taro and sago fields, look after the pigs, gather cocoa-nuts and prepare the betel, so popular with all the inhabitants of the Archipelago. Women are therefore an

economic factor, to be protected against outsiders not so much from sentimental motives as by reason of their market value. Most tribes do not worry about the behaviour of their girls, who are as free as the pupils in an American school for young ladies. On the other hand, woe betide the married woman who ventures into the jungle with a youthful warrior. She is put to death with three-headed arrows, and her accomplice with four-headed arrows, which are also reserved for the punishment of thieves.

Thus, among cannibals, individual as well as tribal wealth consists of two elements of equal importance: women and pigs. When I wanted to buy taro from the natives, so as to economise my supplies of canned provisions, I was invariably asked whether in exchange I would not give either a representative of the weaker sex or of the porcine race. As I had been careless enough to come unprovided with either women or pigs, the Kanakas had to content themselves with money payments, which, New Guinea being under British mandate, are almost as complicated as in England itself. There is shell-money called *kuma-kuma*; snail money—the name of which is *giri-giri*; berry-money called *unkorora*, and finally axe-money—*tacham*—an axe being in some districts the equivalent of one woman, three *kuma-kuma* necklaces and five *giri-giris*.

On the coast a necklace of *kuma-kumas* is worth an Australian shilling. So in the jungle a wife may be bought for three shillings, and in case of extreme urgency she may also be eaten. A man with ten shillings, able to buy three wives, is looked upon as a millionaire. I met a bush Rockefeller who had eight wives and twenty-four children.

It is understandable that pigs should be very valuable in

New Guinea, the island being practically without mammals. But after seeing the women there, one is puzzled. They must indeed be wonderful workers to be worth five *giri-giris* each.

It must be added that from the demographic point of view it is fortunate that the women are good workers, and one can understand that, in providing labour required for cultivating the fields, they have a high economic value.

Had their women been less useful, and possessed less market value, I believe that the natives of New Guinea would have died out, as they would long ago have eaten all the women, who are indispensable, as everyone knows, for the perpetuation of the race.

Tribal chiefs buy their wives from their subjects. In certain islands the woman must be of the same tribe as her husband, but in New Guinea exogamy is more general. Since in payment for the woman a certain number of pigs and many *kuma-kumas* must go away from the buyer's village, the purchaser must count on the seller, when he in his turn requires more wives, descending upon the village which has previously been his customer. If for one reason or another this does not happen, all available arrows are collected, and the men set off to uphold the prestige of the tribe and regain possession of the pigs and necklaces which they have lost.

Purchase and sale of women is the origin of most of the tribal wars. It may happen that a woman is sterile. She is then sent back to her village, and it goes without saying that reimbursement is demanded. After many palavers, in which interminable pleas and counter-pleas are put in on both sides, it becomes clear that the question cannot be

settled by peaceful means. War breaks out. If one of the parties fails to inflict a total defeat on his adversary, they kill one another for a few weeks, and end by concluding a treaty of peace under the terms of which the wife is sent back to her husband at half price, and perhaps a sister will go with her. The price of the latter remains to be fixed. If a patrol passes that way at the time of the crisis, the price will be fixed fairly easily. But if no patrol comes, the palavers go on even longer, and are interrupted occasionally by a brawl or a murder.

On the question of the purchase of wives, I have collected a few juridical problems submitted for solution to patrol officers, who have often to play the part of Solomon in the jungle. And, God knows, the part is not an easy one.

Here are a few cases which patrol officers have had to decide: A woman is sold for two pigs, one of which dies before reaching the village of the fiancée. Is it fair to demand that it should be replaced? If men of the purchasing tribe come to fetch the fiancée, and on the journey to her new home they are attacked and the woman is killed, can delivery of another woman be claimed even if the assailants were enemies of the woman's tribe and not those of the buyer's tribe? If the buyer asserts that the woman is barren, and the seller can prove that she had a child before marriage, ought the buyer to be compensated for the delivery of a woman who was not intact? If the husband discovers that his wife is not intact, and if it can be proved that she was seduced by the brother of the seller, can the husband claim reimbursement of the purchase price? If the wife commits adultery and her husband kills her, what material compensation can he claim? If the fiancée was intact at the time that

she left her father's village, but is no longer intact on arrival at the village of her future husband, can she be returned even if the seducer was a member of the escort sent by her husband?

Of these questions, those dealing with the virginity of the woman were without exception put by tribes living in the interior of the island. It seems that only mountain tribes attach importance to this detail, while the coastal tribes are quite indifferent concerning the private lives of unmarried women. The coastal tribes are also more indulgent in regard to adultery; in most cases it is not punished by death unless aggravated by incest. In that case both guilty parties are summarily executed.

Among tribes where exogamy is the rule the married couple meet for the first time on the day of their marriage. The ceremony is extremely simple. The parents of the girl present gifts to those of the man, and these are immediately returned. In New Britain custom prescribes that the father of the fiancée should throw down some cocoa-nuts, saying:

'Here are my daughter's cocoa-nuts.'

Then the fiancé picks up the cocoa-nuts to show that he wishes to marry the girl. On the other hand, if at the last moment he changes his mind, he has only to leave the cocoa-nuts on the ground and go away to his hut. Then the elders of the village have to decide who has to pay the cost of the journey and other expenses of preparations for the marriage. It goes without saying that these negotiations very often end in a fight.

I have often wondered whether savages can understand love in the sense which we give to the word. Do they understand the perfect happiness which a combination of

canoe; but others allow women to travel with them, provided they do not talk. Men of the latter tribes believe that women's voices may excite the wrath of monsters living in the sea. As for me, I don't believe in monsters, but all the same I consider that these men show wisdom in thus summarily dealing with a problem which has faced anyone who has travelled with one or several women. If one adds that the laws of this same tribe, which inhabits the south coast of New Britain, formerly prohibited a mother-in-law from speaking to her son-in-law, it must be admitted that much is to be said for the intelligence of the Kanakas.

The differences which exist in the status of married women, as such, also apply to widows. . . .

One day, when near Arawi in New Britain, I met a patrol which had just arrived from the jungle. As I was turtle-hunting at the time, I did not pay much attention to them, until I noticed that a young native was walking between two policemen, his arms fettered to his ankles by a chain, long enough to allow him to walk, but making any attempt to escape impossible. I thought he might be a cannibal, and joined the patrol. Half an hour later I was told the following appalling story:

The prisoner's name was Awipi. He was ten years old. He came from a village in the Arawi district, the natives of which have an unpleasant habit of cutting the throats of the wives of a husband who has departed this life.

This tribe, like all those of the Archipelago, also celebrates the initiation ceremony, which every male child has to go through on reaching adolescence.

Awipi being ten, and the date for his initiation being

near, it happened that a man of his tribe was devoured by a crocodile. The village elders came to the child and told him that this was a great opportunity to show that he was a man *sans peur et sans reproche*. All he had to do was to agree to kill a widow. In this way the initiation ceremony might be dispensed with.

Following the advice of the village sorcerer, who told him that the season was propitious, the boy went quite calmly to despatch the widow in accordance with the law of the Arawis, which requires that the victim's *lap-lap* should be tied round her head behind the ears in such a way that the neck can be stretched and broken by the executioner placing his knees on the shoulders of the wretched woman.

Awipi, in spite of his youth, showed himself worthy of the confidence placed in him, and performed his task with unexpected skill. Unluckily for the young amateur, a patrol arrived a few days later in the village, and the victim's sister felt she ought to mention the incident to the white Master. It was for this deed that Awipi was being taken to Rabaul with his hands and feet fettered.

I spoke to the ten-year-old assassin, who in spite of the circumstances struck me as being a normal and even intelligent lad. When I asked him why widows were killed, he gave me the following explanation:

When one of our men dies, he becomes a Spirit. As his wife is no longer with him there is no one to care for him and prepare his food. He is therefore hungry. On this account the Spirit wanders round the village and causes all sorts of trouble there. But if his wife is killed, her Spirit will join him, he will have enough to eat and he will leave the living in peace.

Later, I learned that the immolation of widows on the death of their husbands is general among many of the tribes. Some throw the widows into a swamp swarming with crocodiles. Others shoot them with arrows. And all this is done in order that the Spirit may not have to prepare his own food.

There are tribes where widows become the third or fourth wife of the brother of the deceased, which is worse even than crocodiles or arrows, as work done by wives is regulated, more or less, by their rank in the household. When we know that the favourite, number one, works some twelve hours a day, it can be imagined what the life of number four must be like.

There is only one part of New Guinea where widows are really merry. It is the Markham valley. There they are neither thrown to the crocodiles, nor transfixed by arrows, nor strangled with *lap-laps*. Moreover, if they are young they remarry honourably; for in this happy valley women are as rare as oases in the desert. On the other hand, when old, they are used, in this country, for 'political' purposes in defence of the tribe. I will explain in what circumstances. Possibly the time will come for these ingenious tactics to be adopted in Europe!

As we have stated above, the natives, warned by the tom-toms, are aware, two or even three days beforehand, that an expedition is on the march in their direction. Being as distrustful as they are inhospitable, they then make feverish preparations to receive strangers by the novel method of leaving their village with all possible speed.

In what these preparations consist, and of the part played in them by widows, I have had several personal experiences.

When I entered any of the villages in the Markham valley the same scene was always enacted. I found myself in the midst of abandoned huts, the doors of which had been carefully barricaded with bamboos. Not a man, not a child, not a woman! They were all in hiding in the neighbouring jungle. The evacuation was complete, even down to the pigs.

In the middle of the village we found the widows waiting for us. . . .

They were uglier than the Devil's grandmother. Round their necks were hung, as reminders of past happiness, the skulls of their deceased husbands. These skulls also had a publicity value. They indicated to the invaders that these ladies were unattached. You could take your choice: of one, or even several. To exercise your right it was enough to say so, and offer a pig in payment for each to the tribal chief.

On the other hand, if the invaders come with hostile intentions they are entitled to kill the widows.

The tactics of the Markham natives appeared to me to be very effective.

I always, in fact, left their villages with record speed, as if a whole army of cannibals were after me. More than once, I gave the order to leave before having time to inspect the huts or touch food.

The widows would come with us to the edge of the forest, and they remained there for a long time, their eyes turned in the direction in which we were disappearing. Then with a sad smile they fondled the yellow skull of their late lord and master.

I have often heard it said that the hospitality of some of

the natives of Oceania extends to the offer of their wives and daughters to travellers who are their guests.

Although I have been in many villages, and made friends with a number of tribes, I confess that no such offer was ever made to me. I have also questioned patrol officers on the subject. They informed me that they had never had any adventure of this kind.

One more fallacy exploded!

And one danger less, among all those to which a traveller is exposed in the forests and mountains of the cannibals!

IV. HOMO SAPIENS, 6° SOUTH OF THE EQUATOR

What is the constant and general direction of this evolution? It appears to follow the same curve as our own.—MAETERLINCK, 'The Life of the Bee'.

A philosopher, not unknown to fame, claimed that man living in a state of nature had more human kindness and deeper feelings than man 'corrupted' by the institutions of civilised society.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau did not, it is true, ever visit New Guinea.

If he had, he would certainly not have upheld with such conviction his well-known thesis. He would no doubt have discovered that contact with men 'living in a state of nature' produces feelings of horror and disgust, rather than pure intellectual or moral pleasure.

This does not mean that civilised man has no serious defects. Progress in fact robs us of certain qualities, which on the other hand are highly developed in savages, but, all the same, it is rare for us to sink to the degree of moral and physical degradation which prevails among men not 'tainted' by civilisation. I admit that, in war and in the revolutions which follow it, men claiming to be civilised have committed acts of barbarism worthy of the Ku-Ku-Ku-

Kus and other head-hunters. But such acts, which are very rare with us, are the general rule among cannibals. They cut off the limbs of enemies and of lepers. They massacre widows. They think no more of beheading than we would of cutting an apple in two. They inflict tortures on prisoners, the description only of which would make a Chinese executioner shudder with horror. In certain districts they commit enormities unimagined even by an Aretino or a Marquis de Sade. In short, all the vices, all the crimes, all the moral and physical perversions to be found as criminal abnormalities in a civilised community exist among savages, and are not unlawful. Therefore, with all due respect to the memory of the author of the *Contrat Social*, primitive man, in the mass, shows no signs of being superior to civilised man.

Still, in what concerns vital problems, impulses, desires, passions, will, and ambition, the cannibal is not perhaps so far removed as one might expect from the man who, for example, in Paris revels in the poems of Verlaine, who at Toledo admires the pictures of El Greco, who in Arizona builds huge bridges, or who makes a ritual of afternoon tea in a fashionable club in Pall Mall.

I do not lay any claim to originality in affirming this, but it may be that I am the first, so to speak, who has 'photographed' it.

The camera which I took with me to New Guinea had no philosophical, social, or political convictions. It gathered truth, and reproduced it, without attenuating or exaggerating either facts or scenes, and without adding to the picture either comments or arguments. It portrays men as they are, *sub specie aeternitatis*, as they used to say in the eighteenth century.

I took photographs of men whose practical notions of the world were more limited than those of an European child of four. But these very men at the same time knew perfectly well that to have authority, inspire respect and exercise power, it is necessary to impress one's fellow men. They knew perfectly well that he who is chosen by the Spirits must distinguish himself from the masses by special 'signs', and that before respecting the individual the masses must respect the 'signs'.

It is with this object that a chief adorns himself with the most gorgeous plumes of the bird of paradise, and wears triple chains of cassowary bone round his neck.

In this way he wins respect.

These men also know that if persuasion of foes can only be achieved by use of the club, friends can also be moved by words, energetic or persuasive according to circumstances. He who knows best when to be gentle and when to be implacable becomes the sage of the tribe, and therefore rules it.

The women, on their side, know that they must work, but they also know that their special mission in life is to please.

Take a pocket mirror, and ask the lady you are dining with at a fashionable restaurant to look at herself in it. Her first instinct will be to arrange her hair and smile. This was exactly the gesture of a cannibal woman to whom I revealed the fascination of a looking-glass in the Bulobo valley. When, to her astonishment, she saw her features reflected, she at once put up her hand to her hair and smiled at herself.

These same women give birth to a child, and a few hours

later are back at their daily work. At fifteen years old they generally have two or three children to feed and guard against crocodiles, scorpions, and evil spirits. But at the same time they have to go on working as much as before. Now these women, for whom children mean additional anxiety and pain, love their offspring quite as much as our women love theirs. When they look at their little ones they have on their plain faces an expression that makes one forget that they are cannibals and ugly. They are mothers miraculously transformed by their love.

And the children themselves. At the age of three they might pass, except of course for their colour, for Europeans or Americans. They scream, they run about, they fight, they laugh and they cry, and their favourite toys are little bows and arrows and tiny clubs. They play at soldiers just as children do with us.

Maternal love, the fighting instinct, a passion for power, ambition to excite admiration and to dominate, feminine vanity—does not all this prove that human beings at bottom are always the same in every climate, and irrespective of the diet on which they are nourished?

Certainly there is a difference in degree. But no matter. Our instincts and reflexes are, if not identical with, at least analogous to those of a cannibal, who, after all, is still *homo sapiens*, though six degrees south of the equator.

The great-grandchildren of those I met in the bush will wear white duck trousers, will read the works of Karl Marx, and at their Grand Palavers, which will then be called 'meetings', will clamour for Dominion Status for New Guinea. A few hours after the new government has submitted its programme to the Parliament sitting at

Rabaul the British Resident General will be on the links, playing a round of golf with the *luluai* of Morobe or Sepik. Next day the new Academy of Arts and Letters will be inaugurated, and in the course of the proceedings a Professor of Salamaua University will make a speech to prove that travellers who a hundred years ago drew such a gloomy picture of the ancestors of their noble race were without the slightest doubt either liars or fools.