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D.F.Wetherell thesis. Corrections required by the examiners:

page 43 gavamani line 4

213 crèches second last line

261 comma after 'missionary' line 11.

291 last line: Kaiser-Wilhelmsland

297 China Strait second line.

323 8th last line. 'The accused men, Harry Morley and Jack Grey, were acquitted and...' please retype names and paste over incorrect version.

324 China Strait 6th last line

351 underline Papuan Times 3rd last line

365 China Strait

387 foreseen, para two first line.

402 writ; first line below quotation.

MISSIONS came to New Guinea as part of a broad range of European influences which began to have an impact on the Melanesian people from the last quarter of the 19th century. This study examines the relations among the various ethnic groups concerned in the conversion of the Massim people of eastern New Guinea (Papua) to Christianity, describes the response of the Massim and their neighbours to this process, and assesses the indigenous Christian leadership which emerged.

The first section is concerned with the establishment of missionary and government influence among the eastern Papuan people. This process was assisted by Pacific Island teachers from Samoa, Fiji and other Melanesian groups. Powerfully influenced by Polynesian models, the Samoans combined the presiding functions of the pastor's office with Evangelical convictions about 'fallen man'. The Fijians, with their Melanesian origins, attachment to European supervision and close domestic ties with village people, proved more elastic than Samoans in their encounter with the Massim. Other teachers of Melanesian origin came to New Guinea without formal training, but with some familiarity with missions in the Queensland canefields.

Pacific Island behaviour corresponded in some measure to the intellectual climate within the church of their adoption. The Kwato and Methodist missions, inheriting earlier Evangelical traditions, often responded uncompromisingly to the problem of differing social values. The Anglicans, influenced by a romantic notion of primitive societies and restrained in their theology by Darwinian scepticism, were nevertheless strongly convinced of the paternal nature of the missionary's task.

Missionary activity paved the way for the spread of prophetic cults. The rapid spread of these movements - which may have been known before missionary intrusions - showed missionaries how fragile was their grasp of the Melanesian intellect, and how greatly the religious understanding of Papuans differed from their own. Furthermore, the decline of the highly organized Methodists at Dobu, and the increasing momentum of the weaker and more hesitant Anglicans at such places as Boianai, showed that for a cultural encounter of the kind desired by 19th century missionary patrons, mere finance and numbers were not enough.

The third section deals with the widespread humanitarian concern about the destructive results of western civilization on the Melanesians. Various theories linking depopulation with culture change and disease were reflected in missionary and government attempts to remedy the causes of decline. The 'goal kick' was one of the ways fostered by officials and missionaries to restore the competitive nature of tribal life; and the introduction of medical services represented other religious efforts to combat the problems associated with European contact.

Hoping to save people they believed to be endangered by western influences, and preoccupied with the link between racial survival and physical vitality, missionaries in Papua adopted various industrial experiments to teach their converts the value of work. These ranged from brief Anglican schemes between 1899 and 1910 to more extensive Methodist enterprises, and reached a zenith in the Kwato Extension Association (K.E.A.), whose trading principles led it away from the London Missionary Society in 1918. Such experiments were begun against a background of acrimony between missionaries and some secular Europeans as Papua passed from British to Australian control; but the conflict between the themes of protection and development was resolved, as far as missions were concerned, in the protective policies of Sir Hubert Murray.

The fourth section is about Massim leadership in the missions. A goal common to the three missions was the fostering of indigenous Christian élites; but euphoric hopes for early success faded as Papuans tried to adapt traditional methods of leadership to the exigencies of rapid culture change. The Anglican Mission, in spite of its paternal mould, lost little time in creating and extending a Papuan priesthood. Kwato, adhering to its Evangelical theology and industrial goals, adopted the methods of the Oxford Group (Moral Re-Armament) in penetrating the Keveri valley. Methodism spread along kinship lines in the D'Entrecasteaux and beyond. Tardy social and economic change in Papua in the 20 years before the outbreak of war was the setting for much caution and hesitation in experiments in Melanesian leadership. The result has been a crisis in Christian leadership as Papua and New Guinea approaches independence.

CHRISTIAN MISSIONS IN EASTERN NEW GUINEA:
A Study of European, South Sea Island and Papuan Influences,
1877-1942

by

David Wetherell

A thesis presented in fulfilment
of the requirements of the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the Australian National University

Canberra

March 1974

This thesis is based on my own
research except where otherwise
acknowledged.

D. Withnell.

Preface

THIS study examines the relations among the various ethnic groups concerned in the conversion of the eastern Papuan people to Christianity, the response of the Massim people and their neighbours to this process, and the nature of the indigenous Christian leadership that emerged. Between 1877 and 1942, several groups of missionaries were influential in eastern New Guinea. The first were the Pacific Islands missionaries of the London Missionary Society who arrived in 1877.¹ They were followed in 1891 by Anglicans and Methodists and the first European L.M.S. missionaries. Direct L.M.S. influence ceased, however, when the resident missionary at Kwato formed the Kwato Extension Association in 1918.

A scrutiny of Kwato, Methodist and Anglican missionary methods reveals different approaches to traditional cultures and varying standards of civilization and Christianity. The first two missions derived their emphasis from the Evangelical Revival and were not diffident in setting forth their views about 'fallen man'. They believed in the beneficent role of British civilization in human progress and thought that the law of man should conform to the law of God; so they devoted their energy to campaigns against features of heathen society which fell short of this standard. The Anglicans, strongly influenced by the Oxford Movement as well as by romantic concepts of the 'natural man', were more hesitant in their approach to traditional cultures and more sceptical of the value of material change.

The missions involved, though holding different social and theological assumptions about their role, were uncomplicated by rivalry or competition for souls. Because of the compass of the analysis it was not possible to provide either a detailed account of the background of the European missionaries involved or a narrative account of major features of missionary activity such as education and health. A certain amount of work is already in progress or has been

1 They were preceded by Marist missionaries on Woodlark Island, whose work collapsed through lack of response in 1855. Marist missionaries worked on Sidea Island from 1935.

completed in these fields, particularly in education, and these studies can be consulted for a more rounded picture of the work of Papuan missions.²

The Massim people among whom these missions worked are ethnically and culturally similar, and their territory is within the boundaries of the Eastern and South-Eastern administration divisions. The spheres of the Kwato, Methodist and Anglican missions thus coincide with a relatively homogeneous area. The term Massim - sometimes written Maisin - was first used to describe the eastern Papuans in 1889.³ C.G. Seligmann established the convention that the Massim were the island and mainland groups between Cape Nelson and Orangerie Bay.⁴ This convention has been followed here, while the peoples beyond the region are generally referred to as Papuans. The most characteristic cultural features of the Massim are a peculiar form of totemism with matrilineal descent, the kula trade of the island groups, and the prevalence of a unique form of decorative art.

The only people outside the Massim area are the Binandele of the north-west and the Keveri of the Musa headwaters, the former inhabiting part of the sphere claimed by the Anglican Mission and the latter in an area evangelized by Papuan converts of the Kwato Mission. The terms 'Protestant', 'Evangelical' and 'Anglo-Catholic' are used in a doctrinal rather than ecclesiastical sense; and the term 'Islander', unless otherwise stated, applies to a Pacific Island teacher. The description 'eastern New Guinea' refers to British New Guinea or Papua and not to the mission fields in the Mandated Territory of New Guinea.⁵

This study presented peculiar difficulties in balancing oral and written material and evaluating the experience of different

2 For example, D.J. Dickson, 'Government and mission in education in Papua and New Guinea...', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Port Moresby, 1971; David Lewis, 'London Missionary Society Education...', B.A. hons., Adelaide 1968; Patricia Ann Prendergast, 'A history of the London Missionary Society in British New Guinea, 1871-1901', Ph.D. thesis, Honolulu, 1968; David Wetherell, 'A History of the Anglican Mission in Papua, 1891-1942', M.A., Canberra, 1970.

3 E.T. Hamy, 'Etude sur les Papuas...', in Revue D'Ethnographie, vol. 7, 1889, 504.

4 C.G. Seligmann, Melanesians of British New Guinea, 7ff.

5 Kaiser/wilhelmsland until 1914.

groups - European, Pacific Island and Papuan - involved in the contact. The 55 years between the departure of Samoan missionaries and the present, for instance, has obliterated the oral basis for the account of the contact in Milne Bay which I had hoped to present. This was offset by Fijian and Samoan vernacular sources, and by material in the Dogura, Kwato and Salamo archives, of which this is the pioneer study.⁶

The local written sources have been supplemented by the journals and proceedings of missionary boards, government legislatures and geographical societies. Additional material has been based on Massim and Fijian narratives, published travellers' tales, and patrol reports. Some private collections have been lost or damaged by tropical conditions, but the valuable collections of the Abel family of Kwato, Evan R. Gill of Liverpool, and Canon W.G. Thomas of Melbourne have helped to reconstruct evidence and locate original source material written by Papuan teachers.

Some of the material was collected in the National Library of Australia, the Mitchell Library, Sydney, and the Library of the University of Papua and New Guinea, and I would like to thank the staffs of these libraries. Some of it was collected in the Fiji National Archives, Papua and New Guinea National Archives, and Australian National Archives. I would like to thank the staffs of these institutions for making the material available. The Reverend M.A. Gribble of Sydney, the Reverend Bruce Deverell of Apia, the Reverend Canon J.D. Bodger and the late Reverend Canon F.W. Coaldrake also put valuable information at my disposal.

I am also indebted to those retired missionaries or descendants of missionaries with whom I have had personal contact. In particular,

6 Initially, it was intended to look solely at the work of the Pacific Island teachers but this was difficult for two reasons. First, after a preliminary search both in archives and in the field, it became apparent there was insufficient documentary and oral evidence for a self-contained analysis of the work of the teachers and their relationship with the people of Papua. Second, the absence of complete histories of the missions involved, and the unworked nature of their archives, prevented referring the reader to accurate background material relating to these missions. It thus became necessary to provide more basic information about each mission.

my thanks are due to Mr Cecil Abel, Mr and Mrs John Smeeton, Mrs Shiela Abel and Mr Merari Dickson. Others who have given help are Mr Daniel Sioni, Mrs Olive Dixon and Miss Ema Vakalala.

The staff of the Department of Pacific and Southeast Asian History have helped a great deal through advice, discussion, and critical comment. Dr Francis West, Dr Deryck Scarr and Mr Hank Nelson read parts of drafts. Mr John Heyward drew the maps and Mrs Rosamund Walsh typed the manuscript. Finally, I would like to thank Dr Niel Gunson for his guidance, helpful criticism and careful reading of many drafts, as well as Dr Peter Corris who acted as supervisor during Dr Gunson's absence from Australia and has continued to show a special interest in the work.

Canberra,
March 1974

David Wetherell

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Abbreviations

ABM	Australian Board of Missions (Anglican)
<u>ABM Review</u>	<u>Australian Board of Missions Review</u>
ACTS	Australian Catholic Truth Society
<u>ADB</u>	<u>Australian Dictionary of Biography</u>
<u>AMG</u>	<u>Australian Medical Gazette</u>
<u>AMN</u>	<u>Australasian Missionary News</u> (Anglican)
<u>AMMR</u>	<u>Australasian Methodist Missionary Review</u> , from 1915 <u>Missionary Review</u>
ANC	Armed Native Constabulary
ANG	Australian National Gallery
ANGAU	Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit
ANL	National Library of Australia
ANU	Australian National University
ANZAAS	Australia and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science
<u>APP</u>	<u>Australian Parliamentary Papers</u>
<u>AR</u>	<u>Annual Report</u>
ARM	Assistant Resident Magistrate
<u>ATV</u>	<u>Ai Tukutuku Vakalotu</u> (Methodist)
AWMMS	Australasian Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society
BNG	British New Guinea
BR	Registry office, Diocese of Brisbane
CAO	Commonwealth Archives Office
<u>CC</u>	<u>Church Chronicle</u> (Anglican)
CICCU	Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union
CMC	Combined Missions Conference
CMO	Chief Medical Officer
CMS	Church Missionary Society
CS	Colonial Secretary
CSO	Colonial Secretary's Office
<u>CS</u>	<u>Church Standard</u> (Anglican)
DA	Church of England diocesan archives, Dogura, held in the library, UPNG
DC	District Committee (LMS)
D of B	Diocese of Brisbane
DRB	Diocesan Registry, Brisbane

ED	Eastern Division
<u>FA</u>	<u>Fetu Ao</u> (Methodist, Samoa)
FNA	Fiji National Archives
<u>HKM</u>	<u>Heralds of the King Magazine</u> (Anglican)
<u>HS</u>	<u>Historical Studies</u>
<u>JPH</u>	<u>Journal of Pacific History</u>
<u>JRH</u>	<u>Journal of Religious History</u>
KA	Kwato Archives, held at UPNG
KB	Koeabule plantation
KK	Kanakope plantation
<u>KMT</u>	<u>Kwato Mission Tidings</u>
<u>KSM</u>	<u>Kwato School Magazine</u>
LD	Letter-Diary (C.W. Abel)
LMS	London Missionary Society; London Missionary Society Archives, London
MBD	Milne Bay District
<u>MC</u>	<u>Missionary Chronicle</u> (LMS)
MH	Metoreia House, United Church, Port Moresby
<u>MJA</u>	<u>Medical Journal of Australia</u>
ML	Mitchell Library
MLC	Member Legislative Council
MOM	Methodist Overseas Missions Archives, Mitchell Library
<u>MN</u>	<u>Missionary Notes</u> (Anglican)
<u>MR</u>	<u>Missionary Review</u> (Methodist); <u>AMMR</u> before 1915
MRA	Moral Re-Armament (Oxford Group)
ND	Northern Division
NED	North-Eastern Division
NGC	New Guinea Collection, UPNG
NGDC	New Guinea District Committee (PDC after 1907)
NGES	New Guinea Evangelisation Society (Kwato)
NGM	New Guinea Mission (Anglican)
<u>NGT</u>	<u>New Guinea Tidings</u> (Kwato)
<u>OP</u>	<u>Occasional Paper</u> (Anglican)
<u>OJ</u>	<u>Official Journal</u> - mimeographed
PDC	Papua District Committee (LMS)
PI	Papuan Industries Limited

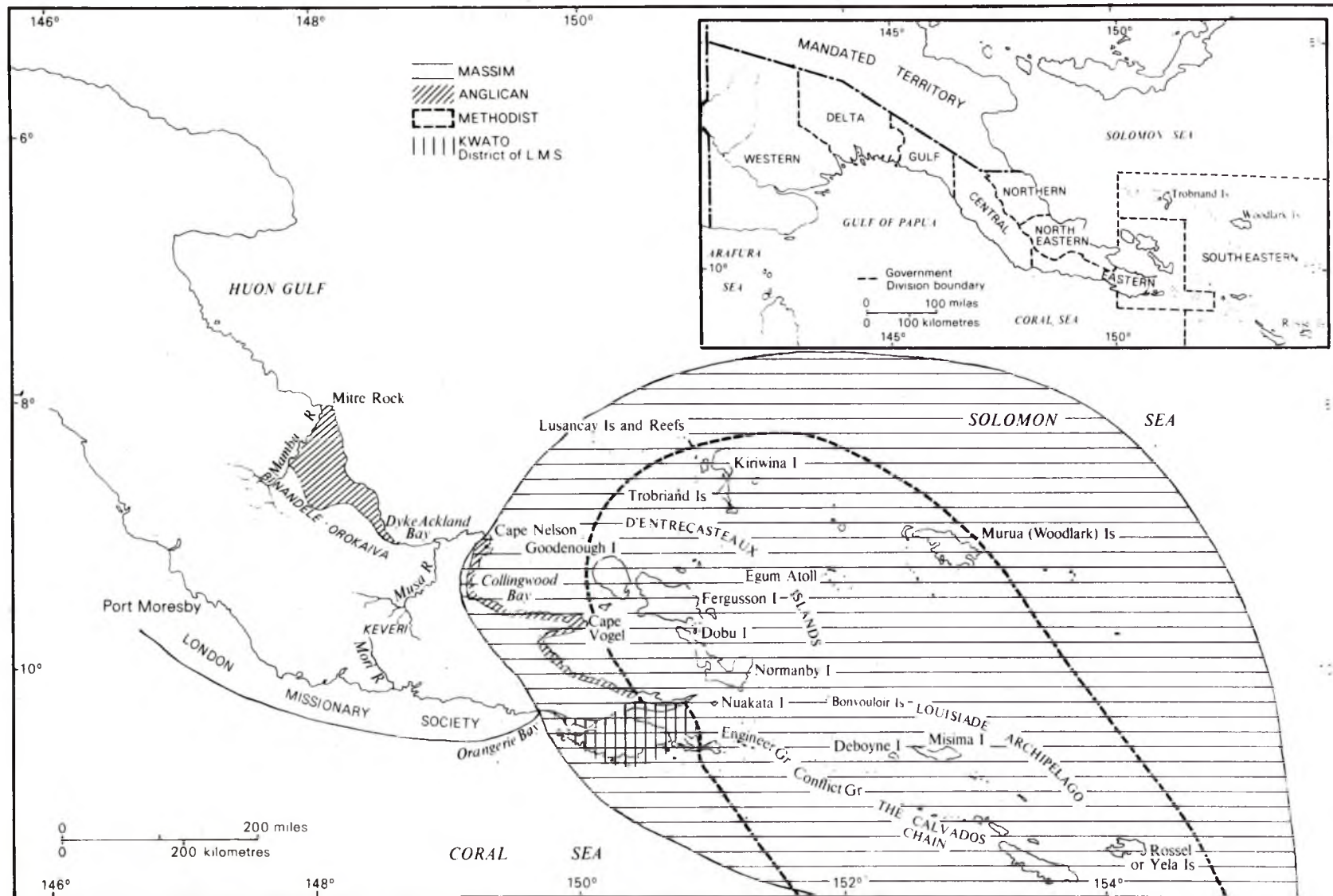
PL	Papua Letters, LMS
PMB	Pacific Manuscripts Bureau, ANU
PNGA	Papua New Guinea Archives
<u>PR</u>	<u>Patrol Report</u>
<u>PV</u>	<u>Papuan Villager</u>
QM	Quarterly Meeting
RCI	Royal Colonial Institute
RGS	Royal Geographical Society
RM	Resident Magistrate
RMED	Resident Magistrate Eastern Division
RMND	Resident Magistrate Northern Division
RMNED	Resident Magistrate North-Eastern Division
RMSD	Resident Magistrate South-Eastern Division
SA	Archives of the Methodist mission, Salamo, Library of the UPNG
SDC	Samoa District Committee (LMS)
SJ	Station Journal
SMA	Samoa Methodist Archives, Apia
<u>SMH</u>	<u>Sydney Morning Herald</u>
SML	St Mark's Library, Canberra
SPAC	South Pacific Anglican Council
SPG	Society for the Propagation of the Gospel
SSI	South Sea Islander
<u>SS</u>	<u>Samoa Sulu (LMS)</u>
SSL	South Sea Letters (LMS)
TNG	Mandated Territory of New Guinea
TP	Territory of Papua
UFM	Unevangelised Fields Mission
UPNG	University of Papua and New Guinea
NGC	New Guinea Collection, UPNG
<u>V & P</u>	<u>Votes and Proceedings</u>
VC	Village Constable
WD	Western Division
WOL	Western Outgoing Letters, LMS

Glossary

airipa	grass skirt (Bartle bay)
asisi	supernatural, spirit, name of cult prophet in Collingwood bay
bada	elder, white leader
bagi	a highly prized ornament consisting of lengths of <u>sapisapi</u> discs attached to conical shells and used in the <u>kula</u> trade
baigona	Ubir word used by female to female friends; name of cult prophet in northern Papua
banahivi	death feast (Bartle bay)
bariawa	uncanny, supernatural, extraordinary (Bartle bay)
besa	dance performed at a cannibal feast (Wagawaga)
bogigi	drum (Wagawaga)
boiatu	drum (Suau)
bolabola	stone circles or rows, used for meeting places (Bartle bay)
borabora	a lie (Suau)
bure	house (Fijian)
bulamakau	tinned meat
bwebweso	mountain on Normanby island, home of departed spirits
dam	clan (Bartle bay)
damorea	dance at the <u>toreha</u> ceremony (Wagawaga)
dimdim	foreigner
dirava	originally a mythical being (Motu); God
dubu	ceremonial platform (Motu and Koita)
eravo	meeting house
eriam	a brotherhood. At Wedau the <u>eriam</u> carried rights of access to wives of fellow members
ewage	language of Orokaiva people of Eroro, Oro bay
fa'asamoa	Samoan way or custom
fale	house (Samoan)
faifeau papalagi	European missionary (Samoan)
faifeau Samoa	Samoan pastor (Samoan)

fale ulu	house of the <u>matai</u> (Samoan)
ganamuri	beyond the fence, viz., outside the church (Kwato)
giu	catechism or preparation (Dogura)
govermani	government
gulau	head man (Bartle bay)
haitabu	ceremonial stone (Tavara)
hanai biaguna	head man (Amau)
haus tambran	meeting house (Sepik)
kava keva	madness
keduruma or keduluma	term of respect to an old woman (Tavara); name of Margaret Parkin (Kwato)
kibi or kibo	conch shell blown to summon people to a <u>tabu</u> feast (Motu and Koita)
kino	conch shell
kula	trading circle in eastern Papuan islands
laloa dika	bad ways (Motu)
laulau	ways or habits (Suau) (Motu)
lauma	soul, life, spirit of the dead (Motu)
lotu	religion (Samoan and Tongan) hence the Christian religion (Fiji and the mission fields), alternatively, <u>tapwaroro</u> (see below)
Maisin or Massim	people of eastern Papua (see preface)
malaga	a travelling party (Samoan)
mapula	payback (Kiriwina)
marama	mother or respected woman (Fijian)
matai	titled head of family (Samoan)
mei	meeting derived from annual meetings in Exeter Hall, London; in New Guinea, not necessarily in the month of May
Misi Ipo	Mr C.W. Abel
misionari or mitsinari	missionary, Papuan missionary (Dobu)
mwali	armshells (Kiriwina)
nanisi	fish (Fijian)
Oga Tara	Anniversary Conference (Dogura)
ogababada	lay church leader (Dogura)
potuma	clubhouse (Bartle bay); lime spatula (Wagawaga)

puri puri	sorcery
qase-ni-vula or qase-ni-vuli	school teacher, local preacher (Fijian)
rami	loin cloth
saragigi	one who twists out his teeth, name for W.E. Bromilow (Dobu)
sina	girl or woman; name for Elizabeth Tomlinson (Dogura)
soi	last of a series of funeral feasts (Wagawaga and Tubetube)
sovai	death feast (Suau)
tabu	prohibition
tagatanu'u	man without title (Samoan)
tama	old man; name for Samuel Tomlinson (Dogura)
Tamate	name for James Chalmers
tapa	cloth made from bark of tree in parts of north-eastern Papua
taparoro or tapwaroro	bending of the knee; Christianity; otherwise, <u>lotu</u> (see above)
taravatu	prohibition (Motu)
taubada or bada	respected man (Tubetube, Tavara)
tavero	fighting canoe (Dau)
toeita	one who shows how to see, teacher (Dobu)
tonugana	one who leads, teacher (Dobu)
to-ita-i-isi	one who cares for others, head teacher (Dobu)
tuafale	orator (Samoan)
toreha	feast given a year after death, provided no other feast has intervened
tuma	heaven of afterworld
vaga-ue or waga	built-up canoe for travelling long distances (Wagawaga and Tubetube)
vakavuvuli	pastor, head teacher (Fijian)
vivireina	sacred, set apart (Bartle bay)
wantoks	friends (Pidgin)
walaga	spectacular feast (Bartle bay) held at Gelaria in 1901 and Diwari in 1907



MAP 1 MISSION FIELDS IN THE MASSIM AREA UNDER THE COMITY OF MISSIONS, 1890

I

E N C O U N T E R

CHAPTER I

The beginning of Eastern New Guinea missions

FOREIGN settlement did not begin in New Guinea until the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The reason lies partly in the preoccupation of traders with the riches of islands between the east coast of Australia and Fiji, particularly the search for fragrant woods and bêche-de-mer, which took them first towards New Caledonia, the Loyalty Islands and the New Hebrides.¹ The first foreign settlers in New Guinea were driven for other than economic motives. Partly because of the difficulty of working in an area which had become a French sphere of influence, partly because the command to preach the gospel to every creature knew no boundaries, the London Missionary Society sent a party of teachers to New Guinea in 1871. Though the instructions for the venture came from London, the plan was conceived by the Reverend Samuel McFarlane, missionary at Chepenehe, Lifu, in the Loyalty group.

McFarlane's plan had as its primary strategy the use of coastal islands as stepping stones to the New Guinea mainland. Relying on the example of Bishops Selwyn and Patteson in New Zealand, who had removed their first students from the islands for training in Auckland, McFarlane believed the European missionary's task lay in teaching converts at a distance from their homeland. The work of collecting them belonged to the Pacific Island teacher.² A native missionary was, he remarked, better acquainted with the habits and customs of natives than a European.³ He therefore established his base, not in New Guinea, but at Somerset on Cape York in Australia, and later moved it to Murray Island. Some of his eight Lifuan and Marean teachers seem to have anticipated the consequences that might follow this plan. One cried 'Crucify me! crucify me!' as he told the students at Chepenehe how he was to suffer for his Melanesian brothers in New Guinea.⁴

1 D. Shineberg, They Came for Sandalwood, 29ff.

2 S. McFarlane, Story of the Lifu Mission, 57-8.

3 Ibid., 334. For the role of Polynesian teachers earlier in the century, see W.N. Gunson, 'Evangelical missionaries in the South Seas, 1797-1860', 210ff.

4 C. Silvester Horne, The Story of the L.M.S. 1795-1895 (London, 1894), 395-7.

Island teachers played a lively part in the establishing of contact between Papuans and the external world, particularly when the traders came to New Guinea on various errands and began tangling with the island people of the Louisiades. For the Papuans the initial significance of these missionaries was much greater than that of officials, for in many places they were the first dimdim or foreigners to appear from the sea. Between 1871 and 1874, L.M.S. stations were begun by Loyalty Islanders and Rarotongans in the Torres Strait islands, at Bampton Island and the Katau (Bineturi) river in western Papua, as well as at Manumanu and Port Moresby.

In 1872 the mission vessel John Knox lost its way while carrying Lifuans to the Torres Straits, landing instead in the islands of eastern Papua. Here the tattooing and canoe carving, as well as the people's olive skins and the high status of their women, reminded Thorngren, the captain, of Polynesians; and he told McFarlane so.⁵ McFarlane still thought Murray Island in the Torres group a useful base for a mission to the eastern Massim people. He felt his role in the east, as in the west, was to lead the enterprise, create garrisons of Island teachers, and periodically visit his distant outposts, replenishing stores and taking back the sick.

The scope and scale of such plans reflected the confusion in missionary minds arising from the little they knew about the land whose conversion their patrons wanted them to accomplish. W.G. Lawes, who in 1874 had established the first European station on the mainland of New Guinea at Port Moresby, came to disagree strongly with McFarlane's plans. He thought it was better for European and Island missionaries to settle at the same place among their converts.⁶ Enlivened by this conflict, and intrigued by Captain John Moresby's descriptions of the intelligent Massim people after the visit of the Basilisk in 1873, Lawes and McFarlane visited eastern New Guinea in 1876.⁷ McFarlane saw the pleasant green hillsides of China Strait, the flourishing lowlands without swamps, and the decorated canoes looking like Roman galleys, and decided that the sooner a band of

5 Ibid., 380.

6 S. McFarlane to J. Mullens, Somerset, 15 November 1875, PJ.

7 J. Moresby, Discoveries..., 173-83; W.G. Lawes, Journal, 3 April 1876, PJ.

teachers came to the island 'stepping stones' near Milne Bay the better.⁸ He returned to Murray Island to collect Loyalty Islanders for a missionary expedition. Lawes returned to Port Moresby to resume work among his Niuean, Rarotongan and Samoan colleagues.

The people of Divinai village in Milne Bay have their own account of the arrival of the first missionaries. Watakaloni, a head man, saw two parties approach from the sea on 24 November 1877:

About noon we sighted two white sails out to sea towards Saleoni and as they drew nearer to us we said they are 'memetua', something supernatural. The boats... anchored at Bubuleta. One boat was the Ellangowan and the other a whaleboat called Logeai. They contained Dr McFarlane and four Lifu teachers - Kerisiano, Tom, Siweni and Mataika. ... Some of them drank from a coconut water bottle and on returning the vessel to the natives it was smashed. The idea was that it was memetua, and would probably poison anyone who drank out of it.⁹

At Divinai, a church was erected by Kerisiano and Siweni. Two other Loyalty Island teachers settled at Teste (Ware) island, where the people were excited by stories of a land to the south where the dimdim lived. Tom and Mataika settled on Logea island in China Strait.¹⁰ At the same time the Divinai village people gave the name Dimdim creek to the place where the party had landed; and a wooden statue was erected of McFarlane to mark the arrival of the first European the people had seen.¹¹ Carved with helmet, black coat and white painted trousers, the statue stood near the beach for over forty years.¹²

Mataika, one of the four original missionaries, was descended from a party of Tongans whose canoe had drifted to Lifu, probably at the end of the eighteenth century. His father had been converted to Christianity in about 1843.¹³ In the Torres Straits, he had crossed

8 W.G. Lawes to J. Mullens, Port Moresby, 8 July 1876, PL.

9 D. Watakaloni, 'The Gospel in Tavara', KA. Two details of this vernacular account need correcting. The Bertha was used on the voyage of 1877. The Ellangowan came on the second visit in 1878.

10 S. McFarlane, Annual Report, East End branch, 12 December 1878, PR.

11 D. Watakaloni, op. cit.

12 RMED OJ, 24 April 1924, CAO/CRS/G91. See also J.E. Lips, The Savage Hits Back, 1.

13 S. McFarlane, Among the Cannibals, 30-1.

from Darnley to Murray islands by making a canoe and paddling thirty miles, in order to begin a mission station.¹⁴ In 1877 Mataika was about thirty years of age, tall and powerfully built, and he was spoken of with awe by the people of China Strait among whom he lived. From the beginning of his residence on Logea he was on good terms with the head man Dilomi, and when needled by Dilomi's enemies, declared that he would kill anyone who touched the head man. Mataika suffered however from the thieving propensities of his congregations, and the floggings he gave them for pilfering and irreverence in church were remembered with respect. Yet he was universally spoken of as a good man.¹⁵

In about 1879 Dilomi took Mataika the three miles from Kwato, the small island beside Logea, to his island garden of Eboma. Despite its malodorous swamp, Mataika decided that Eboma - called Dinner Island by Moresby, and later Samarai - should be made L.M.S. headquarters and began building a mission house.¹⁶ Arriving later to confirm the purchase, McFarlane recorded that he acquired Samarai for goods valued at 2/6d. Dilomi, who had not met McFarlane before the house was built, told the story with great clarity in his old age:

I did not meet Mr McFarlane on this first visit. I had recently killed a man who was at Logea Pota on a friendly visit. The quarrel with him was an affair of my wife's relations. My having killed him laid the Logea people open [obligated them] to revenge from the relatives of the deceased. 17

The Island missionaries' attempt to enrol the Papuans in the kingdom of believers was soon matched by the Papuans' attempt to enmesh the missionaries in the web of tribal politics. Dilomi's support for Mataika was undoubtedly related to his need for protection against his enemies. In about 1882 Mataika was replaced at Samarai by the Lifuan missionary Diki, who set about clearing the island. Diki, not realising the hostility between the Dau-i-speaking relatives of Dilomi and the Tavara-speaking villagers of Milne Bay, enlisted workers from both sides to finish the task. Soon a squabble erupted

14 A.W. Murray, Forty Years..., 471.

15 P. Dilomi, 'The Gospel in China Straits', KA.

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.

between traditional enemies on the cleared land. Diki decided to send the Tavara men home, but on the way back to Milne Bay they surprised the small Dauí village of Goilavaio and captured two women, whom they roasted and ate.

Dilomi soon convinced Diki of the importance of his alliance with the L.M.S., and with the missionary aboard bearing a gun, the Dauí canoes set off in pursuit of their Tavara enemies. Diki evidently hoped that his presence with a muzzle loader would enhance their success. But it had the opposite effect, for in the rush for the canoes Diki had forgotten to take powder or shot. As soon as the Tavara of Wadounou village learnt that the missionary was merely carrying a barrel of iron beneath his arm, they rallied from their alarm and drove the disconcerted relatives of Dilomi into the sea. Dilomi was dragged aboard the fleeing canoes with five spears hanging from his body. For his valour, Diki was dismissed from the L.M.S. and died soon afterwards a 'very sad death' according to Dilomi, who recovered from the affray.¹⁸

Of the ten Loyalty Island teachers who arrived in eastern Papua between 1877 and 1882, little is known. The death rate among their wives was appallingly high. Brought down by fever and discouraged by poor housing and irregular contact, they failed to fulfil MFarlane's original vision for the east end. Dieni had to be dismissed by James Chalmers for selling bird of paradise feathers to traders at Killerton Island.¹⁹ Ipuneso was sent home for assisting labour recruiters at Samarai in 1883.²⁰ Tom, one of the first four teachers, lived with a Sariba Island girl in the mission house after his wife died and is commonly supposed to have committed suicide to avoid disgrace.²¹

The teachers who survived fever succumbed to the fate of being abandoned by their patron. None of the things that sustained European and Polynesian agents - frequent visitations, letters from

18 Ibid. For use of firearms in tribal fighting in Lifu and Mare, in which islanders neglected to load weapons, see Kerry Howe, 'Culture Contacts on the Loyalty Islands 1841-1895', 276-7.

19 SMH, 1 September 1885.

20 Ibid.

21 P. Dilomi, op. cit.

home, or the reassurance of having many converts - prevented the Loyalty Island teachers from slipping into despair. The Ellangowan scarcely ever visited eastern New Guinea. In 1885 Jerry, the Lifuan teacher at Teste Island, complained to a traveller that he had not seen McFarlane for three years. He wanted to return to Lifu, but McFarlane continued 'putting him off', although he had been in L.M.S. service fourteen years and had come to New Guinea on the understanding that he might go back when he liked. All his hoop iron had been stolen and without this he could not buy food. He had been several months without provisions.²²

Thus the Melanesians from whom much was expected were those to whom little was given. They reproduced a few of the features of the mission at Chepenehe. A model farm was established at Divinai, and at Killerton nearby a two storied lath and plaster house was built, from which the teachers travelled up and down the beach villages in the Bay.²³ Several school houses were erected. In 1883 Lawes claimed that 350 of the 1000 Papuan children in L.M.S. schools were being taught by Loyalty Islanders in Milne Bay and adjacent islands, a number which probably soon declined.²⁴

McFarlane's resignation in 1885 all but extinguished the flickering Loyalty Islands missions. Reduced by fever and unable to converse in Motuan, the tongue spoken by Lawes during his visits to the east, the teaching band gradually dwindled to two. Since Milne Bay people were spreading the story that Christianity was responsible for bad crops, by 1889 preaching had to be abandoned at Rabi, Bou, Bubuleta, Lilihudi and Waralai.²⁵ Later that year Vaitupu, the first Samoan teacher, was sent to Kwato when that island was exchanged for Samarai as headquarters of the L.M.S., and there he represented the mission in place of the Lifuans.²⁶ When the Loyalty Island student uttered his cry, 'Crucify me!' that cry contained in it a prophecy. For by the time the English missionaries F.W. Walker and

22 T. Bevan, Toil..., 32; see also Australasian, 29 June 1878.

23 R.W. Thompson, My Trip..., 31.

24 Australasian, 25 April 1883.

25 BNG AR, 1888, 9, 21.

26 J. Douglas to J. Chalmers, Thursday Island, 24 April 1888, SA.

C.W. Abel settled at Kwato in 1891, not one survivor of the Loyalty Islands mission was left in eastern New Guinea.

II

NEW Guinea was the home of few white men before the end of the nineteenth century. Because it offered Australians fewer opportunities for profit than could be had in their own land, the ascendancy of European missionaries was generally accepted at the time when New Guinea was being drawn into the compass of political discussion. McFarlane's missionary visits to New Guinea came only twenty-three years after Leichhardt's last central Australian expedition, ten years after McDouall Stuart had crossed the continent, and one year before an overland telegraph was laid between Darwin and Adelaide. In New Guinea, the explorations of L.M. D'Albertis and Octavius Stone between 1875 and 1877 were of brief duration and had no enduring impact on the Papuans. It was the Australian frontier, not that of New Guinea, which absorbed most of the explorers' desire for adventure, discovery and fame.

Between 1880 and 1888 other travellers, through books and newspaper despatches, exploited the thirst of the British and colonial public for novelty and the exotic. What Africa had given to H.M. Stanley and Richard Burton, New Guinea offered, on a smaller scale, to J.B. Lindt and G.E. Morrison.²⁷ Even the titles of missionary books, such as McFarlane's Among the Cannibals and Chalmers' Pioneering in New Guinea, emphasized action and drama at the expense of reflection.

As travelling journals make clear, the zest for exploration was a deeply felt motive in many Britons who came to New Guinea. Another trait was a strong desire for isolation from the intricate relationships of civilization, and the power of possession a man might enjoy over 'virgin' surroundings. W.D. Pitcairn, an early resident in eastern New Guinea, believed that the beauty of China Strait exceeded that of the harbours of Cork and Sydney:

27 See also Gavin Souter, New Guinea..., 16-69.

I have so often, in company with my pipe, sat on my verandah in the silvery moonlight and gazed on that picture of tropical peace and plenty, that the impressions of it are indelibly imprinted on my memory.

28

Here the interesting point emerges that New Guinea was sometimes portrayed as though it lacked any human inhabitants. In other narratives the Papuan villager was little more than an animated part of the background against which Europeans carried out their explorations.

Chalmers was alone among explorers in seeing individuality in Papuans, who stand out in his journals as more than inert beings, and it is sometimes difficult except for their names to discern whether he was describing Europeans or Papuans.²⁹ This makes a vivid contrast to the writing of T.H. Bevan the explorer, who dismissed the human inhabitants of the land as 'a few inferior coloured races, engaged in the sanguinary work of mutual extermination'.³⁰ With the exception of an outstanding individual like Kwapena of Aroma,³¹ the lack of chiefs made it virtually impossible for early writers to distinguish between one native and another. Literature of exploration in New Guinea depicted its heroes engaged in a setting in which Papuans, mountains and birds of paradise merged together as part of the natural landscape.

Colonizing ventures which hoped to follow the tracks of explorers made similar assumptions. Early settlement schemes reflected a serene confidence that their merit would receive government blessing. The chairman of the New Guinea Colonizing Company said in 1875 that it was evident that all they had to do was to plant a colony in New Guinea, and their acts would be backed by the English government.³²

Assumptions about the place of the Papuan in colonizing schemes gained weight from social Darwinian theories of survival of the fittest. Explorers such as D'Albertis, travelling in southern New Guinea after the publication of Darwin's Origin of Species in 1859, were implicitly defending the right of conquest in declaring

28 W.D. Pitcairn, Two Years..., 52-3.

29 J. Chalmers, Pioneering..., 198-203.

30 T. Bevan, op. cit., 3.

31 Australasian, 24 July 1875. See also W. MacGregor, Diary, 26 September 1892, ANL.

32 Ibid., 15 May 1875.

that the original savage race, the dark-skinned Papuans, had been driven inland by the light-skinned 'Malay' invaders.³³ By analogy, the process would be repeated when these yielded to even more powerful intruders. The Sydney Mail raised the impatient argument of moral conquest:

Is the Papuan making [so] much use of the territories he occupies that he can tell the rest of the world to leave him in undisturbed possession? Has savagery the rights of civilization? Are cannibals to dictate the abandonment of commerce in seas which they navigate in canoes?

34

In early colonizing proposals the missionary was enrolled implicitly as a friend of 'humanity and commerce'. Most early explorers like Stone, D'Albertis and Bevan were anxious to use mission teachers, steamships and converts. Initially hospitable to explorers, missionaries began to adopt a hostile position as New Guinea was drawn steadily into the ambit of settlement companies. A.W. Murray, who had accompanied McFarlane's second voyage to New Guinea in 1872, assailed the schemes on the grounds that they could lead to collisions with natives. He therefore urged the directors of the L.M.S. to create 'a line of stations all along the coast as soon as possible so that we may get the start of foreign settlers'.³⁵ McFarlane stressed that the Papuans were numerous, and required nearly all the whole of the land for their plantations.³⁶ Lawes and Chalmers acquiesced grudgingly in large expeditions, but opposed the purchase by the traders Andrew Goldie and J.B. Cameron of 30,000 acres at Kabadi at 1^d an acre, a transaction later repudiated by the Queensland government.³⁷

In the 1880s, Lawes and Chalmers collaborated in an attempt to create an unfavourable impression of New Guinea in the minds of prospective settlers. Their influence in the colonial press made them formidable opponents, for Chalmers was widely regarded as an

33 Sydney Mail, 29 March 1879.

34 Australasian, 23 October 1875, 533.

35 A.W. Murray to W. Mullens, New Guinea, 25 December 1872, PL.

36 S. McFarlane, Among the Cannibals, 21.

37 V & P (Qld.), Vol. I, 1883-4, 36. Chalmers' communications with McIlwraith were quoted during the debate. A. Keyser, Our Cruise..., 7; see also SMII, 17 May 1883.

explorer who 'probably knows more about New Guinea and its inhabitants than any man living'.³⁸ Chalmers emphasized the freedom-loving, individualistic nature of the Papuan and contrasted it with the bondage of European employment. The natives would never condescend to labour for others, said Chalmers. 'Why should they? They have everything their hearts can desire in abundance. We cannot give them anything'.³⁹ Intent on discouraging traders, Lawes warned Australians in 1883 that the skulls of Chinese traders murdered five years before still dangled from the men's house at Aroma.

The conflict between missionaries and explorers was scented early in the Australian press. The Sydney Mail evidently regarded Chalmers' expeditions inland as a sporting challenge to Armit and Morrison, for in 1883 it reported that 'as matters now stand the English flag has been carried farthest by the missionary'.⁴⁰ The Cooktown Courier, which represented gold mining interests, was more belligerent:

The fact of the matter is, that most of the yarns about the unhealthiness of the New Guinea climate have been spun by the missionaries... These gentlemen do not want to see a white race in New Guinea, and are never at a loss to find a reason why Europeans should leave them and their black pets alone.

41

Efforts by Pacific Island missionaries to hinder the activities of explorers, and thus place Britons in a position of subordination to other races, aroused strong opposition. Bevan spoke of an 'infamous untruth' when a Polynesian teacher made a point that Hula women had been seen boarding his cutter.⁴² R.E. Guise was gripped by an almost apoplectic rage when Renaki, the head man at Hula, accused him of isolating young women for immoral purposes. The Polynesian teacher Ilaiwa, said Guise, had suborned evidence against him by threatening the head man.⁴³ For an Islander to interfere

38 Australasian, Supp. 19 January 1884.

39 Ibid., 28 April 1883.

40 Sydney Mail, 12 January 1883.

41 Cooktown Courier, 25 September 1888.

42 T. Bevan to G.S. Fort, Hula, 16 November 1885, CAO/CRS/G9 282/85.

43 R.E. Guise to J. Douglas, York I., 16 November 1886, CAO/CRS/G9; H.H. Romilly to P. Scratchley, Port Moresby, 24 November 1883, 14 June 1885, CAO/CRS/G9, 156/85.

with an Englishman was regarded almost as a violation of the natural order.

More significant than the polarity between religious and commercial interests was the transformation of Moresby's friendly, peace-loving savage of eastern Papua into a treacherous murderer whose deeds cried out for retribution. The murder of six Fijian missionaries in New Britain in 1878,⁴⁴ and the subsequent deaths of six Rarotongan teachers at Suau in the following year by poison, increased the indignation.⁴⁵ By 1880 the New Guineans had shown to the colonial press that they were 'capable of diabolical actions'.⁴⁶ The press had further proof in the murder of nine Rarotongan teachers and their families at Kalo in 1881.

An assault on Polynesian teachers by New Guineans aroused widespread indignation in the colonies;⁴⁷ but a challenge to Englishmen was worse. The massacres in eastern Papua of Europeans, especially those on Brooker Island, were the first to provoke a clamour for redress. By 1878 the Brooker Islanders had killed and eaten no fewer than six parties of sailors. To Australians these inroads into European prestige were both insulting and dangerous to the preservation of racial pride. The murder of a white man, the ultimate signal of a collapse of prestige, was an event of great symbolic importance. In 1878 W.B. Ingham, a former Queensland government official, was killed and eaten on Brooker Island.⁴⁸

Secular accounts of native assaults upon visitors were matched by missionary allegations of atrocities committed upon natives. Lawes blamed the adventurers who marched recklessly through the islands, attributing the murders to a 'disregard of warning or

44 Australasian, 22 March 1879; Chalmers was in Adelaide when the Rarotongan teachers died. Ibid., 17 May 1879.

45 Sydney Mail, 29 March 1879. Chalmers maintained an optimistic view of Papuans. 'I am actually beginning to love these Papuans - so much belied, and yet so good', wrote a traveller who was almost certainly Chalmers. Australasian, 18 August 1883. See Sydney Mail, 29 March 1879, for contrasting view.

46 S. McFarlane to Colonial Secretary, Ellangowan, 10 December 1878.

47 This was probably a reflection of the esteem with which some Polynesians were regarded in Australia. After carrying a sick miner several miles on his back for help, Ruatoka was presented with an inscribed fowling-piece by the Queensland government. J. King, W.G. Lawes..., 162.

48 See also Australasian, 10 May 1884.

violation of native rights'. McOrt had been killed because he shot village pigs; Read had been massacred because he persistently interfered with native women.⁴⁹ H.H. Romilly, first Acting Special Commissioner for New Guinea, agreed with missionaries:

modern explorers... have gone at their work in a headlong fashion, putting their faith in rifles and tomahawks, and hoping by these two powerful agents to overcome ignorance of languages, native prejudices, and want of food....⁵⁰

The most glaring violations of native rights, however, were by Greek traders in the eastern islands. Nicholas Minister, the best known of these, was known to have shot a number of islanders by the time British authority was established. Of middle build and impassive features, Minister was usually armed with cutlass and repeating rifle. Bevan reported that 'the Louisiade natives were more frightened of him than all the men of war in the British army'.⁵¹ However, Malinowski later wrote of the Trobrianders' ribald mimicry of Minister's sexual activities.⁵²

In the picture of the debauched, carousing, swashbuckling trader the missionary believed he could explain the murders of Europeans; he could also point to the sober and honest Papuan nurtured by Christian missions. Certainly Nicholas Minister was a good subject for a moral homily. As late as 1891 a Panaeiti woman, whose husband had been shot by the Greek, could show the weals where her abductor had beaten her long before, and the pink and white robe in which he had dressed her.⁵³

The representation of Papuans as passive, childlike innocents however must be related to motives for the killing of foreigners

49 SMH, 6 October 1885.

50 H.H. Romilly, The Western Pacific and New Guinea, 234-5. See also H.H. Romilly, From My Verandah..., 224-55. The murders of Frier, Webb and Miller caused great sensations.

51 T. Bevan, op. cit., 89; see also J. Mayo, 'A Punitive Expedition in British New Guinea, 1886', in JPH (8) 1973, 92-9.

52 B. Malinowski, The Sexual Life of Savages, 284. N.H. Hardy described Nicholas Minister as 'a dangerous man to chaff, even when he was well filled with wine'. N.H. Hardy, The Savage South Seas, 10, 74. W.E. Bromilow remarked that 'no statement about him was considered too wild to be true' in eastern New Guinea at the turn of the century. W.E. Bromilow, Twenty Years..., 191. According to C.A.W. Monckton, Nicholas Minister trained a crew of native women with whom he sailed for many years. C.A.W. Monckton, Some Experiences..., 6-7.

53 W. MacGregor, Diary, 27 June 1891, ANL.

rather than the missionary dialectic. Loyalty Island teachers, who were closer to the scene of the massacres than European missionaries, reported that very many of the murders had been prompted, not by revenge, as Lawes claimed, but by a simple quest for gain.⁵⁴ William Baker, for example, was massacred in the Louisiades in 1890 for not giving trade goods or 'paying' natives.⁵⁵ The report of the teacher Diki to H.O. Forbes at Samarai, rendered in a form of pidgin, is illuminating:

I hear the natives of Milne Bay, Basilaki and other islands who come here, talking among themselves, 'No more frightened man of war; Fryer no pay; Frier's mate he no pay; St Aignan he cut man o'war Captain [Marx] he no pay... They think, Mr Forbes, that man o'war no come no more, around about their islands if now no more safe. 56

Because the attacks upon Captain Frier and Captain Marx were not avenged, sorcerers claimed the departures of warships a victory for their magic, for did it not follow that the Beritani war canoes were afraid and had run away? As Diki's story makes clear, the evidence often tended to support the traders' case rather than the missionary argument of retaliation. Further support of the theory that traders were killed for their possessions is given by the Loyalty Island teacher Ipuneso. The teacher reported a debate with some Sariba Islanders in about 1885. The Islanders said:

[Man of war] he no savee fight; he all the same as woman.

To this Yuneso replied: By-and-by man-of-war come and, fashion belong New Guinea, you run away into bush. Now you talk big. And all replied with one accord; 'No man-of-war no come... Long time we kill dimdim Sideia ... man of war no fight.

Ipuneso: 'Before, Queen Victoria no put flag up, now she finish take New Guinea. You kill white man, by-and-by man of war come and kill you.'

And all the men of Sariba with him said, 'Eloopom-lakki-lakkina'. [You tell lies]. 57

54 SMH, 7 January 1887.

55 W. MacGregor, Diary, 17 January 1891, ANL.

56 H.O. Forbes to J. Douglas, Dinner Island, 10 September 1886, CAO/CRS/G9; see also T. Bevan, op. cit., 82-3.

57 T. Bevan, op. cit., 83; see also D. Shineberg, op. cit., 200-14.

Many of the eighty-one documented cases of murder and assault upon foreigners in New Guinea before 1886 seem to have had nothing to do with the classic missionary argument of retaliation.⁵⁸ The traders, W. Powell suspected, were more sinned against than sinning, and their misdeeds were often exaggerated.⁵⁹ C.W. Abel's subsequent declaration that 'for every savage white man who lost his life in those early days a score of natives were done to death by white men' is simply untrue.⁶⁰

ONE event decisively determined the balance of the argument between missionaries and traders. The disclosures of the Royal Commission into the Queensland labour trade in 1885 was an enormous psychological victory for Protestant missionaries at a crucial stage of the debate over the future of New Guinea, and incalculably damaged their opponents' case. The anti-slavery movement, which had coalesced into the Evangelical missionary cause, had conditioned public leaders in Britain and the colonies to view the relationship between white men and their black subjects in moral terms. In Australia this had been given stimulus in the poignant death of Bishop J.C. Patteson on Nukapu Island in the Santa Cruz group.⁶¹ The Evangelical section of society were able to restrain political authority through vigilant groups ever ready to dramatise imperial shortcomings in addresses, at mass meetings and by direct lobbying.

Against this background the cruise of the Hopeful, the Lizzie and the Forest King to New Guinea released a flood of shocking and incriminating detail. A letter by W.G. Lawes to The Times

58 A. Musgrave, Assistant Deputy-Commissioner, listed 21 cases as 'apparently unprovoked' and 36 as 'unprovoked' before 1886. BNG AR 1886 (II), 39, quoted in T. Bevan, op. cit., 177.

59 W. Powell, Wanderings..., 262, 266.

60 C.W. Abel, Notes of Address, 1924, KA. Even after the punitive expeditions at Cloudy Bay and Chad's Bay, MacGregor described the narrow escapes of two of his officers, Hely and Musgrave, from assault or death, the cause being desire for trade goods. W. MacGregor, Diary, 26 July 1891, 2 August 1891, ANL.

61 Mission Life, 1 November 1871.

precipitated an official enquiry.⁶² The Lizzie, commanded by Captain W.T. Wawn, had kidnapped several Moresby Island natives. The Forest King had decoyed some forty-nine villagers at East Cape by offers of hatchets and tobacco and forcibly abducted others from the beach.⁶³ The Hopeful emerged in the most damaging light. At Killerton Island, fifty natives had been taken aboard; ninety-one from Moresby Island, and sixteen from East Cape; and seventy-one abducted from Sudest. Smaller contingents were abducted from Bentley, Watts, Slade and Lydia islands in the Engineer group; from Normanby and Fergusson islands in the D'Entrecasteaux; and from Misima. At Fergusson Island one native had been shot, one decapitated and a third had his throat cut.⁶⁴ Of 630 taken aboard during two voyages, 167 died before being returned.

The Papuan descriptions of the traders' methods were graphic enough not to need repainting by missionary journalists. Vakuri, a Bou man from East Cape, reported that he was offered pipes, tobacco and calico when the Hopeful anchored at Basilaki Island.

... we wanted the trade, and we were afraid of the guns in the other boat. The Ware [Teste] boys said if we did not go they would be angry and shoot... We thought it [Queensland] was not far away. It was only when we got out of sight of land that we knew it was far away and over the sea. 65

With such powerful first-hand evidence missionaries were able to injure the Queensland planters' case for black labour. 'If there had been a Bentley Bay Herald', wrote Lawes, 'we might have read "Kidnapping and Outrage by the Whites" "100 men decoyed away and 25 killed by the Beritani" "Villages burnt, children drowned, men shot and throats cut by white pirates from over the sea".'⁶⁶ In an

62 V & P (Qld.) 1885, Report from the Royal Commission..., Vols. I & II. See also H.H. Romilly, From My Verandah..., 191-223. Australian workers, opposing competitive labour from the Islands, were also against the labour traffic.

63 S. McFarlane to R.W. Thompson, Yule Is., 18 July 1884, PL.

64 V & P (Qld.) Report..., xxx, xxxii. See also SMH, 2 October 1885.

65 SMH, 2 October 1885.

66 Ibid., 6 October 1885. For a study of motives of Islanders in acts of violence against foreigners, see D. Shineberg, op. cit., 214.

ecstasy of journalistic dramatisation, Lawes was able to clinch the Christian case for the abolition of the labour trade. Lawes wrote that every blow given on a Queensland plantation, and every indignity suffered, would be repaid with compound interest in New Guinea. The east end of New Guinea, Lawes predicted, would become a second Solomon Islands with its massacres and outrages on visiting traders.⁶⁷

Open comparison between the labour traders and slave ships heightened arguments for a missionary and government alliance of trusteeship over defenceless natives. As early as 1878 Lawes had suggested visits of inspection by a delegate of Sir Arthur Gordon, as High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, whose function would be to restrain 'the lawlessness that will inevitably ensue on the arrival of expeditions'.⁶⁸ The tours of H.M. Chester as Gordon's commissioner were symbolic of the Imperial government's recognition that supervision was necessary for the good of both natives and traders. Commodore Erskine's proclamation of a Protectorate in 1884 presented for the first time to New Guineans the argument that the coming of government was meant for their own protection.

THE lively part played by Loyalty Island missionaries was evident in the voyage of Erskine to eastern New Guinea as well as the Royal Commissioners' investigations. Teachers were portrayed as mediators between officials and visitors. In Milne Bay, a returned labourer, Konoga, told Erskine that the labour recruiters were not cruel as long

67 SMH, 6 September 1884.

68 Sydney Mail, 20 July 1878. The Australasian also asked for a legal check to white settlement by the British government in New Guinea. Australasian, 8 May 1875. In June 1878 H.M. Chester visited southern New Guinea aboard the Ellangowan as Judicial Commissioner and delegate of Sir Arthur Gordon, British High Commissioner for the Western Pacific. H.M. Chester to New Guinea Mission Committee, Thursday Island, 26 June 1878, PL. In 1883, W. Powell wrote that 'the bad men... are getting fewer every year... thanks to the action of the Government in sending men-of-war cruisers to these seas'. W. Powell, Wanderings..., 265. If Powell's observations were accurate, and the vagrant traders was being replaced by landed settlers, the cruise of the Hopeful was of unexpected advantage to the missionary press.

as they were in sight of the missionary; 'when away from reach of the missionary they got guns, etc., and burnt villages, and got men by force'.⁶⁹ On a voyage to the Bay in 1884, McFarlane was given a present at every place 'as token of their gratitude (so they told us) for having brought teachers to live amongst them and teach them'.⁷⁰ At Killerton, where the Lifuan Dieni was stationed, there was 'an immense gathering... a present of about three tons of yams, taro & and seven large pigs were prepared and placed in heaps before the teacher's house'.⁷¹ One missionary, Ipuneso, did not emerge unscathed from the enquiry in Queensland. A Wesleyan hymn book, inscribed by Captain McNeill of the Hopeful, 'From the above to Eboneza for having explained to recruits the Queensland agreement 18/5/84',⁷² was found in his Samarai house. Although Lawes regarded Ipuneso's part in the scandal as an 'error of judgment'⁷³ the teacher was repatriated to the Loyalty Islands.

Jerry, teacher at Teste Island, understood better than his colleague the safety of being on the government side. He interpreted for the Deputy Commissioner H. Milman in New Guinea, accompanied him during the Royal Commission proceedings in Queensland, and handed over to relatives of dead labourers the official compensation. This consisted of an American axe, two tomahawks, two cane knives, a dozen coloured handkerchiefs, two red blankets, and one length of Turkey red cloth for each dead man.⁷⁴

In presiding over reparations Jerry combined secular and religious office, assembling natives between decks twice daily for scriptures, hymns and prayers.⁷⁵ Although Commodore Erskine, who took Jerry and the labourers home, wrote that the missionaries had been 'intimately connected with every step of any importance which has hitherto been taken in New Guinea', he thought it useful to add

69 Courier, Brisbane, 7 January 1885; Sydney Mail, 6 December 1884, 1155.

70 S. McFarlane to R.W. Thompson, Yule Is., 18 July 1884, PL.

71 Ibid.

72 SMH, 3 January 1885.

73 Ibid., 1 September 1885.

74 Ibid., 18 July 1885.

75 Ibid.

that the work could have been performed without them. Romilly had to check Jerry's speeches 'as he told the natives that the whole expedition had been organized by the Mission. I made him tell them that it was the Queensland government, or Queen Victoria, that had done it all.'⁷⁶

Some labourers reported harsh treatment; and seventy years after the abolition of the labour trade there were fragments of their narratives, especially of the heat and thirst below decks.⁷⁷ Two newspapers carried the same account:

In the morning very early, before it was light, the white men cut up bread and gave it to us; then when it was broad daylight a bell was rung, and we all had to go to work... We left off work when it was nearly sunset, and then had rice to eat, but we were never satisfied, and some couldn't eat it, and went to sleep without eating any thing. We slept on the floor, in a house by ourselves, and had pieces of blanket to cover ourselves with. 78

Not all labourers, however, claimed they had been badly treated. That fifty-eight New Guineans chose to remain on the Burdekin river rather than return, as Chalmers admitted, suggested that some planters treated their employees well.⁷⁹ Even John Douglas, who regarded some recruiting practices as 'abominable', said that the result of the traffic had been 'a friendly feeling towards the white man' in eastern New Guinea.⁸⁰ This was verified by Chalmers' report during a visit to Bentley Island: 'They seemed particularly happy and jolly. They trotted out their English, "My word, plenty work in Queensland", accompanied by a pantomime of fisticuffs.'⁸¹ Some of the Teste and Tubetube islanders were inclined to look down on the first Fijian Methodist missionaries in 1891 because of their ignorance of English.⁸²

76 H.H. Romilly, Western Pacific..., 47.

77 J. Nogar, Interview, Maivara, 3 May 1972.

78 SMH, 9 October 1884; Sydney Mail, 6 December 1884.

79 Courier, Brisbane, 12 December 1883.

80 Quoted in F.M. Synge, Albert Maclaren, 40.

81 SMH, 1 September 1885.

82 AMMR, 1 December 1891.

Against the melodramatic literary background of what The Times called 'slavery'⁸³ must be set the cordial relations between returned labourers and Europeans. Not only did many prefer to remain on the sugar fields, but a number of those who returned eagerly sought employment by white miners on the Sudest goldfield in 1888. Furthermore, some labourers like Kago of Giligili and Abraham Kwaroro of Awaiama became influential missionaries and collaborators with Europeans.⁸⁴

Into a complex situation came Erskine's proclamation helping to resolve the widespread political uncertainty surrounding New Guinea. The Protectorate government also signalled the beginning of a brief but intense collaboration between imperial officers and missionaries. Many of the despatches of the Scratchley protectorate were written within the walls of a Pacific Island missionary's house, as if to emphasize the influence that had been built up among Papuans by Island evangelists before the coming of British rule.

The consolidation of authority under Sir William MacGregor did not signal at first a waning of Protestant influence: indeed, his administration was regarded as a victory. The vituperative writing of Bevan and other spokesmen for trading interests reflects their awareness that the missionaries seemed to have prevailed over the traders. There was no doubt in Bevan's mind that missionaries were the greatest stumbling block to progress in the island. Erskine and Romilly had 'played into their hands'.⁸⁵ But Bevan was sure that their ascendancy would be temporary. Lawes had sown the wind: might he not reap the whirlwind?⁸⁶

Lawes seemed content to reap whirlwinds. By 1888 there were far fewer government officials and traders than missionaries. The arrival of almost sixty foreign missionaries in eastern New Guinea in 1891, and a group almost as large in Yule Island from 1886,

83 The Times, 24 September 1885.

84 See Chapter II, pp. 34-8.

85 In Port Moresby in 1884, Bevan recorded a statement by a Port Moresby native that the man-of-war then in Fairfax Harbour was Tamate lakatoi (Chalmers' ship). Bevan called Erskine 'a simple dupe in the hands of the missionaries'. T. Bevan, op. cit., 15, 17. See also H. Jackman, 'Sir Peter Scratchley: Her Majesty's Special Commissioner for New Guinea', in PNG Society, Journal..., Vol. 3, no. 1, 1969, 52, 56.

86 Daily Bulletin, Townsville, 17 May 1886.

swelled the religious quota further. The lure of exploration on the Australian continent, the lack of economic opportunities in New Guinea, and the severe limitations on land transactions largely explain the fact that before the turn of the century New Guinea was predominantly a missionary frontier. No array of unique fauna existed to dazzle zoological expeditions or game hunters: no spectacular ancient ruins could be unearthed for archaeologists: no fabulous interior cultures for the curious or the traveller. Only later did the diversity and richness of Melanesian culture begin to reveal itself. For the present, the land was left in possession of the preacher and the schoolmaster. Being a foreigner in New Guinea meant, almost inevitably, being a missionary.

CHAPTER II

Missions and Government on the Frontier

CHRISTIAN missionaries came to New Guinea before the flags of colonial powers, and they moulded public opinion in Britain and Australia during the period in which Pacific peoples were being placed under colonial rule. The idea of a duty and a trust and a goal, evident in the writings of Scratchley, MacGregor and Le Hunte,¹ derived partly from a Christian concept of national vocation. In late 19th century Britain the notion of trusteeship over primitive peoples had some official acceptance, but in Australia it was mainly limited to the churches.

Churchmen in the Australian colonies tended towards a view of political intrusion in the Pacific that saw it as in a sense inevitable, the outcome of expanding technology and trade. But Montagu Stone-Wigg, first Anglican bishop in New Guinea (1898-1908), believed annexation was made morally defensible only on condition that concern for the inhabitants be the overriding aim of government.² When in 1850 the Australian Board of Missions was formed by the six English bishops in the colonies for the conversion and civilization of the Melanesians and Aborigines of Australia,³ New Guinea was implicitly included within the scope of its evangelistic work. The importation of Melanesian labourers to the canefields of Queensland

1 Sir William MacGregor said that in New Guinea the British had one last opportunity of showing that they could govern humanely a subject race. OP 21/3. G. Seymour Fort, Sir Peter Scratchley's secretary, wrote that at no period in history was there a more favourable opportunity for successfully adjusting the interests of whites and blacks. It was essential that the natives be protected. BNG AR 1886 (I), 19-20.

2 For Stone-Wigg's views of colonial annexation, see ABM, The Jubilee Festival..., 42.

3 'Minutes of Proceedings at a Meeting of the Metropolitan and Suffragan Bishops of the Province of Australasia, held at Sydney, from October 1st to November 1st, A.D. 1850', (Sydney, nd), 23-4. The ABM was reformed at the first General Synod of 1872 and its functions were spelled out at the General Synod of 1896. ABM, The Jubilee Festival..., 20. See also K. Rayner, 'The History of the Church...', Ph.D. thesis, Qld. 1963, 29.

from the 1860s had further increased their awareness of the Islanders. In 1876 Bishop Matthew Hale of Brisbane had trenchantly criticized the colonists' 'prejudice against missionary efforts in connection with the Chinese, the Islanders, and the aborigines' and their 'aversion to men of these races'.⁴ Alfred Barry, Bishop of Sydney (1884-1889), said that as the stronger race Europeans were put in trust over their 'weaker brethren'. Unless they recognized the true brotherhood of humanity they were sinning against God.⁵ Following Queensland's abortive proclamation of sovereignty over southern New Guinea in 1883, Hale and Bishop George Stanton of North Queensland moved to secure a broad pledge from the Premier, Sir Thomas McIlwraith, that the Papuans would be dealt with 'on Christian principles'.⁶

Anglicans believed the Church of England was called by its history to the vocation of a national church; and in Australia, although it was not established, national obligations were attached to Anglicanism still. The idea that to be English was by birthright to be Church of England was widely accepted among many who were churchgoers, and many others who were not. In New Guinea, Papuans had seen the British flag hoisted three times between 1873 and 1884 and taken down three times.⁷ It was not until the fourth and final occasion - Erskine's proclamation in 1884 - that a merely theoretical concern for the Papuans came to be regarded as insufficient for the largest church in the colonies and the one with closest affinities with the Crown. Fortified by Erskine's proclamation, the Church of England in Australia was quick to cast itself in a dual role: spiritual mother of Britons in New Guinea, and guardian of Papuans against any of her sons who might not, in Barry's words, 'recognize the true brotherhood of humanity'.

4 DofB, 'Report of the Proceedings of... Synod', Brisbane 1882; see also Messenger, Melbourne, 4 April 1887; DofB, op. cit., 1876. For further study of European attitudes to Melanesian labourers in Queensland, see P.R. Corris, Passage..., 90-1.

5 Messenger, Melbourne, 4 April 1887.

6 K. Rayner, op. cit., 383.

7 J. Moresby in eastern New Guinea in 1873, H.M. Chester in April 1883, H.H. Romilly in October 1884 and J.E. Erskine in November 1884. The latter three ceremonies were in Port Moresby. H.H. Romilly, From My Verandah..., 191.

Quick to speak, churchmen were slower to act. In 1886, on Stanton's motion, the Australian General Synod said that British sovereignty 'imposed direct obligation upon the Church to provide for the spiritual welfare both of the natives and the settlers and that the expense of a mission should be shared by all the Dioceses in Australia'. With considerable restraint the Synod asked its members to 'collect information with a view to establishing a mission in British New Guinea'.⁸ Rumours were soon circulating in Port Moresby that a band of colonial clergymen would arrive in the Possession, but in 1887 the Church Missionary Society in London gave an assurance that it had no intention of entering the field.⁹ As Primate or presiding bishop, Barry had once asked Lawes about missionary prospects; but in 1888 the latter wrote caustically, 'up to the present I have not heard from him - and I do not expect to'.¹⁰ Meanwhile Barry and Stanton were attempting to inflict responsibility for New Guinea upon each other. 'The good folks at Sydney seem to want to thrust the task on me', Stanton complained in Townsville.¹¹ By 1890 nothing had been done beyond the making of speeches by the Primate in Sydney and Melbourne and the publication of a missionary magazine which survived only four issues.¹² Some critics began asking whether the English church in Australia was too somnolent to muster a band of missionaries for New Guinea.

One clergyman in Queensland was convinced that his personal calling was to arouse the flagging energy of his brethren. The Reverend Albert Maclaren (1853-1891), a Scotsman educated in England, was one of those converts to Anglicanism whose zeal for the reclamation of the English poor turned easily into a passion for work among the 'poor heathen'. Schooled in the cosmopolitan atmosphere of St Augustine's missionary college at Canterbury but rejected for service in Africa on grounds of health, Maclaren had migrated to

8 General Synod, Proceedings, 1886, Res. XIV.

9 W.G. Lawes to R.W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 29 February 1887, PL; R.W. Thompson to W.G. Lawes, London, 10 June 1887, WOL.

10 W.G. Lawes to R.W. Thompson, Sydney, 24 April 1888, PL.

11 G. Stanton to M. Green, Townsville, nd. Letter in writer's possession.

12 Australian Missionary News (hereinafter AMN), Sydney, 1889-1890, ML.

Queensland. At Mackay, whose parishioners had a reputation for recalcitrance, he scolded them in his first sermon:

You have starved out one man, you broke another man's heart, and you drove another man away. Now the Roman priest will always give me an old coat, the Methodist minister will give me a meal, so you can't starve me out, you can't break my heart, and you can't drive me away. 13

The Mackay parishioners, however, resented their rector's interest in the 2000 Melanesians in the sugar fields of the Pioneer River. Instead of starving him out, as Maclaren wrote, they sat arguing 'that they pay me, not to look after the souls of blacks but of white people'.¹⁴ Maclaren resigned, placing an offer in Barry's hands to lead a mission to New Guinea, which he now conceived as his life's ambition.¹⁵ Like many of his clerical colleagues, he was noted for pastoral rather than practical gifts; but he met John Douglas' two conditions that missionaries be good sailors and 'above all things' have 'a thoroughly human interest in the natives'.¹⁶

Douglas' advice had led the Primate to understand that the whole of the eastern archipelago was to be made available to the Church of England. By 1889 it was being announced that the English headquarters would be at Bentley Bay in the Louisiades.¹⁷ Knowing nothing of the acting Special Commissioner's correspondence, however, MacGregor had other plans for the spiritual conquest of eastern New Guinea. He had been greatly impressed with the capacity of Wesleyans in Fiji and decided to ask the Australasian Conference to enter the

13 R. Fraser, A Historical Sketch of the Diocese of North Queensland, SML, nd.

14 F. Synge, Albert Maclaren..., 12; see also C.G. Bolton, A Thousand Miles Away, 173. An interesting contemporary parallel is described in John Rex's study of English-West Indian race relations. Rex found resentment in an industrial town among non-church-going parishioners, who felt that the vicar was their vicar and should not be fraternizing with coloured people. J. Rex and R. Moore, Race, Community, and Conflict, 186.

15 After resigning from Mackay, Maclaren spent a brief period in Maitland, NSW.

16 AMN, 3 June 1889.

17 BNG AR 1886 (II), 7; Australian Churchman, 26 September 1908, 1; AMN, 3 August 1889, 4; *ibid.*, 3 June 1890, 2.

field which the L.M.S. was unable to occupy.¹⁸ He asked Lawes whether he had 'learn[t] anything of this reported Church of England mission for New Guinea...'. If the L.M.S. did not intend fully occupying the west, he wrote, 'the best thing would be to leave them the Fly River'.¹⁹ Disconcerted by the Administrator's preference for Methodism, some Anglicans consoled themselves with the reflection that mission work was 'not a question of the position of rival denominations, but of Christianity versus Heathenism'.²⁰

Compared with their episcopal brethren, the Wesleyans lost little time in turning words into action. MacGregor's invitation was accompanied by a detailed map of the Eastern islands, and Anthony Musgrave, the Government Secretary, was sent to Sydney to present it. Musgrave's description was intended to persuade, for the Methodists had by then become aware of the belligerent reputation of the eastern Papuans. He outlined 300 arcadian islands, comprising 'forest lands and natural pasturage, well supplied with streams and springs, an affinity of reefs stocked with excellent fish, and an aboriginal tenantry of tens of thousands' - a prospectus suggesting a well-ordered estate awaiting a landlord. The island estate comprised 40,000 square miles, and forty missionaries were needed. But Musgrave thoughtfully added that the 'landlords' would have to be provided with a means of escape by boats 'in case of the often lightly-incurred hostility of the people'.²¹

The British representative became a patron of Methodist missions in New Guinea. In 1889 MacGregor invited the Reverend George Woolnough of Brisbane to send a missionary party to New

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- 18 W. MacGregor to R.W. Thompson, Brisbane, 25 August 1889, PL; AMMR, 4 February 1892.
- 19 W. MacGregor to W.G. Lawes, at sea, 22 December 1889, PL. MacGregor told S.B. Fellows that Anglicans 'wished to take all the field that had been allotted to us. McLaren [sic] talked of National Church and historic Ch - You can stop that said Governor. We have no national church. That will be our national church which does best work. And the Churches here have yet to make their history... He [MacGregor] said I have invited Wesleyans to come and I most certainly shall not ask them not to come.' S.B. Fellows, Diary, 29 July 1892. ANG.
- 20 AMN, 3 June 1890, 2.
- 21 A. Musgrave, 'Memorandum on Prospective establishment of a Branch of the A.M.M.S. in British New Guinea'. Sydney, 27 November 1889, SA.

Guinea and told him that, failing a favourable Wesleyan response, he would apply elsewhere.²² In the words of the Reverend George Brown, chairman of the Wesleyan Mission Board,

We did not seek such an opening. It is doubtful whether we had thought of it. The door has been opened for us, and we have been plainly asked to step in. 23

According to Brown's interpretation of events, MacGregor became the human instrument of a divine purpose - a conclusion that the Sacred Heart Mission at Yule Island, baulked by the Administrator's action in hemming them in to a strip of coast, would have resisted.²⁴

But for Methodists, divine planning was not enough: the New Guineans themselves had to be portrayed as imploring the churches to action. MacGregor's appeal was regarded by the Wesleyan missionary board as 'the articulated cry of tens of thousands of spiritually destitute and helpless people'. The Macedonian call 'Come over and help us' excited the Wesleyans to put forth all the strength they possessed.²⁵ The words 'articulated cry', 'helpless people' and 'come over and help us' reveal the misleading nature of missionary rhetoric. How greatly they were at variance with reality is shown by Brown's preparations in 1901 for a mission at Rubiana in the Solomon Islands:

[I] did not find the Islanders at all anxious for a mission, in fact, if I had asked permission, I was pretty certain of receiving a refusal. I thought it much the best to go without having asked permission in the first instance and then have to go in the face of a refusal. 26

Missionary after missionary discovered that figures of speech in platform rhetoric were unreliable guides to Melanesian attitudes. To interpret a demand for fish-hooks and tobacco as a craving for Christianity assumed that the Melanesian did not know what was good

22 W. MacGregor to G. Woolnough, Port Moresby, 19 August 1889, SA; W.C. Robinson to W.G. Lawes, Sydney, 10 September 1889, KA; see also G. Brown, George Brown..., 465.

23 Weekly Advocate, 19 April 1890.

24 G. Brown to W.E. Bromilow, Sydney, 5 September 1901, MOM 48.

25 Weekly Advocate, 19 April 1890.

26 G. Brown to W.E. Bromilow, Sydney, 5 September 1901, MOM 48.

for him: only the missionary did. From this to the theocracy of religious imperialism was but a short step.

Protestant missions in the Pacific had generally accepted the principle, first enunciated by Samuel Marsden in regard to New Zealand and the eastern Pacific, that occupation of a field by one mission precluded others from work in that field. Bearing in mind the spiritual rivalry that had marred earlier relations between Methodists and the L.M.S. in Samoa, George Brown in 1874 had decided not to lead a mission to the Solomons because the islands were claimed by the Church of England, going instead to New Britain.²⁷ Fifteen years later Brown assured the L.M.S. that there would be no Methodist competition in New Guinea.²⁸ Edward White Benson, Archbishop of Canterbury (1883-1896), also had strong views about struggles for souls, and Maclaren was given instructions strictly to avoid trespassing.²⁹ Bishop Barry of Sydney ventured even further: if there were the slightest idea of Anglican interference with the L.M.S., he for one would have nothing to do with the founding of a Church mission.³⁰ In May 1890 the L.M.S. requested an interview with MacGregor in order to sort out the territory each mission was claiming.³¹

With a united determination that the chance of spiritual collision should be prevented, the Wesleyans relinquished their claim to the north-east coast, the Anglicans accepted the northern littoral from Cape Ducie to the Mamba river, and the L.M.S. sphere shrank to the southern coast from East Cape to the Netherlands border.³²

27 G. Brown to B. Chapman, Sydney, 27 January 1874, MOM 166.

28 G. Brown to W.G. Lawes, Sydney, 10 September 1889, KA;
W.C. Robinson to W.G. Lawes, Sydney, 10 September 1889, PL.

29 W.G. Lawes to R.W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 17 June 1890, PL.

30 The Port Moresby conference in 1890 was foreshadowed by a Methodist-Anglican meeting at Levuka, Fiji, in 1880. See JPH, Vol. 8, 1973, 191.

31 W.G. Lawes to R.W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 20 May 1890, PL.

32 The LMS station of Ware Island was handed over by the Reverend F.W. Walker in 1891 to the Methodists. AWMMS, AR, 1 December 1891. Because a bequest had been made to the Wesleyans 'for work on the island of New Guinea' the Methodists retained a strip of coast from East Cape to Cape Ducie. AWMMS Resolution passed at Meeting, Sydney, 1 September 1890, KA; see also J. Waterhouse to W.G. Lawes, Sydney, 6 September 1890, PL.

The partitioning of British New Guinea by Brown, Lawes and Maclaren in 1890 emerged as a distinctly Protestant arrangement. MacGregor encouraged the meeting and reported it, with obvious satisfaction, in the Annual Report for 1889-90.³³ Yet he was not a party to the agreement in a technical sense, for no government regulations were made, as MacGregor was quick to point out in reply to a Roman Catholic complaint in 1897.³⁴ In practice, the government simply refused to grant land to any mission outside its agreed sphere. Since the Sacred Heart Mission declined to agree to the concordat - indeed, Archbishop Louis-André Navarre denounced it as a 'wretched piece of political Erastianism'³⁵ - the only direction in which it could advance was inland, along the St Joseph River.

The 'Gentlemen's Agreement', which the signatories treated as irrevocable,³⁶ was highly satisfactory to the Protestant missions, to the Administrator, indeed to everyone but the Roman Catholics. For MacGregor, it contained the danger of friction with the supra-national Roman Catholic church with its structure of authority transcending his own jurisdiction. Its bishops were French, their cultural and national ties outside the British Empire, and their attitude to heretical sects documented in the ultramontane encyclicals of Pius IX and Leo XIII. The vituperative account of the 'Gentlemen's Agreement' by André Dupeyrat, and intense lobbying by Bishop Alain de Boismenu to have it nullified,³⁷ are in themselves

33 BNG AR, 1889-90, 19.

34 N. Lutton, 'Murray and the Spheres of Influence', in H. Nelson, ed., Select Documents in the History of Papua and New Guinea, 1ff. Nevertheless, that the spheres of influence policy was protected by government regulation was believed commonly in New Guinea, even by such an experienced magistrate as Monckton. C.A.W. Monckton, Some Experiences..., 139. See also R.B. Joyce, Sir William MacGregor..., 175-178.

35 B. Grimshaw, Adventures in Papua with the Catholic Mission, ACTS vol. x, nd, ML. Initial negotiations between Lawes and Father S.H. Verjus had been friendly. W.G. Lawes to Special Commissioner, Port Moresby, 6 August 1886, CAO/CRS/G9.

36 Brown refused to accept a twenty years' limit to the Agreement, as he considered the D'Entrecasteaux alone would occupy his church for the indefinite future. AMMR, May 1891, 3; AWMMS Minutes, 13 October 1890, MOM.

37 See A.M.G. de Boismenu to F.R. Barton, Yule Island, 25 February 1905, CAO/CRS/G121; J.H.P. Murray to A. Hunt, 11 June 1908 and 28 June 1908, CAO/CRS/G76.

an indication of the blow which the Sacred Heart Mission realized it had suffered through the comity of missions. According to Dupeyrat, MacGregor - whom Navarre compared bitterly to a crocodile³⁸ - had violated British imperial policy. He had attempted to 'canton the missions off, in impenetrable spheres':

MacGregor was not very clever in mixing himself up in a purely religious question like this; it was contrary to the general directions of the Imperial Government.... Officially he left the denominations to settle the question among themselves, and when the agreement he had forseen was concluded he applauded it vociferously and approved it with all his authority. 39

Only one adjustment to the comity of missions was made by British missionaries in New Guinea: in 1915 the L.M.S. Torres Straits mission was transferred to the Anglican diocese of Carpentaria.⁴⁰ The result of the concordat, as a Protestant cheerfully reported, was that in New Guinea no native knew one church from another, and 'missionaries had more sense than to allow them to know it'.⁴¹ For Protestants, the comity of missions was a tactical gain; for Roman Catholicism, apart from initial friction with the L.M.S. at Waima (Maiva) in the Mekeo, it determined that the march of the Sacred Heart Mission would be inland rather than along the coast.

In the eastern villages of the north coast the arrival of missionaries had long been anticipated. News of the lotu (Christianity) had been spreading for thirteen years along the coastline from East Cape. Beginning with Moresby's journey in the Basilisk in 1873 as far as the Mamba river, coastal people already knew a little of foreign visitors. Although these people depended upon hearsay for information about the lotu, the visits of pearl shellers had made Goodenough Bay villagers thoroughly aware of the existence of races other than their own.

For some years before Maclaren's arrival a version of Christianity had been spread abroad by a native of Taupota known as Abraham Kwararo. Recruited probably at East Cape by a labour

38 W. MacGregor, Diary, 9 September 1892, ANL.

39 A. Dupeyrat, Papouasie: Histoire de la Mission, 258.

40 A smaller cession was made in 1926 when the strip of coast between East Cape to Killerton was transferred from the Kwato Mission to the Methodist Mission.

41 Daily Telegraph, Sydney, 4 April 1896.

vessel in 1883, Kwararo had worked for several years near Townsville. Conversant in the language and ways of white men, his travels had given him prestige throughout Chad's Bay and renown in villages beyond it. Probably had recruiting not been abruptly stopped, many of Kwararo's fellows might have seen the bright lights of Townsville and Mackay. By the time he met Maclaren, Abraham Kwararo's name was known as far north as Cape Vogel.⁴²

Borrowing freely from his experiences in Queensland and his short apprenticeship in Christian teaching at the L.M.S. station at Suau, Kwararo was able to initiate his hearers into some of the mysteries of the white man's religion. Invariably dressed in serge trousers, blue reefer jacket, and battered white billycock hat,⁴³ Kwararo was one of those few Papuans who stood out visibly from the mass of his countrymen. Maclaren, who first met him in Samarai, noted that he was 'rather a short man with a pleasant face and a merry disposition';⁴⁴ he was, however, 'dignified when addressing his countrymen'. Samuel Tomlinson, arriving in October 1891, was impressed with Kwararo's demeanour and wrote with only a little exaggeration that he was 'a very respected Chief and his wishes are law to his people and he is highly respected by them'.⁴⁵

To officials and missionaries anxious to contact people along the north-east coast, the presence of a man of Abraham Kwararo's talents must have appeared little short of providential. Only a month before Maclaren's arrival the former cane-cutter had acted as MacGregor's messenger to his people's mountain enemies, the Agonai, when one of them had been tried for murder.⁴⁶ Kwararo was able to mediate between Agonai and Government by promising terms of peace if the coastal villages were left in safety. Among the Massim, Kwararo was said to be a 'very smart' man.⁴⁷ So well had he prepared the people of Chad's Bay for the coming of the

42 F.M. Synge, op. cit., 139; E. Rogers, A Pioneer of Papua, 106.

43 W. MacGregor, Diary, 13 June 1891, ANL.

44 F.M. Synge, op. cit., 139.

45 S. Tomlinson, Diary, 1 January 1892, ML; see also F.M. Synge, op. cit., 9.

46 W. MacGregor, Diary, 15 June 1891, 4 September 1891, ANL.

47 J. Nogar, Interview, Maivara, 3 April 1972.

gospel that when Maclaren stepped on the beach at Taupota the people sat down quietly on the sand in an attitude of expectancy to hear him preach a sermon there and then.⁴⁸

It was not at Taupota but at Bartle Bay thirty miles to the west that Maclaren decided to begin missionary operations. There was an excellent strategic position known as Dogura in the bay. A plateau with an almost completely flat top, Dogura was the fighting ground of the coastal and mountain people. It was visible over twenty miles out to sea. The people of Wedau and Wamira were 'decidedly kind and hospitable' having already many iron adzes and tomahawks.⁴⁹ Maclaren readily accepted MacGregor's recommendation that he should make a beginning there.⁵⁰ As he no doubt realized, Dogura had a symbolic value which enormously enhanced its material assets. The cluster of images which surrounded the idea of Christendom - a spiritual fortress, a city on a hill, a battleground consecrated into a shrine - all these reflected the wisdom of Maclaren's choice. As the Zanzibar mission had built a cathedral on the site of a slave market,⁵¹ so the New Guinea mission could raise its altar on a place of bloodshed and death. Dogura, seventy sea-miles from Samarai, would be Maclaren's holy mountain. In Dogura he had found a place which contributed greatly to the imagery and symbolism of the Anglican mission.

On 10 August 1891 Maclaren and Copland King stepped ashore on the pebbled beach at Kaieta. At that time the village of Wamira consisted of a number of houses with saddle-shaped roofs and overlapping gables surrounded by crotons and dracaeneas. Beside the village was a circle of blue stones. The people, who were clad in native cloth and wore their hair long, were lightly built and appeared to suffer from skin disease. Although they had told MacGregor some weeks earlier that the people in the Bay were all 'good and do not fight',⁵² the appearance of the Grace Lynn gave

48 F. Synge, op. cit., xv.

49 W. MacGregor, Diary, 15 June 1891, ANL; BNG AR, 1890-1, app. P, 63; W. MacGregor to A. Maclaren, Samarai, 6 August 1891.

50 A.K. Chignell, Twenty-One Years in Papua, 13; G. White, A Pioneer in Papua, 23.

51 G.H. Wilson, The History of the U.M.C.A...., 31.

52 W. MacGregor, Diary, 15 June 1891, ANL.

considerable alarm to the villagers, who assembled on the beach prepared for a fight. One man, Martin Modudula, recalled the landing thus:

Early on a morning in the dry season: later I was to know that it was Monday August 10 1891: I heard the sound of the conch shell coming from across the river.... I asked my father why it was sounding, and he said that as the day before had softened into evening a boat with sails had anchored near Iabara, and that there were Bariawa, strange folk, on board...

One of the men pulled a book out of his pocket, and held it in his hand, and opened it and read something. I think the book was a Bible. The man was Amau Alaberta and Amau King was with him. Alaberta gave Gaireka (the chief man) some tobacco. They all climbed the Dogura ridge and there they stood, and Alaberta and his friends... said they would dwell there.⁵³

The Dogura plateau, about 160 acres in area, subsequently was purchased from Gaireka and the other elders for two tomahawks, 112 pounds of trade tobacco, ten large and ten small knives, twenty-five pipes, twenty-four mirrors, a piece of red Turkey twill cloth, and some boxes of matches. The government later confirmed the purchase.⁵⁴

The arrival of Abraham Kwararo and his followers from Taupota on 11 August completed the initial landing at Bartle Bay; and Kwararo lost no time in delivering the message of Christianity to the benighted Wedauans. Returning to Wedau village from a reconnoitre, Maclaren and King were surprised to find him preaching beneath Maclaren's umbrella to a large concourse. Abraham, Maclaren wrote, was 'telling them what he knew about Christianity and why we had come. They sang nicely, and he said a short prayer'.⁵⁵ By accident rather than design, Christianity was first preached to the people of the northern Papuan coast by a Papuan.

Identification with the dimdim missionaries, however, was an essential part of Kwararo's performance. To complete the impression of an alliance with the smooth-skinned Maclaren, Kwararo bade the missionary shave his beard. 'For the first time in my life

53 Church Standard, 10 October 1941.

54 Qld. PP, V & P, Vol. III, 1890, 1591-1592; J.V. Paton, Soldiers and Servants under the Southern Cross, 17; A.K. Chignell, Twenty-One Years in Papua, 19.

55 F.M. Synge, op. cit., 141; C. King, A History of the New Guinea Mission, 8.

I acted in the capacity of shaving man', wrote Maclaren, 'and gave satisfaction to Abraham, as he testified when he saw himself in the glass after I had finished with him.'⁵⁶ But the astute Taupotan combined spiritual enterprise with a nice regard for earthly reward, and Gaireka was relieved of half the purchase price in mirrors and tobacco which he had been paid in return for Dogura. A sorrowful Maclaren, saying that he could not speak too highly of the manner in which Abraham had helped him,⁵⁷ was obliged to send the entrepreneur back to his village.

On 10 August 1891 another party led by C.W. Abel and F.W. Walker of the L.M.S. began a mission at Kwato, an island in China Strait only three miles from the government headquarters at Samarai. Kwato, the traditional property of the lineage of Bwagagaia of Logea, had been taken over by another lineage as compensation for a murder committed before 1877. In about 1880 a Chinese and a Portuguese trader had lived there, but both were murdered. After the purchase of Kwato by the Protectorate government it was transferred to the L.M.S. in exchange for Samarai. Walker and Abel, who had settled at Suau in 1889 and 1890 respectively, began clearing the swamp on Kwato in February 1891 and moved there in the following August with the Suau children Josia Lebasi, Pari, Lihi and Mireka.⁵⁸

AMONG eastern Papuans living near Dogura and Kwato, secular authority could be a powerful persuader of the Christian cause. The fact that the Union Jack flew from the masthead of the L.M.S. house at Port Moresby was more than symbolic. It was accompanied by the Administrator's Royal Instructions 'to the utmost of his power to promote religion and education among the native inhabitants...'. Lawes saw Instruction XXXI as the Magna Charta of the missions.⁵⁹

56 F.M. Synge, *op. cit.*, 141.

57 *Ibid.* Abraham received the blue uniform and belt of a village constable in 1892 from MacGregor. W. MacGregor, *Diary*, 2 September 1892, ANL.

58 Abel and Walker succeeded W. Sharpe and E.B. Savage, who had withdrawn in 1886 after a few months at Suau owing to Sharpe's illness. BNG AR 1886, 2; J. King, *W.G. Lawes...*, 237; R.W. Abel, 'They Broke their Spears', 70. For further biographical information about Abel, see D. Wetherell, 'Monument to a Missionary...', in *JPH* 8, 1973, 30.

59 W.G. Lawes to A. Hunt, Vatorata, 11 August 1905, Metoreia Records; see also NGM AR 1902-3, 4.

In a land in which the cross had preceded the flag, and where by 1891 missionaries of all nationalities outnumbered officials by over ten to one, there were obvious practical motives for a profession of religion by the secular power. But the staunch churchmanship of early administrators was of a missionary character. John Douglas was a brother of the Bishop of Bombay;⁶⁰ H.M. Milman his deputy was a nephew of the Dean of St Paul's;⁶¹ General Scratchley's brother was also a dignitary of the Church of England. Sir William MacGregor (1888-98), a former candidate for Presbyterian orders, was said to read his bible 'more diligently than nine-tenths of the clergy'; and Sir George Le Hunte (1898-1903) had been an Anglican lay reader who appeared in surplice at Evensong in Fiji to read the lessons.⁶² In these pro-consuls there was an assumption that religion provided a set of principles by which a man should regulate his life. In this sense F.M. Syngé wrote accurately that 'some of our Governors are missionaries in the true sense - at any rate Sir William MacGregor is'.⁶³ Captain F.R. Barton, third Administrator (1904-07), the son of a land-owning parson, was more equivocal in his attitude to religion, but was in harmony with most

60 J.H. Holmes, *Diary*, 19 June 1896, PJ.

61 F.M. Syngé, Albert Maclaren, 53, 76; J.B. Thurston to J. Douglas, Fiji, 18 August 1886, CAO/CRS/G9.

62 G. White, Thirty Years..., 216; C.W. Whonsbon-Aston, Pacific Irishman, 42. Le Hunte rebuked critics of missions in New Guinea:

You do not believe in Missions, yet you know that in places that are called savage, if you see a mission village you land without arms.... You do not believe in Missions, and yet you accept the Missionary's hospitality, and are often glad to get his medicines. Anyone who does not believe in Missions, is the greatest of fools, for he not only tries to deceive others, but he deceives himself.

AMMR, 4 July 1908, 5.

63 F.M. Syngé, op. cit., 76.

missions in what he conceived to be the native interests.⁶⁴ Indeed, there is evidence that many of the rulers of the Empire were quite explicitly and unashamedly Christians, and their regular attendance at worship was no conventional conformity.⁶⁵

By far the most articulate spokesman for missions was MacGregor; but his stout attachment was more explicitly pragmatic than that of others. The government annual grant of £15,000 allowed him little scope for the development of a civil service. Missionaries could therefore be regarded as unofficial servants of the government, at no cost to the Administration, but with official endorsement and prestige. He had no doubt whatever that 'the two finest and best institutions [he] left in New Guinea were the constabulary and village police, and the missions'.⁶⁶

MacGregor's writings reveal an assumption common enough among secular rulers in the nineteenth century - that order and religion were synonymous. His was a strictly literal interpretation of the Royal Instructions of 1888. Sound government, he believed, flowed from religion; conformity and obedience were derived from religious principles.

Good government and order [he said] could never be permanently established unless it had Christianity as its basis. Order could be kept by moral or physical force. If it was maintained by physical force alone order would cease as soon as the force was removed, but where a moral force was at work with Christianity as its basis they could depend upon it that it would last for ever. 67

64 Of the six administrators between 1886 and 1940, Barton was least informative about his religion and C.S. Robinson (acting-Administrator 1903-4), the most sceptical about missions. This was surprising, since both were sons of clergymen. Bromilow wrote of Robinson: 'our new judge has hanged two natives already - he is acting-Governor and we do not expect much from him.' W.E. Bromilow to A.J. Small, Dobu, 2 November 1903, FDC.

65 M.A. Warren, The Missionary Movement..., 71. Though many attended church, no British New Guinea officials prepared candidates for confirmation as in Samoa, where the British Consul, T.B. Cusack, instructed candidates and held the pastoral staff of Alfred Willis, Bishop of Honolulu. C.F. Pascoe, Two Hundred Years..., 463b.

66 Quoted in J.H.P. Murray, Papua..., 27.

67 See AMMR, 4 February 1892, 9; see also February 1897.

Much of MacGregor's religious writing suggested a political derivation rather than theological or emotional conviction. In his strategy of pacification, policemen, 'chiefs' and missionaries seemed interchangeable. Savages were made into law-abiding citizens by Christian missionaries, he declared, better than by any other means. If a disturbance arose he might go with a force of native police and inflict punishment upon the wrongdoers, but the effect of such a lesson soon passed away. On the other hand, if a mission were established in a district, he found the work of maintaining law and order a comparatively easy matter.⁶⁸ Dupeyrat's comment is shrewdly perceptive:

None will contest that besides his great qualities he also had great deficiencies; thus, being a Protestant who seemed to be devoid of any fixed belief, his narrowness of mind was such that he could conceive of religion only as a sort of gendarmerie. 69

Lawes' opinion that '[MacGregor] has been the friend of the Mission[s] all through albeit he has little sympathy with the spiritual side of our work',⁷⁰ corroborates Dupeyrat. Other missionaries, delighted at the high level of religious fervour which flowed from Government House, in comparison with the vigorously secular content of imperial rule in India, were less percipient about the real nature of MacGregor's Christianity. Passing Tupuselei village near Port Moresby with Montagu Stone-Wigg, the Administrator asked the headman to go with him to church. 'I always tell the chief that', he said, turning to Stone-Wigg, 'the effect is bound to tell in time.'⁷¹ In the D'Entrecasteaux MacGregor rounded up Fergusson islanders telling them to visit Dobu;⁷² in Kiriwina he told the people to give up polygamy and Sunday work, saying that 'on his return he would see how they had behaved'.⁷³ MacGregor once gave a picnic to all those in Port Moresby over seven years who could say the Ten Commandments and

68 AMMR, 7 August 1889, 9.

69 A. Dupeyrat, Papouasie..., 257.

70 W.G. Lawes to R.W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 29 August 1894, PL.

71 M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 24 April 1898, DA; see also G. Brown, George Brown..., 471.

72 W. MacGregor, Diary, 22-3 June 1891, ANL.

73 S.B. Fellows, Diary, 10 November 1895, ANG.

under seven who could recite the alphabet.⁷⁴ At Panaeiti MacGregor installed the head man Kaiwai as chief and gave him clothes and staff of office during a church service. He bade the people to adapt to the new order now the missionary and government had come to stay.⁷⁵

The close alliance between Government House and the missions gave Protestantism a weapon of propaganda which it was not slow to wield. MacGregor's endorsements were published by Methodist presses.⁷⁶ Government reports carried long descriptions of religious progress by Pacific island teachers which amounted virtually to unsolicited advertisement.⁷⁷ The Administrator engaged in public polemics on behalf of the missions.⁷⁸ If Protestant missionaries themselves had been entrusted with the appointment of a Lieutenant-Governor, they could scarcely have chosen a man more convinced of the value of their work, and more assiduous in advancing their interests, than the first Administrator of British New Guinea. He not only supported missions financially, but he joined in their worship. The Methodist S.B. Fellows at Kiriwina described a jovial Governor singing his favourite hymns in the evening and in the morning tossing a shilling with his wife Sallie to see who should take the larger egg at breakfast.⁷⁹

MISSION stations in eastern New Guinea were generally planted among people who had already had ample proof of the white man's technological superiority. Their first glimpse of westerners was aboard vessels which dwarfed their own craft, of flashes of lightning and claps of thunder from the ships.⁸⁰ The visit of Moresby's expedition was an event well remembered in north-eastern Papua.⁸¹ Teste

74 F.M. Synge, op. cit., 88.

75 S.B. Fellows, Diary, 24 July 1892, ANG.

76 AMMR, 7 August 1899, 9. The Anglican Occasional Paper said MacGregor was 'The greatest friend the Papuan has ever had'. OP 21/2.

77 BNG AR 1893-4, 1; ibid., 1894-4, 22, 137.

78 W. MacGregor to M. Stone-Wigg, Lagos, 1 April 1900, DA

79 S.B. Fellows, Diary, 10 November 1895, ANG. For missionary criticism of MacGregor's officers, see Ch. XI, p.324ff.

80 A.A. Koskinen, Missionary Influence..., 25.

81 M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 13 March 1904, DA. The older villagers of Goodenough Bay told the bishop that Moresby had visited them 30 wet seasons before 1904, coinciding with Moresby's visit in 1873.

Islanders had seen Moresby's flag raised in 1873, McFarlane's teachers land in 1877, and Erskine proclaim the Protectorate in 1884. Other islands had been visited more often by recruiters than officers or missionaries. But traders, the misionari and the govermani nearly always appeared without warning.

When the champions of various dimdim interests appeared in the islands all mixed up and in no intelligible order, the Melanesians reacted with consternation. Devida Nikolisi described his perplexity on the arrival of Fellows in 1894:

I saw Mr Fellows and his party when they came... We thought the strangers were 'blackbirders' looking for workboys for the sugar plantations. When they came ashore they told us (through an interpreter from Ware) to sit down and close our eyes while they talked to God. We weren't to be caught that way. We thought that if we closed our eyes they would grab us and take us to the ship. So we covered our faces with our hands and peered through our fingers. 82

Another Misima man saw men run for spears, and was sure they intended to kill Fellows. He heard the Ware interpreter call out 'Men, stop!' They then gathered round and listened to him.⁸³ By contrast, Panaeiti islanders welcomed the Waverley with jubilation, for Fellows wrote that 'as soon as they understood that we were missionaries, and not the "Government" come to "make them fast" several of them dashed into the water, and, swimming to us, came on board'.⁸⁴ The missionary arrival on the scene of conflict between inhabitants and police was no coincidence: in the Louisiades, Cape Nelson and the Mamba river, bloodshed precipitated religious activity.

There was no direct identification between tapwaroro and a punitive expedition: missionaries realized that to be associated with a police action might jeopardize the freedom of choice essential to a good conversion. C.W. Abel, who was in any case a pacifist, refused to accompany MacGregor in the Merrie England to the execution of a man named Roko at Werewere because the party was armed. 'I told him I did not think the natives would have the least [blame] on him or the mission', wrote MacGregor, 'that we did not go anywhere

82 Quoted in H.K. Bartlett to - Walker, Misima, 11 November 1941. Fellows Collection, ANG.

83 Ibid.

84 AMMR, 1 December 1891.

without guns &c', but Abel was adamant.⁸⁵ George Brown instructed Methodists not to engage in political disputes, as officers might regard it as an interference.⁸⁶ When MacGregor landed in 1890 at Guasopi on Murua to apprehend a murderer, both Maclaren and Brown stayed aboard ship, for, as the latter wrote, 'it was not desirable that we should be mixed up in any affair which... might affect prejudicially our subsequent relations with the people'.⁸⁷

Nowhere was religion invested with a heavier aura of official protection than at Dobu (Goulvain) Island at the founding of the Methodist mission. Like Bau in Fiji and New Georgia in the Solomons, also evangelized by the Wesleyans, Dobu was an example of the power that the inhabitants of small islands sometimes possessed in Melanesia, for each of these islands in pre-Christian times had been a source of fear to its larger neighbours. The Dobuans of Dawson Straits, who traced their origins to Teste Island and eastern Fergusson Island,⁸⁸ exercised an aggressive ascendancy over much of the D'Entrecasteaux. Visiting villages with their allies of Ubuia as far west as Goodenough Island and along the entire north Normanby coast, the Dobuan raiders had a reputation for ferocity and cannibalism unrivalled in any other east Papuan society. Having been visited by the labour schooner Hopeful, and lost several men through conflict with the crew, the Dawson Straits were well acquainted with the unfriendly nature of the dimdim.⁸⁹ Regaled by Papuans with testimonies as to Dobu's sanguinary customs,

85 W. MacGregor, Diary, 10 February 1891, ANL.

86 AMMR, 8 May 1901.

87 G. Brown, George Brown..., 481. See also AMMR, 6 December 1899. Brown's discretion was not always matched by that of field missionaries. James Osborne of Bunama mission used the Methodist cutter Vikatoria to transport prisoners to Samarai; the Anglicans took prisoners home from Samarai gaol aboard the Albert Maclaren. In 1917 however, C.B. Higginson of Samarai said he was in no way dependent upon missions for the transport of prisoners. RMED OJ, 18 February 1907; M.H. Moreton to A. Musgrave, Samarai, 12 January 1901; J.H.P. Murray, Diary, 12 March 1917, ML.

88 N. Baloiloi, Interview, Dobu, 7 May 1972.

89 J. Chalmers, Pioneering in New Guinea, 142. For a description of Dobu's linguistic and trading position, see B. Malinowski, Argonauts of the Western Pacific, 39ff.

MacGregor spread abroad the island's reputation as the fiercest and most intractable in New Guinea.⁹⁰ 'Now, Brown, take care of yourself at Dobu', he said to the Methodist secretary in 1890, 'or they will knock you on the head. They are about the worst natives I know in New Guinea.'⁹¹

Dobu provides an excellent example in action of the benefit which Christianity gained from its association with imperialism. The Methodist Chairman, W.E. Bromilow (1857-1929) had worked in the Fiji mission from 1879 and was a seasoned leader. His European colleagues - S.B. Fellows, J.T. Field, J. Watson and G.H. Bardsley - had no missionary experience, but were fortified by a corps of 34 Fijians and their wives, 20 Samoans and wives, and eight Tongans and wives. They were well prepared. What they heard in Sydney and Samarai - that Dobuan women would not let their men return until they had prisoners, whom they would then roast and drink their blood from coconut shells⁹² - confirmed their fears that Christianity might have an armed encounter with Heathendom. The Samarai Europeans, said Bromilow, 'frankly told us that to go to Dobu at all was akin to madness, but to go unarmed was madness, sheer and unmitigated; did we really know what sort of savages the Dobuans were...?'⁹³

The Methodists did not go unarmed: the tradition of martyrdom was not commended to the followers of John Wesley. Bardsley, the carpenter, had only one weapon, a six-chamber colt revolver; but most of the ministers carried two firearms each. One was meant for birds, but Bardsley wrote the other was 'a fifteen cartridge Winchester! for nobler game - if needed'.⁹⁴ Not only were missionaries armed as to their persons, but their domestic engineering was designed to withstand a prolonged siege. A prudent architect had invented a fortified mission house which was carried on the Lord of the Isles. Designed in three concentric rectangles through which occupants could retreat to a central armoury if

90 Telegraph, Brisbane, 8 October 1898.

91 G. Brown, op. cit., 485.

92 J.H.P. Murray, Diary, 23 June 1906, ML. The Methodist called Dobu 'a kind of human butcher's shop'. Methodist, 11 March 1893.

93 W.E. Bromilow, Twenty Years..., 64.

94 G.H. Bardsley, Diary, 9 June 1891, PMB.

attacked, the massive prefabricated building was erected by J.T. Field at Tubetube.⁹⁵ Watching the mission ship approaching, MacGregor wrote: 'It is a good thing that I shall be first at Dobu with a large force...'.⁹⁶

From the beach at Asatope Point on 19 June 1891 the Dobuans saw a demonstration of strength that eclipsed all other missionary landings in the Pacific. They saw a flotilla of iron ships, the Merrie England, the Lord of the Isles, and the Waverley processing slowly up the Dawson Straits. They watched whaleboats being lowered, and from them disembarked sailors, native policemen, and interpreters, cattle and poultry, magistrates, seventy-two missionaries of half a dozen nationalities, and the stout, square figure of the Governor himself.⁹⁷ They knew that MacGregor was searching for the murderers of the Chinese trader Ah Gim,⁹⁸ and they may have thought that the large dimdim force was pursuing fugitives.

From the beginning a Dobuan headman Gaganumore spoke for the Islanders. His brother Eneute had recently been killed by villagers of Meadeba on Normanby Island, and a canoe named Eneute lay on the beach in preparation for a reprisal.⁹⁹ From the deck of the mission yacht Bardsley scanned the Dobuans running along the shore. He mistakenly concluded that they were not warring with their neighbours.¹⁰⁰

On the evening of the 19th MacGregor made notes of the sermons that had been preached that day. Brown, preaching in the saloon of the Merrie England, said that what had changed a Paul would change a savage, and that scoffers against missions were

95 See G. Brown, *op. cit.*, 498. Ironically, the Lord of the Isles had made its reputation as a recruiter on the Fiji run. E.W. Docker, The Blackbirders..., 175.

96 W. MacGregor, Diary, 13 June 1891, ANL.

97 The missionary party included 12 children of Island teachers as well as Lilly Bromilow and her foster-daughter Ruve.

98 W. MacGregor, Diary, 18-20 May 1891, ANL. Abel described Ah Gim as 'an old ruffian' who had abducted boys from Mailu. C.W. Abel, LD, 2 October 1904, KA.

99 The Eneute was being hollowed out when the Methodists arrived.

100 G.H. Bardsley, Diary, 21 June 1891, PMB.

fighting a force stronger than they.¹⁰¹ MacGregor was not impressed, but he thought more of a Fijian address:

There is a tremendous earnestness in these Wesleyan South Sea teachers. The preacher spoke with deep feeling and gave to his hearers the knowlege that he meant all he said. He seemed to preach from the heart... The Rev. George Brown's eloquence is halting and his command of language meagre and skeleton like compared to that of the Fijian preacher.¹⁰²

On the 20th, Bromilow and Gaganumore conversed through an interpreter from Teste who knew of the lotu from Lifuan missionaries. According to Dobuan sources, when Bromilow approached Gaganumore he called 'kagotoki' (greetings, thank you) to which Gaganumore responded 'geabusioia' (no war).¹⁰³ The two men shook hands, Bromilow being prompted with a few words by the interpreter. The next day a longer conversation took place. On the third day Gaganumore instructed the women to meet Lilly Bromilow who was known to the Fijians as Marama; and the whole party slept ashore in tents.¹⁰⁴

There were only two tokens of opposition. The Dobuans stopped working on the Mission house after a rumour spread that it was a gaol in which they would be 'made fast'.¹⁰⁵ The second was a scheme to club the Bromilows from behind. Gaganumore and Kedokeda of Bwaiowa had probably heard Bromilow's misguided Teste Island interpreter announce that the government would imprison them all at Samarai;¹⁰⁶ but in any case, the two headmen broke up the conspiracy:

101 Ibid.

102 W. MacGregor, Diary, 21 June 1891, ANL.

103 N. Baloiloi, Interview, Dobu, 9 May 1972.

104 S. Kambo, Interview, Ubuia, 9 May 1972. There is a discrepancy between the oral and written accounts. Bromilow suggests that the Mission house was built before he met Gaganumore. W.E. Bromilow, Twenty Years..., 116.

105 W. MacGregor, Diary, 13 July 1891; AMMR, 1 October 1891; BNG AR 1891-2, App. A. By July 1891 the Dobuans were probably aware that the government had converted the missionary Diki's house on Samarai into a gaol. F.M. Synge, op. cit., 89.

106 W.E. Bromilow, op. cit., 72. The older men's objection was probably strengthened by the hanging of a man for murder near Dobu. Gaganumore and Kedokeda were invited by MacGregor to witness the execution, but were too afraid to go. W. MacGregor, Diary, 7 January 1892, ANL.

'How do you know they will not make a fight for their lives' they asked. The reply was, 'They are so few and we so many. What chance have they?' True enough. The older men then raised a more forceful objection, 'What about their friends? They will come to visit them, and, finding them dead, they will punish us and be our enemies. No, let us wait, and see what they are like. If they are good to live with we will adopt them into the tribe, and, if not, we can kill them when we choose'.¹⁰⁷

Three factors smoothed the advent of Methodism in eastern New Guinea: the influence of Gaganumore, which extended throughout Dobu as well as parts of Normanby and Fergusson Island;¹⁰⁸ the impressive panoply of the initial landings, conducted as the Merrie England cruised about the Straits;¹⁰⁹ and the skill of the Papuan Methodist leaders. The uneasy peace nearly ended when Sirugu, a Fijian teacher, shot a pig belonging to one of Gaganumore's kinsmen; but Bromilow hastily compensated him with axes, knives and tobacco.¹¹⁰ There was little overt tension. Dobuans willingly carried ironbark stumps from the boats, surprising onlookers, in view of their gnome-like appearance, with their muscular ability.¹¹¹ Twenty village men showed Bardsley and Rickard the track up the Dobuan crater. The Europeans did not take their colt revolvers.¹¹²

The landing of a strong force of government and missionary representatives at Dobu undoubtedly dispelled the possibility of a bloody confrontation which was at that time looming between the Dobuans and the constabulary. As MacGregor wrote, the Dobuans, like the Binandele on the Mamba river, were 'at the stage when bad advice might have brought them into serious collision with the government'.¹¹³

107 W.E. Bromilow, op. cit., 72. As Bromilow acknowledged, 'There was one law of the island against which we were unwittingly offending; in brief it was just this - we had no business to be there...'. Ibid., 71. The Dobuans solved this problem by recognizing the Bromilow family as members of the Nem Nem clan. See MR, March 1932, 16.

108 See G. Brown, Diary, 11 June 1897, MOM.

109 W.E. Bromilow, op. cit., 67.

110 I. Baloiloi, Interview, Ubina, 9 May 1972.

111 G.H. Bardsley, Diary, 21-23 June 1891, PMB.

112 W.E. Bromilow, op. cit., 66.

113 BNG AR 1891-2, xxvii.

Chalmers' death in 1901 was an apt illustration of the tragic consequences of a missionary hazarding a landing without the government: the Mamba river catastrophes of 1895-1901 showed the effect of a government intrusion without the missionary. At Dobu there was a competent and skilful collaboration between government, mission and Papuan authority.

Methodists were strongly patriotic. The L.M.S. had yielded to secular power in 1884 as a matter of expediency: the Wesleyans accepted it as of God, as a matter of authority. They alone had gone to New Guinea as a direct result of an Administrator's invitation. They liked to recall that, in M.K. Gilmour's words, 'our field is unique from the fact that it has been handed over to the Methodist church and recognized by the Government'.¹¹⁴ In the tradition of the conservative politics of John Wesley and Jabez Bunting,¹¹⁵ the Wesleyans recognized a close relationship between cross and sceptre in the Pacific. This conception was made visible through addresses of loyalty, invitations to heads of government to preside at meetings, and a general readiness to assist governments in ordinary duties.¹¹⁶

In domestic as well as official contacts this link was assiduously preserved. George Brown often entertained the Governor of British New Guinea and Lady MacGregor, and their daughters stayed at his home at Randwick.¹¹⁷ Samuel Fellows dived from the deck of the Waverley at Misima to ask warriors on the beach to lay down their arms to the constabulary.¹¹⁸ W.E. Bromilow, being a Qualified Officer for indenture agreements, was described by the Brisbane Courier as a 'missionary and acting Government agent'.¹¹⁹ C.A.W. Monckton recalled that Bromilow 'acted as a sort of bureau of

114 N.G. Synod Minutes, Ubuia, 17 October 1908, SA.

115 See E.R. Taylor, Methodism and Politics, 115-137.

116 For a Wesleyan missionary who came to antagonize the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, see N. Rutherford, Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga, 155ff.

117 G. Brown to A. Gordon, Sydney, 27 March 1893, MOM 43. Brown referred roguishly to Lady MacGregor of her husband as 'that dreadful man'. G. Brown to Lady MacGregor, Sydney, 20-25 November 1893. MOM 43.

118 AMMR, 4 May 1898.

119 Courier, 23 April 1897.

information in regard to the native affairs of Normanby and Fergusson Islands'. The Methodist Chairman nearly always had a long list of native crimes, principally murder, sorcery and adultery.¹²⁰ Instead of killing a miner who had shot one of their number, the villagers of Darubea on Normanby sent a message to Bromilow in 1897 to bring the Government.¹²¹

Methodist strategy combined political and religious persuasions. Landing at an island in the Engineer Group, J.T. Field wrote that

I told them... there was to be no more fighting, killing, and eating. They... promised to give their adherence to 'taparoro' (bow-your-head), and not kai-kai men any more. 122

At Tubetube the magistrate M.H. Moreton and the missionary Field 'expounded to [the people] the different laws and regulations affecting them. Two chiefs got up at the end and harangued those present and said the laws were good.'¹²³

In 1898 the Wesleyan Synod assured MacGregor that it had ever been loyal to Her Majesty's government. They had always taught the biblical principle, to 'Fear God and honour the King.'¹²⁴ Tapwaroro had brought peace and submission. MacGregor's enthusiasm for Methodism was undoubtedly a recognition of its political alignment. He believed there was not a better conducted mission in the world. Indeed, he said, the Wesleyans had 'made the Queen's name a household word' in the D'Entrecasteaux.¹²⁵

ANGLICAN collaboration with imperial power was more oblique. No police escort accompanied Maclaren and King to Wedau; no magistrates provided protection when new stations were begun. The Oxford

120 C.A.W. Monckton, Some Experiences..., 84.

121 M. Billing, Diary, 6 October 1897. MOM 150.

122 AMMR, 1 December 1891, 14-15.

123 M.H. Moreton to A. Musgrave, Siai, 2 August 1898. CAO/CRS/G121. J. Green records that Bromilow gave information to officials during a tea at Dobu in 1895. The next day a party landed at the village on Fergusson Island 'to attack them and give them a lesson for fighting'. J. Green to - Green, Samarai, 26 February 1895, PMB.

124 'Address of Loyalty to Sir William MacGregor', Dobu, 7 November 1898, SA.

125 Telegraph, Brisbane, 8 October 1898.

Movement had begun as a protest against erastianism, and Anglican work was not tinged with the suggestion of subordination of church to state. Rather it was conducted from the privileged position of an English episcopal mission, even though MacGregor had frowned upon the idea of a national church. The difference was well understood by the first magistrate of the north-eastern division, C.A.W. Monckton, whose deferential tone towards Bishop Stone-Wigg contrasted with his brusque treatment of the Nonconformist C.W. Abel.¹²⁶ In northern New Guinea, church and state adopted positions of mutual disengagement. The lofty separation of Sefoa mission across the fiords from Tufi government station is a striking illustration of a principle fought for by the Oxford reformers in England.

At the eastern end of the mainland, government supremacy had been very quickly established. Following the killing of a trader named Ancell at Chad's Bay in 1888 - the fortieth foreign murder since 1874¹²⁷ - MacGregor's officers swept through a score of villages to capture the offenders. Chad's Bay had been visited by the Island missionary Dieni of Killerton,¹²⁸ and MacGregor may have reasoned that the four accused men were sufficiently acquainted with western concepts of crime to be judged responsible. In 1891 he had executed a Woodlark Islander for a trader's murder, arguing that the Islanders had had the Marist Mission forty years earlier and were therefore aware of what was criminal to a westerner.¹²⁹ When he asked Komodoa, the headman at Polotona whether he had killed Ancell, the reply was 'No! too much fear God'.¹³⁰ The Cooktown Independent, having insisted for some years that Papuans deserved a decisive hand, jubilantly awaited retribution:

He [MacGregor] will exact even justice from the treacherous scoundrels whom Chalmers and Lawes profess to have run into Jesus.. Papuans... shall

126 See C.A.W. Monckton, op. cit., viii, 247-9.

127 W.G. Lawes to R.W. Thompson, Sydney, 7 January 1881, PL.

128 D. Watakaloni, op. cit., 5.

129 W. MacGregor, Diary, 23 January 1891, ANL. See also Hugh M. Laracy, 'Xavier Montrouzier...', in J.W. Davidson and Deryck Scarr, eds., Pacific Islands Portraits, 134-38.

130 BNG AR 1888-9, App. M. Ancell is spelt variously Ansell.

in future be judged and treated according to the equitable laws of British fair play, instead of being coddled up by missionaries as saints. 131

In order for the majesty of justice to be as widely witnessed as possible the murderers were hanged at Samarai, Ahioma in Milne Bay, and Awaiama on the north-east coast. According to local tradition, speeches were made by the condemned men from the gallows. At Ahioma, a convicted man, named Hanewai, was raised to the platform and MacGregor asked him to speak to the crowd. Hanewai is reported to have said, 'If you go on fighting you'll be hanged like me';¹³² and thereupon died. Contingents walked from East Cape to the executions, and a reporter wrote that they were 'perfectly quiet and orderly'.¹³³ Milne Bay accounts of the place of execution are vivid, and related idiomatically that the hangings 'scared the life out of the people'.¹³⁴ Not surprisingly the people replied in the affirmative to MacGregor's suggestion about missionaries to 'teach them to live a peaceable life'. When Maclaren visited Awaiama with MacGregor a few months later he discovered the villagers to be 'very quiet and extremely honest'.¹³⁵

Further north, 160 Wamira people of Goodenough Bay had seen several convicted murderers being transported aboard the government yacht. In 1895, an expedition was launched after a theft from MacGregor's camp which resulted in five of the villagers

131 Cooktown Independent, 5 January 1889.

132 J. Nogar, Interview, Maivara, 26 April 1972. Similarly, MacGregor wrote of the hanging of Gumumua, murderer of Captain Axil (?) near Dobu: 'They say Gumumua made a speech on the scaffold that he was being executed far from home and that his people should come and dig him up and bury him at his own place.' W. MacGregor, Diary, 7 January 1892. See also BNG AR, 1891-2, xiv.

133 SMH, 1 February 1889, 3.

134 J. Nogar, Interview, Maivara, 26 April 1972.

135 SMH, 1 February 1889, 3; BNG AR, 1889-1890, xvi; op. cit., 1890-1, App. D. Brown described the Chad's Bay hanging as 'an event which did more to quieten this end of New Guinea than any other means'. G. Brown, Polynesians..., 484. MacGregor regarded the imprisonment of the accomplices in the Chad's Bay affair as the beginning of the prison system in British New Guinea. The Colonies and India, 2 March 1895, 15. However, a 'lock-up' had previously been built in Port Moresby. BNG AR, 1886 (II), 31.

being shot, a white man speared through the thigh, and a Massim sent to gaol for a year 'to teach his fellow tribesmen to receive visitors with more politeness'.¹³⁶ In 1898 the Massim of Collingwood Bay proved truculent towards Anglican Island teachers, and the armed constabulary made a 'big demonstration' there in the following year. 'All the tribes along the coast were duly impressed', wrote the Reverend W.H. Abbot, 'and the many threats that were constantly hurled against our teachers were no longer heard'. The Mission's 'great ally' in Wanigela was made village constable.¹³⁷ A man who had levelled a spear at Abbot was caught in a pre-dawn raid and given two months' gaol.¹³⁸

But even in the absence of military authority, initial contacts between Papuans and missionaries were usually highly favourable to the missionaries. The fact that Fellows built his mission house at Oiabia within a week of landing was due to the assistance of hundreds of Kiriwinans; yet the Kiriwinans were oblivious of the power of government firearms before 1899.¹³⁹ Certainly the visitors were often approached with suspicion, but this was overshadowed by curiosity and acquisitiveness. Edward Clark's reception at Wanigela does not suggest the Papuan as timid or passive in the racial encounter:

I was immediately surrounded by scores of them and pushed and huddled along the beach. They pulled me about, opened my shirt, pulled up my trousers, in fact I thought they were going to strip me. 140

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- 136 MN, 15 January 1896. When King threatened the Wamirans with the government for stealing, the Wamirans said this was 'too much' for them, one saying he 'could not sleep for fear'. S. Tomlinson, Diary, 7 October 1891, DA. The appearance of the Merrie England at Dogura caused truants to rush back to the mission school; at Kiriwina there was a stream of villagers bringing baskets of valuables to the mission for safety from the government. S. Tomlinson, Diary, 22 December 1891; AMMR 7 July 1902, 11.
- 137 MN, 15 January 1899.
- 138 BNG AR, 1898-9, 82.
- 139 S.B. Fellows, Diary, 31 August 1894, ANG. Only C.W. Abel had to flee before a hostile crowd, at Maivara in about 1892. C.S. Robinson asked a Rossel island headman in 1903 whether he wanted a missionary. He replied 'I dunno' and led the laugh which followed. C.S. Robinson, Diary, 26 September 1903, PNGA.
- 140 MN, 18 December 1896, 110.

Laura Oliver's landing at Uiaku in Collingwood Bay illustrated that women were not backward in making acquaintance:

The stockings puzzled the women very much... white hands and arms, black legs, whatever creatures had come to visit their shores now... They touched our noses and then ran off a few paces shrieking, returned again for fresh discoveries, then off shaking their sides with laughter... My hair seemed to be a great attraction, I took it down, and they said I must be a spirit. 141

The advent of foreigners appealed especially to curiosity and a desire for gain. Some of the more athletic Churchmen obligingly demonstrated gymnastic feats: others donned their scarlet Oxford hoods to excite attraction.¹⁴² Further colour was added by a squadron of Papuan boat boys dressed in blue or red calicos and white singlets.¹⁴³ Iron was prized above all other commodities, for it meant an enormous saving of labour to a people whose technology had not advanced beyond the polished stone tool. When King landed at Wanigela in 1898, he was not allowed into the stockaded village as he had no iron. As the Wanigelans said, a man who had no trade was no better than a dead man. In other villages a tumultuous reception was given to newcomers bearing hoop iron.¹⁴⁴ Here were the white strangers on the beach dressed in their vivid ecclesiastical and academic regalia; there were the cargo and the trade goods, the iron and the cloth, and the mission Papuans evidently prospering in their smart naval uniforms. It must have been an irresistible combination to acquisitive Melanesian villagers.¹⁴⁵ When Methodists landed on a beach near Dobu, a headman met them with the words, 'This place will not do. There is a swamp. That

141 'Notes and News From the Staff', Mukawa, 5 October 1906, DA.

142 MN, 15 September 1898, 89.

143 Ibid.

144 M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 6 May 1898; A.K. Chignell, op. cit., 91; C.J. King, Copland King and his Papuan Friends, 13.

145 King wrote that many Papuans 'try to enforce the purchases of their goods at the spear point'. C. King to M. Stone-Wigg, Dogura, 13 March 1898, DA. Chalmers landed at Suau in 1878 with six cwt. of hoop iron; and the LMS vessel was known as the 'iron ship' in eastern Papua. Report of East Cape District, 12 December 1878, PR.

is the flood course. Come to my land and take your choice. I want the teacher to live near me...'.¹⁴⁶

To allay any suspicion that the visitors might be planning hostilities, King learnt to call kimona to na gimona (iron to sell) in the language of Wedau, the large village near Dogura. In 1891 Wedau was understood along about 40 miles of coast and ten miles inland, though dialectic variations within that area were considerable. Anglican missionaries found Wedau easier to learn than other Melanesian languages in northern Papua. Tavara was spoken in Milne Bay and Dauí, the language of Suau, was used in China Strait. By far the most widely disseminated language was the Edugaura language of Dobu, which was understood widely in the D'Entrecasteaux, and, through Dobu's trading links in the kula ring,¹⁴⁷ on Kiriwina in the north and Ware in the south-east.

The driving force behind missionary work on coastal languages was an anxiety to teach converts to read the Bible. Philology being heavily emphasized in nineteenth century missionary training, Bromilow devoted the first section of his chapter on ethnology to linguistics, and King completed his apprenticeship in Wedau in less than three years.¹⁴⁸

The linguistic output of eastern Papuan missions was considerable. By 1888 the Rarotongan missionary Pi had published a Dauí translation of St Mark.¹⁴⁹ Abel published two dozen volumes of Tavara translations, catechisms, and hymns. Fellows published catechisms and vocabularies in the Panaeiti and Kiriwina languages.¹⁵⁰ Bromilow rendered St Mark into Dobu in 1894, the four gospels and catechism by 1898,¹⁵¹ and the whole Bible in 1927, an undertaking which J.H.P. Murray said was 'colossal' in scale.¹⁵² King was

146 AMMR, 4 May 1903, 1.

147 See B. Malinowski, Argonauts..., 39ff.

148 W.E. Bromilow, Twenty Years..., 77-94; S. Tomlinson to E.S. Hughes, Dogura, 18 August 1894, DA.

149 Pi, St Mark's Gospel in Dauí, Sydney, 1888, KA.

150 S.B. Fellows, Taparoro Bukena Taparoro..., Sydney, 1894; Buki Tabu Kaitala..., Sydney, 1899.

151 W.E. Bromilow, Iesu Keriso ena tetera..., Sydney, 1894; Buki Tapuaroro Tapuaroro..., Geelong, 1898; Vocabulary of English words, with Equivalent in Dobuan..., nd.

152 J.H.P. Murray to A.H. Scriven, Port Moresby, 4 June 1927, SA.

similarly assiduous. By 1899 a grammar of Wedau had been arranged, a translation of St Luke made, and a dictionary and Prayer Book produced, all in Wedau.¹⁵³ Lawes, Brown, and Bromilow were given honorary doctorates for linguistic research, and both King and Tomlinson were honoured by the Australian College of Theology for their philological publications.

THERE was active hostility between tribesmen and police at the northern end of the mainland. In September 1895, 400 armed warriors passed the Merrie England moored at the mouth of the Musa River on their way upstream. Hours later, the yacht met them 'coming down again loaded with the bodies, some cooked and cut up, some still whole, of men, women, and children, whom they had massacred'.¹⁵⁴ The steam launch rammed most of the canoes, and the rest were taken in tow, while several fleeing warriors were shot by MacGregor's party. 'Such a complete, quick and ample punishment for murder has never before been meted out to any tribe in New Guinea', wrote John Green to his father. 'I was simply gnashing my teeth during the fight.'¹⁵⁵ By 1896 MacGregor was able to tell King that he had 'beaten the people up here soundly, and left them humbled. Now would be the time for the Mission to follow up his work'.¹⁵⁶ Abbot at Wanigela wrote three years later that he was 'thoroughly charmed'¹⁵⁷ at the demeanour of the people. G.R. Le Hunte, MacGregor's successor, was determined to leave the Arifama people of Cape Nelson 'in no doubt as to the power of the Government... to put them down if they resist us'.¹⁵⁸ The Tufi promontory was compulsorily acquired, the British flag was hoisted, and a detachment of constabulary arrived under C.A.W. Monkton.¹⁵⁹

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- 153 C. King, 'Statement re Languages in the New Guinea Mission', Dogura, 17 October 1899.
- 154 BNG AR, 1898-99, 20; see also BNG AR, 1899-1900, xi; MN, 15 February 1900, 12.
- 155 J. Green to M. Green, Mamba, 27 September 1895, PMB.
- 156 MN, 15 January 1896, 2.
- 157 W.H. Abbot to G.R. Le Hunte, Wanigela, 19 January 1900, CRO/CRS/G121.
- 158 BNG AR, 1899-1900, 16.
- 159 C.A.W. Monckton, Some Experiences..., 166.

In the north-west, government control was established only after bloody conflict with the inhabitants and without the presence of missionaries. The Orokaiva and Binandele people were, like the Dobuans, long accustomed to a state of perpetual tension with their neighbours. In the Mamba, Gira, Waria and Opi river areas there was continual sporadic warfare between the coastal and inland people. Furthermore, the Binandele people of the Mamba were allies of their Opi relatives and enemies of the Waria. Most of the communities on these rivers were extremely unstable political units familiar with armed feuds, migration and dispersal.¹⁶⁰

The invasion of the Mamba river by hundreds of armed miners after 1895 made conflict between British and Binandele inevitable. The inherent structural instability of Orokaiva society was exacerbated by the introduction of a moving rifle frontier advancing in the direction of the gold deposits. Certainly the nature of the encounter, so unlike the pacification by missionaries and officers elsewhere, upset all MacGregor's plans by its very suddenness. Both John Moresby in 1873 and Albert Maclaren in 1890 had been struck by the difference between the warlike Binandele and the more amenable eastern tribes. According to Maclaren, the northerners were 'not so gentle, to put it mildly, as in some of the Bay Capes' of Goodenough Bay.¹⁶¹

An escalation in the violence following the death of George Clark, one of the first miners, was responsible for the reluctant despatch of Anglican missionaries to the Mamba. As John Green, government agent on the river, ruefully reflected in 1896, had the vigorous Methodists been in charge of the northern coast instead of the feeble Anglicans, there would have been Fijian teachers on the Mamba already.¹⁶² In 1896 Green requested Copland King to evangelize the Opi, 'a numerous and friendly people'.¹⁶³ In spite

160 For a detailed study, see J.D. Waiko, 'European Melanesian contact in Melanesian tradition and literature', unpub. seminar paper, UPNG.

161 J. Moresby, Discoveries..., 276; A.A. Maclaren, 'A Visit to the North East Coast of British New Guinea', RGS of Victoria Transactions, Pt. 1, Vol. IX, 4 March 1891, 32-3.

162 J. Green, Diary, Mamba, 15 October 1896, PMB.

163 BNG AR 1895-6, 77.

of the most exacting precautions,¹⁶⁴ Green himself and the Kiwai corporal Sedu, regarded as the best man in the armed constabulary,¹⁶⁵ were speared near their stockade in January 1897 and their remains thrown into the river. Plunder from Green's camp was distributed among the lower Mamba villages in order to foster solidarity in the murders.

MacGregor's subsequent punitive expedition inflicted severe psychological punishment on the Binandele. Several men were killed. The villagers of Wade were routed. The fighting prowess of the Orokaiva was weakened. Two years after the massacre, Stone-Wigg commented on his first visit to the Mamba, that he 'did not see a native the whole way up the river'.¹⁶⁶ Requesting the Anglicans to send men to the silent and deserted Mamba, MacGregor said that whenever in the cause of justice he had been forced to shed blood, there he desired to see a mission station established.¹⁶⁷

The Administrator believed that Christianity would have an easy conquest, a prediction not justified by later events. His reason was that the northern people had been 'humbled and thrashed so often that they no longer regard themselves as the greatest of great powers'.¹⁶⁸ The Binandele acknowledged the military superiority of Europeans: 'If the foreigners had fought us with spears and shields', as one said to the Reverend F.W. Ramsay, 'we should not have been conquered. But they brought guns, and we could not see inside a gun, and it made a great noise, and we were frightened.'¹⁶⁹

Green and Sedu were not the last to fall in the bloody encounters of the Mamba. To succeed Green on the goldfields was

164 In 1895 Green wrote: 'This is how I sleep; revolver inside the net close to my head, winchester rifle outside the net close to my head. Martini Henry and shot gun leaning up against the hammock-ropes...'. J. Green to Hannah Green, Samarai, 6 October 1895, PMB.

165 BNG AR 1896-7, 28. For Monckton's opinion of Green, see C.A.W. Monckton, Some Experiences..., 78-9. The principal instigators were arrested in 1898: Bushimai; Amurapi of Umi (murderer of Green); Bugata of Umi (murderer of Sedu). Tamata station journal, 18 July - 5 August 1898, CAO/CRS/664B, Pt. 685B.

166 M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 6 May 1898, DA.

167 OP 21/4.

168 W. MacGregor to M. Stone-Wigg, Lagos, 1 April 1900, DA.

169 MN, 18 March 1901, 21.

sent William Armit, a man whose career in the Queensland Police Force had been embellished by New Guinea forays in which he had been noted for bravery.¹⁷⁰ Armit had little faith in the intelligence, let alone humanity, of those races which had the misfortune of being black. The people of eastern New Guinea, he conceded, 'appeared more intelligent than their compatriots'. But this was only illusory, 'for their superior intelligence had no foundation in fact, and these men were often more stupid and duller of apprehension than others whose looks did not raise any futile hopes'.¹⁷¹ Before men of limited intellect Armit felt it was unnecessary to observe the customary rules of decorum. When drunk he was known to emerge naked, call a parade, and review the constabulary in that condition.¹⁷² Even more celebrated were stories of his career as Police Superintendent, when he was reputed to have 'crucified' Aborigines by tying them to a tree with arms tied lengthwise and practising on them with a rifle. According to a tale told to J.H.P. Murray, he kept his working parties up to the mark by peppering the victims with shot.¹⁷³ W.G. Lawes referred to Armit simply as 'a shooter of blacks'.¹⁷⁴

Armit needed no encouragement to apply his formidable energies to the contingencies of tribal disorder on the Mamba. He believed that the Orokaiva and Binandele who molested his lines were 'treacherous, truculent, aggressive, cruel, and cunning'.¹⁷⁵ He was revolted by their atrocities - a constable once arrived at his tent carrying five human legs and the forequarter of a girl aged about twelve years¹⁷⁶ - so he was not scrupulous in his despatches of numbers killed and wounded by his own constabulary.

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- 170 For a description of Armit, see C.A.W. Monckton, Some Experiences..., 3-4.
- 171 W.E. Armit, 'The Papuans: Comparative Notes on Various Authors with Original Observations', in Geographical Society (Victoria) Proceedings, Vol. II, pt. II, 1885, 78.
- 172 J.H.P. Murray, Diary, 26 February 1906, ML.
- 173 J.H.P. Murray, Diary, 26 February 1906; J.H.P. Murray to Gilbert Murray, Port Moresby, 14 March 1905, in F. West, Selected Letters of Sir Hubert Murray, 33-4.
- 174 W.G. Lawes to R.W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 21 September, 189[6], PL.
- 175 BNG AR 1899-1900, 98.
- 176 Ibid., 90.

Le Hunte officially reprimanded Armit for his cavalier attitude to reports:

I am aware that the wholesale destruction of men, women and children has, in other places, been conveyed by the term 'dispersed', and killing by 'hurt', and the occurrence of these expressions in your report gives me great uneasiness... I think you may not be aware how very serious a thing it is in my view to have to take human life... 177

Official reports manufactured by Armit and travellers' journals convey only a confused picture of the turmoil which accompanied the search for gold in the gullies of the upper Mamba. Glimpses of bloodshed 'horrible beyond description'¹⁷⁸ and stories of captive labourers being put in pens by cannibals,¹⁷⁹ of men begging for dead diggers' bodies for meat,¹⁸⁰ portray scenes more sanguine than in any other part of Melanesia.

Some of the bloodiest struggles of the contact period were not with Europeans, but those between Mamba river people, carriers from the Papuan coast, and their traditional enemies on the Waria. Near Tamate Ramsay wrote that 90 carriers, infuriated by ambushes on labour lines, had allied themselves with police wantoks to defeat the Opi river warriors:

The carriers got loose and done [sic] some frightful execution with their tomahawks, splitting men down, as if they were pieces of wood... The Opi natives were most daring and attacked the police, again and again, fighting for eleven hours without a break. The police doing great execution with their new rifles. 181

There are strong grounds for the argument that the Binandele, once they had sustained the first setback of western contact, looked on

177 Ibid., 95. Armit enumerated the incidents and the 54 deaths caused among the Orokaiva-Binandele. Ibid.

178 Ibid., 90.

179 TP AR 1925-6, 19.

180 M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 2 July 1900, DA.

181 F.W. Ramsay to M. Stone-Wigg, Mamba, 20 June 1901, DA; MN, 20 November 1901, 110.

the white man simply as a powerful ally against their enemies on the Gira and Waria rivers, and sought to enlist his firepower.¹⁸²

As the northern people began to indenture for labour in eastern Papua, the pattern of belligerence between Binandele and other Papuans was projected beyond the environs of the gold rush. In Giligili, Lilihoa, Lauiam and other commercial areas of Milne Bay, employers found that the presence of Orokaiva labourers often precipitated violence. The people of Rabi once complained that Orokaiva 'armed with spears, knives and bayonets' had invaded their village.¹⁸³ Some Orokaiva possessed 18" bayonets and with these bullied other labourers.¹⁸⁴ Employees from the Orokaiva-Binandele tribes fought labourers from the Gulf, they fought the Massim villagers, and, in the interval, they fought among one another. When a magistrate asked several Orokaiva whether they felt shame at assaulting a Massim they replied that they did not; 'it was just their fashion'.¹⁸⁵ Many employers, although they valued the energy of their northern labourers, agreed that disturbances among the tribal groups ended when Orokaiva were removed.¹⁸⁶

The first mission station on the Mamba river was begun in 1899 by E.W.M. Hines and A.P. Foote at Ave. Copland King put the station on a permanent footing in the following year and remained until his death in 1918; the first converts were baptized in 1912; S.R.M. Gill worked on the Mamba from 1922 to 1951. Undoubtedly the crushing of the military power of the Binandele which began with the rout of Wade in 1896 gave the morale of the northern tribes a blow from which it never properly recovered. The swift and irresistible advance of foreigners over the river plains was

182 On a trip to the Mamba, Stone-Wigg wrote: 'Many natives very friendly, hoping to get the white man to fight for them against a neighbouring village.' M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 2 July 1900, DA. For photograph of Kaili Kaili accompanying a government patrol in war decorations, see C.A.W. Monckton, Some Experiences..., 218.

183 RMED OJ, 4 April 1922, 14 May 1922, CAO/CRS/G91; D. Petelo, Interview, Koeabule, 25 April 1972.

184 RMED OJ, 14 July 1922, CAO/CRS/G91.

185 RMED PR, 23 June 1927, CAO/CRS/G91; D. Petelo, Interview, Koeabule, 25 April 1972.

186 RMED OJ, 30 September 1926, 4 April 1922, 16 November 1911, 28 May 1914, CAO/CRS/G91.

proof to the Binandele that they had brushed with a tribe they could never conquer.

In these circumstances the arrival of unarmed missionaries was greeted with more relief in the Orokaiva plains than elsewhere. Advised by C.A.W. Monckton to take firearms to the Opi river, Stone-Wigg had declined, trusting to divine protection. The magistrate then privately instructed the bishop's interpreter:

You will interpret truly... but you must first tell the people that he is my friend, and if anything happens to him I shall take such vengeance that the women and children of the furthest Binandele people will cry at the mention of it. 187

Not surprisingly, the party returned with glowing reports of the kindness of the people. 'You are good men', cried an Opi headman delightedly, 'You don't come to fight us.'¹⁸⁸ Missionaries were right to decline rifles and police in trying to win the Orokaiva to God. They surmised correctly that the spirit of the people was so subdued that it was unnecessary to take a single precaution.¹⁸⁹

OF all Papuan customs, none disappeared more quickly than cannibalism and tribal fighting. How much of this was due to mission teaching and how much to fear of the government is a question to which available evidence does not give any clear answer. In 1901 people on the Gira river armed with spears and 'pineapple' clubs met the Anglican bishop's party coming ashore from their wrecked schooner.

187 See C.A.W. Monckton, Further Adventures..., 14; Some Experiences..., 172.

188 M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 27 March 1901, DA.

189 The reason given was that 'a mission party should be different, both from a Government expedition and from a prospecting company, and we would not even take a shot gun on the chance of shooting a pigeon'. MN, 24 April 1901, 25. Orokaiva and Binandele, according to Monckton 'a strong, warlike, and colonizing people steadily pushing their way south', had a reputation among the Massim. There were persistent reports of brawls between Orokaiva and Milne Bay people. Managers wrote that the northern labourers 'bully the other labourers and have been very troublesome...'. The approach of labourers sometimes resulted in the cry, 'The Orokaivas are coming', and a stampede for the bush. RMED PR, 7 August 1913, *ibid.*, 28 May 1914, 30 September 1926, CAO/CRS/G91 621C-629; C.A.W. Monckton, Some Experiences..., 173.

A man poised his spear for a second at a schooner boy and rapidly dropping it said, 'Fighting is over now. Peace.'¹⁹⁰ Sometimes the cessation of custom was explained by Papuans in missionary terms. A Teste Islander, familiar with raids against Louisiade neighbours, explained that when Chalmers came and told them of God's way they saw it was best, and gradually 'put away evil things'.¹⁹¹ Sometimes habits were suppressed by fear engendered by hangings, as in Dilomi's last raid against the Tavara. Occasionally a headman like Gaganumore was exasperated by the conflict of customs old and new. After an enemy killed his pigs, Gaganumore raged, 'I'll have my revenge, and then give myself up to the Government to be hanged.'¹⁹² His mind was quietened by Bromilow, who composed the quarrel over a cup of tea and biscuits in the mission house study.¹⁹³

The initial motive for abandonment of aggressive behaviour however was probably fear of reprisal as much as Christian teaching. Maclaren's death in December 1891 provided an illuminating index of police intimidation. The Goodenough Bay people, remembering the Ancell hangings, were more shocked than the Anglicans at the news. Many villagers, recalling previous visits by the Merrie England and deciding that a pay-back by MacGregor was imminent, fled to the hills. The Wamira village headman Magaia blackened his face in mourning and set out for Dogura. Villagers continually 'came up to Dogura to Cry and Moan', wrote Tomlinson. 'They were extremely afraid that they would be punished for his death.' Many coastal people were still hiding in the mountains a fortnight after the news of Maclaren's death.¹⁹⁴

190 MN, 17 December 1901, 117-8.

191 MR, 5 June 1933, 20.

192 AMMR, 4 May 1909, 5.

193 Ibid.

194 S. Tomlinson, Diary, 1 January 1892, DA. When Moreton attended church at Kavataria 'at morning service at which hundreds usually assemble only twenty-three turned up - they were off like lightning as soon as it was over'. M. Billing, Diary, 3 June 1896, MOM 150.

The alliance between missions and government signalled the end not only of fighting but of cultural activities connected with warfare.¹⁹⁵ In Milne Bay the tavero, the sophisticated fighting canoe, went out of production. According to Abel the last tavero in use was cut up and its hull converted into flooring boards for a chapel.¹⁹⁶ At the opening of Wamira church near Dogura, villagers imitated the habits of Europeans at jumble sales by giving things they did not want: the collection included 46 spears, armlets, bowls and pots.¹⁹⁷ At Kiriwina Fellows criticized a group of villagers for visiting him armed with clubs, only to be told these were for sale and not for a fight.¹⁹⁸ The Dobuan canoe Eneute, almost complete for raiding when the Methodists arrived in 1891, was renamed Marama after Lilly Bromilow and used for fishing.¹⁹⁹

Inter-tribal relations were adjusted not only because of government suppression and mission teaching, but because the people themselves recognized them as harmful. A Massim man gave vent to his feelings to a missionary at Wanigela who rendered his talk: 'Taubada, what for New Guinea man he like fight, he altogedder big fool. I talk, I talk, I talk... my mouth he big feller sore, I talk, I finish. Alright he fight, he kill him 'nother feller, bymebye he savvy good.'²⁰⁰ Tribal fighting between Doriri and Wanigela ended when 40 men from each side assembled outside Wanigela church and broke their spears before the magistrate.²⁰¹

195 Abel related that he

was with Sir William McGregor [sic] in many places when he made known to big communities... that from that occasion all inter tribal strife was to cease... it put an end to much highly skilled industry and art. War canoes were useless; fighting was prohibited.

C.W. Abel, Notes, 1929, KA.

196 C.W. Abel, Savage Life..., 61.

197 M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 21 September 1899, DA.

198 This formed the basis of the Fellows collection of artifacts sold to the Australian Government in 1973. See also W. MacGregor, Diary, 25 July 1891, ANL.

199 Pilea Geosina, Interview, Dobu, 2 May 1972. See M. Billing, Diary, 20 May 1895; J. Tinney, Diary, 7 July 1892.

200 OP, 70/5.

201 A photograph of the ceremony was published by the Anglican Mission. NGM AR 1904-5, 1, 25.

The change at the headstations was even more marked. Stone-Wigg wrote in 1904 that he could always tell which boarders had been at Dogura the longest. New boys slept with one eye open ready for flight, old boys were heavy sleepers.²⁰² At Dobu many susceptible youths fell completely under Bromilow's sway and moulded their prayers, indeed their whole lives, upon the high-pitched exhortations of the Methodists. A Dobuan student aboard the Dove in 1897 on the way to Panaeiti had clearly mastered Evangelical piety:

O Lord help us to behave ourselves alright whilst these our Panaeiti friends are with us. Oh, help us, that we may do nothing which would discredit taparoro. Help us, Lord, that we may not show them anything that is wrong, but may all our conduct be such that they may see what true religion is. 203

In six years of work, Brown claimed, there was scarcely a tribe within the Wesleyan jurisdiction where the spear and club had not been laid aside.²⁰⁴ When the H.M.S. Curacao visited China Straits in 1893, a Kwato student sang 'God save the Queen' on deck to vociferous applause by the assembled crew.²⁰⁵

In 1898, after a visit to British New Guinea, R.W. Thompson of the L.M.S. recalled Charles Darwin's words that the transformation he had witnessed in the Pacific was like a change produced by a magicians's wand.²⁰⁶ Undoubtedly the coming of peace was the greatest triumph which missionary propaganda ever enjoyed. MacGregor compared the safety of Christian Dobu with that of George Street in Sydney.²⁰⁷ Le Hunte said that an umbrella rather than the gun sufficed in the districts under mission influence.²⁰⁸ Abel went about unarmed; the Methodists never used their armoury of Winchester

202 M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 31 May 1904, DA.

203 G. Brown, Diary, 8 June 1897; G. Brown, op. cit., 499.

204 AMMR, 7 November 1898, DA.

205 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Kwato, 4 August 1893, KA.

206 MC, June 1898, 146. R.W. Thompson was Foreign Secretary of the LMS 1881-1914.

207 AMMR, 7 August 1899, 9; see also AMMR, 7 November 1898, BNG AR 1897-8, xxx. Stone-Wigg customarily placed the jawbone of a Kumusi boy eaten by cannibals on the pulpit while preaching outside New Guinea. M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 12 January 1902, DA.

208 SPG, Eloquent Testimony..., 26, DA.

rifles; and Le Hunte left Kiriwina mission station armed only with a butterfly net.²⁰⁹ Stone-Wigg sold his revolver to a man in Samarai in 1899, devoting the proceeds to mission funds.²¹⁰ But the most eloquent reminder was by a Motuan in Port Moresby. He spoke for many coastal Papuans when he picked up a spear saying 'This used to be our constant companion. We dared not visit our gardens without it... we slept with it by our side, and took our meals with it at hand; but now', holding up a copy of the gospels, 'we can sleep soundly because of this, and this Book has brought us peace and protection, and we have no longer need for the spear and the club.'²¹¹

209 C.A.W. Monckton, op. cit., 150.

210 M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 13 May 1901, DA.

211 AMMR, 4 July 1892; see also, RMNED OJ, 2 November 1905. CAO/CRS/G91.

II

SOUTH SEA ISLANDERS

CHAPTER III

Samoa 'faifeau'

APART from a comparatively small influx of European missionaries from Australia in the south, the main spread of Christianity in the Pacific was from east to west. The period of Pacific Island missionary activity in New Guinea falls chronologically into two parts: the twenty years before the partitioning of British New Guinea by the English-speaking missions in 1890, and the thirty that followed it. Samoan missionaries, who began arriving in 1884, were the last visiting group from the eastern Pacific; but on the Melanesian frontier they were no less pioneers than any other.¹ Mission work in eastern New Guinea, as in other parts of the western Pacific, would have been impossible without Polynesian missionaries.²

When Samoans arrived in eastern New Guinea they carried not only Christianity but the fa'asamoa, the traditional attitudes and standards of Samoa or the Samoan way.³ The placidity of the Massim had long been contrasted with the ferocity of the northern

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- 1 Rarotongans arrived in New Guinea after 1872, Niueans after 1875, and Samoans after 1884. Up to 1890 the first group numbered about 104; there were about 25 each in the second and third groups. The Loyalty Islanders (1871-1885) numbered about 30, making a total of 190, in addition to two Tahitian couples. W.W. Gill, From Darkness..., 359: LMS Register of Missionaries in New Guinea 1871-1890, NGDC minutes 1872-91; D. Lewis, 'London Missionary Society...', unpub. Hons. thesis Adel.1968, 141
 - 2 The presence of a missionary fluent in a particular Polynesian tongue brought about a preponderance of certain nationalities in certain areas. Thus Niueans and Rarotongans tended to gather in the Port Moresby district under W.G. Lawes and Samoans under A.E. Hunt; Rarotongans went to Suau with Chalmers; Loyalty Island Melanesians gathered in Torres Straits and eastern Papua under McFarlane. Samoan behaviour in areas west of Orangerie Bay is used in analogous situations where there is a dearth of material from Milne Bay and other Massim areas.
 - 3 For a further definition of fa'asamoa, see N. Goodall, A History..., 378. For outlines of Samoan mission development see N. Goodall, op. cit., 352ff; J.W. Davidson, Samoa mo Samoa, 33ff; R.P. Gilson, Samoa..., 83, 126.

Binandele; Captain Moresby's account was widely known;⁴ and there was little resistance to the fa'asamoa in Milne Bay. There were two vigorous exceptions: the communities of Bou and Maivara were still dangerous to visitors.⁵ On the other hand, pockets of influence - Logea, Killerton, Samarai, Wagawaga and Teste - had been created by Loyalty Islanders, and these were familiar with the lotu the Polynesians preached.⁶ One reason for popular deference to Samoans was that they were not only dimdim who happened to be muscular or 'tall and fat', but that they were sorcerers. Many elders thought that if they offended the pastor, he would pray to God and they would become sick.⁷ The tendency of Samoans to cultivate friendships among the most powerful men, to whom was often attributed the power of a sorcerer, probably strengthened this reasoning.

Polynesians gained entry into eastern Papua largely through the use of trade. Hoop iron was at first the major commodity offered: the Suau headmen who welcomed Piri, Chalmers and the Rarotongan party in 1877 had been 'greatly delighted' with it.⁸ A later New Guinea inventory in 1884 revealed a wider repertoire: 144 leather belts, 4500 fish hooks, round mirrors, red beads, and 400 butchers' knives.⁹ By far the most commonly used inducement, however, was tobacco. McFarlane, who dispensed it sparingly to his Loyalty Island teachers, complained that Chalmers overstocked his Rarotongans with tobacco who then disparaged the Loyalty Islanders on 'the small quantity of tobacco their missionary gives them.'¹⁰ Chalmers was not perturbed by his brother missionary's ebullitions: 'I use the weed myself',

4 J. Moresby, Two Admirals, 310.

5 C.W. Abel, Savage Life in New Guinea, 170. The hostility of the Bou and Maivara people may have influenced MacGregor's choice of Ahioma between the two villages, for one of the Ansell executions in 1889. See pp. 51-2.

6 At Bou, Mita, Waralaia and Suau, MacGregor wrote that 'the natives seem to have taken to [Samoans] well'. BNG AR 1891-2, 89.

7 Haure Heaoa, Interview, Orokolo, 16 January 1971.

8 J. Chalmers to W. Mullens, Suau, 23 August 1878, PL.

9 W.G. Lawes to R.W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 4 January 1884, PL.

10 S. McFarlane to W.G. Lawes and J. Chalmers, Murray Island, 14 August 1884, PL.

he wrote, 'and have found it a good friend in many strange places and amongst very peculiar people.'¹¹ Lawes annotated the uses to which Polynesian missionaries put tobacco:

houses and churches are built with it, boats are pulled by it, gardens and fences made with it. It is our wood and water, our fruit and vegetables and fish - It is the sign of peace and friendship, the key which opens the door for better things... The shortest way to a New Guineans's heart is through his tobacco pipe. 12

Papuan attitudes to tobacco illustrated their disposition towards both the Polynesian and European dimdim. They had given them land: they anticipated a plethora of goods in return. MacGregor commented that their desire for missionaries 'may not in every case be disinterested, as these people are not in the least ashamed to beg from their teacher and to obtain from him all they possibly can without giving him anything in return'.¹³ Chalmers, who had no illusions about Papuan motives, wrote with a little irony that in among the Massim 'people everywhere were kind and gave pressing invitations to return. In all the districts they will with joy receive teachers for the gospel of salt, tobacco, beads and tomahawks.'¹⁴

In the pioneering phase the Islanders' use of tobacco in appealing for peace was therefore of some political importance:

You see that I am a stranger from a strange land [said the Lifuan Elia]. I have come amongst you... to tell you not to fight any more, but to be friends. We have one father, Jehovah, and He does not like us to fight, but to be friends, and be kind to each other. 15

Elia's speech in the Torres Straits was repeated by Samoans along the coast from the Fly River to Samarai. By the time the Special Commissioner made his first tour of duty in 1886 there were thirty

11 J. Chalmers to R.W. Thompson, New Guinea, 11 February 1884, PL. For other objections within the LMS to the use of tobacco see J.O. Whitehouse to W.G. Lawes, London, 14 December 1883, WOL.

12 W.G. Lawes to R.W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 6 February 1883, PL; R. Lovett, James Chalmers..., 216.

13 BNG AR 1888-9, 32.

14 J. Chalmers to J. Mullens, Port Moresby, 30 October 1879, PL.

15 Elia - to S. McFarlane, Dauan, 19 June 1877, PL.

Polynesian mediators scattered among south coastal Papuans.¹⁶ Beginning with Alesana at Killerton Island in 1884, the Samoans outnumbered Sir Peter Scratchley's eastern staff by eight to one. Officers were quick to acknowledge their importance in creating conditions favourable to acceptance by Papuans of the pax Britannica.¹⁷

The role of the Polynesian in surmounting inter-tribal hostility is also remembered in Melanesian folk lore. Messengers were said to have reported that 'The Samoans are coming to tell you not to fight and not to hurt one another';¹⁸ and Samoans were noted for speaking 'very strongly' to villagers, saying 'Don't fight; become God's children; live well.'¹⁹ The Rarotongan teacher Tenaori intervened to save the lives of fifty Motuans at Keppel Point near Aroma. When Aroma warriors launched a fleet of canoes to massacre the wrecked Motuans, Tenaori interposed the L.M.S. whaleboat, harangued the attackers, and induced them to forgo the raid. Finally he provided hospitality for the Motuans, for which Scratchley presented him with an inscribed watch in 1886.²⁰

Western gifts - silver watches, inscribed rifles, and an illuminated address - were tokens of the secular value which officials placed on the presence of Island missionaries.²¹ In the villages of eastern Papua the pastor was usually the first man contacted by officers; when the Merrie England or the Hygeia dropped anchor, it was often the pastor who was first on board. The Samoan's house was the venue of meetings between magistrates and head men; sometimes members of the Administrator's party slept and ate with the pastor. J.W. Lindt, who travelled with Scratchley, described the extent of Polynesian influence in 1886:

16 See NGDC AR 1886, PR.

17 See J.W. Lindt, Picturesque New Guinea..., 153; BNG AR 1888-9, 27.

18 Haure Heaoa, Interview, Orokolo, 16 January 1971.

19 Ibid. In Samoa the LMS had taken the position that war, except in the strictest self-defence, was contrary to the will of God and anyone who participated was liable to be expelled. R.P. Gilson, Samoa..., 116.

20 J.W. Lindt, op. cit., 72; BNG AR 1886 (I), 38.

21 For a description of Ruatoka, Rarotongan teacher at Port Moresby honoured by the Queensland government, see O. Stone, A Few Months..., 219.

They have succeeded, not merely in opening up communication with the natives along nearly the entire littoral of the Protected Territory... but, what is more important, they have inspired those natives with confidence. 22

Between 1872 and 1890 the Cook Islands supplied nearly half of all the Polynesian missionaries, but by 1890 Samoa had replaced Rarotonga as the main supplier of Polynesians for New Guinea.²³ Many of the Islanders who appeared in early official accounts were Rarotongan; but by 1890, secular officials had become accustomed to Samoan as well as Cook Island guides. However, with the inauguration of the Armed Native Constabulary the active peace-keeping role of the missionaries was declining; and Samoans became guides and interpreters for magistrates rather than delegates. Fua'au of Iokea mission related an encounter with a government patrol:

At about midnight we were suddenly awakened by the shining of the torches of the cannibals in the dark forest... The magistrate gave the command, 'If I say shoot then shoot only for a few minutes.' After a while when the cannibals were near enough the judge gave them the order to shoot... in the morning they came back again and looked at the dead people. There were six of them, five dead and one still alive. Each one of them had a parcel containing parts of the two men and the boy whom they had captured the previous day. 24

Instructed by missionaries who upheld the separation of church and state, Samoans in New Guinea tended to identify religious and civil arrangements in a way that was distinctly at variance with Protestant ideas.²⁵ Thus, while armed villagers conducted hostilities against the constabulary, a Samoan faifeau sometimes marched with the government to preach a message of peace. In inland Kalaigolo, O.S. Tuata told how his evangelism assisted the government:

22 BNG AR 1886, 12. See also H.H. Romilly, Western Pacific..., 241.

23 By 1887 there were only two Rarotongans left at Suau in eastern New Guinea, one of whom was Ono. W.G. Lawes to R.W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 29 February 1887, PL. In 1903 the church at Suau was described as 'a complete wreck'. RMED OJ, 6 March 1903, CAO/CRS/G91.

24 SS, September 1912, 142, translated by V. Rasmussen.

25 See R.P. Gilson, Samoa..., 115.

The spears thrown by the Edei people descended like falling rain... I preached there and spent the night in the village... I sent a messenger to every village near the road to gather together for my preaching... The people had not heard of the Kingdom of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. It is trying for them to wait for a preacher but the answer is the same - the answer is from heaven. 26

Although no Samoan missionary at Kwato ever held secular office, a Samoan faifeau in the Methodist mission, Filimoni Faitele, was distinguished both in secular and religious service. Returning to Samoa in 1914 after seven years' work on Dobu, Faitele became a policeman at Apia and served until 1922, when he again volunteered for the New Guinea field. He worked there for another twenty years. As catechist, policeman and native minister, he won an excellent reputation.²⁷

So vividly did Polynesians and Englishmen manifest themselves to Papuans as parts of the same peacemaking process that in many places they were commonly assumed to be the same people. Dimdim or foreigner, 'sea people' or immigrant were used indiscriminately of Samoan, Rarotongan, Niuean and European. In Orokolo, for example, the first Samoans were described as maea hakula haela, or white men.²⁸ At Maivara in Milne Bay, the Samoan Ma'anaima was thought to be a dimdim from Australia. To distinguish themselves from Europeans, Samoans pointed out that their black hair and olive skin were slightly different from those of the magistrates. According to Orokolo tradition, they then expatiated on the distinction, pointing out that the race belonging to Misi Lao (Lawes) and Tamate (Chalmers) had gone to Samoa before coming to Papua. Papuans then understood that Samoa was a land 'beyond Australia'.²⁹

26 SS, July 1914.

27 Filimoni Faitele. Catechist Dobu, 1910-1914; policeman Upolo, 1914-1923; catechist and native minister, Dobu, 1912-46. In 1941 the Synod recorded 'the unique place and value of this aged Samoan Minister... guide, counsellor and father to boys on the station... a powerful influence'. NGD Synod Report, 1945, SA.

28 Kavea of Paevera, Interview, Orokolo, 14 January 1971. See also C.S. Belshaw, The Great Village, 189. A. Chowning, 'Recent Acculturation between Tribes in New Guinea', in JPH, Vol. 4, 1969, 31.

29 Haure Heaoa, Interview, Laikolo, 16 January 1971.

To dispel any lingering misapprehension, Samoans and Rarotongans then affirmed kinship with their interrogators. 'You and me: we have one body', cried one Samoan, 'Europeans they have different body. We are teaching you to read and write; afterwards white people, you and we will live together and mix together.'³⁰ Piri, the Rarotongan teacher from Boera who introduced a few contingents of missionaries, shook hands with head men in the Gulf and said, 'We have one grandfather [ancestor] and we are all together now.'³¹

Polynesian protestations of kinship were significant, for in outward decorum they proclaimed anything but a state of being 'all together now' with Papuans. During the conversion of Upolu in the 1840s Samoans had quickly abandoned the leaf girdle and wig (mavo) for western dress, and clothing became for them as tobacco was for Papuans, an article of barter.³² Western clothing customs tended to have an exaggerated vogue among Samoans in New Guinea. The professional faifeau Samoa appeared on Sunday among pandanus-clad worshippers clad in waistcoat, neckerchief and collar. Sometimes he wore a frock coat and held an umbrella. Photographs of Samoan wives - stiff, orthodox, surrounded by black crepe and frills to the ankles - reveal the elaborate emphasis on clothing compared with that of the more simply clad European. MacGregor described Polynesian wives as 'great swells, big ugly and in hats with great ostrich feathers'.³³ Fear of losing face made it difficult for them to realize they were over-reacting to their new land by over-dressing. But the effect upon Papuans was all that could be desired.

30 Ibid.

31 Ibid.

32 SR no. 12, January 1851. G. Brown, Polynesians..., 317. The Samoan fondness for western dress may have originated in school uniforms. The Methodist uniform at Satupaitea consisted of white Eton coat, brass buttons, and white mortar boards with tassels representing the Imperial German colours. Normal School Satupaitea AR 1907, SMA, MA.

33 W. MacGregor, Diary, 28 December 1890, ANL.

'When the people looked on the Samoans and Rarotongans they thought they were very rich', said a villager, 'they wanted to wear all those things too but they could not.'³⁴

Illness, and death, dogged Polynesians from the start. The first Rarotongan, Adamu, died within a few months of arrival at Manumanu in 1873.³⁵ 'How terribly they suffer!' wrote E.P. Jones, 'it is a wonder that any work is accomplished, seeing what a number of breaks there are through illness. They all suffer.'³⁶ Five of the first fourteen Rarotongans sent to convert the people of Suau in 1877 died within months of their introduction, all, it was believed, by poisoning.³⁷ Abel lost three of his Samoans within a few weeks of their arrival, and eight altogether between 1891 and 1900.³⁸ 'They come as the tides', said the teacher Tupto, 'one comes and falls, another succeeds him.'³⁹ The memorial window at Vatorata near Kapakapa reminded Papuan students that between 1871 and 1899 over 120 Polynesian missionaries had perished in the attempt to convert their country. By 1916 another forty had died.⁴⁰

The catastrophic death rate was caused partly by ignorance. Without proper attention to quinine, a Samoan in fever was apt to

34 Haure Heaoa, Interview, Orokololo, 16 January 1971. A Samoan wrote at Hula in 1932 that 'Seldom anybody is naked; everyone seems to compete in displaying his clothes and appearance, as in a Christian country; and whole rolls of materials in stores are bought by villagers for this purpose. It conveys the idea that paganism is fading.' SS, September 1933. At a service at Wagawaga in 1912 Abel noted the Samoan pastor's annoyance because, as he wrote, 'I forgot to take my black coat on shore! I fear if the truth were told, I addressed the people with my shirt sleeves rolled up!' C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Koeabule, 30 August 1912, KA.

35 J. King, W.G. Lawes..., 58, 80.

36 E.P. Jones to R.W. Thompson, Moru, 10 May 1905, PL.

37 Australasian, 22 March, 1879.

38 C.W. Abel, op. cit., 167.

39 J.H. Holmes, Diary, 16 July 1899, PJ.

40 Estimates of Island mortality varies slightly. The Cooktown Courier numbered 90 dead of 187 missionaries up to 1888; the Australasian Medical Gazette recorded 103 dead up to 1887, 'all men and women in the prime of life'. Cooktown Courier, 25 September 1888; AMG May 1887, 144. For Kemp Welsh river massacres of 1881, see J. Chalmers, Work and Adventure..., 205.

sit in damp shirt, walk in the rain, or strip off the greater part of his clothing and in Abel's words 'sit for an hour on his verandah in the teeth of a strong wind'.⁴¹ The philosophical detachment of Polynesian deaths can be explained by reference to the logic of the divine call. As he lay dying of malaria, a Samoan exclaimed:

Oh, if I could only take with me the knowledge that
I had done ten years' work for Christ in New Guinea
I could die happy; but only two years - so little,
so little, compared with what He has done for me. 42

As Samoans fell, their colleagues built leaf shelters over their graves, and Papuans formed above the sand the outlines of white coral monuments. By 1900 the pioneer station on Killerton Island was marked by a circle of graves. When Samoan missionaries learnt of the cause of malaria, they acted with greater caution:

We have now met up with the most difficult of enemies, the mosquito [wrote Neru]. Numerous mosquitoes have bred and fallen down upon wherever people live. Uninhabited places too, houses filled with mosquitoes day and night. We're sure there are more mosquitoes in Pastor Kuki's house in Moru than in the whole of Upolu. There is only one rescue here - the mosquito net. There are more hours spent inside the mosquito net than outside it because of the difficulties with the mosquito. 43

Polynesians died affirming a gospel of spiritual rather than social brotherhood. As missionaries soon observed, the 'sprightly

41 C.W. Abel, *op. cit.*, 167.

42 SMH, 17 August 1901; MC, June 1898, 149. Samoans leaving for the Methodist field told their relatives they were 'happy if necessary that their bodies might crumble and mingle with the dust of a foreign land' for the sake of the Gospel. District Training Institute, Savai'i, AR 1902, SMA. For the Polynesian missionary prayer, '... enable us to persevere in the great work until we die', see M. Stone-Wigg, The Papuans..., 6.

43 SS May 1914, 70. At Funafuti in the Ellice Islands school-children were heard singing a Samoan song, 'Niukini e, tuku toku tainamu laukaka, me se malu koe i te name! Tamato, e, tuu faka malosi ke te galuega i Kapatii!' 'New Guinea, place your mosquito net of kaka leaves to protect you from the mosquitoes! Chalmers, make strong your work in Kabadi!' Mrs T.W.E. David, Funafuti..., 74.

little Papuan'⁴⁴ had little in common with the stout dignity of his Samoan mentor. The Polynesian household, adorned with metal cooking pots, utensils, cloth and china illustrated at a glimpse a state of life very different to that of a beach village.⁴⁵ Outward tokens disclosed inner convictions. Villagers in eastern Papua were aware of the difference between the easy gregariousness of Tamate (Chalmers) and the comparative aloofness of the settled Samoan faifeau. In the wake of European pioneers, who slept and ate with villagers, the faifeau ate separately according to the fa'asamoa and rarely joined in tribal celebrations. His wife detested peeping villagers who found her an object of curiosity;⁴⁶ he himself bade them not to teach their children the 'bad ways' of the past.⁴⁷ As the Samoan believed intensely in his cultural alliance with European Christianity, so he knew that the closer he resembled the Anglo-Saxon, the more respect would be accorded to him by Papuans. When a Samoan named Faolo married a Papuan woman at Hula, his colleagues petitioned the Lieutenant-Governor to deport the teacher.⁴⁸

Attitudes to physical labour was one of a cluster of Samoan beliefs about dignity emphasizing the gulf between them and their new cultural milieu. For a Samoan mate or faifeau to display interest in work was regarded as demeaning. When Wilhelm Solf, German Governor of Samoa declared that 'The Samoan... is a shirker',⁴⁹ he judged as

44 BNG AR 1890-1, 61. Thompson contrasted the 'frank and easy Englishman' with Samoans who were 'stiff, and standing on their dignity constantly'. R.W. Thompson to H.M. Dauncey, London, 10 March 1905, WOL. Chalmers wrote that Samoan pastors tended to 'ape the Popish system' in their insistence on the title 'Reverend'. J. Chalmers to J. Hutchin, New Guinea, 25 April 1884, PL.

45 Holmes wrote that Samoans ordered as 'necessities' 'K' shooting boots, Primus stoves, American spiral screwdrivers, leather leggings, gold rings, three umbrellas a year, frock coats. H.M. Dauncey to J.H. Holmes, 2 April 1912, Papua Minute Book, Metoreaia.

46 T. Afatoa, Interview, Saroa, 16 February 1971.

47 Haure Heaoa, Interview, Orokolo, 16 January 1971.

48 C.W. Abel, LD, 13 March 1914, KA.

49 J.A. Moses, 'The Solf Regime in Western Samoa', New Zealand Journal of History, Vol. 6, No. 1, April 1972, 45. 'Manual work is not naturally desired by the young men of Samoa, and it requires much tact to induce them to engage in it...'. Satupaitea Normal School, AR 1903, MA.

laziness a trait which, viewed from a Polynesian context, was merely a token of social status. Samoan notions of dignity had been violated during the gruelling experience of the voyage to New Guinea. Albert Pearse wrote of

... the terrible and wretched discomfort of the teachers. The hold would not contain half of them, though they were huddled together like nigger slaves. The rest had to remain on deck, washed by the sea, squatting anywhere they could find a place. 50

Dignity was reaffirmed from the moment the Ellangowan or John Williams dropped anchor in Papuan waters. Acute Papuan observers noted that Tamate and Misi Ipo (Mr Abel) carried their own accoutrements ashore, but the Samoan faifeau did not. Their suitcases were borne by Melanesians. From the initiation of missionary contact Polynesians revealed a strong reluctance to yield to prevailing Melanesian custom. On the contrary, culture contact after a threatening sea voyage tended to harden resistance to change.⁵¹

As the Polynesian ascendancy became accepted in such Milne Bay villages as Maivara, Rabi and Wadounou, Samoan behaviour patterns were reinforced by Papuan willingness to accommodate them. The pliancy of Melanesians to Samoan intransigence accounts in large measure for harmonious racial relations between intruder and natives: the Polynesian always dominated, the Papuan always compromised. European witnesses recalled the Samoan malaga or travelling party along village tracks: the Samoan pastor in white loin-cloth and coat carrying a Bible, his wife with woven fan aloft in one hand and umbrella in the other; and a file of Papuans labouring behind under household effects, chairs and cases.⁵² The grandiose entourage of the malaga, the imperious gestures: such visible cultural traits were

50 A. Pearse to R.W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 26 September 1887, PL. McFarlane and Chalmers gave the Ellangowan's master instructions to respect their Pacific Island teachers: 'As a class they have done admirable service to the cause of Christ... as a body they deserve our warmest regard for their real worth.' S. McFarlane and J. Chalmers, letter of instructions given to the Master of the Ellangowan, Thursday Island, 25 June 1878, PL.

51 Mrs T.W.E. David's description of Funafuti resembles New Guinea: white washed coral church, calico dressed women, artificial flowers in church, taxation to support the pastor's family, and domination by the pastor.

52 M. Smeeton, Interview, Daru, 5 January 1971.

held by Samoans with considerable intensity. Few Europeans, however, ever saw the methods by which such effects were produced. Villagers were familiar with the summons from the pastor's fale and there were some who disobeyed. A few alleged that dissident villagers were pulled out of their gardens, slapped and kicked in order to be bent to the Polynesian will.⁵³

Tendencies revealed by Rarotongans and Samoans in New Guinea after 1880 were well known in other island groups where Polynesians went. The assertion of superiority over people to whom Islanders ministered was particularly evident of the Society Islanders in the Tuamotus,⁵⁴ of the Tongans in Fiji,⁵⁵ and of the Samoans in all the lands to which they went.⁵⁶ This was reflected in New Guinean names accorded to the Samoan faifeau: in the Gulf the Samoan was not called a dimdim or maea hakula haela, but simply the amua or taubada: the master.⁵⁷ On Murray Island the Samoan teacher Finau combined sacred and secular office in 1898 by levying fines and appointing his own magistrates.⁵⁸ However, the careers of European missionary politicians in the Pacific show that Finau of Murray Island was in good company.

53 B. Lohia, Interview, Tatana, 22 February 1971. Samoans at first tended to conceal feelings of anger and were facially much less expressive than Melanesians. See G. Brown, Polynesians..., 58. Albert Maori Kiki alleges that his parents were beaten by a missionary for not going to church. There were Samoan missionaries at Orokelo between 1930 and 1950. A.M. Kiki, Ten Thousand Years..., 59. There is, however, no evidence of the use of physical violence by Samoans in Milne Bay.

54 H. Cuming, Journal, 118, quoted in W.N. Gunson, op. cit., 387-8.

55 Watsford wrote, 'They thought too much of themselves and wished to ride over the people... One of the teachers was a Tonga chief and he wished to rule the land as well as preach the Gospel.' Watsford, 21 July 1847, WMMS Letters from Feejee, v, quoted in W.N. Gunson, op. cit., 388.

56 Ibid.

57 Haure Heaoa, Interview, Laikolo, 16 January 1971.

58 'Like all the Samoan teachers Fenan [sic] is fond of power', Douglas wrote. J. Douglas to J. Chalmers, Thursday Island, 27 November 1898, PL. For the attitude of Methodist Samoans to the village police at Dobu, see RMED OJ 30 May 1907, CAO/CRS/G91. In 1896 a police message sent overland from the Mamba to Port Moresby after Green's murder, was delayed, in Monckton's words, by 'a presumptuous and thick-headed Samoan teacher of the London Missionary Society'. C.A.W. Monckton, Some Experiences..., 81.

The culminating symbol of the Polynesian presence was the Samoan fale.⁵⁹ The pastor's house was calculated to impress, provide hospitality for papalagi guests from Australia,⁶⁰ be a model of domestic order, and provide living proof of the superiority of the fa'asamoa over primitive Papuan ways. As A.C. Haddon remarked, the home life of the South Sea teachers was perhaps of more value than that of Europeans, for it was easier for Papuans to copy.⁶¹ Often the Polynesian house was more imposing than the church; sometimes house and church were contained in the same coral building. A few pastors lived in European dwellings: Ma'anaima of Kwato, for example, built an interesting replica of a Queensland country house, with verandahs, iron roof, stumps and barbed wire fence.⁶² But the majority of Samoans imitated architectural styles of life as exact as that of any faifeau or matai in Samoa. In the Kavataria Methodist mission at Kiriwina, villagers carried coral and cement for the floor of Fa'asala's fale and covered the elliptical basket-like framework with a grass roof.⁶³ The fale being an open building, villagers could see that Samoans ate and slept on the floor, that they wove mats from pandanus, and that they rested their heads on bamboo stands or kapok pillows in the hot afternoons.⁶⁴

59 'They went to work at once after they were landed, and put up a dwelling place, a spacious and lofty place', wrote A.W. Murray after he had left the Rarotongan Adamu and his wife at Redscar Bay. A.W. Murray to W. Mullens, Cape York, 27 January 1873, PR. In MacGregor's words, 'The little white-washed houses of the native teachers are the pledge of good order and civilization, and worth more for the sacredness of life and security and property than an armed constabulary'. Quoted in AMMR, 4 June 1909, 13.

60 In Samoa the matai had two homes, the fale afolau and the fale ulu. The larger fale ulu was vacated by the matai family when visitors were in residence. Thus C.W. Abel wrote at Killerton Island: 'I must confess to a feeling of shame when I see my Samoan teachers crowded into a poky little native hut... while we quietly take possession of their commodious home.' C.W. Abel, Diary, 2 October 1904, KA. See also C.S. Robinson, Diary, 18 September 1903, PNGA.

61 A.C. Haddon, Headhunters..., 98.

62 C.C. Abel, Photograph collection, UPNG.

63 S.B. Fellows, Photograph collection, UPNG. Kaliton Weyalulu, Interview, Kiriwina, 17 May 1972.

64 Ibid.

Samoans in New Guinea formed a seigneurial class, carrying house design, etiquette, dress, and the habit of singing hymns as comforting tokens of their origin in a strange land. As village heads they were bound to a number of reciprocal obligations to their inferiors in the same way as a matai in Samoa. The pastors expected presents during the Mei collections; were given a prime share in the fishing catch, eggs, meat, and birds killed in the hunt; were deferred to in the making of speeches.⁶⁵ Mrs T.W.E. David's impressions in 1899 of the Samoan pastor of Funafuti tallies with those of New Guinea travellers: '[he] gives himself a few airs, lords it, in fact, over king, magistrate, and natives just like an old-fashioned rector-squire in a country parish in England.'⁶⁶ As Papuans had been accustomed to fear the man with special influence with the spirits, so they conformed willingly to the Samoan pastor's ideas of how villages should be run.

Nevertheless, the Papuan deference to the taubada was tinged with resentment:

The Samoans were the big boss when they were in the village. They could take anything they liked from people's gardens. 67

The Papuans disliked the Samoan preoccupation with hygiene, which had become a feature of missionary work in Polynesia, for it suggested that their own smell was offensive to the Samoan. Abel once heard of the European missionary Robert Lyndon:

The Class V complain that he is like a Samoan, and has his own verandah washed if they have been sitting upon it. Poor Bob! 68

Such objections were expressed obliquely, by a return to custom immediately the Samoan had left. When the Samoan teacher at Wagawaga died in 1910, a magistrate found the high-water mark of Discovery Bay covered with human excrement.⁶⁹

One exception to the pattern of obedience was Kiriwina, which withstood the fa'asamoa successfully. Although the first Samoan

65 B. Lohia, Interview, Tatana, 22 February 1971. Presents during the Mei in Milne Bay included necklaces, stone axes and spatulas. R.W. Thompson, My Trip..., 27; see also R.P. Gilson, Samoa..., 97.

66 Mrs T.W.E. David, Funafuti..., 79.

67 B. Lohia, Interview, Tatana, 22 February 1971.

68 C.W. Abel, LD, 19 February 1924, KA.

69 RMED PR 19 November 1910, CAO/CRS/G91, 623.

missionary Fa'asala yielded symbolically to Kiriwina chieftainship by sitting on a chair no higher than Touluwa's,⁷⁰ his successors drove hard at the Kiriwinan hierarchy: 'I know what the big chiefs think about this', wrote Alesana at Omarakana, 'they say: "If this religion becomes established, and the people learn to know God, they will despise the ruling of the big chief [Enamakala] and will refuse to make him presents of yams and fish."' ⁷¹ When Alesana and Fa'asala told the Kiriwinans to discard garden magic the people replied, in Alesana's words, 'You should throw away your religious customs which are bad.'⁷² The Samoans believed that the lotu would not prosper before the older people were dead,⁷³ and the young people had abandoned traditional sexual behaviour:

The minds of the Kiriwina people are like the minds of the beasts, they have no sense of shame; so I wonder sometimes whether the religion will be established or not. The whole land belongs to Satan. The people have no sympathy with our missions. They know how to thieve, and we grieve greatly that by and bye all our goods will be gone. 74

In about 1910 relations between the Samoans and Kiriwinans appear to have reached a low ebb. Foisaga had to be removed for 'having on several occasions severely beaten Natives with practically no provocation',⁷⁵ and Fa'asala Si'io was fined for unfair dealing in pigs and expelled from the mission. 'The Samoans generally are not

70 K. Weyalulu, Interview, Kiriwina, 17 May 1972.

71 AMMR, 6 December 1895, 9.

72 Ibid.

73 AMMR, 4 January 1897, 5. Alesana added that in Kiriwina 'the progress of religion is slow like that of a boat sailing in a light wind.' Ibid.

74 AMMR, 6 December 1895, 9. Alesana left Kiriwina before the rebellion of 1899. AMMR, 6 December 1899, lff.

75 G.R. Holland to B. Danks, Kiriwina, 9 June 1911, MOM 119.

liked here', ⁷⁶ wrote G.R. Holland, adding that they had given him more anxiety than the Fijian and Papuan teachers put together. Holland was asked by the Quarterly Meeting of Papuan and Fijian leaders to request no more Samoans to be sent to Kiriwina, a petition which he ruled out of order. ⁷⁷

POLYNESIAN missionaries in Papua stood in the intellectual lineage of the first Evangelical seminaries in the Pacific. George Pritchard's college at Papeete and Aaron Buzacott's institute in Rarotonga had instilled into students the precepts of English missionary colleges such as Gosport in Hampshire where Pritchard had been a student. ⁷⁸ More important was Malua, or the 'Samoan Mission Seminary' established on Upolu in 1844. Scripture history, systematic theology and pastoral training were combined at Malua with a course on natural philosophy and Roman Catholicism or 'popery'. ⁷⁹ The Samoan Methodist institute

76 Ibid. Holland added that in his opinion Samoans came to New Guinea 'to make money and advance quickly... They are born traders and do not treat the people fairly. They usually trade in pigs'. G.R. Holland to B. Danks, Kiriwina, 9 June 1911, MOM 119. Bromilow wrote that

one has to be careful here where the Samoan element comes in... I have now two Samoans who are very capable men, ... but we have some who were very arrogant with the natives and treated them very contemptuously... all our students except one are Fijian-taught... that in itself speaks volumes.

W.E. Bromilow to A.J. Small, Dobu, [1900] FDC.

77 G.R. Holland to B. Danks, Kiriwina, 9 June 1911, MOM 119.

78 Pritchard, 2 June 1831, SSL, Heath, Buchanan and Sutherland, 30 September 1847, SSL, quoted in W.N. Gunson, op. cit., 391. W.G. Lawes' minister in Berkshire had also been taught at Gosport. J. King, W.G. Lawes..., 3.

79 Clashes between Samoan LMS teachers and French Catholics at Maiva at the turn of the century illustrated the hostility of Malua-taught students to Roman Catholicism. See SR, March 1861, 22. Dupeyrat's account of the sectarian struggles in New Guinea illustrates the result: 'Their [Samoan] idiotic calumnies about Rome, described as diabolic Babylon, and Paris, a dissolute Sodom, as opposed to London, the honour and light of the world...'. A. Dupeyrat, Papouasie..., 265. Archbishop L.A. Navarre did not regard Samoans as missionaries: 'They are not trained, and they differ little in morals or training from the savages amongst whom they live... I know a large number of them... I found few of them intelligent. The conduct of some is very reprehensible.' BNG AR 1887, 25.

on Savai'i taught arithmetic, reading and writing, as well as Scripture.⁸⁰ The tutors of the 100 L.M.S. students at Malua, the Reverend J.E. Newell (1887-1910) and the Reverend J. Marriott (1887-1904), emphasized academic discipline rather than practical ability,⁸¹ but a few Samoan teachers were trained at Leulomoega where carpentering, blacksmithing and plumbing were also taught. Most Samoan L.M.S. wives in New Guinea received their education at Papauta Girls' School under Valesca Schultze (1890-1916) and Elizabeth Moore (1890-1920).⁸²

One example of almost everything the faifeau Samoa was asserted to be was the pastor Ma'anaima, who lived in Milne Bay between 1890 and 1910.⁸³ Volunteering at Malua, where he was dux, Ma'anaima came to New Guinea 'looking every inch a typical headmaster',⁸⁴ being surrounded, like many Samoan pastors, by an aura of distinguished erudition. His first attempt to convert the Bou people of north-western Milne Bay was drowned by a cacophony of drums beaten by his opponents. When one of them, Haki, threatened to smite him with elephantiasis, he seized the sorcerer's haitabu, or sacred stone, and hurled it into Milne Bay. Abel recorded the ensuing animosity:

At Bou we had great difficulty in starting mission work. The people did not want a teacher, and they frankly told us so. When they found we studied their needs before their wishes they became very offensive, and showed considerable opposition to our settling amongst them. They threatened to poison Maanaima... and it is probable from their attitude during the first months of Maanaima's work, that they... would have laid violent hands on him, had it not been for

80 Upolu and Manono Circuit Report, 1903, SMA.

81 N. Goodall, A History..., 357.

82 Valesca Schultze joined the LMS in 1889. With Elizabeth Moore she founded Papauta girls' school for the daughters of chiefs at Malua. N. Goodall, A History of the L.M.S...., 359-60.

83 Other long terms were the Methodist Filimoni Faitele (27 years), Ioane Siatu (22 years), and Foisaga (10 years) in the D'Entrecasteaux. Foisaga was regarded by Mud Bay villagers as more fluent in Bwaidoga languages than their own people. D. Jenness and A. Ballantyne, Language..., 1.

84 R.W. Thompson, My trip..., 15; MC, February 1892, 35; ibid., October 1899, 243.

the fact that a few miles from Bou, the Government had publicly hanged a member of their tribe quite recently for murdering a white man. [Ansell, in 1888]⁸⁵

In 1898 Ma'anaima became headmaster of Kwato school, teaching scripture, writing, geography and singing. Evidently he was a better school teacher than many Polynesians in eastern New Guinea, who Europeans thought were 'as a rule, miserable schoolmasters'.⁸⁶ His carpentering and musical abilities seem to have been exceptional, MacGregor ordering 100 of his trade boxes and 100 of his wife's sewn police uniforms.⁸⁷ Twelve of his 54 pupils formed the choir at the church in Samarai. Le Hunte said that 'Maanaima appears to be an excellent man for the work, instructing his scholars well, and joining heartily in their games, of which cricket is the chief.'⁸⁸ Probably official approval was increased by Ma'anaima's indoctrination of his pupils in the Native Ordinances promulgated during MacGregor's regime.

Because of his formidable physique as well as his uncompromising posture towards Papuan tradition, Ma'anaima was sent to Maivara, the most intransigent village in Milne Bay. It was Maivara which had once nearly cost Abel and Walker their lives, where more than one European had been killed, and where the Tokeriu cult had flourished.⁸⁹ Ma'anaima once had confessed that it was 'extremely difficult to live all alone... in the midst of strangers who look very fierce'; but among the Maivarans, who looked 'like wild beasts' it was even more irksome. The Maivara headman's name was not recorded, but according to Ma'anaima he was 'like a demon; he delights in every evil, and wicked thing' and 'the ringleader in everything that is evil, and in heathen dances'.⁹⁰

85 C.W. Abel, *op. cit.*, 170. Filimoni, the Samoan at Higebai, was also threatened. C.W. Abel, Notes, 1929. Abel wrote that at Bou he and Ma'anaima 'were young and inexperienced, and zeal rather than reason dictated sometimes'. C.W. Abel, Note July 1929, KA.

86 W.G. Lawes to R.W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 18 August 1886, PL.

87 Kwato, *AR* 1898, PR.

88 BNG *AR* 1898-9, 35.

89 C.W. Abel, *op. cit.*, 104; C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 1 March 1901, PL.

90 *MC*, January 1893, 17. See G. Brown, *Polynesians...*, 42.

Ma'anaima's account of his struggle with traditions at Maivara epitomised the Samoan approach to Melanesians under Evangelical inspiration. His preparedness to suffer for his convictions fitted easily into the heroic missionary mould: 'my life I have given to the care of Jesus', he wrote; 'If I live I live for Christ, if I die I wish to die for him.' Dancing, as usual, commanded most attention:

I tried to forbid these evil practices, but I was unsuccessful. One day they grasped their weapons to injure me, but their hands were restrained from above. The demon stood before me with an axe in his hand and said 'We do not wish to lotu [convert]; we desire to imitate the European traders whose habits no one seems to forbid. 91

However, the scene closed with the headman's son imploring Ma'anaima to let him be his son, and the rebellious faction piously renouncing their dances. The Samoan then preached a sermon on 'forgiveness', a suitable confession being made at its conclusion by the refractory 'demon':

He told the people that he intended to cast away all his evil practices, and give himself to the religion of Jesus. He also addressed all the people of his end of the village and told them to cease their evil contentions and give themselves to the lotu... My heart burst forth with prayer and praise to God. 92

The Evangelical traditions in British Dissent had been preserved during Ma'anaima's training at Malua. Both Marriott and Newell had served their apprenticeships under such pioneers as George Pratt, George Turner and Thomas Powell;⁹³ and before the turn of the century Malua was ruled by septuagenarians. Methods and ideas introduced by men such as Ma'anaima into New Guinea were mirror-images of Evangelical piety of earlier times. Suppression of dancing, destruction of carving, and production of calico-clad converts in New Guinea echoed the earliest Pacific missionary methods.⁹⁴ Vernacular accounts of Ma'anaima's encounters show at first hand how Papuans regarded his

91 MC, January 1893, 17.

92 Ibid.

93 N. Goodall, A History..., 357.

94 For a study of Samoan psychology and intellect, see W.E.H. Stanner, The South Seas..., 315.

attempt at the overthrow of sorcery. At Wagawaga

One man said, 'You are the teacher that used to be at Bou who interfered with the Haitabu.'... 'Well, said Maa: I was the teacher who touched the 'Haitabu' did it hurt me? did it give me a swollen leg?' 'A swollen leg!' said one of the men. 'a swollen leg! a swollen body, you're swollen all over.' Maa is usually a little sensitive about his size but he [replied]... 'It is ten years since I threw the "Haitabu" into the sea and I am still alive and working hard for God, tell me where are the men who told me at Bou that my action would kill me. Where are they? Come, you tell me? Where is Haki, and Solu? Where is Nanaka, and Pusuri? Alas! They are all dead years ago, but I, who was to die am here to bring you the message I took to them.

'They followed me down to the beach' [said Ma'anaima] and wished me kindly goodbye, and called out and said, "Come and see us again when the new teacher is sent from Kwato: you are our friend." 95

As an iconoclast, a friend of Christians and hammer of sorcerers, Ma'anaima represented well the Samoan missionary cause. As a European ally, moreover, he was much less troublesome than many of his compatriots. Abel described him as 'very docile';⁹⁶ the District Committee recorded that Ma'anaima had 'proved himself in every way worthy of the trust placed in him by Mr Abel.'⁹⁷ W.J.V. Saville said it was 'a pleasure to talk with the intelligent and humble Samoan',⁹⁸ an epithet that reads oddly among other descriptions. But Ma'anaima possessed a sense of humour and an agile diplomacy that many of his Island colleagues lacked: in short, he knew how to handle a European.

Ma'anaima was a family man with two wives buried in Papua and one, Safua, who survived him. During his furloughs in Samoa he preached forcefully about Samoa's mission to the Papuans, and in 1905 his sermons resulted in a revival of interest in Melanesia, no fewer than thirteen men volunteering for the Mission in New Guinea.⁹⁹ At home in Kwato, his seven children presented a picture of domestic tranquillity which Abel must have found reminiscent of his own childhood in Bloomsbury:

95 C.W. Abel, Diary, 11 February 1906, KA.

96 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Kwato, 26 January 1897, KA.

97 SDC Minutes, 21 December 1910, Apia.

98 W.J.V. Saville, Kwato AR 1901-2, PR.

99 C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 2 September 1905, PL.

After prayers their games are brought out, and, squatting about the large room in little groups, some play at marbles, some grind tunes out of an organette I bought some time ago, some play bagatelle... or I teach them a hymn, or perform a clumsy conjuring trick, much to their delight. 100

Here were Papuan, Rarotongan and Samoan children engaged in mutual amusements; and here, in the evening, the cultivated elegance of the faifeau Samoa shone forth in conversation and music. Ma'anaima's first wife was the mistress of three languages and a good calligraphist. He himself could sing, preside at a feast, and hunt with a fowling piece. Occasionally teacher and wife amused Papuan audiences by masquerading in leaves; sometimes the pair danced beneath the moon. The Polynesian dance and feast was one of the cultural legacies of the fa'asamoa in eastern New Guinea.

A very great deal of the Samoan folk traditions of coastal Papuans relate to physical violence. Apart from the Mamba disasters, violence of different types was used more extensively by Samoans than any other immigrant group in British New Guinea.¹⁰¹ The explanation for the attainment of physical dominance lay partly in familiar methods of correction in Samoa; partly through the absence of chiefs in Papua; and partly in the extreme respect which Samoans, like many foreigners, discovered Papuans paid to the use of superior power. To destroy symbols of animism or check tendencies towards rebellion, the Polynesians resorted to methods which entailed personal mastery over Melanesians.¹⁰² Samoans soon realized that Papua would not quickly produce a landslide of conversions as had their own country. J.W. Soloi wrote:

100 C.W. Abel to J.Hills, Kwato, 4 December 1910, PL.

101 'The Samoans cannot at first understand a country where the children please themselves whether they obey or not, and where the word of the Teacher carries little weight in the village.' Moru District AR 1916, PR. B. Danks concurred with Samoan methods: 'Once successfully resisted', he wrote, 'you may as well leave, for your influence would be gone.' B. Danks to E. Shackell, Sydney, 19 January 1910, MOM 230.

102 However, instances of violence seldom come from the Samoan stations in Milne Bay. One exception was a widely circulated complaint by Wagawaga villagers in 1910 that their children had been punished severely by the faifeau Tuata at Duabo. C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 21 November 1910, PL.

I do believe that the work in Papua is a thousand times more difficult than the work in Samoa. The make up in morals and abilities, customs and background of the Papuan people are far different from that of the Samoans. 103

There is, however, no evidence to support the argument that the Samoan missionaries were of the tagata nu'u or lowest class and that their iconoclasm was a vicarious revolt against the pre-Christian matai or oppression in their own society.¹⁰⁴

As peacemakers, Samoans very quickly showed to European supervisors their utility by intervening in tribal fights with fists, canes and sticks.¹⁰⁵ The muscular agility of Samoans, who were, for heavily built men, surprisingly fleet-footed, enabled them to overwhelm squabbling Melanesians rapidly. Naturally, tales of their prowess circulated widely in the villages. Europeans were directly responsible for much of the intellectual dialectic behind Samoan militancy, and they encouraged Samoans in the belief that they were harbingers of civilization. When J.W. Lindt wrote in 1886 that the 'Word of God is gradually dispelling the darkness of barbarism and cannibalism', and described Melanesian ceremonial as 'idolatry',¹⁰⁶ he was providing unwitting endorsement of the iconoclastic vandalism that characterised much Polynesian missionary activity.

At first violence was symptomatic of the precarious political relations which existed between Papuan and foreigner. J.H. Holmes wrote of the 'tidal wave' of Papuans who were 'so wild, reckless and indifferent to discipline' that they threatened to sweep restraint before them.¹⁰⁷ As late as 1914, the Samoan Fitui at Aird Hill was threatened with death, and 10,000 arrows and hundreds of bows were found in the course of manufacture for an attack on Fitui's station.¹⁰⁸

103 J.W. Soloi to S.G.F. Phillips, Fife Bay, 21 August 1954, LMS Archives Apia.

104 V.G. Kiernan, The Lords of Human Kind, 258. Samoan teachers told Dauncey that they could produce more results in three month's work in Samoa than in three years in the Kabadi District. H.M. Dauncey to R.W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 8 February 1892, PL.

105 P. Chatterton, Interview, Port Moresby, 2 February 1971.

106 J.W. Lindt, Picturesque New Guinea..., 30.

107 J.H. Holmes, Namau Report 1910, PR. B.T. Butcher to H.C. Cardew, Aird Hill, 9 May 1914, Metoreia records.

108 H.C. Cardew to B.T. Butcher, Kikori, 11 May 1914, Metoreia records.

But in areas where Melanesians were less turbulent, a display of aggression by Samoans was used simply to expedite obedience. The recollections of Kiwais near the Fly River are of vivid tempests of abuse and anger inflicted by Samoans on congregations, especially when supplies of food dwindled.

The Samoans used to beat the table, saying 'Why don't you believe in God?' or 'Why don't you bring me food? I leave my country far away, I come to Papua to bring you good news about God, but you bring me no food.' The Samoan man was getting cross now. Afterwards the head man talked hard to the people and made them give him food. 109

With Samoan authority over Papuans established, orders from the fale were quickly executed. When each villager was told to collect 100 crabs for the church collection, according to witnesses, 'if anyone hadn't got the mark, he was in trouble'. Defiance was checked by force:

If a village man disagree, Samoan man... goes straight to his house and hit him, pull him out of his house and bang him. Sometimes he only talk, sometimes he hit him... All the people were afraid of him and whatever words he say the people do it quickly. 110

The Polynesian supremacy aroused strong disapproval in visitors like J.S. James (Julian Thomas) who predicted that 'New Guinea will be swamped by Samoan teachers, whose doings will in the end be a source of great trouble to the white missionaries.'¹¹¹ Brown regarded a Samoan action in striking a Massim canoe with an axe as 'most shocking'.¹¹² To control Samoans in the L.M.S. district a 'strong and vigorous' missionary, A.E. Hunt, was brought to Port Moresby from Upolu in 1895.¹¹³

109 D. Wainetti, Interview, Daru, 17 February 1971. The Calvinist ethics instilled at Malua were exhibited in sermons like Tuka's at Orokolo: 'But God does not forget, neither does He allow his fire to go out he will keep the oven hot for unbelievers.' J.H. Holmes, Diary, 13 January 1898, PJ.

110 Lae Vagi and Vele Rawali, Interview, Kapakapa, 21 February 1971.

111 Australasian, 31 May 1884, 1. See also J. Thomas, Cannibals and Convicts..., 399.

112 G. Brown to W.E. Bromilow, Sydney, 10 March 1896, MOM 44. 'It meant far more than the mere destruction of the canoe. To a Samoan it meant driving the axe through the man who had offended...'. Ibid.

113 SDC Minutes, 2 December 1901.

Formerly lavish in praise of Samoan peacemakers, Protestants became alarmed at the manner in which the faifeau imposed conformity.¹¹⁴ At Keabada, the two native dancers were imprisoned by the teacher for nine weeks for refusing to stop dancing.¹¹⁵ At Kerepunu, two teachers were sentenced to four and six months' gaol for violence towards Papuans.¹¹⁶ Shotguns were brought out as a prompt method of inducing obedience. A boy was shot by a Samoan for singing on a Sunday; the boy later recovered after nursing by his assailant.¹¹⁷ At Maipua the faifeau Latoro, seeing Papuans fishing on the Sabbath, discharged his shotgun with the subsequent remark, 'Well, they had no right to go fishing on Sunday - besides it was only no 5 shot.'¹¹⁸ Both L.M.S. and Methodist supervisors reported the use of shotguns by Samoans, and there was frequent reference to Polynesian interference in dancing.¹¹⁹ The remedy in Papua as in Samoa was to confiscate rifles: when Governor Solf decreed that firearms must be surrendered by January 1901, 1500 rifles were turned in;¹²⁰ but in Papua rifles were sometimes restored to Samoans needing them for game-hunting.¹²¹

In their approach to Melanesian custom the Samoans displayed a literal interpretation of the decalogue and a reverence for the fa'asamoa. Each led to rigid patterns of behaviour when confronted with the inexplicable and unfamiliar. The first commandment ruled out compromise with graven images; so the Samoans, steeped in biblical injunction, conducted violence against property with conviction. 'We weep for the religion of God, we are like Noah's dove', wrote Alesana

114 The Samoans made an issue of 'right conduct'. The missionaries observed that many Samoans considered 'behaviour... the way to salvation'. R.P. Gilson, op. cit., 104-5.

115 BNG AR 1886, II, 1; ibid., 1898-9, 67.

116 A. Pearse to R.W. Thompson, Kerepunu, 11 June 1906, PL.

117 J.H.P. Murray, Diary, 3 February 1906, ML.

118 Ibid.

119 See BNG AR 1898-9, xiii; 1899-1900, xii; 1898-9, 67; 1900-01, xxviii; 1898-9, 67. Jacobo, Ono's Rarotongan companion in eastern New Guinea, was dismissed from Teste Island for violence in 1891. F.W. Walker to R.W. Thompson, 20 October 1891, PL. The Tongan Silivenusi was reprimanded in 1893 for forcing Alhoka natives to build a church at gunpoint. Panaeiti QM, 24 June 1893, SA.

120 J.A. Moses, op. cit., 46.

121 RMED PR 20 January 1910, CAO/CRS/G91 item 623.

on Kiriwina, 'Oh! our Fathers, our Elders, you who are safe within the Ark, will you not help us?'¹²² The first action of the Samoans was not to march to the eravo or burn carvings: usually, they waited some time to test public opinion before demolishing the symbols of paganism. In many places, however, there was a confrontation between Samoan and sorcerer. According to a Samoan source,

The chief said anyone who burns this image will die. Mika on Sunday morning prayed with his wife in the house; put on his clothes; and hit the image with an axe. The chief came out with a stick. Mika said, 'You old sinner; there is only one God.' Afterwards the old man lost power. 123

Some Samoans cut down the eravo saying, 'If your god is stronger than mine, let him kill me.'¹²⁴ Others entered dwellings and threw out magic stones, carvings and prized objects. Some escaped in a storm of arrows; one involved government officials in hostilities against Kiwai villagers.¹²⁵ Art was assailed not for aesthetic or cultural motives, though these may also have been operative, but because it was believed to embody evil, or to be an offence in the eyes of God.¹²⁶

122 AMMR, 6 December 1895, 9. Malua-taught Samoans tended to a fine display of literary purity and Biblical references, in addition to the traditional excellence of Samoan orators or tuafales. Abel referred to Ma'anaima's addresses at Killerton as 'inspirational'. C.W. Abel, LD, 13 June 1906, KA.

123 T. Afatoa, Interview, Saroa, 16 February 1971. In another incident, 'Afatoa picked up a stick and smacked everybody, broke all the drums. The men came to kill Afatoa. He said, "You are very silly: we have come because we love you." Everybody came to church. Afatoa said "This won't come to the government, because I am your father and you are my children. This is the finish."' Ibid.

124 T. Afatoa, Interview, Saroa, 16 February 1971.

125 C.A.W. Monckton, Some Experiences..., 151-2. Monckton recorded that a Samoan teacher went up the Fly River to a village, probably Baramura, to 'tear down the god' and had escaped from angry villagers. He complained to an officer who burnt down the village dubu leaving about 500 people homeless. According to Monckton, the people were 'as venomous as a lot of scorched snakes'; and in attempting to make restitution, Le Hunte narrowly escaped injury. Ibid.; BNG AR 1899-1900, xii; C.S. Robinson, Diary, 7 February 1904, PNGA.

126 W.N. Gunson, op. cit., 162.

McFarlane's first church conference on Murray Island in 1879 had begun with a 'ceremony of burning the idols'.¹²⁷ Thirty years later, confronted with the rich ceremonial life of Moru in the Gulf, the Samoan teacher Ieremia wrote:

The people of Moru worship this Idol. Those who make offering to Tiparu are the high chiefs of the present time... They are really afraid of this Idol because the Pukari carvers make strange noises and frighten the people... 128

Then the bull-roarer of the ceremonial 'Idol' was heard; and Ieremia kept three boys in his house to defy the sorcerers:

Then we heard a very ugly sound. They [the sorcerers] faced our house and our front lawn and they all came together. But I stood up quickly and held the hands of the three boys and we all walked outside. I started yelling out to them. 'Look here you liars, no fool will die because of you. Are these boys dead now?' But they answered back, 'No, because they are your sons.' And I yelled out again, 'I pity you fools because you have deceived yourselves but not others, and that is the main reason for all this trickery.'¹²⁹

As the Samoan reflected on the initial stages of the conversion of Papuans, one thought alone troubled him. Had he been remiss in the burning of idols? He had burnt many, no doubt, but he might have burnt more. Only in Milne Bay is there no evidence of interference with art forms. The highly decorated canoes and platforms of the Massim apparently did not evoke Samoan condemnation.

Dancing usually provoked censure. Brown observed that Samoan night dances had been 'very obscene at certain stages', performers removing their genital coverings early in the morning.¹³⁰ No wonder Alesana at Kiriwina fiercely denounced Trobriand dancing.¹³¹ A.C. Haddon,

127 The teachers' minute read:

We have great pleasure in being able to inform the Directors that the natives of this [Murray] Island have collected all their idols... and handed them over to the teacher Josaia... Resolved, that some be picked out and sent to the Directors for the Mission Museum and that the rest be burnt in the presence of the Murray Islanders....

S. McFarlane to W. Mullens, Murray Island, 31 January 1879, PR.

128 SS, September 1913, 139.

129 Ibid.

130 G. Brown, Polynesians..., 347.

131 See p. 81.

enquiring about dancing in the Torres Strait missions of the Samoans, wrote that, according to their custom, the South Sea teachers put a stop to all native dancing in the Torres Straits.

Finau often preached loudly against native dancing, and consigned those who attempted a little of it to hell where, he informed them they would have kerosene poured over them... 132

The Old Testament concepts used by Samoans - 'worship the idol', 'make offering' - reveal the framework in which their behaviour was formed. Many of their European superintendents had embraced more liberal theology and were questioning the vigour with which the nineteenth century Evangelical tradition was applied in New Guinea. J.H. Holmes wrote in 1902 at Orokololo:

My work, during the past few months, has been chiefly magisterial and, unfortunately, the S.S. men are oftener in the wrong than the N.G. teachers ... Tuka... has succeeded in wrecking, almost entirely, our work at Orokololo, but I do not blame Tuka and his countrymen nearly as much as I do our own countrymen, the early missionaries to the South Seas, who I venture to say, were Christian bigots and religious despots of no mean order. It is a mystery to me that the natives do not shoot our South Seas men and thus rid themselves of such despots. 133

Disenchantment with Samoans became a recurrent theme in European writing in New Guinea. Despair at their limitations replaced glowing descriptions of their qualities. At the turn of the century, Pearse at Kerepunu was calling his teachers 'bad tempered men, who oppress the natives'.¹³⁴ Holland in Kiriwina said the Samoans were

132 A.C. Haddon, Head-Hunters..., 35, 128. Polynesians were accustomed to full-throated preachers.

133 J.H. Holmes to R.W. Thompson, Urika, 18 August 1903, PL. Thompson however did not think the early European missionaries were to blame: '[The Samoans'] tendency, even in the South Seas, is to become spiritual chiefs... in Samoa... pastors have become a new order of chiefs, practically ruling the villages. That tendency is sure to be still more strikingly... developed when they are working... among barbarous chiefs.' R.W. Thompson to J.H. Holmes, London, 7 October 1904, WOL.

134 A. Pearse to R.W. Thompson, Kerepunu, 11 June 1906, PL. W.E. Goward of the Gilbert Islands relieved his feelings in this protest: 'No [Samoan] dare be true to that which is best in him. He is a slave of faa-Samoa, one of a clique. Hard work is a degradation. Eating speechifying, sleeping, magnifying office and attending functions - these are placed first. Quoted in N. Goodall, A History..., 379.

'in disgrace with the Kiriwinans';¹³⁵ Fellman at Raluana was writing that the Samoans 'do lord it over the poor natives';¹³⁶ and Danks in Sydney was condemning the 'pride of the Samoans'.¹³⁷ Authoritarianism was nearly always the basis of European criticism:

For a long time [wrote Pearse] I have warned them, because of their violent tempers... Formerly I had a fine lot of Teachers, intelligent, earnest, with self-restraint... But now, the Teachers are different, who would lord it over the people. 138

By 1910 English missionaries were openly questioning whether the advantages of Samoan teachers were not outweighed by their defects.

But Samoan teachers had their own complaints. They had come to New Guinea during a period of increasing ministerial prestige at home; and in New Guinea they had found they were not honoured. In 1875 the Fono tele of pastors had been instituted in Samoa as a consultative body; in 1906 the Au Toeaina or Elders' Council was created with 45 members, most of whom were elected from the 150 ruling pastors.¹³⁹ A Deputation in 1898 found that Samoan pastors in Upolu '[did] not recognize the difference' between their own position and that of the English missionaries.¹⁴⁰ On the Papuan mission field, however, the faifeau's status was relatively low. They were not

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- 135 G.R. Holland to A.J. Small, Kiriwina, 17 July 1911. At a Kiriwina teachers' meeting Holland was asked to ensure that no more Samoans were appointed to Kiriwina. G.R. Holland to B. Danks, Kiriwina, 9 June 1911, MOM 119.
- 136 H. Fellmann to B. Danks, Raluana, 29 July 1905, MOM 52.
- 137 B. Danks to W. Muller, Sydney, 7 August 1911, MOM 58. Samoan missionary relations with Fijians in New Guinea appear to have been unsatisfactory. At the farewell Methodist meeting in Sydney in 1891, after the Fijians had addressed the meeting, the head Samoan faifeau said, 'We have a custom in Samoa that the best-looking man speaks last. I am that man, and I now speak.' N.Z. Methodist, 6 June 1891. For a brief study of Samoan-Fijian encounters, see p. 133.
- 138 A. Pearse to R.W. Thompson, Kerepunu, 11 June 1906, PL.
- 139 N. Goodall, A History..., 366-8.
- 140 R. Steel, A.W. Murray..., 157-8.

autonomous: they were, in Thompson's words, only 'the eyes and hands and ear and mouth of the European missionary'.¹⁴¹ Not only was there no Samoan voice on the governing District Committee, but the salary of £23 compared badly with the £32 of pastors in Samoa.¹⁴² Furlough was granted only once each ten years. They chafed beneath the yoke of European supervision and began trading to supplement their incomes in defiance of regulations. They organized competitive Mei meetings to enhance status.¹⁴³ A few asked for ministerial ordination; others attempted to gain representation on the Methodist Synod and on the L.M.S. District Committee.¹⁴⁴ Mindful of their recent crisis with the Samoan missionaries in the Ellice Islands, the L.M.S. Committee in Samoa urged the New Guinea brethren to appoint a Samoan-speaking missionary.¹⁴⁵ By 1903 the situation in New Guinea was causing 'very grave apprehension' among English missionaries in Samoa.¹⁴⁶ Lenwood, whose perception of missionary problems was usually acute, said that if he were a Samoan 'the impulse would be almost irresistible to make

141 R.W. Thompson to J.H. Holmes, London, 6 January 1899, WOL.

142 H.M. Dauncey to R.W. Thompson, Delena, 9 December 1911, PL.

143 In the Torres Straits, pastors' collections coincided with the harvest festivals, and 'the Samoans seized this opportunity to solicit contributions...' by encouraging competition between different congregations. Similar collections were organized in eastern New Guinea. J.W. Bleakley, The Aborigines..., 257.

144 Samoa District Synod, Minutes 1895, SMA. District Committee regulations included: furlough after 10 years for Samoan pastors (12/92); no trading, barter, or sales (13/94, 36/97); not to communicate other than with the secretary of the D.C. They might be invited on special occasions 'to attend before the Committee' (1/99). The Samoan D.C. could supplement allowances only after Papua D.C. had consented (13/90, 41/07).

145 A similar appeal for a Samoan-speaking missionary had been made in 1902. SDC, 16 May 1902, XX. The Ellice Island crisis began with a quarrel between Pastor Abela and the Reverend W.E. Goward in 1902. The Samoan pastors attempted to remove Goward from the Gilbert Islands and, when this was ruled out by their European colleagues, attempted to withdraw Samoan pastors from Goward's district. SDC, 1 August 1902, II, 18 September 1902, 23 January 1903. The SDC believed that the conflict had 'had the effect of increasingly prejudicing the English Missionaries in New Guinea against our Samoan brethren there... a change has already taken place...'. SDC, 12 May 1903, XIII.

146 Ibid. In 1921 the Samoan Methodist church recommended a Samoan circuit in New Guinea. Dobu QM, 15 September 1921, SA.

quite clear that if I were not an equal with the white man, I was at least much superior to the Papuan'. He invited L.M.S. missionaries to examine their own responsibility for racial barriers on the mission field:

We could not shut our eyes to a certain superiority, not to say disparagement, in the attitude of the S.S. men towards their Papuan colleagues, and which naturally brought resentment on the Papuan side... If the European can show that for him race does not exist, that with the Papuans... he emphasises his equality... he can remove the impulse to self-assertion from South Sea minds and go a long way to bridge over the gulf which separates the South Sea Teacher from the Papuan... 147

Much of the tension was caused by the domineering behaviour of missionaries such as Abel, who, when he arrived, was a comparatively young man incapable of speaking Samoan. Within two years Abel was asking Thompson to relieve him of his faifeau, for they were 'men who cannot be trusted to carry out my instructions'.¹⁴⁸ Reckless in interpreting his superiors' instructions, Abel expected absolute obedience from his subordinates. So continual was Abel's bickering with his teachers that the transfer of Hunt from Samoa to Port Moresby was largely due to discontent at the eastern end of New Guinea.¹⁴⁹ Abel approved heartily of Ma'anaima, Mataesi, Filimoni and Peni;¹⁵⁰ he commended Vaiea, the widow of Maene - 'a most excellent woman';¹⁵¹

147 LMS, Deputation Report, 1916, 41.

148 Kwato, AR 1894, PR. In 1895 one of Abel's Samoan teachers suffered mental instability and in Pearse's words committed 'gross sin'. A. Pearse to R.W. Thompson, Kerepunu, 23 August 1895, PL. In 1903 the Samoan teacher at Rabi sexually assaulted a Papuan woman. RMED PR 1 January 1903.

149 A. Pearse to R.W. Thompson, Kerepunu, 17 July 1893, PL; W.G. Lawes to R.W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 6 December 1894, PL.

150 Mataesi was 'one of the strongest Samoans who ever came to New Guinea'. After his death in 1899 Killerton was occupied by Peniata, an Ellice Islander who did not preach 'above a whisper'. C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 2 September 1905, PL. Abel, however, held Peni, who occupied Koeabule for twelve years in high esteem. Kwato report 1911, PR.

151 C.W. Abel to J.W. Hills, Kwato, 4 December 1910, LMS Archives Apia.

but he disapproved cordially of twice as many others.¹⁵² In 1905 Papuans complained to Abel at Rabe that the Samoan '[held] them in contempt'.¹⁵³ If the L.M.S. were to rid him of the Samoans, he wrote, he was ready to try the interesting experiment of making his Mission 'almost entirely' a Papuan taught one.¹⁵⁴

Samoan-European missionary conflict marked an important epoch in the development of race relations in the Pacific. It revealed the strand of triumphalism and lack of elasticity running through much religious thinking. If Samoans were unbending, they were no more so than Abel. The Kwato reports indicate a growing intransigence by English leadership which was placated only by Samoan apology,¹⁵⁵ and a Polynesian conceit which was preserved only by reducing contact with Europeans to a minimum. In 1892 they were 'all good men';¹⁵⁶ in 1895 they were childish, disobedient and 'in disgrace';¹⁵⁷ in 1901 they were obdurate;¹⁵⁸ and by 1906 he had conceived a horror of employing them.¹⁵⁹ The last Samoan, Peniata, was described in 1917 as 'a man I shall be very glad to dispense with'.¹⁶⁰ In retrospect Abel looked to Samoans as a scourge whose exit he regarded with relief.

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- 152 A Samoan teacher at Rabi was convicted of adultery with a Papuan married woman in 1903. RMED PR, 1 January 1903, CAO/CRS/G9. Abel condemned Sioni and Maria at Kilihoa for laziness, and Saville criticized Solomona and his wife for 'ungovernable tempers'. C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Koeabule, 30 August 1912, KA; W.J.V. Saville to J.H. Hills, John Williams, 9 April 1910. LMS Archives, Apia. Solomona however wrote a letter of complaint to Governor W. Solf against Abel, for which he was severely censured by the District Committee. SDC, 21 December 1910, PMB.
- 153 C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 2 September 1905, PL.
- 154 C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 25 July 1892, PL.
- 155 C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 30 October 1895, PL.
- 156 Kwato AR, 1 January 1892, PR; C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 13 July 1893, PL.
- 157 B. Abel to M. Parkin, Kwato, 11 January 1895; MC, 21 January 1895.
- 158 C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 1 March 1901, PL.
- 159 In 1913 Abel refused to allow the teacher Peni to land when the John Williams berthed at Kwato. PDC Minute 66, 1913, PR.
- 160 C.W. Abel to Secretary S.D.C., Kwato, 4 April 1917. LMS Archives Apia.

Much of his subsequent missionary strategy was based on a determination to avoid a Pacific Island agency resembling that of Samoa in any detail.¹⁶¹

Samoans failed to fulfil missionary expectations. Because they venerated chiefly power, emphasized food exchange and literacy at the expense of industry,¹⁶² and often used violence instead of persuasion, they were condemned. In upholding a presiding rather than active role, they were asserting traditional Samoan notions which Christian missionaries had failed to dislodge in a previous generation. The Samoan missions, which Abel characterised as 'dead stations',¹⁶³ were those in which the fa'asamoa had triumphed. Possibly the most striking measure of the Samoan performance in eastern Papua was its legacy of churches. Where churches in Samoa surpassed all others in size and grandeur, and where the pastor's house reflected the quality of his leadership, only two crude coral churches at Bou and Killerton remain to commemorate the Samoan presence in Milne Bay between 1890 and 1917.

Invariably, however, Papuan villagers regarded Samoan missionaries as 'good men'. Since the Melanesian ethic rested heavily on material generosity, it may be guessed that Samoans were lavish in their distribution of goods. In Samoa a good man - o le tagata lelei - was, as in Melanesia, one who was liberal; a bad man - o le tagata leaga - was one who was not generous and not a chief.¹⁶⁴ In this the fa'asamoa coincided fairly neatly with Melanesian expectations: what the teacher lost in possessions he gained in prestige. The Samoans introduced mango, citrus fruit, yams and

161 Abel condemned the 'Samoan blight' in Milne Bay, and referred vulgarly to 'fat, lazy germ-distributing friends' and 'sloppy-looking Samoans... with their children dressed like barrel-organ monkeys'. C.W. Abel, Diary, 6 May 1904, LD, 3 July 1924, 1 March 1930. He compared Samoan mission stations to 'orange trees which have suffered from bark fungus'. LD, 1 January 1928, KA. He concluded: 'Poor beggars, for want of a fair deal they haven't a strong point. Perhaps the Lord will ask us to go there someday and give them a chance.' C.W. Abel to P.D. Abel, New York, 8 September 1923, LD, 5 May 1925.

162 See R.P. Gilson, op. cit., 95.

163 C.W. Abel, LD, 1 January 1928, KA.

164 G. Brown, Polynesians..., 260.

coconut - Samoan coconuts so lightly encased that Papuans could husk them with the hands - and they brought new ways of preparing food.¹⁶⁵ Papuans learnt to bake pork in earth ovens. They acquired a taste for flour and bread. They could perform new technical innovations: new house designs, garden implements such as the iron spade and fork, and methods of weaving pleasing to the eye and suitable for personal adornment. Papuans had to endure Samoan authoritarianism, but there were many delectable compensations, and 'good men' the Samoans were accounted because of them.

165 In eastern Papua several foodstuffs are named 'banana Samoa', 'breadfruit Samoa', and 'coconut Samoa'. Julian Thomas similarly noted that at Boera a sweet potato was named after Piri, the Rarotongan missionary who introduced it. J. Thomas, Cannibals..., 398.

CHAPTER IV

Fijian 'vakavuvuli'

I

FIJIAN missionary activity owed its beginning to Methodist strategy. George Brown, the most comprehensive of Pacific missionary patrons, was convinced that the people of the South Pacific descended from a common ancestry; they were 'all varying forms of one great Oceanic or Polynesian race'.¹ The broad scope of his approach to Pacific problems was of practical expansionism informed by an ethnologist's outlook. He saw Fijians, Samoans and Tongans moving west as Christian colonisers among peoples of similar customs and outlook. The Fijian communities in New Britain (1875) British New Guinea (1891) and the Solomon Islands (1902) were largely due to Brown's design.

The most influential Fijian missionaries in British New Guinea were the sons of converts who had been baptized in infancy. Perhaps the most celebrated of the early vakavuvuli, Ponipate Vula, was born in 1869 at Nabukelevu, Kadavu, the son of a Malakai Vula, a Fijian Wesleyan minister. As qase-ni-vuli (local preacher) for 18 years at Rewa, then tutor at the theological institute at Navuloa, and afterwards the missionary in New Guinea (1902-1915), Vula spent his life in the church.² His contemporaries in the field, such as Poate Ratu (1891-1901), and Ratu Isei Vueti of Bau (1899-1912),³ were also baptized Methodists whose chiefly rank showed that missionary fervour was not confined to those of humble origins. Their communal exposure to Christianity had been brief but intense. Pilato Silimiratu of Nalawa, Viti Levu, began his autobiography with the words, 'Our people had lotu'd (abandoned heathenism) before my time, so I know nothing of the old days, excepting what I used to hear from the

1 George Brown, Polynesians..., 20; George Brown..., 102; The Pacific, East and West, 426, 472.

2 NG Synod Minutes 1905, SA; A.J. Small to W.E. Bromilow, Bau, 7 April 1902, FDC.

3 Ratu Isei Vueti volunteered in 1901. He served at Bwaidoga (1901-3), Dobu (1903-5) and Panaeiti (1905-12). He was appointed Catechist in 1907. ATV, June 1912.

elders... but the cannibal ovens were scarcely cold when I was born.'⁴
The majority of pioneer Fijians in New Guinea and their wives, like their European colleagues, came of devout Methodist stock.

A second group volunteered as missionaries ostensibly as a result of preaching, or because of occurrences they saw as miraculous. Livinai Vuetia of Ba, for example, came to New Guinea in fulfilment of a promise made during a shipwreck. Spending a day and a night in the water after his canoe overturned, Vuetia was picked up by a passing ship and, in response to his undertaking to do religious work if saved, enrolled as a theological student.⁵ Joape Narara appears to have been converted by 'a remarkable deliverance from what appeared to be certain death in the bush during a fierce storm and flood'.⁶ Epieli Bote had been a crony of beachcombers and had 'copied all their vices until no employer could tolerate him': according to his own testimony, he had been converted by a Fijian minister.⁷

Brown was an unashamed missionary imperialist who believed that Britain had a calling to protect Islanders from exploitation⁸ and British missionaries a duty to supervise the civilizing of Melanesians. Nineteenth century Methodists regarded their original

4 L. Fison, ed., Pilato..., XI. Silimiratu was converted by a Fijian missionary, Akuila, becoming a class-leader, local preacher at Viwa, and teacher. He then went to Navuloa institution in about 1888 and volunteered for New Guinea in 1891.

5 Before his escape at sea, Vuetia had been a policeman. G.R. Holland, quoted in NG District Synod Report, 1911, MOM 172.

6 NG District Synod Report 1903, MOM 175.

7 NG District Synod Report 1916, SA. Bote was captain of the vessels Dove and Saragigi and a local preacher on trial. M.K. Gilmour to A.J. Small, Ubuia, 15 November 1915, FDC. For Fijian missionary autobiographies, see W.T. Lagi, 'Autobiography', Epworth House files, Suva; L. Fison, ed., Pilato....

8 G. Brown, George Brown..., 69ff; see also W.N. Gunson, 'Missionaries and British Expansion...', in JRH, vol. 3 no. 4, December 1965, 308. A Tongan, Joni Kuli, 'a man of tremendous energy and strength of will' accompanied the pioneer party to British New Guinea. Although Tongans were regarded by the Methodist Church as 'most excellent missionaries', few were sent to Papua. The predominant number went to the Solomon Islands, which after 1912 was regarded as the special field of the Tongan Church. See B. Danks to J. Moulton, Sydney, 25 July 1905, MOM 52; AMMR, 5 September 1895.

fields in the eastern Pacific as bases for future conquests.⁹ The idea of a multi-racial missionary enterprise came about through the understanding that Europeans would govern and instruct while Islanders would act as racial middlemen, cultural links between Britons and Melanesians.¹⁰ Hence, Methodists tended to look for physical toughness and adaptability in their Island volunteers rather than mental sophistication.¹¹ Brown boasted that not a Fijian was sent out to the mission field who would not 'pull an oar, sail a boat across a stormy sea, swim like a fish, cultivate a garden, wash his own clothes, build a house, light a fire without matches, cook without a pot, write a sermon or teach a school'.¹²

The emphasis on physical vigour was partly a legacy from the warrior idiom with which missionary themes were imbued. Many Protestant missionaries in the Pacific were sons or grandsons of men who had served in the British army.¹³ Fijian converts, who were also the sons of warriors, found their imagery stimulating. They addressed their audiences with high excitement. They suggested that just as Fiji's energy had been spent on fighting, so it could now be turned to the service of humanity:

I have rested long enough [wrote Simioni Momoivalu], now the time has come for me to enter the gate of our enemy in New Guinea. I'll rise up this month with my sword by my side. I'll take the trumpet of war and sound it among the soldiers of God throughout the whole of Fiji, the ministers and those who...

9 B. Danks, Our Mission Fields, 4.

10 For a secular corollary, see the theories of Harry Hamilton Johnston, first British Commissioner to Central Africa. H.A.C. Cairns, Prelude to Imperialism, 207.

11 Candidates were recommended on the basis of their physical condition, intellectual fitness and record as Christian workers. See A.J. Small to R.O. Cook, Suva, 16 February 1905, FDC.

12 AMMR, January 1895, 8.

13 W.A. Heighway's imagery is a fair example: 'When Nolan... gave the command at Balaclava "Forward the Light Brigade. Charge for the guns!" ... they faced the task which they realized meant death... I blush to think that herein a lower standard is set for us than for the British Army and Navy.' W.A. Heighway to A.J. Small, Navuloa, 30 January 1906, FDC.

are strong and can dodge the hard blows of the enemy. Now we must rise again with the weapons of God and move to the gate of our enemy to fight for Jesus' cross. 14

In 1891 there were 15,000 more Methodists in Fiji than in New South Wales and Queensland combined.¹⁵ In challenging Fijians to do strenuous work for Christ, however, the missionary recruiter had a more limited repertoire of arguments than in Britain or Australia. He could not appeal to a sense of responsibility aroused by imperial custodianship. He could not invoke convictions of national guilt over slavery, blackbirding or the like. He could not dwell upon the theme of collective atonement for past wrongs. Nor could dissatisfaction at home or better conditions abroad be truthfully advertised. But he could still refer to martyred British and Fijian missionaries in the South Seas and compare Christian Fiji with heathen New Guinea.¹⁶ Vivid pictorial imagery of roaring cannibal ovens, clubs, and bloody human banquets was the substance of much Fijian missionary propaganda. By playing on Fijian memories and epic seafaring associations, the exhorter could arouse consciences and awaken a powerful thirst for adventure.

National pride, scripture and narratives from the field were also used in advertising the cause of New Guinea. As the Bible, according to Methodists, was opened daily in 20,000 Fijian homes,¹⁷ specific messages could be seized upon as having direct application. 'There are only four of us', wrote Timoci Drugu in 1898, 'Have you

14 ATV, September 1913. Similarly, Esekaia Vodo wrote of a New Guinea convert, Simione Tusiqa, that 'This man was strong and valiant during tribal fighting, but now he is a good soldier of God.' ATV, October 1913.

15 AMMR, 6 January 1893.

16 See ATV, June 1897.

In the old days Fiji was in the same position that New Guinea is now in [wrote M.K. Gilmour]. What happened then? Some brave European missionaries decided to come to Fiji... They left their familiar surroundings and ventured into the unknown... Look at Fiji now. The Light has been brought to Fiji. Do you want to share with the people that are still in the dark?

ATV, October 1911; B. Danks to A.J. Small, Sydney, 7 June 1911, MOM 58.

17 AMMR, 4 April 1906.

looked at St Matthew, chapter 9 verse 38?'¹⁸ Fijian achievements in New Britain were praised; their deaths were exalted; their failures were concealed. 'We are proud of Oripa, the Fijian girl in New Britain', reported Ai Tukutuku Vakalotu. They were therefore appealing to the women of Fiji to consider going to those neighbouring islands to spread Christianity.¹⁹

The Fijian volunteers who heard Brown's call in 1875 and 1890 responded without hesitation. 'If we live, Sir, we live, if we die we die, but we have decided to do this work for God', was their spirited reply to an enquiring Governor.²⁰ They knew that the lotu had been brought first to Fiji by Pacific Islanders;²¹ they liked to parade their valour;²² they were encouraged by their teachers to look forward to the second coming of Christ.²³ They had doubtless been told by their fathers how Cakobau and Taufa'ahau (King George Tupou I of Tonga) had prayed before the battle of Kamba, and how people had 'lotued' in their thousands upon Jehovah's victory over the heathen.²⁴ At the end of sermons by Brown and his colleagues

18 ATV, March 1898; ibid., September 1903, March 1910.

19 Ibid.

20 This was the parting reply of the 1875 party to New Britain. Four Fijians were murdered in New Britain three years after the beginning of the mission on the Duke of York Islands. G. Brown, George Brown..., 80, 129; W. Powell, Wanderings..., 124. See also, MM5 AR 1898-9, xix.

21 In some parts of Fiji, European missionaries were known as 'late comers'. G.C. Henderson, Fiji..., 144.

22 Ibid., 70.

23 Millennial teaching was emphasized in Fijian mission institutes. Methodist teacher training, begun at 'Richmond College' at Mataisuva in 1856-7 offered courses in Biblical history, theology, exegesis, English, geography and arithmetic. Theological lectures stressed the second coming of Christ. A.J. Small, 'A Short Account of the Educational Work of the Methodist Mission in Fiji', Suva 1909; Bennett to A.J. Small, Navuloa, 11 April 1904, FDC.

24 G.C. Henderson, op. cit., 269.

numbers of young men were 'freely offering to go to the head-hunters',²⁵ and spoke of the clearness and definiteness of the call.²⁶

The call of God was overlaid by sanction of Caesar. Fijians in the pioneer party of 1891 were farewelled by the Governor, Sir John Thurston; cheering crowds lined the Suva wharf singing 'To the work, to the work', and 'God be with you till we meet again.'²⁷ Eight months before, Thurston had despatched, at Sir William MacGregor's request, a Fijian sergeant and corporal to be the nucleus of the Armed Native Constabulary which MacGregor was forming in New Guinea.²⁸ Arriving in Sydney, the missionary contingent was received by the Earl of Jersey at Government House, where Fijian presentations were made.²⁹ They were addressed by Archdeacon R.L. King, whose son was joining the Anglican Mission. A meke was performed on the Governor's lawn.³⁰

'WE are now in New Guinea', wrote Pilato Sili in July 1891. 'The inhabitants are short in stature, big-headed, and addicted to Man-eating.'³¹ Belonging to a race familiar with cannibalism, the Fijians' collective memories were tinged with the deaths of Ratu Elijah Varani at Lovoni in 1853 and the Reverend Thomas Baker at Nubatautau in 1869. Not only did the 22 Fijian Methodists in British

25 One of the Navuloa students was among the first six to volunteer for the Solomon Islands in 1902:

Sir, this matter has been on my mind for years, I know that God is calling me to go to the Solomons. I long to go. As for this body of mine, I give it to be eaten by the cannibals of New Georgia.

A.J. Small to G. Brown, Bau, 24 March 1902, FDC.

26 AMMR, 4 August 1906, 8.

27 Ibid. Sir J.B. Thurston, Governor of Fiji, asked whether the Fijians knew that 'they would have little protection of the law', and gave them a present of half a sovereign each. AMMR, 6 August 1897.

28 The sergeant was named Tabua; some of his descendants still live at Daru in the Western District. See also R.B. Joyce, Sir William MacGregor, 161.

29 AMMR, 4 May 1892. J. Tinney, Diary, 10 April 1892, SA.

30 AMMR, July 1891. An account of the Fijians' experiences in Sydney in 1891 is found in L. Fison, Pilato and his Comrades....

31 AMMR, 2 November 1891, 11. Three members of the first party - the wives of Nehemiah (Fijian) and Silivenusi (Tongan) and the son of Joni Kuli (Tongan) died in the first four weeks. S.B. Fellows, Diary, 14 - 22 July 1891, ANG.

New Guinea display fearlessness, but their letters dwelt on the probable means of their deaths with composure; for were they not following Varani's footsteps?

Here is the land, here are the people [wrote Poate Ratu]. We are busy. Time flies. Two things are going on together; hearing sermons, and eating men. They cut up the victim like one does fish. Each one gets his piece, and grills it over the fire. They are not baked whole, as at one time with us; so if you hear of one of us being killed, you would know that we were not baked in an oven, and roasted, but that we were grilled in small pieces over the fire.

32

Strengthened by divine assurance, the Fijians set out on the missionary task with evident exuberance. Within a few weeks of the landing at Dobu, the Island contingent of 22 was broken into four parties led by Europeans.³³ By the end of 1893 there were Fijian stations on Dobu, East Cape, Tubetube, Panaeiti, Normanby and Fergusson.³⁴

Each of these strongholds was chosen to throw the influence of the lotu over as wide an area as possible. Besides what Malinowski called the 'international position'³⁵ of Dobu, Panaeiti was the centre of a busy canoe manufacturing industry whose products were exported as far afield as Suau, Logea and Misima.³⁶ Tubetube was the genesis of a dialect understood within a radius of fifty miles. All the stations were partners in the kula ring with its eastern arc to Rossel Island, north-east to Woodlark, and north-west to the heavily populated Kiriwina group. Songs, stories, art and general cultural influences travelled along the route between the islands. Though the full extent of the kula was not then comprehended, the Methodists had located some of its major compass points. Thus the Fijians, whose navigating skills rivalled those of the Massim, would spread the

32 AMMR, 1 December 1891; see also 2 November 1891.

33 W.E. Bromilow at Dobu, S.B. Fellows at Panaeiti, James Watson on Fergusson and J.R. Field at Tubetube.

34 At the end of 1891 the Islanders' stations were Nem Nem, Kenaia, Kegadoi, Taibe'u, Begassi, Ware and South Cape. AMMR, October 1891; BNG AR 1891-2, xxvii.

35 B. Malinowski, Argonauts..., 39.

36 The choice had originally been Basilaki Island, but MacGregor pressed the Methodists to go instead to Panaeiti. W. MacGregor, Diary, 13 July 1891, ANL.

gospel with the bagi and mwali of the kula trade.³⁷ The prodigious horseback ministry of Wesley in the 18th century would be adapted to a whaleboat ministry of Wesleyan Fijians in the 19th.

Among hospitable Massim, who were well used to visitors from the sea, it is unlikely that the Fijians would have been regarded as intruders. On the contrary, in spite of their extraordinary religious customs, they were probably welcomed universally for their iron, prized for their tobacco, and even desired as social assets. Enosi and Iosep for example, were received 'in a most friendly way' by the Panaeiti people in September 1891.³⁸ Bromilow commented that 'the bargaining instinct of the Scot and the Jew, seem to be concentrated in these people'.³⁹ It is also possible that the Massim showed a proprietary interest in the dimdims and gained a special type of pleasure from the mere fact of 'owning' them. Peni Rokowaku reported that 'the people of Tubetube are kind and hospitable to us, the vakavuvuli' and also that 'these people are very good at trading'.⁴⁰ Islands at which the vakavuvuli stopped on the way to Dobu had clamoured for teachers, and land was procured without the slightest difficulty. Only on Fergusson Island was a Fijian life threatened; and when the goods of the vakavuvuli Pilato Sili were put on the boat, one man put his arms round Pilato's neck and implored him to stay.⁴¹

The proximity of missionaries to man-eaters does not seem to have been as precarious as Poate Ratu had supposed; and Fijians were able to observe their neighbours as they gossiped around their fires, prepared food, and embarked on their periodic voyages. The newcomers did not hesitate to express preliminary reactions, and especially in matters of sanitation they commented with asperity: Methodist schools had taught hygiene in Fiji.

37 Bromilow's first visit to the Trobriands was with Enamakala and Kedokedo of Dobu, probably in 1892. W.E. Bromilow, op. cit., 180.

38 S.B. Fellows, Diary, 5 September 1891, MOM 130. See also Panaeiti Circuit, Teachers' Minutes, 24 June 1893, SA. The first Panaeiti converts, Saneva and Marki, were baptized in 1895. Panaeiti Quarterly Meeting Minutes, 25 December 1895, SA.

39 AMMR, 4 March 1910, 14.

40 ATV, 38.

41 J. Tinney, Diary, 26 December 1892, SA.

They keep the inside of their villages clean, but all around about outside, is full of evil smells... They sleep on the floor without mats in the midst of their yams and little food, and when they get up they look as if they had been digging earth. Their bodies are covered with dirt, and stink, and this I believe to be the cause of their skin disease. 42

In the aftermath of Fijian conversion of Dobu, Rupeni Nageri's first observation on arrival was, 'Dobu is a very clean place. Christianity is thriving here.'⁴³

Much of the content of early Fijian estimates was derived from differences of taste or aesthetic preference rather than morality. Chewing betel nut, painting teeth and personal hygiene evoked Islanders' comment readily, and were devoured by thousands of readers of vernacular newspapers in Fiji. Reported by writers like Pilato Sili, the external features of western Melanesian culture were widely circulated in the home islands:

They paint their bodies black every day, and they are full of lice, and the smell of the betel nut, which they are always chewing mixed with lime... We ask them to go away, and they move a little, and then come back and eat our food, and take our clothes and wear them. 44

Latent irritation was betrayed towards the Melanesian pre-occupation with material possessions. Fijians and Polynesians being observers of reciprocity,⁴⁵ a number of them found the calculating acquisitiveness of Papuans beyond endurance. 'O what thieves these people are!'⁴⁶ lamented a Samoan preacher after his travelling box

42 AMMR, 4 March 1892, 10.

43 ATV, February 1897. The Fijian response to body odour was similar to that of some Europeans. Abel, Malinowski and MacGregor all commented with distaste upon the odour of Massim people. C.W. Abel, Savage Life..., 22; B. Malinowski, A Diary..., 44; W. MacGregor, Diary, 2 October 1891, ANL.

44 AMMR, 4 March 1892, 10.

45 Ibid., 11. Generous contributions to church collections was expected of pastors. Joni Kuli the Tongan Minister at Panaeiti was known to give £6/10/- of a salary of £12 to the Church Collection day. AMMR, 8 September 1900.

46 AMMR, 4 March 1892; ATV, February 1900; ibid., October 1900. Early Europeans in Fiji, however, had suffered losses through Fijian stealing. G.C. Henderson, Fiji..., 81. At Kiriwina, S.B. Fellows wrote that his wife 'dared not leave [the house] even for a moment, lest something should be stolen'. AMMR, 5 September 1895.

had been prized open. 'They are clever thieves, and up to all manner of cunning tricks', wrote a Fijian. 'But they are cowards, and swift to flee.'⁴⁷ When government equipment was stolen, Sir William MacGregor could send armed constables to recover it;⁴⁸ when missionaries lost theirs, such action could not be taken.

The persistence with which Papuans removed Pacific Island property, however, must be seen in its Massim context. The kula native, as Malinowski pointed out, loved to possess: his social code lay down that to possess was to be great, that wealth was the indispensable appanage of social rank and personal virtue.⁴⁹ A man who owned something was expected to share it, to be its trustee and dispenser. The higher the rank - and a teacher in Kiriwina was recognized as possessing chiefly attributes - the greater the obligation. To the kula natives, not to share betel nut, tobacco, hoop iron and domestic effects was simply meanness, and meanness was despised.⁵⁰

But the Papuan also knew he could not impose his own moral views about property on the dimdim Fijian. His traditional open, voluntary and ostentatious acquisition of wealth therefore was modified. Removal of missionary property was not accompanied by customary exchange of the kula; on the contrary, it was carried out with the furtiveness and stealth of calculated theft. In part, Papuans were adhering to a venerable custom of distributing wealth; in part, they were simply plundering the goods of defenceless visitors.

Among a people with comparable problems of navigation, the Fijian was quick to assess, and sometimes praise, the technological accomplishments of Melanesians in eastern Papua. Where an industry was devoted to canoe manufacturing as on Tubetube, a craft was surrounded by an atmosphere of interest, an object of tradition and veneration.⁵¹ There was no mistaking the Fijians' praise of the Massim art of canoe building, of their quickness in apprehending differences in design, stability and buoyancy, and of their realization

47 ATV, January 1895.

48 W. MacGregor, Diary, 31 August 1892, 1 September 1892, ANL.

49 B. Malinowski, op. cit., 97.

50 Ibid.

51 Ibid., 105.

that each Pacific Island community had evolved a unique means of mastering the sea:

The people of Tubetube always build their own canoes - again they are similar to the Fijian canoes except for the stern - the mast is bigger and is tied by ropes to bow and stern. It is so structured that if they want to sail somewhere and the wind is blowing against the canoe is immovable and they have to abandon the trip. 52

In many ways - the walls of churches and bure, use of woven mats and chairs, and items of personal adornment such as hats, fans and sulu - the extent and versatility of Polynesian and Fijian influence upon Papuan ideas was seen. Etiquette and ceremonial,⁵³ amusements and sport, the baking of pork and fish in earth ovens, the introduction of Fijian vegetables,⁵⁴ and the use of woven mats for guests, all display the influence of Fijian social customs on the Massim of eastern Papua.

Closely allied to questions of etiquette and domestic arrangement was that of the status of women. The predominance of males at Papuan feasts and females in manual labour aroused strong Fijian indignation. 'One custom', wrote Eparama Vuau, 'is that women and men are not allowed to eat together. If the men are eating and a woman suddenly appears, all the men will quickly retreat into the bush.'⁵⁵ Husband and wife relationships in the cycle of labour were severely criticised:

52 ATV, September 1895; see also C.S. Robinson, Diary, 19 September 1903, PNGA.

53 MacGregor reported that Fijians in the A.N.C. mocked the 'extremely primitive and unceremonious way' in which Papuans drank the piper methysticum root in western Papua. MacGregor thought that 'The difference between this inornate custom... and the elaborate, imposing, sometimes almost solemn ceremony in the Pacific Islands represents, not unfairly, the immense distance that separates the Papuan from the Polynesian civilization.' BNG AR 1890-1, App. M. For action of a teacher, possibly Fijian, in removing ceremonial feathers at Tubetube, see C.G. Seligmann, The Melanesians..., 586.

54 Piti taro and piti yams in eastern Papua indicate the Fijian origins of these strains.

55 ATV, March 1898.

[One] stupid custom is that men are not supposed to cook food, or bring water from the well or collect the firewood. If a man is seen performing one of these menial tasks this means that it is a sign of weakness and no woman would like to marry [him]... The man should walk empty-handed whereas the woman would be laboriously dragging all the food, firewood etc. behind him. I do pity the women. 56

No Papuan custom aroused more vociferous criticism than the burial of the dead. That a body, instead of being decently interred, was 'chopped... into small bits' and 'passed from village to village, to be broken, cut up and eaten'⁵⁷ was considered depraved. There is some evidence that Europeans regarded burial of the dead in family dwellings as repugnant, and George Brown photographed skulls to illustrate his books.⁵⁸ But Fijians reacted to it with intense revulsion and incredulity. Pilato Sili described Papuan burials as 'abominable';⁵⁹ Josua Matenaiu alluded to them as habits 'too terrible to explain';⁶⁰ and Jotame Namamandre's exclamations angered his Kiriwina hosts: 'They said to me, "You have just brought in this religion and you are asking us to abandon our custom which our forefathers have taught us for generations. You will not be able to make us leave our Kiriwina custom".'⁶¹

Burial provided an opportunity to exalt Fijian custom. Pilato Sili wrote:

In Fiji when our kinsfolk die we bury them like chiefs, and bring funeral presents of great rolls of native cloth, and mats, and whale's teeth, and sinnet, and pigs, and canoes - we strip ourselves bare to honour the dead. These people weep more than we do, but they give nothing but their tears. 62

More fascinating to Pilato Sili than lamentation for relatives was the ostentatious wailing for slain enemies about to be cooked and eaten. 'They cry over the men they kill in war... they weep for the

56 Ibid.

57 ATV, July 1899; G. Brown, Polynesians..., 390.

58 Ibid., 152, 241.

59 AMMR, 4 March 1892, 12.

60 ATV, July 1899.

61 Ibid.

62 AMMR, 4 March 1892, 12.

man who is slain.'⁶³ In their response to burial customs, Fijians and Europeans both expressed distaste for New Guinean expressions of emotion as gaudy, shallow and vulgar.

In perspective, however, these unfavourable judgments were few. In a host of cultural traits - dress, art, trade, dancing, engineering, and gardening - there was effortless understanding. As Poate Ratu said in 1894, 'We see their bodies, they are like Fijian bodies, faces like Fijians, they wear tapa masi cloth like Fijians, and grass skirts like Fijians. Many of their words are similar to Fijian.'⁶⁴ For just as Fijians were the most prodigious missionary force in eastern New Guinea, so they easily were the most popular of missionaries. Visiting Dobu in 1897, MacGregor commented on the Fijians:

They are taken as the mirror of fashion by all the young men of Dobu and that neighbourhood. The Papuans try to imitate the Fijians in gait, manner, dress, and the cut of their hair... It is quite plain now, as heretofore, that the Fijian teacher is the best liked and most respected of all the coloured teachers in the colony. 65

The transfer of large areas of eastern New Guinea to Fiji's religious emissaries had been due partly to a comparison by Wesleyans between the violence of old Fiji and that of New Guinea. That the Dobuans should be shepherded into the kingdom by erstwhile cannibals was a paradox which missionaries found exhilarating. Wesleyans saw the same virtues in their 'Fijian braves' that they admired in

63 Ibid. Asked by Fijians and Australians why they cut off the finger joint of their dead, the Bwaidogans of Fergusson Island replied, 'Oh! it's one of our customs.' Ibid., 4 January 1907, 6. On Kiriwina Josua Matenaniu wrote that 'the people of this land worship the dead... This act of worshipping is sacrilegious. They are mad. They have not seen the light.' ATV, January 1898.

64 ATV, September 1894. In the D'Entrecasteaux the architectural styles of Fijians, Tongans and Samoans do not seem to have been imitated to any extent. See G. Brown, Diary, 24 July 1897, MOM 150; J. Tinney, Diary, 23 May 1892, MOM. The dancing styles of Samoans and performance of Fijian meke was imitated by students at Mission stations. See G. Brown, Polynesians..., 40; G. Brown, George Brown..., 509. AMMR, 8 September 1900, 4; S.B. Fellows, Photograph Collection, ANG.

65 BNG AR 1897-8, 47.

Englishmen: physical endurance, self sacrifice and courage.⁶⁶ Fijians, too, judged from their references to perils on land and sea, anticipated a career of heroism for Christ.

Much mission work, however, offered little that satisfied the impulse to be heroic. There were church services, hymn singing, teaching the alphabet, and a little cricket and football. Occasionally missionary magazines provided glimpses of 'courageous Fijians' or 'brave fellows'.⁶⁷ One teacher attained distinction by marching 80 miles to rescue a stricken missionary wife;⁶⁸ another, Josaia Qoro (1906-1913), shouldered an enfeebled European and traversed swamps and beaches to reach help.⁶⁹ But rarely could Fijian readers of Ai Tuku-tuku Vakalotu delight in a vision of the Christian warrior performing heroic duty.

There was, however, one notable exception. The subduing of tribal conflict between Enamakala and other chiefs in Kiriwina in 1899 was exalted as a Fijian triumph. 'These [Kiriwina] villages', Josua Matenaniu wrote, 'are big in size and the people are also big in stature like the Fijians.'⁷⁰ Everything the Fijian people thought about their race, and all that missionaries expected of them, was realized at Kiriwina. The first Fijian vakavuvuli, Samuel Naboutina and Setareki Tuicakive of Kadavu, settled with their wives in Kiriwina in about August 1895,⁷¹ Tuicakive at Omarakana, the village of the paramount chief Enamakala.⁷²

66 Gilmour referred to Fiji as 'the land of those heroes who came to cannibal Papua..'. M.K. Gilmour to A.J. Small, Ubuia, 4 February 1919, FDC.

67 ATV, February 1908. W.E. Bromilow, Twenty Years..., 33.

68 AMMR, June 1900, 32; G.A. Burgess to A.J. Small, Bunama, 1 August 1913, FDC.

69 AMMR, September 1910, 110.

70 ATV, January 1898.

71 ATV, September 1895. S.B. Fellows obtained land at Kavataria in the south of Kiriwina, while Andrews, a layman, went to Sinaketa in the north, a village in which Dobuan was understood. AMMR, 5 September 1895. J.T. Field's excursion in 1892 was a preliminary visit.

72 MacGregor, Monckton and Laminowski described Enamakala as paramount chief. Seligmann and J. Singh Uberoi present a slightly different view. See BNG AR 1893-4, 19; B. Malinowski, Argonauts..., 63; J. Singh Uberoi, Politics of the Kula Ring, 38ff.

In 1895 Enamakala of the Malasi totem clan was about 50 years of age, a tall, stout, vigorous looking man as his photographs show, with a facial expression remarkable in its impassivity and shrewdness. With his 36 wives, his nineteen yam houses, and his annual levy of yams on other chiefs in Kiriwina, Enamakala occupied a unique position among the Melanesians of New Guinea. Opetaiā Muanivanua, a missionary from Bau, described Enamakala's response to his sermons:

The name of the great chief here is Enamakala. He does not care for the taparoro (religion)... When I commenced the services in the village, Enamakala stayed in his house for the first two Sabbaths. On the third Sabbath I said to him: 'Come along, Enamakala, let us go to the service.' He came, but he would not look at me. He turned his back to me, and sat with his face to the wall of the house where we were.

73

According to Fellows, discontent had been gathering in Kiriwina for some years.⁷⁴ Enamakala levied heavy burdens on the island's food supplies; and his brother Taolo, a man with a squint, was disliked as a despot and a bully. Indeed, some Kulua chiefs of the north-west averred that 'Taolu's mind and conduct were twisted just like his bad eye', for had he not seduced women who were not his property?⁷⁵ The alliance between Enamakala and the Fijians, with their access to European power, had exacerbated the tension already latent in Kiriwina.

In about 1882 Enamakala had burnt down eleven villages of the Kulua people, including their chief hamlet Tilatataula; and no mapula, or payback, had ever been made.⁷⁶ There were minor upheavals

73 AMMR, 6 September 1898, 8; see also BNG AR 1891-2, 28. Opetaiā wrote of Enamakala's wives: 'His wives are very many. Some have died; some have been killed; some have committed suicide.' *Ibid.* W.D. Pitcairn wrote of Enamakala with a little exaggeration:

He has a splendid house... and a large retinue of slaves. He never walks a yard, but is always carried on a kind of sedan-chair or stretcher. His word is law, and his influence over the natives of his kingdom very great... The king of the Trobriands is as much a king to his subjects as the autocratic Czar is to the serfs of Russia.

W.D. Pitcairn, Two Years..., 144.

74 AMMR, 6 December 1899; J. Tinney, *Diary*, 16 October 1899, MOM 150.

75 AMMR, 6 December 1899.

76 *Ibid.*

after the missionaries' arrival. In October 1898 two subsidiary villages, Kadakwaikala and Gumilababa, erupted in conflict; in January 1899 Gumilababa collided with another village. The ostensible causes were pigs and land.⁷⁷

The behaviour of Fijians in these threatening circumstances indicated their ability as peace-makers and mediators. Josua Matenaniu of Bau wrote:

They fought the whole day until sun-set and then retired to wait for the morning to start again. Jotame [Namamandre, from Kadavu] and I went to see if we could stop them... [Jotame] said that it was most foolish and stupid to be engaged in a war. What had they achieved? Nothing! The result was disastrous. There were so many killed and injured. If they had obeyed the good teaching of the Lord then surely they would have never come to any harm... 78

Undeterred by Namamandre's advice, Gumilababa attacked Wavutine village; but this time Matenaniu had somewhat greater success:

I went back amongst the people and shouted, 'I beg of you not to fight each other'. These words had an effect on them and they all went to their various homes. I thanked God for giving me the strength to do my duty... 79

Like the Binandele of the Mamba in warfare with their enemies the Gumilababa people tried to enlist foreign help: 'the men said to me, "Setareki, take your spear and shield to fight on our side." I said, "I am forbidden. There is one sharp spear - God is my spear."⁸⁰

Worse was to follow. The Kulua tribes, led by Enamakala's cousin Moliyasi - who had formerly 'crawled most abjectly in the presence of the great chief'⁸¹ - became leagued against the paramount chief, seized his village in 1899, and drove him out. When Tuicakive returned to the village at Enamakala's request, he had to run for his

77 By this time Fijians had become interested in the unique social organization of Kiriwina, as well as the high population density of the Trobriands. Fellows numbered the mainland population at 7565. M.H. Moreton to G.R. Le Hunte, Siai, 7 September 1900, CAO/CRS/G121.

78 ATV, March 1899.

79 ATV, October 1899.

80 AMMR, 6 September 1897.

81 AMMR, 6 December 1899. See also B. Malinowski, Argonauts..., 63.

life, followed by a shower of spears.⁸² Believing that the Mission itself was in danger, Fellows poured out his anxieties to the magistrate M.H. Moreton by mail. As Enamakala had been made a constable by MacGregor the Kiriwina rebellion was now against the chief's allies as well. Believing that the govermani guns were but sticks,⁸³ Moliiasi addressed 2000 massed Kuluas in November 1899,

Why do we wait, let us meet them on their own ground. We will kill the government party first and then the missionaries. We will mitulaisi the foreigners (that is, make a clean sweep)... We will divide their goods, burn down their station, and in the evening go round to the government cutter [Siai] and burn it. 84

But the ambush launched by Moliiasi on Tuicakau, Moreton and eleven Papuan constables was a failure. 'They did not know the effect of the gun',⁸⁵ wrote Tuicakive tersely. The effect of a volley shattered their morale: a chief described the sound as 'just like thunder, and the men who ran away leaped the garden fences like wild pigs'.⁸⁶

The rebels were made to compensate Enamakala and Omarakana was rebuilt, but the chief had paid heavily for his defeat. He died in humiliation on 31 December 1899 in a dysentery epidemic,⁸⁷ his power damaged beyond repair. Foreign authority was increased. Moreton

82 ATV, February 1900. However, Fellows' claim that the Kulua at Omarakana 'made eager search for the teacher stationed there, Setareki, in order to kill him' is contradicted by Moliiasi's statement: 'I put my hand on Setareki's house, I put my hand on the church, and I said "Let them remain", I saved them from destruction.' AMMR, 8 January 1900.

83 Ibid.; S.B. Fellows to M.H. Moreton, Kavataria, 8 November 1899, CAO/CRS/G121.

84 AMMR, 8 January 1900.

85 ATV, May 1900; H.M. Moreton to G.R. Le Hunte, Siai, 7 November 1900. See also M. Stone-Wigg to G.R. Le Hunte, Cooktown, 10 November 1899; W.E. Bromilow to M.H. Moreton, Dobu, 27 September 1899, DA.

86 AMMR, 5 February 1900.

87 S.B. Fellows, Diary, 31 December 1899, ANG. Enamakala was compensated with 60 baskets of yams, and six 'fine young men' were taken as hostages to Samarai. Fellows said that 'Enamakala's power is gone - his villages destroyed, whilst the influence and power of the Missionary... is very much increased...'. AWMMS AR 1898-9, xix. See also W.E. Bromilow to G.R. Le Hunte, Dobu, 30 November 1899, CAO/CRS/G121; G. Brown to S. Fellows, Sydney, 4 December 1899, MOM 46.

established a police post 'for humanity's sake',⁸⁸ and two Fijian vakavuvuli were placed among the Kulua to preach the gospel of peace. In 1902 the chief Pulitara was diligently erecting a 'model sanitary village' after the Fijian manner at Kavataria. Visiting an inland village, Moreton came face to face with 'a three foot gaudy missionary picture, the flaming colouring of which delighteth the heart of a savage. It was stuck up on the chief's yam house.' On the banner was an image of St Paul, and below the inscription, 'They received the word with all readiness of mind.'⁸⁹ Thus at one blow Kiriwina lost its paramount chief and gained the appendages of colonial authority: the Losuia government and a chain of missionary outposts. In 1903, the Chief Judicial Officer C.S. Robinson was greeted at Kavataria by 60 boys and girls drawn up by a Fijian missionary and singing 'God save the King.'⁹⁰

How Fijians saw the transformation is clear on the evidence available. They were mindful of Cakobau's cession of their islands to British authority in 1874, and they told Kiriwinans that the same authority was now coming to prevent a revival of dynastic warfare.⁹¹ Fellows was ecstatic at the result of his mediation: he would 'proceed at once to secure ground for a Mission right in the heart of the disaffected district'.⁹² The stories of Matenaniu's energy during the affrays became the basis of widely circulated accounts of Fijian

88 The police post was situated a few hundred yards from the Mission. W.E. Bromilow to G.R. Le Hunte, Dobu, 20 November 1899, CAO/CRS/G121; M.H. Moreton to G.R. Le Hunte, Siai, 7 September 1900, CAO/CRS/G121.

89 BNG AR 1899-1900, 10. Moreton added: 'Mr Fellows assured me it was not a missionary joke, and that he had no hand in it.' Ibid.

90 C.S. Robinson, Diary, 8 October 1903, PNGA.

91 G.R. Le Hunte, MacGregor's successor, wrote in Kiriwina:

I warned them against the folly and danger of talking about opposing the Government, and referred them to their Fiji teachers - several of whom were present at my request - for an account of what had happened to the chiefs and people of the mountains in Fiji, who fought the Government when I was in that colony.

BNG AR 1899-1900, 9.

92 AMMR, 8 January 1900.

bravery under the Wesleyan flag. The fact that he had not succeeded in preventing the ambush was not allowed to dim his credit:

Setareki behaved splendidly, rushing between the two opposing forces, and pleading for peace till his voice failed him; even then, not leaving his post until, with clothes pierced, his hand dripping blood, and spears whistling in clouds around him, there was no further chance of stopping the fury of the fight. 93

Nevertheless, neither Christianity nor Fijian oversight brought an end to dynastic turbulence in Kiriwina. As Pulitara told Fellows in February 1900, 'We in Kiriwina still keep our spears sharpened.'⁹⁴

II

THE errand on which Fijians were sent implied spiritual rather than military goals. Broad religious differences emerged as the New Guineans realized that the Fijians were neither immigrants nor traders but apologists of a mythology vastly dissimilar to their own. 'God did not send me here to trade. He sent me to preach the Gospel',⁹⁵ declared the first Fijian missionary at Kiriwina, removing the commercial motive for travel that would have been first among his kula listeners. Like other Melanesians, the Massim ascribed the weather, fertility and illness to holders of occult power.⁹⁶ Moreover, they possessed a complex and very definite set of metaphysical views, and they resisted Fijian attempts to alter their beliefs:

We tell them that these things are lies, and they reply that what we tell them is false. They say, 'Lies! Lies! Jesus is a lie! Werevana (witchcraft) or Balua (sorcery) is true...' We preach Jesus Christ, the Lord to the people, and many of them believe our report, though others say, 'Lies! lies! It is all a lie!' But we go on in the name of Jesus... 97

93 AMMR, 6 January 1902. A similar account was given of Opetaiia Muanivanua:

He was close behind and bursting through the ranks, would rush and gather into his arms with their spears and shields at least two of the most excited, foaming leaders, and carry them right out of the danger zone.

AMMR, 5 August 1907.

94 S.B. Fellows, Diary, 11 February 1900, ANG.

95 AMMR, 4 March 1892.

96 See pp. 199, 209-10.

97 AMMR, 4 March 1892; see also G. Brown, Polynesians..., 235.

In Dobu and Kiriwina, some Fijian sermons degenerated into a strenuous polemic exchange. The Fijians asserted the doctrines of everlasting life and the unchanging Trinity: the Papuans insisted on the truth of their traditional beliefs. 'Tuma is the true place', said a Kiriwina sage. 'Do not believe the Missionaries. There is no such place as Heaven. All the Missionaries that died are in Tuma.'⁹⁸ Samuel Naboutina rejoined:

... it is false, your forefathers have deceived you. Listen to me. God is in the sky. You see the book in my hand, it contains the true story about God... When I sat down, an old man said to me: 'What is God, a man or a woman?' I replied 'God has no body. He is a spirit... The man asked me: 'Have you seen Him?' I answered: 'No, I have not, but as I have given up sin, when I die I shall see God.' 99

The sanctions and penalties of traditional beliefs were often invoked by New Guineans to reduce the appeal of Christianity. Barren gardens, seas empty of fish, even death, were regarded as proof of retaliation by offended spirits. Ananaisa Benu reported the argument by his congregation:

They went on to say I am a liar and am trying to remove these people to far away islands where they will be unwanted and left in poverty. They also claimed that whoever joins our religion will die. I assured [them] that they should rest in peace as the Word of God is stronger than these sorcerers. 100

As physical illness and death were commonly invoked by sorcerers,¹⁰¹ fear of retaliation may well have been the largest single obstacle to conversion at a metaphysical level.

Fijians very soon realized how important was the acquisition of goods among the Massim. 'They are very materialistic!' wrote Josefa Matailagi of the New Britain mission, 'They want to possess material things. They judge each other by their material goods. There

98 AMMR, 8 October 1897; *ibid.*, 5 April 1897.

99 AMMR, 8 October 1897; *ibid.*, 5 April 1897.

100 Yet some Dobuans stayed away from church because they were bored. A Dobuan called out during a Fijian peroration, 'Won't he stop? My back is aching.' Afterwards the man claimed compensation for his suffering. W.E. Bromilow, *op. cit.*, 101.

101 ATV, June 1896.

are many like this around the villages.'¹⁰² Another Fijian in New Britain argued from material comforts to theology: 'See what the lotu has done for us - we have houses, we have a big ship to come and visit us, and bring us cloth, beads, &c.'¹⁰³ According to Wilfred Powell, a headman then replied that if the lotu gave him these things, he would go to lotu often.¹⁰⁴ Some Fijians were believed to be rain makers; and when rain did not fall they became targets of suspicion and appeasement. Esikaia Vodo at Dobu asked Fijian supporters 'to pray that we may overcome all this stupidity'.¹⁰⁵

The reactions of most of these early missionaries were fairly simple and straightforward. The style of their approach to Papuans, and the tendency to regard their beliefs as 'stupid', mirrored their personalities. Thus the missionary Timoci climbed a hill to seize a magic stone, which he hurled far down into a valley. 'The Fijian is nothing if not a scorner of all forms of idolatry',¹⁰⁶ wrote a supervisor. Some time later the rain maker died, and Timoci's villagers looked upon their missionary as a man of supernatural power.

Wesleyan sabbatarian attitudes were turned into a crusade by Fijian and Polynesian missionaries. The idea of a sacred day had been quickly accepted in Fiji, as among most Island peoples,¹⁰⁷ and one of the earliest Fijian anxieties at Panaeiti was the departure of kula canoes on Sundays.¹⁰⁸ If people on Dobu failed to observe the Sabbath and went gardening, some Islanders went to the gardens and drove them out with sticks. Josua Matenaniu, having distinguished himself during

102 One Fijian reported the conversion of a constable in the Louisiades, Simioni Tubiega: 'Last year there was a big hurricane. This made Simioni change his mind about Christianity... He works hard for the government and also is a firm believer and sometimes he now preaches.' ATV, October 1914.

103 W. Powell, Wanderings..., 144ff.

104 Ibid.; see also ATV, July 1903; see also G. Brown, George Brown..., 206.

105 ATV, July 1903. Fijians were supplied with 100 sticks of tobacco as a building allowance from 1893; their salaries were paid in prints, calico, clothing, biscuits, rice, tea and sugar. New Guinea by-laws, 1893/268, SA.

106 AMMR, 5 February 1912, 14.

107 G.C. Henderson, Fiji..., 236. See also J.W. Burton, Fiji..., 163.

108 Panaeiti QM Minutes, 18 December 1894, SA.

the Kiriwina struggle, was sent to Dobu after upsetting the yam supplies of villagers whom he found bartering fish on Sunday.¹⁰⁹ The Polynesian euphemism, 'smacking the Papuans' seems to have been a fairly frequent occurrence. The European tonugana (one who leads) caned only boys, but the Island to ita'i'isi (one who cares) smacked even old men, usually by turning them on the knee and hitting bare buttocks. The Massim were no match for Fijian and Samoan missionaries, and there is no record of any physical retaliation. Bringing some Taibeu women to Lilly Bromilow, the Fijians Maikeli and Marida exclaimed, 'These women have been shell-fishing today. Let them be punished!'¹¹⁰ Marjorie Abel recalled a visit to a Wesleyan island on which natives sat on the rocks all day waiting for Sunday to pass.¹¹¹ 'Where there is a resident missionary among them', reported the Methodist Review, 'they will cease fishing on Sunday long before they are converted.'¹¹² The smacking, the legalism of Sunday observance, and dismissal of traditions as 'stupid' all bespeak minds intent on producing a replica of the Polynesian and Fijian religious reformation in New Guinea.

Expression of psychologically satisfying beliefs about Melanesians were part of the ethnocentrism in which Papuans and Fijians, as well as Europeans, indulged. Papuan mimicry, taunts and verbal abuse of Fijian to ita'i'isi revealed that chauvinism and cultural superiority were not always the monopoly of the intruder. Often the

109 W.E. Bromilow to G. Brown, Dobu, 14 November 1899, MOM 167. Fellows reported the incident:

That fool Iosua... had smashed up the yams of some Kulua natives... They attacked him in Ialaka ... and would have killed him but the Ialaka chief ... held him in his arms and said If you want to spear him send spears through my body. He is Babada's bodala [Fellows' friend] and you shall not kill him in Ialaka.

S.B. Fellows to S. Fellows, Kiriwina, 13 October 1899, ANG.

110 AMMR, 4 May 1903; see also, ATV, September 1896. George Brown agreed with J.F. Goldie that 'the teachers take too much upon them and scold the natives instead of seeking to gain them by love... You can tell them... they must not attempt to lord it over the people. This is always a big danger.' G. Brown to J.F. Goldie, Sydney, 30 June 1904. MOM 50.

111 M. Smeeton, Interview, Daru, 31 December 1970.

112 AMMR, 5 May 1897.

Papuan left the Fijian in no doubt that he thought him inferior to the more powerful European. 'When the Missionary comes I will help', said a Vakuta headman to Samuela Vuetia, 'You teachers are children...' ¹¹³

Resistance to Fijian appeals for help was a crushing blow to prestige, especially when the to ita'i'isi was away from his own countrymen or the comforting shadow of the European. 'The missionary is gone away', lamented a Fijian, 'I am alone, having no one to help me.' ¹¹⁴ When exasperated by indifference, Fijians invoked the authority of the tonugana. Sermons reveal the consummate skill of the Islander in coping with severe racial handicaps. Poate Ratu showed how he handled an unruly audience at Niu Mala:

When I arrived and began to preach to them, they said 'Taparoro ka vi' (Christianity is bad) and while I was speaking they laughed and mocked at me, and cried out, 'Ka vi Taparoro! Ka vi Taparoro!' So I gave up my Sermon, and spoke quietly to them, saying 'I will go back to Dobu... I shall not write to Sydney for guns to fight you with, nor send a herald asking the Government for soldiers or a British man-o-war to attack you. No! no! ... I will send a herald straight to heaven, to my Father and yours. The herald... will say: 'O God O God... Are there not heaped up before Thee the prayers of Thy people in Sydney and Melbourne and all Australia, in Fiji too; and Tonga and Samoa, and all the world? 'Hear them, for they cry thus to Thee, 'Have mercy upon New Guinea! Have mercy upon New Guinea! ... Let this prayer of mine take hold of those prayers, and let this island of Niu Mala know thee! 115

Soon after Poate Ratu's display of oratory, word came from Niu Mala to Dobu that the people were willing to receive the lotu. ¹¹⁶

A passion for exact measurement was the mark of Fijian and European Methodists alike. Moving from village to village the to'ita'i'isi counted numbers and carried registers for the tonugana to weigh the spiritual scales. ¹¹⁷ By 1907 the total number of baptized New Guineans came to 573; those confirmed as members, 908; Sunday School scholars, 2158; and the grand total, 18,776. ¹¹⁸ No missions had better auditors than those of the Wesleyans.

113 AMMR, 5 April 1893.

114 Ibid.

115 AMMR, 4 March 1892.

116 Ibid.

117 ATV, August 1897; ibid., March 1899.

118 ATV, February 1908.

In a movement whose success related to mastery of language and manipulation of native thought-forms, linguistic versatility was of great importance. Skill at language was a prime qualification of the Island teacher; indeed, it is arguable that in the Fijian orator the Wesleyans had found a man of genius. Undoubtedly, as MacGregor observed at the founding of the Dobu mission, the Fijian's capacity for vivid rhetoric outstripped that of the European.¹¹⁹ Not only was public oratory a major subject in Protestant seminaries in an age of preaching, but it was a highly developed Samoan and Fijian art form. An address by Joape Narara to the Dobuans in 1896 illustrated a play on words on a common Melanesian article, the fishing net:

You Dobuans make many kinds of nets... but none of them like this net which our Saviour speaks of in this parable. This is a draw net and it is like Taparoro. The net is cast into the sea wherever there are fish... [That] is why we came to New Guinea.

All kinds of fish are caught in the net... good and bad; some poisonous, some with sharp-pointed scales that hurt, and others good. Listen! and learn! I tell you people of Dobu you are all in the Gospel-net. Some say 'we're not taparoro, we are outside of it [and] will have nothing to do with it', but you cannot, the net has been cast, and you are in it. 120

Some Fijian preachers turned from imagery to folklore, adapting Dobuan wisdom and proverb to eschatology. The Dobu saying, 'Ta adau be ta ilama ta kwaia ta doieoge' [We sail and we return again, we die and we cry in vain]¹²¹ was used to contrast traditional concepts of bwebweso with the idea of heaven.

Massim hearers appear to have had little difficulty in ascribing natural events to an omnipotent God. Rescue from disaster, hurricane, or drought were adduced by preachers as material for congregations to ponder. When a Fijian teacher and a convert drifted to sea for three days, they spent the time asking God for protection. That they eventually found land was regarded as confirmation of their faith.¹²²

Since Dobuans were interested in the lore of death, Bromilow translated a revivalist hymn 'Will you go to the Heaven above' into

119 W. MacGregor, Diary, 20 June 1891, ANL.

120 AMMR, 4 July 1896.

121 Ibid.

122 ATV, October 1913.

Dobuan, rendering the beginning of the last line with the cry 'oioi'; a Dobuan expression of exquisite joy or pain.¹²³ Revivalist and other melodies made a considerable impact on musical evolution in the Massim islands. Seventy years after the collapse of the Marist Mission on Woodlark in 1853, natives of the island could chant hymns taught by the missionaries.¹²⁴

Fijian hymns and choruses represented the outpourings and desires of an overflowing heart. They made an appeal to the emotions: some missionaries would have thought them sentimental. Exactly when the first Fijian translated a Dobuan tune is unknown; but it is fairly probable that an Island teacher seized quickly the didactic possibilities of traditional songs. New tunes were also taught. The results delighted younger Dobuans. 'When the drum beats for practice not a young man or woman can be found at home', wrote a Fijian, 'all are so eager to acquire the new melodies.'¹²⁵

Pacific Island Methodists gave eastern New Guinea a hymnody. They took traditional hunting songs and set them to new words. 'Manua ekaiiale' became 'Aposetolo ebweu' (one apostle);¹²⁶ other hunting songs were turned into the hymns 'Sitibeni ina mwawasa' (Stephen dead), and 'Edeedele uwodiee, Edeedele uwono' (Jesus' first miracle: water to wine). Having adapted traditional songs, Methodists turned to British hymns, Island choruses, and chants from Suau. The Dobuan hymnody reflected the international composition of Methodist missions.¹²⁷

At the centre of Mission activity religious acculturation came early: on the outskirts of the Wesleyan sphere - Rossel, Murua, and Kiriwina - it was much slower. Within a month of their arrival the Fijians, mindful of the rapid conversion of their own islands, were predicting a rapid success: 'for see', said Poate Ratu, 'we have been here only a short time, yet many of them have bought calico to

123 AMMR, 4 July 1896.

124 AMMR, 4 May 1915.

125 NG District, AR 1898-9, xxi. By 1894 20 hymns had been composed or translated by Bromilow; MR, 5 August 1941.

126 See Appendix 1.1.

127 Chalmers wrote that in the Torres Straits hymns were borrowed from English, Mabuiag, Rarotongan, Samoan, Lifu, China Straits, Motu, and Toaripi languages. J. Chalmers to R.W. Thompson, Saguane, 3 October 1896, PL.

wrap round them, and one Sunday fully 300 attended a preaching service.'¹²⁸
By March 1892, Poate Ratu said that he could not 'find anyone who hates the lotu. Both men and women say with one voice "Kausara Tavaroro" (the lotu is good).'¹²⁹ Six years later, he reflected:

I often think of the Christian work here. It really has made an impact. Only seven years have passed and we already have the New Testament as well as hymns translated. 130

Pilato Simili was equally adamant. 'Christianity is definitely established here', he wrote, 'People are gradually turning to our religion.'¹³¹

THE attempt to maintain relations between Fijians and Papuans at a platonic level caused missionary patrons more worry than any other domestic question. Ten of the first twenty-two Fijian missionaries were bachelors;¹³² and for a predominantly youthful male group, the question of emotional and domestic relations with Papuan women was of obvious interest. But if Wesleyan precedent was any guide it was not alarming. The stability of kinship ties in Fiji, and the state of rectitude in which the vakavuvuli and catechists were believed to live - there were lapses, but these were few - argued favourably for Fijians abroad. Yet the idea of restraint breaking loose on isolated island atolls could not altogether be dismissed.

128 AMMR, 2 November 1891. See also J.W. Burton, Papua for Christ, 67.

129 AMMR, 4 March 1892. The term tapwaroro or 'bend-the-knee' replaced lotu in New Guinea. See also G.C. Henderson, Fiji..., 127.

130 ATV, 26. A contemporary account from New Britain reveals the Fijian impact, emphasis on outward habits rather than inward conviction: 'Christianity is thriving. They are gradually leaving their barbarous habits. Most of them are attending church services faithfully and most of them are wearing clothes. They no longer work on Sundays. They rejoice at the thought of hearing sermons.' ATV, October 1908.

131 ATV, March 1898; see also AMMR, 2 November 1891.

132 For an account of the substitution of single for married Fijians in the first contingent, see L. Fison, Pilato..., 4. The single men were Poate Ratu, Samisoni Bola, Jofesa, Inosi, Pilato Silimiratu, Pilato (Fijian), Fausia and Gasese, and two unnamed men. Methodist Account Book 1893, SA; W.E. Bromilow, op. cit., 61.

Because Victorian reticence demanded silence on the subject of sex, details of European irregularities in the Pacific are generally veiled in ambiguity.¹³³ Immorality among Island missionaries, however, was not concealed; little escaped the notice of a Methodist missionary. N. Chalmers, a Magistrate at Macuata in Vanua Levu thought that the 'system of espionage' practised by the Wesleyan authorities was 'almost as perfect as that of France or Russia'.¹³⁴ The data which exists of trials, judgments, and dismissals may reasonably be taken as the full measure and not the top of an iceberg. The great majority of Fijian missionaries, like their European colleagues, appear to have practiced continence.

To an extent, however, marriage legitimised incipient relationships between Fijians and Papuans. Methodists, though ascetic in other directions, were realists where marriage was concerned. Celibacy was neither expected nor esteemed. According to a Methodist Sister, Dobuan girls took the initiative with Fijians, securing consent 'through sheer persistence in personal application'.¹³⁵ Marriages were performed in public with a white-coated Fijian leading a Papuan clothed in one of Lilly Bromilow's pinafores. In 1897 four marriages had been celebrated in Dobu church - Poate Ratu, joined to Fani Negilimai, looked 'an ideal happy bridegroom'¹³⁶ - and by 1899 there were six mixed marriages. 'These men', reported Pilato Ratu, 'are leading a happy life'; for their New Guinea wives were 'all firm believers in Jesus Christ'.¹³⁷

Rather than revealing a male dominance that might have been expected in a paternalist enterprise, most Fijian-Papuan marriages displayed the energetic exercise of feminine power beside the hearth.

133 No Wesleyan missionaries in New Guinea were dismissed on moral grounds. E.W. Harrison however, resigned from Murua mission station, divorced his wife and married a Papuan. No LMS missionaries were dismissed. Two Anglicans, N. Dodds and F. Smithson, both artisans, were dismissed before 1904 for immorality. See D. Wetherell, 'A History...', 57. Monckton records a lay brother of the Sacred Heart Mission who resigned to marry a Papuan. C.A.W. Monckton, Some Experiences..., 60.

134 Quoted in W.L. Allardyce to Chairman Wesleyan Mission, Suva, 31 August 1899, FDC.

135 J. Benjamin, Victoriana..., 26.

136 M. Billing, Diary, 4 August 1897, MOM 150.

137 ATV, August 1897.

Ratu Isei breathed in confidence about his wife Margaret of Egadoi to Bromilow: 'She is clever, can make mats and washes... but one thing sir, she talks to me sometimes as if I were a child. She tells me she will not have me making the blunders some have made.'¹³⁸ With a few exceptions, Fijians remained in the country of their marriage and their children were New Guineans by inheritance. Their superiors were opposed to Papuan wives being taken to Fiji.¹³⁹ The majority of the 23 children born of mixed marriages before 1911¹⁴⁰ inherited their mothers' land: some, in an apostolic succession, inherited their fathers' pulpits. At Bwaidoga, father and son occupied the same preaching station for over 40 years.¹⁴¹

'Satan comes as lightning', wrote Pilato Silimiratu in 1899, 'and disappears quickly like lightning... Christian work is progressing but there are many temptations.'¹⁴² Indeed there were; and there were some that could not be summarily brushed aside. If there was little tippling at the brandy bottle,¹⁴³ no gambling and no desecration of the Sabbath, the yakavuvuli were exposed to other diversions. Thus, Etonia at Panahera was warned in 1898 against familiarity with New Guinea women¹⁴⁴ and others were counselled against the trading fraternity. In his loneliness the missionary was visited by traders, some Fijians like himself, and how could he refuse hospitality to his own countrymen? The Island traders, the Fiji District Synod believed,

138 AMMR, 4 October 1905. Some Fijian-Papuan marriages were deferred until the Papuan partner was given further Mission instruction. Kolinio Qio was the first of those who had to await European permission. Panaeiti QM, 11 February 1899. In 1905 Qio was charged with adultery; two other Fijians were also charged at the same meeting. Panahera QM, 20 April 1905, 4 January 1906, SA.

139 B. Danks to M.K. Gilmour, Sydney, 12 July 1910, MOM 231.

140 M.K. Gilmour to A.J. Small, Ubuia, 2 January 1911, SA.

141 Laisani Leleca, Interview, Dobu, 8 May 1972. The preachers were Molitikei Mata and his son. Mata (Bwaidoga 1906, Dobu and Begassi 1917), died in 1917. ATV, January 1918. See also M.K. Gilmour to R.L. McDonald, Salamo, 22 August 1928, FDC.

142 ATV, January 1899.

143 In 1901 Fausia and Kolinio Qio were charged with drinking liquor in a white man's house at Misima; Panaeiti QM, Minutes, 28 December 1901.

144 Panahera QM, 8 March 1898, SA.

tempted teachers in villages 'exposed to... evil and corrupting influences'.¹⁴⁵ Copra-making and trading were but two of these temptations;¹⁴⁶ as for the others, no missionary with experience of what MacGregor called the 'profligate' women of Kiriwina needed to be told what these were.¹⁴⁷

A few Fijians who married Papuans fell from grace: and after Poate Ratu's dismissal¹⁴⁸ Methodists became more wary of mixed marriages. The 1913 Synod declared that they should be discouraged, for 'the men in too many cases get astray',¹⁴⁹ but there were mixed marriages after 1913 and some were useful to the Methodist cause. Metuisela Fifita, the son of Kolinio Qio who arrived in 1895, married a Panaeiti woman. 'All other Missionaries have been as visitors in our midst', said a Massim. 'Metuisela was one of us.' Marriage, the Methodists believed, had made him a Papuan.¹⁵⁰ Such missionaries as

145 Fiji District Synod, Minutes, FDC.

146 For laws forbidding Fijians from employing Papuans, see NG District by-laws, 1899/267, 1922/524, 1922/694. Three teachers trading in 1899 had 15 copra bags emptied into the sea and 40 tobacco sticks repaid to the white traders. Panaeiti QM, 11 February 1899, SA.

147 Within 30 days of the Methodist landing on Kiriwina the Fijian Joape Narara was ordered back to Dobu because of 'temptations from the native women'. S.B. Fellows, Diary, 1 October 1894, ANG. Apart from Opetaiia Muanivanua, Kolinio Qio, Poate Ratu, Misateka, Ani Raveli son of Josefata Kasa who came in 1895, were charged with adultery in New Guinea. W.E. Bromilow to A.J. Small, Dobu, 18 November 1901, FDC. M.K. Gilmour to A.J. Small, Ubuia, 16 October 1907, FDC. Five years had to elapse before a teacher found guilty of adultery was reinstated. NG District by-laws, 1911, SA.

148 A.J. Small to G. Brown, Bau, 14 January 1902, FDC. Poate Ratu's resignation read: 'Let me retire at once from my work. I am sinful and guilty in the eyes of God. I have made unclean the work. Let me go right away at once.' W.E. Bromilow to A.J. Small, Dobu, 18 November 1901, FDC. Another Fijian confessed to his Dobuan congregation: 'I have done wrong and am foolish. I repent. You know my sin. Pray for me.' AMMR, 4 October 1905. Molitikei Mata, who married a Papuan, also was dismissed in 1907 for immorality. He was reinstated five years later. NG District Synod Minutes 1917, MOM 181.

149 NG District Synod Minutes 1913, MOM 181.

150 Metuisela Fifita was a local preacher from 1903, married in 1905, visited Fiji for some years and returned to Papua in 1926. He died in 1939. NG District Synod Minutes, 1939, SA.

Fifita were not separated from their flocks by vows of celibacy, nor by marriage with alien women, nor by racial convention. They were followed only for their religious character.

III

JUST as Britons never would be slaves, early Wesleyans in Fiji were confident that Fijian citizens of the British empire enjoyed their own liberties.¹⁵¹ But imperial protection was compatible with racial convention, and spiritual brotherhood did not mean necessarily an equal share in this world's goods. The Wesleyan mission in New Guinea was pluralistic, not egalitarian.

To observers at Dobu, race relations among missionaries of five races must have seemed outwardly harmonious. Fijians, Samoans, Rotumans, Tongans and Europeans worshipped a common Creator;¹⁵² friendly relations with a potential enemy were created, suspicion allayed, and land acquired. There was no expressed interest in the relative privileges of tonugana and vakavuvuli: what mattered above all was the conversion of the heathen.

Fiji was a chiefly society. Fijians, moreover, were nurtured in the bosom of Methodism and their minds were stamped with religious impressions from the beginning. Their deference to the church increased on arrival in Sydney. Visits to military parades, Government House, Darlinghurst gaol and St Andrew's Cathedral¹⁵³ confirmed their awe of the European power behind the church. 'What do these people worship God for - they are gods themselves - why don't they worship themselves',¹⁵⁴ exclaimed a Fijian in Sydney. An Island wife added, 'We Fijians felt like this. God is here', pointing to the top of her hand, 'these white people here', indicating her middle finger, 'and we are down here', pointing to her wrist.¹⁵⁵ Traditional

151 See T.P. Lucas, Cries from Fiji, 58.

152 M. Billing, Diary, 11 January 1896, MOM 150.

153 L. Fison, ed., Pilato..., lff.

154 M. Billing, Diary, 10-11 January 1896, MOM. AMMR, 4 November 1905, 4; see also ATV, February 1911.

155 M. Billing, Diary, 10-11 January 1896, MOM. The Fijians were customarily addressed as 'rangone' or 'children' by their European elders. In Sydney Pilato Silimiratu reported that 'the small boys... danced around us, made impertinent signals on their noses, and shouted "Possum!" with other original remarks, among which were queries as to where we were going to perform, and what we would charge for admission.' L. Fison, Pilato..., V.

deference to chiefs moulded a hierarchical perception of authority. 'Again and again I was moved by their simple, high devotion', wrote Bromilow, 'As I spoke to them... they replied, "Sir, tell us where you wish us to go and we will go."¹⁵⁶

Fijians went where they were told, and for ten years they worked under difficult conditions in New Guinea without complaint. Their behaviour was regulated by a Synod in which they had little say. Within thirty years the Synod had enacted almost 300 by-laws,¹⁵⁷ many of which touched the domestic finances of Island teachers. Europeans were constantly anxious as to the prodigality of Fijians: frugality and hoarding ran contrary to Fijian liberality. £1 was granted for a Fijian's clothes and £1 for his wedding.¹⁵⁸ All fruit was to be collected and sent to the head station.¹⁵⁹ Baptismal and marriage fees belonged to the Superintendent.¹⁶⁰ Coconuts were the mission's property, not the teacher's.¹⁶¹ Even postage stamps were carefully entered under 'stationery' in the educational grant.¹⁶² The amount of tobacco was carefully regulated: the longer a teacher's service, the greater his financial reliability, and the more tobacco allowed.¹⁶³

There was an implicit economic conflict between European and Fijian perceptions of Christianity. 'Methodists in every place grow diligent and frugal;' Wesley had written, 'consequently they increase in goods.'¹⁶⁴ But Ratu Niko Rabuku preached to Australians on a different text, 'Ye were not redeemed with incorruptible things such as silver and gold.'¹⁶⁵ He told them that all the wealth they had in Australia would not buy them the smallest allotment in heaven. As an English supervisor once remarked, if liberality earned salvation, Fijians would go to heaven in droves.¹⁶⁶

156 W.E. Bromilow, *op. cit.*, 76.

157 NG District by-laws, SA.

158 NG District by-laws 1891/233.

159 Ibid.

160 Ibid., 1901/278.

161 Ibid., 1905/293; 1920/492.

162 Ibid., 1898/263-4.

163 Ibid., 1893/247, 1899/268, 1900/273, 1902/279, 1907/309.

164 See R. Southey, *The Life of Wesley*.

165 G. Brown to A.J. Small, Sydney, 29 December 1904, MOM 51.

166 A.J. Small to M.K. Gilmour, Suva, 17 February 1911, FDC.

There was, however, little apparent disagreement between Fijians and Europeans in the field. On one occasion a Fijian in a temper was said to have threatened to kill and eat his missionary, J.R. Osborne; but the magistrate who hurried across to Bunama to prevent such an occurrence found the report much exaggerated, and went home.¹⁶⁷ Much more common was the submission to law and the European: a Fijian in Kaiserwilhelmsland summed up the year's events with pride:

- 2 We are well here.
- 3 No one has died.
- 4 No one has committed any offence. 168

Submission to chiefs had conditioned Fijians to support rather than question authority.

Subordinate to Europeans, many vakavuvuli left little trace of their occupation on the written records or collective memories of the island Massim. But there were two or three, distilled from the stream of names and stations, who made a decisive personal impression. Simioni Momoivalu was to the Methodist church as James Nogar was to the Anglicans and Ma'anaima to the Kwato Mission. Born in the Yasawas, Momoivalu was converted in boyhood and worked between 1897 and 1921 in the Louisiade and D'Entrecasteaux Islands.¹⁶⁹ Momoivalu and Asana his first wife attained a sway over the Panaeiti people, and by their first furlough in 1910 Gilmour was speaking of Simioni as 'without doubt the finest man that Fiji ever sent to Papua'.¹⁷⁰ There were only seventeen converts when he arrived,¹⁷¹ but by instituting Methodist love-feasts at which testimonials were made,¹⁷² and acting as mediator with the Samarai government in times of conflict, he was

167 RMED OJ 15-27 January 1910, CAO/CRS/G91. The Fijian, Taniela, was fined £2/10/- for threatening Osborne and contempt of court.

168 ATV, February 1913.

169 NG District Synod, 1907, SA. See also W.E. Bromilow, Twenty Years..., 251. A Fijian missionary who served a relatively short period but who was regarded as comparable in ability was Wilisoni Lagi (1925-1930). Lagi was a Native Medical Practitioner seconded by the Fijian government to Salamo Hospital. He was ordained in 1926. H.G. Judkins to R.L. McDonald, Salamo, 24 June 1926, SA; see also Synod Reports 1926-1930, SA.

170 M.K. Gilmour to C.O. Lelean, Ubuia, 24 December 1912, FDC.

171 Panaeiti QM, 3 August 1897, SA.

172 AMMR, 4 February 1913; ATV, January 1913.

largely responsible for the conversion of nearly the whole of Panaeiti to his church. When J.R. Williams arrived as tonugana in 1911, Momoivalu led fourteen Island missionaries and a large number of converts in an enthusiastic welcome; 'he just took Mr Williams in his arms and kissed him, knelt and kissed Mrs Williams' hand'.¹⁷³ But according to his daughter, he was unrelenting in his attitude to multiple marriages:

he preached in the church and said, come bring the woman you like best and bring her to the church and be married. Sometimes ten or twenty were married on one Sunday. The Christian ones were baptized first and married on the same day. It was a busy day for my father. They had a big feast with plenty of pigs. Some of the old wives cried, some were cross; some of the children went with the mother and some with the father. 174

For many European Methodists, Momoivalu was the ideal Fijian missionary. But by the time of his departure in 1921 there were signs that he had attained an ascendancy he had not sought. Younger Fijians compared themselves without him to fatherless children; a European circuit minister more than once complained that Momoivalu, not he, was deemed to be the superintendent of Panaeiti mission.¹⁷⁵

Although their two votes in the Papua Synod represented the voice of a minority, Fijian missionaries therefore enjoyed considerable local prestige within the circuits. In Methodist eyes, the Quarterly Meeting was no purely symbolic or perfunctory gathering. It was, on the contrary, rooted in Wesleyan tradition, backed by church law, and surrounded with the mystique of John Wesley himself. All its main transactions were recorded according to prescribed rules. It entailed

173 B. Danks to Mrs J.R. Williams, Sydney, 28 February 1911, MOM 57; AMMR, 4 May 1911.

174 Esitei Momoivalu, Interview, Suva, 5 August 1971. Momoivalu carried the anti-tobacco crusade to New Guinea, but the zeal had abated in Fiji. At the height of the campaign B. Thomson wrote that 'a large number of native teachers wear a blue ribbon on their shirt-fronts as a token that they have abjured tobacco and yankona, and suspend conspicuously in their houses a card bearing the legend, Sa tabu na yacona kei na tavako (drinking and smoking are forbidden).' B. Thomson, The Fijians..., 350.

175 M.K. Gilmour to C.O. Lelean, Ubuia, 24 December 1912, FDC. Panahera QM, 5 May 1904, SA.

the ceremonial of the communion service; it implied frequent consultation between missionaries. With a majority of Islanders in the Quarterly Meetings the Fijians and Samoans would have been able, had they wished, to command voting on every issue.

That Methodism worked efficiently in the circuits was partly due to harmony between Fijians and Europeans. Surviving records of Quarterly Meetings point to an atmosphere of acrimony between Fijians and their Samoan colleagues,¹⁷⁶ an acrimony which Polynesians imbued with the idea of racial superiority often engendered in their 'inferiors'. There is evidence too that relations with Rotuman missionaries were often far from satisfactory. No European needed to assert his own ascendancy while Islanders were so divided. It was during this time that the titles Tonugana for European and Etuetue or Teeita for Islander were promulgated by Synod.¹⁷⁷ Fourteen years after missionaries were divided by title in 1901, Synod resolved that, except in unusual cases, only Europeans would be permitted to use the Methodist cottage in Samarai.¹⁷⁸ At meals, Europeans sat on chairs, Islanders on mats: 'The natives would not be comfortable at the Table'¹⁷⁹ said Minnie Billing. Discriminating scales of salary continued to divide white from black Wesleyans.

Fijians however did not strive for identity with Europeans. The Panaeiti Quarterly Meeting of August 1898 requested permission to eat English food aboard the Waverley,¹⁸⁰ and a Fijian in New Georgia

176 For details of quarrels between Fijians and Samoans, see Panaeiti QM Minutes, 16 March 1897, 8 March 1898, 1 September 1900, SA. In 1926 M.K. Gilmour reported ill feeling between Fijians and Rotumans was largely because Fijians represented Rotumans at Synods. M.K. Gilmour to Churchward, Salamo, 17 December 1926, SA. C.O. Lelean to M.K. Gilmour, Davuilevu, 30 October 1924, SA.

177 NG District by-laws, 1901/275. The term Etuetune or 'Native Minister' was abolished in 1932 and replaced by 'Fijian Minister'. NG Synod 1932, SA.

178 District Synod Minutes, 20 October 1915, SA.

179 M. Billing, Diary, 13 June 1895, MOM 150.

180 Panaeiti QM, 18 August 1898, 5 June 1900. Fellows breakfasted with Island teachers at Panaeiti during his term there. S.B. Fellows, Diary, 25 December 1891, ANG.

once asked for admission to Synod.¹⁸¹ The second request anticipated Fijian entry to the Synods of the three Methodist Districts in western Melanesia, but nowhere is there evidence that Fijians ate in the European manner. Poate Ratu's description perhaps indicated a state of mind well satisfied with the notion of a European patriarchy:

In Fiji the chiefs helped the missionaries, and the people were obedient to their word, so that the lotu went swiftly to all the islands to the coast tribes, and inland also, and within fifty years all Fiji was lotu...182

Fijians, who heard Brown called 'the true father of the... peoples of the Pacific' and 'The Saviour of Polynesia',¹⁸³ accepted the hyperbole and submitted to such Europeans as Bromilow and Gilmour without question. Like the Samoans, wrote Danks, 'they will not yield an inch to each other, but like good Methodists, they will loyally observe the decisions of the heads of their Church'.¹⁸⁴ Methodists commended the 'loyal devotion' of the Islanders; and the vice-regal atmosphere of their travels was once compared with the visitations of a colonial governor.¹⁸⁵

Although the Samoa Synod had asked colleagues in New Britain and New Guinea to admit two Samoans as Native Ministers to their Synods,¹⁸⁶ most Methodists believed that Fijians remained content under European direction. At Panaeiti, Simioni Momoivalu was the living disproof of the argument that European hegemony caused Fijian passivity. But George Brown was in favour of conceding greater power to Fijian vakavuvuli. By 1900 Brown was arguing that the Fiji Synod would have to 'give more self-governing power to our people in Fiji

181 Aminio Bale, of the Solomon Islands Mission. '... they said, that they two selves constitute the Synod, and that no Fijian had a seat there... they two have deceived us...'. A. Bale to G. Brown, Bambatane, 29 December 1906, MOM 226. Aminio Bale's Fijian colleagues dissociated themselves from his complaint.

182 AMMR, 4 March 1892.

183 NG District Synod 1917, SA.

184 B. Danks to S. Churchward, Sydney, 3 February 1909, MOM 229.

185 J.W. Burton, Papua for Christ, 93.

186 Samoa District Synod Minutes, 1895, SMA.

and prepare them for independence and self-support'.¹⁸⁷ In New Guinea, Europeans also still dominated, but from 1905 Fijian and Samoan members sat on Synod: in Fiji, missionaries fearful of Fijian prodigality with money resisted representation on Financial Synod.¹⁸⁸ There probably was a connection of cause and effect between tension at home and languid progress abroad. So long as Fijians chafed beneath the constraints of Europeans in Fiji they were unlikely to be enthusiasts for missions under Europeans in New Guinea.

Missionary strategy in eastern New Guinea depended heavily at a crucial stage on the Pacific Island agency.¹⁸⁹ Just as colonial structures rested on the deployment of field officers about Resident Magistrates, so Methodist polity used a concentric system of Islanders radiating from European Ministers. Unlike their political counterparts, however, Methodist strategists such as Brown envisaged the day when their dominance would become unnecessary. When a sufficient number of native workers had been gathered, the burden of responsibility would be transferred from Europeans and Islanders to New Guineans.¹⁹⁰

Such a blueprint had to be reconciled with Melanesian politics. In most societies outside Kiriwina the centre of authority was found to be poorly developed, and the process of transference became agonisingly slower than in Polynesia. As Poate Ratu observed, 'these people have no real chiefs whose word all men follow, as we have in Fiji, and this is a bad thing'.¹⁹¹ Instead of repatriating

187 G. Brown to W.E. Bromilow, Sydney, 13 March 1900, MOM 47. Danks wrote of 'growing discontent' among Fijians about representation on Church Synods. B. Danks to A.J. Small, Sydney, 15 November 1904, MOM 51. NG District Synod Minutes, 29 October 1917, SA.

188 Fijians were elected to Synod in Suva from 1907 and were on voting equality with Europeans. However, they were not permitted entry to sessions dealing with money or the character of Fijian ministers. See AWMMS Minutes 1907, 47-56; A.J. Small to G. Brown, Suva, 4 November 1902, FDC; A.J. Small to A.B. Ballantyne, Suva, 10 September 1914, FDC.

189 In the Methodist Mission, for example, there were by 1897 27 Island teachers in the Dobu Circuit, 8 at Panaeiti, 7 at Tubetube, and 3 at Kiriwina, a total of 45. There were only 4 white missionaries and 5 white sisters, a total of 9. BNG AR 1897-8, xxx.

190 AMMR, 4 March 1892.

191 *Ibid.*

Islanders overseas, missionary patrons were obliged to appeal for more. Throughout the period of expansion into Melanesia the older fields were besieged with appeals for replenishment; and Fiji, being on the Melanesian perimeter, became inevitably the main recruiting ground.¹⁹²

European missionaries wrote of the 'tremendous force'¹⁹³ of Fijian interest in the founding of new missions. In 1891 the Fijian people of the Wesleyan circuits had been told they were called to a national vocation. To have a national vocation, however, it was necessary to have specific goals and clearly delineated responsibilities, and in the long run these were absent. At first New Guinea recruited well among Fijian students,¹⁹⁴ but the geographic size of the New Guinea field created enormous tactical problems which no other field presented on so vast a scale. 'We are like a banana tree that is ready to fall', wrote a Fijian teacher, 'and a pole has to be brought and stuck into the ground by it to hold it up.'¹⁹⁵ The creation of the Solomon Islands Mission in 1902 broke the monopoly of the Papua Mission over the missionary energy of the Fijians.

To Fijians western Melanesia was a cause. To the 'general' of Methodist Missions, George Brown, it was also an exercise in strategy: the diffusion of as much Fijian missionary influence over as wide an area as possible. The proliferation of mission fields making demands - more heathen, hence more missionaries needed - siphoned off the flow to the original missions. Whereas Australian and New Zealand colonials knew little and cared less about Melanesian missions, Fijians were intensely aware of the activities of their countrymen battling against danger and the natural elements in New Guinea. Their emissaries, as contemporary records make clear, had

192 After 1911 the church in Tonga assumed responsibility for the Solomon Islands, the Samoa and Fiji churches for New Britain, and the Fiji church for Papua. The Tongan allocation was made because of the apparent preference of Solomon Islanders for Tongan teachers. Samoans were sent to New Britain (Kaiserwilhelmsland) because of their common German affiliation. AWMMS Minutes, 2 June 1911, MOM.

193 A.J. Small to G. Brown, Bau, 17 April 1902, FDC.

194 G. Brown to J.T. Field, Sydney, 30 March 1893, MOM 43.

195 AMMR, 4 March 1892.

gone forth on the crest of a wave of national sympathy that bordered on exhilaration. Within three years the Mission had produced five 'martyrs', made no converts, translated no scriptures and spent over £10,000. Yet the number of volunteers for the second and third parties outstripped the capacity of the Mission to employ them. The heavy emphasis on suffering and death in Ai Tukutuku Vakalotu suggested that all Fiji wished vicariously to share in the idea of heroism which accompanied the steps of a Christian soldier 'even unto death'.¹⁹⁶ As concrete monuments attested to these sufferings on the mission field,¹⁹⁷ so marble memorials indicated soon afterwards the sacrifice of Fijians in European warfare. Returning Fijian missionaries in Sydney after World War I pointed proudly to the names of Fijian soldiers on an Australian honour roll,¹⁹⁸ knowing that in sermons and religious pamphlets they themselves were also frequently referred to as 'soldiers'. The Methodist saying, 'Our people die well' was indicated in death-bed repose of Fijians.¹⁹⁹

Pioneering, like soldiering, quickly became ~~obsolete~~^{obsolete} once goals were achieved. The decline of elementary human difficulties paradoxically meant a reduction in the very appeal that the more primitive challenges of New Guinea posed to the Fijian. This was registered in the fact that there was usually a longer list of Fijian passengers on the return than the outward voyage.²⁰⁰ The first hint of trouble was given by Pilato Similiratu in 1897, who wrote that he

196 See ATV, October 1900, November 1908.

197 The marble monument was erected near the site of the murder of Thomas Baker in 1869, and another on the site of the Fijian landing in the Duke of York islands in 1875. A.H. Fellmann to A.J. Small, Raluana, 13 April 1909; A.J. Small to - Steel, Suva, 15 July 1907, FDC.

198 ATV, March 1916.

199 NG District Synod Minutes, 1907, SA; ATV, May 1910. In 1894 Fijians in the Louisiades decided to make Panaeiti a necropolis for missionaries. Panaeiti QM, 27 March 1894; see also 15 March 1900, SA. T.P. Lucas, writing in about 1885, noted that Fijians appointed the day of their death and made preparations for the event. T.P. Lucas, Cries From Fiji..., 44.

200 In June 1895, for example, a total of 50 passengers returned to Fiji from the two missions. ATV, September 1896.

had to preach five or six times each Sunday at Wewemara.²⁰¹ Soon afterwards, two others wrote that they each had to preach to 1000 people in one day. Letters from Josua Matenaniu and Poate Ratu in Kiriwina, Timoci Drugu in New Ireland, and Eroni Botecicikobia in New Britain reproachfully drew attention to the abundance of preachers in Fiji. Conditions were safer; the amount of acculturation was intensifying; but, taken as a whole, the missionary task was now less interesting to the sons of converted warriors, who began returning to their homeland in increasing numbers. It was easier to start a mission with Fijians than keep it going.

As numbers fell, Methodist patrons increased the number of spectacular public farewells: Fijians must not be allowed to believe that only the first band of 1891 were heroes. The dangers of cannibals were advertised; massed farewells were staged; the recruits were presented gifts at Government House. In June 1899 fourteen fresh workers and their wives went forth from a liturgy of three nationalities:

Before the service, the church was packed with Europeans and other races... the Superintendent performed a baptismal service for an Indian... Some of the new recruits spoke during the service. There was a missionary from Scotland who also delivered a speech. The Superintendent from Rewa... made each one of us examine our consciences. Everyone came to shake hands with each recruit as they were leaving at one o'clock next morning. 202

On arrival in New Guinea, the recruits were welcomed with a feast of pigs, chickens and Fijian pudding by resident vakavuvuli. In return, those from Bau and Bua presented gifts of mats and copies of Ai Tukutuku Vakalotu recording the achievements of Fijians in New Guinea.²⁰³

Even with this pattern of advertisement, elaborate farewells, arrivals, and exaltation of national pride, attracting a flow of Fijians to the mission field proved extremely difficult. 'You speak of 20 or 30 teachers as if we had only to give an order for them like Groceries or Draperies...' ²⁰⁴ wrote a nettled Brown to Bromilow.

201 Pilato Similiratu wrote, 'I have to preach five or six times. I desperately need help.' ATV, August 1897. See also AWMMS, AR 1891-2; A.J. Small to C. Bleazard, Suva, 26 May 1905, 14 November 1895; A.J. Small to W.E. Bromilow, Suva, 8 August 1905, FDC.

202 ATV, July 1899; *ibid.*, June 1897.

203 *ibid.*, July 1899, August 1897, February 1900.

204 G. Brown to W.E. Bromilow, Sydney, 17 January 1895, MOM 44.

Impulsive ardour had been dampened by scrutiny, and the repetition of missionary rhetoric after 1899 competed with vociferous criticism of missionary policy by Fijians themselves. Sent out under crude conditions formerly accepted under the flag of heroism, Islanders later complained that hastily provisioned ships were an insult and arrived with feelings considerably ruffled. The 1905 voyage of the George Brown was an instance. Twenty-three embarking Fijians found the saloon full of lumber and the crew sprawled in the cabins. Having shifted the cargo the band set off for more volunteers in Samoa.

With the wretched accommodation left for the brave Teachers... [wrote Small] I was deeply concerned. We had to pack the company away where we could, and yet as many again scrambled on board after that at Samoa. I fear we have earned a bad name over the trip. 205

Fijian missionary expectations of the personal dignity of chiefs and pastors cannot have been satisfied aboard a rolling, badly laden vessel, even though coastal steamers in New Guinea like the Bulldog and Titus were probably no better. The 1905 voyage of the George Brown was long remembered among Fijian volunteers in Melanesian fields.

Acrimonious relations aboard ship sometimes added insult to injury. Unable to speak Fijian, the Captain of the George Brown admitted using 'vile language' on one occasion to teachers, which was apparently well understood. Filimoni Matewai, a Fijian teacher, was a notorious example to his colleagues. He quarrelled with the cook, he quarrelled with the crew, and, in the interval, he quarrelled with the captain. In 1909, the entire Fijian and Samoan contingent sank their differences to indict the captain, a procedure which may well have been more acceptable to him than open mutiny.

Complaints and letters about conditions in the field resulted in a resolve by some Fijians to abandon earlier decisions. After a letter from Rabaul criticising conditions there, said Brown, 'volunteers all say "not to New Britain, but to New Guinea we go".'²⁰⁶ This

205 A.J. Small to A.H. Fellmann, Suva, 15 November 1905, FDC. Small wrote of the 1905 voyage: 'Had some of them refused to go in a ship so shamefully over-crowded they would have been perfectly justified by the circumstances.'
A.J. Small to J.R. Osborne, Suva, 19 September 1905, FDC. See also A.J. Small to M.K. Gilmour, Suva, 10 February 1909, FDC; A.J. Small to M.K. Gilmour, Suva, 8 January 1918, FDC; B. Danks to E.G. Neil, Sydney, 7 March 1912, MOM 60.

206 G. Brown to J.F. Goldie, Sydney, 30 June 1904, MOM 150.

criticism touched the minds of two energetic Fijians, Aminio Bale of New Georgia and Filimoni Matewai of Dobu. Both Bale and Matewai claimed discrimination by Europeans: Bale accused J.F. Goldie of chicanery; Matewai denounced Gilmour for inadequate victualling.²⁰⁷ Bale's letter was described by S.R. Rooney as 'a pack of lies from beginning to end' and its author dismissed from the Mission.²⁰⁸ In 1910 Matewai was still in New Guinea, despite a protest by sixteen Fijian colleagues against his letter.²⁰⁹ He therefore addressed a further letter to the Fijian Government: would the Government intervene to grant him a passage, as the Wesleyans would not provide transport home? The claim was no more than a flagrant untruth, as the George Brown had not arrived for the return voyage.²¹⁰ A complaint from New Britain about salaries added a chorus to earlier grievances from New Guinea and the Solomons.²¹¹

The missionary circle which locked together Fiji and New Guinea was endless. The second produced more and more demands which the first was expected to supply. With demands from three fields, Fijian institutions soon became exhausted. In 1904, Brown was 'greatly grieved and pained' that not a single Fijian could be found for missions overseas;²¹² four years later Small was suggesting compulsory

207 J.F. Goldie to A.J. Small, Rubiana, 2 November 1908; A.J. Small to J.F. Goldie, Suva, 9 June 1909, FDC; W.E. Bromilow to A.J. Small, Dobu, 21 December 1907, FDC.

208 See S.R. Rooney to A.J. Small, Choiseul, 17 March 1907, FDC. The standard Fijian ration in Melanesian districts was 56 lb of rice, 6 lb of tobacco, 30 pipes, 6 dozen matches, soap, lamp, kerosene, boiler, bucket, utensils, scissors, axe, knife, fishing lines, hooks, mosquito net, clothes, print, medicine and mending thread. S.R. Rooney to A.J. Small, Choiseul, 17 March 1907.

209 ATV, August 1911. Josefata Matailagi, loyal to the European staff, wrote to the elders in Fiji that 'It is not right for us to criticise his Ministers and it is fitting for us to be forgiving like the prophets (James 5:9-12)'. ATV, March 1911. William Taufu added, 'We shall be grateful to obtain two or three catechists from Fiji and let them disbelieve all reports about us. We blame ourselves for the bad conditions that exist here: the Ministers are not to be blamed for it. It is only right that we inform you of this.' ATV, November 1912.

210 See NG District Synod Minutes, 1910, SA.

211 A.H. Fellmann to A.J. Small, Raluana, 27 May 1909; B. Danks to M.K. Gilmour, Sydney, 16 March 1910, MOM 230.

212 G. Brown to S.R. Rooney, Sydney, 1 July 1904, MOM 50.

appointments to the field.²¹³ The anxieties of the Fiji Government about the drift to the western missions had long been apparent;²¹⁴ and in 1908 Small was nervously asking Fellmann of New Britain, 'Suppose the Fiji Government were to institute enquiries into our treatment of the teachers?'²¹⁵ When enquiries were begun in 1911, the Governor of Fiji refused permission for Methodist missions to remove teachers from their homeland.²¹⁶

Even though the government's action was revoked in 1913, discontent in Melanesian fields had had a fatal effect. Although Fiji's responsibility was reduced to New Britain and New Guinea, with Tonga assuming teachers for the Solomons field and Samoa assisting Fiji, there were still recurrent recruiting difficulties. Sir Francis May thought the 'evil' of Fijian missions would rectify itself.²¹⁷ A few responded to Ponipati Vula's appeal in 1912 in an article entitled 'The Door is Open Once Again':

Tonga and Samoa have done their work well. How are we doing our work? We should go to make it Jesus' land. Let's go and hoist the flag of the Cross. Let's respond to the call and answer their request to satisfy the native people. 218

In December 1912 a despairing article appeared in Ai Tukutuku Vakalotu entitled, 'Has Fiji Given Up?' The author, a Fijian, said that the young men of his country had turned away from Christ's words, 'Go therefore and make disciples of all nations', and remarked that it seemed that 'the people have now desired to acquire things for themselves rather than for Christ'.²¹⁹ Religious zeal had given way to a more calculating mentality. Ponipate Vula thought most Fijians quietly thought to themselves that New Guinea was far away; it was a

213 A.J. Small to M.K. Gilmour, Suva, 23 September 1908, FDC.

214 Colonial Secretary to A.J. Webb, Levuka, 13 December 1884, FDC.

215 In 1903, moreover, A.J. Small had expressed surprise that the Governor of Fiji had made no demur about Fijian departures. A.J. Small to W.E. Bromilow, Suva, 15 December 1903, FDC.

216 L.V. Harcourt to A.J. Small, Suva, 4 April 1912, CSO/40/12. For a brief study of the development of Fijian government policy towards Methodist missions outside Fiji, and the Methodist response, see Appendix B.

217 CSO Minute paper, 740/12, FNA.

218 ATV, October 1912.

219 Ibid., December 1912.

land of black water fever; many Fijians had died there.²²⁰ By 1914 there were only five Fijian missionaries in New Guinea;²²¹ although dying missionaries requested their comrades to continue the work,²²² only three were left in 1919.²²³ 'My question is... has evangelism in the world come to an end?' asked Apisai Domolailai, 'Fiji is at a standstill.'²²⁴

Clearly the flame of enthusiasm in Fiji and Samoa, which had leapt so high in the three decades after 1875, was burning out. The comforting afterglow - honour rolls, panegyrics, and reminders of the living - flickered wanly over present grievances. Cynicism was rife: Ponipate Vula said there was a saying in Fiji, 'If you are a preacher and also a wise man you should stay in Fiji and serve your own people instead of wasting your talents in faraway lands.'²²⁵ Benjamin Danks knew there was great dissatisfaction; teachers were not satisfied with sacrifice without remuneration; they continually demanded 'more and more' money.²²⁶ The desire for money became a commonplace in religious conversation and in the minds of missionaries seemed to contradict the impression that the vast bulk of Fijians were solidly devout.

In eastern Papua, with the Pacific Islands agency declining in strength, the European role was stretched to embrace preaching, teaching, travelling and organization. As early as 1910 there were only eight of the twenty-two Island stations in the New Guinea mission occupied, the occupants of six of which were due for furlough. With the keystone removed, the whole edifice of Wesleyan activity almost

220 Ibid., November 1918.

221 The three senior missionaries were Simioni Momoivalu, Akariva Josaia, and Esekaia Vodo. Ibid., October 1914.

222 Ibid., May 1914.

223 Ibid., January 1919.

224 Ibid., April 1913; ATV, May 1914, September 1913, October 1913.

225 Ponipate Vula retorted, 'If this saying is still common I pray you to disregard it and volunteer...'. ATV, February 1911. Gilmour said Fijians and Samoans were anxious that they should not have to appeal to Tonga, but said, 'if our lands of Fiji and Samoa fail us then we must ask Tonga'. M.K. Gilmour to A.J. Small, Auckland, 21 January 1920, FDC.

226 B. Danks to W. Brown, Sydney, 6 April 1910, MOM 230.

crumbled beneath the weight of policies imposed upon it in the expansionist beginning of 1891. Bromilow said in 1907 that the mission was an army of generals, with no NCOs.²²⁷

If the material was lacking, it was evident that the strategy would have to be discarded. Solicitous pressure from the Sydney headquarters edged the Europeans closer towards a Papuan ancillary; when M.K. Gilmour wrote that they 'must have South Sea Islanders', Benjamin Danks replied that he did not see any 'must' about it. With the fine young men they had of their own in Papua he was certain, he wrote, that in future 'you must depend on yourselves'.²²⁸ Danks gave the same prescription to Andrew Ballantyne complaining at Bwaidoga about lack of Islanders:

You must put more responsibility on your native teachers - it will be a little trouble to you at first, but after all that is part of your work, that is, making men - try it. 229

Missionaries responded quickly enough to these reproaches by a basic alteration in policy. Sailing boats, they said, must be dispensed with: fewer staff meant that distances would be traversed in oil-driven vessels. The Island institutions would be closed; the centre at Ubuia would be strengthened as a metropolitan training institute for Papuan teachers.²³⁰ These precautions were well informed: the number of Fijian teachers sank back to three in 1918,²³¹ and two in 1925.²³² Nevertheless, Methodists did not ever completely abandon hope that an army of Fijians would one day consolidate their conquests among the islands and coral atolls of the kula trade.

227 W.E. Bromilow to B. Danks, Ubuia, 13 September 1907, SA.

228 B. Danks to M.K. Gilmour, Sydney, 12 August 1910, SA.

229 B. Danks to A. Ballantyne, Sydney, 12 August 1910, SA.

230 NG District Synod Minutes, Ubuia, 1910, SA.

231 One of these was Simioni Momoivalu. In 1915 there were three Fijians, two Rotumans and six Samoans in the Methodist field. The number of Samoans dropped within two years to two. J.G. Wheen to M.K. Gilmour, Sydney, 14 December 1915, MOM 72.

232 Including Wilisoni Lagi.

CHAPTER V

Melanesian teachers

THE Anglican Mission lacked the Polynesian stepping-stones of its Protestant counterparts, but it found a substitute in the Pacific Island labourers of Queensland.¹ Labour recruiting for the Queensland sugar fields had begun in the New Hebrides in the early 1860s, and before 1869 over 1300 New Hebrideans had engaged for three year labour terms in the colony, many from Tana and Malekula.² Beginning with the voyage of the Woodlark in 1871,³ recruiters turned their attention to the Solomon Islands, and by the middle of the 1880s most of the recruits for Queensland came from Malaita and Guadalcanal.⁴ From the 1890s the Solomon Islands became the major source of Melanesian labour for Queensland.⁵ In 1881 there were 6000 Melanesians in the colony; ten years later the number had increased to 9428, most of them young unmarried men.⁶

Overburdened by numbers and enfeebled by lack of money, the Anglican diocese of Brisbane moved hesitantly to absorb these unconverted immigrants. By 1876 Bishop M.B. Hale was alluding in vague terms to a 'sphere of action' among the Islanders;⁷ five years later seventy or eighty were claimed as converts among the Melanesian

1 'It was easy to perceive', wrote McFarlane in 1875, 'how much our teachers have the advantage of us in dealing with a heathen people like those of New Guinea...'. S. McFarlane, 'Report of the Fifth Voyage of the Ellangowan', Somerset, 2 April 1875, PJ.

2 P. Corris, 'Passage, Port and Plantation...', Ph.D. thesis, ANU 1970, 43-4.

3 Ibid., 44-5.

4 Ibid., 60. The fields of Melanesian employment were Queensland, Fiji, New Caledonia and Samoa. Corris estimates an emigration from the New Hebrides, Solomon Islands, Banks and Torres Islands, and the Gilbert Islands involving about 100,000 labourers. Ibid., ix.

5 Ibid., x, 60.

6 Ibid., 100.

7 DofB Synod, 1876 session, Proceedings..., 1, BR.

thousands at Bundaberg and Maryborough.⁸ It was a small enough portion; and Hale ruefully remarked that 'the further you go north the more elementary the work is'.⁹ At a time when missionary activity was being accepted as the yardstick of religious vigour, Hale was discomfited by such slight results, as they pointed to 'a slumbering and decaying church'.¹⁰

In the 1880s, a group of clergy and ladies, influenced by Maclaren's example at Mackay and perhaps that of the Evangelical Young family at Bundaberg,¹¹ began to make amends for past inertia. One of the best known of these was May Goodwin Robinson, wife of a Mackay sugar planter. May Robinson's notions of the correct demeanour of a white lady towards black labourers were distinctly at variance with other members of Maclaren's congregation. It was said that she let Melanesian workers 'wander into her private home... and sit about her parlour as if it were their own', a privilege which she declared they had 'never abused... on any occasion'.¹² In 1882 May Robinson, in the manner of Florence Young, began evening classes in reading, writing, arithmetic, singing and scripture, 'to make [Islanders] good Christian citizens'.¹³ Some time after its opening, the Robinson church and school near Tekowai sugar mill became known as the Selwyn Mission.¹⁴

Interest was kindled also in Bundaberg by the Reverend J.E. Clayton, who opened an Islanders' school in a little thatch hut in 1892. In the evening, the 'Bundaberg Kanaka Mission' was lit by the lamps of the scholars, many of whom besides being 'really devout

8 ABM Report, in General Synod, 1881 session, Proceedings, App. VII, 67, ABM.

9 D of B, op. cit., 1, BR.

10 Ibid.

11 D.L. Hilliard, 'The South Sea Evangelical Mission in the Solomon Islands: The Foundation Years', JPH vol. 4 (1969), 41-64. D.L. Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions in the Solomon Islands', Ph.D. thesis, ANU 1966, 349-50.

12 MN, 17 February 1897, 13; E.C. Rowland, The Tropics for Christ, 104.

13 CC, 1 March 1901, 123.

14 P. Corris, 'Pacific Island Labour Migrants in Queensland', in JPH vol.5 (1970), 61-2; J. Norman, Life's Varied Scenes, 74-5.

followers' could read and write fairly well.¹⁵ When the labourers drifted south, there was an influx of Melanesians into schoolrooms in Bundaberg and Brisbane. In 1892 classes were begun at St John's pro-cathedral by Canon Stone-Wigg and a home was acquired in South Brisbane for men with a church connexion.¹⁶ Francis Pritt opened a school on the Herbert River with a similar Island centre; a third home was acquired on the Burnett River at Bundaberg.¹⁷

To these attempts at benevolence the Islanders responded with varying degrees of enthusiasm. Some were indifferent; others adopted the new religion with a fervour known only to converts. Most colonial settlers did not distinguish one ethnic and linguistic group from another, lumping all together as 'Islanders', 'Kanakas' or erroneously as 'Polynesians', but by 1890 broadly differing characteristics were being discerned among the immigrants. Thus Malaitans had shown themselves as more volatile than other Islanders and among the most aggressive and industrious.¹⁸ If Malaitans often clung more closely to their own customs than other islanders, those among them who accepted Christianity became the most fervent proselytizers among the Melanesians in Queensland.¹⁹ Tanese were much sought by planters for their physique and reliability.²⁰ A number of Island groups came together in the towns to brawl,²¹ and some of the more pious-minded, amongst whom the Malaitans were prominent, banded together to pray and sing. A few could pray in Mota, the tongue then being disseminated

15 The original Bundaberg school stood at Kalkie, where it was staffed by the Reverend W. Morris and the Reverend and Mrs J.E. Clayton, Miss G.C. McIntyre, and Messrs Abraham, Anderson and Fallows.

16 CC, 1 May 1893, 13; ibid., 1 June 1893, 12.

17 CC, 1 March 1893, 13.

18 P. Corris, op. cit., 56-8, 62-3; P. Corris, "'White Australia' in Action", in HS, vol. 15, No. 58, April 1972; CC, 2 September 1895, 13; CC, 1 June 1895, 12.

19 When May Robinson's life was threatened, the Malaitans protected her, in James Norman's words, 'by inscribing on her gate signs which indicated that anyone interfering with her would die the most awful death known to these savages.' J. Norman, op. cit., 74-5.

20 C.G. Bolton, A Thousand Miles Away, 80, 242.

21 Between 1895 and 1906, of the twelve executions for murder in Queensland, eight were of Solomon Islanders, seven of whom were Malaitans. P. Corris, op. cit., 58.

by teachers trained by the Melanesian Mission on Norfolk Island. Converted labourers wore around their necks a medal inscribed with the legend 'Church of England Mission to South Sea Islanders, Queensland'. Those sufficiently advanced to read carried a religious newspaper called South Sea Islanders in Queensland.²² Ethnic and religious identity was grasped eagerly by fragmented immigrant groups in Queensland.

Identity was important to Islanders; but to Churchmen religious affiliation had an importance of a more calculating kind. The value of the Queensland plantations as a training ground for missionaries to heathen multitudes was becoming yearly more apparent. Bundaberg was conceived of as a 'second Norfolk Island' which might rival the Melanesian Mission's sanctuary as a teaching seminary. Visiting the Selwyn schools in 1890, Maclaren hoped to give the Mackay scholars six months' training before sending them to New Guinea; for 'a great thing is that they speak English and will be able to act as interpreters'.²³ When Bishop J.R. Selwyn visited Queensland in 1895, he was besieged by labourers for permission to go to Norfolk Island; instead, he proposed the creation of a college in Bundaberg. On Selwyn's resignation the scheme was abandoned: his successor, Bishop Wilson, instead sent a subscription of £5, bidding Queenslanders to 'make the work hum', and offering to double his subscription. Wilson's paltry response typified the volatile Anglican involvement with Melanesians, and it was no wonder that only 2000 out of 8000 labourers in the colony in 1895 could be numbered as converts of any Christian sect, though many more had had intermittent exposure to Christian teaching.²⁴ The Church Chronicle bewailed the fact that many who might be 'the means of carrying civilization to their fellow-countrymen were returning to their homes in large numbers in no way bettered by the sojourn in Queensland'.²⁵

Islanders trained in a school, however, were not content to return to the Solomons and the New Hebrides; and those who drifted south to Brisbane in the wake of the 1893 depression were among the

22 Published in Bundaberg. CC, 1 November 1894, 13.

23 F.M. Syngé, Albert Maclaren, 74-5.

24 CC, 1 June 1895.

25 CC, 1 June 1895.

first to respond to the cry to preach to the heathen Papuans. Overawed by the magnitude of the task in New Guinea, and encouraged by MacGregor's testimony as to the usefulness of Polynesians to the L.M.S., the Anglicans wasted no time in pointing to the divine command as the duty of converts.²⁶ Two South Sea Islanders were recruited, a hasty service of commissioning held, and the Islanders farewelled. At their valediction in Brisbane, the first Melanesian missionaries

described how they had come to Queensland in ignorance of God, and had learnt of His goodness and love. They felt now that they ought to tell others, who were still as ignorant as they had been, of those glorious truths, and so were going to New Guinea. 27

Religious fervour was not an unmixed motive. Certainly most of the volunteers couched their desires in religious terms. 'A true Christian; with a real desire to work for his Master' was sometimes a testimonial of fitness; yet it may be guessed that fear of unemployment, worldly ambitions, and desire for adventure were also important motives. One, William Maso, was a coachman-gardener who had worked in Brisbane and Sydney. Another, John Dow, was the son of a Fijian sailor shipwrecked on the north Queensland coast and subsequently married to one of his Aboriginal rescuers;²⁸ a number were domestic servants in suburban Brisbane. Offering her servant to Stone-Wigg, a Mrs Benson agreed that he was no missionary zealot but was 'a strong character' who was 'sober and very honest':

I don't know if he would like teaching but he certainly would carry out your wishes and be well able to 'boss' the 'boys' - give Joe a position and make him feel his responsibility and he would do well. 29

To a few Islanders comfortably established in Queensland, the notion of a position in New Guinea made more appeal than that of

26 F. Synge, *op. cit.*, 34. MacGregor published his advice to the Anglican Mission. 'Mr King requires half a dozen European missionaries and at least a score of coloured teachers. The field can never be occupied without the latter.' BNG AR 1893-4, xxvii.

27 MN, 15 March 1895, 19.

28 C.W. Aston, Interview, Suva, 8 August 1971. The oldest of the Melanesian teachers, Peter Mussen, had arrived in Queensland in 1880 and subsequently lived in Sydney. He died at Dogura in 1901. MN, 20 May 1901, 35.

29 L. Benson to M. Stone-Wigg, Brisbane, 10 October 1905, DA.

returning home. Moreover, there was the attractive prospect of a European missionary salary of £25 yearly with which to purchase such luxuries as tinned meat, boots, a shirt, hair oil and scent. Most Islanders, having known by repute of the New Guineans who had worked earlier in the Queensland sugar fields, were aware that they were men 'of their own kind'. Employment in a mission field with European privileges and Anglican status: these were inducements not lightly to be turned down. 'I will come Down to Bundaberg', wrote John Gela, a prospective candidate to his teacher, 'and you send me Down to New Guinea. I like it very much to go there for the way of life.'³⁰ Between 1895 and 1906 no fewer than sixteen Selwyn scholars from Mackay, and eight from Bundaberg, joined the mission in New Guinea.³¹

The arrival of Willie Muiwa and Harry Mark in May 1893 was looked upon by the New Guinea staff as a momentous juncture in its missionary history. Melanesians were now going to preach to other Melanesians, and their interposition would smooth the difficult road of understanding between Europeans and Papuans. Brought to Dogura 'to have their first fever' and learn some Wedauan,³² Harry Mark and Willie Muiwa were then installed at Taupota and Awaiama, the site of MacGregor's hangings in 1889. Here there was trouble. A syncretistic Christian cult had been launched by Abraham Kwararo, the returned Papuan labourer from Townsville who had sold Dogura to Maclaren in 1891. Kwararo's sect had become a 'caricature of Christianity',³³ according to Dogura missionaries, being entirely separate from the English mission and holding its own services. Soon Mark and Muiwa were trying to impose orthodoxy on the followers of the wayward Kwararo, holding school and canvassing Taupotans 'to tell them no work Sunday'.³⁴

30 J.T. Gela to G.C. McIntyre, Bundaberg, 15 February 1906, DA.

31 NGM AR 1906-7, 41; CC, 1 January 1906, 117. Two Melanesians arrived by the steamship Papuan in 1906 without invitation, waiting at Hioge for employment. F.W. Ramsay to M. Stone-Wigg, Samarai, 30 March 1906, DA.

32 NGM 'Notes and News from the Staff', 1905.

33 C. King to M. Stone-Wigg, Dogura, 15 May 1893, DA.

34 CC, 1 July 1893.

Willie Muiwa died shortly afterwards from a meal of poisonous fish at Cape Vogel,³⁵ for which sorcerers claimed credit, although the missionary had told the people his illness was due to natural causes. Four Melanesians joined the staff between 1893 and 1897: in 1898 seven Melanesians signed the mission's Address of welcome to Stone-Wigg. After 1904 Islanders rapidly overhauled Europeans in numbers until in 1908 there were thirty-three Islanders to twenty-three Europeans. For the first two decades of the Anglican Mission, Pacific Islanders represented the Christian cause in greater strength than Europeans.³⁶

Unlike many of their leaders, who were hindered by cultural misunderstanding, internal dissension and frequent illness, Melanesian missionaries had little difficulty in adjusting to their surroundings. Nor did village people, according to fragmentary records, find any difficulty in adapting to Melanesian teachers. Accompanying Willie Holi to open a mission at Boianai in 1895, E.H. Clark wrote that 'Holi being a dark-skinned man was not so extraordinary to them, but I being white was a great curiosity... some of them said I was a child of the Sun'.³⁷ Ethnically similar to the Massim people who dominated the head of Goodenough and Collingwood bays, the Tanese, Abrimese, and Malaitan missionaries had considerable rapport with their congregations. At first, it is true, they were baffled by the intricacies of Binandele or Ubir tongues, but, as Dick Fohohlie of Malaita explained in a letter to May Robinson, this was overcome by continual exposure to the villagers:

I don't understand much of the language here yet - it is hard. Nothing is wrong with us; we stop here and work for God. I do not forget Him day or night... On Sundays we go to other places to hold services. Some places are too far; then two of us go on a

35 C. King to M. Stone-Wigg, Dobu, 13 November 1893, DA. CC, 1 August 1895. Willie Muiwa had been threatened by sorcerers; before dying he disclaimed the influence of sorcery in his illness.

36 Harry Mark, Willie Holi, Peter Mussen, Jack Newa, Dick Bourke, Fred Menema and Bob Tasso signed the Address. For comparative numbers of Islanders and Europeans, see NGM, AR 1898-9 to 1918-19, DA.

37 NGM AR 1906-7, 41; MN, 15 February 1896.

Saturday morning and sleep there - and Sunday morning after Service held we come back to 'Ambasi' - the name of the place where I live. There is not one Christian here yet in Ambasi - it is a new place. 38

Endowed with natural qualities which paved the way for the encounter, Melanesian missionaries nearly always took charge of negotiations with the resident population. The first resident missionaries at Taupota (Harry Mark), Mukawa (Willie Muiwa), Wamira (Bob Tasso), Boianai (Willie Holi), and the Mamba (David Tatoo) were all Pacific islanders.³⁹ These 'gospel ploughmen', as Europeans liked to call them, served as a cultural bridge of considerable value to the Mission.

Some Islanders were more than ordinarily fitted for the task of assimilating Christianity and culture in northern Papua. The special role of James Nogar in articulating the gospel message was vividly remembered in Collingwood Bay. Born at Sonamlo, Tana, in 1876,⁴⁰ Nogar was recruited probably at the age of seventeen for work in the Tweed River sugar fields south of Brisbane. Since older men on Tana controlled kinship customs and monopolised eligible women, younger bachelors such as Nogar had fewer ties to keep them from travelling.⁴¹ Known as a 'thoroughly good fellow and very willing to work',⁴² Nogar was seen by an Anglican parson in the Tweed canefields and offered the position of supervisor of Island scholars at St Barnabas school, Bungalowore.

Energetic, masterful and not without ambition, Nogar accepted the superintendent's post, having renounced his father Yogai's Presbyterian connexion in 1894 and obtained Anglican confirmation in the next year at the hands of Bishop Green of Grafton and Armidale.⁴³ Soon

38 OP, 13/9.

39 NGM AR 1899-1919 passim. In addition, the first missionaries at Paiwa (John Gela), Gona (Mark Maravua and Albert Landar), Lavora (Simon Devi), and Uiaku (Willie Pettawa and Timothy Gela) were Islanders. NGM AR 1906-7 to 1909-10. But John Gela at Mukawa petitioned Stone-Wigg to remove him: 'Please Bishop of New Guinea am very sorry... not to quite understand this language... I never come here to the New Guinea before so... send me home in Gela.' J.T. Gela to M. Stone-Wigg, Mukawa, 1 January 1904, DA.

40 J. Nogar, Certificate of Marriage. Dogura, 28 May 1903, DA.

41 C.B. Humphreys, The Southern New Hebrides, 17; C.G. Bolton, A Thousand Miles Away, 80ff.

42 J.T. Bate to M. Stone-Wigg, Murwillumbah, 31 March 1898, DA.

43 J. Nogar, Interview, Maivara, 27 April 1972.

he determined to seal his new status in the farming community by proposing marriage to a young white lady in the Tumbulgum choir. This brought him down. The sugar planters, indignant at Nogar's audacity, easily turned his fellow labourers against him and St Barnabas school emptied. 'There as been a good deal of jealousy that Nogar was ever made a teacher', wrote his clergyman, 'he will never be a success there'.⁴⁴ When the work languished, Nogar and his friend Fred Menema who had been at Stone-Wigg's school in Brisbane elected to labour in a more productive field and accompanied the Bishop to New Guinea.

Wanigela, with its population of over 500, was recognized as one of the best organised and most prosperous communities on the north coast. The Massim were engaged in continual warfare with the Doriri of the Musa and had already engaged in an affray with MacGregor's constabulary.⁴⁵ 'There will be rough work there', wrote King, 'and we want fellows with plenty of game in them, and with good heads on their shoulders.'⁴⁶ Nogar was an obvious choice and arrived at Wanigela in May 1898. Within two years the enterprising New Hebridean was turning his career to good account. He applied for a lay reader's licence, declaring that he 'allowed the Book of Common Prayer to be agreeable to the Word of God' and that he would 'knowingly teach nothing contrary to the Doctrine of the Church of England as contained in the Thirty-Nine Articles'.⁴⁷ But he saw nothing inconsistent in combining spiritual and worldly enterprise. By 1899 he was conducting a flourishing side business in selling Massim artifacts at £2/10/- each as curios, with a cut rate of £1/10/- to trading confederates.⁴⁸

Nogar thoroughly concurred in the Reverend Wilfred Abbot's vigorous handling of the proud Maisena people. Both the clergyman and his lieutenant believed in the maxim about sparing the rod, and night school as well as day school became compulsory at Wanigela. Children were instructed in the morning, and their fathers, home from fishing and hunting, were corralled by a vigilant Melanesian into learning

44 F.J.C. Reynolds to M. Stone-Wigg, Glen Innes, 10 February 1898, DA.

45 See p. 56.

46 CC, 1 August 1895.

47 J. Nogar, Lay Reader's Licence, 12 August 1901, DA.

48 J. Nogar to - Johnson[?], Wanigela, 28 August 1899, 5/23(sic) 1899, DA.

their letters in the evening. When Abbot promised Lieutenant Governor Le Hunte to erect government buildings at Tufi for the first magistrate C.A.W. Monckton, Nogar executed the order in the teeth of opposition from the Korafe residents of Cape Nelson:

Jimmy has quite adopted my methods [wrote Abbot] of dealing with unruly natives. They had not cut a stick or plaited a leaf before he arrived. The chief men threatened to kill anyone who did a stroke of work: Jimmy promised the two chiefs a big hiding if they did not set their men to work immediately. The rebellion was quelled. 49

After Abbot's resignation, Nogar took charge of the Wanigela mission, and was observed by the Governor in 1901 with a school of seventy children and seventeen boarders who 'sang a hymn in their own language with their arms folded'. Le Hunte wrote of 'a striking difference' between the children of Wanigela and those of neighbouring Uiaku. Nogar's students looked 'as if they had no more knowledge of savagery or fighting' than children in rural England.⁵⁰

James Nogar's architectural ideas, borrowed from his experiences in Australia, contrasted with the rural vision which largely conditioned the thinking of English Churchmen. His urban reforms at Wanigela did not please his superior A.K. Chignell:

He was a forcible character, and his word was law... And at Jimmy's bidding they built their new houses in a row, like some suburban terrace, and brought the platforms near to the ground, instead of lifting them well up... And so it came about that the new villages, instead of blending naturally with the close surrounding trees,... are full of the obtrusiveness of human handiwork and efforts after such impossible straightness of line as is rarely found even in Nature. 51

Chignell was as imbued with pre-Raphaelite ideas as any of his Anglo-Catholic companions, and he resisted Nogar's attempts to transform rural disarray into the geometry of a town plan. Thus he hoped in 1910 that a reconstructed Wanigela 'may be more "native", and less

49 MN, 15 May 1900, 39. Nogar's son believes his father's methods were to squeeze the Massim's hands and stand on their bare feet with his boots. When threatened by several Massim men, he made them break their spears. J. Nogar, interview, Maivara, 3 May 1972. W. Abbot to M. Stone-Wigg, Wanigela, nd, DA.

50 BNG AR 1900-01, 15.

51 A.K. Chignell, An Outpost..., 32.

reminiscent of the domestic arrangements with which Jimmy was familiar when he lived "along-a-Queensland".⁵² That Nogar was able to re-order Wanigela according to preconceived notions without opposition illustrates the change in the villagers' character since five hundred of their best fighting men fled from MacGregor's rifles on the Musa in 1895.⁵³ Vexed by incompetent village constables in the Bay, Monckton relied continually on Nogar, acknowledging that he had 'afforded me assistance in many ways, and appears to have done much good work among the natives'.⁵⁴ Officially Nogar was only a school teacher, who conducted drill, singing and religious teaching, and superintended Papuan pupil teachers.⁵⁵ Not surprisingly, in view of his forceful character, Monckton noted an 'unusually large attendance'⁵⁶ at Wanigela school. Unofficially, Nogar mediated between quarrelling clansmen. When two rival factions met in battle array in the village, it was recorded that only the 'bravery and determination'⁵⁷ of the New Hebridean had prevented bloodshed. Hoping to further his interest in the enforcement of peace, Nogar offered to accompany Captain F.R. Barton and C.A.W. Monckton in an expedition against the marauding Doriri. To Nogar's chagrin, however, Stone-Wigg decided that missionaries should not be identified as armed combatants or government partisans, and Barton set off leaving him in the classroom.⁵⁸

One problem which particularly troubled South Sea Islanders was the state of celibacy in which Anglican workers were enjoined to live. A handsome man like Nogar was so plagued by village women that he wrote to Stone-Wigg, 'My Lord remember me in your prayers to God

52 Ibid., 33.

53 J. Green to M. Green, Mamba, 27 September 1895, PMB.

54 BNG AR 1900-01, 61.

55 MN, 25 April 1904, 26. Nogar's students were regarded as among the best at Dogura school. NGM AR 1906-7, 41.

56 BNG AR 1900-01, 6.

57 C. King to M. Stone-Wigg, Dogura, 13 February 1900, DA.

58 C.A.W. Monckton, Some Experiences..., 210.

because temptation very strong.⁵⁹ Abbot, whose relations with Melanesian teachers was anything but harmonious, suspected that Nogar had succumbed. This the harassed teacher strenuously denied: 'Mr Abbot... think I did samthing [sic] wrong in Wanigela', he wrote, 'but he not true I call him lie he tell you same thing. I very sorry to here [sic] he lie.'⁶⁰ However, Nogar decided to end his state of celibacy and married Mary Mamarum of Kumarbun village in 1903.⁶¹

Compared with some of his Island contemporaries, who were 'not nearly strong enough'⁶² in command for the Massim, Nogar was credited with having gained 'an immense influence over the people'⁶³ from Wanigela to Cape Nelson. Despite Nogar's difficulties with written English, his letters convey the imperative spirit in which he introduced Christianity. Returning from a visit to the Winiafi of Cape Nelson he wrote: 'I say you all won [want] missionary in your place all says we [want]. they all say we [want] you if you would come and I say I see about it...'.⁶⁴ Nogar made an important contribution in the acceptance of Christianity by the Massim of Collingwood Bay. 'Less than twelve years a Christian, eight years a missionary!' exclaimed Stone-Wigg. 'Does not that represent the spirit of the New Testament?'⁶⁵ Esteemed by magistrate and missionary, fully occupied at his large school at Wanigela, and accepted by his Massim kinsmen as one of their own, Nogar worked for three more years with the Mission. When he died of malaria in 1906 at the age of 30, he was buried 'in the midst of the greatest lamentation and mourning

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- 59 J. Nogar to M. Stone-Wigg, Wanigela, 10 November 1900. C.A.W. Monckton affirmed that James Nogar of Wanigela shared the villagers' belief in sorcery, warning the Village Constable Nonis to remain awake at night to avoid puripuri. Monckton wrote that P.J. Money of Wanigela Mission was of opinion that 'in spite of the Mission's teaching that Jimmy still had an inclination towards his native belief in sorcery'. RMNED SJ, 26 June 1904. CAO/CRS/G91.
- 60 J. Nogar to M. Stone-Wigg, Wanigela, 10 November 1900, DA.
- 61 J. Nogar, 'Certificate of Marriage', 28 May 1903, DA.
- 62 P.J. Money to M. Stone-Wigg, Wanigela, 30 September 1907, DA.
- 63 MN, 30 June 1903.
- 64 J. Nogar to M. Stone-Wigg, Wanigela, 10 November 1900, DA.
- 65 NGM AR 1906-07, 41.

from the whole population'. Stone-Wigg's elegy, 'a herald of the Gospel, simple, unlearned, faithful unto death',⁶⁶ perhaps best summed up the Anglican ideal for the Pacific Island missionary.

The celibate ideal may have been less difficult for European than Island missionaries with no monastic tradition and a particularly easy accessibility to their converts. Very few Melanesian women were recruited for Queensland labour; the majority of labourers were unmarried males.⁶⁷ In the mission field moral lapses were not unknown among Islanders. Like Nogar, Thomas Bebeta reminded Tomlinson that 'temptations are very strong in New Guinea'.⁶⁸ Only one Islander, Philip Nodi, was gaoled after civil trial for 'a most disgusting offence'.⁶⁹ Most of those who found the strain unendurable were treated with compassion. When Willie Pettawa had sexual relations with a favourite girl at Wanigela, he had a dream in which Jesus Christ appeared telling him to repent and saying he would have to 'suffer some time for his sin'.⁷⁰ Money's report indicated his sensitivity to the matter of Melanesian celibacy:

Many of the S.S.I. teachers now have had trouble of this kind; they are very close to the Papuan in sympathy and general living in their native homes and I am not surprised that they fall into a sin which I, a foreigner, in every sense... find so hard to keep free from. To me the temptation is severe. What must it be to them? I make no boast of having withstood it for wicked lustful thoughts have often filled my mind. 71

66 Ibid. In 1910 Lady Musgrave, wife of a former Queensland governor, established a memorial fund to erect monuments to Melanesian teachers in New Guinea 'so that their devotion and self sacrifice may ever be remembered'. By 1914 missionaries reported that there were 'already many small brass tablets commemorating those who have fallen in action'. ABMR, 15 November 1910, 163. Ibid., 1 August 1914, 103.

67 In 1881 only 373, or 6.2% of the 5975 Melanesians in Queensland were women. In 1891 826, or 8.7% of the 9428 Melanesians were women. P. Corris, op. cit., 100.

68 S. Tomlinson to M. Stone-Wigg, Menapi, 4 August 1906, DA.

69 RMED OJ 10 January 1906, CAO/CRS/G91. Stone-Wigg refused to plead bail for Nodi because the offence was with a 14 year old girl. In 1907 a 'truly repentant' Nodi offered to work again as a missionary after a year's gaol. C. King to M. Stone-Wigg, Dogura, 10 January 1907, DA; C. King to M. Stone-Wigg, Hioge, 13 December 1905, DA.

70 P.J. Money to M. Stone-Wigg, Uiaku, 5 April 1907, DA.

71 Ibid.

Marriage was one of the most intransigent problems of Melanesian missionaries. The allurements of the world they had brushed aside with disdain; they had resisted the temptations of alcohol, of money, of ambition; but the greatest trial of all appeared in the form of Papuan women. Having been forgiven by the European, how could the Melanesian not forgive in return? Thus James Nogar did not inform his superiors of a sexual scandal involving the mission engineer Norman Dodds and three Wanigela women. To Nogar's surprise, Newton, the vicar-general, criticized his broadmindedness:

When you heard you should have spoken at once so that people would know that sin is bad with Missionaries and with New Guinea people just the same... Bishop put you at Wanigela to help God's work not to stop God's work. This time you stop God's work and it is very bad. 72

Wavering in their attitude to marriage and celibacy - Stone-Wigg once refused commissions to several Melanesians with white wives⁷³ - the Mission leaders cast Islanders into a pit of matrimonial wrangling. Unable to obtain partners among educated women on Norfolk Island, the Melanesians were counselled to seek Papuan wives whom the Mission would train.⁷⁴ But this sometimes offended traditional marriage arrangements, angered relatives, sparked jealousy among female rivals, and upset matrilineal inheritance procedure in which the husband worked his wife's land.

Nevertheless, because of lack of iconoclastic vandalism of a kind that had characterised the careers of the Polynesian teachers, Melanesian missionaries were not a rock of offence to Papuan society. The villagers often took to the newcomers from Queensland with an alacrity that delighted their superiors. Chignell reported that Peter Seevo, Nogar's successor at Wanigela, was 'in some ways the most prominent and popular person in the neighbourhood'.⁷⁵ MacGregor was no admirer of the Islanders' classroom abilities, but he agreed that 'they appear to get on very well with the natives'.⁷⁶ King thought

72 H. Newton to J. Nogar, Boianai, 17 November 1904, DA.

73 H.M. Shuttleworth to M. Stone-Wigg, Rockhampton, nd, DA.

74 C. King to M. Stone-Wigg, Dogura, 4 January 1894, DA.

75 A.K. Chignell, An Outpost in Papua, 50.

76 BNG AR 1894, xxv. Newton said that Harry Mark, missionary 1893-1909, 'knew more about the people in New Guinea from Wedau to Awaiama than any other man living'. NGM AR 1909-10, 42.

that Willie Holi had 'won the entire confidence of the people'⁷⁷ at Boianai; Buchanan aptly summed up Holi's conciliating activity: 'Two years ago all was opposition, now all is friendliness.'⁷⁸ Peter Seevo, whose rumbustious personality was a major subject in Chignell's An Outpost in Papua, was notable among the Wanigela people:

These ... [men] do indeed spend 'much of their time' with Peter, and you may find them, at almost every hour of the day or night, seated in rows upon his verandah, or around his table while he sits at meals. 79

European praise for the personal attributes of Melanesian teachers was sometimes accompanied by criticism of their behaviour in a crisis. Newton once said that Islanders were sometimes overbearing towards villagers, acting too literally on the text 'Compel them to come in'.⁸⁰ He could recall Peter Mussen at Awaiama. Mussen had once picked up a sorcerer and carried him to a cliff, over which he held him by the ankles. Afterwards, the sorcerer seldom forgot to remind the Islander how regularly he attended divine service.⁸¹ In 1904 Newton had reported two missionaries to the government after a shooting incident. Harry Mark and Johnson Far had fired guns in the air above the heads of Wamirans and Wedauans in order to break up a fight over a woman, for which they were both severely reprimanded; Peter Seevo fired at some men in canoes after they had speared mission cattle at Wanigela.⁸² Physical dominance is more in evidence in Island than in European missionary behaviour, although the sketchy nature of sources makes reconstruction of conflict very difficult.

77 MN, 15 September 1897, 85.

78 MN, 15 January 1902, 1; see also NGM AR 1912-13, 14.

79 A.K. Chignell, op. cit., 50. Another was Willie Tari of Opa and the Selwyn Mission, Mackay, known in Goodenough Bay as 'the Smiling One'. NGM AR 1906-7, 41.

80 H. Newton, In Far New Guinea, 253, 255.

81 R. Dakers to M. Stone-Wigg, Taupota, 13 November 1899, DA.

82 H. Newton to M. Stone-Wigg, Samarai, 24 October 1904. RMED OJ, 9 December 1904, CAO/CRS/G91. Wanigela Log, 3 August 1911, DA. See also RMNED SJ, 11 July 1911, CAO/CRS/G91.

Sometimes Europeans thought the Islanders lacked firmness. 'Too easy going with the Natives' was Newton's disparagement of them in 1900.⁸³ At Menapi, where Willie Muiwa's death in 1893 had been claimed as a victory for sorcerers, Willie's successor, Billy Kylu, was withdrawn because of weakness⁸⁴ and replaced by Thomas Bebete, a 'very strong character'.⁸⁵ David Tatoo, an Ambrimese who worked for seventeen years on the Mamba, was like many of his colleagues a quiet, blameless, unexceptional man. In 1905 he reported friendly relations with the Binandele: 'We get on very well... The native get on very well to come for service we have the school going very well.'⁸⁶

Before 1906 most Melanesian teachers chose a missionary career freely. There was no external coercion. Those who came to New Guinea after 1906 however were among the 4269 deported from Queensland by Commonwealth legislation.⁸⁷ In Queensland the Pacific Island labourers Act⁸⁸ was opposed by some Churchmen because of its arbitrariness and because many Islanders had made Queensland their home.⁸⁹ Some of the most articulate opposition offered to the Commonwealth Act was by Islanders at Mackay led by a New Hebridean, Henry Tongoa, founder of the Pacific Islanders' Association.⁹⁰ A letter attributed to Jack Malayta, one of May Robinson's scholars, was widely circulated:

I am only a poor South Sea boy, and may be I do not know much, but if white people know the true God... how can they think that right, to send us back into a land... where there is always fighting, where life

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- 83 H. Newton to M. Stone-Wigg, Dogura, 20 September 1900, DA. However, Chignell did not agree. After Melanesian teachers had 'severely maltreated' Wanigela students he forbade them the use of corporal punishment. Wanigela Log, 13 April 1909, DA. For corporal punishment and Papuan missionaries, see also p. 404.
- 84 CC, 2 October 1905, 35.
- 85 Ibid.
- 86 D. Tatoo to M. Stone-Wigg, Mamba, 15 March 1905, DA.
- 87 P. Corris, "'White Australia" in Action' in HS vol. 15 no. 58, April 1972, 243.
- 88 C of A 'Pacific Island Labourers Act' no. 16 of 1901, ss3, 8.
- 89 Married labourers, those who had arrived in Australia before 1879, and those who held freehold land, were among the 1654 granted exemption from the Act who still remained in Queensland in December 1909. P. Corris, op. cit., 243.
- 90 P. Corris, op. cit., 238-40; see also C.G. Bolton, A Thousand Miles Away..., 251.

is never safe, where there can't be schools for many years yet, no church to praise God in...

Why did the white people bring us away from our Islands, and teach us a better way of living, if they now want us to go back into heathen darkness again? 91

Malayta's indignation echoed many a converted Islander's unwillingness to return to the 'heathen darkness' of Guadalcanal or Malaita. For here they would 'mix with bad people',⁹² a reflection of the tardiness of the Melanesian Mission in extending northwards into the Solomons. If the Islanders did not wish to return home, the exodus might serve the purposes of the New Guinea Mission admirably at a juncture when manpower was desperately needed.

Churchmen knew that, in MacGregor's words, their field could never be occupied without the Islanders.⁹³ While Queensland churchmen complained about the inhumanity of the deportation, New Guinea missionaries prepared for a flood of converted black emigrants from the canefields. 'What an army of them the Mission will have!'⁹⁴ one missionary predicted. With the additional help, Stone-Wigg hoped to open up the whole coastline and have a chain of mission stations from Samarai to the Mamba.⁹⁵

In Anglican circles there was in 1906 an incipient dream of newly emancipated labourers volunteering themselves to take the gospel to their benighted brethren in New Guinea. The idea that Queensland might become a seminary for New Guinea, as Norfolk Island had been for the Melanesian Mission, had never been completely extinguished; and the greatly increased influx from the Selwyn Mission stimulated interest among Dogura staff. One of these, C.C. Sage, joined the Selwyn Mission in 1905 and immediately began canvassing for New Guinea

91 J. Malayta to M.G. Robinson, quoted in MN, 31 July 1901, 73. CC, 1 November 1901, 56. 'When [Islanders are] told that people in the South think them slaves, and state that they are ill-treated... they laugh at the very idea.' MN, 17 December 1901, 121.

92 CC, 2 July 1894.

93 BNG AR 1893-4, xxvii.

94 E. Scarth to M. Stone-Wigg, Torquay, 16 January 1907, DA. F.M. Synge, who interviewed several Melanesian candidates, thought volunteering for New Guinea was 'not a little bit caused by fear of returning to the islands'. F.M. Synge to M. Stone-Wigg, Brisbane, 26 July 1907, DA.

95 NGM 'Notes and News from the Staff', 23 February 1905.

recruits.⁹⁶ The potential of the Queensland Missions was indeed promising. Between 1897 and 1906, 3756 Melanesians passed through the mission classes at Maryborough.⁹⁷ At Bundaberg the attendance was 200 weekly;⁹⁸ and in the Mackay district five schools were conducted, some by Melanesian employees of the Selwyn Mission.⁹⁹

But although individual scholars found their way to the New Guinea field, hopes of a large scale emigration of exiles from Australia, entertained in the confusion of the repatriation, were largely illusory. In 1906 six Islanders arrived in New Guinea; before the completion of the deportations fifteen more arrived. In Mackay Sage wrote: 'I am afraid that the hope of getting them to go to New Guinea... is very small. They say that if they have to leave Australia, they would sooner go home.'¹⁰⁰ In the Tweed River, which already had sent several Melanesians, the Island church was said by the parson to be 'as dead as any nail that is in any door'.¹⁰¹ A visit by Stone-Wigg to the north Queensland canefields had little success. Undoubtedly one of the causes of the lack of success were private domestic concerns; another was the refusal of Anglicans to collaborate with Protestants in training Islanders. In 1897 Bishop Barlow of North Queensland had rejected Presbyterian proposals for a united church college for Melanesians.¹⁰²

Among the twenty-one Melanesian missionaries received by the Dogura mission between 1906 and 1909, fear of returning to Island homes was acknowledged as one motive.¹⁰³ Another was the rejection by Norfolk Island authorities of Island volunteers from Queensland on account of age.¹⁰⁴ Half the missionary recruits were from the

96 C.C. Sage to M. Stone-Wigg, Mackay, 18 June 1906, DA.

97 CC, 1 February 1906, 117.

98 CC, 1 March 1894.

99 CC, 2 October 1905.

100 C.C. Sage to M. Stone-Wigg, Mackay, 15 June 1906, DA.

101 F.R. Newton to M. Stone-Wigg, Murwillumbah, 15 December 1905, DA.

102 K. Rayner, *op. cit.*, 395. Some labourers settled at Moa in the Torres Strait Islands, where an Anglican station was established under Florence Buchanan.

103 F.M. Synge to M. Stone-Wigg, Brisbane, 26 July 1907, DA.

104 *Ibid.*

islands of Malaita and Guadalcanal; here the lack of Anglican mission schools where returned labourers could find employment was a contributing factor. By 1910 the volume of Island migration to New Guinea was at the full tide, and twenty-seven Melanesian teachers were at work.

The dominant numerical group in the Anglican staff was severely impaired by lack of training. Schoolmasters they were meant to be; yet as schoolmasters, said Chignell, 'they are probably as ill-instructed and incapable as any body of men who ever handled a piece of chalk or flourished a duster'.¹⁰⁵ European missionaries said William Maso of Palma in the New Hebrides and Peter Seevo were 'shocking writers';¹⁰⁶ Peter Mussen was unable either to read, write, or do simple arithmetic;¹⁰⁷ Bob Tasso could not teach arithmetic beyond numbers limited to fingers and toes.¹⁰⁸ E.L. Giblin despaired of his helper: he could not read, nor could he learn figures, although he knew the letters l, 6 and 0 by sight.¹⁰⁹ To compensate for his deficiencies, a teacher such as Maso applied discipline:

[William] would then go quietly along the rows, cutting each child lightly and very neatly with his cane, as a man might 'run the chromatic scale up' upon a xylophone, and dealing faithfully with the whole fifty inside of half-a-minute... The children seemed to think it was just part of a game they were expected to play... 110

Missionary logistics reduced the disadvantages of a poorly trained soldiery by a system of control from headquarters. The Island outstations were arranged concentrically around the European station, and weekly training classes were held. Such were certainly necessary,

105 A.K. Chignell, An Outpost..., 104.

106 Ibid., 77, 78.

107 Ibid., 75, 76.

108 R. Dakers to M. Stone-Wigg, Hioge, 3 November 1901, DA.

109 E.L. Giblin to M. Stone-Wigg, Hioge, 8 March 1906. Atlee Hunt, Secretary of the Department of External Territories, also condemned the Island teachers. E.L. Giblin to M. Stone-Wigg, Melbourne, 4 August 1907, DA.

110 A.K. Chignell, op. cit., 57. For this reason, Chignell advocated the training of Papuan teachers, who would 'not introduce silly nonsense imbibed from well meaning people in Queensland', a criticism of the methods of the Selwyn Mission. Wanigela Log, 22 November 1914.

for the further the message was percolated through the agency of Melanesians, the more diluted it became. Thus the visiting European was sometimes appalled at Island classroom instruction:

I have taught Peter [said Chignell] chanting, with the children, after him, 'Four fundle one penny', 'ten fardles t'ree penny', each formula repeated ten or twelve times over... and I have heard them go on, 'Fourteen fartles seven penese', 'Fifteen bartles eight penny', and I wrote the very words down at the time, that there should be no mistake. 111

Although such teachers as Peter Seevo were clearly incompetent, until 1917 they were placed in village schools to advise Papuan teachers and impart their own notions of English and arithmetic to their charges, who were sometimes compelled by village constables to attend. As mentors of young teachers, the Islanders illustrated the axiom that a little learning is a dangerous thing. King wrote that a New Guinea teacher had an example of incompetence before him and might assume that the Mission did not care about village schools.¹¹²

Certainly those Papuans instructed by Melanesian teachers were deficient in book-learning. Entering St Aidan's college in 1934, Amos Paisawa of Menapi was reported to be:

A difficult learner, having learnt to read and write under a ... S.S.I. teacher, who knew practically nothing of arithmetic... A poor reader, a very slow learner, and knows no arithmetic... 113

Being better acquainted with Bible stories than with arithmetic, the Islanders were more at home in the pulpit. Each Sunday morning Peter Seevo set off from Wanigela with hymn book and smoking tackle tied up in an old flour-bag, returning from his preaching tour at one o'clock 'soaked, when the tide and creeks have been high, up to the very armpits'.¹¹⁴ Devout, simple and pious, the Islanders favoured long sermons, being even more voluble in church than in the classroom. They did not speak much about the Old Testament, of which, said King, they were absolutely ignorant.¹¹⁵ With New Testament topics they were

111 A.K. Chignell, op. cit., 57.

112 C. King to G. Sharp, Ambasi, 10 January 1910, DA.

113 A.P. Jennings, 'St Aidan's College Report 1933-4', 1, DA.

114 A.K. Chignell, op. cit., 58.

115 C. King to G. Sharp, Ambasi, 13 September 1910, DA.

on surer ground, and a few were thought 'excellent and reliable'.¹¹⁶ Others forsook accuracy for rhetoric, to the discomfiture of any white supervisor who happened to be in their congregation. Thus the parable of the pharisee and the publican was rendered colloquially by a Melanesian:

He seemed suddenly to remember something about the 'scribes', and so he told the story all over again, and the exhausted congregation, if it remembered anything at all, must have gone away with a fixed impression that the R.M. [Resident Magistrate] at Tufi is a Publican and my lay colleague a 'Scribe', and that I am a fairly typical Pharisee. 117

In such perorations the Islander sometimes talked for most of the afternoon, Chignell said, 'until the bolder members of the congregation begin to remind him, without circumlocution, that the sun is going down'.¹¹⁸

Relations between Islanders and Europeans provide a sharp focus on inter-racial egalitarianism aground on the stubborn realities of experience. How deeply the Melanesians yearned for recognition as equals by Europeans is illustrated amply by the career of James Nogar. How nostalgically they looked to Queensland, where a transient equality had been available in mission schools, can be measured by the intensity of affection for such planter wives as May Robinson, in whose homes social acceptance had been complete. As Dick Fohohlie wrote:

I never forget you. I pray every day and night for you. All of your own boys we are, and all trying to do good work for God in New Guinea. We have been put to teach quickly because you been teach us fellows so much in Queensland. I think you were best teacher in all Queensland... God bless you always and forever. 119

In New Guineathere was at first an appearance of easy equality, springing from a trusting intimacy between leaders and

116 Ibid.

117 A.K. Chignell, op. cit., 59.

118 Ibid., 58. Visiting the Walaga [Mango] feast in 1901, Samuel Siru combined a sermon on retributive justice with the killing of sacrificial pigs: 'If you do evil, you will suffer greatly when you die like the pigs when they are killed badly [with spears] and they scream and cry. But if you do good things, you will be like the pigs when they are shot by the white men. There will be no pain.' M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 3 July 1901, DA.

119 D. Fohohlie to M.G. Robinson, quoted in OP 13/9.

followers. Lured by the prospect of a missionary status,¹²⁰ Islanders did not at first look back with longing to the Selwyn mission schools. European and Islander received the same salaries, dressed similarly, ate, walked and worshipped as one: in Stone-Wigg's words, as 'organs of the body, not merely isolated individuals'. But even here latent tension was evident, for as they sat round a common table to take corporate action, the Islanders spoke in Pidgin, not English.

Discovering that the process of consultation was too laborious, King explained that it was very puzzling to understand the Melanesians, 'so that you have to guess what they mean, then give them the correct pronunciation'.¹²¹ Chignell wrote disparagingly that they conversed 'with that complete elimination of mood and tense and number and concord... which is characteristic of the right "pidgin" English'.¹²² Having spent years in mastering Wedau, Ubir or Binandele, Anglican missionaries steadfastly refused to learn Pidgin. When Stone-Wigg declared in 1901, 'on one point I am sure we all agree - we will have the Queen's English, if any, and not that mongrel tongue, "pidgin English", which the white man usually introduces',¹²³ he unwittingly reduced enormously the potential for communication between the two racial groups on the Mission.

Intransigence about language polarised the staff and imperceptibly altered the nature of the relationship. Chignell's portrait of the Islander Peter Seevo in 1910 revealed how greatly the original ideal of comradeship had become distorted:

And as the fat old fellow halted for an interview, with feet planted firmly and far apart beneath a vast expanse of blue dungaree trouser, he would point with his forefinger... And then with a grunt or a sigh, and a glance along the room, and a sailor-like hitch of his capacious trousers, he would wheel and stump along to the next small victim of his solemn incompetence. 124

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- 120 An Islander's salary was fixed at £25 in 1895, with the possibility of an increase to £30, or more than that of a European. ABM 'Agreement between Billy Holly and Australian Board of Missions, 11 March 1895', DA.
- 121 C. King to M. Stone-Wigg, Dogura, nd, DA.
- 122 A.K. Chignell, op. cit., 65.
- 123 M. Stone-Wigg, 'Address to Conference', 26 July 1900, DA. R.W. Thompson, Foreign Secretary of the LMS, held a similar view: 'that odious Pidgin English... must be kept out of our Schools at all costs', he wrote. R.W. Thompson to W. MacGregor, London, 19 July 1897, WOL.
- 124 A.K. Chignell, op. cit., 54-5.

Despite the entertaining outlines of Chignell's vignettes and the affection in which he depicted his characters, he tended to caricature Islanders behind their backs. In Chignell's writing Pacific Island missionaries come alive for the first time in European literature, but only as figures of fun. Portly, puffing, wheezing men, or perspiring schoolmasters equipped with a big stick, glittering teeth and coal-black countenances, were seen as comic opera characters rather than messengers of civilization.¹²⁵ Generally regarding Melanesian missionaries with amused tolerance, Englishmen failed to plumb the depths of character of displaced refugees from Queensland whose experiences of cultural disorientation must have been all too real. Even though Islanders often appeared ludicrously overdressed, the surfeit of comedy strengthens the impression that, unlike their Protestant neighbours, the Anglicans never really took the Island missionaries seriously as communicators.

In 1905 the annual Conference was divided into two sections, one for Europeans and the other for Islanders.¹²⁶ Newton reported that feeling among Islanders to 'cleavage along the colour line' was 'very strong'.¹²⁷ The reasons given by Stone-Wigg, that linguistic difficulties among a staff of sixty missionaries made discussion unwieldy, did not satisfy the Melanesian teachers. Islanders were quartered in a separate house because of weight of numbers, and although a Christmas treat was accorded to them,¹²⁸ common meals ceased.

Such changes in domestic etiquette were subtle and delicate: the changing nature of racial relations was submerged beneath the sacramental ambiguity of missionary brotherhood. But, as Islanders

125 See P. Corris, *op. cit.*, 249.

126 CC, 2 October 1905.

127 H. Newton to M. Stone-Wigg, Ganuganuana, 8 May 1905, DA. Melanesians in Queensland schools had insisted on the fraternal nature of the relationship with Europeans, as the plaque erected in Gairloch church suggests: 'We Melanesian boys who love him [Francis Pritt] put this in Gairloch church. "Let not your hearts be troubled". "All one in Jesus Christ". 1903.'

128 Chignell's teachers were Reuben Motlav, William Maso, Ambrose Darra, Benjamin Canae, Samuel Biru and Peter Seevo. The Wanigela Log record instances of common meals with Chignell as host. Wanigela Log, 12 April 1909, DA.

must have realized, the bloom of the Christian ideal enunciated by Bishop Patteson¹²⁹ was fading. In its place, Chignell wrote with some pathos of the 'dog-like devotion' of his Melanesian teacher:

From the day I came here, he has accepted me as his 'boss'. He knows I do not like the word, and when he can remember (which is not often) he calls me 'you - my - priest' instead, but 'You - my - master' or in the pidgin English of Northern Queensland, 'You - my - boss' represents his attitude to me. 130

The only Melanesian who appears to have asserted independence, James Nogar, was checked by Newton for shielding the errant Australian missionary. 'You must remember that at Wanigela your master is Mr Money', he wrote, 'and you must tell him everything you do and what you hear. You are not master up there. Mr Money is your master...'.¹³¹

Only one confrontation of an explicit racial nature was recorded. A bitter quarrel between the irascible, idiosyncratic Wilfred Abbot and Nogar's companion Fred Menema, dashed the illusion of a racial utopia on the realities of European supremacy. In Menema's words,

Mr Abbott that time he went Down Awaiama he get on me about our work and said to me We Don't like Black men in this work if you like take your thing[s] and go so I told him I said Yes I will go... Sir Bishop I leave my work in Awaiama true. 132

Menema resigned, but not before all his Melanesian brethren had taken up his cause. For five years after Abbot's gibe, 'We don't like Black men' was chorused by Melanesians.¹³³ There was always plenty of time for an Islander to brood on a Papuan outstation.

It is doubtful whether all Islanders accepted the subordinate role in which some Europeans were eager to cast them. Unlike Papuan

129 'It is contrary to the fundamental principle of the [Melanesian] Mission that anyone should connect with the idea of a white man the right to fag a black boy... [the Mission recognizes] no distinction whatever between English and Melanesian members of the Mission as such...'. Quoted in Mission Life, 1 February 1869, 97.

130 A.K. Chignell, op. cit., 31.

131 H. Newton to J. Nogar, Dogura, nd, DA.

132 F. Menema to M. Stone-Wigg, Awaiama, 16 July 1898, DA. Stone-Wigg had noticed Menema to be 'doleful', and a trader had offered Menema £1 weekly to work on the Mamba. M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 4 May 1898, 20 July 1898, DA.

133 C. King to M. Stone-Wigg, Albert Maclaren, 19 March 1898, DA.

converts, who often clung helplessly to their taubada, there was a streak of independence in these Island men. Talk of 'simple coloureds' 'good boys' and 'poor fellows', expressed European perceptions and were not the way they saw themselves. On the contrary, the older and more experienced these men grew, the more formidable many of them seemed to become. Some certainly would not have been easily bishopped into submission. When an imperious bishop tried to make John Gela obey an order, Gela replied, 'I must make up my own mind.'¹³⁴ In written fragments that survive there is much suggestive of an individualism at odds with European notions of black subservience.

But perhaps Melanesians were worthy of pity in one respect. Having no immunity to malaria, and losing quinine easily or ignoring doses altogether, they fell victim in the coastal swamps of north-eastern Papua. As numbers grew, mortality increased: seven were lost in the five years after 1905.¹³⁵ There were many brass tablets by 1914 in Dogura chapel 'commemorating those who have fallen in action', a dozen of these being Islanders. How impecunious they were was shown in legacies. Willie Obe bequeathed to the Mission three shirts, a hat, plates, saucepans, a mug and a box of matches, the whole valued at £2/1/5¹/2d.¹³⁶ Willie Tari left only a suit of clothes, a silk handkerchief and a silver cross. Tuberculosis struck some others: Alfred Rerep died of it at Mukawa in 1922 with the words 'Tabinewau e botubotu': 'The bridegroom cometh.'¹³⁷ To die on the job was the generous achievement of the Melanesian missionaries.

Melanesian Anglicans and Polynesian Protestants contrasted vividly. The experiences of a recruited sugar worker, adrift from his society and cast upon foreign charity, shaped a missionary contribution very different from the Samoan, Fijian, Rarotongan and Niuean élite sent forth by vigorous mission churches in Protestant strongholds. A large number of Polynesian pastors, particularly the Samoans, were dominating and inflexible personalities, whose regimes

134 J. Gela to M. Stone-Wigg, Menapi, 2 April 1907, DA.

135 NGM AR 1905-1910; A.K. Chignell, op. cit., 44; ABM Report AR 1910, 6; H. Newton, The Anglican Mission..., 23.

136 W. Obe, Will executed 6 September 1909, DA; W. Tari, Will, nd, DA; NGM AR 1908-9, 45.

137 S. Tomlinson to H. Newton, Mukawa, 17 September 1922, DA.

in British New Guinea were as paternalistic as those of English missionaries.

Both Melanesian and Polynesian missionaries claimed a satisfactory relationship with Papuan communities, a response that sprang from entirely different aspirations. Most Polynesians professed great affection for Papuans: they liked their perpetual submission and the placidity with which they yielded to their instructions: a placidity very much valued by them. Like the house of a European, the Samoan fale was the source from which superior manners and spirituality were meant to flow to raise degraded savages. While the Melanesian missionary lacked the polish, education, and refinement of his contemporaries, his relations with Papuans were based on common political and conceptual notions. He married a village woman and died where he worked: his security rested in the land of his adoption, not the island of his birth.

Melanesians were admirable cultural frontiersmen who did not wear out. They were thoroughly familiar with the sacramental ethos of the Anglo-Catholic movement. They did not quench village initiative and were absorbed by village society. Missionaries but not masters, the spirit of equality was basic to their relationship with their converts.

III

ATTITUDES and RESPONSE

CHAPTER VI

Fallen Man or Noble Savage?

I

MISSIONARY attitudes to Melanesian culture ranged from warm sympathy to strong condemnation. Since in eastern New Guinea the observer saw the same ethnic group, the Massim, the missionary response varied from mind to mind, and was governed largely by individual temperament and training. Almost as soon as European settlement began, literature appeared offering one view or another about the Melanesian way of life. This was published by Protestants at Kwato and Dobu and by Anglo-Catholics at Dogura. It compassed a very broad range of attitudes.

British Protestants in the late 19th century tended to perceive the world as a hierarchy of evolutionary stages, of which the white, Christian, industrial society of western Europe occupied the highest level.¹ Below it were the ancient though stagnant civilizations of the Orient; and last of all were the illiterate, technologically backward and pagan cultures of Australia, the Pacific, and Africa. In this triple world order, religion coincided in rough approximation with material and political progress. As man's spirituality stretched from animism through eastern mysticism to Christianity, so tribal anarchy led to constitutional democracy as surely as the dugout canoe of New Guinea began the process that ended with the steamship.

Among social theorists, anxious to place Pacific islanders on a world scale, Melanesia seemed to confirm such an outlook. Because it lacked signs of ancient civilization, Island society offered little to contradict that scale devised by the social Darwinians. The further the observer moved from Hawaii in the east to New Guinea in the west, the fewer the signs that the Islander measured impressively on the scale, and the less civilized he could be reckoned. That dark-skinned

1 For a study of the complex factors involved in the possibility of establishing a hierarchy of cultures, see M. Leiris, Race and Culture, 35-9; H.A.C. Cairns, Prelude to Imperialism, 73-6.

Melanesians were 'lower' than light-skinned Polynesians was thought to be the result of an inherent cultural inferiority.

The evolutionary yardstick was applied also within ethnic boundaries. Thus New Guinea, it was evident, contained two races, the light-skinned 'Malay' easterners and the dark-skinned 'Papuan' westerners. Here the axiom was confirmed that the darker the pigmentation, the more primitive the culture. The fact that both the dark-skinned Binandele of northern New Guinea and Kiwai of the Fly were more hostile and dangerous to Britons showed that they had less appreciation of civilization and were therefore inherently more savage. One L.M.S. missionary, H.P. Schlencker, even thought he could locate the exact place - Orokolo Bay - where the 'awful drop'² occurred between the higher and lower races. A subscriber to the theories of the social Darwinians, C.W. Abel was once puzzled by a mariner's assertion that his black Solomon Island sailors thought themselves racially superior to his own light-skinned Massim boatmen:

'Just look' said the Captain, 'at the contempt on the face of the Solomon Islander! He feels himself so much superior to these bronze Papuans.'

'Don't you see the same contempt in the faces of my crew?' I asked.

'Not so marked' replied my companion.

'Well,' I said, 'that's either because they outnumber the Solomon Islander by six to one, and can afford to despise him lightly, or else that, under good influences, they have passed from contempt to pity, on their way to a still better and more brotherly feeling for the poor black.'

3

On a world scale, Abel placed the brown Massim of eastern Papua in a position below the Polynesian and slightly above the 'poor black' and the Australian Aboriginal, humanity's zero point. This assessment was the intellectual rationale for the distinctive emphasis of the Kwato Mission.

Holding the individual Papuan in warm respect, admiring his capacity and intelligence, and defending his interests against the intrusions of planters, Abel nevertheless revealed in his writing a mind increasingly revolted by what he saw in Melanesian culture. Because there is no hint in his earliest writing that he considered

2 H.P. Schlencker, Urika Report 1907, PR.

3 C.W. Abel, 'Address to East Hill Congregational Church', 9, KA.

the Papuan way of life abhorrent,⁴ it is likely that the extreme form of cultural repudiation to which he resorted took place as a part of the Evangelical dialectic. Thus, the more degraded, savage and immoral the heathen's habits were painted, the greater the difficulty of refuting arguments for missionary expansion. It is also conceivable that Abel's marriage in 1893 and the building of a home at Kwato may have contributed to a hardening of attitudes. While his notes before 1894 were compiled in a spirit of cheerful liberality towards the Massim, the publication in 1901 of Savage Life in New Guinea was dictated by the necessity to raise funds for the L.M.S. It is therefore likely that the extremes to which Abel ventured in his descriptions of Papuan life were partly the result of stylistic exaggeration. When these allowances are made, however, the idea of Christian conversion as a blotting out of native tradition permeated his missionary thinking, and Savage Life in New Guinea may be taken as a base-line of Evangelical orthodoxy in Melanesia.

As the European attitude towards Pacific Islanders varied between adulation and distaste, so their appearance suggested to some a state of Arcadian perfection, and to others, a condition of unredeemed depravity. The blackened teeth, tattooed bodies, pierced ears, and nose-bones of the Massim were to Moresby in 1872 'more ugly than can well be described',⁵ and to Abel, so keenly disagreeable that he could not refrain from comment. Outward appearance, in the eyes of a muscular Christian such as Abel, became a mirror of inner moral attainment.

Some Papuans were positively ugly, according to Abel, and there was not one in his tribe who could be called handsome.⁶ Fifteen

4 For example, Abel described Christmas in 1893: 'We had hundreds of natives with us and they kicked up a fearful din enjoying themselves... many of them highly painted and very artistically decorated.' Abel's later censorious writing about Massim dancing makes a vivid contrast. C.W. Abel to M. Parkin, Kwato, 10 April 1894, KA.

5 J. Moresby, New Guinea and Polynesia, 203. Moresby and Abel were not alone: others alluded to the Massim as an 'ugly race', a 'stunted lot' and 'not over intelligent'. See SMH, 16 February 1895. A visitor at Kwato said that Logea women were 'if possible more hideous to look upon than the men'. H. Cayley-Webster, Through New Guinea..., 255.

6 C.W. Abel, Savage Life in New Guinea, 16. For a further analysis of Abel's attitude to Melanesian culture, see D.F. Wetherell, 'Monument to a Missionary: C.W. Abel and the Keveri of Papua', in JPH, vol. 8, 1973, 30-48.

years had not lessened the nausea he felt in their presence.⁷ Pointing to a man whose hair was adorned with a delicately carved wooden comb, he revealed a serene ethnocentrism: 'How unconventional their taste is', but added sagely, 'He has his own ideas of beauty.'⁸ The perforation of ears aroused his strongest pity, and he sternly reprimanded one of his earliest pupils, Muroro, for having 'spoilt' his ears in a tribal ceremony: 'One of my most helpful boys had deceived me; he had participated in a heathen practice; he had disfigured himself for life.'⁹ Muroro repented, 'Truly, master, I deceived you.' Abel and Walker told all their boys to break with heathen customs, 'and not to be ashamed to be taunted, because they took a higher stand for Christ's sake'.¹⁰ A belief in the divine inspiration of their own aesthetic opinions disfigured the Evangelicals' estimate of the Melanesians from the start.

Just as Abel's attitude to adornment and etiquette presupposed universal aesthetic values, so his description of behaviour traits presupposed universal norms of behaviour. Aptly enough, a long treatise on Massim customs was entitled, 'The Papuan at his Worst'.¹¹ Here, however, he disappointed his readers, for a veil was drawn over more harrowing detail: there were customs 'in his benighted life about which it is impossible to tell'¹² young children into whose hands the book might fall. It was sufficient to say that the Papuan was 'guided in his conduct by nothing but his instincts and propensities, and governed by his unchecked passions'.¹³ Abel believed that as a warrior the Papuan fell to 'a very low position in the scale of savage peoples'.¹⁴ Indeed, there were times when 'unbridled passion seizes and masters him, the man becomes a fiend; and there

7 C.W. Abel, *op. cit.*, 22.

8 *Ibid.*, 14, 15.

9 *Ibid.*, 18. Seligmann mentions this boy. He had perforated his ears to avoid being chaffed as a suaana or wild bush pig by his friends, in contrast to a sarai, or valuable domestic pig. C.G. Seligmann, The Melanesians..., 491.

10 C.W. Abel, *op. cit.*, 20.

11 *Ibid.*, 129.

12 *Ibid.*, 145.

13 *Ibid.*

14 *Ibid.*, 145.

are then no limits to his brutality'.¹⁵ Abel's guest, Lamberto Loria, had discovered that some Massim women skewered out the eyes of captives with a wooden fork,¹⁶ and perhaps journalistic reticence was not without reason.

Attempting an analogy between savage aesthetics and religion, Abel did not conceive of a people with the low moral attainments of the Massim possessing more than the crudest of human sentiments. It was true that Papuans exhibited kindness in providing food, but this was 'mere animal propensity'.¹⁷ As the mind was narrow in thought, so the heart was restricted in feeling. Noting the Suau words nuatoatoa for pity, he-nua for desire, and gadosisi for liking, he concluded with bleak finality: 'This is one of the worst things I have to tell you about my friends here: they have no love.'¹⁸ Like most western observers, Abel saw Melanesian emotions as shallow, being based not on sublime or classic virtues but on sordid gain.

Abel possessed a lively admiration for Massim craftsmanship, thus helping to dispel the criticism of being unduly biased. When he commended the Tavara canoe as 'not the work of a slow-witted and indolent people',¹⁹ he was laying claim to be a reasonable critic. The villager of Milne Bay was, Abel said, slow and lazy, seldom thorough, for he botched rather than repaired his dwelling.²⁰ But when this was conceded, there was much to be said in his favour. The Papuan artist possessed a lively imagination, and the canoe was a token of his craftsmanship. Acclamation of Melanesian energy as 'phenomenal'²¹ took its place within a framework of overall cultural disparagement.

In the quest for reliable, cheap and rapid forms of transport, missionaries became acquainted with the vaga-ue, a large, clinker-built Massim vessel which demonstrated a command of style and artistic

15 Ibid., 129.

16 BNG AR 1894-5, App. S, 39ff.

17 Ibid., 42.

18 Ibid. Abel's estimate resembles that of earlier Evangelicals in the South Seas who regarded some Islanders as 'without natural affection'. See W.N. Gunson, op. cit., 166.

19 C.W. Abel, op. cit., 45.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid., 48.

harmony rivalling the eravo craftsmen of Orokolo. The vaga-ue could outpace a European sailing craft, and Abel's acclamation for its designers was loud:

[The vaga-ue] is by far the Papuan's highest achievement in design and invention. His dwelling houses are good: better, I should say, than the native houses of much superior races in the South Seas... better... than the houses of the Maoris of New Zealand. But in the vaga-ue he transcends his skill in house-building, and in this handsome, well-built vessel, I think we see his highest development. 22

Neither Abel's praise of the intelligence and the imagination of the Massim artist concealed his revulsion for the society which evolved his art. Indeed, the very praise of primitive technology, by implying the scientific detachment of the viewer, strengthened the argument for the depravity of the technician. For just as the Massim possessed the gift of making their ideas visible through art, so they also had the capacity to express their most depraved thoughts in ceremonial.

Abel's dislike of much Papuan ceremonial reached its zenith in his horror at the Turama people of western Papua, who were both cannibals and ritual sodomites.²³ Even though his mission to the Turama was never achieved, traditional dancing in much of Papua aroused his suspicion. He knew that the Motuan dance - 'this be-feathered, bedaubed, naked orgie'²⁴ - was conducted with an immoral purpose. He observed that the Suau dance had obscene gestures which must lead to sexual licence.²⁵ In his address, 'The Papuan as a Musician', he described his feelings about the drum used in the Suau dance:

I have learnt to hate the dull monotonous far reaching boom of the Boiatu as the very voice of the devil.... Very occasionally it revives for a time, as the flames of passion, which are being quenched by Christian teaching and influence, break forth into a fitful flame.... 26

22 Ibid., 65.

23 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Kwato, 12 June 1924; C.W. Abel, Letter Diary (hereinafter LD), 22 May 1924, KA. See also p. 220.

24 NGT, January 1925, 8. See also H. Cayley-Webster, op. cit., 255.

25 NGT, January 1925, 8.

26 C.W. Abel, 'The Papuan as a Musician', MS. undated, KA; see also H. Cayley-Webster, op. cit., 255.

The bogigi or conch shell was a summons; the kino or bamboo flute was used for amusement; but the drum, the boiatu, was used only for seduction. Sexual activities were taught by parents to children, instead of the civilized arts of obedience, self-control, truthfulness and respect. Aroused by the boiatu, the Papuan child became a thorough libertine. 'He pleases himself. He is a savage, in thought and vice, before he is ten years old.'²⁷

The application of the evolutionary scale and Evangelical morality to the Massim people led Abel to plan his strategy with an assurance that frequently accompanies a limited and inflexible outlook. The confinement of children at Kwato was by no means a new idea: as a tactical measure it was anticipated by Kohimarama and Norfolk Island of the High Church Melanesian Mission as well as by the Murray Island institution of McFarlane's Torres Strait Mission. But these differed from Kwato in intention. Abel was unique among missionaries in eastern New Guinea in that he wanted his children to break completely with their Massim culture. If they were to reject it 'lock, stock and barrel',²⁸ the Kwato Mission would provide a substitute. If they did not, they would easily slide back to the ways of their parents. Beatrice Abel described her meeting with a former Kwato pupil in Milne Bay:

It was Sinelua. Her little body glistened with coconut oil, frangipanni blossoms hung in chains around her arms and neck, and a crown of hibiscus blooms was in her hair.

When she saw me she hung her head with shame... I could guess the story. When I left Wagawaga she had returned to her village home, there the influence of heathen relatives was too strong for her; the old life had claimed her again. 29

27 C.W. Abel, Savage Life in New Guinea, 43.

28 KMT, August 1933, 9.

29 KMT, June 1933, 4. Abel's tendency to oppose Melanesian cultural traits such as betel-nut chewing emerges clearly in a diary entry at Koeabule:

Went for them all roundly and told them they were to make up their minds about the [betel-nut] chewing ... God's village, and what are you making it. Heathen customs, just as if you were in your own villages, no different minds bad... I gave it to them hot. After a long time they agreed to give them all up, made them sign their names, and appointed a monitor... told them of God's great love for them. Poor boys, they all listened and seemed grateful.

C.W. Abel, LD, 18 August 1922, KA.

Against the sombre picture of Papuan youth, 'half devil and half child',³⁰ Abel built his argument for complete cultural disengagement in the words of a children's hymn:

I thank the Goodness and the Grace
Which on my birth have smiled,
And made me in these Christian days
A happy English child. 31

Yet this ethnocentric response to Melanesian culture could be coupled with an optimism as to the capacity of the Melanesian to assimilate a range of western traits which could eventually place him on a level of equality with Europeans.³² Pessimism about a society did not necessarily mean lack of respect for individuals in that society.

Abel's theology was the basis of a broader configuration of beliefs and attitudes, including ascetic morality and authoritarianism. His acceptance of social Darwinianism was secular. These themes, reposing in British Protestant society at the end of the 19th century, emerged rampant when confronted with differing social values. The conflict between his beliefs and Melanesian customs gave to the work of the Kwato Mission a burning intensity.

The youngest missionary of the L.M.S. in British New Guinea, Abel clung tenaciously to some of the oldest most intransigent cultural assumptions of the Evangelicals at a time when his contemporaries - J.H. Holmes, E.B. Riley, and W.J.V. Saville - were discarding them. Each of these three wrote creditable anthropological works which helped to release Melanesian missionary thinking from the web of 19th century theology in which it was enmeshed.³³ But posterity has rated Abel's practical achievements so high that it cannot even think Holmes and Saville comparable. In Abel's faith in Papuan entrepreneurs, his pacifism in World War I, his belief in a university-educated Papuan

30 Kipling, quoted in C.A.W. Monckton, Some Experiences..., 139.

31 C.W. Abel, Savage Life in New Guinea, 43-4. However, Chalmers wrote that he could not altogether agree with this hymn, for 'constant quarrels, daily disobedience, and an entire want of reverence to parents... are certainly more common in Britain than among the converts in New Guinea...'. J. Chalmers and W.W. Gill, Work and Adventure..., 243.

32 See pp. 354, 362.

33 J.H. Holmes, In Primitive New Guinea; see also J.H. Holmes, Way Back in Papua; E.B. Riley, Among Papuan Headhunters; W.J.V. Saville, In Unknown New Guinea...

leadership and a self-governing Papua, he was a generation ahead of his colleagues. For Abel possessed an understanding of the prophetic nature of the ministry that was no less Evangelical than his rejection of ancient Melanesian culture. His attitude towards the pagan ways of Pacific islanders marked him out as serenely a child of his time.

JUST as a belief in the Fall of Man permeated the philosophy of the Kwato Mission, so the assumption that 'natural' man was virtuous was strong in Anglican thinking at Dogura on the north-east coast of New Guinea. The Church of England in Papua was directed by a scholarly élite which was highly sensitive to intellectual currents in the 19th century. Lyell's geological researches, which culminated in Darwin's Origin of Species in 1859, portended a revolution in the religious understanding of the origins of the world and human life. By the mid-1860s moderate theologians, such as A.C. Tait, Archbishop of Canterbury (1868-1882), were welcoming scientific advance but were too cautious to hail the theories of Darwin as a revelation.³⁴ The anti-scientific trend of clerical thought was checked in Queensland by the mid-1890s by Archdeacon A.E. David, tutor of several New Guinea missionaries and brother of Sir Edgeworth David, scientist, explorer, and Professor of Geology at the University of Sydney. Bishop Gilbert White's aphorism, 'Christ never promised to give the Church complete truth. He promised that his spirit should "guide her into all truth"',³⁵ placed an imprimatur on the spirit of reverent agnosticism towards primitive cultures which was evident in early Anglican writing in New Guinea.

Missionaries in Melanesia in the tradition of Selwyn and Patteson did not share many of the social teachings of L.M.S. and Methodist missions long established in Polynesia. Nor did they concur in the precise theological certainties of Evangelicals. Montagu Stone-Wigg, first Bishop of British New Guinea (1898-1908) wrote:

34 O. Chadwick, The Victorian Church, vol. II, 26-7. A.E. David, Examining Chaplain to the Bishop of Brisbane 1891-1904, Canon of St John's pro-Cathedral 1893, Archdeacon of Brisbane 1894-1904, Principal of Brisbane Theological College 1897-1904. See K. Rayner, 'The History of the Church of England...', 6, 219, 324.

35 G. White, The Church and Modern Life, 11.

It was no grim feeling, such as had moved our fore-fathers, that the heathen would be damned if they were not converted, that inspired [us] to spread abroad the religion of Jesus Christ.... 36

Even Abel did not speak of eternal damnation, and wrote of 'suffering' rather than 'perishing' heathen. Stone-Wigg was not sure they were even suffering and wrote a circumspect monograph about them. In his contact with Massim people, he was always reticent and cautious.

From the beginning, Anglo-Catholics offered a view of Papuans and their customs which varied from Abel's Evangelical view. Asked his opinion, Archbishop Donaldson of Brisbane replied, 'I thought the New Guinea natives a most attractive people.'³⁷ Gerald Sharp, second Bishop of New Guinea (1910-1921) elaborated: the Papuans were

Affectionate, confiding, sunny-tempered, polite in manner, attentive... most distinctly good-looking, with a wealth of intelligence and expression in their faces, and not in the least degree 'repulsive'. 38

The theoretical framework in which these verdicts were shaped was acquired in the theological lecture-rooms of Oxford and Cambridge. Stone-Wigg had been at Oxford during a period of rising interest in Africa, which was echoed in the creation of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa (U.M.C.A.). Stone-Wigg used the U.M.C.A. as a model which he imitated to an extent in British New Guinea.³⁹ The second bishop of the U.M.C.A., William Tozer, repudiated any inherent connexion between Christianity and the 19th century technological culture in which it was embedded. How could the Church of God flourish in non-western societies, argued Tozer, if 'open war' was declared 'against everything' that reflected their separate nationality?⁴⁰ Tozer set himself resolutely to oppose this trend, arguing that it was better to disturb habits and ideas only to the minimum extent required by the teachings of Christianity.

36 OP 51/4. Compare with Patteson's attitudes, CC, 2 April 1894, D.L. Hilliard, 'John Coleridge Patteson' in J.W. Davidson and D. Scarr, eds., Pacific Islands Portraits, 193.

37 Courier, Brisbane, 21 September 1907, 3.

38 OP 13/5.

39 For biographical information about Stone-Wigg, see D. Wetherell, 'A History...', 43ff. M. Stone-Wigg to Secretary UMCA, Dogura, 6 June 1900, DA.

40 See H.A.C. Cairns, Prelude to Imperialism, 218.

In part, Anglo-Catholic estimates of the African and the Melanesian were a survival of the philosophy attributed to Rousseau: the belief that 'natural man' was virtuous. This was fortified by certain romantic convictions, and contrasted with the corruption of industrial society: the English church had never found the industrial revolution as comfortable a milieu as the Enlightenment. But belief was strengthened by observation. As Anglicans soon discovered, there was very little in the fabric of Massim society needing adjustment to the doctrines of Christianity. Unlike some other Melanesian societies, there were in northern Massim communities no sexual initiation, no hevehe, and no religious structures apart from sacred groves and circles of stones. Compared to the vibrant customs of the Orolo of the gulf or Kiwai of the west, ceremonial practices were not elaborate; W.R. Humphries, a magistrate of the North-Eastern Division, remarked that 'Life is dull extremely dull in this Division when compared with life in the Gulf...'.⁴¹

When confronted with a custom they thought objectionable, Churchmen tended to play down its importance. Thus a clergyman in Adelaide prefaced a paper in 1888 with the words: 'The lecture does not dwell upon those aspects of New Guinea life, which show the degradation to which cannibalism has brought the natives.'⁴² As for tribal fighting, so grimly portrayed in much Pacific missionary propaganda, A.K. Chignell drew attention to its sporting character after a Wanigelan attempt to engage their Doriri enemies:

I am afraid I was just a little disappointed that nothing happened after all. It was just like going out to a football match, and finding that only one of the teams had turned up. 43

Bishop Stone-Wigg's public school education and background were an impediment to his understanding of practical missionary problems, but it gave him a breadth of spirit and agility of intellect that marked him out as a leader from the start. At the turn of the century, there was no official, trader or missionary who could boast himself the intellectual equal of the Bishop of New Guinea.

41 RMNED AR 1927-8, 6, CAO/CRS/G91. See also F.E. Williams, Drama of Orolo...; F.E. Williams, The Natives of the Purari Delta, Anthropology, Report No. 5, 131.

42 E.T. Howell, British New Guinea and Its Inhabitants. A Lecture, 1.

43 CC, 2 March 1908, 159.

The aim of the Anglican pioneers was the creation of village Christianity within the framework of Melanesian society. They wanted the convert to live beside his neighbours, differing from them in nothing but his religion. Like them he would dance and sing, engage in traditional feasting, duly undergo initiation, and till the soil. Most of the Anglicans were romantic medievalists; their Tractarian fathers, Keble and Newman, were poets; and reverence for tradition was part of Anglo-Catholicism. They abhorred the dislocation of primitive, 'natural' cultures by the intrusion of western commerce. The fact that Evangelical missionaries had sometimes been among the agents of destruction was a major reason for the intensity of their reaction.

The agnosticism of early Dogura missionaries spread over a wide area: dancing, death feasting, the toreha, and other customary Melanesian usages. Gerald Sharp said his workers 'tried to rule by love and to leave native customs as they found them'.⁴⁴ They adopted a life of spartan simplicity: the more Europeans resembled Papuans in their style of life, the closer the latter would draw to the former. They took care to preserve symbols of ceremonial, sacred stones and carvings, in contrast to the idol-burning pastimes of their Evangelical predecessors.

The attitude of Anglo-Catholics towards Massim custom aroused differing comments in visitors. C.R. Muscutt, an official, wrote:

apparently they have never made any attempt to get the natives to improve their houses, not even by suggestion alone... apparently so long as the natives roll up regularly for Holy Communion, Taparoro etc., the Missionaries evidently do not worry much about the physical life of a native... 45

Evangelical missionaries regarded the Roman Catholic and Anglo-Catholic emphasis on ritual and the policy of minimum interference with culture as ~~unhappy~~ sops to heathenism. Methodists in Fiji said it was hard to tell a Catholic from a heathen: they both had long hair, daubed faces, and a wild, unpolished appearance.⁴⁶ Some visitors

44 OP 51/7. Opposition to numa gwau, or sleeping together without intercourse, came early. It is probable that ear-piercing was also discouraged at Dogura. Death-feasts were the subject of recurrent disagreement. In 1926, after a debate in which Papuans made 50 speeches and Europeans 23, the Mission reversed its originally permissive policy. OP 68/3, 79/5.

45 C.R. Muscutt, PR, 29 June 1928, CAO/CRS/G91.

46 AMMR, 5 April 1897.

in New Guinea were less critical, one saying that the Church of England could not be blamed 'for desiring to see the natives' present comparatively idyllic existence continue'.⁴⁷

From a fund-raising point of view, warm missionary sympathy for the Melanesian had its perils. If you believed 'natural man' to be virtuous, how could money be extracted from home churches for his conversion? A puzzled secretary wrote about a travelling missionary's address in England:

you left us with the impression that, after all, the N.G. natives don't need the Mission, and that they lead better lives than the English...! I daresay that is so; - but won't it affect the finances? 48

'The finances' mattered little among the northern Papuans. Nearly all their baptized girls got themselves tattooed, as was the custom at Wanigela and Cape Nelson. Their brothers continued their traditional initiation, called koputu among the southern Orokaiva, or according to desire.

Cultural continuity occurred on the northern New Guinea coast, not because apologists forged it later, but because it existed throughout the period of missionary hegemony, and because tendencies towards iconoclasm were curbed from above. A man of strongly antiquarian tastes, Stone-Wigg assembled a museum of artifacts at Dogura. He learnt a little of Massim folklore, and his subordinates could publish a warning which they learnt from a village headman in 1914:

it is only we New Guinea people who can tell them that. The foreigners only see the outside of our customs, like the leaves and branches of a tree. What the inner meaning of them is they do not know. 49

Much of the literature produced at Dogura questioned the idea that motivated missionary activity, of benevolence flowing from the civilized European to his 'primitive' neighbour. According to Stone-Wigg, the reason why the Melanesian should be converted was not so much to save his soul, but because 'he has much to teach the Church, much to contribute... which will help us to understand the "Church that is to be".'⁵⁰ In the setting of conventional missionary

47 ABM, Rambles in Papua, 15.

48 OP 45/10.

49 ABMR, 1 November 1914.

50 SPG, Church Work Amongst the Aborigines in Christendom, 1.

attitudes of the day, Stone-Wigg's writing displayed a degree of originality. The traditional communal life of a village, he thought, could readily be 'consecrated in the idea of the church', whose theology would not be elaborate but which would issue in 'genuine Christian life'.

Stone-Wigg went beyond disagreement with Abel's cultural approach. In a rhetorical reversal of missionary attitudes to Pacific island people, he envisaged Melanesians instructing Europeans in the practice of brotherhood. Setting aside industrial virtues, he asked whether the Papuan could help the European bury the 'old Adam' of selfish individualism. Did not native races 'simple in habits, unselfish in heart, and unassertive in disposition' have a message to inform the European?⁵¹ Impressed by the high group-consciousness of Massim people, he declared that 'negative individualism' would never find a place among a race which 'carried the thought of brotherhood into practical religion'.⁵² If enlightenment were to flow from the Melanesian to his European mentor, the church might receive benefits back from the Pacific islands 'more than the full sum of her gifts'.⁵³

Clearly, Anglo-Catholic admiration for the Papuan embodied an affirmation of many of the values which missionaries esteemed most. 'They can certainly teach us good manners and courtesy',⁵⁴ wrote one enthusiast. But respect was extended even to tribes who were not amenable to religious persuasion. The Orokaiva and Massim people of Collingwood Bay, for example, at first stubbornly refused to listen to the message. But from the beginning Anglican publications extolled the vigorous and manly qualities of the Orokaiva, and praised the proud and aloof people of Wanigela, who were altogether a 'splendid, noble people'.⁵⁵ The fact that they had spurned missionaries with contempt, according to the Occasional Paper, merely showed that they 'had a will of their own' and were not 'the spineless sort the

51 M. Stone-Wigg, The Papuans..., 55.

52 Ibid. At the Annual Conference of 1905, the agenda included a discussion on the topic, 'What in return will the Church receive from the Christianised South Pacific Islander?' NGM AR 1905-6.

53 M. Stone-Wigg, The Papuans..., 55.

54 ABMR, 1 March 1917, 229.

55 S.R.M. Gill to E. Gill, Duvira, 2 February 1929; see also OP 72/2.

government want'.⁵⁶ In the picture of the tall, proud warrior, who refused to cringe before the foreigner, the missionary was essentially projecting his own stereotype of the muscular Christian.

Because Anglo-Catholics were in closer contact with the universities than most missionaries, current ethnographic discussion often reached their ears before it had any effect in other missions. King lectured on anthropology at Cambridge;⁵⁷ E.L. Gibling wrote an appendix to C.G. Seligmann's work The Melanesians of British New Guinea.⁵⁸ S.R.M. Gill and his predecessors left standing a circle of megaliths at Boianai, and noted with amusement that an anthropologist had tried to remove them, 'but such was the anger of the people that they had to be replaced'.⁵⁹ At Kwato, the tendency was to reform unfamiliar habits according to the norms of middle-class England; at Dogura, a broader mentality allowed a permissive approach to traditional ways.

Cultural restraint did not, however, reduce the paternal feelings of Anglican missionaries towards Melanesians. 'Poor things', said Maclaren within a week of arriving, 'they need a father to guide them, for they are only like children.'⁶⁰ Maclaren said this after a man had been murdered because of his rival's desire for a red shirt which the missionary had given him. Commenting on the transfer of British New Guinea to Australia, Stone-Wigg wrote, 'we have, then, adopted unto ourselves a little brother, and it is our duty to learn as much about him as we can'.⁶¹ The bishop compared a voyage from Sydney to Samarai as 'passing as it were from the place of business to the playground and the nursery'.⁶² Few Anglicans thought that happy children of nature were ready to exercise the duties of men.

56 Ibid.

57 C. King to M. Stone-Wigg, London, 20 October 1904, DA.

58 Annie Ker (Mrs P.J. Money), the mission translator, also compiled a book of Papuan folklore. A Ker, Papuan Fairy Tales; C.G. Seligmann, The Melanesians..., App. A.

59 S.R.M. Gill, note, Duvira, 17 December 1927, in writer's possession. The Massim stone circle was believed to serve as a meeting-place for village people. See also RMNED PR 8 November 1931, CAO/CRS/G91.

60 E. Rogers, A Pioneer of New Guinea, 129.

61 M. Stone-Wigg, British New Guinea..., 1.

62 M. Stone-Wigg, The Papuans..., 55.

Their thought corresponded to that of Frank Lenwood of the L.M.S. who wrote in 1920 that 'equality cannot be expected for many generations and the Christian Papuan questions the missionary's right to rule as little as a boy of eight could dispute the authority of his father'.⁶³ Very strong emphasis was laid in Anglican theology on the concept of the church as a family; everyone on the Mission, from bishop to smallest child, was accorded a relationship-name of father, sister or brother. Those who were their brothers in the Empire, said A.E. David, they wished to make their brethren in the Faith.⁶⁴

The father-child analogy, often concealed beneath fraternal sentiments, was one concept in accord with assumptions common on both sides of the missionary relationship. Europeans were not the only people imbued with patriarchal assumptions. In addressing Anglicans after the transfer of the Torres Strait Islands from the L.M.S. in 1915, an Island elder said:

We are like children who have lost their father and mother. We do not know what to do or where to look. You will be our father and show us the way to go and how to live. 65

Both Melanesian and Anglo-Saxon convictions about the role of the father helped to breed reflex attitudes. Once a Melanesian acknowledged the fatherhood of the European, it was to such characteristics as innocence, simplicity, faithfulness and obedience that the European looked. The 'happy child of nature' myth, in whatever form it was presented, denied to New Guineans the privileges reserved for adults.

Yet this was not the whole story. In appealing to the paternal sentiment planted deep in his missionary 'trustee', the Melanesian could attain a measure of control over the foreigner. The degree of ascendancy varied with time and place, but it was often to his advantage. By establishing the paternity of the European and manipulating paternal emotions, the 'child' gained from his 'father' a flow of sympathy, attention, protection and material benefit

63 F. Lenwood to PDC, London, 11 February 1920, KA.

64 MN, 15 February 1898. Brown's feelings were similar to David's: 'The natives are in that stage now in which they will do anything for you if you regard them as parts of your family and they look upon you as their Father or Chief.' G. Brown to J.A. Crump, Sydney, 26 September 1894, MOM 44.

65 G. White, Thirty Years in Tropical Australia, 214.

according to standard missionary behaviour. The obligatory nature of the relationship meant not only that the father exercised control over the child, but sometimes the reverse.

Rejecting that evolutionary scale on which the Papuan ranked so low, missionaries in northern New Guinea found another model, a being that was partly noble and partly childlike. To believe in an ideal savage would serve a group of pioneers well, for it would help them adapt to circumstances that were, in many respects, harsh and uncompromising. Those who were of an intellectual and sometimes romantic cast of mind responded by believing in an almost exemplary Papuan. This anticipated a portrait drawn in later times - the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angel.⁶⁶ To a prospective Evangelical missionary zealot, the most depressing feature of the Anglican way of describing Papuans and their customs was probably its moderation.

IN charting a Wesleyan policy towards Melanesian customs, W.E. Bromilow inherited a more difficult role than either Abel or Stone-Wigg. Though a former member of the strongly iconoclastic Wesleyan Mission in Fiji,⁶⁷ Bromilow was inhibited by his university education, as well as by the liberal writings of his superior George Brown and his colleague Lorimer Fison, two of the more tolerant and observant Methodists in 19th century Pacific missions. Rigid in moral matters, Bromilow himself appears to have believed in an undogmatic faith. He was unlikely to have approached Massim culture in a censorious way. George Woolnough, who first received MacGregor's invitation to start a Wesleyan Mission, adopted an uncommitted view:

66 See D.F. Wetherell, 'A History of the Anglican Mission in Papua 1891-1942', unpub. MA thesis, ANU, 1970.

67 Customs of 'utter depravity' which early South Seas missionaries tried to abolish included infanticide, promiscuity, homosexuality, human sacrifice and dances connected with promiscuity in Tahiti; nakedness, cannibalism, widow-strangling and the killing of strangers in Fiji; 'Idol-worship', night-dancing and warfare in Samoa. See W. Lawry, Friendly and Feejee Islands..., 112-14; G.C. Henderson, Fiji and the Fijians..., 63; B. Thomson, The Fijians..., 389; D.L. Oliver, The Pacific Islands, 178; F.M. Keesing, The South Seas..., 87.

From the little that has come before us, and judging that in the light of our knowledge of other primitive societies, the people of New Guinea are living in a very simple state - a state to be noted as primitive rather than as vile and wicked. 68

Bromilow could not have been indifferent to fluctuating currents of thought between 1891 and 1914. Immersed as he was in the precarious waters of ethnographic criticism, it was necessary for the Superintendent of the New Guinea District to take account of winds and currents, and to tack and trim accordingly. Bromilow's writings and policies were a model of inconsistency, veering sometimes hard towards Kwato and at other times towards Dogura.

In 1914 Bromilow declared that his policy was 'to condemn all customs that are evil in themselves or inseparably connected with evil, and to encourage all others'.⁶⁹ He insisted that Methodists 'did not go to these islands to make the people English, but to evangelise and educate them'.⁷⁰ His commendation of Massim custom warmed as he wrote. Land laws on Dobu, he said, were 'perfect', property was inalienable, gardens scrupulously clean, dancing 'wonderfully elaborate', and hunting efficiently organized.⁷¹ He expressed admiration for Dobuan houses, Louisiade canoes, and D'Entrecasteaux concepts of the supernatural. Kiriwina chieftainship was an institution that 'always strikes the visitor with wonder'.⁷² Notwithstanding cannibalism and infanticide, he felt there was in Melanesian custom 'much deserving of admiration and encouragement'.⁷³

68 G. Woolnough, 'British Possession...', in RGS (Qld) Proceedings... 1886-7, vol. II part I, 62-70. For Brown and Fison, see ADB, vol. I, IV.

69 AMMR, 4 March 1897.

70 AMMR, 4 May 1898. Bromilow's statement 'All customs evil in themselves according to the Bible standard or inseparably connected with evil, we discourage, but all native customs we allow', reflects the ambiguity of his thought about custom. *Ibid.*

71 See J. Colwell, A Century in the Pacific, 544ff; BNG AR 1892-3, 72; W.E. Bromilow, Twenty Years..., 114. W.E. Bromilow, 'Dobuan (Papua) Beliefs and Folk Lore', in ANZAAS 13th meeting, Report, Sydney 1912, 417ff. See also AMMR, 4 March 1897.

72 J. Colwell, *op. cit.*, 544.

73 *Ibid.*, AMMR, 3 October 1898.

At times, then, Bromilow wrote with the hand of Stone-Wigg; at other times he was obliged to act with the conviction of Abel. It was difficult for Bromilow not to take account of his missionaries' reports that more and more 'bad' customs were being uncovered as their linguistic competence grew. 'These people are steeped in the blackest of sin', wrote Jeannie Tinney. 'We knew they were very bad indeed, but the half of it was not known.'⁷⁴ Missionaries had to curb 'lying, immorality, filthy conversation, disobedience to parents... cruelty to dumb animals'⁷⁵ with the result that, as one wrote, 'We are fighting sin and Satan here all the time.'⁷⁶ Bromilow wrote that as he became familiar with Massim culture, the Methodist missionary found 'there is so much to condemn, that unless he is a man of tact and patience he will meet insuperable obstacles'.⁷⁷ Inexorably, despite Bromilow's efforts to the contrary, Methodist writings came to resemble the Evangelical utterances familiar to readers of Abel's reports. The Goodenough Islanders were 'degraded in the extreme... fearfully low down in the scale', and children were 'surrounded by ignorance and evil in all its horrible forms' from the beginning of life's journey.⁷⁸

Once inside Dobu mission, the full rigour of Wesleyan morality was revealed. Clear detail about Methodist Dobu, as about Kwato, was registered in Stone-Wigg's diary after a visit to the Methodist Mission in 1901:

Many parents give children to the Mission... Girls now choose their own husbands and do not follow the arrangements made for them in their childhood. Ill will towards the mission for gradually changing the

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- 74 J. Tinney, Diary, 4 April 1895, MOM 150. The attitude of most male Methodists seems to have been more liberal than that of females. Compare, for example, Fellows' statement with that of E.M. Prisk: 'Though they are low in the mental scale (not so low, I think, as has been generally supposed), and they have many impure and degrading customs; yet on the whole, they live a fairly enjoyable life. They are a happy-go-lucky jolly people...'. S.B. Fellows, Notes, 24 November 1891; ANG. Prisk wrote only of 'the appalling tendencies of these poor children towards untruthfulness, evil language, immorality and cruelty...'. E.M. Prisk, About People..., 4.
- 75 AMMR, 4 July 1892; ibid., 3 October 1898; ibid., 6 August 1898.
- 76 J. Tinney, Diary, 18 January 1895, MOM 150.
- 77 W.E. Bromilow, 'Dobuan (Papua) Beliefs...', 413.
- 78 AWMMS, AR 1911-12, 119.

customs of the natives gradually dies down. Very persistent opposition by the Mission given to many native ways.... Smoking tobacco, chewing betel nut, not forbidden in this district but discouraged, but all the girls the other day came voluntarily and promised to give up smoking... Face painting never done. Native skirts are discarded... No children go back to the native villages as a rule, the village life being considered very dangerous to morals... The native teachers inclined to over severity, forbidding even the plucking of a flower on [Sunday]. 79

To compensate for this severity, Wesleyans encouraged sports, dancing and feasting. Fijians held Christmas festivals at Kiriwina until 6000 people attended. Samoans taught Polynesian dancing. Europeans permitted the revival of tribal raiding and mock fighting. On one occasion, students at Dobu 'swarmed through the mission house dining room, ... smote this and that with clubs and suddenly vanished in pursuit of a man. They caught and tied and carried him to a pile of burning grass and held him over it, pretending to roast him.'⁸⁰

Wesleyan rigour was tempered by Brown's practical knowledge of the Pacific Islands as well as by Bromilow's personality. The extent of the Superintendent's esteem among the Massim of the D'Entrecasteaux was revealed only when he retired from the Mission;⁸¹ and the degree to which he was accepted by the Dobuans was marked by his membership in an Island clan and by the Massim people in general by his admittance to the kula ring. In his assessment of Melanesian culture Bromilow stood midway between the Anglo-Catholic and Evangelical positions. Though uncompromising in sexual morality, Bromilow persistently declared that 'liberty must be allowed in matters which, though strange to a foreigner, are neither evil in themselves nor inseparably connected with evil'.⁸²

MISSIONARY attitudes, then, compassed a broad range. By noticing how differently they reacted to the same stimuli - Papuan dress, dancing, and custom - their inner convictions could be assessed. Another

79 M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 13 November 1901, DA.

80 E.S. Johns to B. Danks, Kiriwina, 13 January 1913, MOM 119. AMMR, 4 February 1910; *ibid.*, 5 August 1907. S.B. Fellows photographed Kiriwinans and Fijians performing traditional dances on the Mission stations in about 1897. S.B. Fellows, Photograph Collection, ANG.

81 G. Brown to J.A. Crump, Sydney, 26 September 1894, MOM 44. See also p. 245.

82 AMMR, 4 March 1897.

index was available in the social behaviour of missionaries among the Papuans.

Abel refused to eat with Massim tribesmen socially. He regarded the notion of social egalitarianism between missionaries and villagers as pretentious, and wrote:

Here in Papua I make no claim to social affinity with my people. Nor do I feel that the entire lack of this is a hindrance to the Gospel. There is something higher... perfect spiritual affinity. I do not shake hands with the Papuans on hygienic grounds: I do not eat with them because their mode of life and mine are so entirely different that I should distress myself beyond measure with their distress were I to attempt such a thing. 83

Nevertheless, at communion Abel shared plates of baked taro and glasses of coconut milk with the Massim. He quoted St Paul, 'there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek'.⁸⁴ Abel's children made no distinction between social and spiritual bonds, eating and sleeping with Papuan families. Probably they were influenced by Frank Lenwood's missionary encyclical of 1920, with its broad disagreement with their father's objections:

European superiority has run as a poisoned thread through all the fabric of our Mission work... I am sure it was not accident that our Lord chose eating together as the vehicle of the highest spiritual manifestation and I wonder whether in Papua... we have gone as far as we might in that form of Christian fellowship. 85

In the D'Entrecasteaux, Bromilow followed Brown's warning that he should 'abstain from any superior aloofness from the native, and... act towards him as to his own countrymen, teaching him always that any superiority is the result of environment...'.⁸⁶ Both Bromilow and Gilmour sat on the floor when eating with villagers. Anglicans similarly developed close social affinity with the Massim. Stone-Wigg ate with his fingers when staying with villagers and slept in their houses, occasionally using the curved sides of his host's

83 C.W. Abel to - Lund, Kwato, nd., KA. Abel also criticized, and for the same reason, the Oxford missions in the East End of London. For similar criticism, see G. Lansbury, My Life, 129-30; K.S. Inglis, Churches..., 172.

84 C.W. Abel, op. cit., 211.

85 F. Lenwood to PDC, London, 11 February 1920, KA.

86 AMMR, 4 March 1911.

drum as a pillow.⁸⁷ The supreme exponent of the cult of simplicity, however, was Francis de Sales Buchanan. A Benedictine oblate before his conversion to the Anglican fold, Buchanan spent twenty years in Goodenough Bay, eating Papuan food, living in Papuan houses, and generally accommodating himself to the material simplicity of Papuan existence.⁸⁸ The evolutionary scale of the 19th century social Darwinians was left far behind in the practice of such a missionary. When Buchanan died in 1920 his possessions were found to consist of a gramophone, a small library, and a set of patched clothes. Coming to live among New Guineans with a warm sympathy for their customs for Buchanan had meant learning to adapt to Melanesian ways.

II

MOST early European observers held a low opinion of Papuan spirituality, an indication of their estimate of the place Melanesians occupied on the evolutionary scale. Octavius Stone, writing in 1880, thought Melanesian religion ludicrous: 'They are perfect infidels, believing in no God, but they have a sort of belief that after death their spirits will inhabit the space above the sea...'.⁸⁹ To J.P. Thomson in 1892, the Massim were 'slaves to superstition and all the other evils arising out of pure heathenism'.⁹⁰ Less crude than these impressionistic views were those of ethnographers such as C.G. Seligmann (1910) and R.W. Williamson (1914). Writing of the Massim of eastern Papua, Seligmann discerned a belief in ancestor spirits but could find no trace of a cult of ancestors or of a superior Being.⁹¹ Williamson wrote that the religion of the Mafulu of the Papuan Gulf was 'apparently confined to a belief in, and fear of, ghosts and spirits' and he could learn nothing of any belief in a higher power.⁹²

87 I. Baloiloi, Interview, Ubuia, 10 May 1972; M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 12 January 1900, DA.

88 For further studies on Buchanan, see D.F. Wetherell, 'A History of the Anglican Mission...', 118-9; G. White, Francis de Sales Buchanan.

89 O. Stone, A Few Months in New Guinea, 96.

90 J.P. Thomson, British New Guinea, 67, 179.

91 C.G. Seligmann, The Melanesians of British New Guinea, 646.

92 R.W. Williamson, The Mafulu People of British New Guinea, 264; The Ways of the South Sea Savage, 87.

Possessing no priestly order or religious monuments, Papuans were often believed to be devoid of religious sentiment. Several government officials believed Papuans incapable of assimilating Christianity: they were destitute of 'religious instincts'. H.H. Romilly declared that the Papuans' every act was regulated by superstition, and that all their spirits were malignant.⁹³ MacGregor felt that while the ethic of Christianity might be accepted among Melanesians, its theology would not. Asked if missions could convert Papuans, he replied:

My experience has been that the Papuan is the most difficult of all savages to influence in this direction. I may state at once that the Christian influence of the missionaries, so far as I have seen, is utterly fruitless, regarded from a purely conversion point of view. I believe that the Papuans are almost incapable of being influenced by deep religious sentiment... The missionaries simply have to create that religious sentiment... I doubt if there is a converted Papuan in New Guinea. 94

Abel disagreed. Believing that Papuan rites did not amount to a formal religion, he thought it would be easier to evangelize a 'savage' Papuan than a sophisticated Chinese or Indian. 'He has very little religion of his own to prevent him from listening to your message', he said. 'Once he becomes your friend he has no prejudice against it.'⁹⁵

L.M.S. missionaries on the south Papuan coast believed that Melanesian religion was so overladen with superstition - 'the most ineradicable weed in the heathen wilderness',⁹⁶ said Lawes - that it was better to try to extirpate it altogether than use it as a stepping stone to Christianity. In general, they agreed that religious sentiment from a western point of view did not exist, but had to be created.⁹⁷

Among missionaries in eastern New Guinea, Stone-Wigg was alone in his view that Papuans were an intensely religious people. Having reacted strongly against earlier missionary attitudes, he was

93 H.H. Romilly, From My Verandah in New Guinea, 81.

94 Telegraph, Brisbane, 16 October 1891.

95 C.W. Abel, 'Address to East Hill Congregational Church', c.1902.

96 W.G. Lawes to M. Stone-Wigg, Vatorata, 15 August 1905, DA.

97 See also A.T.S. James, Twenty-One Years of the L.M.S..., 142.

disposed to regard traditional beliefs with sympathy. He echoed in his writings the words of E.W. Benson, Archbishop of Canterbury (1883-1896):

a religious tone of mind, though heathen, is a better field for Christian effort than a non-religious tone of mind... we ought to do our utmost to understand the religions we are to deal with... It is not true that they are ordinarily wicked, except by contrast. We know that there may be wickedness in and among them... But we know it has been so in Christianity too.

98

Stone-Wigg subscribed heartily to this opinion. Not only did he not condemn traditional beliefs, but he found much to admire in the religious feasts, the toreha and walaga of the Massim people of Good-enough Bay. In 1901 he visited a celebration by 2000 villagers of the walaga feast - sometimes described as the Mango cult - in the hills behind Dogura, and declared that the beliefs of the cult embodied all the elements of a religious system. There was, he noted, a belief in powers more than human, the discipline of body, incantations, sacrifice, propitiation, and feasting upon the victims.⁹⁹ Stone-Wigg also marked the important role of the feast-leaders in the ritual and distribution of the pieces of the mango tree, an implicit comparison with the Mass. His observations of Papuan religion in the Mango cult convinced him that there were distinct parallels between its ideas and the doctrines of Christianity.

Most New Guinea missionaries disagreed with the bishop's rather donnish critique of the walaga. Bromilow, for example, composed no evolutionary theories about Papuan religion but sat teasing the Dobuans about their spirits, saying that 'they gradually come round and join the church'.¹⁰⁰

98 A.C. Benson, The Life of Edward White Benson..., vol. II, 458-9, quoted in M. Stone-Wigg, The Papuans..., 29.

99 Ibid., 29; M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 3 July 1901, DA. However, King disagreed: 'They know nothing of moral iniquity, of conscience, or of propitiation'. MN, 17 May 1902.

100 AMMR, 7 October 1896. When the Dobuans told Bromilow that Duau was inhabited by spirits, he 'anchored the Dove right under the shadow of the dreaded mountain, in the haunted bay. He called aloud to the spirits, told them to come and seize the ship and its company (22), called loud and long, but of course in vain. He told this in vivid language in the church. The people were bound to believe the testimony of so many, so superstition has received a hard blow'. M. Billing, Diary, 15 February 1895, MOM 150.

Without condemning Melanesian belief in spirits, they concurred in effect with Lawes that the conceptual framework of native beliefs could not be used as a preparation for Christianity. The majority considered the Melanesians to be animists, whose beliefs were utterly irreconcilable with the concepts of western religion. Methodist and L.M.S. missionaries agreed with King's claim that he could not detect the slightest idea of a Supreme Being, and without this, any exegesis of Scripture was futile. Moreover, without a sense of sin, Christ's atonement was meaningless:

The people who have no idea of the nature of God cannot see the wonder of God becoming Man. And people who are not conscious of sin do not understand the Cross. 101

Like King, Bromilow and Abel often initiated discussion on religion by considering the creation of their artifacts and other familiar objects; then extended the original premise to the sky, the wind and the rain; and went on to posit the existence of a divine creator:

I explained [said King]... how our father in heaven made the world, and gave us all good things. The men discussed it freely, and talked along time over the news... Ituabae said: 'There is the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and we pray to them, and they hear us.' Then I said: 'They have been listening to our singing, though we cannot see them...' Ituabae said to them: 'We have not been telling you lies: it is all true.' 102

In island New Guinea, however, such expositions were quickly contradicted: villagers stated emphatically that things were not made, but came into being of themselves. There was one sky-god, Eaboaine, who had two entities: one to watch people at feasts, the other to detect wrong, especially theft. When they prayed thus, 'Eaboaine! U itaita mo'utama, Ta a itaito tu'ewa' ('Eaboaine! Thou lookest down upon us, and we look up to Thee!')¹⁰³ they were not necessarily, as Bromilow thought, addressing a Creator. The Dobuans believed in no scheme of causation by which a belief in a creator-God could be induced.

101 C. King, Copland King and his Papuan Friends, 21, 30.

102 Ibid.

103 G. Brown, Polynesians and Melanesians, 147. Brown said that Eaboaine created man and then went to live at Bwebweso. Ibid., 417. Eaboaine was discarded in favour of Eaubada in 1899. QM, Dobu, 11 April 1899, SA.

But Dobuan eschatological beliefs were concise. Men consisted of body, shadow and spirit. After the death of the body, the shadow remained in his house in the village. The spirit proceeded immediately to a point at the south-east of Dobu island, and there, resting on a tree, awaited the falling of a leaf. When the leaf fell, the spirit alighted on it and was wafted across the Dawson Straits to Normanby Island. Having wiped away its tears for friends left behind, it ascended Mount Bwebweso, the land of the dead, where its reception depended upon the state of life spent on Dobu.¹⁰⁴ Not only were beliefs in the afterlife clear, but the causation of rain, wind, drought and natural phenomena was explicit, as were opinions about the veracity of the tapwaroro. A pair of approaching missionaries at a Dobu village heard themselves announced, 'Two ignorant people have come today to have Taparoro. Shall we go and listen?'¹⁰⁵

Nothing could have been better calculated to disrupt the missionary narrative than a similarly lucid exposition by Melanesian authority. Missionaries at Kiriwina related,

When we spoke of thanking God for a good harvest, the answer was: No! No! We have done all the work! Ours is the glory! He only gives us hands and feet! Then we said 'Thank God for the rain!' 'No! No! There is a sorcerer belonging to us who makes the rain! Eaboaine only looks down on us!' 'Who, then, created the world?' 'No one!' 'Who made the stars, the moon and the sun?' 'They have always been there' ... said a woman, expressing the disbelief of the people: 'Bow down to God? No! Let the Missionary bring Him down to us, and we will accept Him, but not till we can see Him.' 106

104 G. Brown, op. cit., 400; W.E. Bromilow, op. cit., 413ff. The Kiriwinans believed Eaboaine was in the sky, but was not a creator. If Eaboaine opened his left hand there was thunder: his right hand caused an earthquake. He turned over a dish to cause rain. J.H.P. Murray, Diary, 28 June 1907, ML. The information probably was supplied by M.K. Gilmour.

105 M. Billing, Diary, 4 May 1896, MOM 150.

106 AMMR, 4 September 1908. Pulitara, chief of Kavataria, asked Fellows the question, "'Who makes the wind and the harvest in your land?' [Fellows] answered 'God'. 'Ah', said he, 'that's it. God does the work for your people, and I do it for our people. God and I are equal.' He delivered this dictum very quietly, and with the air of a man who has given a most satisfactory explanation." G. Brown, op. cit., 236-7.

When Fellows told them about God, the Kiriwinans asked 'What is God? a man or woman? Snake or dog? Bring your God with you on to the platform.'¹⁰⁷ Fellows recited the Judaeo-Christian story of creation, and they reciprocated with their own legends of the making of the sun and moon. Like children, the sun and moon quarrelled. Then the mother said 'You are to rise every morning in the East; go right round to the West and then get your supper, and go to bed; but remember you must go back through the earth in the night...'. The Tubetubeans and Dobuans also related their genesis from a world beneath the ground. Fellows said that 'his heart often sank' as 'they claimed that their stories were equal to ours'.¹⁰⁸ Yet the sublime quality of some Massim legends so touched missionary hearers that they were extensively reported in Methodist magazines.

TO a practical people like the Massim, the truth of a religion depended on its empirical value. Reluctance to abandon garden magic was an intransigent obstacle to the growth of Methodism in island New Guinea. 'My brother!' exclaimed the head man of Sinaketa to the missionary John Andrews, 'Taparoro we do not want, we will never garden, our yams will all die. Let us live at peace, but we are afraid of Taparoro.'¹⁰⁹ But if early listeners to the message were sceptical of the truth of the tapwaroro, the newcomer could retort, 'Go and see the Dove... she is so full of yams that we have no room for any more.'¹¹⁰ When the sorcerer failed to produce larger yams than the mission's tapwaroro yams, he was discredited in the eyes of his admirers. Thus one convert explained the reason for his conversion:

107 AMMR, 8 October 1897.

108 AMMR, 4 April 1902.

109 AMMR, 5 September 1895. Similarly, a man at Bogaboga told the Methodist Samoan teacher Fausia, 'I don't want your Taparoro - you taparoroed here and [a] man instead of getting better died - your taparoro is false. If you come here taparoroing I'll take my spears and kill you.' S.B. Fellows, Miscellaneous notes, ANG. See also MN, 17 January 1905.

110 AMMR, 5 September 1895.

I used to say, What? Is worship food? But a missionary pointed out that we Dobuans can plant in places where we never planted before, and hence we get bigger yams. This caused my conversion. 111

This line of argument illustrated an important Melanesian religious attribute: its emphasis on food and fertility. Garden magic, practised in all areas the missionaries penetrated, was inextricable from the villagers' scheme of causation and survived long after the conversion of the Massim to Christianity. Thus, eighty years after Bromilow's landing, sorcerers on Dobu could recite esoteric charms to induce a good yam crop:

Iotaumala weliyai, madawavo

Iotaumala weliyai on your big canoe

Yaupilipilimai Bolosota debanai.

Sailing along Bolosota point.

Yaulowelalemuia yaigu imi bwarai

Land your big canoe in the middle of my garden

Yauloyawetimua...

Land your big canoe

Eno laga masulina, Gugui

Bring forth the food for the feast

Yaigu laba ubuia yaigu walikaeia

Underneath my land.

112

If the agricultural prowess of the newcomer did not always impress the Massim, there were other ways of earning his respect. The manifest material superiority of the newcomers; the authority of the missionary, both as a member of an occult class and as a European; the power of the Government; the rhythm of the hymns; and the reassuring presence of the Pacific Island teacher who affirmed that the new tapwaroro was available to all: these did not evoke scepticism. When the Massim seemed obstinate, he was not confuted on rational grounds, but reproved for his pride and disbelief. Thus on Peter Rautamara's return to his native Taupota after a visit to Australia in 1905, he berated his listeners, saying:

Some New Guinea people... will not believe the missionaries: they say they are lying... The New Guinea people say: 'Our country is good', but it is bad. The missionaries' country is good. There they have good food and fresh meat, and here they have bad food and 'tinny' meat... For our sakes they have left all this and come here. 113

111 AMMR, 6 August 1902. A favourite Dobuan maxim was 'Always have yams in your house for the season Taguara', the time between harvesting and planting. AMMR, 4 May 1903.

112 Manue Gomalewa, Interview, 6 May 1972.

113 OP 7/4.

Rautamara's visit to Australia, like that of Eliesa Duigu of Dobu and Josia Lebasi of Kwato, overthrew a popular Massim explanation for the missionary migration: that it had been caused by a shortage of food in their own land.¹¹⁴

Religious belief being mechanistic and practical, Massim spirituality was directed to specific goals. Climate, safety and health as well as fertility, were among its main preoccupations. Rather than being a comprehensive body of doctrine, it was a collection of miscellaneous recipes, and missionaries seem to have made no concerted attempt to suppress it. On the contrary, their efforts to persuade villagers to pray and sing were accommodated to their listeners' material expectations. Many usages were taken directly from traditional Melanesian belief: incantations to the spirits, for example, were assimilated into the practice of intercessory prayer. When King was explaining the meaning of intercession to Binandele on the Mamba, he heard an interjection:

One old man sat down suddenly and said, 'Now tell us again about our prayers. What are we to say? I told him, and he repeated it over once or twice... Then he said, 'And when we plant our food in our gardens? And when we go to sea in our canoes, and the waves are big? I had told them to pray at any time they wanted, to speak to God and about anything, and to just use their language through Jesus Christ our Lord. 115

The immediacy with which villagers anticipated fulfilment of prophecy was another legacy from traditional religion. Many stories in the Bible were imbibed with literal assurance. The narrative of the Flood in particular seems to have struck a deep chord in the Melanesian consciousness, so often was it disgorged in the utterances of prophets in eastern New Guinea. Both Tokeriu, the Prophet of Milne Bay (1893) and the Oroda prophet of Naniu Island (1928) predicted that the millenium would begin with a deluge.¹¹⁶

114 G. White, A Pioneer of Papua, 85. A Samoan missionary, Faasiu, recorded that in 1895 at Hisiu near Maiva, 'I told them about God in heaven, the Ruler, but they said, 'Those sea-people, the Europeans, have kept on telling us those things because they have no families or lands and they want our lands, since they have lived all their life on the sea.' SS, May 1895, 67.

115 C. King to M. Stone-Wigg, Dogura, 20 April 1902; MN, 24 November 1904, 101.

116 See also pp. 234, 240.

Certainly the incidents of the Old Testament interested listeners much more than Pauline theology. On sexual morality, a Kiriwina man's reply to H.I. Hogbin illustrated a selective approach:

'There is nothing in the Commandments about unmarrieds having intercourse', was his reply. 'We accept the Bible and follow it'. I thereupon quoted the two passages, which I still remembered. 'Why, that is only Paul!' he exclaimed. 'God's orders and Paul's opinion are two different things.' 117

As with ethical teaching, so with eschatology. Nothing could have been more gratifying to an Evangelical missionary, or more disconcerting to one who was not, than to have his church thronged with anxious converts during a thunderstorm, convinced that the end of the world was about to begin. Yet this happened on occasion at Wedau.¹¹⁸

In Melanesian society old men were often credited with the ability to bring drought or cause rain, and newcomers were often believed to possess similar prerogatives. A major reason for the failure of the Marist Mission on Murua in 1853 was a disastrous famine and epidemic.¹¹⁹ The Massim of Dawson Straits told the Wesleyans that their crops would be blighted, that hymn singing would drive fish away, and that Lilly Bromilow's harmonium was infected with disease.¹²⁰ It was also believed on Dobu that Bromilow's barometer caused, rather than forecast rain, and that he had power to punish offenders by bringing wind.¹²¹ Similar beliefs were held by the Binandele about King's barometer.¹²² When Bromilow landed at Dobu, he kept a hurricane lantern burning at night in his tent. The Dobuans approached the settlement with spears, but thinking the lantern was the missionary's eye gleaming in the dark, kept away. According to MacGregor, in the view of the Dobuans, the Methodist Superintendent was nothing

117 H.I. Hogbin, 'Native Christianity in a New Guinea Village', *Oceania*, vol. XVIII no. 1, September 1947, 17-18.

118 C. King to M. Stone-Wigg, Dogura, 20 April 1902, DA.

119 H. Laracy, 'Catholic Missions in the Solomon Islands, 1845-1966', unpub. Ph.D. thesis, ANU, 1969, 43, 53. Laracy describes the 'blatantly materialistic' motives of the Muruans. *Ibid.*, 53.

120 W.E. Bromilow, *Twenty Years...*, 84.

121 *AMMR*, 6 August 1902.

122 *MN*, 15 January 1902.

but a magician.¹²³ Bromilow's occult reputation greatly increased when the rumour spread that he could take out his teeth, a feat which, demonstrated to the gaping villagers of Dobu and Kiriwina, earned him the lifelong sobriquet of Saragigi.¹²⁴

A similar magic rationale was applied to Anglicans on the Mamba River. When F.W. Ramsay preached on the Flood in Genesis II the subject was discussed in villages a hundred miles away. One thrifty elder had laid up food for a feast and begged Ramsay to let the rain ruin the crops only of those who had neglected their church-going. 'I come', he declared, 'so don't let it do me harm.' Ramsay protested that God decided and that he had no power. 'Well', replied the elder, 'he is your God. You can arrange it with him.'¹²⁵ King was more shrewd than Ramsay. During a flood on the Mamba in 1902, propitiatory offerings were brought to the church at Ave, and King one evening preached to a hundred people:

I told them, in the address that the floods were a means whereby God was calling them to take notice of Him, and a punishment for their neglect of Him, but that He was sorry for their distress, and would listen to their prayer... Then the food was brought to the chancel gate, and received there by the Christians and piled up... and then we knelt down and prayed for relief from our distress. 126

In the masterful figure of C.W. Abel was embodied a supernatural prowess exceptional even for a missionary. As the village Massim knew that the sorcerer might at any moment strike him dead, or poison his food, so it was feared Abel might bring disaster from the sky. Abel's power over the weather deeply impressed the Massim of Milne Bay. When villages were swept by strong winds, messages were sent to Kwato by canoe, imploring him to stay the gusts. Abel sent the Samoan teacher Ma'anaima to explain, but he was asked later to take action against the weather.¹²⁷ At Divinai, the villagers reported that Abel once cursed a tree: 'There is a Piwowi tree in

123 W. MacGregor, Diary, 21 June 1891, ANL. Isako Baloiloi, Interview, Dobu, 9 May 1972.

124 Sara: teeth; gigi: twist out.

125 M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 4 September 1901, DA.

126 MN, 19 March 1902.

127 C.W. Abel, LD, 11 February 1906, KA.

the bush. P.D. [Phyllis Abel] fell from the tree. Misi Ipi [Abel] was upset. So he said, "This tree will not bear fruit till the end of time." And it did not.¹²⁸

Even more remarkable than Abel's command over nature was his influence upon white men. That Abel disliked many Australians and distrusted some Australian field officers was widely known in Milne Bay. His forecasts about Papuan leadership, moreover, coincided with the aspirations of the Kwato Papuans.¹²⁹ Supernatural powers to injure Australians were woven into stories about Abel's dealings with planters in the Bay. Most narratives portrayed a wrathful despot who cast spells.

One tale related how Abel asked the captain of an Australian steamer to take a letter from Samarai to East Cape; the captain had refused, and shortly afterwards the steamer struck a reef and sank. Another account showed how Abel destroyed a planter at Maivara. When the Australian planter's boat Giligili was passing Kwato, Abel requested a passage to his plantation at Koeabule. The request was refused, so Abel gave chase and boarded the vessel. When the owner did not take Abel to his destination, but landed him at Rabi, the enraged missionary was said to have told the planter to steer for the cemetery at Logea. To the horror of villagers, the planter died next day and was buried at Logea Pota.¹³⁰ Other Massim folklore asserted Abel's power to triumph over Australian enemies of the Papuans. Shortly after the manager of Burns Philp's store in Port Moresby refused to serve members of the Kwato cricket XI in 1929, a fire was said to have broken out in the store,¹³¹ illustrating

128 W. Dikueai, Interview, Divinai, 2 June 1972.

129 See also pp. 300-01, 352. M. Dickson, Interview, Port Moresby, 6 June 1972. For Abel's prophetic interpretation of the ministry, see C.W. Abel to C.C. Abel, Melbourne, 3 September 1918, KA.

130 W. Dikueai, Interview, Divinai, 2 June 1972.

131 M. Dickson, Interview, Port Moresby, 2 June 1972. Both Steamships and Loudon's stores opened soda fountains for the first time in 1926. Steamships set aside a special counter for European customers, and Loudon's put theirs in the Chemist's department where only Europeans were served. It is not known whether Burns Philp had these facilities by 1929. Papuan Courier, 5 March 1926, *ibid.*, 9 April 1926.

Abel's ability not only to cause wind and death, but fire as well. The legends of the Milne Bay people are replete with evidence of Abel's occult power.

ONE biblical subject which interested listeners seems to have been the death and resurrection of Christ. Spirits of the dead were of intense concern to the living, and enquirers often asked where missionaries thought these had gone.¹³² 'They grieve over the loss of their children', wrote A.W. Murray in 1872, 'and the idea of having them restored to them is welcomed with corresponding pleasure.'¹³³ The narratives of Christ's healing miracles - the raising of Lazarus, the healing of the centurion's son, the curing of the blind - aroused much interest in a society where sorcerers gained respect by spectacular displays of power. Massim listeners were particularly affected on hearing for the first time the Easter narrative. On Good Friday at Dogura in 1894, King noted, 'the people were very much interested in the lessons, some even shedding tears, saying their hearts burned at the story, and wanting to take revenge on Jesus' enemies'.¹³⁴

To those who accepted a causal relation between religious and empirical truth, the healing narratives must have provided a link between traditional and western spirituality. The emphasis placed on physical power by Gregory Teroia, who went with Stone-Wigg to Australia in 1905, aptly illustrates how vividly Papuans perceived this. In a sermon to villagers Teroia said:

What a lot of money the white people have; they work hard at gathering money, and when they have it, they marry and live happily. These missionaries have no money and do not live happily [in comfort] ... In Sydney there are lots of big boats, and what big guns! All the men and women spend a lot of time in adorning themselves, and putting on many clothes... We saw a doctor... He came to a sick man and pierced into his inside and ripped him up. Then he put his hand in and took the sickness out... 135

132 NGM, 'Notes and News From the Staff', Dogura, 18 October 1904, DA.

133 A.W. Murray to J. Mullens, Port Moresby, 3 March 1874, PJ. See also HKM, 1 October 1913.

134 CC, 2 July 1894.

135 NGM, 'Notes and News from the Staff', Dogura, 1905, DA.

After Teroia's sermon, an observer wrote that 'there was a fervent appeal all through the congregation to offer themselves for instruction, so as to become Christians'.¹³⁶

Some hearers perceived the gospel purely as a spiritual message. A few began reasoning on lines that argued for a speedy understanding of the difference between the theology of Christianity and the magical preoccupations of Massim rites. One such thinker was Samuel Aigeri, the first Anglican convert, who at twenty-five years of age preached to several hundred villagers:

He spoke very quietly [wrote King], addressing himself to the visitors,... and related his impressions when he saw the white people's books and service, how his heart got hot with anxiety to be able to understand it all. Don't let your hearts be like the grass, or the sand, or the stones, let it be like the water running out of one of those people's tanks or running down a gully. It goes in one strong channel... He had his gospel in his hand. He had no gesture, but just kept moving his foot nervously backwards and forwards. He told them that they should all kneel for prayers, and spoke of the necessity for daily prayer and grace at meal times. 'I don't say the incantations over my taro and my drains now', he said, 'But I say my prayer to God before I leave my house... It's like bringing food up to Amau Kingi [Father King] and he giving you tobacco for it and you give the food and he gives you tobacco in return. So, if you give your hearts to God... then he will give his heart to you. 137

The initial exposition of theology had widely differing effects in eastern New Guinea. To some the gospel was synonymous with a state of peace between tribes. Others looked upon it simply as a dispensation of tobacco, tomahawks and hoop iron.¹³⁸ A few began quickly to urge its acceptance on the basis of the dimdim's evident prosperity. Even the clothing and tobacco of the Pacific

136 Ibid.; see also H. Laracy, 'Catholic Missions...', 43, 53. The Muruans' resistance to Marist missionaries was temporarily overcome by a visit by ~~eight~~ of their youths to Sydney with Xavier Montrouzier.

137 C. King to M. Stone-Wigg, Dogura, 4 January 1898, DA. In 1898 Aigeri married Rebecca -, another convert, in the first tapwaroro marriage ceremony in Bartle Bay. For descriptions of Aigeri, see MN, 15 July 1896, 67, *ibid.*, 15 August 1896, 25; C.F. Pascoe, Two Hundred Years..., 465.

138 'We were the people that sat in darkness', one LMS teacher argued at Orokolo, 'just think, we were so dark that we did not know what the foreigners' tobacco was until we received the gospel'. J.H. Holmes, Diary, 12 February 1898, PJ.

Island missionary was instanced as evidence of the superiority of Christianity. But a few perceived the gospel as a spiritual message separate both from Melanesian magic and the European technological culture in which it was embedded. Nearly all New Guineans grasped the tapwaroro as a means of interpreting the bewildering new world then being thrust upon them.

CHAPTER VII

Converting a Society Without Chiefs

IN any proselytism the type of conversion is largely determined by the structure of society and by the type of religion which the people being converted already possess. In the Papuan village Christian missionaries found a situation unparalleled in most areas of evangelistic enterprise in the world: a social structure without a readily identifiable leadership. In such strongly hierarchical societies as Tonga, Samoa and Fiji, Protestant pioneers, realizing that conversion spread more quickly downward than upward,¹ had often directed their persuasions first to the top of the hierarchy. Indeed, one reason for the phenomenal growth of the Christian church in Polynesia had been the parallel between the ministerial hierarchy of the churches and the existing political structures. With the exception of the chiefly society of Kiriwina, Melanesian villages in eastern Papua were vigorously egalitarian. 'We should never have made the progress which we made in Fiji', wrote George Brown, 'if the political state of the people had been like that in New Britain or Dobu.'²

The lack of hereditary chieftainship and a recognizable chain of command in all Massim societies except Kiriwina presented missionaries with both an obstacle and an opportunity. In Kiriwina, the obstacle was quickly overcome when Pulitara, chief of Kavataria, adopted the lay missionary as his son, thus recognizing an alliance.³ The obstacle elsewhere lay in the fact that there was no ruler who could be used as an ally. 'If you have a chief to deal with', wrote Brown, 'when you get him you practically get his people.'⁴ There was

1 For the influence of the matai on group conversion in Samoa, see J.W. Davidson, Samoa mo Samoa, 34. See also D.L. Oliver, The Pacific Islands, 109.

2 G. Brown to S.B. Fellows, Sydney, 9 May 1895, MOM 44.

3 Fellows described this incident. 'Turning to the Chiefs we asked "What about Taparoro". [Pulitara] said quietly, 'All these minor chiefs are commoners, I am the chief... Let him (pointing to Mr Andrews) be my son.' AMMR, 5 September 1895. G. Brown to W.E. Bromilow, Sydney, 2 May 1894, MOM 43.

4 G. Brown to S.B. Fellows, Sydney, 9 May 1895, MOM 44.

in New Guinea, as MacGregor remarked, no Vladimir to command baptism; no Clovis to lead the way on which all must follow.⁵ The comment of the Fijian missionary Pilato Ratu at Dobu was tinged with despair:

... we speak to the people about the lotu; but if we get hold of a man he is only one, and all the rest do as they like. They have a word for chief which is Taubada, but the evil of it is that they all call themselves taubadas, and every man is a chief in his own house. 6

A frontal attack had to be made upon society in general and each individual had to be persuaded of the merits of Christianity. As one missionary wrote, as fishers of men they found the hook and line method worked better than the net.⁷

On the other hand, if there had been a powerful Melanesian aristocracy, and the missions had tried to shift the centre of gravity to their converts, the dislocation might have been much greater. The advantage in an egalitarian society was that the missionary himself might manage to create a position of authority without encountering serious opposition from entrenched traditional leadership. This was what happened. With government visits infrequent, aggrieved villagers often turned to the missionary for redress against their neighbours. Though only one missionary became a magistrate⁸ - a dualism of which others strongly disapproved - many were involved in disputes between clansmen⁹ looking for a strong man.

Most missionaries seem to have been implicated through Papuan action. Bromilow related an initial overture - a low cough beneath his study window - with which some of his colleagues must have been familiar. 'Well, what is it?' 'I have come, sir, to tell you of trouble in my village, and to ask you to go down and help us.'¹⁰

5 Quoted in R. Lovett, James Chalmers..., 422.

6 AMMR, 4 March 1892.

7 E.P. Jones, Boku Report, 1912, PR.

8 E.B. Savage of the Fly River and Torres Straits mission.

9 S.B. Fellows played an important role in resolving Kiriwina tribal war in 1899-1900. When Taolu, brother of the paramount chief Enamakala went to make peace with Moliasi, leader of the victorious rebels in January 1900, Moliasi asked Fellows to attend. Fellows regarded his intercession as 'a grand finish to all our efforts to secure peace.'
S.B. Fellows to S. Fellow, Kiriwina, 7 January - 7 October 1900, Fellows collection, ANG.

10 AMMR, 4 November 1909; see also A.A. Koskinen, Missionary Influence..., 49ff.

Missionaries usually considered themselves required by the nature of their office to abstain from direct political action. Yet when consulted on matters outside their spiritual jurisdiction they found the division between spiritual and temporal increasingly difficult to maintain. Thus they sometimes assumed an ascendancy over inter-tribal relations. Abel said village leaders were weak:

Orders [are] given by headmen in an apologetic tone of voice. A man finds it safer to throw out a suggestion to his boy that he should run and fetch him something.... The boy may object and the man's dignity suffers if the order has been imperative. 11

An egalitarian society in process of rapid adjustment, the New Guinea village lent itself to the acquisition of power by influential foreigners. Hence Wesleyans in the D'Entrecasteaux asked for volunteers who could 'manage natives'.¹² S.B. Fellows, who was such a manager, believed that his mediation in Kiriwinan fighting had greatly increased his 'power and prestige' over the Trobriands. After the peace settlement of 1900 he began signing his name 'Taubada', for as such was he known.¹³

Wesleyans in the field, however, were restrained by their patrons in Sydney. There was, said Brown, 'always a big danger in the Mission Field of a man's feeling and acting as a Lord over God's heritage and that we all have to guard agst. for we are only men all of us'.¹⁴ In accordance with Methodist belief in progressive inspiration, they were reminded not to be dogmatic, that God was ever revealing himself;¹⁵ that they were to be teachable and not merely teachers.¹⁶ Methodists were on no account openly to engage in

11 C.W. Abel, Savage Life..., 37.

12 S.B. Fellows, Diary, 16 November 1894; S.B. Fellows to S. Fellows, Kiriwina, 24 January 1900, ANG. M.K. Gilmour to B. Danks, Ubuia, 4 July 1911, SA. J. King outlined LMS missionary duties as 'doctor, caterer, accountant... governor-general, when chiefs want advice'. J. King, W.G. Lawes..., 37.

13 S.B. Fellows to S. Fellows, Kiriwina, 24 January 1900, ANG. See also pp. 114-8, 206n.

14 G. Brown to J.T. Field, Sydney, 3 May 1894, MOM 43.

15 Methodist, 12 March 1892.

16 G. Brown to J.T. Field, Sydney, 3 May 1894, 11 August 1894, MOM 43.

political disputes.¹⁷ 'Don't affect the Chief, and above all, don't assert your superiority. No chief ever does it',¹⁸ was Brown's advice.

Precept and caution in Sydney was one matter: modesty in New Guinea was another. Urged to take stern measures by native headmen whose desire for authority was balked by the sturdy independence of their peers, missionaries were often assisted by events to the seat of power. Discussing tapwaroro with Bromilow, Gaganumore of Dobu concluded: 'It will be a long time before we understand tapwaroro, and, as for women understanding it, the only way would be to beat it in with a mallet.'¹⁹ When Bromilow confided his disappointment about feeble church attendances to Gaganumore, the headman obligingly recommended that Bromilow go out with his gun and 'shoot, by way of making examples of them, a few of the natives who were working instead of coming to church'.²⁰ Another headman told Bromilow to ask the government 'to come and cut the throats of all the sorcerers'.²¹

Bromilow's restraint on Dobu may have been inexplicable to Gaganumore in view of the autocracy of his colleague at Kiriwina. A tall, well built exemplar of muscular religion, Fellows was urged especially by Brown to exercise 'great discretion and great patience' in his task.²² He exercised both; but he was still exceedingly domineering. Fellows was remembered by the Trobrianders for his height and his loud voice; he was 'a strict man who strode about Kiriwina' to collect people for services.²³ Brown wrote:

I am afraid he may be too domineering and overbearing to the natives. If he acts and speaks to the Kiriwina people as he told us he did in Pan[aeiti] he will get into trouble. Had he done so in N[ew] B[ritain] he would have got a crack on the head... [Fellows] needs a lot of grace and a lot of humility. 24

17 AMMR, 8 May 1901.

18 *Ibid.*; G. Brown to J.T. Field, Sydney, 3 May 1894, MOM 43.

19 W.E. Bromilow, Twenty Years..., 116.

20 *Ibid.*, 117.

21 AMMR, 4 November 1908.

22 G. Brown to S.B. Fellows, 9 May 1895, MOM 44.

23 K. Weyalulu, Interview, Kavataria, 17 May 1972.

24 G. Brown to J.T. Field, Sydney, 3 May 1894, MOM 43. Fellows seems to have agreed: 'I have seen... my own pride and selfishness and by God's gracious help I am going to conquer it in the future.' S.B. Fellows to S. Fellows, Kiriwina, - August 1900, ANG.

While even Methodists were astonished at Fellows' temerity in criticizing the chief Pulitara during sermons, and Kiriwinans remarked that Pulitara could have killed the missionary whenever he wished to, Fellows attained an unusual ascendancy over both Enamakala and Pulitara. He attended feasts and smoked tobacco; he encouraged his Samoan teacher Fa'asala to eat with Touluwa, brother of the paramount chief Enamakala; he arranged that both chiefs and Polynesian teacher should hear his sermons on seats exactly the same in height.²⁵ Fellows' mastery of the minutiae of protocol possibly saved him from the fate that Brown feared.

By the late 19th century Methodism was being aligned with the crusade against alcohol, and in some Methodist strongholds in the Pacific analogous practices such as yaqona drinking and betel-nut chewing were discouraged. Brown, however, succeeded in softening missionary rigour in matters of traditional etiquette and hospitality.²⁶ He criticized J.T. Field for prohibiting betel-nut chewing at Tubetube;²⁷ he questioned the wisdom of the anti-yaqona campaign in Fiji. 'Why should we make Christianity so hard!' he exclaimed. Reminding his subordinates that not even Wesley had required a man to give up his wine,²⁸ Brown said that missionaries should not 'lay burdens on men's shoulders which neither we nor our fathers were able to carry'.²⁹

EGALITARIAN communities in the south, and chiefly society undergoing rapid adjustment in the north, were ready alike to yield to pacific newcomers who possessed unprecedented magical and empirical power. Whether white men were returning ancestors or landless sea-people³⁰ made no difference to the certainty that they possessed superior power. This recognition by Melanesians naturally embodied the hope that the power and benefits of the dindim might be turned to advantage. The only specific leadership resided in the clan heads - what the Orokaiva

25 Ibid.; K. Weyalulu, Interview, Kavataria, 17 May 1972.

26 G. Brown to J.T. Field, Sydney, 3 May 1894; G. Brown to W.E. Bromilow, Sydney, 31 October 1895, MOM 43.

27 G. Brown to J.T. Field, Sydney, 11 August 1894, MOM 43.

28 G. Brown to H. Worrall, Sydney, 18 June 1895, MOM 44; see also W.N. Gunson, 'Incidence of alcoholism...', in JPH (I) 1966, 43-62.

29 G. Brown to W.E. Bromilow, Sydney, 31 October 1895, MOM 43.

30 SS, May 1895.

knew as the kiari embo³¹ - the possessors of occult knowledge, and these were old men. In the change of focus to younger men which inevitably followed the encroachment of foreign influences, these were in a vulnerable position.

Clan heads and missionaries emerged from their first encounter with at least one mutual conviction: that traditional Melanesian religion and Christianity were incontrovertibly different. A garden culture involved in fertility and spirits, and a religion based on atonement and love of enemy: this was unpromising material for a syncretist. Once it became clear to crestfallen clansmen that Christianity was not ultimately concerned with the dispensation of trade and tobacco, missionaries were merely an irritant. When missionaries saw that the Melanesians did not regard them as long awaited deliverers from the bondage of superstition, they realized that their disarmingly friendly hosts merely coveted their goods. 'I have known people to come up and ask for tobacco', said V.H. Sherwin, 'but never for the gospel.'³²

In southern, northern and island New Guinea the reaction of clan heads was similar: withdrawal, passive resistance, and an occasional feeble rearguard action. The preachers noted the disappearance of elders from the villages before services;³³ they marked the bewilderment of those whom they had cajoled into attending; they were taken aback by an occasional verbal challenge from older men. 'You are telling lies'³⁴ was the rejoinder which sometimes greeted the priest's exposition of the doctrine of the Incarnation. Sometimes active opposition was given by sorcerers: on the Mamba, one threatened to cut out King's liver and lungs unless he left the village.³⁵ In another village the Binandele tried to shift a missionary by urinating

31 E. Schwimmer, 'Orokaiva Leadership', in New Guinea Research Bulletin, no. 2, vol. I, 1967, 53ff.

32 PIM, 17 June 1936. Bromilow related a familiar experience with an old Massim: 'As soon as he saw us he called out, "Hello! Misa Bromilow, you come now?" "Yes; what are you doing? "Oh! me do nothing now. Me no got nothing. Me no smoke tobacco, me smoke leaf b[i]long a tree!" AMMR, 5 July 1895.

33 OP 21/9.

34 Ibid.

35 C. King, Copland King and his Papuan Friends, 23.

on his food, which had the desired effect.³⁶ At Dobu old people sometimes instructed a missionary in obscenities and were delighted when the unwitting linguist shocked his congregation from the pulpit next day.³⁷

Direct opposition to missionaries was individual and sporadic, but most elders affected a wooden unconcern for the tapwaroro. 'The breadfruit is always a breadfruit', said Piri, a Rarotongan, 'that is the way of the heathen.'³⁸ E. Pryce Jones asked one of Chalmers' converts why he had lapsed from the church and the old man denied it vehemently:

'Oh no', said he, 'I have not lost the word of God it still remains within me and I have not left it. I do not go to service because my eyes grow heavy with sleep and I can't keep awake.'³⁹

Other elders exasperated missionaries with their stubbornness. Ever an activist, C.W. Abel declared that his job was to fight old customs by 'get[ting] the church members into some aggressive work in their own villages'.⁴⁰ Benjamin Danks strenuously condemned the Papuan elders' lack of hygiene, their cruelty to animals, and their sexual immorality.⁴¹ 'I know the contradiction of the natives', he wrote, 'I know their sullen, passive resistance, I know their ignorant and their wilful disobedience, I know how they try to shirk that which is right, and abide by that which is wrong.'⁴²

Many older people disliked upset not only because they thought traditional Melanesian society was good but because any change must lead to more change and unknown reform. The old were not converted often. But the young fell under the missionary's thrall. Contending that they were 'too old to learn' new ways, older people then often agreed to his taking away some of their descendants. Asked about their attitude to tapwaroro, a few Dobuan villagers replied: 'Our minds are dark; we do not understand; the children will under-

36 H.D. Watson to H. Newton, Ambasi, 4 July 1922, DA.

37 AMMR, 4 June 1909.

38 Piri to the Rarotongan church, Boera, 25 August 1880, UPNGA.

39 E.P. Jones, Moru Report 1905-6, PR.

40 C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 8 August 1897, PL.

41 E. Silas to A.H. Scriven, Kiriwina, 27 July 1923, SA.

42 B. Danks to A. Booth, Sydney, 20 September 1905, MOM 52.

stand, but we cannot.'⁴³ Withdrawal rather than overt opposition was usually the response of the holders of power in Melanesia to Christianity.⁴⁴ Some older people tried energetically to maintain old usages, but in most areas there was an evident weariness, a loss of momentum and a willingness to surrender to the advance of a new religion. Their confidence appeared to falter; their vitality ebbed away. Lilly Bromilow, attending the sick-beds of Dobuan elders, was astonished at the demise of the old people. They had 'no desire to live, [and] look[ed] forward to death as release...'. They spoke of it, she said, as if they were getting into a canoe to go away.⁴⁵ Christianity had been a rallying-summons for traditional chiefly Polynesia: it seemed to sound a knell of death for customary leadership in Melanesia. The old people were morose, but perhaps unable to articulate the reason. They must have felt their world was sliding.

Missionaries then felt the task to be among the young. Bishop Stone-Wigg, like St Ignatius Loyola, understood the value of an early conversion: 'The children are as plastic wax under our hands, and we can mould them at will.'⁴⁶ The Wesleyans wrote succinctly of the value of child-conversion:

When one awakens from sleep and so returns to conscious life, he is in a particularly receptive and impressionable state... The mind is in a freer and more natural state, resembling somewhat a sensitive plate, where impressions can readily leave their traces. 47

The catechising and baptism of many hundreds of infants could be achieved by the small numbers of European missionaries available, only by the concentration of Papuans in artificial communities. The technique of cultural isolation was tempered in northern Papua by the Anglican desire to maintain overall continuity with traditional

43 M. Billing, Diary, 6 July 1897, MOM 150.

44 R. Brudo, a trader in the Trobriands, wrote that 'the native is either too polite or too timorous to contradict the affirmation of a white man and in the presence of the missionary he either believes or gives the impression of believing'. R. Brudo ms, F.E. Williams papers, PNGA.

45 J.H.P. Murray, Diary, 24 June 1905, ML.

46 M. Stone-Wigg, Address to Conference, 8 August 1901, DA. For Anglican missionaries and children, see also R.B. Joyce, Sir William MacGregor..., 179.

47 AMMR, 4 April 1908.

Melanesian society, but at Kwato, where Abel's intention was to break with custom, it found its most vigorous exemplar.

The society in which missions were planted in eastern New Guinea was matriarchal. This affected the sexual distribution of converts, for girls were an asset more prized than boys and were less readily given up. In Dobu, for example, women owned the yam crop as well as the land on which it was grown; women exercised a greater control over children;⁴⁸ and women usually had the privilege of torturing prisoners. It was the mother's brother who played a prominent part in arranging marriage; and witches were more feared than male sorcerers.⁴⁹ Fijian missionaries who married Massim women were absorbed by their wives' clans. In Kwato, Dobu and Dogura, boys outnumbered girls, not because their elders thought it better for boys to learn the new religion, but because they were more expendable.

Practices associated with child-birth also help to explain the missionary emphasis on children. Population control in Melanesia often took forms abhorrent to western observers. Some children - usually males - were buried alive with their dead mothers; twins were often destroyed; and babies were occasionally kicked to death.⁵⁰ W.E. Armit's account was widely circulated:

At Moresby Island I witnessed the boiling of a two-year-old baby, which together with its mother had been captured at Basilaki Island... It was tied to a wicker-work frame, and dropped, living, into a large native boiler full of boiling water. There was a smothered cry, a tiny hand and foot quivered for a second, and all was over. 51

The depth of emotion aroused by such accounts was a major solvent of arguments against missionary work. Nurseries were erected, and orphanages built; children were adopted by missionary wives, and crèches begun by spinsters with maternal instincts; and the rescue of child derelicts became a dominant feature of New Guinea missionary

48 Ibid., 5 April 1897; J. Tinney, Diary, 18 August 1893, MOM 150. Women also exercised control over the food supplies of families. See AMMR, 5 April 1897.

49 See R.F. Fortune, Sorcerers of Dobu, 151-2.

50 G. Brown, Polynesians and Melanesians, 31ff; J. Tinney, Diary, 11 January 1894, MOM 150; AMMR, 4 May 1907.

51 W.E. Armit, 'The Papuans...', in Royal Society of Qld., Proceedings, vol. II (1885), 107.

propaganda of the day. The initial motive was not to stop children from being immoral - indeed, chastity among the unmarried was valued on Dobu⁵² - but in order to save lives.

Just as the intrusion of missionaries into New Guinea spelt change in the movement of Christianity in the Pacific, so did the arrival of many babies in the mission cradles of Dobu, Kwato and Dogura. The first baby rescued by the Methodists was brought into the Bromilow home in January 1894. Baptized Gideoni, he was regarded as 'a lesson in love and pity, and bye and bye of spreading the glad tidings of salvation'.⁵³ By 1894 a similar children's home was being formed eighty miles away at Kwato, while near Dogura St Agnes' home was opened for children of mixed race seven years later. Such children brought to the stations as 'little bundles of bone, skin, sores and dirt' were more impressionable than their peers in the village who went to day-school. Between 1901 and 1934, St Agnes' home educated 110 mixed-race children.⁵⁴

Fortified by a government ordinance empowering magistrates to declare school attendance compulsory within three miles of a classroom,⁵⁵ orphanages became a heavy item in missionary expenditure. The Dobu orphanage, moreover, was the main reason for the formation of an order of sisters at Dobu. 'The devil may manage to keep some of the old people', wrote Fellows in 1895, 'but in God's name... we claim these young people for Christ.'⁵⁶ The truancy ordinance, however, showed how indifferent were many children to the idea of being claimed for Christ, and how opposed were some of their elders to the expenditure of missionary money on their children.

52 B. Malinowski, Argonauts..., 42. Malinowski was probably referring to pre-contact Dobu. Bromilow claimed in 1929 that before marriage Dobuan women were 'undisguisedly unmoral', while 'among the men no moral code can be said to exist; children are initiated to vice at a terribly early age'. W.E. Bromilow, Twenty Years..., 98.

53 J. Tinney, Diary, 11 January 1894, MOM 150; W.E. Bromilow, op. cit., 135ff.

54 OP 99/10. The site of St Agnes' was a place called Ganuganuana.

55 Native Children Custody and Reformation Ordinance, no. 11 of 1891 and Regulation no. 111 of 1897. BNG AR 1890-1, vi; BNG AR 1897-8, vii.

56 AMMR, 6 December 1895.

Village opponents were not always successful. Josia Lebasi, taken from Suau by Abel in 1891, explained his experience:

Some of us were only children when [we] came; and though we were young, we wished to go to them; but our mothers and fathers forbade us. They said, 'Do not go to them for they will weaken you.' But we went; though our thought was not to find... The Good Way. No, we only said, 'Maybe we shall get some beads and fish-hooks' - we knew nothing of the Way of life. 57

Some older people prophesied famine and death if children were converted.⁵⁸ At Lavora near Dogura an old man announced the coming of a snake to punish the Christians, to such effect that newly baptized youths fled from the village.⁵⁹ In some places children were told that missionaries would send them away to an unknown land and leave them to die.⁶⁰ 'Don't you go near them!' interjected an old woman to a Dobuan boy about to join the missionaries. 'They are the people who love children! What do you want them to love you for?'⁶¹ When several Boianai youths drowned off Dogura their elders announced that their deaths had been encompassed by an angry spirit.⁶²

Young people turned to the missionary because he had such things as fish-hooks, not because he was thought a safer guide to heaven than the village sorcerer. But they were still affected by the elders. 'If you touch that boy I will put a spell on you'⁶³ called an old man to a Dogura student collecting a school candidate. The student laughed and said, 'Do what you like, I am a Mission boy; you can't hurt me, I am not afraid of you.' The student promptly became

57 C.W. Abel, Kwato, New Guinea..., 31. This account compares with Abel's description of missionary methods:

He [the missionary] has set his traps for them, baited them with kindness and innocent fun, and has caught many. He has made them a kite: he has drawn them some crude pictures with his pencil... indeed, what has he not done?

C.W. Abel, Lecture Notes, c1902, KA.

58 AWMMS, AR 1908-9, 16-17.

59 OP 6/7.

60 H.A. Murray to M. Stone-Wigg, Wamira, 17 November 1899, DA.

61 AMMR, 5 August 1895.

62 H. Newton, In Far New Guinea, 88.

63 ibid.

ill, and recovered only after propitiatory presents had been given.⁶⁴

A few children were immersed in conflicting demands made by kinsfolk on one hand and a missionary armed with the government writ on the other. Some mothers demanded the return of their daughters to the village: others refused to receive them at home. There was little corresponding anxiety about the return of sons. One girl, Ginaula, of Fergusson Island, suffered from the conflict: she unsuccessfully attempted suicide by twice throwing herself from a coconut tree. Absconding from school, she had discovered she was an outcast in the village. 'You are not my daughter', said her mother, 'your sisters are no more your sisters and your brothers no longer your brothers. Go back to the mission station. We have no place for you here.'⁶⁵ Suicide was perhaps an inevitable outcome of a struggle between mission and clan.

Sometimes converts were told they were claimed from heathen darkness; at other times they were told by villagers they were dimdim or aliens. So long as this habit of mind persisted there would be tension. Minnie Billing wrote with conviction of converted girls, that 'Satan desired to have them surely, but God's power is stronger.'⁶⁶ Occasionally the mission won the struggle, often the village. Pisco, one of the first boys to confess his sins to Bromilow, was 'tempted' by his mother, who 'wanted to make a rich man of him and to make him like a chief'.⁶⁷ Becoming ill, Pisco refused to return for medicine or repent, and died in great pain in his distraught mother's arms. 'She reaped what she had sown',⁶⁸ wrote Minnie Billing with grim satisfaction. As missionary diaries make clear, those who renounced

64 Ibid.

65 J. Tinney, Diary, 13 January 1898, MOM 150.

66 M. Billing, Diary, 20 January 1898, MOM 150. Methodists objected to teeth blacking and sexual initiation. At Panaeiti the conflict between a mother and converted daughter was evident: 'she objected to the... customs, and her wicked mother was consequently angry'. AMMR, 5 August 1895.

67 M. Billing, Diary, 20 January 1898, MOM 150.

68 Ibid.

Christianity and made their way back to the villages were in some stations the rule rather than the exception.⁶⁹

As places of refuge from traditional methods of population control, the orphanages served their purpose well, and many lives were saved. Lives were also partly westernized: such customs as betel nut chewing, tattooing and teeth blackening were frowned upon. As religious cases they turned their subjects into Papuan replicas of obedient, chanting, cricket-loving Christians. Rote-learning, arithmetic, the Bada Eguwalau or morning prayer was taught at Dogura.⁷⁰ Fifty short chapters of biblical lore from the creation to the entrance of the Israelites under Joshua to the Promised Land were read at Kwato,⁷¹ an image of the Papuans which Abel used to the end of his life. At Dobu, children were taught hymn-singing and scripture. Bromilow's hymnody emphasized the error of customary ways:

The children! Oh! Care for and love them
Habits and customs so bad,
Habits and customs long taught them
To give up may they be glad.
By bad words and all that is shameful
Do not thus lead them astray,
If your minds and thoughts are so baneful
Follow your own evil way. 72

The intention of Bromilow's hymn was to uphold monogamy and sexual continence. Dobu missionaries adopted the idea of the tonidoe, or branch bearer at feasts, in forming a White Flag Society. Formed in 1897, the White Flag Society met monthly under Sister Julia Benjamin to reaffirm its pledge to 'live a pure, true life'. After 'a great deal of bright singing' to the waving of white flags, there was an address and the roll was called. Members then repeated the pledge in unison and pinned the white flag on new members who had decided to

69 Sometimes children deserted stations by hiding inside departing canoes. The reason for their discontent was often the food given at the stations. D. Bouli, Interview, Maivara, 26 April 1972. Minnie Billing wrote, 'This diary seems a record of the pleasant things that occur principally; but it would not interest you to hear of the disappointments and heartbreaks we meet, nor could you appreciate the situation... There is a dark side to it all...'. M. Billing, Diary, 25 December 1897, MOM 150.

70 M. Stone-Wigg, 'Address to Conference', 8 August 1901, DA.

71 C.W. Abel to W.B. Ward, Kwato, 7 September 1899, KA.

72 AMMR, July 1895. Other popular hymns were 'Hold the Fort!' and 'The Lamb, the Lamb, the bleeding Lamb'. M. Billing, Diary, 7 September 1896, MOM 150.

take the pledge of purity. By 1897 there were 200 baptized Methodists in British New Guinea, many of whom were White Flag members.⁷³ When one candidate 'fell', wrote Bromilow, 'it made the saved people pray more'. At services after the disciplining of a sinner, 'the sight of row after row of men and women bending before the Mercy-seat' inspired onlookers.⁷⁴ Even more stirring was the response to talk of eternal punishment. Fellows at Panaeiti wrote that 'one woman shrieked when I described the thrusting down of sinners into "prisons of fire".'⁷⁵ Bouna, a fourteen year old Dobuan convert, told his friends 'he was not afraid of the wizards or witches, but he was afraid of Hell'.⁷⁶

In the Methodist stations on Dobu, Tubetube and Kiriwina the effect of such a determined campaign was not slow to appear. Children in clothes, 'girls in bright rainbow colours, boys in white, with red or blue sash' contrasted with their parents at services, 'some in their disgusting black mourning paint, some munching fruit... with their lime gourds, lime spoons and betel nut...'.⁷⁷ Patterns of behaviour changed within two years in Kiriwina. In 1897, MacGregor compared the 'very quiet and well behaved, almost demure' girls of the Mission with the 'very licentious and shamelessly profligate' village women of Kiriwina.⁷⁸

To inculcate morality was not the only task of a Mission. Girls had to plant and garden, wash and iron, patch blankets, and mend pinafores.⁷⁹ Boys had to cut wood, study carpentry, play cricket and gather food. They were, said M.K. Gilmour, cheerful in obedience, anxious to learn, and earnest in preaching.⁸⁰ There was little corporal punishment. At Bunama a magistrate reported some light strapping for offences, but 'no more than the most indulgent of fathers would do to their children'.⁸¹ Visiting Dobu in 1905, J.H.P.

73 AMMR, October 1897; AWMMS, AR 1897-8, 1xv.

74 AWMMS, AR 1902-3, lxxxvii. For Methodist attitudes to polygamy, see pp. 390-1.

75 S.B. Fellows, Diary, 7 August 1892, ANG.

76 J. Tinney, Diary, 19 April 1893, MOM 150.

77 AMMR, 4 April 1903.

78 BNG AR 1897-8, 46.

79 BNG AR 1897-8, 46. New Guinea Synod Report, 1928, SA.

80 AWMMS, AR 1906-7, 121.

81 RMED, OJ, 27 January 1920, CAO/CRS/G91.

Murray was struck by the buoyant spirit of Methodist children:

The whole establishment is much more festive than one would expect, and the natives do not seem at all depressed. The danger of converting them is that you may knock the fun out of them; but this the Wesleyans seem to have avoided. 82

Murray's sympathy for Methodism at Dobu, perhaps surprising in view of his Irish Catholic lineage, may have been aroused by the choral singing, organized sport, and the grass skirt competitions which had been substituted for traditional pastimes.⁸³ A more critical appraisal was made by Stone-Wigg in 1901, whose discerning regard for Melanesian custom bred an impatience with the cultural isolation policy of Protestants.⁸⁴

Charles Abel being the supreme exponent of the theory of cultural isolation, his English colony at Kwato maintained itself in stout independence of its Massim milieu. Logea Island villages were only a hundred yards away from Kwato across a narrow strait, but Abel's children were resolutely sealed off from their 'contemporary ancestors' lest they be dragged back along the evolutionary scale whence they had suddenly been plucked. Abel strongly defended this practice:

The first thing I would do would be to beg, borrow or steal as many babies as possible and bring them up absolutely away from village life... Theoretically it is the wrong thing to do; practically there is nothing else so well worth doing... Our hope for the future would be in those whose minds are not contaminated with filth and heathenism from the day when they can think for themselves. 85

82 J.H.P. Murray to G. Murray, 27 June 1925, quoted in F. West, op. cit., 36.

83 AMMR, 6 May 1899.

84 M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 13 November 1901, DA. See pp. 188-9, 192-3.

85 C.W. Abel to S.R. Boggs, Kwato, 17 April 1924; C.W. Abel, LD 22 May 1924, KA. Abel's policy was partly determined by demography: '[In 1898] I should have advocated making the village life the basis of our work', he wrote in 1916. 'To gradually purge it of its evils, but to preserve in it everything that was good... was a sound idea for the time. But today... such an idea is impossible... I am obliged to recognize the fact of wide-spread disintegration throughout the District.' C.W. Abel to F. Lenwood, Kwato, 29 April 1916, KA; see also PDC Minutes, 25-6 March 1910, PR.

Abel had in mind the ritual sodomy to which boys in the Turama River area were initiated;⁸⁶ but even stripped of its vehemence, his idea was a literal application of the dictum about taking a child from the age of seven. Abel's belief in cultural isolation dictated the severity of the measures he took to keep Melanesian animism and Protestantism apart. In the evolution of the Kwato Mission he seems to have been influenced by Te Aute College in Hawke's Bay in New Zealand,⁸⁷ where Maori youths were isolated and trained in the manual arts.

Walker and Abel had begun the Kwato scheme with a permissive attitude to students' movements, but this gave way, after a sexual misdemeanour, to a strictness remarkable even in Evangelical households. In 1897 the island rule-book contained 22 regulations; in 1909 there were 37; by 1936 the Kwato colonists were enmeshed in an intricate net of statutes and unwritten precepts.⁸⁸ Laws were heavily built around the need to prevent cohabitation and illicit relationships, especially between converts and the ganamuri outside. The larger the converted community, the longer the list promulgated. In 1899 Abel handed the Samoan teacher Filimoni a list of mission laws:

- 1 No girl or boy to go to married children's [sic] houses.
- 2 No one to go to village... without permission...
- 4 No boy to go into girls' workshop.
- 6 When the children are speaking among themselves they must speak Suau.
- 7 No messages to be sent from one sex to the other.
- 11 Girls and boys to wash heads Sundays Tuesdays and Fridays.
- 14 No Kwato boy or girl can marry outside the Kwato community.

86 See BNG AR 1899-1900, 130; W. MacGregor, Diary, 5 October 1891, ANL; A. Musgrave to RMWD, Port Moresby, 7 August 1893, CAO/CRS/G91; J.H.P. Murray to Prime Minister, 23 December 1929, CAO/CRS/G69; B.T. Butcher, We Lived with Headhunters, 71; F.E. Williams, Papuans of the Trans-Fly, 158-9, 188, 194-204.

87 C.W. Abel, LD, 9 March 1925, KA.

88 D. Sioni, Interview, Kwato, 25 May 1972. Abel had originally intended passing children back to the villages after their education. 'But the experiment was hardly put to the test here', he wrote, 'because we found that the children lost touch with the normal village conditions, and after a few weeks with their friends, they found their way to Samarai and joined the traders.' C.W. Abel to F. Lenwood, Sydney, 29 April 1916, KA.

- 15 All alliances are entirely in our hands.
 16 No food to be given privately to girls. All to be given to F[ilimoni]... no cooked food to be accepted.
 17 No girl or boy to make an exchange present for food. Only F[ilimoni] can buy food.
 21 The girls can only go to 'Osiri' if Penaia goes with them.
 22 No boy to be on the hill at night except married. At sundown boys to be in[mission] village. 89

The introduction of written laws provided Abel with an excellent means of interfering in the behaviour patterns of Massim youths. Separation of the sexes was matched by an unremitting zeal for order, a contrast to the sexual disorder he discerned outside the Mission. Minnie Billing of Dobu noted in 1895 that the youths at Kwato sat on the floor, putting their copybooks on tables about a foot high. Under supervision, some wrote their pothooks very well.⁹⁰ There was more than enough time for pothooks when Father Abel watched their moral behaviour so closely.

English manners and fashions in clothing were adopted without modification, with the addition of the Island sulu for boys. Papuan girls wore pleated dresses, hair clips and occasionally even corsets, although the head prefect Dai objected to the corsets because 'they pinch me... I can only wear them when my stomach is empty'. Abel blushed, and left the room.⁹¹ Rules of etiquette for Abel's own children were imparted to his Papuan pupils as well, and to these Beatrice Abel taught drawing-room decorum:

When a boy comes up [you] say Oh ... let me introduce you to my sister (not my sister to you)... He'll bow, and you can all engage in conversation, or walk on together conversing. If you don't do this it is an insult to your boy friend and distinctly disrespectful [to your sister]. 92

Not only Melanesian pupils, but Polynesian teachers as well, found the searching detail of Abel's etiquette irksome. The laws of hygiene were strictly enforced: it was 'the most laughable thing', said Lamberto Loria in 1897, 'to see the natives being dragged to the sea... It was a real struggle, as the natives opposed [with] that

89 C.W. Abel, Diary, 24 October 1899, KA.

90 M. Billing, Diary, 22 June 1893, MOM 150.

91 C.W. Abel to M. Parkin, Kwato, 26 August 1896, KA.

92 B. Abel to C.C. Abel, Kwato, - 1918, KA.

passive resistance which is so difficult to overcome.'⁹³ The Rarotongan teacher Ono, appointed to marshal unwilling Papuans to early morning cold baths, carried a large Rarotongan bible to Abel to point out that the Scriptures did not enjoin a Jew or a Christian to take a bath in the sea at sunrise every morning. 'And in this scriptural view of the matter', wrote Abel, 'we found every member of the community was supporting him.'⁹⁴ But the rule was enforced as peremptorily as before.

Birching and head-shaving were among the more common punishments at Kwato. As a luxuriant coiffure was regarded as a Melanesian glory, so hair cutting had the force of an act of penance. When the first sheep were shorn at Dogura, villagers asked Stone-Wigg 'what the poor sheep had done, to cause the magistrate and police to cut off all their hair'.⁹⁵ Beatrice Abel performed the office of hair cutting on Kwato with a melancholy relish. 'After breakfast cut Maori's hair', she noted in 1897, '... why has she been so foolishly naughty. So sad to have to crop the bonny head.'⁹⁶ Loria wrote that the Abels had to force their way in matters of discipline, a task that 'required great tact on their part, being very strict on one occasion and giving way slightly on another, as the case might require'.⁹⁷

The outward severity of rules was tempered to an extent by the relationship between ruler and ruled. Critics of the Mission did not gainsay the capacity for friendship of the master of Kwato. As early as 1892 scores of children were waiting to come to the Mission; none were compelled to stay against his will; that nearly all did stay is a measure of the attraction which Abel's quality of paternalism must have had for young Papuans. Minnie Billing was struck by their affection for their formidable foster-parents; and by the manner in which boy servants 'hang lovingly on the back of the chairs in the pauses between handing and removing the dishes'.⁹⁸

93 MC, February 1897, 38.

94 MC, August 1909, 149.

95 C.A.W. Monckton, Some Experiences..., 153.

96 B. Abel, Diary, 14 July 1897, KA.

97 MC, February 1897, 38.

98 M. Billing, Diary, 13 May 1894, MOM 150.

THE quality of faithfulness and childlike trust was one of the most significant virtues extolled by Christian missionaries. Especially revealing of the ego-enhancing imagery of Englishmen in New Guinea was the evolution of the stereotype of the faithful servant. 'You ought to be truly thankful for your native girls and boys', wrote Beatrice Abel's father, 'you could not get any servants equal to them - they do as they are told and never give you "cheek" like the Australian servants do.'⁹⁹ Among missionary families, the protégés of Abel illustrate an almost ideal relationship between the father-employer and his child-servants where responsibility rested squarely on the shoulders of the father. The discovery at Suau of a small boy, who came to be known as Josia Lebasi, was regarded by Abel as an event in the history of his missionary trusteeship:

I met this boy, then about thirteen years of age, amongst a crowd of happy children who had left their villages round about, and attached themselves to the mission... He had a slight stoop which was quite unusual in a Papuan, and it was evident that he had been neglected as a child; he also had a more serious face than most Papuan boys wear, which was occasionally lit up by a smile which arrested me from the day I first met him. 100

As the secret of early work was to gain influence over outstanding individuals, Abel persuaded Lebasi and Ketapu to accompany him to Orokolo as assistants, where they met Chalmers and returned as passengers on the hiri expedition. At fifteen years of age the domestic servant had become the overseer. Minnie Billing wrote of Lebasi's power of command: 'there is an unconscious dignity about him - the other boys respect him although no distinctions are made in his favour'.¹⁰¹ Lebasi may well have modelled his character not only on Abel, but on his older brother Biga Lebasi, who had killed a man at Suau and as mission teacher at Wagawaga had brought a boy close to death with his thrashing.¹⁰² So marked was Lebasi's dominance

99 F.H. Moxon to B. Abel, Bourke, 28 July 1912.

100 Kwato Mission Tidings, vol. 1, no. 1, January 1924; see also C.W. Abel, op. cit., 30. Josia Lebasi, said R.W. Abel, was 'untrained and unconversant with white men's ways, but who nevertheless had a watchdog's loyalty'. R.W. Abel, Charles W. Abel..., 66.

101 M. Billing, Diary, 31 January 1895, MOM 150.

102 F.W. Walker to A.H. Symons, Kwato, 13 February 1900, CAO/CRS/G121.

that Minnie Billing had mistakenly assumed he was of aristocratic birth. 'Fancy being waited on by a chief', she wrote rapturously after Lebasi had served her at table.¹⁰³ When Lebasi married, he became head of the industrial school; at the age of thirty even a man of Abel's paternal disposition was willing to sink the servant in the friend.¹⁰⁴

The faithful Lebasi left his friend's side for only five weeks in the first ten years of the partnership, when he erected churches on Murua for the Wesleyan Mission and at Daru in western New Guinea. Abel's instructions reveal the high degree of responsibility he accorded to Lebasi:

Dear Josia,

These are my instructions to you. You go to Mawatta to erect a church... You will have two or three teachers given to you by Mr Riley to help you, besides natives, so as to enable you to get on with the work as fast as possible. 105

Arriving at Mawatta on 18 August 1905, Lebasi had an iron roof on the church by the end of the month. Like all missionary artisans, he dropped his hammer on the Sabbath to preach to the people.¹⁰⁶

More than a builder, Lebasi was a missionary imitator of talent. He depicted the encounter between his technologically backward countrymen and missionaries in the moral metaphors of darkness and light:

My friends, greetings. We, in New Guinea, aforetime were in darkness; we were very evil; we were very ignorant; we saw no light, for we lived in the midst of darkness. But you over there had wisdom, and light, and strength; and because you served God, He made you great... You did not say, 'They are black

103 M. Billing, Diary, 31 January 1895, MOM 150.

104 C.W. Abel, Savage Life..., 30; Kwato, New Guinea..., 21.

105 C.W. Abel to J. Lebasi, Kwato, 2 August 1905, KA. Lebasi was assisted by Wadiaki and Adanu, two assistant carpenters. However, Abel was inclined to exaggerate Lebasi's ability: 'I defy anyone to point out a single thing that sterling man has done that slumped. He works with his heart', wrote Abel, unaware of the poor construction of Lebasi's church at Murua. C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 9 January 1906, PL. Lebasi also erected the residence for Kitchen & Sons at the head of Milne Bay in 1911 and the hospital at Samarai. MC, March 1912, 54.

106 C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 22 September 1905, PL.

men; they are a different race; they are evil...
because God's love was in you...

God has seen your compassion for us; and because
you have done His work He has made you a mighty
people; and He continually exalts you. 107

Not only did Lebasi forge a link between the Protestant work-ethic, material progress, and Christian civilization, but he accepted the argument that the humanitarian ethic was in some way responsible for material affluence. Such themes, instilled by Abel, may have been a powerful strand in Lebasi's sermons to the ganamuri in Milne Bay.

Through the agency of Lebasi and his followers, accompanied by Moody and Sankey choruses, the revivalist tradition passed into the religious mainstream of the Massim of Milne Bay. Imitating Abel, Lebasi dramatised the difference between darkness and light, breaking 'down in his addresses, exhorting and weeping alternatively, so that his congregations were 'so touched that many of them could not restrain their tears'.¹⁰⁸ In the forests where he procured his logs, Lebasi demonstrated the muscular Christianity which he preached in the pulpit. Asked by his log-getters about the meaning of prayer, Lebasi wrote that 'we sat, and talked and talked and talked, and I told them all about Jesus - and presently the sun rose. We had morning prayers, and then set to work and felled six tremendous ilimo trees.'¹⁰⁹ Beatrice Abel regarded Lebasi's sermon on the death of Chalmers as among the most impressive she had ever listened to.¹¹⁰

In Lebasi, Abel had discovered a rare example of a Melanesian disciplinarian, a man who gave orders and was accustomed to having them obeyed. The extravagant attention paid to such individuals as Sergeant Barigi in Monckton's books¹¹¹ and Koapena in Chalmers'

107 Quoted in C.W. Abel, Kwato, New Guinea..., 31. Lebasi's letters to Abel seem to have been expressed in terms of supplication. When he erred, he overflowed with contrition. 'Joe's confession was ample', wrote Beatrice Abel. 'He called the Kwato church together, and addressed them privately for two hours the next night.' C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Kwato, 29 March 1904, KA.

108 C.W. Abel, Savage Life..., 198-9.

109 MC, March 1906, 66.

110 C.W. Abel, op. cit., 199. The rostrum was draped in black for Lebasi's panegyric. R.W. Abel, 'They Broke Their Spears', 146.

111 C.A.W. Monckton, Some Experiences..., 200.

journals,¹¹² is in itself a reflection of their comparative rarity. Abel described an encounter between his lieutenant and Milne Bay villagers at Dewadewa:

I asked Lebasi to offer prayer to God in their language, as it was a dialect I only partly understood... he told the people he was about to address the True God, whom they must approach with reverence. I removed my hat, and before Lebasi commenced his simple invocation, one of my canoe paddlers... called out rather abruptly - 'Have you no respect? Take out your ornaments'. Immediately my congregation plucked the feathers, and combs, and flowers from their hair, and sat silently, with their heads bowed, and their eyes closed, while Lebasi... prayed that the Light of Heaven might come into their hearts... 113

Josia Lebasi mastered most of Abel's characteristics and copied some of his faults, even to his cavalier disregard of higher authority. Seeing government prisoners at work on Samarai, and needing labourers to excavate ground at Kwato, Lebasi quickly ordered a whaleboat, filled it with prisoners and hastened with them to his own project. The magistrate was indignant.¹¹⁴

In books, pamphlets, addresses and photographs, Josia Lebasi was advertised as the metamorphosis of savagery. Clad in a white suit and bow tie, or in cricketing pads, boiled vest and broad belt, his face was retouched by mission publishers to render broad lips thinner, the glistening eyes more intense, the head thrust forward anxiously in anticipation of service for the Lord.¹¹⁵ He was placed beside an ornamented heathen dandy whose voluptuous pose dramatised the transformation.¹¹⁶

Just as the hilltop house on Kwato epitomised European Protestantism at the pinnacle of civilization, so Lebasi's bungalow with its verandahs, iron roof and stumps stood foursquare as an object lesson to Papuans that even the lowest in the scale of human evolution might climb above his natural station. Lebasi's straight nose and staring features were in every Kwato publication. Yet

112 See also R. Lovett, James Chalmers..., 178, 248; J. Chalmers, Pioneering..., 176, 198, 200.

113 C.W. Abel, op. cit., 38.

114 C.H. Walker, Diary, 18 November 1895, KA.

115 C.W. Abel, Savage Life..., 212; Kwato..., 30.

116 R.W. Abel, op. cit., 40.

whether on the mouth, the eyes, or the frown, the total impression was unmistakable: there was a slightly puzzled look on the face of Josia Lebasi.¹¹⁷

Faithfulness and trust were the hallmarks of mission children placed, like Lebasi, from an impressionable age in an atmosphere exclusively and infectiously religious. Any boy or girl who entered the precincts of a station for a prolonged period, with its implicit hostility towards the 'old ways', was placing himself firmly in the way of eventual conversion. Even mixed-race children at Dogura and Dobu, collected from Fijian, Japanese, Irish and Solomon Island camps in Milne Bay and the islands,¹¹⁸ were susceptible to a milieu strongly disposed toward their acceptance of the 'new ways'. Papuan students were assembled with youths of other tribes towards whom they were either indifferent, suspicious or antagonistic. Although their homes were not far away, they were distant enough in terms of values and customs for the influence of the new order to strike deep root.¹¹⁹ The impact of child conversion on Massim society at large varied from mission to mission. Documentary evidence of the assault by Kwato missionaries on the Keveri valley and the patriarchal rule of Papuan priests trained at Dogura shows how different were the ultimate results of child conversion.¹²⁰

Child converts preached vibrantly of the new ways. Missionaries declared that they had never heard such sermons, and that, like Wesley, their hearts had been 'strangely warmed'.¹²¹ Some Methodists

117 By 1904, Dai, the head girl on Kwato, was said to be showing symptoms of insanity - 'almost madness'. Lebasi, however, was 'a treasure and comfort'. Ten years later, however, Lebasi also showed the same symptoms in Port Moresby; he died insane. C.W. Abel, LD, 25 August 1904; C.C. Abel, Interview, Port Moresby, 10 June 1972.

118 MN, 21 August 1905.

119 In a history examination at Dobu in 1897 candidates were required to answer the question 'Describe the coming of the missionaries and the spreading of the gospel to other circuits'. The course in New Guinea history began with the arrival of the Lord of the Isles in 1891 and ended at Bromilow's furlough in 1897. M. Billing, Diary, 29 September 1897, MOM 150.

120 See Chapter 12-13.

121 R. Bartlett to R.W. Thompson, Orokololo, 26 July 1907, PL.

declared confidently that Massim children were quicker learners than Australians;¹²² others recorded the clarity of language of young New Guineans:

Yehova Tamamai! U gi tai mai
 Jehovah our Father! Thou seest us; we
ka mia mia kabona! ka rusai
 are here today! We enter Thy
Koa Am numi mena, ka tapwaroro
 house, we bow down to
Koliwo, kama toke Koa, Ku lohnia
 Thee, we thank Thee. Do thou
yo ku saguimai! nuamaine si
 come and help us! Our minds are very dark - we
boniboniai, nigeri ka gitai, nigeri ka
 do not see - we do not know good things, do Thou
 come
Jitai, nigeri ka katai ginauli namanamali
 to teach us. Today when the missionary reads in
 the Sacred
ku lobima yo ku yakataimai...
 Book to us and preaches to us, do Thou help us to
 truly understand. 123

Papuans and Europeans alike described Christianity in the imagery of darkness and light. Addressing 500 youths in Dobu church, Sir George Le Hunte said they all knew well 'the great contrast between those days of light and the former days of darkness'.¹²⁴ F.W. Walker of Kwato was greeted by a Motuan in 1888 saying that the Papuans were 'very dark and very sinful';¹²⁵ Gaganumore of Dobu addressed Brown in 1897 with the words, 'Now the light is shining, and by-and-by all will be light.'¹²⁶ How seriously some old people misunderstood the metaphor was indicated by an old Dobuan woman, who when asked to attend church, replied that she had scratched herself to let the light in.¹²⁷ The lives and deaths of children showed no such confusion about semantics.¹²⁸ A number regaled their congregations

122 J.H.P. Murray, Diary, 28 June 1905, ML.

123 AMMR, 7 October 1896.

124 AMMR, 4 July 1908.

125 F.W. Walker, Diary, 9 September - 4 October 1888, PJ;
Sydney Mail, 6 September 1884.

126 G. Brown, George Brown..., 500.

127 M. Billing, Diary, 22 July 1896, MOM 150.

128 Told that his illness was incurable, a Dobuan boy exclaimed in 1895, 'Then I shall know him.' A girl said before her death, 'It is all true what the Missionaries tell us. The Angels are around me, and are pressing me to go.' AMMR, 7 October 1895; AWMMS AR 1906-7, 119.

with accounts of their 'dark' pre-contact activities, how they would catch an unwitting Massim child, and hang him on a pole above a fire, and how 'the greatest amusement came when the poor victim writhed in agony and cried for his father and mother to help him'.¹²⁹

The conversion of Massim youths to the 'light' was cemented in the institution of marriage. Wesleyans performed rites over Fijian teachers and Papuan wives, and like Abel, resisted marriage between converts and heathen.¹³⁰ The marriage of Daniel and Imwatea on Dobu in 1896, for example, was celebrated in the face of 'tremendous opposition' by Daniel's family who had already arranged a marriage outside the Mission.¹³¹ Anglicans however were more accommodating: Stone-Wigg told his staff they should throw themselves wholeheartedly behind native marriages.¹³² But Dogura's milieu was almost as conducive to mission marriages as that of Dobu.

Missionaries agreed that one of the strongest obstacles to Christian continence lay in traditional sexual arrangements. Thus the Wesleyans, like Abel, often mediated in marriage arrangements. This may have marked an advance in individual freedom, as the students were expected to make their own choice. Lilly Bromilow was begged by a cook boy desiring marriage with a mission girl 'to see into her mind concerning himself and let him know'.¹³³ Like the Anglicans, the Wesleyans also eventually came to support traditional marriage, though no Papuan could be accepted on trial after 1898 who had not been married tapwaroro.¹³⁴ The importance of the indissolubility of the marriage tie was underlined in the instruction of trial members. As the catechism stated, neither promiscuity nor polygamy were permitted:

129 J. Tinney, Diary, 11 June 1892; AMMR, 5 September 1892.

130 NG District by-laws, 1910/352, SA.

131 M. Billing, Diary, 24 May 1896, MOM 150.

132 M. Stone-Wigg, 'Conference Address', Dogura, 26 July 1900, DA.

133 AMMR, 1 April 1896.

134 See also M. Billing, Diary, 20 May 1895, 4 August 1897, MOM 150; NG District by-laws 1895/254, *ibid.*, 1898/263-4, SA.

Do you desire to enter church membership, do you accept the Christian ideal of marriage, that a man can have one wife only, that he must forsake all others, and keep to her only so long as they both shall live? 135

Presents from the mission staff for a monogamous marriage included a pinafore for the bride, salt beef, biscuits and tea for the feast, and other foodstuffs which were carried home in the traditional manner and consumed in the nuptial home.¹³⁶ The Wesleyans never minimized the importance of marriage and kinship in the conversion of Massim villages.

Dreams and visions also played an important part in the Melanesian perception of tapwaroro. For a Massim to cry out in a trance could spark a radical revision of attitudes at the right psychological moment in the cultural contact. Dobu provides an example. The first convert to tapwaroro, an old woman of Gaula village, was a hearer at Bromilow's services whose death was one day reported at the Mission. When the Samoan teacher Alesana arrived for the funeral, she had revived to tell the mourners of her visit to garawaia (heaven). There, she related,

I was dead, and my spirit went to heaven. I met Jesus there. He is so good. I am so bad... He told me to return and tell my people that tapwaroro worship is true. He told me, also, that I was to return because I was not ready, and the missionary and his wife would tell me about it. 137

As Melanesians believed that revelations from the supernatural were sometimes received through dreams, it was not long before converts came from Gaula to be baptized.¹³⁸ A Papuan evangelist at Kwato, Tariowai, also reported that a man after coming to services for some time had had a dream about Christ. The vision told him to destroy

135 NG District by-laws, 1927/210, SA.

136 M. Billing, Diary, 4 August 1897, MOM 150. Julia Benjamin wrote that at Dobu mission marriages, brides and bridegrooms 'marched down the aisle and out of the church amid a shower of flower petals and rice'. J. Benjamin, Victoriana..., 29.

137 W.E. Bromilow, Twenty Years..., 104; J. Tinney, Diary, 1 February 1893; J.H.P. Murray, Diary, 24 June 1905, ML.

138 Similarly, a Bwaidoga dreamer announced a heavenly visit in 1909: 'I ascended into a big village, too fine to describe...'. AMMR, 4 September 1909. The first three baptized Methodists were Gimwasara (Iosaia), Didiwai (Daniela), and Bauna (Watisoni); their ages ranged from 13 to about 35 years. W.E. Bromilow, op. cit., 108-9.

the things which he had been wearing, as his armlets and beads were blocking the gateway to the new life. After his dream he lay awake and before morning decided to obey the vision. He destroyed his ornaments and asked Tariowai to admit him to tapwaroro.¹³⁹ On the other hand, a young man affected by the Mission in Kiriwina declared he had received a vision of tuma, the Kiriwina afterlife, and had heard a message that the missionary story was false.¹⁴⁰ Rather than being sole reasons for conversion or repudiation of tapwaroro, dreams seem to have been the culminating points of long psychological struggles.

MISSIONARY fortunes varied widely in eastern New Guinea. While the Anglicans languished, MacGregor described the Methodist Mission as 'one of the most successful in existence',¹⁴¹ and Brown boasted it was 'the phenomenal mission of modern times as far as rapid progress is concerned'.¹⁴² The extraordinary success of Methodism in creating an ascendancy over parts of the D'Entrecasteaux can be explained only by reference both to Wesleyan vigour in Australia and Dobuan hegemony over its New Guinea neighbours. Having forfeited their raids over surrounding Massim islands, the Dobuans found in the presence of a busy maritime mission an asset which enormously buttressed their prestige. The spread of the Dobuan language, Edugaura, during the first three decades of Methodist activity, supplies an index of the growth of Dobuan influence. In 1891 Edugaura was known for 160 miles from Ware to Kiriwina.¹⁴³ By 1913 it was flowing with Bible translations along the arc of the kula ring to Rossel and Woodlark. From 1914 all Papuan synod sessions were conducted in Edugaura.¹⁴⁴ It became the predominant medium of communication for all educated Massim people in island New Guinea.¹⁴⁵ Dobuan behaviour in receiving W.E. Bromilow, the translator of the Bible into Edugaura, into member-

139 C.W. Abel, LD, 24 October 1918, KA.

140 AMMR, 8 October 1897; *ibid.*, 5 April 1897.

141 Telegraph, Brisbane, 8 October 1898.

142 G. Brown to G.H. Bardsley, Sydney, 8 July 1895, MOM 43.

143 AMMR, 5 September 1895.

144 NG District Synod, Minutes, 2 October 1913, SA.

145 W.E. Bromilow, Twenty Years..., 204-5.

ship of the kula ring in 1920 indicated that the strategic, political and magical advantages of Christianity were regarded as valuable compensations for the restrictive habits of its missionaries.¹⁴⁶

Nor can the personality of Bromilow in his direct preaching for a cessation of raiding be discounted in the change in Dobuan political relations. Highly organized, well equipped and fortified by Pacific Island missionaries, the Wesleyan Mission spread quickly along the sea lanes to other partners of the kula ring. The speed with which the tapwaroro traversed the Massim routes was attested to by the flimsy, temporary chapels erected as the message spread: there was no time to erect the more enduring coral structures common in Polynesia. Over 1000 members and members 'on trial' were enrolled in the Dobu circuit by 1902;¹⁴⁷ in Bwaidoga on Goodenough Island young people were openly expressing their abhorrence of traditional customs;¹⁴⁸ and villages on Kiriwina which had been indifferent to religion were now enquiring after conversion.¹⁴⁹ At Kavataria G.R. Holland wrote of a 'moving column of human beings' coming out to greet him. 'Then came the sweet song of praise... The old familiar Sabbath school hymn... Joyfully, Joyfully... their smiling faces and hearty grip assured us of a warm welcome.'¹⁵⁰ In Panaeiti the 'generosity and enthusiasm of the people' were beyond description. As their new

146 Bromilow was recognized as a tribesman of Dobu when he, his wife and daughter Ruve Bromilow were given coconut trees in separate villages, signifying their acceptance. J.H.P. Murray, Diary, 23 June 1905, ML.

147 AMMR, 6 October 1902.

148 *Ibid.*, 8 September 1902.

149 *Ibid.*, 4 March 1904. Fellows' progress at Kiriwina illustrates the speed of Methodist work. He arrived on 30 August 1894; by 1 September his house was finished; the first hymn was translated 16 September, church bell arrived 17 September; 800 people at service 23 September. By 30 September he was writing of 'Sabbath breaking'; 7 October Pulitara the chief at Kavataria was attending service; by 28 October the first pinafores were worn; on 11 December day school began with 105 boys and girls. On 30 December 1894, 2000 Kiriwinans, or 30% of the population of the group, attended services. S.B. Fellows, Diary, August-December 1894, ANG.

150 AMMR, 5 October 1908.

Marama and Tonugana alighted from their boat the words 'Welcome to Panaeiti' were mounted on white turkey twill.¹⁵¹

Where MacGregor had been met in 1890 by 'a howling pack of savages',¹⁵² missionaries bent over large roll books a dozen years later. From Kiriwina in the north to the Engineer Group in the south, from Bwaidoga in the west to Misima in the east, the Massim thoroughfares were now dotted with chapels and classrooms. Careful accounting revealed the precise relationship between money spent and souls saved. Between 1891 and 1895 over £15,000 had been expended;¹⁵³ by 1896 there were 56 full members, 112 'on trial', and 206 catechumens;¹⁵⁴ in 1902, 39 village pastors manned 21 stations in which 'sin [was] denounced, the Gospel of Salvation proclaimed, ... class meetings held, and the sick visited'.¹⁵⁵ The church was moving to fill gaps in the long coasts; its methods were proved, its plans assured, and what could shake its sure repose? 'We are, through God's continued help and guidance', said the Methodist Review, 'having success all the way.'¹⁵⁶

151 NG District, Panaeiti Report 1914, SA; see also W.E. Bromilow, op. cit., 177; AMMR, 4 January 1896.

152 AMMR, 4 March 1897.

153 AMMR, 6 November 1895; ibid., 5 October 1908.

154 AWMMS, Dobu Circuit Report, 1896.

155 AWMMS, AR 1901-2, lxxxix.

156 AMMR, 4 May 1898. Lilly Bromilow said in 1907 that at the mission was 'the white robed student, the comely Christian maiden, and the sweet happy child, instead of the useless village lad, the wild savage and the uncared for babe'. NG District Report, 1907, SA.

CHAPTER VIII

Cults, Crises and Revivals

IT was, perhaps, not without irony that the introduction of Christianity by Europeans helped pave the way for the initiation of new types of religious cults by Melanesians. Cult activity was reported so soon after missionary contact that it seems probable that Melanesians in eastern New Guinea were long familiar with its occurrence. A readiness to interpret dreams as supernatural messages had been responsible for the first Dobuan conversion to tapwaroro in 1893.¹ The cults likewise seem to have originated in the dreams and visions of men who subsequently became prophets. For the first thirty years, European missionary work was bedevilled by the apparently spontaneous emergence of prophetic movements on its frontiers.

The earliest recorded prophetic movement in eastern New Guinea was begun by Tokeriu of Milne Bay in 1893.² The 'Prophet of Milne Bay', a youth of Gabagabuna village near Maivara, anticipated a deluge, a favourite device among prophets who had heard of the Judaeo-Christian narrative of the Flood. The deluge, in the form of a tidal wave, would be accompanied by an earthquake and an eruption. An island covered with yams and taro would then rise from the bed of Milne Bay. A vessel would sail from the island laden with food and the spirits of the dead.³

The Tokeriu cult involved its devotees in a rejection of European emblems. This was significant in Gabagabuna, a vigorous community which had played a dominant political role at the head of Milne Bay, but which had been overlooked in favour of Wagawaga since Moresby's landing at the rival village in 1873 and the subsequent establishment of an island mission there five years later. Envious of the flow of western goods which their traditional enemies were

1 See p. 230. The first record of cult activity in Milne Bay is in J. Chalmers, Work and Adventure..., 324.

2 BNG AR 1893-4, App. C.

3 C.W. Abel, Savage Life..., 108.

enjoying, yet unwilling to accommodate European influences within their own villages, the Maivara people had already killed several foreigners who trespassed into the Gabagabuna environs.⁴

Tokeriu instructed his followers to discard everything they had ever received from the dimdim: heirlooms such as pocket-knives, tin match-boxes and trade. Secondly, they were to wear a long narrow leaf or bisare in their armllets, as a sign that they were followers of the cult.⁵ Thirdly, they were to renounce foreign contact and migrate to a new settlement away from the coast:

Go from thy village on the coast [said the spirit],
where thou art in sight of the white man! Go
inland, and make a new village where the tidal
wave and the white man cannot come near thee. 6

Tokeriu's vision was clearly an attempt to rally the people of Milne Bay to reject European contact. Without calling for hostility, the prophecies had the symptoms of the passive resistance that had characterized the early behaviour of clan elders to Christianity.

The leading opponent of the Tokeriu movement was the L.M.S. teacher, Biga Lebasi, elder brother of Josia Lebasi.⁷ Villagers at Wagawaga had fled inland from Lebasi's mission station after hearing of the deluge prophecy. With Abel and Walker, Lebasi led a flotilla of canoes from Wagawaga to Tokeriu's headquarters. There Lebasi reminded the Tavara that 'a generation before' a prophecy had been uttered by Domu of Mita which had not been fulfilled.⁸ Abel's attempt to convince Tokeriu that the Mission, not he, represented the Spirit was unavailing;⁹ but shortly afterwards the prophet was arrested as

4 Ibid., 178. See also C.C. Abel, 'An Introduction to a Historical study of the Maivara and Wagawaga People...', 1967, NGC, 2. However, MacGregor found the Maivara people friendly when he visited the head of Milne Bay. W. MacGregor, Diary, 27 January 1891, ANG.

5 C.W. Abel, op. cit., 108.

6 Ibid., 123.

7 Ibid., 110.

8 Ibid., 111. Do^mu of Mita may have been the prophet first reported by Chalmers. In 1885 Chalmers wrote of a 'heathen (?) prophet who goes about proclaiming the advent of a new era, admonishing his people to give up cannibalism, murder, adultery and theft, and says that by all means they must keep the Sabbath'. J. Chalmers, Work and Adventure..., 324.

9 Ibid., 121.

a disturber of the peace and given two years' gaol at Samarai. Lebasi's arguments eventually seem to have persuaded Tokeriu to give a present of land to the Papuan teacher Ketabu.¹⁰ Tokeriu's arrest extinguished the cult.

A more syncretistic prophecy in the D'Entrecasteaux confronted the Wesleyans in Dobu with a cult movement overtly hostile to Europeans. Dreaming that he had visited heaven, a prophet at Begassi on Fergusson Island declared that only Papuans could be found there. Not only were Europeans foreign in the world above, but they were usurpers in the world below. In fact, the only legitimate leadership in the D'Entrecasteaux resided in himself, authority which had been usurped by the Samarai government. The Begassi prophet promised to turn any white magistrate who interfered with the cult into a white stone; Papuan police would be turned into black stones.¹¹ There would be no more missionaries in the land, and no government other than himself.¹²

To vindicate his rejection of the dimdim, the prophet said he would pass through the earth to Samarai and there distribute government and commercial stores among the people. The spirits of the dead would rise and there would be 'great rejoicing in all the world of Papua'.¹³ To lend authenticity to his message, the prophet declared that the spirit's voice was 'like the voice of the missionary wife at Dobu, and therefore was the voice of the spirit'.¹⁴ The spread of the Begassi cult, with its evocative syncretistic theme, was stopped by the magistrate A.M. Campbell of Samarai, who believed that the prophet was practising extortion and was 'becoming a serious danger to the peace and good order of the islands'.¹⁵

As prophetic voices echoed in the mountains of the D'Entrecasteaux, more enduring cults began sweeping across the plainlands

10 Ibid., 127.

11 RMED OJ, 9 January 1905, CAO/CRS/G91.

12 AMMR, 5 August 1895. This prophecy resembled that of the Bwebweso prophet of Normanby Island, who predicted that 'guns were to be given to all the natives with which they were to drive out the present government'.

13 AMMR, 4 April 1906.

14 Ibid.

15 RMED OJ, 11 January 1905, CAO/CRS/G91. The Begassi prophet was arrested and gaoled. Campbell's report suggests that the majority of Begassi people were not sympathetic to the prophecy.

of northern Papua. Compared with the Baigona and Taro cults, which followed the ~~inception~~^{eruption} of Anglican teaching on the Mamba, the Tokeriu and Begassi prophets had only an ephemeral impact. The originator of the Baigona cult was probably an Orokaiva man called Eroro of Ombeia village, although the cult also radiated from the Wanigela and Winiafi regions near Cape Nelson.¹⁶ Eroro, who attended Copland King's giu classes for hearers, was a 'courtly old gentleman' who had been a 'very attentive listener' to sermons.¹⁷ By 1913 his followers, called Baigona men,¹⁸ were practising a 'washing ceremony' on their relatives.¹⁹ King claimed that the Baigona baptism was borrowed from Christian teaching: if so, contributions to the cult may have come from the Anglican station of St Andrews, Ave (1899) and Ambasi (1906), as well as the Lutheran station at Morobe.²⁰

Calling themselves healers, the Baigona men claimed to be able to exorcise sickness; and, like the Anglican Sisters M. Nowland and E. Combley at Ave, professed to have benign intentions. However, they practised a form of extortion on their patients and for this they were opposed with the same rigour as had earlier prophets in the east.²¹

The most widespread cult in northern and eastern Papua, the Taro or kava keva movement, also arose from the dream of a man who became its dominant prophet. Buninia, a young man who lived near Manau on the Mamba river, claimed in about 1912 to have been visited by a sovai or spirit of his slain father incarnate in the taro plant and to have received instructions from him.²² The people of Taoturu

16 C. King, 'Some General Remarks on the Baigona Cult' in TP AR 1912-13, 76; TP AR 1911-12, 129. For further analysis of the Taro and Baigona cults, see J.D. Waiko, 'European Melanesian contact in Melanesian tradition and literature', unpub. seminar paper, UPNG. See also F.E. Williams, Orokaiva Magic; D.F. Wetherell, 'A History of the Anglican Mission...', 160-71, unpub. MA thesis, 160-71.

17 C. King, op. cit., 76.

18 Baigona, Ubir word used by female to female friends.

19 J.H.P. Murray to G. Murray, 19 January 1913, quoted in F. West, Selected Letters..., 71-2.

20 F.E. Williams, Orokaiva Magic, 75.

21 Ibid., TP AR 1911-12, 14.

22 Ibid.; J.D. Waiko, 'European Melanesian Contact...', 19-21.

and other neighbouring villages, having seen the young man fall into a convulsive jipari fit, fell one by one into the same condition. By this means they achieved identification with Buninia in his hysteria and were possessed in turn by the father-spirit. Although the taro was the visible object of the rite (and like the Baigona snake might be seen as a phallic symbol), it was to the spirit of the dead father rather than to the taro itself that the petitions were directed. The Taro men believed they were possessed by the sovai.²³ In propagating belief in father-possession, the followers of Buninia were in fact asserting their inheritance of the traditional prowess of the father, then in process of decline through the enforcement of the new authority of the European regime and the Christian commandments.

The Taro cult was transmitted through the Orokaiva plainlands both by direct proselytism and through its inauguration by travellers returning to their own villages from areas where it was practised. In either case the spread was rapid and suffered no hindrance, both because the Orokaiva were inveterate travellers and much given to visiting distant relatives, and because government police had made travelling safer. Fifteen years before, Stone-Wigg had noted that the Binandele were great talkers and could be heard shouting messages to people three miles up the river. 'News... can be passed on ten miles in a few minutes', he noted.²⁴ In this case the news was disseminated by cult leaders, who travelled by land and water to 'hold services' in neighbouring districts where others were initiated into the jipari convulsions and the taro dance. The movement appears to have spread from Manau in two directions: southward down the coast, and up the Mamba river.²⁵ By 1923 it had arrived at Emo in the south, where Raymond Elder had begun a mission station nine years before; by 1925 the cult had reached Naniu island and the Hydrographers valley; and in 1927 the Taro jipari had even made its appearance at Uiaku and Wanigela in Collingwood Bay, a distance of 120 miles from its seminary at the Mamba mouth.

There was no doubt that the Taro cult, being connected with fertility, religion and gardening, was firmly rooted in three matters

23 Ibid.

24 M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 14 May 1901, DA.

25 F.E. Williams, op. cit., 164.

of supreme interest to Papuan people. Flamboyant and energetic, the ceremonial answered to their craving for excitement, and there is little wonder that, in contrast to the reception of the Anglican missionary, the response to the arrival of the Taro prophet was highly emotional:

The night... [had] been spent in singing Taro songs, but still the revellers show no sign of exhaustion. The principal Taro man, Home, has been of late visited by his deceased father and has awoken to find a fresh supply of medicines in his hand. At about noon Home... attended by some twenty boisterous youths, sallies forth to perform the business of the day... there is no lack of good will and merriment, and when, after almost two hours of this exceedingly strenuous employment, the Taro men return to the village, it is to partake of the feast which concludes almost every native ceremony. 26

The sweeping progress of the Taro cult through the Orokaiva villages was in contrast to the halting advance of Anglicanism. Western religious symbolism played no part in the Taro ritual. A lime pot, leaves and herbs were the furnishings of the cult: there were no borrowed trappings of Christianity. Nor was there any trace in the underlying rationale of the cult to suggest that it was directed towards the acquisition of European goods. Unlike the Tokeri movement of Milne Bay, it did not embody a specific rejection of Europeans. But while the cult itself appears to have been the authentic flowering of indigenous religion, its emergence at a time of upheaval for Orokaiva culture was no coincidence. The coming of Europeans to the northern plainlands had brought a number of traditional customs to an end, and had placed the importance of the clan elders in jeopardy. The Taro cult was a reactionary movement in that it asserted the authority of the dead over the living and rejected Christianity in its rationale and ritual. Nevertheless, the spread of the cult did not lead to sorcery or intimidation. On the contrary, it strengthened old friendships and cemented new ties among the Orokaiva. This irenic and benevolent character, so foreign to traditional religion, was in harmony with the enforcement of peace by Europeans and represented a radical development in native religion.

The small expatriate population in the northern division was unsympathetic to the cults and especially towards the jipari

manifestations, which were regarded as ridiculous. But the administration did not conduct systematic opposition to the Manau or Taro movements. Towards the Baigona healers a repressive policy was adopted, and the practitioners could be gaoled on grounds of extortion. Copland King, however, did not denounce the Baigona:

I... am rather pleased to have something which I can show is entirely opposed to Christianity. The quitting of a heathen cult is a great step to take. It means more than a simple enquiry into Christianity, because there is nothing else. The Baigona took up certain practices cribbed from us... They baptized their people and gave new names. The whole matter is extraordinarily interesting. 27

It was typical of King's detachment that he published a scholarly account of the origins of the cult and even permitted a Baigona practitioner to perform a 'cure' on his Melanesian teacher while he sat by to observe results. King said that the Baigona had taught him to admit that Christian missionaries could not prove everyone else in the wrong.²⁸

Towards Taro prophets and their contemporaries, the 'Oroda men' of Cape Nelson, missionaries were adamantly opposed. The Oroda and Tokeriu prophecies were strikingly alike. Near Naniu island in 1928 a prophet, Bogari of Dariri, predicted that Mount Victory would erupt and that a tidal wave would engulf the peninsula.²⁹ The prophet predicted the arrival of a steamship laden with western food and instructed the Naniu communities to build houses in the hills. Bishop Henry Newton was opposed to the Oroda because of its disorderliness:

We shall have to be very strict in forbidding our Christians having anything to do with it [he wrote]. By the Mad dancing the people work themselves up... into what I suppose are epileptic fits... Explain to the teachers that it is obviously wrong because it makes people mad, and God is the God of order not of confusion. 30

In reply, Bogari when accused of predicting upheavals said, 'Yes, I have talked that way, the people are forgetting their old customs.'

27 C.J. King, Copland King and his Papuan Friends, 31, quoted in J.D. Waiko, op. cit., 22ff.

28 ABM Review, 1 July 1913, 74.

29 N. Hullett to H. Newton, Naniu, 18 February 1928, DA.

30 H. Newton to N. Hullett, Mukawa, 14 February 1928, DA.

They forget the Oroda. I get wild with them and talk about the end of everything - all the same Bishop... I am not mad.'³¹

The opposition of Anglican missionaries to the Oroda prophets represented a failure to recognize the desire of northern people to preserve traditional ways against violent change. As the tidal waves of Tokeriu in 1893 and Bogari in 1928 symbolized the inundation of Melanesian beliefs by western religion, so the taro emblem of Buninia's followers on the Mamba represented the spirit of the forefathers and a visible appeal against cultural apostasy. In the paroxysms of spirit possession there may have been a strand of desperation; yet the prophets were able dispassionately to explain the purpose of the paroxysms.

The boisterous spread of spirit cults in the north and the universality of belief in magic even in mission strongholds, showed missionaries such as King the fragility of their grasp of the Melanesian mind. Participation in cult activities did not, however, necessarily mean that Christianity had failed to impress the Papuan. For him, what was involved was not a choice between mutually hostile systems of thought and worship, but a willingness to experiment with alternatives and a refusal to see Christianity and indigenous religion in a true-false dichotomy. This flexibility was combined with the volatile temperament of the Orokaiva disturbed by European penetration. However, the failure of the Taro cult to penetrate the eastern flank of the region suggests that two generations of mission contact had rendered most Massim people impervious to further radical religious change.

JUST as the Tokeriu and Taro cults had originated in unconverted villages and failed to penetrate converted areas, so the Asisi cult had its genesis in the stubbornly traditional village of Uiaku in Collingwood Bay. In July 1932 Kitore of Uiaku, a Maisena spear chief, had a vision in which the wind spoke to him. The wind took him up and showed him two paths, one leading to Satan and the other to God. Kitore was told to heal the sick and given instructions to unmask evil. The followers of Kitore, the 'Asisi men', claimed to possess the power to cast out spirits from the bodies of the infirm, to heal

31 RMNED OJ, 28 February 1931, CAO/CRS/G91; PV, May 1933, 38.

sickness and raise the dead.³² This triple function supplied an answer to problems of great concern to Papuans: exorcism and the spirits of the dead. Probably because villagers had known healing to have been part of the ministry of Christ, missionaries had been asked to practice the healing arts through exorcism. Anglicans, however, had not developed techniques of spiritual healing and had left work among the sick to trained nurses and medical science.

As the Asisi cult passed to the east, it merged with another popular movement, the Vailala cult, which had begun in the Gulf of Papua in about 1919.³³ The main symbol borrowed from the Vailala was the wireless mast, which appeared everywhere the Asisi went. These masts were about twenty feet in height and were supported by four vines.³⁴ The inspiration came from Kitore, who understood that God had directed him to build a tower in order to converse with the Asisi. For God's convenience a second short pole was raised which held a dish of water, a knife and fork, and a piece of soap. Here God was supposed to meet the Asisi and impart instructions. The smoking of tobacco, a part of the ceremonial, produced the intoxication supposedly necessary for the requisite mental condition for the dialogue.

To detect evil, the Asisi men sniffed the air before each house. The reason given for this procedure was that it was not good for New Guineans to injure one another by sorcery, another sign of the benign intentions of many cults. The scenting was followed by a spear dance, a borrowing from the Oroda prophets. The Anglican missionary who witnessed Kitore's methods was astonished at the accuracy of his divinations. In each house where the prophet detected evil, poison was subsequently found by village councillors.³⁵ Kitore, called 'doctor' by his followers, told the magistrate W.R. Humphries that he derived his knowledge of medicine from the Taro men of the Mamba.³⁶ Wanigela councillors were emphatic that Kitolo was not an

32 Wanigela Log, 7 June 1932, DA. Kitore is variously spelt Kilolo or Kitole.

33 F.E. Williams, Drama of Orokolo, 29ff. See also F.E. Williams, The Vailala Madness...

34 Wanigela Log, 7 June 1932, DA.

35 Ibid.

36 RMNED AR 1932-3, 7; RMNED OJ 14 June 1932; *ibid.*, 16 June 1932, CAO/CRS/G91.

extortioner but a 'good man' whose powers stood between the people and calamity. When Kitore died, his disciples endeavoured to revive him in accordance with his teaching, but were forced to admit failure.

Kitore was a prophet who won wide respect from villagers, government officers and missionaries. His movement, unlike the volatile Tokeriu cult, was beginning by 1933 to become an institution owing to his traditional status as one of the Maisena spear-chiefs. Through Kitore's benign blend of Baigona, Taro and Oroda cults, his followers were among the village constables chosen for Wanigela village; and their authority was probably based on both occult and political powers. It is likely that the Asisi cult was an attempt at reconciliation of church policy, with its emphasis on medical science, with the intense Melanesian belief in the role of spirits in physical illness.³⁷

AS fertility was the motive of much cult activity in northern Papua, so lack of fertility was one reason for the waning of Christianity in its island birthplace of Dobu. During the first ten years of mission work, in spite of two hurricanes in 1898 and 1899,³⁸ harvests had been excellent. In a society in which religion was associated with fertility and material well-being, successive good seasons had culminated in the last great walaga feast of 1901 in Goodenough Bay, at which Stone-Wigg had publicly attributed garden fertility to God.³⁹ Ten years later, a famine followed by an epidemic on Dobu heralded a serious decline in mission attendances. Where Methodist tapwaroro yams had eroded opposition to the mission in 1892, so the famine convinced the sceptical in 1910 that the tapwaroro had lost its efficacy.

37 See G. Sharp to H. Newton, Brisbane, 18 May 1922, DA.

38 Methodists regarded the cyclone which ravaged the east New Guinea coast in 1899 as an object-lesson. In the pulpit missionaries spent much time 'teaching these superstitious people that God ruleth the storm, and not the Dobuan witch and wizard'. AWMMS AR 1898-99, lxxxii.

39 The banihivi of 1907 was much less spectacular. In 1901 Stone-Wigg reminded the 2000 Papuans present 'that God must be thanked for the abundant supply of food'. A service was also held before the killing of the pigs which began the banihivi ceremonies. M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 3 July 1901, DA.

After Bromilow's resignation in 1907, Dobu began losing faith in Christianity for other reasons as well. Wesleyan finances, based upon the rising affluence of the middle classes in Australia, were exhausted by the first wave of missionary activity in British New Guinea. Never again did Methodist giving, depleted by the financial depression of 1893, approach the outburst of support which created the New Guinea Mission. Additional amounts were asked for; but despite the centenary appeal to commemorate John Wesley's death in 1791, the resources of Australian Methodism were waning; and the inauguration of the Solomon Islands Mission in 1902 imposed another strain on church finance. The New Guinea Mission had been established at a cost of £10,000. Twenty years after the first landing, annual receipts totalled only £4,550, and the missionary patrons had to lodge £12,000 as security with the mission bankers.⁴⁰

Another reason for the recession was the problem of strategy. Methodist ascendancy appears to have reached its zenith in 1896: the missionaries had had five years of exciting and dangerous work, and almost 400 New Guineans were counted on their class rolls.⁴¹ But the capacity of the mission to consolidate its success was undermined by defects in its original strategy. Only five of the original force were male European supervisors, and to these were assigned impossibly long coastlines in scattered island groups. Their Pacific Island assistants were located in the D'Entrecasteaux, Trobriand and Louisiade archipelagos and dependent upon whaleboats and schooners. By 1902, three European wives had been invalided out of New Guinea, and of the original group, only one couple remained. The sheer magnitude of Methodist aspirations had been a major factor in the recession: more than any other reason, the ambitions of Sir William MacGregor were responsible for the grandiose strategy of imperial and religious conquest.

MacGregor's unremitting pressure on the Methodists was based upon evidence of their achievements in Fiji.⁴² But mass conversions in Fiji had been secured by concentrating attention upon influential chiefs. Following the conversion of Cakobau, for example, a thousand

40 AMMR, 4 December 1909; *ibid.*, 4 December 1914.

41 NG District AR 1896, SA.

42 AMMR, 7 November 1898.

Fijians had placed themselves under the instruction of the missionary Joseph Waterhouse.⁴³ Not even Gaganumore could compel baptism on Dobu, and when the Mission attempted to lease village land for its expanding children's colony, he could not persuade its owners to transfer it.

Three specific events marked the decline of Methodism on Dobu between 1907 and 1920. The transfer of Mission headquarters to Ubuia, a small island off south-western Goodenough, robbed Dobu of the prestige it had derived from its patronage of the Mission. The resignation of W.E. Bromilow ^{deprived} ~~lost~~ the Dobu Mission ~~of~~ the personality of a popular missionary. The famines of 1911-12 were the consummation of the mission's failures. Ponipate Vula reported the people of Dobu searching for fruit in the forest;⁴⁴ M.K. Gilmour wrote that 'The days were dark and heavy... as the scourge of dysentery, following drought and famine, passed over the islands.'⁴⁵ Natural disaster had precipitated hostility to foreign settlers in several regions in Melanesia.

The retirement of Bromilow in 1908 spelled disaster for the Mission on Dobu. Methodism in New Guinea lost the single bold and popular leader it then possessed. Into the vacuum of leadership went lesser men, who ruled rather than led. Bromilow's successor at Ubuia, W.C. Francis, lacked personal magnetism and tact, resorted to harshness, and lost influence. 'The congregation is ebbing out, and the spiritual tone is not as of yore',⁴⁶ Gilmour lamented after a visit to Dobu. A magistrate's report from Ubuia is more illuminating:

I was very very much struck with the different look and bearing of the natives on the station since the departure of Rev Mr Bromilow... the children and young men and women seem to have lost the bright happy look and bearing they had in Mr Bromilow's time... They then asked why had their father - Mr Bromilow - left them to the care of a stranger, they expressed the most genuine grief I have yet seen in a native for their loss... 47

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- 43 J. Waterhouse, The King and the People in Fiji, 261-3.
- 44 P. Vula to B. Danks, Ubuia, 22 February 1912, MOM 119. Similarly, a famine in Murua in 1853 was attributed to the Marists: 'the taros were so small and it was necessary to double them'. H. Laracy, 'Catholic Missions...', 51.
- 45 M.K. Gilmour, Synod Report 1912, SA. Jenness discounts the influence of a famine in 1900, which seems to have not affected Massim attitudes to the Mission. See D. Jenness and A. Ballantine, The Northern D'Entrecasteaux.
- 46 AMMR, 4 December 1909, 4 March 1914. L. Griffiths to B. Danks, Dobu, 10 August 1911, MOM 119.
- 47 RMED OJ, 14 February 1908, CAO/CRS/G91.

That Bromilow's converts deeply regretted his going was poignantly shown at Ubuia, where portraits of the late Superintendent and his wife hung in the dining hall. As the lamps were extinguished at night, students used to go sadly to the portraits, saying 'Good Night Tonugana' and 'Good Night Marama' to Bromilow and his wife.⁴⁸

Recession on Dobu foreshadowed decline in stations on the mission periphery. Kiriwina was the scene of a popular movement away from the tapwaroro that astonished those familiar with Fellow's triumphs. Where 540 members were enrolled in 1908, only 348 remained six years later. Where fifty preachers were being instructed, there were none in 1914.⁴⁹ Audiences ceased to be swayed by rousing sermons; reports of victories on the field no longer filled missionary propaganda in Australia. The loss of momentum was felt in other stations, and the lack of Pacific island missionaries closed outstations that had clustered round the centres of influence. A.J. Small of the Fijian Mission wrote:

Our Australian church must be made to vividly realize the crisis at which we have arrived; it must also be made to see that unless it is prepared to donate more to the great cause of missions our church will have to sound the call for Retreat! 50

IN north-eastern Papua, whose outline was visible from the Wesleyan D'Entrecasteaux, the lineaments of change were different. Where failure had dogged the foundation of the Anglican Mission, this had now given way to unexpected prosperity. The reversal began at Boianai, a village some sixteen miles north of Dogura. A people long reputed for the savagery of their relations with Wedau, the Boianai had been impervious to missionary overtures. The first two missionaries at

48 Gilmour described the departure of the Bromilows as 'like the taking away of the training poles, from young plants. The natives clung to them...'. AWMMS, AR 1907-8, 136. AMMR, 4 May 1908. Anglicans at Dogura had similar experiences. When leaving on furlough, they were asked by their followers: 'When are you coming back to Dogura: do you love the place or not?' MN, 17 September 1896. Samuel Tomlinson wrote of his wife's departure from Mukawa for a few days: 'She put them to bed as usual at 8 p.m., and the whole girls' dormitory cried itself to sleep.' OP 53/6.

49 AMMR, 4 March 1914.

50 A. Small to W.E. Bromilow, Suva, 17 December 1909, FDC.

Boianai-Radava, Willie Holi (1895-1899) and Francis de Sales Buchanan (1899-1910) had created sentiment somewhat more favourable to the Mission.⁵¹

At Boianai there had been a kindling of interest before Buchanan's departure. This burst into flames of enthusiasm in the régime of Romney Gill, his successor. Whether the 'miracle at Boianai' was due entirely to the charismatic personality of Gill, or whether it was part of a much wider revivalist movement emanating from Milne Bay, is a matter for conjecture. In 1911, when Boianai's alignment with the Mission was first noted, C.W. Abel wrote of a revival which had affected most of the people of the islands near Kwato, some 100 miles to the east. Thousands of Sariba and Logea islanders flocked to church, and many 'broke down and cried bitterly' during services. Signs of the awakening were seen after Josia Lebasi's visits to Maivara; and Paolo Dilomi had seen the movement spread to the Anglican and Wesleyan borders.⁵² According to Dilomi, 'the Holy Spirit had set their hearts on fire'.⁵³ It is possible that the 'great and searching times'⁵⁴ at Kwato and the revival at Boianai were reverberations of the same popular movement.

Certainly Gill's astuteness and insight were responsible for consolidating the movement at Boianai. A grandson and a grand nephew of two prominent L.M.S. missionaries in the Pacific, Gill brought to his adopted church a practical ability not evident in most Anglican clergy, as well as a gift of involving Papuans in his enterprises. Skilfully husbanding the potential of native church councillors, he turned the movement towards Christianity into a reshaping of the social structure under his own leadership. While his own policy was unusually well articulated, he did not allow it to extinguish Melanesian initiative.

Exploitation of the authority usually wielded by clan elders brought the clan elders of Boianai into a fruitful alliance with the Mission. A building committee was responsible for measuring sites; a

51 A.K. Chignell, Twenty-One Years in Papua, 25. MN, 17 July 1899; G. White, Francis de Sales Buchanan, 11. See also D.F. Wetherell, 'A History of the Anglican Mission...', 119ff.

52 C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 9 November 1911, PL.

53 Ibid.

54 Ibid.

village bank had fifty small depositors; by 1916 a registry office, school, council hall and church had been erected.⁵⁵ In about 1914 a council of seven was inaugurated to control the affairs of villages in the Boianai-Radava constituency. Elected on the basis of one councillor for each fifty villagers, the ogababada met once a month under Gill's presidency.⁵⁶ A variety of matters was adjudicated upon by the ogababada: the detection of wrongdoers, the eligibility of candidates for baptism, and the building of roads, bridges and flower gardens. 'Approaching from the sea', wrote Bishop J.O. Feetham of North Queensland, 'one appears to be approaching Paradise, and on a close acquaintance this expectation is not disappointed.'⁵⁷

Zealous development of village facilities, combined with an assiduous safeguarding of public morality, caused Boianai to be upheld as a model settlement and 'the exhibition station of the Anglican Mission'.⁵⁸ When J.H.P. Murray, a Lieutenant-Governor not usually given to extravagant compliments, visited Boianai in 1915, he noted:

It is generations ahead of any village. Scrupulously clean, houses better built, no crime, no absentees from school. Gill runs the whole show, but so that the village council think they run it themselves. They are lavish in their donations of food - his difficulty is to get them to accept payment. 59

Conversion for the Boianai Christians, like others in Mission districts, meant not only the transformation of their values and ways of life, but an attempt to impose the same ideals of behaviour on their neighbours. There was evidently no resistance to the proselytising by young converts of their own kinsmen. The ogababada built a hall in which men's bible classes were held twice weekly; they erected open air pulpits in outlying villages, from which Boianai evangelists delivered evening homilies to benighted village folk.⁶⁰

55 OP 54/6ff. See also D. Wetherell, op. cit., 122ff.

56 OP 54/9, 63/6.

57 Ibid., 54/5.

58 F. Hurley, Pearls and Savages, 18ff.

59 J.H.P. Murray, Diary, 4 September 1915, ML. The magistrate A.M. Campbell had praised Boianai village fifteen years earlier. OP 8/8.

60 See ABM Photographs Set 11, ABM archives. See also RMED PR 11 July 1914, CAO/CRS/G91.

When Gill was transferred to the Mamba River in 1922, 'nearly every teacher' volunteered to go with him; and when Bishop Gerald Sharp appealed to native Christians to take the gospel into Kaiserwilhelmsland after the German capitulation of 1914, several Boianai men offered to go to what must have been, for them, a hostile and dangerous land.⁶¹

The movement towards Anglicanism, which had begun as a wave at Boianai, soon caused ripples in other parts of north-eastern Papua. Taupota, since 1906 the scene of sturdy indifference to mission Europeans, and on occasion mass apostasy from the church - perhaps the result of Taupotan resentment of MacGregor's hangings of 1889 - experienced a reversal of sympathy in favour of the Mission. Mukawa, Wamira and Wanigela soon followed suit.⁶² Those previously excommunicated aligned themselves with the church; attendances at giu classes multiplied; and at Dogura, European missionaries found it difficult to force their way to services through the dense crowds. At Taupota 300 people joined the catechumenate; Wanigela was 'jumping ahead' according to one cleric and was 'almost a second Boianai' in its zeal. Wabubu near Mukawa was 'in the first glow of its fervour',⁶³ 100 people coming to prayers each evening. Only Copland King expressed sadness at the suddenness of the movement and what he thought was an over-hasty admission to the church.⁶⁴

The revival of interest reminded some of the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, so sudden and unexpected was the transformation. 'I have seen of the power of our dear Redeemer to redeem, and of our Saviour to make simple people like the Papuans blessed and happy...'⁶⁵ wrote Sharp. Having no experience in the whole context

61 OP 70/2; S.R.M. Gill to A.T. Gill, Boianai, 29 December 1922, DA.

62 OP 50/6, CS, 28 July 1916.

63 Nevertheless, in 1917 only 560 of 900 Wamirans were Christians, although the Mission headquarters were next to the village. RMED PR, 8 January 1917.

64 King had baptized only 40 Binandele by 1914 after 14 years' work. ABMR, 1 June 1914, 48. Liston Blyth wrote in 1920 of 'the delight they [Boianai villagers] take on making something to surprise their "Bada" on his return... they have killed off all their pigs save a few young ones... a marvellous instance of the power of one man to persuade a people for its own good.' Baniara Station, SJ, 11 February 1920.

65 OP 69/3.

of culture contact, little historical perspective, and no knowledge of cargo-cult theories, missionaries confessed the revival to be 'astonishing'. Like Abel and Dilomi, the Anglicans did not search for explanations; they simply accepted the phenomenal growth of the church between 1910 and 1920 as a gift of the Spirit.

RECESSION in island Papua, and unprecedented expansion on the northern mainland, illustrated the fact that for a cultural encounter of the kind desired by 19th century missionary patrons, mere numbers and finance were not enough. Precepts digested by Methodists during childhood were rigorously applied, often unmellowed by experience or imagination, in rural Melanesia. Methodist sermons, with their exhortations to piety and grave warnings against impurity and betel nut, were clothed in the traditional stiffness of formal church phraseology, but much of their force missed the ears of Dobuan congregations.

By 1918, Dobu seemed a lost cause. The prodigious numerical strength of the first Methodist party all but swamped the Islanders, whose conversion to Christ their missionary board had directed them to compass; and this they mistook for conversion and announced their conquest. Sheer success had completely conventionalised them, and even when their converts had ceased to listen, their addresses and reports reiterated the same language of gospel triumphs, of children plucked from graves, of cannibal ovens put out, and of white-robed choirs singing hymns of praise.⁶⁶ The language of success could not easily be reconciled to news of reverses and failure. Repetition, stale imagery, and self-congratulation in Sydney soured missionary minds in 1910 as they looked out on vacant churches and partly empty classrooms on Dobu, for long 'the scene of glorious Gospel triumphs'.

In northern New Guinea Anglican mission work had begun feebly and by 1898 had been almost abandoned as a failure. But the first ten years were of considerable value in absorbing experience and gaining an elementary knowledge of Melanesian culture. The caution, circumspection and reticence of Dogura missionaries contrasted with the volatile 'enthusiasm' of their colleagues on Dobu. While the Wesleyans never properly recovered from the loss of their first

66 See AMMR, 4 May 1911

leaders, the sustaining advantage of an episcopate lent solidarity to the Anglican enterprise.

In spite of their efforts to understand and sympathise with Melanesian attitudes, the Anglicans did not evolve a satisfactory response to the prophetic movements which flourished on their northern margin. In the southern bays of the coast there had been a resurgence of interest after the initial recession, and Christianity had become something of a popular movement. In the north, missionaries saw their achievements challenged by the Baigona, Taro, Oroda and Asisi cults. Here, conventional mission work meant slow and unspectacular erosion, few converts, and fewer still whose adoption of Christian values was in any way permanent. The slow progress of Christianity among the Orokaiva showed the fragility of the hold which tapwaroro had in the north: in the cultural framework of the northern tribes there had been no point of radical breakthrough.

IV

S A V I N G T H E R A C E

CHAPTER IX

A Dying Race?

THE humanitarian question of the first quarter of the 20th century was whether or not the Melanesians might become extinct. Since the time of European settlement, some observers had accepted as axiomatic the belief that native races in the Pacific were doomed by contact with Europeans. In the Massim people of eastern New Guinea, there seemed proof that this was so. In 1606 Torres had described Orangerie Bay (Mullens Harbour) as a well populated and cultivated country.¹ Visiting the Bay 160 years later, Bougainville declared that he had seen few countries presenting a finer aspect.² A generation before Chalmers' landing at Suau in 1877, a guriam lailai, or 'great hunger' had caused devastating mortality along the coast.³ Then a disease known as tupitupi, probably smallpox, had killed hundreds of people in the Bay.⁴ In 1939, Russell Abel contrasted Orangerie Bay with Torres' picture: 'Today... forest envelops all in a majestic green shroud. Although a few families are grouped here and there, the general air is of silence and desertion.'⁵

Abel was voicing an assumption which many shared - his father among them - that civilization brought death to native races.⁶ After 1900 there had come reports of ethnic groups at Cape Vogel, Kiriwina, Suau, and Port Moresby which were expected to 'vanish altogether'.⁷ Such government officers as C.A.W. Monckton and F.R. Barton, Administrator of British New Guinea (1904-1907) made observations before

1 C. Markham, ed., The Voyages of Pedro Fernandez de Quiros..., vol. II, 472.

2 See BNG AR 1902-3, 24.

3 Quoted in F.E. Williams, Depopulation..., 38.

4 Ibid.; see also Colonies and India, 2 March 1895, 14.

5 R.W. Abel, 'They Broke their Spears', 98.

6 See N. McArthur, A report on the First Census of the Population, 1; see also N. McArthur, Island Populations..., 246-58.

7 BNG AR 1902-3, 33; *ibid.*, 1906-7, 49; *ibid.*, 1902-3, 24; *ibid.*, 1902-3, 16.

the advent of statistical surveys, but in the eastern areas they visited they could not doubt the serious state of depopulation.

There were three broad schools of thought about diminishing populations. Some thought that it was part of the evolutionary process that 'weaker races' naturally gave way to the stronger.⁸ Others believed that the abolition of tribal fighting and the coming of steel tools led to atrophy and social decline.⁹ Yet others, influenced by functional anthropology, argued that culture was a complex web of custom and institutions, and that disturbance at one point led to overall decay. A few fastened on a single cause, such as the introduction of clothing or disease.¹⁰

Missionaries were divided about the wearing of western clothing by Pacific Islanders. Lawes and Chalmers at first played down its importance:¹¹ Murray and McFarlane both emphasized it. Thus McFarlane wrote after four years in the Torres Strait Islands that not a native of Darnley or Murray Islands was without clothing as the whole population had 'embraced the Gospel'.¹² Five years later, the adherents of the L.M.S. at Samarai were adopting clothes; and in 1895 girls on Dobu donned the pinafores which had come in boxes from Australia.¹³ Dobuan men wore the rami or loincloth when indentured for labour on the Mamba and Gira goldfields.

Engaged as carriers in the north, these Massim appeared to the Orokaiva to be women on account of their clothes. An old man of Korisata village had a tale which was noted by F.E. Williams:

Saw miner's boys. The boys wore Ramis - thought they were girls - chase - for speed discarded club and spear. Outdistanced... lost sight of 'girls'. Was peering about in bush - when... saw the wholly new spectacle of a uniformed policeman. Other man came and [I] was bound hand and foot to a pole like a pig.¹⁴

8 See p. 319.

9 The Royal Commissioners in 1906, for example, referred to Papuans as plunged into 'a condition of peaceful sloth'. APP 1907, Report of the Royal Commission..., xiii.

10 For differing views on missionary influence on clothing, see W.H.R. Rivers, ed., Depopulation..., 8, 91.

11 J. King, W.G. Lawes..., 336.

12 S. McFarlane to J. Mullens, Ellangowan, 27 March 1875, PJ.

13 S. McFarlane to J. Mullens, Ellangowan, 7 July 1879, PJ; M. Billing, Diary, 4 August 1897, MOM 150.

14 F.E. Williams, Orokaiva Notes, 15 October 1923, 447 item 138-150, PNGA.

This villager was recording the advance of the modern world across his lands in terms of clothing - the carrier's rami and the policeman's uniform. Neither of the wearers was a woman, a European, or a Christian.

In some places, mission stations attested to their presence in their converts' dress and cut of hair. But not all forms of Christianity were associated in the Papuan mind with the wearing of western clothes. Neither Anglicans nor Roman Catholics added to the clothing which Papuans already wore, though an attempt at dressing mixed-race children was made at Dogura, and Papuan wives of South Sea Island teachers usually wore Mother Hubbards. The missionaries who clothed Papuans were the exception rather than the rule; and missionaries more frequently lamented the desire of Papuans for European clothes than complained about immodest dress. The fact that most Massim converts persisted in the pandanus leaf and grass skirt for the first thirty years of the century suggested that few Papuans - mainly teachers - thought it necessary to alter their style of dress on conversion. On the whole, the adoption of European clothing was a process uncontrolled by missionary influence.

Among those who thought clothing undesirable, Barton was probably the most vocal.¹⁵ Desiring not only a return to New Guinea dress, Barton wished also to preserve other features of Melanesian life, particularly the dance. He thought that the waning of traditional dancing was contributing to a loss of buoyancy in the villages and decided that anyone who wished to dance should be encouraged by the Administration to do so. Barton invoked the psychological argument that dancing was a lively, healthy exercise. A festival of tribal dancing was inaugurated on the parade ground at Port Moresby in July 1904.

Lawes was incensed. English Congregationalists had become more tolerant of theatre going and dancing as the 19th century advanced; but when Lawes arrived in Port Moresby in 1874 he had learnt that Motuan dancing was an occasion for sexual licence. Most Evangelical missionaries in the South Seas denounced dancing and decoration, distrusted frivolity, and suspected immorality in night dancing.

15 See F.R. Barton, Public Notice, 30 April 1906, CAO/CRS/G69. Native Regulations 1913 70(a) and 1922 87(I) both forbade the wearing of clothes by Papuans on the upper part of the body.

Lawes objected also on grounds that dancing encouraged idleness and disrupted schools. 'Fancy dancing every night from Jan^y to June (except now on Sat^y and Sunday nights)!' he had written. 'It demoralises the whole community and leads to neglect of everything else.'¹⁶

Barton complained of Lawes' desire for a confrontation, thought him unnecessarily severe, and told Abel his only anxiety was 'above all things to save them if possible from extinction'.¹⁷ Addressing 2,000 dancers whose disappearance as a race he had prophesied two years before,¹⁸ Barton said,

My friends,

I have asked you all to come together here today so that I may look upon your faces... Many a time I have been present at your village feasts, and today I am very pleased to see you at the Government feast ... You must dance and make merry tonight, and tomorrow you will return to your villages. 19

The revival of dancing released a flood of village hostility against the Christian leaders who had long denied villagers their ancient pastime. Having made it a rule that all who were baptized should give up the dance, L.M.S. missionaries watched as hundreds of converts in the Port Moresby district forsook church membership. Even more galling was the fact that village constables interpreted Barton's invitation as a command and gave out publicly that the Government and the Mission were at loggerheads.²⁰

But the popularity of the Government's innovation encouraged Barton to convene more dances. At Cape Nelson a festival was held under the Administrator's patronage. The Administrator's speech was translated by Anglican missionaries, whose ideas about dancing were very different from those of such L.M.S. agents as Lawes and Abel.²¹

16 See W.G. Lawes to J.A. Blayney, Vatorata, 14 July 1898, CAO/CRS/G121.

17 F.R. Barton to C.W. Abel, Samarai, 9 September 1904, CAO/CRS/G121; see also F.R. Barton to W.G. Lawes, Port Moresby, 15 November 1904, CAO/CRS/G121.

18 BNG AR 1902-3, 16.

19 Quoted in F.R. Barton to R.L. Turner, Port Moresby, 5 July 1904, CAO/CRS/G121.

20 See Dilomi Paolo to C.W. Abel, Logea, 9 September 1904, CAO/CRS/G121.

21 See MN, 15 December 1897, 110; *ibid.*, 17 December 1904, 109.

The Wesleyans did not oppose organized dancing in the D'Entrecasteaux, though it may be guessed that their desire to interest the Massim in Polynesian dances was hastened by the village burlesque.²² In north-eastern New Guinea, missionaries warmly approved Barton's encouragement of traditional dancing. Lawes in southern New Guinea feared that dancing would destroy the village churches.²³

SUCH missionaries as McFarlane had introduced clothing in China Straits because they thought it would hasten civilization. Others like Lawes opposed dancing in Port Moresby because they thought it dangerous to Christian standards of civilization.²⁴ Both ideas brought them criticism from later observers, who thought the Papuans were a dying race and were looking for causal explanations. But in teaching Papuans to play English sport, L.M.S. missionaries forfeited no observer's sympathy. Both cricket and football were introduced into New Guinea by Protestant missionaries.

Young men in Papua - Abel, Riley, Lawrence, and Saville - came from colleges in England where sport was freely played and found that they had settled in a deteriorating tropical countryside among a people with no activity but fighting to quicken them. They began to argue with Lawes that sport was not merely an innocent pastime, but a morally elevating part of the missionary vocation.²⁵ Even McFarlane had delighted Milne Bay villagers by retiring to the beach after service to play blind man's buff and puss-in-the-corner.²⁶ Abel wanted villagers to go further and play such 'good wholesome British games' as would wake them up.²⁷ From the day that the first Papuan boy

22 AMMR, 5 September 1910; *ibid.*, 4 December 1912.

23 Lawes, Abel and Schlencker opposed dancing; Chalmers, Holmes, Riley, Saville and Rich did not. See J.H. Holmes, *Diary*, 5 August 1893; J.H. Holmes to H.M. Dauncey, Kerema, 11 April 1903, LMS Box 2, ML.

24 W.G. Lawes to R.W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 1 August 1893, PL.

25 A.E. Hunt to R.W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 22 January 1902, PL.

26 S. McFarlane to J. Mullens, Ellangowan, 7 July 1879, PL.

27 C.W. Abel, 'Address to East Hill Congregational Church', 1899, KA.

wielded a cricket bat, he was certain sport would do much 'to develop [sic] the character' of the children in Papua.²⁸

Abel was an outstanding cricketer who had been chosen to play for Hertfordshire in 1887. He was also interested in football, bowls and billiards.²⁹ The apex of his ideal of a healthy missionary pastime was cricket in the manner of the Cambridge Evangelical Seven. Abel said he rejoiced 'as a missionary rather than a sportsman' when a Papuan kicked the first football through the Kwato goalposts on 22 September 1891.³⁰ An earnest enthusiast who ruled his mission according to the principles of the Evangelical Revival, Abel became the founder of both cricket and football in New Guinea.

Sport was played in Papua with such casual ease that later enthusiasts overlooked the solemnity with which it was originally regarded. Abel was sure that it was connected to the problem of depopulation, and his talk about 'restoring these races from the remnants which survive'³¹ always included a reference to cricket. His L.M.S. patrons in London found these arguments somewhat strained, and his missionary neighbours seemed less concerned about justifying their pleasures. Neither Anglicans nor Methodists appear to have thought Papuans destined for racial cemeteries. They agreed simply in the moral value of sport and thought villagers would enjoy playing it. Bishop Stone-Wigg began his first visit to New Guinea with a football match at Wedau, coming off the field with sprained wrists, and remarking that if Papuans worked as well as they tackled they would be 'capable of great things'.³² G.R. Le Hunte, a cricketer, was much addicted to the bat and ball, and while Lieutenant-Governor played at Kwato, showing Papuans the advantage of keeping the left shoulder well over the bat, and the right foot firmly planted inside the batting crease.³³ On a blackboard in an Anglican village classroom,

28 MC, 22 April 1899, 13; Log of the East End District, December 1891, KA.

29 C.C. Abel, Interview, Port Moresby, 1 June 1972.

30 C.W. Abel, Diary, 22 September 1891, PR; see also S. Tomlinson, Diary, 7 October 1891, ML.

31 The Christian, 11 March 1920, edited by Arthur Porritt, a director of the LMS.

32 MN, 15 December 1897, 108.

33 C.W. Abel, Savage Life..., 197; see also J. Chalmers to R.W. Thompson, Saguane, 22 April 1900, PL.

a visitor noted a line written in the best public school tradition, 'Play up! Play up! and play the game.'³⁴ For a bishop solemnly to discard apron and caracole on a football field was not evidence of a lapse of dignity, but a witness to a great theme which the British carried almost everywhere they colonized.

Frank Lenwood, Foreign Secretary of the L.M.S., once remarked that Charles Kingsley would have rejoiced to see Hula beach in the cool of an afternoon.³⁵ Magistrates saw sport less romantically, as a panacea to the problem of tribal fighting. As J.H.P. Murray said, if the football could replace the bullfight in Spain, it might 'help to oust the head-hunt from Papua'.³⁶ Government officials therefore fostered the goal kick to resolve disputes. It was really very important, wrote Murray, that the Papuan should have some legitimate means of excitement, 'in short, that he should have his fun'.³⁷ He approved of soccer, not because it was obscurely connected with Christianity, but because the opening game in Port Moresby in 1925 had been played 'with a highly satisfactory degree of fury'.³⁸ Murray agreed to the appropriation of native taxation after 1923 to the buying of footballs and cricket bats.³⁹ When the Wanigela villagers asked W.R. Humphries how their tax was spent, he satisfied them by replying that 'some went to the Mission, some to the Doctor, some for bonus, footballs, trees and seeds'.⁴⁰ In June 1938 the Kwato cricketers listened to Murray's speech opening their new oval. How different might recent history have been, he told them, had the Germans learned to play cricket with the British; then he bowled the first ball down the new pitch.⁴¹

Cricket was thought a strong builder of character and teacher of morality.⁴² A Papuan schoolboy, M.D. Barton, wrote of the way his

34 M.T. Jones, By Land, Sea and Air..., 10.

35 F. Lenwood, Pastels..., 167.

36 J.H.P. Murray, 'Native Welfare in Papua', undated ms., CAO/CRS/G91.

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid.

39 See F.E. Williams to J.H.P. Murray, Port Moresby, 27 April 1923, CAO/CRS/G69.

40 RMED OJ, 8 June 1930, CAO/CRS/G91.

41 R.W. Abel, 'They Broke their Spears', 73.

42 See K.S. Inglis, Churches..., 74-85.

missionary, J.D. Bodger, had instilled the sporting ethic:

He taught them that they must play the game for their team and their school and not to be selfish players; and to always look on the bright side with a smile on their faces. They must never get sulky when defeated by others. 43

Team spirit, loyalty, and fairmindedness: these were the values which champions of the cult of muscular Christianity tried to breed on Papuan playing fields.⁴⁴ Yet, as Russell Abel realized, such virtues were too quickly understood not to have been already latent.⁴⁵

However, there were times when umpires were distressed by the tribal nature of Papuan sporting contests. Ethnic tensions formerly relieved in warfare occasionally now reverberated on the football field. In a Cape Nelson match in 1932, Mokorua, a village captain, was downed and shouted to his opponents as he rose, 'All right, you've been looking for it, now you can have it; come on!'⁴⁶ But his team refused to follow, the councillors howled him down, and the game went on. Humphries said later that 'to arrange a football match between the Arifama and Okein would be to arrange a fight'.⁴⁷

The way sport was played varied with place and circumstances. Where a cricket ball was not available, Melanesians used limes or green fruit as balls. A patrol officer in 1927 found the males of a village on Goodenough Island busily engaged fashioning cricket bats from logs of wood; later they began wielding bats 'of grotesque shape and sizes'.⁴⁸ More radical deviations, such as female football, may well have been the work of Polynesian missionaries.⁴⁹ As the games spread, missionaries like A.K. Chignell tried instilling 'correct' rules in the players:

43 M.D. Barton, 'Why Cricket is a Good Game', F.E. Williams papers 10-26, PNGA; see also PV, 11(4) April 1939, 28.

44 See also Cecil Wilson, 'Cricket in the Solomon Islands' in P.F. Warner, Imperial Cricket, 423-4.

45 R.W. Abel, op. cit., 73.

46 RMNED OJ, 12 September 1932, CAO/CRS/G91.

47 Ibid., 14 September 1932.

48 RMED PR, 29 January 1927, CAO/CRS/G91.

49 See also T.R. St Johnston, South Sea Reminiscences, 38-9; A.W. Mahaffy, 'Cricket in Samoa...', in P.F. Warner, Imperial Cricket, 391; A.B. Brewster, The Hill Tribes of Fiji, 232.

I tried for a whole year to make my boys play cricket after the manner of Marylebone, and then I gave it up, as better men have done before me, and left them to play the game in their own way. 50

When European control over the rules declined, cricket was revised according to Massim ideas. In Kiriwina an oral tradition relates how the game was introduced by C.W. Abel during a yam-gathering visit before the turn of the century.⁵¹ Later, balls were made of coconut stems and bats of fibres, and sorcerers were engaged to make spells to guarantee a win. An eye-witness account depicts Kiriwina cricketers in action:

Early on the day of the match, the teams with their women and supporters proceed noisily to the field; ... teams of forty or fifty a side are not unusual... As the game gathers momentum it becomes impossible to tell whether one or other of the people rushing up and down the wicket happens to be a batsman; the carrying of a bat is in itself no criterion. At such times scoring a run becomes more like running the gauntlet.

Early in the game, the target is the wicket; later on, however, a tendency develops to bombard the batsmen, direct hits being acclaimed by the bowler's supporters. 52

Thus Kiriwinans turned Abel's game into a tribal preoccupation. Though Moreton's police had restrained fighting on the island in 1899,⁵³ the tensions which had fed it had not been dissipated.⁵⁴

The violence that attended a Kiriwina cricket match was lacking in the white-sleeved correctness of the game on the home field. Where a batsman might be knocked unconscious by the bowler in Kiriwina, sport at Kwato was organized tightly according to scoreboard and the rule book. Here also the formality of an English county match - the starched whites, pads, boots and other detail of the team photograph⁵⁵ - was imitated with fastidious exactitude. Abel himself played in bow

50 A.K. Chignell, An Outpost in Papua, 54. The first cricket match, Wanigela v. Uiaku, was played on Christmas Day 1908. Wanigela Log, 25 December 1908, DA.

51 Kaliton Weyalulu, Interview, Kavataria, 17 May 1972; C.C. Abel, Interview, Port Moresby, 1 July 1972.

52 H.A. Powell, 'Cricket in Kiriwina', in Listener, vol. xlvi, 4 September 1952, 384-5.

53 See p. 116.

54 R. Lawton, Interview, Kiriwina, 16 May 1972.

55 R.W. Abel, Charles W. Abel..., 162.

tie; his team were gentlemen - with a 'play on' and a 'cheer boys, cheer' from the side - and tea was served with elegance in a marquee on a special day.

But cricket was not merely a gentleman's pastime: the souls of the Papuans were too important to be trifled with. Having led off in a match with villagers, a Papuan medium-pace bowler sometimes turned with astonishing vivacity into a giver of Evangelical testimonials. Abel often attended these campaigns to ensure that the cricket of his sportsmen was well mixed with their Christianity. If the villagers seemed likely to want more cricket and not be reminded of the moral evil of heathenism, the bowler summoned the missionary as did Saevaru at Gwavili in 1921.⁵⁶ Abel's cricketers were never in any danger of losing their sense of moral evil: if the game of cricket could remind them of it, how could they forget it among the villages in eastern Papua?

In Kiriwina, cricket was performed without missionary overtones: when played at Dogura and Dobu, it was intended primarily for pleasure. Only Kwato exalted sport as an item essential in the rescue of a race. As this was a missionary's humanitarian duty, sport was associated in Abel's mind with the way of redemption. He wrote to his sons in 1920:

You will be much struck and deeply grateful to God when you come back and see the wonderful change in these young converts... Bele is a very attractive youth (and a fine medium bowler). Olaf too is a nice lad (and very clever behind the sticks). Maipua has the family coarseness, but M[adge] gives him a good character (and he will be the best medium break bowler we shall have for some time to come) and so on...

57

Beatrice Abel was also inclined to equate cricket with Christian character. Discussing a youth whom she thought lacking in manliness, she wrote, 'I think N.G. wd. probably make a man of him - real need - fellowship in Christ's sufferings - hard work for Him in the salvation of [hun]gry souls... and cricket. He needs all.'⁵⁸

Batting was probably the only activity in which Abel joined comfortably with his fellow Englishmen in Papua. This probably explains

56 Saevaru - to C.W. Abel, Gwavili, 4 November 1921, in C.W. Abel, LD, 4 November 1921, KA.

57 C.W. Abel, LD, Kwato, ?1920, KA.

58 B. Abel to C.W. Abel, London, 5 March 1925, KA.

his eagerness to engage in a contact which did not necessitate preaching to other men. The miner Jim Pryke once called him the 'King of Dusky Cricket'.⁵⁹ Even at Kwato, such common Christianity as Abel shared with other missionaries counted for little without the bat and ball. 'Mr Hallows plays no cricket', wrote Abel of an industrial teacher who joined his staff briefly in 1926, 'he is leaving by the next boat.'⁶⁰ Such a description may have seemed extreme, but it must be remembered that test cricket was then reaching the zenith of its popularity in Australia. Abel arranged in order of importance a list of world events in 1926:

1. The Test Match.
2. Germany's entry to the League of Nations.
3. The General Strike. 61

If Abel's boisterous fulfilment in cricket appealed more to Europeans than his moral austerity, it also brought him closer to Papuans. One day a fine cricketer, Mauru, was rude to his teacher in the Kwato school. Beatrice Abel wrote: 'Dad took him in hand and knocked his cricket off for a week.' This was an argument Mauru understood. 'On Monday morning he suddenly came to his senses... and asked God to forgive him and take him back again.'⁶² By Tuesday afternoon a chastened rebel was once again batting on the pitch.

When sport and religion were intertwined, the spread of cricket along the coast with mission Christianity was assured. Evangelists who could bowl as well as preach were fairly certain to be raised up in the Kwato team. Merari Dickson, for example, was given a place in the school at Kwato when his father Diki Esau (a convert of Diki the Lifuan teacher at Samarai) made ninety-nine runs in a village match.⁶³ By 1930, Dickson was captain of the Kwato XI and a school-teacher in the Mission, in spite of his habit of taking classes while seated in a cricketer's deck chair.⁶⁴ F.E. Williams somewhat flippantly wrote that he felt 'tempted, even at the risk of irreverence, to

59 See Appendix 3.

60 C.W. Abel to C.C. Abel, Kwato, 10 June 1926, KA.

61 C.W. Abel to W. McDougall, Kwato, 24 September 1926, KA.

62 B. Abel to C.C. Abel, Kwato, 4 November 1926, KA.

63 M. Dickson, Interview, Port Moresby, 10 June 1972.

64 Ibid.

suggest "less Christ and more cricket".⁶⁵ Abel commented gravely, 'I have ignored that part of the Report where W[illiams] suggests that we should alter the method of our religious exercises. He is out of his depth there.'⁶⁶

While Kwato cricket was a game exclusively for men, the Mission provided recreation for the weaker sex in the form of badminton, croquet and tennis. These pursuits were also permitted to the feebler boys, but Abel regarded lawn tennis as a 'side game' and strongly discouraged it when the premier sport was neglected. He admonished his sons:

You should sacrifice a soft game of tennis for the good of the community... One of these days I shall bar tennis to all able bodied Papuans. And the blame may be at your door. 67

At Dogura, Anglican sportsmen were challenging students to more esoteric pursuits like lemon and spoon races, three-legged races, and greasy pole competitions. Young and energetic boys liked swarming up the greasy pole for the tin of bulamakau nailed to the top.⁶⁸ What Abel thought of Anglican sports is not recorded. He is unlikely to have been enthusiastic.

In all Melanesian missions, however, the genteel game of cricket was the premier sport. Apart from its social prestige, it was thought to have a special value for Papuans: the Papuan Villager advised its readers to be 'not only... good cricketers, but... good boys, too'.⁶⁹ Because of its high moral tone both Government and missions wanted villagers to play it. The fact that two of the best batsmen in the England team of 1932 were Indians, led the editor to predict that some day they might have Papuan players in the Australian test team.⁷⁰

An opportunity for contact which did not offend the particular racial code of the colonizers, cricket and football helped towards the bettering of race relations in Papua. Visiting Samarai with the Royal Commissioners in 1906, J.A.K. Mackay said Papuans could beat Europeans

65 F.E. Williams, Depopulation..., 49.

66 C.W. Abel, LD, Kwato, 28 September 1926, KA.

67 C.W. Abel to C.C. Abel, London, 14 March 1930, KA.

68 HKM, 1 March 1912.

69 PV 3(10), 5 October 1931, 78.

70 Ibid., 4(9), 15 September 1932, 1.

'out of their socks' on the field.⁷¹ The Annual Report of 1929 dwelt on the 'keen and friendly rivalry' which cricket brought about between races.⁷² As Russell Abel wrote, in cricket the white man found he could comprehend, respect and 'even admire' the Melanesian.⁷³

Whether Papuans made better sportsmen than Europeans was a matter for lively debate. Beatrice Abel decided they made better cricketers than Samoan missionaries.⁷⁴ In about 1925 Frank Laver, the Australian test batsman, was bowled for a duck by Alaedi, a bowler from Kwato.⁷⁵ Maulu was a cricketer whose style reminded some observers of test cricketing;⁷⁶ Maru was considered an 'absolutely first class' batsman.⁷⁷ When the three went into the field together in the final match of 1933, Samarai was all out for 42 while the Mission closed with 117. The Papuan Villager conceded victory, but said the white men had not had any practice and were, in consequence, not as good as usual.⁷⁸

The visit of the Kwato XI to Port Moresby in 1929 was an important event for others than sportsmen. Kwato's reputation was well known and the Port Moresby players were urged to practise in the hope of being selected to play Kwato.⁷⁹ Arriving on the Elevala in response to an invitation from the Port Moresby Cricket Club, the Kwato players 'afforded a great deal of pleasure to the white spectators' because of their 'exemplary conduct on and off the field'.⁸⁰ Russell

71 J.A.K. Mackay, Across Papua..., 49.

72 TP AR 1928-9, 10-11. See also E.P. Wolfers, 'Games People Play' in New Guinea..., vol. 6 no. 1, April 1971, 47ff.

73 R.W. Abel, 'They Broke their Spears', 73.

74 B. Abel, Diary, 11 July 1898, KA.

75 R.W. Abel, Charles W. Abel..., 161; M.K. Abel, Charles W. Abel..., 61.

76 C.W. Abel, LD, 11 June 1926, KA.

77 Other prominent members of the Kwato XI were Ou of Mailu (adopted son of Ah Gim, murdered in 1891), Alaedi (slow googly bowler), Pita (wicket keeper), and Saevaru (medium-pace bowler). C.W. Abel, Diary, 2 October 1904, KA; Communication from C.C. Abel, 1 July 1973.

78 PV, 5(2), 15 February 1933, 15, quoted in E.P. Wolfers, op. cit., 48.

79 Papuan Courier, 21 June 1929. For an account of earlier inter-racial cricket in Port Moresby, see Papuan Times, 27 September 1911.

80 TP AR 1928-9, 11.

Abel spoke of a 'National Spirit' among the Papuan crowds at the match.⁸¹ Leonard Murray said that he felt 'something very like the beginning of a Papuan national sentiment':

It was obvious [wrote Murray], from the interest and excitement of natives from all parts of the Territory, that the Kwato team was regarded as representing Papuans as a whole, and that Kiwais, Orokaivas, and others took the same pride in the skill of the Kwato cricketers as the Samarai natives themselves. 82

Three years later, Samarai defeated Poreporena, and in 1936 Port Moresby began to compete against Hula.⁸³ In 1932 the Church of England Natives' Cricket and Football Club was formed at Samarai, with Bishop Newton as patron and an executive including R.F. Bunting, G.E. Aumuller, Mazeppa Bacca and John Guise.⁸⁴ Soon afterwards, mixed teams of Milne Bay planters and villagers played against Samarai traders and Papuans led by Bunting and Merari Dickson.⁸⁵

In January 1930 Abel had arranged a cricketing tour of Australia by the Kwato XI under the auspices of the N.S.W. Cricket Association, part of the £700 cost of which would be borne by the Kwato Mission.⁸⁶ Even before he left Sydney for England in 1930, Abel

81 R.W. Abel, Diary, 7 July 1929, KA. The match was won by Port Moresby. At a victory dinner at the Papua Hotel, the President of the Papuan Cricket Club said he hoped that some day the Port Moresby team could play with the black men and realize that they were playing with gentlemen. He hoped that one day they could sit down with them at the same board. C.W. Abel, representing Kwato with his son Cecil, replied that 'they could not afford to despise the native, and must make the best of him. One way to transform their character was to put them into cricket.' Papuan Courier, 28 June 1929; see also Amirah Inglis, 'The White Women's Protection Ordinance...', 100ff.

82 TP AR 1928-9, 10. J.H.P. Murray once heard a New Guinea resident boast that racial policy in Rabaul was superior to Papua's, illustrating the claim by the fact that in Papua white men played cricket with natives. 'I think that the difference is that we cultivate a feeling of "mateship" or cameraderie between Europeans and Papuans, and they deliberately do not.' J.H.P. Murray to G. Murray, 10 June 1939, in F. West, Selected Letters..., 231.

83 PV 3(2), 16 February 1931, 14.

84 Ibid., September 1932, 70.

85 C.C. Abel to P.D. Abel, Kwato, 16 March 1940, KA.

86 Abel first proposed this scheme in 1913. C.W. Abel, LD, 8 July 1913; ibid., 29 July 1926. C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Sydney, 25 September 1929, KA.

was considering further sporting competitions between Papua, Fiji, Tonga and Samoa.⁸⁷ Abel's death in April proved to be the demise of such hopes, and none of the schemes came to fruition. In 1931 Williams correctly prophesied that Papua would probably never send a Test Team to Australia,⁸⁸ illustrating the extent to which organized sport in Papua had been dependent upon one man's life.

If sport could bring together Papuan and European as temporary equals, it was thought it could bridge doctrinal gulfs between the churches. At the end of the 1924 cricket season a marquee tea was held to farewell D. Fowler, a bank clerk and captain of the Samarai side, and speeches were made and cheers called for Fowler by Gogo, the Papuan captain.⁸⁹ Seven years later, several hundred Papuan competitors met at the first inter-mission athletics carnival. Here, Wesleyans in red struggled with Anglicans in white and Kwato teams in black and gold.⁹⁰ An L.M.S. team was brought also from Isuleilei; and students, missionaries and commercial employees contested their skills under the umpiring of bishops and magistrates.⁹¹ In 1937 the Papuan athletes were billeted by Government and trading interests on Samarai and welcomed officially by the magistrate. Russell Abel described the ecumenical mingling of missions:

Dogura got their goals right at the beginning, before Kwato had quite woken up. After that it was a ding-dong, and a roar of barracking right round the field. There were thousands of natives and a terrific crowd of dimdims, all barracking hard. 92

Athletics raised only a temporary glow of tribal brotherhood. When J.C. Rundle led the Methodist team home to Dobu after a successful carnival in 1939, his boat was met by canoes of painted warriors chanting in Dobuan, 'See the conquering hero comes.' Rundle sat reminding himself of war cries sung to welcome Dobuans home from a raid before the coming of Christianity.⁹³

87 C.G. McNamara to C.W. Abel, Buna, 29 April 1929, KA.

88 PV, 3(2), 16 February 1931, 14.

89 C.W. Abel, LD, 12 April 1924, KA.

90 Black and gold were the colours of Cheshunt College, Cambridge.

91 PV, January 1933, 6-7.

92 R.W. Abel to A. Swinfield, Kwato, 26 April 1939, KA.

93 NG Synod, Dobu Report 1939, SA.

The games which Abel introduced in 1891 spread all over eastern New Guinea. By innovation the players developed their own rules, but some did not lose Abel's sense of the eternal, even in cricket. When Sergeant Gaibiri, the King's police medallist, was buried at Cape Nelson in 1937, the body was wrapped in the Papuan ensign and lowered as the police fired a volley. Then the constabulary put his goods on the earth for comfort on his journey: betel nut, lime pot, and cricket bat. Gaibiri had been Captain of the Tufi Cricket Club.⁹⁴

Introduced partly to spread the gospel and partly to revive a race believed to be dying, cricket and football proved one of the enduring legacies of Christianity and colonial rule. It instilled a spirit of equality and friendly inclusiveness between races. In many places it eclipsed customary forms of recreation. If New Guinea was one of those cultures whose littorals were penetrated but whose heartlands were never conquered,⁹⁵ then European sport in eastern Papua was a captivating exception.

DURING the period in which inter-racial sport was becoming more common, surveys of population were being taken in eastern New Guinea. Between 1920 and 1924, census-taking indicated that earlier impressions of a slide were wrong in some places but probably correct in others. In the D'Entrecasteaux, village counting disposed of the claim that the population was generally increasing.⁹⁶ On Dobu, a fall from 1800 to 1150 was recorded between 1891 and 1925, or an average of twenty fewer, or 1.1 per cent each year.⁹⁷ To some magistrates these fragments suggested a composite picture of overall decline, and a theory of deliberate race suicide advanced by a Government anthropologist, W.E. Armstrong, was not considered to be exaggerated.⁹⁸

94 RMNED to H.W. Champion, Cape Nelson, 7 April 1937, CAO/CRS/G91.

95 J.W. Davidson and Deryck Scarr, eds., Pacific Islands Portraits, 167.

96 For population statistics in Milne Bay and eastern islands, see RMED OJ, 28 June 1924, CAO/CRS/G91, C.W. Abel, LD, 21 March 1924, KA.

97 The Dobuan population was 1800 in 1892, 1329 in 1906, 1201 in 1911, and 1150 in 1924. RMED OJ, 11 October 1924, CAO/CRS/G91.

98 RMED OJ, 12 March 1925, CAO/CRS/G91.

Faced with an apparent recession in the Massim population, European observers suggested a variety of explanations: tribal warfare,⁹⁹ sluggish apathy,¹⁰⁰ or pernicious Europeans.¹⁰¹ Nearly all blamed European diseases: few fastened on Christian missions as a cause.¹⁰² In 1922 W.H.R. Rivers said dysentery, whooping cough, measles and venereal disease were the four major diseases in the Pacific.¹⁰³ The first three were thought to be unknown in British New Guinea before 1900,¹⁰⁴ so they may have entered the country between then and 1910. There was a serious epidemic of dysentery on the Lakekamu goldfield in 1910-11; when dysentery spread to Teste Island in 1912 54 in a small community of 250 died.¹⁰⁵

Venereal disease was commonly thought to be responsible for depopulation in eastern Papua. Scientists who studied the disease in one Papuan region found the correlation between the two phenomena impressive;¹⁰⁶ and the Chief Medical Officer, W.M. Strong, believed venereal infections rather more common in the east than elsewhere.¹⁰⁷ In 1907 a magistrate had observed a line of venereal infection moving up the coast from East Cape to the Northern Division.¹⁰⁸ Another believed the disease marked the lugger lines of Greek pearl-ers as signposts adorned a road. A third believed Rossel Island, the Engineer group, and Kitava Island east of Kiriwina were disseminating points.

Believing they were preventing the spread of venereal disease, missionaries generally agreed that conversion rendered a community immune to infection. However, Teste Island was not only the original Christian

99 J.H.P. Murray, Population Problem in Papua..., 3.

100 AWMMS AR 1911-12, 109.

101 See p. 322ff.

102 See J.H.P. Murray, op. cit., 8-9; AMMR, 4 May 1908.

103 W.H.R. Rivers, ed., Essays..., 90.

104 Colonies and India, 2 March 1895, 14.

105 NG Synod, Duau Report 1912, SA; RMED OJ, 15 January 1912, CAO/CRS/G91; see also TP AR 1910-11, 24; ibid., 1911-12, 38.

106 See Appendix 1.2.

107 TP AR 1917-18, 59.

108 TP AR 1906-07, 108. For disseminating points of venereal disease, see R.F. Jones to C.M.O., Samarai, 11 July 1907, CAO/CRS/G91.

mission station in eastern Papua but also a centre of prostitution.¹⁰⁹ In 1888 John Douglas had suggested that the island was free from venereal disease,¹¹⁰ but two years later girls of ten years of age were reported to be infected. Teste being the seafarers' rendezvous of the Louisiade archipelago, the disease quickly spread to Moresby and Dinner islands; in 1905 Teste was being called a 'hotbed of syphilis'.¹¹¹ A year later, Copland King told the Royal Commissioners that he had watched venereal disease travelling up the coast from the east.¹¹² Prostitution (enoeno) was common enough at Suau, Chalmers' landing place in 1877, women being paid in betel nut or sapisapi belts: some magistrates thought it had a vital bearing on the declining birthrate.¹¹³ At Losuia in Kiriwina the Reverend M.K. Gilmour built a lock hospital for the first magistrate, Dr R.L. Bellamy, who waged a remarkable war there against venereal disease.¹¹⁴ Places under religious domination - Kwato, Dogura, Dobu, Ubuia and Salamo - were almost entirely free of gonorrhoea. In short, venereal disease is likely to have spread in spite of missionary influence, not because of it.

Christian missions everywhere denounced abortion and infanticide. Papuans at Suau believed that abortion was procured by drinking a brew of croton leaves.¹¹⁵ Elsewhere, a common method was to stand in the sea sipping salt water incessantly. The drinking of tuka, known as 'New Guinea dynamite', was said to be the best abortifacient of all:

109 W.E. Armit, 'The Papuans...', in Royal Society of Qld., Proceedings, vol. II (1885), 109.

110 J. Douglas, 'Sudest...', in Geographical Society of Qld., Proceedings, Session 4, 1888-9, iv.

111 RMED OJ, 1 December 1905, CAO/CRS/G69. For the view that syphilis was rare, see TP AR 1911-12, 161; *ibid.*, 1912-13, 158; *ibid.*, 1917-18, 59.

112 C. King to M. Stone-Wigg, Dogura, 15 October 1906, DA.

113 RMED PR, 5 July 1926, CAO/CRS/G69.

114 For a study of Dr R.L. Bellamy's contribution to the control of venereal disease in Kiriwina from 1907, see R.H. Black, 'Dr Bellamy of Papua', in MJA, vol. II no. 6, 10-17 August 1957.

115 Australasian, 26 October 1883.

Pound the root, squeeze juice into half a coconut shell and drink it. Reaction is very quick, paralyzing the extremities and working up towards the heart. 116

The reluctance of villagers to admit scientists to clan secrets left Williams with ambiguous results, yet he did not doubt that abortion and infanticide occurred.¹¹⁷

In Abel's sermons was implicit the idea of depopulation as a punishment for adultery and abortion. W.E. Armstrong said that on the Suau-Daui coast, feasting, love-making and sexual intercourse were the chief forms of recreation for the young.¹¹⁸ 'Putting the matter in a nutshell', Abel wrote in 1924 after a discussion with magistrates, 'the Papuan is dying through persistent sin. So the remedy is the Gospel.'¹¹⁹ Abel likened the spread of venereal disease to the perishing of the children of Israel when they disobeyed their God.¹²⁰ His Massim hearers, imbued with the notion of pay-back, may have quickly accepted the idea that sexual permissiveness was responsible for the decline. As an elder of Lilihoa said in 1924: 'before the Evanelia [gospel] came we were a strong people... we are a weak people today because we have refused to listen to the Word of God, and prefer our own dark ways...'.¹²¹

Ever a practical missionary, Abel constructed a large obstetric hospital at Kwato with funds subscribed by his American patrons and the Government of Papua.¹²² He was not the first missionary to see in medical science a remedy to 'dark ways' and a solution to more complicated patterns of disease. St Barnabas' hospital at Dogura had ninety in-patients in the first two months of its opening in 1915;¹²³ Gona hospital opened ten years later, and Salamo hospital in 1928. These, and the smaller hospital built for miners and carriers on the Mamba in 1902,¹²⁴ meant an increase in the number of women working in

116 RMED OJ, 4 September - 22 October 1923, CAO/CRS/G91.

117 F.E. Williams, *op. cit.*, 14.

118 TP AR 1920-1, 41.

119 C.W. Abel, LD, 14 March 1924, KA.

120 C.W. Abel, LD, 22 May 1924, KA.

121 C.W. Abel, LD, 16 February 1924, KA.

122 *Ibid.*, 5 March 1924.

123 OP 78/1, 80/6ff.

124 BNG AR 1902-3, 32; OP 78/1, 80/6ff.

eastern Papuan missions. Not only did the number of medical sisters increase by five times between 1901 and 1920, but the proportion of female to male missionaries greatly increased. If there were nurses, doctors must supervise their treatment of tuberculosis, venereal disease and dysentery. So in the 1920s a small corps of male mission doctors - a Fijian, Wilisoni Lagi, two Australians, H.G. Judkins and W.G. Heaslip, and an Englishman, Cecil Gill - enlisted as medical missionaries. All but the last, an Anglican, worked at Salamo Hospital in the D'Entrecasteaux.¹²⁵

In 1924 a Government officer, R.A. Vivian, drew the conclusion that in the matter of depopulation the Christian missions were a cause rather than a remedy. Collecting census returns in sections of the D'Entrecasteaux, Vivian found a population decrease of only eighteen in a sample area untouched by Methodism and one of 116 in a sample area under mission influence.¹²⁶ At Suau, he came to the same conclusion: the Massim were 'intent on losing heart' in the face of the Christian missions.¹²⁷

Both increase and decrease in population were present in mission areas in eastern Papua. Under nearly perfect 'laboratory' conditions on Kwato, 36 married couples produced 130 offspring between 1891 and 1924, or double the number in a generation.¹²⁸ Similarly, Isuleilei mission reported 450 births for 100 deaths in three years in the population affected by the mission.¹²⁹ Officers visiting Wanigela and Wedau recorded these Anglican hamlets as 'teem[ing] with healthy children; and Boianai's population 'increasing by leaps and bounds'.¹³⁰ Williams pointed out a paradox: there was apparent

125 See Appendix 5.2, 5.3, 5.6.

126 The mission area from Numanuma to Begassi, including Dobu, numbered 3928 in 1921-2 and 3762 in 1924, a decrease of 166. The non-mission area from Salamo to Cape Mouralyin numbered 3112 in 1921-2 and 3094 in 1924, a decrease of 18. The causes Vivian suggested were marital infidelity, 'together with, of course, the usual practices of abortion and infanticide'. RMED PR, 24 October 1924, CAO/CRS/G91.

127 RMED OJ, 10 December 1923, CAO/CRS/G91.

128 C.W. Abel, LD, 16 February 1924, KA.

129 F.E. Williams, *op. cit.*, 20; F.E. Williams, Notebook, 447 item 138-110, 1925 PNGA; F.E. Williams to J.H.P. Murray, Port Moresby, 28 June 1928, CAO/CRS/G69.

130 BNG AR 1902-03, 16; OP 99/15; see also RMED OJ, 15 April 1925, CAO/CRS/G91.

stagnation of population in border areas of missionary influence and apparent increase near the centres of mission work.¹³¹

The D'Entrecasteaux was more heavily scoured by recruiters than any other part of Papua. The problem for Wesleyans had always been that recruiters found Dobuans as pliant as had the missionaries.¹³² Using the Mamba death-rate of 55 in each 1000 among carriers in 1906, the Methodist synod decided to campaign for the prohibition of the traffic.¹³³ Certainly many Dobuans, brought down both by pneumonia high in the Mamba and by Binandele raids, never again saw the peak of Bwebweso where their fathers' spirits were believed to lie in wait for them. Yet it is not possible to indicate how the demography of the area was affected by the gold rushes and plantation labour.¹³⁴

The report on Methodist claims to the Government by C.B. Higginson, Resident Magistrate at Samarai, rested on the argument that missionary motives were not to be trusted and that missionary knowledge of statistics was limited.¹³⁵ After investigating the movement of labourers from the D'Entrecasteaux, A.M. Campbell said the Wesleyan theory of depopulation caused by recruiting was 'absurd' and 'merely a plan to get the islands to themselves'.¹³⁶ There the matter rested, though occasional Wesleyan attempts were made to stop recruiting. By this time, C.W. Abel was using depopulation as a

131 F.E. Williams, *op. cit.*, 20.

132 Dobuans regarded traders with respect, calling them to'oka'oka. M. Billing, Diary, 14 September 1896, MOM 150.

133 J.H.P. Murray to Minister External Territories, Port Moresby, 11 January 1908. RMED OJ, 7 November 1906, CAO/CRS/G76. See also J.P. Mair, Australia in New Guinea, 169-170; A. Ballantine to B. Danks, Bwaidoga, 20 March 1912, SA.

134 See 'Depopulation correspondence', 1912, SA; M.W. Young, 'Goodenough Island Cargo Cults', in Oceania, xii no. 1, September 1971, 45.

135 See C. Higginson to A/Government Secretary, Samarai, 18 January 1912, MOM 119; see also A.M. Campbell to J.H.P. Murray, Port Moresby, 7 January 1913, MOM 119.

136 J.H.P. Murray, Diary, 13 October 1912, ML.

weapon in his war against the L.M.S.,¹³⁷ and the discussion was in the coils of missionary intrigue and 'scientific' conjecture.

To the population debate the Anglicans made a contribution by summoning a conference of Papuans in 1925. Worthy as Papuan consultation may have been as a motive, as scientific data the results were of doubtful value. After wrangling for several days at Dogura, the 120 delegates assented to four propositions. The population was declining because of sorcery, lack of food, love of ostentation in feasts, and the feeling that for a woman to have many children was a disgrace. Bishop Henry Newton did not welcome these conclusions or wish to send them to the Government. He pointed out that they were all 'anterior' to contact and should have diminished as European influence grew.¹³⁸ But Newton did not long resist the conclusions of the conference, partly because the opinion of these Papuans could not safely be ignored. He sent in the minute.

Peter Rautamara, the senior Papuan priest, thought his colleagues blamed women unfairly for depopulation. 'Why put all the blame on the women?' he asked. 'The men are just as responsible as the women.'¹³⁹ Adopting one of the explanations of the conference, the Administration decided to introduce a financial reward for fertility, 5/- for a family of four and 1/- for each additional child. Magistrates distributing the 'baby bonuses' were struck by the popularity of the measure among men.¹⁴⁰ Some communities celebrated the bonus day with a feast and dance; others appeared ready for football matches in clean shirts. One magistrate thought it ironic that on such occasions he had to tell the sportsmen that the law forbade the wearing of clothes above the waist.¹⁴¹

137 In arguing for independence for Kwato from the LMS in 1917, Abel said Papuans would be saved by his methods and 'made a good deal of a verbal statement by Dr [W.M.] Strong that venereal disease was sweeping through the western and Gulf districts like a bush-fire'. F. Lenwood to R.L. Turner, London, 28 January 1917, KA.

138 F.E. Williams, *op. cit.*, 16-18.

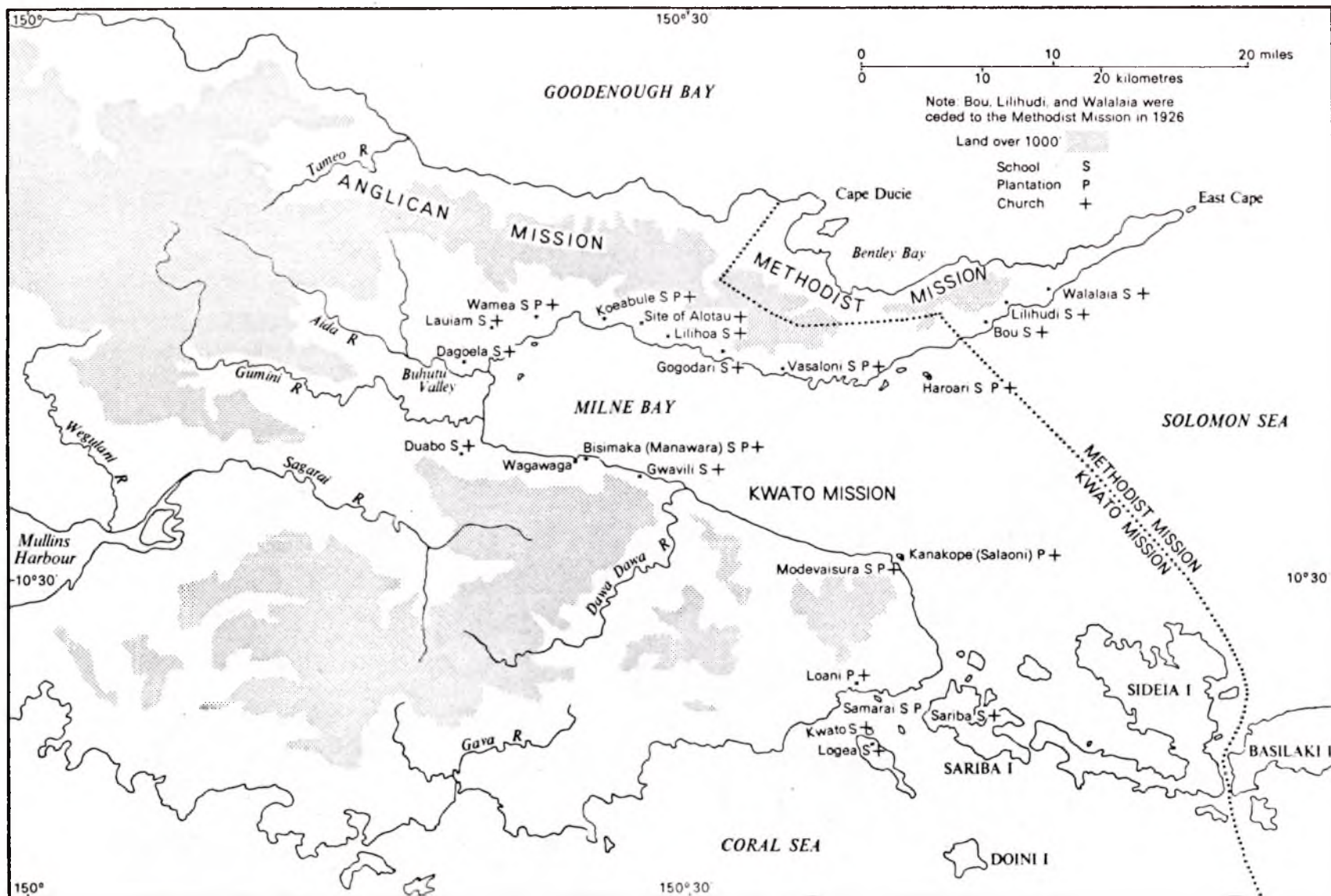
139 OP 79/3.

140 See RMED OJ, 17 July 1916, RMED AR, 1924-5, 32, CAO/CRS/G91.

141 RMED PR, 28 December 1926, CAO/CRS/G91.

AS a humanitarian issue, the 'fate of the Melanesians' diminished in importance as the 20th century advanced. By 1923 Murray was openly doubting, as he had doubted before, the claim that civilization brought death to native races.¹⁴² The importance of the 'dying race' thesis in quickening the spread of industrial classes and hospitals was a matter that varied from mission to mission. At Kwato, where Abel had put into practice his belief that a race had to be saved, it subsided to a general interest in medical work. Elsewhere in eastern Papua depopulation ceased to occupy a prominent place in missionary writing and was preserved only in the hospitals erected alongside the churches. Christianity in New Guinea produced no medical missionaries of the stature of Father Damien of Molokai. Perhaps the fact that it raised many good cricketers instead settled the question whether the future of the Melanesians was any longer in doubt.

142 J.H.P. Murray, Review of the Australian Administration in Papua 1907-1920, 19; TP AR 1913-14, 8-9.



MAP 2 THE KWATO MISSION, 1930

CHAPTER X

Industrial Missions

PROTESTANT missionaries came to the Pacific with a background of faith in the virtue of free enterprise and hard work. In New Guinea they began with the elementary task of housing themselves, first under canvas, then under palm thatch roofs, then finally under galvanised iron, and during this time their knowledge of the people of Papua remained slight. Without tempering their zeal with understanding, L.M.S. missionaries paid dearly for their faith in lives and money. In the first thirty years over £150,000 was spent and 130 missionaries, mainly Pacific Islanders, had died in the attempt to convert the Papuans.¹

By the turn of the century the battle for survival was being followed by a struggle within the L.M.S. to define more effective methods. This confusion might have been expected if New Guinea was one of those heathen lands over which 'thick darkness' brooded. They began asking whether the Papuans understood the missionary message, or whether the missionary was capable of understanding the Papuans. 'If God loves us', retorted some villagers at Kerepunu, 'why does he not send rain, and give a better supply of food?'² In the Gulf, Chalmers said the supposition that Papuans desired teachers simply for the gospel was 'awful nonsense'.³ MacGregor said in 1892 that though twenty years had passed since the coming of missionaries not a single Papuan had died a Christian.⁴

Exploring his colleagues' methods, C.W. Abel concluded that Melanesians were being taught wrongly. In a long and animated speech to the District Committee in 1903 he told them that industry and enterprise were essential to the salvation of the Papuans. Religious

1 About £200,000 was Abel's estimate in 1903. C.W. Abel, Aim and Scope..., 18; MC, August 1898. For mortality among Island teachers, see *Appendix Chapter III*.

2 Kerepunu Report, 28 December 1905, PR; *ibid.*, 28 December 1893, PR.

3 Fly River Mission Report, Saguane, 1894, PR.

4 S.B. Fellows, Diary, 13 May 1892, ANG.

exercises, effective among sophisticated Samoans, were beyond the mental capacity of Melanesians.⁵ If the gospel touched their social condition they would readily perceive its abstract message.⁶ Abel said they should bend their efforts to raising the Papuans by practical example from sluggish indolence. They were not in New Guinea to make savages religious, but to make 'these weak, foolish, superstitious people strong Christian men'.⁷

Sustained by the belief that without work Melanesians were doomed to extinction, Abel's proposals came soon after several acts of cruelty and outrage by white men in Milne Bay.⁸ His younger colleagues, C.F. Rich, J.H. Holmes and W.J.V. Saville, agreed with his arguments; they were in no mood to listen to Lawes' caution that 'steady, plodding work' in linguistics was the only proper study for a missionary.⁹ Where sermons and Bible lessons escaped Melanesian minds, the carpenter's shop and planter's fields would 'make Jesus intelligible to man'.¹⁰ There was no voice in the wilderness. The trend to industrial missions as a means of overcoming the material weakness of primitive races - a response to the 'racial pessimism' of the social Darwinians - was reflected in an increase from 29 to 167 in the number of industrial schools registered among Christian missions in the twenty years after 1880.¹¹ Some of these were in the Pacific. On Murray Island in the Torres Straits the L.M.S. had established a boatbuilding shop,¹² and at Samarai McFarlane had contemplated a printing works. In 1904 John Howard Angas of South

5 C.W. Abel, op. cit., 4.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

8 See p. 323ff.

9 W.G. Lawes to R.W. Thompson, Vatorata, 14 January 1895, PL.

10 J.H. Holmes to R.W. Thompson, Urika, 29 June 1910, PL;
B.T. Butcher, 'Notes on the Industrial Question in
Relation to Our Mission', Aird Hill, 16 March 1912, PR.

11 W.N. Gunson, 'Victorian Christianity in the South Seas:
A Survey', ms. ANU 1973, 16.

12 The 15 ton schooner Mary was the first built in the LMS
Murray Island shipyard. S. McFarlane to C.W. Abel,
Southport, 13 February 1908, KA; J.W. Lindt, Picturesque
New Guinea..., 4.

Australia gave £10,000 to the New Guinea Mission for industrial work.¹³ Most missionaries in Papua agreed with J.H.P. Murray's sentiment, that 'racial despair is a great evil, and the best cure is to encourage those who suffer from it to work, and so give them something to live for...'.¹⁴

Abel's opinions were moulded particularly by an American Negro, Booker T. Washington (1856-1915), son of a Virginia slave. Moved by the ideal of 'salvation by the hands', Washington preached the necessity of moral and economic development among Negroes as a condition of social improvement. As early as 1904 Abel was having long talks with Papuan converts about Washington's work at the Tuskegee industrial school in Alabama. Asking his students to help him 'to save the race from what looked like certain destruction',¹⁵ Abel warmly concurred with Washington's maxim that property, education and Christianity should be the black man's 'cloud by day and pillar of fire by night'.¹⁶ He apparently modelled his book Up From Savagery on Washington's Up From Slavery.¹⁷

The Tuskegee ideal of racial partnership - 'first the Gospel, next the helping hand' - was parallel to Abel's rhetoric in 1903. So was Washington's appeal to American businessmen to give the Negro artisan 'a man's chance in the commercial world'.¹⁸ His speeches in America were a consummate statement of what Abel believed best for Melanesians at the time:

13 W.G. Lawes declined responsibility for the Angas Industrial Mission. W.G. Lawes to J. King, Vatorata, 4 November 1904, PL. See also E. Hodder, George Fife Angas... Further extension into the Buhutu valley was made possible by John Arthington's bequest of £1,000,000 to the LMS, in order to hasten the second coming of Christ. E. Chirgwin, Arthington's Million, 27-31.

14 TP AR 1911-12, 8.

15 C.W. Abel, LD, 17 July 1904, KA. See B. Washington, Future of the American Negro, 132. S.R. Spencer, Booker T. Washington..., 125; L.H. Fishel and B. Quarles, The Black American, 161.

16 L.H. Fishel, op. cit., 164.

17 See R.W. Abel, Charles W. Abel..., 185; B. Washington, Up From Slavery.

18 L.H. Fishel, op. cit., 342.

As we have proved our loyalty to you in the past, in nursing your children, watching by the sick-bed of your mothers and fathers, and often following them with tear-stained eyes to their graves, so in the future, in our humble way, we shall... lay down our lives, if need be, in defence of yours, interlacing our industrial, commercial, civil, and religious life with yours in a way that shall make the interests of both races one. 19

Washington's teaching was of great significance to Abel. From McFarlane came inspiration for his factory settlement and from Angus a capital fund. But in Washington the attempt to formulate a philosophical core for his experiments to 'save the race' was resolved. Through him Abel saw himself as the ideal benefactor and the Papuans as the ideal beneficiaries.²⁰

By 1904 Abel had scant interest left in the veterans of the New Guinea Mission. Lawes was endowed with little imagination and a powerful grasp of detail; he was more a book-keeper than a leader. As a man he was sober and dull. He was more fitted to delay than advance reform. At first, Abel wrote, it had not struck him to doubt a man of such 'undoubted gifts and wider experience'; but later, in espousing the industrial ideal, he 'had to fight and secure an alteration inch by inch'.²¹ Lawes' writing became more carping as Abel began making caustic criticism of his preoccupation with calligraphy. Fired with Washington's ideas, Abel led a lobby of dissent against Lawes' Polynesian methods.

Because the Massim were commonly believed to be less deficient in intellect than their darker-skinned neighbours in the west, L.M.S. missionaries thought industrial schemes would be more successful among the eastern people.²² As early as 1885 the Loyalty Island teacher Iponeso had exclaimed to Chalmers:

19 Ibid., 343.

20 For the influence of Washington in west Africa, see R.E. Wraith, Guggisberg, 143-4.

21 C.W. Abel, Notes 1929, KA. Abel had briefly worked under Lawes at Hanuabada school. W. MacGregor, Diary, 25 May 1891, ANL.

22 See Chapter VI, p. 170-1.

Long time before Milne Bay man no like make plantation
 he like fight and rob all the time. Now he pray; he
make plantation. ²³

E. Pryce Jones, a former Madagascar missionary, believed the difference between an eastern and western Papuan was as wide as that between a Malagasy and a west African Negro.²⁴

Certainly the Massim had been quicker than the Binandele of the north-west in grasping the idea that culture contact might be to their benefit. Long familiar with the kula trade, they used their bartering ingenuity to obtain European wealth as the sea lanes became busy. 'Our people are the most advanced on the coast', declared Abel.²⁵ Lawes' cautionary reminder was, 'You mustn't argue for the whole Mission from your emotionally advantageous standpoint. The same may never occur again in the history of the Mission.'²⁶ But by 1893 quilts woven by Kwato students were being sold in London, and police uniforms cut and sewn by contract.²⁷ Six years later the first copra was bagged and marketed at Samarai. While Lawes became increasingly unfriendly to the change he saw taking place in the east, younger colleagues as far west as Orokolo were sounding their agreement with the rebel at Kwato. Now loud, now soft, the murmur of discontent with the old methods of the Polynesian missions became audible.

Whether or not it could be quietened was less a matter for Lawes than the London board. Through R.W. Thompson, its Foreign Secretary, the L.M.S. had made the strictest distinction between industry and trade. Having begun to sell copra, Abel was running against the regulations of the Society. 'Encourage industry and lawful commerce in your people', the L.M.S. enjoined its agents, 'but do not become involved in trading transactions; have nothing to do with land.'²⁸

23 Quoted in W.G. Lawes to R.W. Thompson, Vatorata, 11 May 1904, PL. See also J. Chalmers, Work and Adventure..., 322-3.

24 Moru Report 1903-4, PR.

25 C.W. Abel to W.B. Ward, Kwato, 30 March 1899, KA.

26 W.G. Lawes to C.W. Abel, Vatorata, - December 1892, PL.

27 For early industries at Kwato, see W. MacGregor, Diary, 9 February 1891, 23 January 1892, ANL; BNG AR 1891-2, xxviii; *ibid.*, 1893-4, xiii.

28 Quoted by R.W. Thompson to C.W. Abel, London, 20 October 1893, WOL; R.W. Thompson to F.W. Walker, London, 6 December 1895, WOL.

Although Thompson, like Lawes, was in favour of cottage industries,²⁹ he hoped effectively to suppress Abel's incursions into commerce by ruling out permission for the John Williams to carry copra. But by then J.H. Holmes was also inducing Orokelo youths to bag copra for export.³⁰ Thrust further into opposition, Thompson told C.F. Rich to keep clear of agriculture.³¹ In 1904 all three missionaries were selling copra and timber, and Abel's overseer Josia Lebasi was building under contract for planting companies.³²

Inheritors of the Independent system, divided by distance, and pursuing different courses, L.M.S. missionaries followed Chalmers' reckless example in ignoring requests to come to order. 'I like authorities but we don't get on well together', Chalmers once wrote to Beatrice Abel, 'we clash too often and they are so often wrong at all events they don't agree with me.'³³ A visitor from Samoa said that in New Guinea every missionary was 'a law unto himself' and that the financial liberties of the New Guinea Mission were intolerable and notorious.³⁴ Kwato infringed the rules more than other stations. Abel chafed beneath the Blue Book and the District Committee. He had moved the station from Suau to Kwato in 1891 without permission. He engaged 200 men to drain the Kwato swamp and for seven years haggled with Thompson over the cost.³⁵ He ordered material from the Army and Navy stores without authority.³⁶ He twice failed to attend the District

29 Thompson distinguished between the manufacturing mission at Murray Island and the trading missions at Isuleilei and Kwato. R.W. Thompson to W.G. Lawes, London, 18 July 1902, WOL.

30 Moru Report, 1899-1900, PR.

31 R.W. Thompson to C.F. Rich, London, 18 July 1902, WOL; R.W. Thompson to C.W. Abel, London, 19 December 1902, WOL.

32 C.W. Abel to J.H. Holmes, Kwato, 24 March 1905, KA; E.P. Jones to R.W. Thompson, Jokea, 15 September 1900, PL; C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 9 January 1906, PL.

33 J. Chalmers to B. Abel, Jokea, 31 May 1893, KA.

34 A.E. Hunt to R.W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 3 October 1896, PL; R.W. Thompson to C.W. Abel, London, 12 July 1895, KA.

35 C.W. Abel, Kwato, New Guinea..., 8-9; R.W. Thompson to C.W. Abel, London, 23 December 1898, WOL.

36 C.W. Abel to G. Cousins, Sydney, 5 May 1902, PL; G. Cousins to C.W. Abel, London, 6 December 1901, WOL.

Committee even when elected chairman.³⁷ 'Our friend Abel', wrote Thompson with a touch of nervousness, 'is a splendid missionary, but he is a very unsafe advisor of matters of order and Regulation...'.³⁸ At other times Thompson harshly condemned Abel and Walker for 'irregular, not to say lawless' violations.³⁹ When Walker commissioned the yacht Olive Branch at £1,800, three times the allotted sum, Thompson declared he would dispense with any man who flouted the regulations. Abel's partner was compelled to resign.⁴⁰

Walker soon had other plans afoot. For several years he had believed that a Christian trading company would revive the Melanesians' flagging interest in the gospel.⁴¹ Drawing some of his ideas from such Christian Socialists in England as Charles Gore and Scott Holland,⁴² Walker proposed the floating of a company known as the Papuan Industries Limited. Settlements of the company would be established in sites from East Cape to the Fly River and furnished with commodities to make life comfortable. There would be provision for education, music, and organized recreation. Bonuses would be awarded to Papuan cottagers as an incentive to production on the basis of their returns and clear profits used to extend the settlements.⁴³ In 1904 Walker persuaded William Cadbury, J.S. Fry and Sir William Lever to contribute £1,000 each to his capital fund.⁴⁴

Beginning operations in 1905 with a rubber plantation at Madiri on the south Fly, Walker cleared a large area for copra on the

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- 37 W.G. Lawes to R.W. Thompson, Vatorata, 12 April 1898, PL; C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Kwato, 24 August 1912, KA.
- 38 R.W. Thompson to C.F. Rich, London, 24 September 1903, WOL.
- 39 R.W. Thompson to C.W. Abel, London, 10 May 1901, KA.
- 40 R.W. Thompson to F.W. Walker, London, 15 March 1895 and 27 March 1896, WOL; C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 8 September 1896, PL.
- 41 F.W. Walker to R.W. Thompson, Samarai, 22 June 1898, PL; see also W.G. Lawes to R.W. Thompson, Vatorata, 14 January 1895, PL; A.C. Haddon, Headhunters..., 197.
- 42 F.W. Walker to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 29 April 1899, KA.
- 43 F.W. Walker, 'A Suggestion for the Advancement of Missionary Enterprise', 1902, KA; MC, June 1903, 140; see also MC, January 1909, 4.
- 44 F.W. Walker, The Appeal of the Backward Races to the Business Man, 17; British Weekly, 19 December 1901 and 14 January 1904.

Bineturi (Katau) River and made his head station on Badu Island.⁴⁵ Sisal, copra, and coffee were planted; timber-getting was begun soon afterwards; and from a fleet of luggers commanded by Walker's brother, C.H. Walker, employees of the Papuan Industries would collect beche-de-mer, turtle and pearlshell. A company badge was designed: a Maltese cross flanked by the legend 'They shall beat their swords into pruning hooks and their spears into plough shares.' By the time the Papuan Industries store was opened on Daru, Rosamund Walker, wife of the founder, had a bible class of 760 members united under the 'P.I.' pledge of work and prayer. Two of Walker's colleagues, J.B. Freshwater and D.C. Harman, supervised churches.⁴⁶ Fearful as to the results of Walker's enthusiasm, the Papua District Committee held aloof; its members by 1905 were aware that Walker was a dreamer, probably a dangerous dreamer. They would give him no practical support.⁴⁷

WHILE visionary schemes were launched in the west, the more sedate progress of workshop, dairy and sawmill at Kwato in the east was attracting a mixed reception. There was some criticism of Abel's children's colony as a 'hothouse' system. But younger missionaries contrasted thirty years' work in the Fly River with that in a decade at Kwato. If Abel's mission were a hothouse, wrote W.J.V. Saville, greater funds should be expended to achieve hothouse results.⁴⁸ 'The Kwato boys work at sawing wood and are very pleased', wrote Dagoela Manuwera, 'it will give us good houses and many other things it will put within our reach. In our minds we say, our father, Mr Abel, we thank you to death, you have brought us this good thing which will benefit New Guinea.'⁴⁹ Washington agreed. If Papuans were to maintain

45 G.C. Martin, The New Guinea Mission..., 86ff. The P.I. properties were Badu (406 acres), Boze or Dirimu (250 acres) Madiri (500 acres) and Mausea (60 acres). F.W. Walker, op. cit., 18.

46 C.H. Walker had cotton, rice and sugar fields at Matadona in Milne Bay and worked closely with Abel's teachers. C.H. Walker, Diary, 27 November - 7 December 1895, KA.

47 See R.W. Thompson to W.G. Lawes, London, 26 June 1903, WOL; W.G. Lawes to R.W. Thompson, Cooktown, 17 June 1903, Sydney, 16 January 1906, PL.

48 W.J.V. Saville to R.W. Thompson, Millport Harbour, 4 January 1909, PL.

49 D. Manuwera to W.B. Ward, Kwato, 27 June 1905, KA.

either their self-respect or independence, he wrote from Tuskegee, they should be taught the dignity of labour, and Abel's methods to achieve this end seemed rational and sensible.⁵⁰ To L.M.S. missionaries, only one of the thirteen stations which stretched along the south coast seemed to be conducting a convincing battle against the heathen. Even with 'that devilish white settlement' of Samarai nearby, Manuvera's students maintained 'fine Christian living' on the station.⁵¹ 'The more I see of Kwato', wrote C.F. Rich, 'the more convinced am I that the settlement plan is the only one.'⁵²

By 1903 Kwato was being regarded more and more as an exception to the normal New Guinea station. Because Abel was regarded as having special abilities, and because no one knew quite how to stop him, he was allowed to dispense with a number of principles which hedged his colleagues. Rules were bent to allow his doing more industrial work; 'special factors' were invoked; he was permitted to draw more from funds than his brother missionaries. 'I haven't kept within my warrant for years', he boasted in 1905, 'and I'm proud of it.'⁵³ Alfred Deakin, who regarded Abel's competence as exceptional,⁵⁴ was told there were two missions in Papua, the traditional L.M.S. station and the Kwato Mission. The latter created an 'absolutely new environment' of a 'modern and model Christian village'.⁵⁵ At Le Hunte's farewell banquet in 1903, the Lieutenant-Governor referred to Kwato as the head station of the L.M.S. 'Misi [Lawes] would not like it', said one listener apprehensively.⁵⁶ Misi certainly did not like it. 'The New Guinea and Kwato Mission would be a good new title', Lawes sneered.⁵⁷ With the coming of industrial Christianity to China

50 C.W. Abel, Testimonials, nd, KA.

51 J.H. Cullen to R.W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 23 December 1902, PL.

52 C.F. Rich to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 5 November 1903, PL. For the Aird Hill industrial station, see B.T. Butcher to H. Murray, Aird Hill, 17 June 1924, MH.

53 C.W. Abel to T. Wilson, Kwato, 13 May 1907, KA.

54 A. Deakin to C.W. Abel, Melbourne, 10 December 1902, KA.

55 J. King to A. Deakin, Melbourne, 13 July 1908, MH.

56 J.H. Cullen to H.M. Dauncey, Port Moresby, 10 June 1903. LMS Box 2, ML.

57 W.G. Lawes to R.W. Thompson, Cooktown, 17 June 1903, PL.

Straits, observers had begun to talk of the Kwato Mission as being in some sense distinct from the rest of the L.M.S. New Guinea Mission.

Unlike such neighbours as Bishop Stone-Wigg, Abel did not believe Melanesians could absorb Christianity within their own cultural framework. Industrial settlements fortified his beliefs, for they made necessary the gathering of workers into a single compound and discouraged children from wandering in dissolute places like Samarai.⁵⁸ To Abel, mission plantations had a double purpose: turning hard soil into profit by the hand of industry, and converting laggards in the beach villages into Protestants. Lawes, believing Abel's methods to be wrong, did not share the enthusiasm:

A new word... 'Christian settlements' are spoken of in which natives would live for years and years under Missionary control... this surely is unsuitable for New Guinea. We do not want 'gardens walled around' in this great heathen land, but rather a stream of trained, educated Xtian men who may influence and change the native villages. 59

Resistance to the projects came chiefly from London. Hoping to wear down his patrons' opposition, Abel began raising questions on the Board. Was mission land regarded as industrial or not? Would the directors allow industries to make profits? Was a station at liberty to build boats in competition with commercial boatbuilders? Might he sell copra and sawn timber at Samarai?⁶⁰ Anticipating a favourable answer, he built a sawmill, two wharfs and a workshop, armed now with a government ordinance compelling missionaries to sign on and pay all students resident on stations.⁶¹ In 1907 Abel asked Thompson for a guarantee that his commercial work would not lead to a loss of his position as a member of the L.M.S.⁶²

Abel's arguments rested heavily on their intrinsic obscurity as well as the distance between London and New Guinea. Thompson complained more than once of Abel's mental ambiguity and 'the haziness

58 C.W. Abel, Aim and Scope..., 30.

59 W.G. Lawes to R.W. Thompson, Vatorata, 13 April 1905, PL.

60 C.W. Abel to PDC, Kwato, 27 July 1907, KA; C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 27 July 1907, KA.

61 'Native Labour Ordinance' No. 1 of 1907; see TP AR 1906-7, 5; H.M. Dauncey to R.W. Thompson, Delena, 28 June 1907, PL.

62 C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 4 September 1907, PL.

in his ideas'.⁶³ When the missionary was compelled by the Foreign Secretary to be specific, Thompson concluded, 'Abel's arguments are feeble and he mixes up different things.'⁶⁴ Ambiguity was one of Abel's weapons. He wrote one message to Australia and another to England. When the Royal Commissioners advocated the expropriation of waste land in 1907, Abel besought the L.M.S. to take action against the day when white settlers might drive the Papuans from their land. But a few months earlier he had recommended to Senator Staniforth Smith that the Buhutu valley be opened up, European settlement begun, and roads built by prison labour from Samarai. 'You must do more than offer [the settler] land on easy terms', he wrote in 1906. 'You must do something to give him a reasonable guarantee that he will live to gather his harvest.'⁶⁵ With the publication a few months later of the report of the Royal Commission, Abel changed his mind and wrote grimly to his superiors that 'every steamer has brought company promoters, brokers, speculators, investors, copra and rubber planters, and there is a great rush for land'.⁶⁶

As settlement began in the Buhutu valley, Abel shrewdly used it to take away L.M.S. objections to trade. He depicted the Tavara people near the Buhutu roadhead as leaning upon him in their hour of racial trial, ready to sacrifice themselves at his bidding. Abel's wish to begin trade himself was couched, as usual, in the language of dire crisis and the certainty of impending doom for the Papuans unless he were allowed his own way:

The people in my district are quite scared at the turn things have taken... We have had some stirring political meetings here recently, and our prayer meetings have been no less earnest. My youths are willing to make any sacrifice to help their fellows, and I find the people outside our little circle... turning to us in grave anxiety and asking us to help them.

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- 63 R.W. Thompson to J. King, London, 11 April 1902, WOL.
- 64 R.W. Thompson to J. King, London, 31 March 1904, WOL.
- 65 C.W. Abel to S. Smith, Kwato, 10 October 1906, KA. For Atlee Hunt's support for Buhutu development, see APP session 1905 vol. II, Report..., 21.
- 66 C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 4 September 1907, KA. For Abel's signing of a petition in 1910 for a commission of enquiry to allow less restrictive labour laws, see APP session 1910, vol. iii, 153-4.
- 67 C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 4 September 1907, PL.

That Abel was capable of extending inland reflects the inadequate oversight by the L.M.S. Without receiving permission he announced in 1908 that he had taken up defensive missionary positions in the Buhutu. Abounding in fresh streams and fine timber, and suitable for the purposes of pasturage and agriculture, the Buhutu was a virgin field for industrial endeavour.⁶⁸ The people were found peaceable and obedient. Abel bought land, erected buildings, and despatched teachers from Kwato. It was typical of his methods that, having acted upon divine guidance to go to the Buhutu, he then asked the L.M.S. in effect whether it was moral to question his action. 'I am quite willing to be blamed for making promises on my own authority', he wrote to Thompson, and added, 'I had more faith in the churches, than the churches have in my work.'⁶⁹

The rich valleys and deep anchorages of Milne Bay were well-nigh irresistible to Abel. Agriculture - copra, coffee, cotton, citrus and tropical fruits - would flourish, and copra drying would place industry in Papuan hands. By 1907 he was embarking on a war of words 'to defend the copra industry as a legitimate operation of our industrial branch, and to show that it is a blessing, not a curse, to those who engage in it'.⁷⁰ But he was by that time already waging a war of deeds, for the Kwato Mission had begun stamping copra bags and was marching along the road to independence from its patrons in London.

The island of Kwato was too small to contain Abel's energies, just as the sinking of his individualism in the common task of converting southern New Guinea was too large for a man of Abel's intellectual limitations. Events beckoned Kwato to intervene in Milne Bay: the Commonwealth Copra Company, Papua Rubber, and Papua Plantations were taking up land for copra and rubber. In the Sagarai valley, alluvial gold was being won by prospectors. The 54 acres of land on Kwato, much of it steep hillside, were already insufficient for the vigorous children's community, and the extension of Kwato colonies into the heartland of the Tavara tribe seemed but a matter of time.

Abel's belief that he had been sent on a divine mission probably crystallised during the expansion of planting companies into

68 C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Duabo, 10 October 1911, PL.

69 C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 31 March 1908, PL.

70 See p. 297; C.W. Abel, op. cit., 16.

Papuan lands in Milne Bay. He saw in these vigorous foreign interests a sign of death written above the dormant beach communities; and with a prophet's passion for reform, in Washington's shadow, he determined to rouse them up. Fragments of his sermons which survive suggest that Abel's campaign among the Tavara took on a new intensity:

I showed them first, what advances the white man had made during the past twenty years: then I told them that he was only beginning... and then asked them how much they had grown in 20 years... Oh! of course it spells death every way you look at it. We must, for Christ's sake, shake them up. 71

In Gwavili village in 1912, as a plantation was being cleared nearby, he preached on the text 'I will be their God' and compared the wayward Israelites with the shrinking Papuan population. If God saw the possibility of a great Nation in Abraham the childless, and if this multiplying of his seed was the reward of his faith, had God less interest in the children of Papua if the Papuan church was also faithful? Abel was certain he knew the answer.

II

THE peaceful rural setting of north-eastern Papua, and the tranquil faith of missionaries sustained by romantic notions about noble savages, shaped a different response to Melanesian problems. The late 19th century trend to industrial missions had influenced those Anglicans who shared the prevailing 'racial pessimism' of the Darwinian theorists; and the teaching of the Christian Socialists on the dignity of labour gave them of temporary interest in industry.⁷² In north-eastern New Guinea there was a brief industrial interlude. But Abel was probably right in claiming that the mechanical experiments at Dogura were inspired mainly by his own mission.⁷³

The predominant emphasis in Anglican work was not industrial. Holding strongly that their business was not to 'civilize' natives by imparting the dubious assets of an industrial culture, Churchmen

71 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Koeabule, 30 August 1912, KA.

72 For a further study of Anglican policies, see D. Wetherell, 'A History of the Anglican Mission', 176ff. An outline of the Christian Socialist movement, from F.D. Maurice and Charles Kingsley to Henry Scott Holland and Charles Gore, may be found in O. Chadwick, Victorian Church (II), 372ff.

73 MN, 16 November 1899.

regarded their goal rather as concerned with primary eschatological issues. In King's words, 'It will not come by ordinary, material means. It is a spiritual victory and must come spiritually.' As a result, they played down the European industrial element in their missionary strategy, and hoped, by reducing rather than emphasizing cultural differences, to induce conversion at a purely religious level. 'Let us wean ourselves from absorbing interest in worldly matters', said King. 'Let our devotional life be a reality.'⁷⁴

Other reasons for lack of industrial interest were rather less spiritual. The Anglican leaders in New Guinea, with the exception of King, were Englishmen who either possessed independent means or were ascetics indifferent to worldly necessities. Clergy whose mental associations were with the country houses of the gentry had a different outlook to those who had in mind visions of city alleys and gin-drinking rabbles. Most Anglicans moreover held the view that ministers of the Word and Sacraments should not meddle in trade and agriculture.⁷⁵ They knew little enough about either, accustomed to the security of the parson's freehold and the frequently well endowed English parish church.⁷⁶ Trained in philosophy and the classics, Anglicans were not disposed in favour of an acquisitive mentality in the encounter between English gentleman and innocent savage.

Gentlemen did not always see eye to eye with traders, and in their esteem for godliness and good learning there was a distaste for commerce and the manual arts. Among Anglicans in New Guinea there was an evident aversion to money-making. Noting how their Nonconformist neighbours conducted a fund-raising campaign during the annual L.M.S. Mei meetings, they observed 'how the sordid love of self-glorification is ministered to when every offering is stated publicly and commented on, and one vies with another to come out first'. In contrast, they said they were content with slower progress

74 C. King, 'A Sermon...', 22 September 1914, 15, DA.

75 Ibid. The attitude of 'standing on one side in ascetic aloofness' is analysed in R.H. Tawney, Religion and the Rise of Capitalism (London 1936).

76 See also D. Wetherell, op. cit., 176ff.

'to keep the motives pure'.⁷⁷ The distinctively Anglican hauteur towards traders was criticized at more than one Dogura conference.⁷⁸

One manifestation of the Anglo-Catholic movement had been a belief in the Churchman's duty of benevolence to the poor. University missions in the English slums were similar in purpose to philanthropic schemes further afield. Albert Maclaren had worked in a university mission in the London Docks;⁷⁹ Stone-Wigg was familiar with such schemes as the Oxford Mission to Calcutta, the Cambridge Mission to Delhi, the Dublin University Mission to Chota Nagpur, and the Universities Mission to Central Africa. Gertrude Robson, missionary at Boianai, had been a member of the Sydney University Mission at Newtown. St Agnes' Home for mixed-race children at Dogura was another reflection of the belief in a Christian's duty to relieve distress which had cast philanthropic missions on the shores of the Thames and of three continents colonised by the British.

Like the Royal Commissioners of 1907 and their Free Church neighbours, the Anglicans were moved by the argument that the enforcement of peace by the Government had plunged the Papuan into a condition of peaceful sloth.⁸⁰ H.H. Montgomery, a patron of the Mission, pointed to West Africans who on professing Christianity 'gave up farm work, became clerks, and swaggered about in English costume'.⁸¹ To combat such tendencies in his Mission, Stone-Wigg preached the doctrine that man lived by toil and the sweat of his brow. He began rising at 5 a.m. to labour with converts in the gardens. In 1899 it was reported that 'every native teacher [sic] has to work daily with his hands in the Mission farm or garden; and his white brother headed by the Bishop leads the way'.⁸²

Stone-Wigg visited Kwato twice before 1900. He saw Abel's livestock, his table filled with the produce of the land, and his excellent brick kiln and workshop. Impressed by the way the Mission

77 OP, 13/4. Abel also referred to the 'miserable spirit of competition which [Mei meetings] engender in our people'. C.W. Abel, Aim and Scope..., 5, KA.

78 G. Sharp, 'Address to Anniversary Conference', Dogura, August 1913, DA.

79 E. Rogers, A Pioneer of New Guinea, 10-11.

80 See p. 253n.

81 MN, 17 August 1899, 80; OP, 15/2.

82 MN, 16 November 1899, 1; *ibid.*, 17 August 1899, 80.

had improved fast from poverty to affluence, he declared that Anglican missionaries must also include 'the carpenter, the blacksmith, the tailor and the bootmaker'.⁸³ Stone-Wigg did not say whether these artisans should work for profit, or merely teach Papuans to know the things necessary for employment. Two years later he met F.W. Walker in England and heard his Papuan Industries scheme, returning to New Guinea fired with the infectious confidence of Abel's former partner.⁸⁴ Mission stations, he announced, were henceforth 'not only shrines of worship or seats of learning - they are designed to be hives of industry'.⁸⁵

From 1903 determined efforts were made to beget industry on Anglican stations. A boatbuilder, J.B. Stirrat, arrived to teach his craft and a printer, Sidney Ford, began taking in apprentices.⁸⁶ Mat-making was already in vogue among Dogura girls, having been introduced by a Fijian wife brought from Dobu. In 1903 cotton was planted and coconut groves begun, grazing lands were fenced in for sheep and a bold scheme to pasture cattle was inaugurated.

The most conspicuous sign that Anglicans were forsaking their aloofness from worldly occupations was at Hioge, a site some twenty miles east of Dogura. Here by 1903 a plantation of 1000 acres had been cleared and 5000 coconuts planted;⁸⁷ and Stone-Wigg predicted that in a few years' time the Mission would be 'in possession of the largest cocoanut plantation on the coast'.⁸⁸ An Island missionary, Harry Mark, and a cattleman, W. McMullan, managed the 'Hioge Industrial Settlement' on the estate.⁸⁹ Opening with six village youths, Hioge had 100 members at its zenith in 1905. Many of these were converted

83 Ibid., 18 April 1898, 29.

84 M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 24 December 1902, DA. Part of the bishopric endowment fund was intended as an investment in the Papuan Industries. See W.R. Mounsey to M. Stone-Wigg, Westminster, 24 March 1904, DA.

85 Mission Field, February 1903, 43; see also NGM AR 1898-9, 8, DA.

86 OP, 1/2, 18/8; see also M. Stone-Wigg, A Brief Account..., 15; OP, 11/8.

87 Mission Field, February 1903, 43.

88 MN, 26 August 1901.

89 Later Island teachers at Hioge were Mark Marovua, Willie Tari, Billy Maso, Joseph Soso, and John Dow. E.L. Giblin to M. Stone-Wigg, Hioge, 4 March 1906, DA.

Dogura youths who had 'pressed upon the Mission their dislike of the ordinary village life, with its houses crowded with several families, and its generally low ideals'.⁹⁰ Hioge in the bishop's opinion was a standing proof that the Anglican Mission taught its converts to work as well as pray.⁹¹

At the same time events within the Mission began to overtake the bishop's plans. Stirrat died of malaria in 1903;⁹² McMullan resigned from the Hioge settlement after two years; Dodds, the engineer on the Albert Maclaren, was accused by Papuans of a sexual misdemeanour in 1904.⁹³ Sage then left Dogura to join the Selwyn Mission at Mackay. Two other missionaries, Giblin and Dakers, resigned after six years' teaching. It was Dakers' opinion that the withdrawal of McMullan from Hioge had signed the 'death warrant' of industrial work.⁹⁴ Thus Stone-Wigg was deprived of the men who he hoped would have given substance to his vision.

There were reasons outside the Mission for this failure. In north-eastern New Guinea there was no such clash between missionaries and other white men as had occurred in China Straits. It was because of this lack that the argument about doom and disaster being the black man's lot carried less weight among missionaries; and the further north the Albert Maclaren sailed, the fewer secular white men, and the less convincing the case for mission industry. Not believing, as did Abel, that the way of life of the Melanesian was doomed, Anglican clergy showed a diminishing interest in 'salvation through the hands' after Stone-Wigg's resignation.

Anglican industrial schemes were wound up on the arrival of Gerald Sharp in 1910. Knowing nothing about manual work, depressed by the failure of Hioge, and sensitive to criticism of commercial missions, Sharp wasted little time in addressing his doubts to his missionary staff. Was it right, he wondered, for priests to trade? He criticized the Roman Catholic mission in Kaiserwilhelmsland:

90 M. Stone-Wigg, 'Education in British New Guinea' in (British) Board of Education, Special Report on Educational Subjects, vol. 14 App. 4, 1905, DA.

91 MN, 26 August 1901.

92 OP, 1/4.

93 H. Newton to A.E. David, Dogura, 30 November 1904, DA.

94 R.H. Dakers to M. Stone-Wigg, Hioge, 20 May 1907, DA.

'Besides being a Mission, it is also a registered trading company, a circumstance which I profoundly regret.'⁹⁵ He had a strong desire to wash his hands of the taint of trade. They would never pay their way by plantations, he said in 1912, they must be content to be what they were, and what they came to be, a spiritual force in the land.⁹⁶ King protested against the decision because the white residents' impression of Anglican missionaries was that they were impractical.⁹⁷ As though in answer to King, Sharp began visiting plantations in Milne Bay to take the sacraments to northern indentured labourers. The Mission was concerned with the soul, not the body, of the Papuan.

INDUSTRIAL concern generated among Evangelicals and Anglo-Catholics resulted in practical schemes by Methodists in the Papuan islands. Strongly discouraging Island teachers from avarice,⁹⁸ and opposing transactions by its Papuan officers in the kula ring, the Methodist church was not in principle opposed to making a profit. Its missionaries were encouraged by the coconut ventures at Ulu in New Britain. Here the Reverend R.A. Crump hoped to support the church by 'practical Christianity' and through copra to 'familiarise these heathen people whom we cannot at present reach with the Gospel'.⁹⁹ Moreover, Fiji's Davuilevu Institute taught manual arts and agriculture, and in the Solomon Islands the Ulu scheme was later imitated by the Reverend J.F. Goldie.¹⁰⁰ With such ideas fresh on their minds, they asked why the Dobu mission should not follow the lead.

Relying on MacGregor's encouragement of commercial agriculture, Bromilow hoped to secure blocks of land for planting. 'My idea was that B.N.G. could be made a large copra producing country',¹⁰¹ he explained to the Government Surveyor. But Bromilow's scheme of

95 NGM AR 1917-18, 23-4.

96 Ibid., 1911-12, 10.

97 C. King to G. Sharp, Ambasi, 22 October 1911.

98 NG District by-laws, 1921/555, SA.

99 G. Brown to W.E. Bromilow, Sydney, 27 April 1901, MOM 48. See also AMMR, 4 May 1908, 15.

100 J. Colwell, ed., A Century in the Pacific, 524; ATV, July 1903; AMMR, 4 January 1910.

101 W.E. Bromilow to J. Richmond, Dobu, 13 March 1906, SA.

'producing, preaching, and praying' evoked much scepticism in his patrons. In Brown's words:

What we want is to be perfectly free ourselves
from all suspicion of trading; to see that our
teachers are free from actual trading... 102

Bromilow also had to convince the Government that his idea had merit. The Acting Administrator, C.S. Robinson, had the same troubles as Thompson of the L.M.S.: he tried to distinguish between industry and trade. He told Bromilow his interpretation of the Ordinance granting lands for religious purposes was 'the education of the Natives... according to the tenets and teachings bequeathed by Our Lord Jesus Christ'; and not the cultivation of copra.¹⁰³

Robinson's objections were brushed aside; Bromilow argued to Atlee Hunt that if the girls could make mats for sale and take in sewing, 'surely the boys and men can grow produce for sale?'¹⁰⁴ Allotments of land were acquired for small station plantations with the object of 'teaching Papuans to fully utilise their land' and 'the inculcating of industry in connection with the various suitable trades'.¹⁰⁵ At Dobu, Ubuia and Salamo trades and agriculture were taught, although F.J. Winn, the trading supervisor at Ubuia, wrote that 'in many things I must confess I have had to be the instructed rather than the instructor'.¹⁰⁶ But perhaps it did something to secure for the D'Entrecasteaux some of those young men being sought for plantations on the mainland.

The Wesleyans' attempt to establish industry aroused strenuous debate at home. The Missionary Review argued in Sydney that the physical condition of a people should not be a prominent reason for sending them the Gospel; St Paul had not gone to Macedonia to increase its commerce with Palestine.¹⁰⁷ The Review was stating an important problem. Should the church provide for the social prosperity of its

102 G. Brown to - Oldham, Sydney, 14 April 1893, MOM 43.

103 J. Richmond to W.E. Bromilow, Port Moresby, 19 November 1903, SA. Jim Pryke's line, 'When Judge Robinson the upright strove to banish mission greed' is probably a reference to Robinson's stand. See App. 3.

104 W.E. Bromilow to A. Hunt, Dobu, 10 August 1903, SA.

105 B. Danks to NG District Synod, Sydney, 16 September 1909, SA.

106 NG District, Ubuia Report 1913, SA.

107 AMMR, 4 February 1897.

members, and if it did so, might its spiritual mission be compromised? There was anxiety lest rising interest in industry was followed by ebbing spirituality:

Whatever minimizes sin minimizes God's mercy to guilty men... God no longer a Throne in the universe, but only a rocking-chair, from which a doting Father sings lullabies to all... Back to the Bible, therefore, back to the Bible! 108

Missionaries like the Reverend J.W. Dixon, a Bible translator and printer, epitomised the decline in this variety of dogmatism in Papua. Meeting Abel, his nearest industrial missionary neighbour, and turning the Old Testament over in his hands, Dixon remarked, 'I don't see what good this stuff is going to do them.' Abel was horrified by the remark, saying that this 'typical Methodist of the new order' would make the founder of Methodism turn in his grave.¹⁰⁹

Younger Methodists illustrated the vogue in 'practical Christianity'. Instead of rummaging in white tie among scriptural lexicons, they were now 'clothed in a blue dungaree suit and thick-soled boots, coatless and collarless, sleeves rolled up, and billycock hat wedged on [the] head'.¹¹⁰ No other man better symbolized the blend of theology and practical skills than Bromilow's successor, M.K. Gilmour, described as a linguist, businessman, carpenter, engineer, printer, electrician and boat builder.¹¹¹ Gilmour was constantly impressing these attainments on his Papuan apprentices:

I have always believed and maintained [he wrote] ... that the Papuan can be saved and lifted... And I believe that a general and industrial education, with, for some, technical and medical training, with the vitality and morality Christian faith inspires are among the best aids to that end. I see no reason why the Papuan should die out if we and the Government do our duty. 112

In 1907, Gilmour's class built a kerosene-driven launch with a speed of seven knots.¹¹³ Copra was collected for missionary meetings in most

108 Ibid.

109 C.W. Abel, LD, 16 February 1925, KA.

110 AMMR, 5 May 1913.

111 Ibid., 4 October 1909.

112 M.K. Gilmour to S. Smith, Salamo, 17 March 1922, SA. For industrial education in the Mandated Territory of New Guinea, see TNG AR 1921-2, 90; *ibid.*, 1922-3, 25-31.

113 AMMR, 4 October 1907.

circuits, and an industrial mission was being established at Ubuia. By 1927, beef and dairy cattle were kept at six circuit stations.¹¹⁴

None of these improvements were made without comment, much of it hostile. 'To hear some missionaries talk', said the Review, 'one would be led to think we worshipped Mammon.'¹¹⁵ Even if commerce were for the good of the Mission, it might dim the vision of those who had come with higher motives.¹¹⁶ Publicly criticised by traders, the Synod recorded its 'unshaken conviction' that no member of the Mission ever engaged in trade for personal profit.¹¹⁷

Under Gilmour, the Mission developed important industrial stations. By 1910 the hill at Ubuia had a population of 250 with telephones, workshops and a slipway.¹¹⁸ Twelve years later a site at Salamo in eastern Fergusson was chosen for sawmilling and boat building.¹¹⁹ A Fijian agricultural teacher, Joeli Kimi, and an Australian naval architect, Charles Sparrow, worked the technical sections of the Salamo Mission. A mile from the water a nurses' home and hospital were erected. In 1933 a printing press was established at East Cape. J.W. Dixon with three Papuan typesetters began publishing Tapwaroro Teterina, a quarterly magazine in the Egudaura language of Dobu.¹²⁰ In a religion purged of theological dogmatism, benevolent activity became the most acceptable form of worship.

By far the most colourful industrial missionary in eastern Papua was James Markey, who was commissioned in 1923 to train Massim carpenters at Salamo after service in Aboriginal missions. A man of organizing ability,¹²¹ Markey erected the hospitals at Kwato and Salamo and six large mission houses at Kiriwina, East Cape and Dobu.

114 NG District Synod report 1927.

115 AMMR, 4 February 1897.

116 Ibid.

117 NG District Synod report, 1934, SA.

118 AMMR, 4 January 1910.

119 NG District Synod Minutes, 8 November 1916, SA. M.K. Gilmour to S. Smith, Salamo, 10 February 1922, SA.

120 RMED PR, 25 March 1936, CAO/CRS/G91. E.A. Harrison, Methodist missionary (1910-13) and trader (1913-42) blamed his 'trading brethren the Revs. Isaac Guy and Shylock Dixon' for a decline in his trade. See NG District Synod Minutes, 1932, Appendix; see also PIM, 9 March 1932.

121 J.C. Markey, Testimonial, 10 December 1922, SA.

Markey symbolized the industrial philanthropist for whom doctrine had declined to its fullest extent, who did not attend church, both swore and drank, and to the delight of his Papuan apprentices, smoked a pipe during Norah Gilmour's prayer meetings.¹²² As a Papuan student said, 'Everything with him was "bloody", and all his work boys swore after Markey's fashion.'¹²³ It was noted that some Papuans who had taken over Markey's giddy language used it without minding that they were in the missionary presence; but Gilmour did not hear. He said Markey had 'won the love and confidence of the native people' and that his buildings were among the best of their class in the Territory.¹²⁴

The Methodist and Anglican missions responded very differently to the idea of industrial missions. Apart from a brief interlude from 1900 to 1910 the Anglicans did not assist economic development. The Methodists thought that economic change was essential to the expansion of 'civilization and Christianity', and believed they had a duty to hasten it. Neither fully accepted the Kwato industrial ideal, that the church should be the bearer of economic growth. When the mining boom subsided in northern Papua the Anglicans resumed their sedate progress in gathering happy children of nature who neither toiled nor spun; while the Methodists produced boatbuilders and farmers among a group of Massim in the D'Entrecasteaux.¹²⁵

122 N. Baloiloi, Interview, Dobu, 12 May 1972.

123 I. Baloiloi, Interview, Ubuia, 10 May 1972; see also C.W. Abel, LD, 15 September 1924, KA. For erection of Kwato hospital by Markey, see NGT June 1929, 9-10.

124 M.K. Gilmour to J.C. Markey, Salamo, 24 August 1928, SA.

125 Attitudes of other missions throw light on Abel's industrial mission. When the Marist Mission was contemplating a station in Milne Bay in 1930, a priest said that 'the L.M.S. [sic] are only commercialising the people and giving them no religion'. A.W. Guy to M.K. Gilmour, Melbourne, 31 October 1930, SA. Two years before, Abel had ceded Bou to the Methodist Mission; the minister at East Cape wrote that at Bou 'the folk lived together in a sort of communal life that included practically every activity not excluding trading, and which life had its centre in the church. The fact that our church in no way enters into business... is foreign to the type of Christianity to which they have been accustomed for over 30 years...'. NG District, East Cape Report 1928, SA.

III

AS Dogura missionaries were abandoning their industrial plans, their neighbour in China Straits was moving from cottage industries to copra making. In Abel's mind copra, or 'this clean industry' as he called it,¹²⁶ could help rescue villagers from indolence and make them vigorous. It was thus cleared of its unholy associations. Abel had no doubt of his unique historical role in the regeneration of the Massim through the copra industry.

The first copra collected at Kwato in 1899 totalled eighteen bags, a contribution by converts to the L.M.S. Mei meetings.¹²⁷ In spite of disapproval from London, the Mission annually augmented its income by selling copra at Samarai. In 1909 Abel met Ernest Young, manager of Fairymead sugar plantation near Bundaberg and a member of an Evangelical family whose crusading zeal among Melanesian cane cutters had resulted in the formation of the South Sea Evangelical Mission.¹²⁸ Under the indomitable leadership of Florence Young, the S.S.E.M. had moved into the Solomon Islands along with the Queensland labourers repatriated by the Federal Government.

Abel's meeting with Ernest Young ignited the spark which had been smouldering within him for almost two decades. It resulted in a visit by Young to Kwato. Abel proposed that a loan be made to help his mission enter strategic parts of Milne Bay in which beachheads of Christian settlers might be created. He pointed out to Young that 'in the highest sense' the characters of young men already had been improved. Young was convinced. Late in 1909 he agreed to provide Abel with £10,000 over five years 'with a view to uplifting the natives and delivering them from the dangers of contact with white men'.¹²⁹ The scheme began with three plantations on the important sites of Loani, Salaoni, and Giligili, the first being L.M.S. property and the others being acquired by Young. A company was drawn up, and Abel the missionary became Abel the manager. No wonder J.A.K. Mackay

126 C.W. Abel, Aim and Scope..., 16.

127 C.W. Abel, Kwato, New Guinea..., 26.

128 D.L. Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions...', 349-50.

129 C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Streathern, 4 September 1909, KA; C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Wellingborough, 25 October 1909, KA.

rated him as 'one of the smartest and most up-to-date men I met in Papua'.¹³⁰

Convinced by Abel's teachers that European planters meant to wrest their land from them by inches,¹³¹ village elders in Milne Bay welcomed the scheme. Pilipo, head man at Lilihoa, handed over 250 acres at Wiwai with the words, 'I am an old man. I don't want the white men to take my land; ... so I offer it to you.'¹³² Lands leased from converts ~~were~~^{were} added to the freehold sites which Abel already held. Elders who were interviewed by the Resident Magistrate expressed their confidence in Abel's capacity. Their reaction was the same as that of Iakobo of Mita. 'Why do you ask?' Iakobo had replied to F.W. Walker in 1892. 'Is not all the land God's? Take what necessary for his work.'¹³³ Abel was in ecstasies. 'This part of Papua is closed to plantation seekers', he wrote in 1911, 'I don't think there is any part of Papua which would be withheld from the L.M.S. if it applied for it.'¹³⁴ Christian industry spread in Milne Bay as part of a rural response to the threat of foreign landlords among the Massim people.

There is little doubt that the Kwato plantations in eastern Papua assumed the proportions of a popular movement. When Kanakope plantation was opened, 130 men walked thirty miles through heavy rain to clear land.¹³⁵ In April 1910, 272 acres at Rabi in Milne Bay on a 99 year leasehold were cleared; in December 500 acres were thrown open on a site three miles south of Spike Island.¹³⁶ Another was opened at Wiwai near Koeabule on the western shores of the bay. With enthusiasm stirred by reports from plantations, hundreds of men forsook their villages and streamed to five plantations without promise of pay.¹³⁷ In June 1910 Young's offer was consolidated in the launching

130 J.A.K. Mackay, Across Papua..., 63.

131 See also pp. 336-9.

132 C.W. Abel to J.B. Nicholson, Kwato, 13 February 1911. Abel added that the land 'is absolutely closed land - except to us'.

133 F.W. Walker to C.W. Abel, Kwato, 5 September 1892, KA.

134 C.W. Abel to J.B. Nicholson, Kwato, 13 February 1911, KA.

135 C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 23 September 1910, KA.

136 ARM to C.W. Abel, Samarai, 8 December 1910, 3 April 1911, KA.

137 C.W. Abel to J.B. Nicholson, Kwato, 13 February 1911, KA.

of a company by Albyn Stewart and Young's brother-in-law, James Nicholson. The purpose of the Enesi Plantations Limited was the acquisition of land in Papua 'to carry on the business of Planters, Island Traders, Merchants, and Shipowners'. Ten per cent of profits would be devoted to Evangelical work among Papuans.¹³⁸

The deployment of forces in the Enesi campaign appealed to elements deep in Abel's personality. It challenged his tactical and organizing flair; it satisfied his ambition to equal and master the threat of opposing Europeans;¹³⁹ it expressed his most passionate convictions about the place of industrial schemes in the salvation of the Papuan. By February 1911 over 300 men were employed on his projects between Kanakope and Koeabule alone.¹⁴⁰ 'It suits me best I find to do this work on a large scale', he wrote, 'and get through the bush clearing with a yell, and a shout, and with a big crowd.'¹⁴¹ The inauguration of the Enesi plantations had all the appearance of those mass movements that had characterised the emergence of earlier millenarian leadership in Milne Bay.¹⁴²

Agricultural revolution on the perimeter of Milne Bay had a stimulating effect on industry at the centre. 'Everything at Kwato', wrote Mary Abel, 'ran like clockwork.'¹⁴³ The cacophony of machines suggested a deeper theme to the manager as he stood listening:

The clashing of hammers, the scrunching of saws, the general hubbub of work everywhere, draws attention to an industrious, happy and progressive people; clever hands doing skilled work, developing brains, and conceiving new methods; men and women working with interest, not selfishly, but with the great incentive of saving their own race. 144

138 Memorandum and Articles of Association of Enesi Plantations Limited, 1, 20. Enesi: formed from the letters 'N' and 'S' for Nicholson and Stewart.

139 In 1902 Abel was pained that the LMS was opposed to 'collision and competition with the white men' in Samarai. C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 18 October 1902, PL.

140 C.W. Abel to J.B. Nicholson, Kwato, 13 February 1911, KA.

141 C.W. Abel to J.B. Nicholson, Kwato, 11 January 1911, KA.

142 See pp. 234-6.

143 M.K. Abel, Charles W. Abel..., 62.

144 Record of Christian Work, February 1930, 89-92.

Abel engaged labourers and marked boundaries; his workers rebuilt houses of long-departed teachers at Waema, Lauiam, Gabagabuna and Maivara.¹⁴⁵ They built fences for dairy cattle, and moved into the fields to sow the seeds of Evangelical Christianity along with rubber trees and coconuts. Abel gave magic lantern lectures twice weekly on a spiritual theme at Koeabule and provided evening classes. 'None of these people will be able to go back to their villages in doubt as to what is the healthy Christian all round life to which we call them in the name of Christ',¹⁴⁶ he told R.W. Thompson. Thus each Kwato settlement had its church, pastures, schoolroom and copra drier, as outward and visible signs of what Abel understood by civilization.

Misgivings within the missionary community about an enterprise that allied the gospel to the stock market were overshadowed by widespread secular cynicism about Abel's spirituality. Where the Young family had begun as planters and become missionaries, Abel the missionary was commonly thought to be turning into a planter. Both E. Pryce Jones and Thompson thought a missionary's sacred character was impaired by commercial agriculture.¹⁴⁷ A more astringent view was offered by S.M. Lambert, who called Abel 'a luxuriously living Christian':

He 'instructed' the natives in collecting nuts, cutting copra, and building boats. His fine house and teeming acres revealed how well he had profited by his instructions. If he had made any effort to civilize the people the effort was not apparent... 148

Undaunted by such sour criticism, Abel argued that the Enesi Plantations Limited would fulfil one of the Melanesian's greatest needs, a stake in the economic revitalising of his land. Black men would become 'partners with the white man in the Commercial enterprise of the near future'.¹⁴⁹ Every position of authority in the Enesi would one day be held by Papuans. Even his own position of Manager

145 C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Duabo, 10 October 1911, PL.

146 C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 23 September 1910, KA. C.W. Abel to J.B. Nicholson, Kwato, 11 January 1911, KA.

147 See R.W. Thompson to C.W. Abel, London, 31 January 1913, KA.

148 S.M. Lambert, Doctor in Paradise, 72.

149 C.W. Abel, Kwato notes, Enesi file, 1918, KA.

would be relinquished when native bookkeepers were trained.¹⁵⁰ The Enesi would, in short, usher in a new age of responsibility for Papuans.

The Enesi scheme was as plausible as it was ingenuous. Any youth who showed an aptitude for leadership would be taught at Kwato, incorporated into the company, initiated as a Christian, and set in a position of authority. In due course he would marry one of the young women in Beatrice Abel's class. New villages of 'reborn' Christians would then spring up around the plantations, populated by Christian offspring who would take their place at their parents' desks at Kwato. A self-generating economy would thus stimulate the whole of Milne Bay to cultural rebirth. With such a millennial goal Abel continued to insist that the Enesi Plantations Limited was no less than an instrument of Providence which he, as manager, was commissioned to unfold. 'Of only one thing I am certain', he wrote, 'that is that the plan I am unfolding is God's, and that it is to go on unfolding.'¹⁵¹

Other members of the London mission in Papua were not so sure of Abel's divine mandate. Far from being God's plan, they said, the Enesi was merely a weapon in Abel's hands 'to enable him to bring all his influence as a missionary and that of his teachers, into competition with other traders'.¹⁵² They denied that even the exceptional circumstances of Milne Bay justified such an adventure into copra. Such a radical departure from traditional missionary policy could only bring calumny on the name of the L.M.S.

Abel's argument rested on the premise that all industry, from basket-weaving to copra exporting, was indistinguishable; to discard one was to abolish all.¹⁵³ Enjoying clever debate, Abel was open to the vice of being easily convinced by his own skill. He reminded the L.M.S. that he had not robbed other companies of labour; that the largest commercial employers in Papua, Messrs Kitchen & Sons, had drawn only 27 of its 700 labourers from the Eastern Division.¹⁵⁴

150 C.W. Abel, 'A Retrospective Account of the time of Enesi written in defense [sic] of threatened industrial scheme', Kwato 1916, KA.

151 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Kwato, 1 October 1912, KA.

152 PDC Minutes, 6-11 April 1911, PR.

153 C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 21 June 1911, PL.

154 C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 21 June 1911, PL.
ARM ED PR, 15 April 1907, CAO/CRS/G91.

Furthermore, he had encouraged the Kitchen consortium to come to Milne Bay: their residence had been built by Josia Lebasi, an employee of Kwato. These rejoinders were carried into the London board room by carefully rehearsed confederates of Abel who rose at crucial moments to throw the opposition into disarray. One of these, Arthur Porritt, invited the Administrator of Papua, Staniforth Smith, to eulogise Abel's work before the Board.¹⁵⁵

The marshalling of support for Kwato barely concealed the emotional currents running against Abel in the Papua Committee. Among many L.M.S. field members Abel was regarded as arbitrary, unreliable, and incapable of working harmoniously with others. He had monopolized common facilities, kept the Olive Branch five months at a time when other stations waited for the ship,¹⁵⁶ and dug deeply into the Angas bequest at the expense of Isuleilei and Saroa industrial missions. He was alienated from J.B. Clark and W.N. Lawrence on personal grounds.¹⁵⁷ 'It's all very well, Abel, but is it fair?'¹⁵⁸ was A.E. Hunt's grievance which later missionaries had occasion to swell to a chorus. W.J.V. Saville's outburst was among the more impassioned:

It might be an entirely different proposition if Kwato were sympathetic towards the L.M.S. work. THEY ARE NOT. THEY CAN SEE NO GOOD IN OUR WORK. From beginning to end Kwato is an intensely selfish organization, from beginning to end it is KWATO KWATO KWATO, as though Kwato were the Kingdom of God itself...
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Abel had never much minded unpopularity. Though Riley was more disliked among the Samoan teachers and few could rival King's odium among the Mamba miners, no English missionary in Papua in 1913 could claim to be as generally unpopular as Abel. His colleagues said he was high-handed, sarcastic, calculating and ambitious; the magistrates

155 S. Smith to C.W. Abel, Port Moresby, 2 May 1911, KA;
A. Porritt to C.W. Abel, London, 29 September 1912, KA.

156 A.E. Hunt to C.W. Abel, Port Moresby, 4 September 1899, PL. Abel's book Savage Life in New Guinea, apart from a chapter devoted to Chalmers, makes only one reference to other LMS stations in 220 pages.

157 R.L. Turner to R.W. Thompson, Vatorata, 17 April 1915, PL;
J.B. Clark to C.W. Abel, Boku, 25 July 1913, KA; C.W. Abel to J.B. Clark, Kwato, 2 June 1913, KA.

158 A.E. Hunt to C.W. Abel, Port Moresby, 4 September 1899, PL.

159 W.J.V. Saville to O.G. Parry, 17 July 1935, Daru United Church records.

said he was brash and meddlesome; even visitors criticized his industrial methods.¹⁶⁰ In 1913 Abel could muster support among only three L.M.S. missionaries: five others were counted among his foes.

In 1913 the District Committee forced Abel to resign as Manager of the Enesi. 'I am left stranded', he wrote, 'my plans are all broken up. The Enesi, a most harmless and helpful enterprise, has been abandoned.'¹⁶¹ Surrender of the Enesi plantations to the L.M.S., however,¹⁶² was sweetened by the consolation that as district missionary Abel still controlled the land. In 1914, in addition to eighteen branch stations, Abel was L.M.S. agent for eight flourishing plantations at Loani, Kanakope, Koeabule, Modevaisuma, Manawara, Killerton, Vasaloni and Waema. There were then 600 acres under cultivation valued at £16,000, almost twice the acreage of all other London stations in Papua combined.¹⁶³

From the downfall of the Enesi Abel was aware that his was a voice crying in the wilderness. In 1913 the L.M.S. world deficit amounted to £29,300 and severe economies were being predicted.¹⁶⁴ Dissension within the Papua Mission as to the principle of planting missionaries brought a Deputation from London in 1916 to examine the methods of the Mission as a whole and Kwato in particular. Led by Frank Lenwood, the Foreign Secretary (1912-25), the Deputation sounded the death-warrant for Abel's vision.¹⁶⁵ It concluded that the objections to large-scale mission agriculture were justified. Arguing

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- 160 See C.A.W. Monckton, New Guinea Recollections, 234; C.A.W. Monckton, Some Experiences..., 30, 248; S.M. Lambert, Doctor in Paradise, 72; C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 21 June 1911, KA. Abel's supporters in the PDC were C.F. Rich, H.P. Schlencker and R. Bartlett.
- 161 The L.M.S. bought Nicholson and Stewart's plantations for £2368. R.W. Thompson to J. Nicholson, London, 21 July 1911, KA. C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 15 April 1913, PL.
- 162 PDC Minutes, 17-23 March 1913, PR.
- 163 LMS Deputation Report, 1916, 224.
- 164 R.W. Thompson to B.T. Butcher, London, 29 April 1910, KA; R.W. Thompson to H.P. Schlencker, London, 8 July 1913, KA.
- 165 Abel believed, probably correctly, that Lenwood had made up his mind before arriving in Papua. C.W. Abel to A.P.C., Kwato, 30 November 1916; C.W. Abel to A.W., 25 December 1916, KA.

that the position of preacher was incompatible with that of paymaster,¹⁶⁶ the Deputation talked of the hazard of holy professions sinking into profit, of Papuans becoming 'rice Christians', and of the horror that a religious body might begin competing with merchants.¹⁶⁷ The L.M.S., which had long been identified with the anti-slavery movement, could not risk the accusation that in its own mission in New Guinea, black men had become hewers of wood and drawers of water.

Objection was piled on objection to the Kwato Mission. The church store, another cornerstone of plantation economy, was in the Deputation's view 'like a vampire sucking away at the Missionary's strength'.¹⁶⁸ Not only did it distract the missionary from his spiritual work, but it gave Papuans the impression that the L.M.S. was a body of 'fabulous wealth'. It was not the function of the Society to provide natives with tomahawks and fishhooks. While in Abel the Society had 'a man of very exceptional ability' his absolute command illustrated the extent to which the Kwato Mission rested on a single life. Admitting that the appearance of 'enormous financial interests',¹⁶⁹ evoked their fear that the Society might be accused of trading, the Deputation ordered the closure of all plantations in excess of 100 acres per station. Moreover, the Deputation endorsed Lawes' view that a missionary should not wall children up in the mission house but send them back into the villages where the people lived. L.M.S. stations in Papua were instructed to have no more than fifty children resident at each headstation.¹⁷⁰

Abel's response to this ultimatum was to confront his directors with a new kind of conflict - the education of the masses versus the education of the few. It was the first time that he had raised the elitist banner in public:

What we have to deal with is a people... who in one generation have been rushed from savage conditions, through the wood, the stone and the iron ages, and who... find themselves today... watching the progress of wireless telegraphy... The native has to be taught to think. The only possible way... is for us

166 L.M.S., op. cit., 233.

167 Ibid., 234.

168 Ibid., 244.

169 Ibid.

170 Ibid.

to concentrate very special attention on a few...
 I am convinced that the only safe plan is to do
 intensely and thoroughly a small piece of work and
 work out from that. It is the principle of Kwato...
 If I could this is what I would do for the whole
 race. 171

Abel set before his supporters the ideal of a mission where everybody was well employed and well educated. His ideal prodded the Deputation into defining the goal of the L.M.S. differently, as reaching the 'nation of Papua' rather than creating 'little protected communities of highly-developed Christians.'¹⁷² Abel believed his ideal had been viewed without the least knowledge of his intentions.¹⁷³

Sensing a crisis with his directors, Abel hoped to find common ground on the issue of depopulation. No missionary patron would be unmoved by the 'dying race' argument. So he wrote to London,

I must emphatically state that matters with us are extremely critical. The native race is threatened with extinction. Nothing short of an immediate and far-reaching forward movement will save it... and avert the catastrophe... I personally dare not obey an order which strikes the doom of my people when I am confident I can save them. 174

Here Abel's arguments were beginning to show strain, as in drawing a picture of decay he was negating an earlier opinion. In 1912 J.H.P. Murray had noted after a long talk with Abel: 'he is doubtful as to the alleged decrease in population - there is he thinks a slight increase... Abel says the apparent decrease is often due to the fact that the village has split up and the inhabitants gone elsewhere.'¹⁷⁵

The blatant contradiction between private conversation and public rhetoric was largely the result of pressure from Abel's enemies in the L.M.S. Abel had taken great trouble to develop Kanakope and Loani plantations; very well, said W.N. Lawrence and R.L. Turner, let him sell these first in compliance with the Deputation's instructions.¹⁷⁶ Abel had emphasized Papuan ownership of resources: very well, said

171 C.W. Abel to A.P.C., Kwato, 30 November 1916, KA.

172 LMS, op. cit., 214.

173 C.W. Abel to A.P.C., Kwato, 30 November 1916, KA.

174 C.W. Abel to A.P.C., Kwato, 30 November 1916, KA.

175 J.H.P. Murray, Diary, 13 October 1912, ML.

176 L.M.S., op. cit., 240; W.N. Lawrence to F. Lenwood, Port Moresby, 25 August 1916, KA.

Lenwood, let all the lands be 'passed into the hands of the natives, especially to those of Mr Abel's young people who have sacrificed so much to make the work a success'.¹⁷⁷ The Deputation was evidently asking Abel to abdicate from his secular position and make Papuans the leaders, a vision which he said had always inspired him. But Abel had never placed the Papuan's success in opposition to his own. Had not Booker Washington emphasized the 'partnership' of races? Abel's goal to fulfil the leadership potential of Melanesians was envisaged only within the context of his own absolute authority. His colleagues' misinterpretation of this scheme was intended cruelly to demolish his life's work.

A man steeped in biblical imagery, Abel began in 1916 to depict his role in messianic terms. 'As I conceive it', he said, 'the Papuan is to be either lost or saved by my action.'¹⁷⁸ Since a man had to render unto Caesar only what was Caesar's, so he was torn between duty to the L.M.S. and obedience to God. He had 'overlaid, undermined and saturated'¹⁷⁹ the matter with prayer, he assured his critics, and the divine message was the same. The Kwato organization had a commission which absolutely debarred its founder from altering his plans: he would not submit to a 'criminal' order to send his children back to their villages. It was a heavy sacrifice to make for the 'easy road of obedience', he wrote. 'I pray God I may not be tempted above that I am able to bear.'¹⁸⁰ The road which began in the desert had brought him to the Gethsamene of his decision: he had to choose now between the L.M.S. and the Kingdom of God. Not surprisingly, he decided for the Kingdom and the plantations, confidently asserting that his decision was in the highest interests of the Kingdom.

The assertion by the Deputation of the unity of the Papuan Mission was made at a time of growing autonomy in its strongest and

177 All the Kwato lands except that at Bisimaka were registered in the name of the LMS. The Deputation concluded that the natives should be made 'their own masters in finance'. Ibid., 227, 234.

178 C.W. Abel to A.P.C., Kwato, 30 November 1916, KA. See also C.W. Abel to B.T. Butcher, Koeabule, 10 July 1916, KA; F. Lenwood to R.L. Turner, London, 28 January 1917, WOL.

179 C.W. Abel to H.M. Dauncey, Kwato, 15 June 1914, KA.

180 C.W. Abel to A.P.C., Kwato, 30 November 1916, KA.

wealthiest station. Even before the Deputation began its report Lenwood confided that it was ten years too late, as affairs in Papua were beyond control. Received enthusiastically elsewhere as a firm mandate for the Papua District Committee to put its house in order, Lenwood's report was received sourly at Kwato. 'I do feel I ought to teach them a lesson', wrote Abel, '... Those poor miserable shiverers will not touch industrial schemes... Shouldn't I rejoice to see my duty clear to say, "I've done with you".'¹⁸¹ By 1916 Abel had no intention of broadening his horizons or of sinking the individualist in the committee man.

Baulked of official patronage, Abel was in no mood to accept direction from such colleagues as Laurence, Turner and Clark. He preached to his Papuan congregation on 'the persecution of [the] early Christian Church, and the testings of the children of Israel in their journey from Egypt to the promised land'.¹⁸² Several months later he grasped an acute passage in Judges VI to depict himself as rescuer of the Papuans from the clutches of his erstwhile colleagues:

'Oh, my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold my family is poor... and I am the least in my father's house.' And the Lord said unto him, SURELY I will be with thee and thou shalt smite the Israelites as one man. 183

Perceiving that his source of income would not come from the same quarters as his theological inspiration, Abel sought to assemble an imposing committee of Nonconformist laymen, industrialists and imperial officials such as MacGregor, Le Hunte and Barton.¹⁸⁴ From MacGregor came support so glowing Abel thought it worth £5000.¹⁸⁵ Only three of the fourteen who made up the Governing Committee of the Kwato Extension Association (K.E.A.) were ministers; despite his ordination, Abel was not fond of men of the cloth. The appointment of Percy Bright, a 'keen man of business'¹⁸⁶ and member of the L.M.S. directorate, was the only link with his former employers. There were a few disappointments: Lord Leverhulme, disillusioned at the failure of Walker's

181 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Kwato, 28 September 1912, KA.

182 C.W. Abel, LD, 22 September 1924, KA.

183 C.W. Abel, LD, 14 March 1926, KA.

184 F.R. Barton to C.W. Abel, Surrey, 8 December 1917, KA.

185 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, London, 13 October 1917, KA.

186 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, London, 2 November 1917, KA.

Papuan Industries to produce dividends, held aloof;¹⁸⁷ another businessman queried whether St Peter or St James could have spread the gospel by 'starting a fishing syndicate as part of their missionary propaganda'.¹⁸⁸ But he achieved a modest success among chapel-going directors in the Sheffield steel belt.¹⁸⁹ Who could have done better under the circumstances, Abel wondered. Where twenty of his colleagues would have failed miserably - 'would you entrust Rich or Saville with such responsibility?'¹⁹⁰ he asked Beatrice - he would succeed.

On 29 April 1918 the Kwato Mission seceded from the L.M.S. Even at this twelfth hour some Papuan missionaries thought the directors might veto it. Abel presented his own brief in the board-room at 48 Broadway, Westminster. W.N. Lawrence, representing the Papuan District Committee, strenuously prosecuted Abel.¹⁹¹ The chief arbitrator, Frank Lenwood, decided that relations between Kwato and the Papuan Committee were so envenomed that 'the separation involved in the contemplated scheme could not be worse than the state of affairs hitherto'.¹⁹² Lawrence left the board-room routed. Abel was given a ten-year period of suspension from the Society; his salary was withdrawn, but his name remained on the list of missionaries; and a schedule of annual rentals ranging from £150 to £500 was devised for his plantations. Abel's exhilaration was almost childlike:

I spoke for six or seven minutes and then was asked a couple of questions and told to withdraw. A quarter of an hour later Carter came out and told me the vote had been unanimous... Hoorah! Hoorah!! Hoorah!!!
Praise the Lord. How glad I am! How young I feel!
How conscious I feel of God's hand in this! 193

187 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Kent, 14 December 1917, KA.

188 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, London, 16 March 1918, KA.

189 The major contribution came from the Arthington and Arundel trusts (£1000 each), and from 1921, £1000 annually from the Native Taxation Fund in Port Moresby. There were several individual donations of £500 or less. J.W. Baldie to C.W. Abel, Port Moresby, 10 February 1921; H.W. Champion to C.W. Abel, Port Moresby, 26 September 1922, KA.

190 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, London, 8 February 1918, KA.

191 See C.W. Abel, LD, 22 August 1916, KA.

192 F. Lenwood to PDC, London, 24 June 1918, WOL.

193 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Kent, 29 April 1918, KA.

Abel's breach with the parent body was precipitated by finance; and Kwato's march away from the L.M.S. was carried through without alteration in doctrine. But the K.E.A. came into existence at the beginning of an era of uncertainty both in the copra industry and in the midlands industries of Abel's constituents who had made profits on war orders. In November, 1920 Abel set his target at £15,000;¹⁹⁴ a year later he could not afford the firewood bill for his campaign headquarters in London.¹⁹⁵ Paying annual rent to the L.M.S. for lands in Papua showed that the missionary and his former employers had agreed on nothing but an armed truce.

IN 1921 Abel crossed the Atlantic in search of friends. In finding relief he became aligned with a section of American fundamentalists who reacted most harshly against the light of biblical criticism and scientific advance. Arranging a luncheon with Henry Ford, he failed to tap his resources,¹⁹⁶ but he located three other industrialists, Hugh R. Monro of New York, W.G.A. Millar of Pittsburgh and John L. Steele of Philadelphia.¹⁹⁷ These prayerful businessmen read their Bibles daily and were willing to match their convictions with liberal generosity. To augment the sterling reserves of the K.E.A., Millar proposed an American ancillary to be known as the New Guinea Evangelisation Society. Working through syndicates in industrial centres, the N.G.E.S. would shoulder the burden of revitalising the Kwato Mission to the extent of \$75,000 within five years. 'We want to cheer his heart and uphold his hands by prayer and by giving him adequate financial support',¹⁹⁸ wrote Millar.

Shortly afterwards, Millar's group was harnessed to a triumvirate of the three most influential Evangelicals in America: W.R. Moody, son of the revivalist preacher Dwight L. Moody who had converted Abel in 1876, Samuel R. Boggs and Delavan L. Pierson. Boggs was a

194 C.W. Abel to H.W. Champion, Kwato, 8 November 1920, KA; KEA Occasional Report 1921-2, KA.

195 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, London, 4 December 1921, KA.

196 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, New York, 14 May 1923, KA.

197 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, New York, 14 May 1923; B. Abel to C.W. Abel, London, 30 October 192[3], KA.

198 Quoted in C.W. Abel to N.G.E.S., London, 24 November 1923, KA.

founder of the organization known as Gideons International, Christian businessmen whose intention is to place a Bible in every hotel room in the world.¹⁹⁹ Pierson, a publisher of Puritan lineage, was the son of Arthur Pierson, an understudy of Charles Spurgeon, one of the most popular preachers in late Victorian England.²⁰⁰ With Puritan, revivalist and commercial blood running rich in his patrons' veins, Abel left for Papua in 1924 exultant: 'They treated me in a way I shall never forget... I came across the Pacific a grateful and happy man.'²⁰¹

American investment in a British mission in Papua opened a period of inglorious debate on both sides of the Atlantic. Abel did not tell the L.M.S. of his intentions to found an American auxiliary: neither did he tell the N.G.E.S. of the strength of L.M.S. commitment to the Kwato Mission. The result was enraged complaints by Lenwood that he had not been informed of 'American participation of so dominating a kind',²⁰² and puzzled questions from Pierson and Boggs about 'rental' delivered by Abel to the L.M.S. on properties they assumed to be his.²⁰³ There was no doubt where Abel's sympathies lay. Lenwood, he said, 'hates to have the wedge of fundamentalists inserted into the Papuan field. He has no love for my American friends any more than he has for me. He suspects us all of fundamentalist leanings!'²⁰⁴ Urged by Abel to end the uncertainty about the ownership of the mission, Pierson asked Lenwood to renounce the L.M.S. trusteeship over the Kwato district.

Lenwood's position in 1924 was invidious. He had presided in 1918 over the dismemberment of the Papuan Mission in the teeth of opposition from his field missionaries. Added to the fuel of theological differences was a stream of personal recrimination which threw light on Abel's reputation within orthodox religious circles.

199 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, New York, 14 May 1923, KA;
S. Decks to C.C. Abel, Cambridge, 1 August 1926, KA.

200 D.L. Pierson, Arthur T. Pierson..., 226ff.

201 C.W. Abel to - Shergold, Koeabule, 14 October 1924, KA.

202 F. Lenwood to A. Hood, London, 29 August 1924, KA;
A. Hood to C.W. Abel, Surrey, 13 July 1924, KA.

203 C.W. Abel to D.L. Pierson, Kwato, 17 July 1924, KA;
C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Kwato, 18 September 1924, KA.

204 C.W. Abel to D.L. Pierson, Kwato, 17 July 1924; see also G.J. Williams to H.M. Dauncey, Melbourne, 21 September 1924, KA.

To the Reverend Arthur Pringle, Chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, the Kwato Mission was 'industrious, insidious, plausible; imposing on the ignorant, and often embarrassing those who are not ignorant. It is hurtful in its ideas and in many of its methods'.²⁰⁵ The most vociferous opponents, however, were in the Australasian Committee of the L.M.S. led by the Reverend G.J. Williams. The American alliance was to Williams 'a grievous mistake, whether from the point of view of the Society, the Papuans concerned, or the Australian national outlook'.²⁰⁶ In the view of the Australasian committee, Abel's theories about race salvation by industry was a highly camouflaged attempt to seize L.M.S. property for a syndicate unpleasantly fundamentalist, mercantile and American, in order to gratify one man's ambitions. In the name of the Papua Mission, Williams called on Lenwood to restore the apostate Kwato organization to its rightful spiritual parent at the end of the ten year period of suspension in 1928.

Abel, on the other hand, firmly believed the Lord was on the Evangelicals' side. Returning from Kanakope with a hold full of copra, he felt he could not submit to the horrid tyranny of men who had lost faith in the sovereignty of the Bible:

never can we allow the L.M.S. secretary, who has shown such want of sympathy with us, to interfere finally... You will not suppose that I shall cable home my resignation... But if the L.M.S. take over again we must go out. Nothing is more certain than that. I can never work, nor can we let our children work, under that flag again. 207

At the same time, Abel was coming to regard his colleagues - Rich, Riley, Short and Chatterton - as having in some sense drifted from the firm faith of their forefathers. These, he wrote, were among those who 'do not understand how tremendously important this little mission is, not only to Papua, but possibly to many other parts of the South Seas as well'.²⁰⁸ As for Frank Lenwood - 'tremendously clever, and

205 Quoted in C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Kwato, 13 July 1924, KA; G.J. Williams to W.A. Barradale, Melbourne, 7 May 1926, KA.

206 See L.M.S. Australasian Committee Minutes, 5-7 May 1926, KA; PDC Minutes, 15 March 1926, KA.

207 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Kwato, 13 July 1924, KA.

208 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Kwato, - March 1924, KA.

seldom frank'²⁰⁹ - he was a crafty Oxford intellectual who deceived plain honest men.²¹⁰ To wall his family of converts off from such modernists Abel would create a self propagating mission recognizing no man as superior to himself.

From his country house in Sussex, Sir George Le Hunte, President of the K.E.A., tried to improve relations within the ranks of Kwato supporters. Abel's children, Phyllis, Cecil, Russell and Marjorie, encountered much spleen from their father's critics;²¹¹ but Le Hunte was able to use his considerable diplomatic gifts to mediate between the K.E.A. and L.M.S.²¹² To a suspicious, nettled Abel, now inclined to portray his colleagues melodramatically as good or bad, the Irish Protestant Le Hunte was decidedly good because he interfered little in mission administration or religious debate. In 1925 Le Hunte said he wanted the Abel children to succeed their father.²¹³

Embedded in a morass of five bodies claiming oversight of Kwato, Abel laboured for three more years to extricate his mission from its patrons. In 1927 he secured the sale of L.M.S. properties in Milne Bay for £9,666 to the N.G.E.C.²¹⁴ In the following year he confounded his opponents in London by showing them, in his own words, 'that I am boss of this show, not they'.²¹⁵ 28 May 1928 was a day of rejoicing at Kwato. A telegram told him that negotiations granting independence to his mission were complete and that he was no longer considered a member of the L.M.S.:

I was dumbfounded... We went outside, and in a few words I broke the news, and, as if everyone realized what it all meant, they burst into deafening cheers and stamped on the floor... Kwato, and all it implied was in our hands and in the hands of those who follow us, for good, and for all time... We were free. 216

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- 209 C.W. Abel to A. Porritt, Kwato, 26 August 1924, KA.
 210 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Kwato, 24 March 1924, KA; C.W. Abel to D.L. Pierson, Duabo, 11 February 1926, KA.
 211 R.W. Abel to M. Parkin, London, 24 December 1924, KA.
 212 G.R. Le Hunte to C.W. Abel, Sussex, 2 January 1925, KA.
 213 C.W. Abel to G.R. Le Hunte, Kwato, 13 January 1925, KA.
 214 E. Curwen to C.W. Abel, Hove, 4 July 1927, KA.
 215 C.W. Abel to M. Parkin, London, 29 December 1928, KA.
 216 C.W. Abel to M. Parkin, Kwato, 28 May 1928, KA.

Abel's break reflected the severity of the clash, not only over industry, but about the proper relations between a missionary and his patrons, a clash exacerbated by differing views about the Bible. But the steps had been taken to raise the Evangelical from a voice crying in the wilderness to a place of ascendancy in Milne Bay. The Kwato Mission had won a position in the religious establishment of Papua for a missionary goal in which love of God was entangled with material aspirations. Even if the price were high - bitterness among his former partners in the L.M.S. - Abel was sure that future generations of Papuans would bless him.²¹⁷

217 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Kwato, 28 September 1912, KA.

CHAPTER XI

'A Good Country for White Men'

IN 1930 Beatrice Grimshaw referred whimsically to Europeans in the Pacific as 'beachcombers, blackbirders and bad lots' or 'missionaries who are equally sanctimonious and depraved'.¹ From her cottage on Sariba overlooking China Straits, Beatrice Grimshaw could observe two foreign societies taking shape in eastern New Guinea. One drew its livelihood from trade, the other from missionary supporters. One believed that the wealth and resources of the land should be exploited vigorously, the other that the saviour's command was to have compassion on even the least of the little ones. Each hoped to make New Guinea a good country for white or black men according to its vision and felt the other had brought a curse rather than a blessing to the land.

To missionaries, other Europeans could be judged by a simple yardstick: whether they aided or hindered the advance of moral civilization among a primitive people. They took very little time to ask whether their trading or prospecting neighbour was setting a good example. Was he sober and honest? Did he treat natives fairly? Was his sexual behaviour beyond reproach? Did he support missionary work? If so, he was to be encouraged; if not, he would be suspected as a 'bad lot' or resisted altogether.

Privately many white settlers agreed that the economic development of New Guinea would be quickened by the absence of missionaries; for their part, missionaries knew that secular contact with Papuans was making their work harder. It was affected by recruiting and prostitution, wages and crowded labour lines. While supporting officials who extolled New Guinea's economic potential, they hoped to attract 'respectable' settlers rather than beachcombers. They knew they had no way of stopping a gold rush. Bishop Stone-Wigg spoke warmly of Papua's pastoral resources, condemning as 'short sighted' the suspicion felt in the Queensland Government for land syndicates;² Abel helped in

1 B. Grimshaw, Isles of Adventure, 21-2.

2 MN, 15 February 1902; see also Argus, Melbourne, 1 March 1902.

the planning of commercial enterprises in Milne Bay. On Dobu, indentured labourers were paid off outside the Wesleyan mission house. At the turn of the century, no missionary in eastern New Guinea wished it said that he opposed commercial activity within limits strictly supervised by a British governor.

The important words were 'strictly supervised'. The traditions of anti-slavery and Exeter Hall weighed heavily on English missionaries when they thought of economic ventures among native races, especially if black labour was involved. Slavery 'under another name' was mentioned gloomily when the powerful voice of the A.B.M. Review was raised against the acquisition of land by white men in Papua. According to Missionary Notes, another Anglican journal, the Papuans were doomed if left to the 'rapacity and lust of the explorers from Australia'.³ The notion of trusteeship over primitive races by wise and disinterested men was in one sense anti-imperialist, since it questioned the economic expansion essential to the full flowering of imperialism. Lawes' sober warning on the proclamation of sovereignty in 1888 was:

I do not think the prospects of New Guinea very bright. I do not believe New Guinea is or ever will be a white man's country. 4

Some explorers and traders disagreed. Theodore Bevan wrote that most of the tales about the unhealthiness of the climate were spun by missionaries wanting Europeans to leave them and their blacks alone. Abel had a conversation with a carpenter in 1892 at Kwato: 'You've only to feed the wildest savages on a little flour', said the carpenter, 'it works a miracle on 'em in no time.' Abel assumed this to be a tribute to his mission work, unaware of the ironic prescription, 'bags of flour and a pound of arsenic' as a way of settling the Aboriginal question.⁵

Secular Europeans and missionaries in New Guinea quickly adopted aggressive postures. S.B. Fellows noted H.N. Chester's pithy description of the Massim as 'swine and niggers' and believed he would delight in

3 MN, 17 December 1901; ABM Review, 1 August 1912.

4 Courier, Brisbane, 28 June 1888.

5 C.W. Abel, Lecture notes, 1892, 26, KA; Australasian, 24 November 1866; see also John Young, 'Evanescent Ascendancy' in J.W. Davidson and Deryck Scarr, eds., Pacific Islands Portraits, 149.

shooting down the natives on the slightest chance.⁶ Abel characterised white men in Melanesia as 'missionaries'; the missionaries of light and those of darkness. The latter class included a large number of Australian planters. 'Remove the church', he wrote, 'and New Guinea would be a blackguard's Elysium.'⁷

Traders had their stories too. Rumours were spread at the turn of the century that certain missionaries used their converts for sexual gratification, and that one Papuan woman had borne a missionary's child.⁸ There was a tale about an L.M.S. missionary who refused to succour a dying beachcomber.⁹ In one traveller's words, Protestant missionaries were 'canting sharks', 'wicked pirates' and a 'blackguardly crew'.¹⁰ Abel thought ethnographers held a different view: 'They regard us probably as we regard those long-haired grey-coated Israelites you see preaching in the Domain on Sunday afternoons.'¹¹ After several months' travelling in the New Guinea islands, a traveller said he had not heard a single word spoken by anyone in favour of missionaries.¹²

Most of the planters and traders in British New Guinea were men for whom the threat of unemployment in the colonies after the depression of 1893 made migration to New Guinea an attractive alternative. Many were Irish, some were fugitives from justice, a few were colonial born: almost none had any sympathy with English Christianity. The majority of those who were of British birth came from those classes with which the English churches had lost contact during the industrial revolution. A vociferous section thought missionaries were meddling in the economic development of the country. Bertram Calcutt showed how they viewed missionaries:

[Missionaries] were pious peasants, who had brought new ghosts to the spookiest part in New Guinea... Their table-manners belonged to the centuries in

6 S.B. Fellows, Diary, 2 February 1892, ANG.

7 C.W. Abel, Lecture notes, 1892, 26, KA; see also C.W. Abel, Aim and Scope..., 7-8.

8 F.W. Walker to A.H. Symons, Kwato, 13 February 1900, CAO/CRS/G121.

9 L. Loria to R.W. Thompson, Cooktown, 15 July 1896, PL.

10 C.W. Abel, op. cit., 7.

11 C.W. Abel, LD, 15 September 1924, KA.

12 C.W. Abel, LD, 2 May 1928, KA; see also Marnie Bassett, Letters from New Guinea 1921, 51.

Europe when witches were burnt - bare table, the soup-bowl on top of two plates, and noisy digestion of food and liquid; the men bachelors and the nuns spinsters, celibates in a land of normal people; their small libraries a mess of ecclesiastical trash; and no soap in the bathroom. 13

For Anglicans as well as Methodists, the need to reach Melanesian masses before the traders and diggers was urgent. In Kiriwina a trader organized a conch shell blowing contest to drown out the first Methodist service in 1894;¹⁴ at Sanaroa near Dobu the people threatened to starve out the missionary after traders had paid them a visit.¹⁵ Murua was an island where missionaries met decisive reverses at the hands of diggers, even though Bromilow thought the Methodist arrival had been in 'the nick of time'.¹⁶ In 1894 the Muruans had responded favourably to missionary overtures.¹⁷ But the discovery of gold affected their attitudes to Wesleyans. At Kulumadau, diggers warned villagers against the tapwaroro; when missionaries tried to buy land at Tekoia the villagers insisted that their taro would be blighted, and threatened to pull down the village if a mission came.¹⁸ At Kaurai, thirteen miles from Kulumadau, the Wesleyans offered teachers to the villagers. 'No! We don't want you here', said the headmen, 'you promised us a teacher two years ago and then you did not send him, now we do not want one.'¹⁹ Forced from the original mining centre, the mission moved to Gasmata. Here the labourers were 'strongly prejudiced';²⁰ the miners were against religion 'almost to a man';²¹ and animosity was openly shown. A church was eventually built by Josia Lebasi of Kwato at Kulumadau; but only seven or eight came to monthly services.²² By 1913, when churchgoing began to become fashionable and Kulumadau had assumed

13 B. Calcutt, 'Stone Age and Steel', ms, UPNG Archives.

14 W.E. Bromilow, Twenty Years..., 191.

15 W. MacGregor, Diary, 22 January 1891, ANL.

16 AMMR, 5 September 1895.

17 AWMMS AR 1901-2, lxxxix.

18 AWMMS AR 1908-9, 109-10; BNG AR 1901-2, 37; B. Danks to G. Gatland, Sydney, 4 January 1906, MOM 52.

19 AWMMS AR 1908-9, 18.

20 AMMR, 6 January 1902.

21 AMMR, 4 July 1910; see also C.A.W. Monckton, Last Days..., 115.

22 AMMR, 4 July 1910; *ibid.*, 6 November 1900.

the character of a settled town, E.J. Glew, G.A. Gatland, J.A. Walsh and E.W. Harrison had averaged only three years on Woodlark before resignation or death. It was at this time that one of the Wesleyans discovered the hand-made bricks of the Marist mission house built in about 1851;²³ and they remembered that Murua had already proved the graveyard of one missionary venture.²⁴

The relatively marginal issues of Sunday observance and alcohol aroused initial conflict on the frontier. Maclaren had rejoiced to see L.M.S. converts refuse to sell food to the crew of the Merrie England²⁵ on Sunday and Newton led a protest on behalf of all the missions against employment of Papuan wharf labourers at Samarai on Sunday.²⁶ Prohibition, however, was one issue in which missionaries and settlers stood shoulder to shoulder against legislators in Australia. Between 1900 and 1905 a vigorous prohibitionist lobby in the Australian parliament, claiming that alcohol had been responsible for the decline of the American Indian and the Australian aboriginal, raised the argument for prohibition to save the Papuans from a similar fate.²⁷ In New Guinea, few Anglican missionaries were teetotalers, though both Methodist and Kwato missionaries were total abstainers.²⁸ All agreed with settlers in New Guinea that prohibition would be either an arbitrary interference with reasonable liberty or a measure unenforceable along the 3500 miles of Papuan coast.²⁹ Copland King and C.W. Abel both campaigned in Melbourne against the bill supported by Staniforth Smith, and Abel sat in the gallery during the second reading. The Prohibitionists were forced to compromise by a majority led by Alfred Deakin; and their prohibition bill did not reach the Senate.³⁰

23 Ibid. See also C.A.W. Monckton, Some Experiences..., 23; in 1890 Muruans remembered the Marists' names as Epikopo, (Bishop), or Permorosi (~~Bishop~~ Montrouzier) and Tamasan (Joseph Thomassin), Courier, Brisbane, 19 December 1890.

24 AMMR, 4 July 1910.

25 E. Rogers, A Pioneer of New Guinea..., 77.

26 H. Newton to A.E. Oelrichs, Samarai, 6 December 1909, DA.

27 Parliamentary Debates, XXVIII, 3927.

28 See also R.B. Walker, 'Growth and Typology...', in JRH vol. 6 no. 1, 345.

29 NGM AR 1903-4; M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 5 September 1901; Parliamentary Debates, XXVIII, 3988.

30 Ibid.

Nothing, not even the harshness of their common environment, could persuade missionaries and miners to sink their differences. When told of the reported discovery of gold in the Mamba headwaters, R.W. Thompson said that for the sake of the unfortunate natives he hoped the report was not correct.³¹ The miners, preferring the name 'diggers' but known to Papuans in the northern goldfields as 'missionary he look out along money',³² began arriving on the sun-blasted beaches of the eastern islands after the Sudest discovery in 1888.³³ The first abrupt contacts between diggers and missionaries were usually made aboard the steamers Titus, Mystery and Bulldog which plied between Cooktown and Samarai. Above a hold loaded with whisky, trade tobacco and cabin bread, Henry Newton made his first encounter with diggers in 1899:

At last one said in a somewhat thick voice, 'Are you going to New Guinea after gold too?' 'Yes' I answered, 'after gold of a sort.' 'What d'ye mean?' he said. Just then his neighbour dug him in the ribs with his elbow, saying 'Shut up! can't you see he is a missionary?' 'Oh, I can't stand these... missionaries!' was the answer, as my friend turned his back on me. 34

The viewpoint of some diggers was supported by a lobby of North Queensland newspapers. The Cooktown Independent succinctly expressed its case:

Mr Douglas has said... that his primary principles are the protection of the natives. That sounds very well... but how can it be practically applied if the right of conquest is abandoned?... The natives of New Guinea are like all other aborigines, and must be liable to the inevitable fate of weaker races. 35

During MacGregor's punitive raids of 1888 the Cooktown Independent became explicit about the Papuans' 'inevitable fate'. The reprisal against the murderers of Captain Ansell in Chads Bay, the paper predicted, would 'probably be the commencement of a fierce but final struggle of the Papuans against their natural and inevitable fate of disappearing before the invading and dominant race'.³⁶ Another

31 R.W. Thompson to J. Chalmers, London, 20 October 1896, WOL.

32 J.H.P. Murray, Diary, 7 January 1909, ML.

33 The goldfields in order of discovery were Sudest (1888), Misima (1889), Mamba (1894), Woodlark (1896) and Gira (1897).

34 H. Newton, In Far New Guinea, 5.

35 Cooktown Independent, 20 August 1890.

36 Ibid., 9 January 1889.

colonial newspaper suggested a practical way of ensuring the disappearance of Melanesians: a cordon of armed men would be placed round smaller islands, driving natives into the interior, where they could be despatched. H.H. Romilly criticized this plan on the grounds that it was impracticable.³⁷

Clearly the sentiments expressed by the more robust Australians were incompatible with missionary notions of paternal responsibility. Stone-Wigg often reiterated his belief that the church was a softener of relations between the weak and strong, 'so that the strong shall not make slaves of or abuse the weak'.³⁸ When A.E. David, preaching at Stone-Wigg's consecration in 1898, bade the bishop-elect to 'remove mountains of prejudice, and to tear up by the roots the forests of corruption and injustice',³⁹ there was probably little doubt in his listeners' minds that the reference was to the white diggers and traders of British New Guinea.

Relations with the secular community however were made more difficult by missionaries who branded all diggers with opprobrious names and made white men appear more iniquitous than they actually were. Stone-Wigg strongly criticized diggers' morals to their faces.⁴⁰ His hearers retorted that 'the worst places' for native women were in the vicinity of mission stations. Clergymen could not live among 'a lot of naked women without having intercourse with them', the bishop was told; 'besides', one added, 'it isn't natural'.⁴¹ The presence of the bachelor King on the Mamba River gave rise to a ribald tale that he had fathered a child among the Binandele.⁴² Smarting with indignation, King threatened to bring a lawsuit against W.E. Armit, the missionary-baiting magistrate who had begun the story. Armit's death from black-water fever, which was hailed by one of King's colleagues as the intervention of Providence,⁴³ brought an end to the suit but not the story. King's first name was reduced to a bawdy variant, 'copulating',

37 H.H. Romilly, Western Pacific..., 10.

38 M. Stone-Wigg, Book of Cuttings, nd, ABM.

39 MN, 15 February 1898; see also MN, 14 January 1899.

40 North Queensland Register, 3 September 1900.

41 M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 4 March 1904, DA.

42 C.A.W. Monckton to M. Stone-Wigg, Mamba, 25 April 1901, DA.

43 F.W. Ramsay to M. Stone-Wigg, Mamba, 2 July 1902, DA.

and stories of 'copulating King' were being circulated twenty years after Armit's death.⁴⁴ For King, a cultured scholar whose milieu was more the cloister than the mining camp, New Guinea was a particularly harsh frontier.

But King, unlike many of his wayward parishioners, survived the pestilent Mamba. Judge F.P. Winter's maxim that the river would claim a pound of corpse for every ounce of gold was an augury,⁴⁵ for six of the early magistrates were buried there. Papuan carriers also died, suffering from lack of protection against the chilly mountain air, from the heavy loads, and from dysentery.⁴⁶ Stone-Wigg noted that before 1900 attacks from natives were common. In places the sides of the track were lined with skulls, some of carriers who had died, others of natives who had been killed.⁴⁷ Thus the river deserved its reputation as the graveyard of the Territory. The commonest way of burying a digger who had died in his sleep was to sew up his body in his blanket and bury him in the tent fly. A digger once found two of his mates dead, one in the act of digging a grave for the other. Nothing remained but a rotting heap of bones bent over a shovel.⁴⁸

The behaviour of the diggers at first had disgusted and appalled the Anglican bishop. After 1901, however, his addresses were marked by a more conciliatory note, and he had a small hospital built for diggers on the Mamba. Believing his earlier judgments to have been too harsh, he began commending the good treatment given by diggers to their Papuan carriers, and said experience had taught him the digger was 'much-enduring, generous-hearted, kindly, and as a conversationalist, both interesting and instructive'.⁴⁹ In the awkwardness of diggers' grief he found humour and pathos mixed:

44 B. Malinowski, A Diary..., 182. 'Poor old Copland!' was Abel's description of the unhappy King. C.W. Abel, LD, 24 October 1918, KA.

45 C.A.W. Monckton, Some Experiences..., 47.

46 BNG AR 1903-4, 9, 35; *ibid.*, 1906-7, 86; see also L.P. Mair, Australia..., 169.

47 M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 2 July 1900, DA.

48 *Ibid.*

49 MN, 21 September 1904; *ibid.*, 18 June 1900; *ibid.*, 21 September 1904.

You see, your worship [said Tom, the baker at Tamata] there's Frenchy, and Tom Kilkenny, and Sago Bob, and Alligator Jack, and Red Bill, and Irish King, and I sewed them up in their own calicos, and there weren't no coffins... but the young Government feller was not far off, and had a Bible... and we sent a nigger to fetch it... and Steve Dawson read a bit out of it. Yet it wasn't a proper service like - though we all did our best. But we would like you to put up a bit of a prayer over the men. 50

The Anglican church failed dismally to realize its aims on the Mamba river. Instead of harmonizing and civilizing the relations between the diggers and the Binandele, its missionaries arrived after the catastrophic first encounters were over. Forty years after the rushes had crushed the resistance of the Binandele there were only six small stations - at Eroro, Sangara, Isivita, Duvira, Gona and Ambasi - along the breadth of the Orokaiva plainlands. From the beginning, missionaries were overwhelmed by the defiant amoralism of the diggers and the ruthless and distrustful nature of the Binandele. The feebleness of their achievement was due partly to lack of manpower, and partly to a loss of sympathy between the missionaries and those they sought to reform.

AN even more vivid clash of interests occurred in Milne Bay, where commerce competed openly with Christianity for the Papuan soul. Here, where planters rapidly grew in influence (in 1887 there were four foreign settlers, in 1894, 28, by 1907 there were 170)⁵¹ the potential for vigorous opposition to the churches was great. Not all were British: Greeks, West Indians, Malays, Fijians, Loyalty Islanders of mixed race or pure stock were sprinkled along the beaches, and many of these lived with women of the Tavara people. 'I think sometimes that serpent in the garden must have been a white serpent' sighed Chalmers after a trip to the Bay. 'If I had my way I would keep all whites away from the natives, but, the mischief is the natives worship them as gods, particularly the [native] women.'⁵²

At Kwato, believing that New Guinea was becoming a receptacle for the criminal population of Queensland, Abel justified missionary

50 M. Stone-Wigg, *Book of Cuttings*, nd, ABM; see also C.A.W. Monckton, *op. cit.*, 173.

51 C.A.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 4 September 1907.

52 J. Chalmers to J. Hutchins, New Guinea, 18 May 1887, PL.

commerce on the grounds that the only traders with whom he competed were criminals.⁵³ There were two murderers, a man who had raided villages, and a brothel-keeper. The latter, a West Indian named Joe-One-Arm (Joe Tanby) was gaoled in 1902 after Abel complained that he had allowed a white man, George Klotz, to rape a small girl thrice while four Papuans held the girl down.⁵⁴ On the same day as the Methodists arrived at Samarai aboard the Lord of the Isles, MacGregor found a Greek trader covered with syphilitic sores 'too loathsome [sic] to be carried on board ship or put in prison'.⁵⁵ Such unsavoury episodes heavily blurred missionary thinking about the value of commercial development; and Churchmen began freely depicting all foreign settlers in the worst colours. 'I have met some bad men in New Guinea' wrote the Anglican rector of Samarai, F.W. Ramsay, 'but not any as bad as these fellows. I should like to tackle them every day until I put the fear of God into their hearts.'⁵⁶

Clearly, if there were any place in which the dialectic between religious and economic strategy were to burst into open conflict, that place was Milne Bay. In June 1901 a miner named McLean was found with a pickaxe in his body.⁵⁷ The accused men, Jack Morley and Harry Lindsay, were acquitted and a Maivara prostitute, Bi, sentenced to two years' gaol for the murder. Shortly afterwards Abel claimed that there had been a miscarriage of justice and in the name of the Maivara natives petitioned for a reopening of the case.⁵⁸ In August Abel further alleged that a posse of armed traders led by Lindsay and Stephen Woolf⁵⁹ had shot several Milne Bay villagers for theft, driven others into the bush, and burnt thirty-eight houses at Gamadaudau to the ground.

53 C.W. Abel, Diary, 19 August 1901; C.W. Abel, Aim and Scope..., 8, 15-16.

54 Ibid.; C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 7 February 1903, PL.

55 W. MacGregor, Diary, 12 June 1891, ANL.

56 F.W. Ramsay to M. Stone-Wigg, Samarai, 8 January 1906, DA.

57 See F.R. Barton to G.R. Le Hunte, Samarai, 23 June 1901, CAO/CRS/G121; C.W. Abel, Diary, 25 June 1901, KA.

58 C.W. Abel to M.H. Moreton, Kwato, 16 August 1901, PL; C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 4 August - 23 November 1901, PL; M.H. Moreton to A. Musgrave, Siai, 1 September 1901, CAO/CRS/G121.

59 See also C.A.W. Monckton, Some Experiences..., 261-3.

Abel declared that A.J. Symons, a former purser of the Merrie England and Assistant Resident Magistrate, had participated in the raid.⁶⁰

Abel's accusations were laid across a background of increasing acrimony between officials and missionaries. Since the Australian colonies subscribed to the cost of administering British New Guinea, most of MacGregor's and Le Hunte's deputies were Australians. Most divisional officers were believed by English missionaries to be unsympathetic to the identification between Lieutenant-Governor and Protestant interests. One official who aroused particular missionary suspicion was Winter, Chief Judicial Officer (1888-1902) whose social relations with Protestant missionaries were said to be almost wholly lacking in cordiality.⁶¹ Another was M.H. Moreton, Resident Magistrate at Samarai, who had aroused the wrath of F.W. Walker by arresting the teacher Biga Lebasi at Wagawaga.⁶² Moreton also suggested that Walker had fathered an illegitimate child,⁶³ and condemned the trading mission at Kwato in Christ's words in St Matthew, 'It is written my house shall be called a house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves.'⁶⁴ In 1900 Walker had requested Moreton's dismissal by the Colonial Office.

By the end of 1899, in spite of Moreton's competent handling of the Kiriwina crisis, Abel was also questioning the magistrate's capacity.⁶⁵ Abel at this time commanded considerable prestige in China Straits. He had been presented within the past month by a petition signed by forty-three residents asking for Protestant services as well as an inscribed Address expressing recognition of his pastoral services.⁶⁶ In August 1901 Abel met Moreton and Monckton and threatened public exposure unless the Milne Bay affray was re-examined. Realizing the seriousness of the situation, Monckton spoke of resigning his

60 C.W. Abel to F.P. Winter, Kwato, 8 November 1901, KA; C.A.W. Monckton, op. cit., 261.

61 See F.W. Walker, Diary, 27 October 1888, PJ.

62 F.W. Walker to G.R. Le Hunte, Kwato, 11 November 1899, CAO/CRS/G121; F.W. Walker to A.H. Symons, Kwato, 13 February 1900, CAO/CRS/G121.

63 For correspondence in the Moreton-Walker dispute, see CAO/CRS/G121, January 1900.

64 F.W. Walker to G.R. Le Hunte, Kwato, 24 July 1900, CAO/CRS/G121.

65 C.W. Abel, Diary, 6 November 1899, KA.

66 Addresses to C.W. Abel, 1 October - 6 December 1899.

commission and Moreton hurriedly left for Port Moresby to discuss the matter with Australian friends, including Winter.⁶⁷ Abel's jubilation was tinged with his abrasive regard for the colonials: 'I'll sweep the Bay clean of these blackguards' he swore to R.W. Thompson, 'and the natives and Samarai will thank me for it.'⁶⁸ The natives of Milne Bay were probably on Abel's side. Their relations with the Orokaiva-Binandele who dominated Monckton's Constabulary were unsatisfactory throughout the colonial period. The Massim police at that time were embroiled in a dispute with the Binandele constabulary, whom they had called 'ignorant bushmen'. Smarting under the insult, the Binandele were, in their words, 'digging a pit for a pig'⁶⁹ when Monckton's patrol embarked on its trip to bring in Massim witnesses for the judicial inquiry.

In September 1901 Abel had his way, and Woolf was arrested at Cape Rodney.⁷⁰ Three weeks later, Morley, Lindsay, Carlson, Woolf and Gray were committed to the Central Court after the hearing of affidavits by thirty Massim witnesses. Feeling by this time was running strongly against Abel in Samarai. A subscription fund was opened to bring Woolf's defence counsel from Queensland;⁷¹ Abel was sued on a minor charge by a resident; and when the missionary stepped into the township he was protected against friends of Woolf by a guard of Papuan boatmen.⁷² A month later Stone-Wigg wrote to MacGregor's successor, Le Hunte, on the subject of magistrates and the treatment of Papuans, protesting against 'the bias of the Government officers in the direction of regarding [Papuans] as an inferior type of humanity'.⁷³

Abel was vindicated. The trial which was held led to the gaoling of Woolf and the ruin of several reputations. Winter gave sentence amid loud expressions of sympathy in the courtroom for the accused:

67 C.W. Abel, Diary, 15 August 1901, KA; M.H. Moreton to A. Musgrave, 1 September 1901, CAO/CRS/G121; C.A.E. Monckton, Further Adventures..., 167ff.

68 C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 7 February 1903, PL.

69 C.A.W. Monckton, op. cit., 258-9.

70 C.A.W. Monckton to A. Musgrave, 10 November 1901, CAO/CRS/G91.

71 C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 23 November 1901, KA; see also C.A.W. Monckton, op. cit., 258-62.

72 C.C. Abel, Interview, Port Moresby, 5 June 1972; see also C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 6 September 1901, PL.

73 M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 6 December 1901, DA.

Woolf indignantly slanged the Judge for having singled him out for punishment and letting the others, especially Symons, off free... a man called out, 'Come on Steve, take it like a man, the bloody missionary has got home on you for once.' These are Sir Francis Winter's words: 'Racial feeling is so general and so strong in this country, that I cannot regard the defendant morally culpable in taking the life of a native.' 74

Winter's judgment pleased neither the missionaries nor the traders. The L.M.S., who had warmly commended the leniency of his treatment of the Papuan murderers of Amedeo Giulianetti, a magistrate in the Gulf,⁷⁵ reversed their opinion of the Chief Judicial Officer. R.W. Thompson characterised Winter's as 'the worst type of colonial opinion about natives'.⁷⁶

Meanwhile, the Anglican Mission had not been idle, and in December 1901 Henry Newton laid a charge against a junior officer, Yaldwyn, for rape.⁷⁷ Although the magistrate Monckton acquitted Yaldwyn, Stone-Wigg immediately requested Le Hunte to order the officer's dismissal.⁷⁸ At an executive council meeting aboard the Merrie England Yaldwyn was dismissed, Moreton transferred, Symons removed to a clerkship in Port Moresby, and Maguire, a government employee, dismissed. To the missionaries, the most gratifying result was the announcement of Winter's resignation a week later. The Chief Judicial Officer had intimated his desire to retire before the trial, but jubilant Protestants attributed it to the Samarai miscarriage of justice.⁷⁹

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- 74 C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Burradoo, 17 March 1902, PL. According to another report, what Winter said was 'Racial feeling might be wrong, but there it was, and it had to be reckoned with.' NGDC Minutes, 20 March 1902, PL.
- 75 H.M. Dauncey to R.W. Thompson, Delena, 27 November 1901, PL.
- 76 R.W. Thompson to W.G. Lawes, London, 6 June 1902, WOL; see also W.G. Lawes to R.W. Thompson, Vatorata, 1 August 1902, PL.
- 77 C.A.W. Monckton, op. cit., 264-6.
- 78 M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 4 December 1901; NGM AR 1901-2, 20. In Monckton's words, 'The Governor's minute was short and sweet. "R.M., North-Eastern Division, dismiss Yaldwyn at once".' C.A.W. Monckton, op. cit., 266.
- 79 F.W. Walker to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 22 January 1902. S.W. Griffith to G.R. Le Hunte, Brisbane, 1 July 1901, CAO/CRS/G121; see also C.A.W. Monckton, op. cit., 266.

THE controversy in Milne Bay had barely subsided when another crisis occurred on the north-eastern coast. This time the Anglican Mission was embroiled in an affray involving C.A.W. Monckton. Born in New Zealand, but professing an ingenuous preference for well-bred Englishmen, Monckton had come to New Guinea in search of adventure in 1895. A capable and intelligent officer, he handled his commission with a soldier's flair for discipline and a hatred of weakness and effeminacy.⁸⁰ After 1901 Monckton's relations with the aboriginal population, praised initially for its restraint, began to be marked by increasing severity.⁸¹ As the pioneer resident magistrate within the Anglican sphere, he provided the Churchmen with their first practical problem in the ethics of paternal responsibility.

Surviving an attempt by Cape Nelson natives on his life by poisoning, Monckton set out in November 1901 to conduct a foray into the Agaiambu country of the Musa River, and there won his first colours on the field of battle. The advance of his column was resisted and the constabulary killed two men on the river whose bodies were devoured by crocodiles. Next a charge was ordered, which the officer recorded: 'fired straight into the mass of men ahead of us at a range of about 15 feet... truly a bloody three minutes' work'.⁸² Ten were recorded killed. Le Hunte's successor, C.S. Robinson, was deeply impressed by Monckton's martial ability, and wrote with ecstasy that his enforcement of law was 'marvellous to contemplate'.⁸³

Monckton's efficiency was due partly to his Binandele constabulary, whose fighting talents had been enlisted by the Government and improved with the exchange of spears for rifles. About to fire on villages in the D'Entrecasteaux, Monckton's Binandele began to 'flop home the breech blocks of their Sniders, and to whimper like a pack of eager hounds'.⁸⁴ In May 1903 a report was received at Cape Nelson of the murder of a half-caste trader named Jackson by the Paiwa tribesmen,

80 See C.A.W. Monckton, *op. cit.*, 41, 157, 250-2; see also C.A.W. Monckton, *Last Days...*, 80.

81 See C.A.W. Monckton, *Last Days...*, 7.

82 C.A.W. Monckton to M.H. Moreton, Cape Nelson, 6 November 1901, CAO/CRS/G91.

83 C.S. Robinson, Diary, 22 May 1903, PNGA.

84 C.A.W. Monckton, *Some Experiences...*, 96.

who had long been a source of trouble in Goodenough Bay.⁸⁵ Having received an armoury of bayonets,⁸⁶ and eager to test their efficiency in hand-to-hand fighting, Monckton led the constabulary under Sergeant Barigi and Corporal Oia to Paiwa. Monckton's subsequent obfuscation in his book,⁸⁷ and his attempts to shift blame for the massacre that followed, did not dim his responsibility for the more discreditable part of the episode.

The police charged with the bayonet and a fight began [which] lasted until sunset, it was much too dark for firearms to be used... Several duels took place between single constables and single natives in each case with the one result, the constable turned... and jumping in bayoneted his opponent. As the sun sank ... the village presented a dreadful sight 18 men lying dead in a space of 100 feet. The police told me that several others had been more or less severely wounded. 88

Several village women were then raped by victorious Orokaiva police, and the bodies of the eighteen massacred men were lashed by Sergeant Barigi to pieces of coral and thrown into the sea. It was then discovered that Jackson was alive and that he had merely been assaulted.

Monckton's raid took place during a change of government, and investigations were overshadowed by C.S. Robinson's accession and broader political arrangements for the transfer of British New Guinea to the Commonwealth. Robinson agreed with Monckton that to 'inflict a short and sharp punishment'⁸⁹ on troublesome tribes like the Paiwa was the most expeditious policy. He considered that the northern tribes in particular had been treated with too much clemency in the past: he determined to rectify this deficiency in the future.⁹⁰ Robinson's short career as Acting Administrator was greatly influenced

85 M.H. Moreton to A. Musgrave, Samarai, 5 November 1898, CAO/CRS/G121.

86 G.R. Le Hunte to C.A.W. Monckton, Port Moresby, 21 May 1903. In 1904 the ANC had a complement of 50 men. BNG AR 1904-5, 34.

87 C.A.W. Monckton, New Guinea Recollections, 75-78.

88 C.A.W. Monckton, 'Patrol to Paiwa', in G.R. Le Hunte to C.A.W. Monckton, 21 May 1903, CAO/CRS/G91; C.W. Abel, Diary, Kwato, 4 August 1904, KA.

89 C.S. Robinson, Diary, 2 December 1903, PNGA.

90 Ibid., 23 July 1903.

by a belief in retributive justice,⁹¹ and he was inclined to think leniently of an error of judgment by the magistrate at Cape Nelson.⁹²

The Anglican Mission adopted a curiously impartial position in view of its professed aim of protecting the weak against the strong. The report of Jackson's 'murder' had been made by the Island missionary Dick Bourke; the judicial enquiry was conducted through Richmond Diala, an Anglican convert;⁹³ both Tomlinson and Newton declined to make an issue of the affray, and were claimed by Monckton as supporters.⁹⁴ The Government Treasurer, David Ballantine, expressed the perplexity of many about the silence of the Churchmen:

The Judge is singularly apathetic about the bayonetting of helpless, innocent natives of PAIWA. I cannot understand the reticence of the Anglican Mission about this massacre. They had a great deal to say two years ago when a Government officer [Yaldwyn] had sexual intercourse with a native girl and when another officer wantonly takes the lives of 17 natives, they are silent. 95

The neutrality of the Anglicans was partly accounted for by Stone-Wigg's absence in England during the Paiwa massacres. In 1901 he had vigorously protested to Le Hunte that officers sometimes 'screened one another', a claim which Le Hunte politely but firmly rejected.⁹⁶ Stone-Wigg had an unusual ascendancy over Monckton who in turn admired the bishop's patrician rule over his diocese. He delighted the bishop when, having scaled Mount Albert Edward, the highest peak in the country, he gave the name Mount Stone-Wigg to a slightly lower eminence of 11,000 feet in the Owen Stanleys.⁹⁷ Monckton believed that

91 However, Robinson referred privately to the 'harrowing details' of Monckton's expedition. C.S. Robinson, Diary, 13 October 1903, PNGA.

92 See C.S. Robinson to A. Musgrave, Port Moresby, 17 October 1903, CAO/CRS/G91; C.S. Robinson, Diary, 30 June 1903, 20 July 1903, PNGA.

93 C.S. Robinson to M. Stone-Wigg, Giwa, 15 December 1903, DA.

94 C.A.W. Monckton, New Guinea Recollections, 79-84.

95 D. Ballantine to C.W. Abel, Samarai, 17 December 1903, KA; C.W. Abel, Diary, 11 March 1904, KA. The Anglicans made a brief report of the Paiwa incident which omitted Monckton's name. NGM AR 1902-3, 24.

96 G.R. Le Hunte to M. Stone-Wigg, Samarai, 5 September 1901, DA.

97 Register, Adelaide, 10 November 1906, 2; C.A.W. Monckton, Last Days..., 69.

the Anglican bishop would stand out 'in brilliant prominence' when the history of the land was written.⁹⁸ The bishop was no threat to Monckton.

Two Anglican clergy, Wilfred Abbot and Copland King, saw Monckton in quite a different light. Abbot complained bitterly that Monckton had asked for the daughter of the Wanigela village constable - 'who is a very pretty girl' - and had the constable arrested when the request was declined. Monckton's police once descended on Wanigela to arrest a thief and had looted houses and gardens instead.⁹⁹ Thereafter, the missionary habitually fired a rifle in the air to warn the Wanigela people of the magistrate's approach. In March 1903 King stumbled into an affair involving three magistrates and a Binandele girl on the Mamba river. Monckton's deputy on the goldfields, A.L. Walker, contrived to take sexual advantage of the girl, Bogabai, by sending her husband Iaide on an errand. King was told that both Monckton and Oelrichs had also had sexual intercourse with Bogabai.¹⁰⁰ In 1903 C.S. Robinson held an inquiry into the affair. Despite the insistence of R. Hislop, Monckton's assistant (1902-3), that the charges were true, Robinson accepted Bogabai's words that Monckton was blameless.¹⁰¹ Monckton had been a respectable trader; he valued his friendship with Stone-Wigg; and, judging by his books, he was a good raconteur. But none of these things justified the defence the Anglicans gave him. Some time after the Bogabai affair the bishop helped him secure a transfer from New Guinea.¹⁰² What to do about Monckton had become a matter of embarrassing delicacy.

The Anglican assumption of influence over political circles led its missionaries seldom to question openly the integrity of

98 C.A.W. Monckton, Some Experiences..., viii.

99 When he [Monckton] states to my teacher [Nogar] that he is about to bring all the Kairi Kairi to march against my natives from inland whilst he and his police attack them from the shore, I think it is time to appeal to a higher power on behalf of my children.

W.H. Abbot to G.R. Le Hunte, Wanigela, 23 November 1900, CAO/CRS/G91.

100 C. King to H. Newton, Mamba, 17 March 1903, DA; see also D.F. Wetherell, 'A History...', 222.

101 C.S. Robinson, Diary, 29 July 1903, PNGA.

102 C.A.W. Monckton to M. Stone-Wigg, Buna, 6 March 1907, DA.

magistrates: Church of England politics were, above all, internal politics.¹⁰³ They went about their business baptizing, comforting the sick and giving medicine, while all the while embroiled in a moral crisis from which not even their bishop's cordial relations with the Governor could extricate them. By avoiding open confrontation with the Administration, the mission shifted temporarily from its trusteeship to a more partisan role. In 1903 David Ballantine, with unconscious irony, was advocating the appointment of an official Protector of Natives, the role the Anglican Mission had always regarded as its own.¹⁰⁴

C.S. ROBINSON went to Goaribari Island in western New Guinea in March 1904. His object was to recover the skulls of the murdered missionaries Chalmers and Oliver Tomkins; and to effect this he induced a group of Dopima villagers to board the Merrie England. The attempt by the constabulary, some of whom were kinsmen of the Kiwai helpers massacred with Chalmers, to seize the Goaribari visitors resulted in a mêlée in which about eight of the latter were killed. Robinson himself took part in the scuffle and was seen taking aim with a rifle.¹⁰⁵

Fortified by the success of his bluff tactics which had made magistrates truckle in Milne Bay,¹⁰⁶ Abel went to Brisbane and demanded a Royal Commission. Perhaps Abel was encouraged by Deakin's personal invitation to 'keep me in touch with events in our new possession'.¹⁰⁷ In any case, the result was a sensation. In Monckton's words, 'The Press fairly howled for the head of Robinson, as did also certain Australian members of Parliament... happy comparisons were drawn between the Merrie England and the "blood-stained Carl, brig".'¹⁰⁸

103 Stone-Wigg was a mayor's son and his metropolitan, St Clair Donaldson of Brisbane, was son of the first Premier of N.S.W.

104 D. Ballantine to C.W. Abel, Samarai, 17 December 1903, KA.

105 APP, 1904, 'Report of the Royal Commission on the Affray at Goaribari Island...', 18; C.A.W. Monckton, Some Experiences..., 246ff; C.W. Abel, Diary, 6 May 1904, KA. Originally the number of Goaribari killed was reported as much greater than 8.

106 C.W. Abel, Diary, 6 May 1904, KA.

107 A. Deakin to C.W. Abel, Melbourne, 10 December 1902; see also A. Deakin to C.W. Abel, Melbourne, 7 July 1902, KA.

108 C.A.W. Monckton, Some Experiences..., 248; C.W. Abel, Diary, 29 May 1904, KA.

Australia is coming in; [wrote Abel] a happy-go-lucky, free and easy, Jack's-as-good-as-his-master type of enormous self-conceit... Papua in ten years from now will be a part of White Australia. We are worse than fools if we see these changes coming... and do nothing to secure something for the natives now while it is possible. 112

The proclamation of Australian sovereignty in Papua was anticipated by the visit of the Royal Commissioners who made their report in 1907. The Commissioners, declaring that the hour had struck for the commencement of a vigorous forward policy, so far as white settlement was concerned,¹¹³ accepted the maxim that security of land tenure was the key to economic development. What bothered the missionaries was an interpretation of Erskine's proclamation of 1884 which they believed had locked Papuan lands away forever from foreign occupation.¹¹⁴ The Commissioners however dismissed Lawes' notion of a solemn pledge made by Erskine as 'due either to a misconception of the proper position', or 'an erroneous construction of a promise to the Papuan natives in the past'.¹¹⁵

Believing that the Papuans were about to be swept away on a flood of compulsory land purchase, Stone-Wigg said the Federal Government was 'on the brink of committing a most terrible breach of faith with the natives of New Guinea'.¹¹⁶ Bromilow and Abel compared the effects of the advent of Commonwealth rule over Papua with that of Governor Phillip in 1788 upon the Australian Aborigines. Nearly all missionary writers were suspicious of the philanthropic tone of the Report and attributed sinister motives to 'keeping natives alive'.¹¹⁷ Abel told J.C. Watson, parliamentary leader of the Labour Party, that 'a large number of people were doubtful... as to whether the labour

112 C.W. Abel to T. Wilson, Kwato, 10 April 1908, KA.

113 APP, 1907, 'Report of the Royal Commission...', x. The Commissioners were J.A.L. Mackay, W.E. Parry-Okeden, and C.E. Herbert.

114 See W.E. Bromilow, 'New Guinea' in A. Colwell, ed., A Century in the Pacific, 538.

115 APP, 1907, 'Report...', xxvi-xxvii.

116 See AMMR, 4 July 1907; see also J. King to H.M. Dauncey, Melbourne, 19 February 1907, KA.

117 See APP, 1907, 'Report...', xiv.

party saw any place in any part of the world for a man with a dark skin'.¹¹⁸ According to Joseph King, Australasian agent of the L.M.S., the Australian motive was to use the black man, even if benevolently, for the white man's benefit and to turn the Papuan into an industrious peasant labourer.¹¹⁹

The Royal Commissioners spent very little time in considering missionary evidence, but they were far from oblivious of the importance of Christianity in the new Papua. Their assumptions were embedded in the philosophy of economic development. Had the Papuans learnt from missionaries the habits of obedience and industry?¹²⁰ Did the missions inculcate habits of thrift?¹²¹ Had the natives been taught to respect the white man? Had they been made useful?¹²² The Commissioners did not address such questions to missionaries - they might have proved troublesome about basic assumptions - but rather to traders and planters. J.A.K. Mackay doubted whether the missions had 'made any real impression on the natives' and based his pragmatism on the premise that it was nonsense to suppose that Papuans could ever be converted to Christianity.¹²³ Consequently, much emphasis emerged in the Commissioners' enquiries upon industrial missions as a sure way of forming 'character' in the native of a kind that would make him a good servant of the European.¹²⁴

A principal doctrine implicit in the Royal Commissioners' report was that missions were a religious extension of imperial government. Religious achievement without government protection was 'well nigh impossible',¹²⁵ and were the Commonwealth to withdraw from Papua, the missions would have to cease work. But the Commissioners were

118 C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Melbourne, 1 May 1902, KA. Watson however reassured Abel that this view was not correct, and Abel left the meeting saying 'it will be the labour party who will ultimately save us'.

119 J. King to H.M. Dauncey, Melbourne, 19 February 1907, KA; see also Courier, Brisbane, 19 July 1898.

120 APP, 1907, 'Report...', 4.

121 Ibid., 10.

122 Ibid., 10-12.

123 J.A.K. Mackay, Across Papua..., 38, 40.

124 See APP, 1907, 'Report...', viii, xv, xxxviii.

125 Ibid., xxxix.

careful to add that the preservation of the comity of missions was not one of the functions of imperial custodianship. The 'spheres of influence' system might develop, under 'fanatical or obstinate men' into a form of temporal power rivalling secular authority. Fearing perhaps that missionaries might become possible agents of sedition, the Commissioners decided that the spheres of influence system was 'a purely private arrangement' and was not stamped in any way with the aegis of official support.¹²⁶

The Royal Commissioners clearly intended to cut once and for all the gordian knot between the Administration and Protestantism. Eastern missionaries, fearing sinister Roman Catholic influences behind the Report, were fearful lest the Protestantism of Scratchley and MacGregor be forgotten.¹²⁷ They rejected as a fanciful invention the Commissioners' claim that their work would collapse without Australia's imperial protection. The only danger from Australian withdrawal, said Stone-Wigg sarcastically, would be to remove the danger of an unsympathetic Administration.¹²⁸ Had not the London mission preceded the arrival of the British flag by sixteen years? The connexion between Christianity and imperialism implicit in the Report was rejected by the churches with indignation. According to the Anglican bishop, the Catholic Church pursued its divine commission to preach the gospel to every creature independently of the fortunes of imperial politics.

Ecclesiastical issues, however, aroused less indignation than the matter of land rights. In a joint petition, the heads of the three eastern missions reminded Australians of the Maori wars in the New Zealand colony. They insisted upon a literal interpretation of Erskine's speech, referring to the Commissioners' recommendation to purchase compulsorily land 'not required' by the natives as evidence of a 'broken pledge'. This, they declared, might lead to 'a race cleavage of which in our day we may never see the finish, and which may lead to the horrors of bloodshed, reprisals and "dispersion".'¹²⁹ With some emotion H.M. Dauncey wrote that he would 'not stand by and

126 Ibid., xl.

127 See J. King to A. Hunt, Melbourne, 10 December 1908, MH.

128 NGM AR, 1907, 16.

129 AMMR, 4 July 1907.

see the native helped out of existence as he has been in Australia'.¹³⁰ In 1907 the L.M.S. missionaries determined to create public sentiment in Australia to secure for Papuans the rights they thought had been promised when their country became a British protectorate.

Neither missionary nor planter invoked the symbol of consultation with Papuan villagers. In 1884 Erskine had carefully explained the idea of a protectorate to over 100 Papuans during interviews, who Lawes thought had grasped the meaning of annexation.¹³¹ But the transfer of British New Guinea to another custodian in 1906 was not the subject of discussion, although Barton read in Motuan a speech telling Port Moresby natives not to be alarmed at the change.¹³² Villagers near government stations realized that the dimdim who ruled from a foreign country were involved in an obscure deliberation which touched their lives. 'What way belong new government?' asked a Suau headman timorously to a magistrate, 'he good fellow?'¹³³

If ultimate political issues presented an enigma, eastern Papuans were keenly aware of one issue - that land was involved. Land, that inheritance of birth, was not a question about which a Papuan entertained any confusion. Maclay once asserted that 'every yard of land, and every tree on it, is owned by some one, and the natives would never dream of selling it'.¹³⁴ Abel's assertion to a European audience was that

Our first thought with regard to the South Seas is not the Commercial question as to how much they can produce in Copra or Cocoa or rubber but how can we secure them permanently to their aboriginal owners. 135

Abel did not exhort his congregations to take up the struggle against Australian land speculators, but he came close to it. Setting the issue in the biblical imagery of the Promised Land, he communicated to them his fear of a few Australians grabbing all the best land in

130 H.M. Dauncey to R.W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 27 March 1907, PDC Letter Book, MH. For George Brown's interpretation of a similar 'solemn assurance' to the Fijian chiefs in 1874, see Telegraph, Sydney, 23 January 1915; P. France, Charter of the Land, 36ff.

131 SMH, 4 December 1884.

132 TP AR 1906-7, 7.

133 RMED, 19 October 1907, CAO/CRS/G91.

134 H.A. Romilly, The Western Pacific..., 226.

135 C.W. Abel, draft of KEA, ms., nd, Kwato, KA.

Milne Bay. Shaken up by his rhetoric, many villagers decided to avert the crisis they believed was at hand. Kwato converts posted vernacular notices on trees between Gibara and Wagawaga warning villagers not to sell land to the foreigner.¹³⁶ In other areas, villagers moved down from the hills or from beach villages, erected dummy houses, and departed, leaving a group in nominal occupation. The result was that one property agent reported it was impossible to acquire land anywhere in Milne Bay or China Straits without Abel's permission.¹³⁷

Few manoeuvres could have more vexed magistrates who subscribed to the Royal Commissioners' philosophy of development than the thwarting of land transactions by Papuans. A dummy village built near Taupota in 1905 by the Agonai hill tribes was a 'very glaring instance' said A.M. Campbell, 'of how the Papuans in this division, at all events, will try to block European settlement in the country'.¹³⁸ The blocking of land sales however led to calamitous results in one Milne Bay village: a Kwato mission teacher announced that 'all the whites were going to take all the native land'.¹³⁹ The villagers forthwith killed their pigs to present a scorched earth policy before the 'invaders'. Having liquidated their property, they were ready for the speculators and refused to part with their land at any price.¹⁴⁰

Milne Bay was not the only place in which an 'understanding' existed between European missionaries and natives to defeat the provisions of the Royal Commissioners' report. The New Guinea islands were also involved. The Reverend Benjamin Danks, Brown's successor in the Wesleyan mission office, believed that:

136 RMED OJ, 22 August 1911, CAO/CRS/G91. See also C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Koeabule, 15 September 1912, KA. In 1903 Biga Lebasi had been scolded by a magistrate for instructing villagers at Wagawaga not to sell land to the Government. RMED OJ, 16 January 1903, CAO/CRS/G91.

137 C.W. Abel, LD, 24 August 1912; C.W. Abel to C.C. Abel, Kwato, 16 October 1919, KA.

138 RMED OJ, 21 August, 17 October 1905, CAO/CRS/652B PT-664B.

139 RMED OJ, 6 October 1907, CAO/CRS/652B PT-664B.

140 Ibid., 13 October 1907.

Unless we can train the natives... to some knowledge of how to best utilize their great potential wealth in their land, they must simply be driven into reservations... until we shall have quite lost our opportunity to save these people from being practically crushed out of existence. 141

The link between patrons in Sydney and Papuan preachers was the mission station at Dobu. On Fergusson Island opposite Dobu mission, a planter named Olsen applied for ten acres of land. The villagers immediately descended to make taro gardens across the land, which Campbell said was 'a thing they had never done before within the memory of man',¹⁴² in order to prevent Campbell declaring it waste and vacant. On Teste Island the villagers related how the Reverend Guy Burgess had urged them to reclaim the island of Anakarukarua which they had sold.¹⁴³

The extent of missionary influence in retarding economic growth is obscure. Bromilow described as 'awful liars'¹⁴⁴ natives who credited him with scorched earth instructions; Abel and Burgess claimed, probably sincerely, that they had not told Papuans to adopt these tactics. But they certainly approved of land blocking and protected villagers who exceeded reasonable limits in bringing it about.¹⁴⁵ Campbell was regarded by missionaries as one of the most humane officers in the Administration. As he had repudiated some of the actions of his predecessors - Moreton, Symons and Monckton - Abel considered him as 'the best friend the Papuan has in the Government'.¹⁴⁶ Yet these systematic attempts to prevent land expropriation were often made at

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- 141 B. Danks to M.K. Gilmour, Sydney, 12 November 1909. See also B. Danks to J.R. Osborne, Sydney, 2 November 1909, MOM 230. The Methodist Synod of 1911 petitioned the Papuan government to protect islands in eastern Papua used as camping grounds and fishing places. NG Synod Minute 24, 1911, SA.
- 142 RMED OJ, 21 September 1905, CAO/CRS/G91.
- 143 RMED PR, 14 June 1912, CAO/CRS/G91.
- 144 W.E. Bromilow to RM, Dobu, 9 January 1905, CAO/CRS/G91.
- 145 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Koeabule, 15 September 1912, KA. Abel once reported a patrol officer to the government for flogging a Papuan who had obstructed the sale of land in Milne Bay. The officer was dismissed. W. Williamson, Notebook 1920, KA.
- 146 C.W. Abel, LD, 14 October 1912; see also C. Vaughan to F.P. Winter, Samarai, 5 August 1902, CAO/CRS/G121; C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 31 July 1902, PL.

the behest of mission-educated Papuans; and the fact that villagers thoroughly understood the provisions of the land laws suggests a strong missionary connection.

Dummy villages, scorched earth tactics, and token horticulture were three means by which Massim villagers resisted the encroachment of a foreign proprietorship of landed settlers. Another direct method was a considerable investment in land by the mission at Kwato. To prevent the Massim becoming what he called a 'landless wandering out-cast' Abel secured wide land interests in Milne Bay which would be worked by peasant tenants. He would market their produce at Samarai. Familiar place names on the shores of Milne Bay attest to Abel's land interests. Bisimaka ('Mr McFarlane', Abel's land at Wagawaga), Dago ('he ran away'), Duagaibu (land 'given free' to Abel), Vasaloni (purchased in 'the peace' of 1918), Dim Dim creek (foreigners' creek), Kanakope (anagram of 'Kwato Association')¹⁴⁷ provide oral clues as to the circumstances and intention of land purchases by missionaries. There can be little doubt about the connection between Papuan and English missionary behaviour after the cession of Papua to the Federal Government.¹⁴⁸ Despite strenuous denial by missionaries of authorship of land blocking measures, the alliance between their converts and villagers assumed the proportions of an organized, though scattered, resistance movement.

The missionary reaction to land policies was part of a broader anxiety that the secular colonial thrust from Australia, contained successfully in 1884, had been only temporarily halted by the British interregnum. MacGregor's administration, with its humanitarian tincture, had lulled the missions into a false sense of security: here at last was the real threat which might engulf both the Papuan and his paternal missionary protector. Deprived of the British administrators

147 P. Frank, Interview, Ahioima, 27 May 1972; M. Dickson, Interview, Port Moresby, 16 June 1972; B. Abel to C.C. Abel, Kwato, 19 November 1933.

148 Abel's trusteeship of land by 1907 extended over the following sites: 235 acres at Loani, 100 acres at Salaoni purchased 1906, 72 acres at Giligili, 40 acres at Wagawaga on a 99 year lease, 10 acres at Rabi, 15 acres at Lilihoa, 10 acres at Higabai, 7 acres at Gwavili, 1 acre at Sariba. C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 4 September 1907. Later purchases were made at Wagawaga and Manawara. KEA 'Report for Quarter ending 31 March 1927', KA.

in whose shadow they had long felt free to proclaim colonial shortcomings from the rooftops, and forced to voice their dislike of Australian attitudes towards coloured races, Englishmen like C.W. Abel were in a remarkably uncomfortable position in 1907.

Anxious to avoid an open clash with the Commonwealth at the inauguration of Australian rule on 1 September 1906, the missions nevertheless long held that their prior occupancy had made them, in a special sense, custodians of native rights. But, in Joseph King's words, they also felt obliged 'to endeavour to use that responsibility in such a way as will secure the sympathy of the new legislators, who are henceforth to control the government of the Possession'.¹⁴⁹ Sectarianism added to their discomfort. The appointment of J.H.P. Murray, with his Irish Catholic background, had ended the Protestant lineage of Government House. 'The hand making the changes may be the hand of Esau (Labour Party),' wrote Dauncey, 'but the voice directing the changes is the voice of Jacob (Cardinal Moran), and there are dark days ahead of us.'¹⁵⁰ In 1907 the Protestant missions were probably more anxious than they had been since annexation.

In view of the augury, Murray's relations with eastern Papuan missions was one of unexpected harmony. That fear of Catholic power, which had troubled Protestant minds, was slowly dissipated by Murray's judicious actions. From the beginning his official activities assumed a pattern of church-going, school prize-giving, and a scrupulous avoidance of the sectarian appearance. Moreover, he became identified with officers such as Campbell, H.W. Champion and W.R. Humphries rather than with Monckton and Symons. By 1912 the A.B.M. Review was saying that the Australian government had proved itself a firm and powerful defender of native interests.¹⁵¹ When the sectarian dog-fight began to wane, Murray acquired in missionary eyes the high seriousness of

149 J. King to H.M. Dauncey, Melbourne, 19 February 1907, MH. Atlee Hunt, Secretary of the Department of External Territories, publicly criticized the Report as having not done anything like justice to the Missions. A.E. Hunt to W.E. Bromilow, Melbourne, 22 January 1907, 3 October 1907, SA.

150 H.M. Dauncey to R.W. Thompson, Delena, 28 June 1907, PL.

151 ABM Review, 1 August 1912.

Exeter Hall whose influence he had once deplored;¹⁵² and an Australian Catholic emerged in English Protestant minds as the Papuans' chosen protector.¹⁵³

No better instance of this alignment can be found than the missionary response to a settler campaign to have Murray removed in 1920. When advocates of a more aggressive colonial policy than Murray favoured were agreed on the necessity of his dismissal,¹⁵⁴ the Anglican and Protestant missions formed an alliance to support him.¹⁵⁵ The Combined Missions Conference which met at Kwato on 23 September 1920 was a polemical body, challenging the attempt by some settlers to depose Murray and create an ascendancy through an elected Legislative Council. The C.M.C. raised the issue of taxation without representation and argued that Papuans should be represented since they were also taxed.¹⁵⁶ The idea of a missionary assembly seems to have been that of Bishop Sharp but the organizing drive was more Abel's.¹⁵⁷

Whether the Australian government was influenced by the missionary lobby in rejecting the campaign against Murray is a matter for conjecture. The Papua Act of 1924 established a Legislative Council providing for a judicious blend of official, commercial and missionary nominees.¹⁵⁸ In their relief that the argument whether Papua was a good country for white men to exploit had evidently been contained, the missions began to put all their trust in Murray. At the same time the rising stature of the Lieutenant-Governor as a wise and benevolent

152 See J.H.P. Murray to G. Murray, Port Moresby, 16 December 1907, quoted in F. West, Selected Letters..., 37, 47-8.

153 See N. Goodall, A History..., 416; see also F. West, Hubert Murray..., 182ff.

154 See F. West, Hubert Murray..., 190-204.

155 Members of the C.M.C. were Abel and Gilmour, A.H. Scriven and A.W. Guy (Methodist); M.A. Warren and Henry Holland (Anglican). CMC Minutes, 23 September 1920, KA.

156 See ABM Minutes, 6 December 1920; F.V. Dowling to F. Lenwood, Melbourne, 30 September 1920, KA; W.E. Bromilow to A.J. Small, Dobu, 31 August 1920, FDC. On Murray's request Abel petitioned W.M. Hughes in London in 1921 against the settlers' proposal. C.W. Abel to W.M. Hughes, London, 20 August 1921, KA. See Appendix 4.

157 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Kwato, 19 April 1920, KA.

158 Papua Act, 29 (1), (2), (3). When the Papua Act of 1905 was amended in 1924, the Legislative Council was to consist of eight official and five unofficial members, one of which was to represent the Christian missions.

ruler began to be noticed abroad, to the gratification of officials and missionaries, the greater proportion of the latter now being Australian-born. In 1921 Abel, who had once pressed the case for protection of natives to such conclusions that he had heaped settlers' vilification on his head, ventured to say that in general the Australian commercial settler in Papua was a man who wished the native well.¹⁵⁹

Nevertheless, missionaries in the 1920s in rural Papua were aware that secular contact was making their work harder, and that the work was hardest in the towns of Samarai and Port Moresby.¹⁶⁰ So they did not want the 'unspoilt' native contaminated by the irreligion of the towns any more than settlers wanted their wives tainted with a black man's touch. Increasing contact between European women and Papuan servants seemed to endanger the aloofness that had prevailed between the sexes, and for this both Newton and A.J. Thompson, the Anglican rector of Samarai, blamed European women.¹⁶¹ Between 1914 and 1918 there had been two convictions for sexual offences by Papuan men upon European women; in the following two years three; and between 1922 and 1925 there had been eight convictions with two more cases pending as of 1 January 1926.¹⁶² Believing that the number of assaults by black men upon white women was increasing and ought to be diminished, the Legislative Council drew the somewhat hysterical conclusion that such offences must be punished with a whipping or death. Dauncey, the missionary nominee on the Council, supported the Ordinance.¹⁶³

No sooner had the Government published details of the White Women's Protection Ordinance than the C.M.C. was summoned to a meeting at Kwato on 8 March. With the threat to unseat Murray still fresh on their minds, missionaries were unlikely to have opposed outright a

159 C.W. Abel, 'The People of the Pacific...', in Occasional Paper of the LMS Laymen's Movement, no. 6, 1921, 10.

160 H. Newton, In Far New Guinea, 299.

161 H. Newton to I. Percy, Dogura, 10[?] September 1922, DA; A.J. Thompson, Lecture Notes in writer's possession.

162 Register of Criminal Cases, Central Court, Papua, vols. VII-VIII.

163 Legislative Council Debates, no. 1 of 1926, 1; TP AR 1925-6, 10-11; Amirah Inglis, 'The White Women's Protection Ordinance: A study in the history of Papua 1926-1934', unpub. MA thesis, ANU, 1972, 80ff; J.H.P. Murray to M. Murray, Port Moresby, 5 May 1926, quoted in F. West, ed., Selected Letters..., 119.

measure designed to stamp out immorality which emanated from Government House; yet in defining their attitude to the Ordinance, they were treading on ground where they probably felt least comfortable. Knowing that for a white man to commit rape on a Papuan woman was a capital offence under the Queensland Criminal code in force in Papua, two members of the C.M.C., Newton and Abel, had instituted proceedings against white men leading to acquittal in one case and conviction in the other.¹⁶⁴ Moreover, they knew that a village council meeting in Milne Bay had asked the Government's permission to beat adulterers with rods.¹⁶⁵ Having expressed confidence in Dauncey, the C.M.C. suggested that the Ordinance be extended to protect Papuan women as well:

carried unanimously -

That this conference... would respectfully ask the Government to make the punishment for offences against Papuan women more severe...

The conference feels very strongly that such action would have a good effect in showing that the Government is concerned with respect due to women, Papuan as well as white.

166

Thus the missions trifled with the Ordinance and blamed the indiscreet behaviour of European women for making it necessary; and the conscience which had once expressed Christian hatred of slavery and condemned the inhumanity of white men now saw the protection of their wives as its moral duty.

The chance of a clash between settlers and missionaries was diminished by the nomination of a missionary by Murray to the Legislative Council. From 1926 there were no attempts by the C.M.C. to sway the course of government policy apart from a vigorous missionary 'Amen' to Murray's opposition to the amalgamation of Papua with the Mandated Territory of New Guinea in 1939.¹⁶⁷ The beachcomber or digger who spent his time whoring and drinking, and the speculator who threatened to grab the Papuans' land, had given way to an orderly class of settler

164 See TP AR 1925-6, 10-11; C.A.W. Monckton, Some Experiences..., 263; see pp. 323, 326.

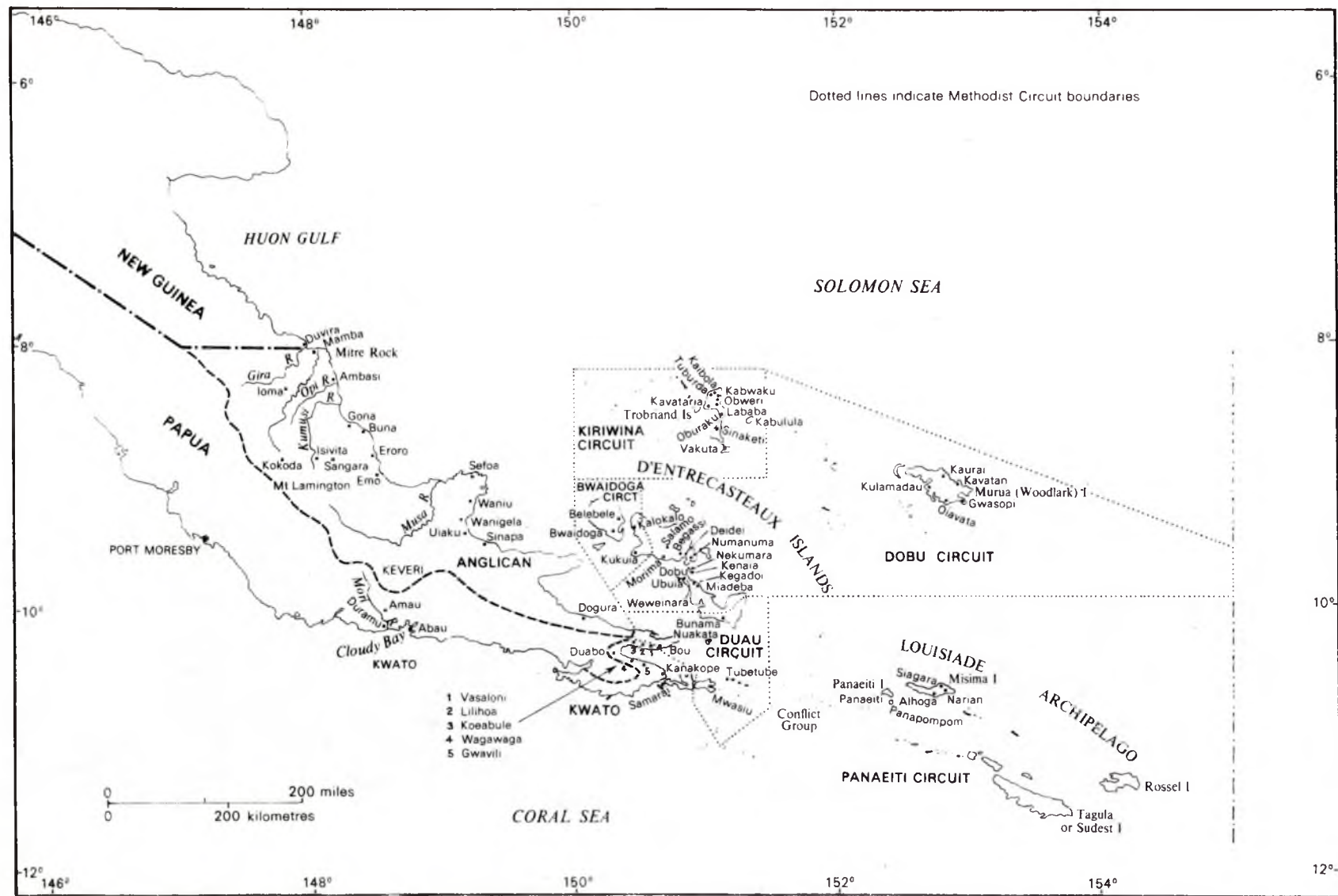
165 C.W. Abel, LD, 13 March(?) 1925, KA.

166 CMC Minutes, 8 March 1926, KA.

167 CMC Minutes, 17 February 1939; R.W. Abel to S. Porteous, Kwato, 2 April 1939; Minister External Territories to R.W. Abel, Canberra, 17 March 1939, KA; J.H.P. Murray to G. Murray, Sydney, 17 March 1939, quoted in F. West, op. cit., 225.

who stayed with his wife, was usually sober, and sometimes played cricket with the natives. In the villages the missions went about their business of baptisms, bible lessons and the cure of souls, until the eyes of an Anglican magistrate, Liston Blyth, misted over with a vision of recreating a society of squire and parson in Papua.¹⁶⁸ That high-mindedness and moral indignation with which some missionaries had once tangled with Australian settlers now reposed in the confidence that all was fair and good with the Murray regime.

168 Baniara Station Journal, 28 January 1920, CAO/CRS/G91.



MAP 3 ANGLICAN, METHODIST AND KWATO MISSIONS, 1942

V

EMERGING LEADERSHIP

CHAPTER XII

Papuan Elite - Kwato

WHEN the Kwato Mission was separated from the L.M.S. in 1918, its founder was able to reflect on the problems which he thought faced the Papuans and to attempt his own solutions. With the Covenant of the League of Nations printed in the prospectus of the Kwato Extension Association,¹ and the support of J.H.P. Murray, who accepted the principle of a 'sacred trust' for those peoples who could not yet stand on their own feet under the strenuous conditions of the modern world,² the Kwato Mission began to attract fairly widespread attention. This coincided with the period following the secession of the mission from the L.M.S. In 1918, proclaiming Kwato's goal for Papuans as providing 'a foothold in the world, a stake in the land of their birth, and continuity of place, life, and interest',³ Abel set out to develop a Christian élite which could cope under modern conditions.

Abel's plan rested on the assumption that converted Papuans would be the future leaders of their own people. The nucleus of the scheme lay in a group of Suau youths who arrived at Kwato in August 1891 - three boys, Josia Lebasi, Pari, Lihi, and a girl, Mireka.⁴ In 1893 there were twelve student teachers:⁵ by 1902 the Kwato school enrolled eighty children. In a land with no academic traditions, L.M.S. missionaries, who were establishing similar schools at other headstations, were adding the useful arts of carpentry, sewing and weaving to the curriculum as a way of giving their students a livelihood. At Kwato, practical skills were instilled into Papuans from the beginning. 'As to their scholarly proficiency I cannot speak', wrote MacGregor in 1895, 'but they certainly left on my mind the impression

1 C.W. Abel, Incorporated Kwato Extension Association; C.W. Abel, 'People of the Pacific...', in Occasional Paper of the L.M.S. Layman's Movement, 7-9.

2 See F. West, Hubert Murray..., 204ff.

3 C.W. Abel, draft of KEA, nd, KA.

4 Log of the East End District, 8 August 1891, PJ.

5 C.W. Abel to W.B. Ward, Sydney, 24 November 1893; C.H. Walker, Diary, 25 January 1896, KA.

that they were at least imbued with the right sort of missionary spirit - sincere, straightforward and practical.'⁶

Converts of earlier missionary enterprises were already working by this time in Milne Bay.⁷ At the turn of the century the most prominent converts were Vainebagi, Ketabu, Iakobo of Mita, Paolo Dilomi,⁸ Kago⁹ and Biga Lebasi, Josia's elder brother.¹⁰ The latter three had been converted by Island missionaries before Abel's arrival and their interpretation of Christian teaching was regarded by MacGregor as somewhat debased. When they preached at Samarai, he wrote:

the house was full but the preachers a mere farce.
One read something from the New Testament and I think
prayed a little. That was all. Both boys were hoarse.
No singing. I was dissatisfied with it. 11

Vainebagi and Ketabu were slightly more experienced, having been trained by Lawes. Taking with them little more than the Rarotongan Pi's translation of St Mark's gospel,¹² as well as the belief that tribal fighting must bow to the tapwaroro, these men were regarded by Abel simply as forerunners of those Papuan missionaries being trained at Kwato.

Paolo was by far the best known of the older converts, having been middle aged when the Island missionaries arrived in 1877.¹³ Lawes regarded Dilomi as 'a fine specimen of a native Xtian'¹⁴ and Abel thought his was 'truly a saintly life',¹⁵ though MacGregor was less impressed:

6 BNG AR 1895-6, 49.

7 See W.G. Lawes to F.R. Barton, Vatorata, 18 September 1904, KA.

8 For descriptions of Dilomi, see W.D. Pitcairn, Two Years..., 120-1; J. Chalmers, Work and Adventure..., 324; NGT, January 1926.

9 In 1886 Hillel Liljeblad, captain of the LMS vessel, contracted to employ 'Cable, a native of Gilligilli'. This was almost certainly Kago, Abel's teacher at Maivara. In 1891 C.H. Walker complained that the Maivara teacher was 'oppressing' the villagers. Kago appears to have renounced Christianity sometime before 1918. Contract, H. Liljeblad, 17 December 1886, CAO/CRS/183086; W. MacGregor, Diary, 15 January 1891, ANL; NGT, February 1929.

10 See pp. 223, 324.

11 W. MacGregor, Diary, 14 January 1892, ANL.

12 Published in 1892. W.G. Lawes to NGDC, Sydney, 30 August 1892, PL.

13 W.G. Lawes to F.R. Barton, Vatorata, 18 September 1904, KA.

14 W.G. Lawes to A. Hunt, Vatorata, 4 September 1905, PL.

15 C.W. Abel, LD, nd, KA.

'He giggles at everything and does not seem to have much authority.'¹⁶
 A more sophisticated convert was youthful Dagoela Manuwera of Suau. The son of a headman who had befriended Chalmers in 1877, Manuwera had been trained at Port Moresby and was almost certainly the teacher described by MacGregor in 1888 as 'a young man of great activity, earnest in his work, and very intelligent'.¹⁷ Soon afterwards Manuwera married Harieta, a Suau woman, and was appointed at a stipend of £12 p.a. to supervise the moral progress of his home village. He evidently found his task difficult:

The boys and girls are very ignorant and in great darkness and they have no desire to do better. Only a few people observe the Sabbath. The great multitude of them stay away from our services. But at all times we proceed with our mouths doing God's work openly before the people. We do not hide the goodness of God. 18

Harieta was more certain than her husband that the dimdim ways would prevail. 'Your ways are good', she wrote to some Australian supporters, 'you help us, and think of us; at some future time they will turn their minds. This is in the hands of our Master.'¹⁹

The clarity of Harieta's vision contrasted with the manner in which Abel groped his way towards a policy for his mission children and the ultimate secession of his mission from the L.M.S. In 1892 Lawes began outlining his plan for a central training institution occupying a position in New Guinea analogous to that at Malua in Samoa.²⁰ The language of the institution at Vatorata near Kapakapa, would be Motuan; from Vatorata would come a trained corps of teachers promoting the 'friendly peaceful intercourse between tribes'.²¹ Ever a district supporter, Abel maintained that Papuans could not be forced to learn Motuan or to write it. He disliked the idea of sending his best students away; instead, he said, Papuans should be taught in their own

16 W. MacGregor, Diary, 24 January 1892; see also BNG AR 1898-9, 14.

17 BNG AR 1888-9, xiii.

18 D. Manuwera to W.B. Ward, Savaia, 17 January 1896, KA.

19 H. Manuwera to W.B. Ward, Savaia, 31 May 1895, KA.

20 W.G. Lawes to NGDC, Sydney, 9 April 1892, PL.

21 H.M. Dauncey to W.G. Lawes, Port Moresby, 24 February 1892, MH.

dialects by their own people.²² Thus in eastern New Guinea the Melanesian tribal heritage was strengthened by the English Independent mentality of a Christian mission.

It was not until Abel and the L.M.S. came to a parting of the ways that he began to advance the idea of a privileged Papuan élite. But even the most casual visitor at Kwato in the 1890s could not fail to notice on Sundays the contrast between the villagers' pandanus leaves and grass skirts and the mission students' scarlet rami and brown Holland smocks.²³ If this, as one missionary wrote, was a sign of the gospel's power,²⁴ the use on Mondays of footballs and carpenters' tools pointed to another difference between mission students and the rank and file of the villages.

Such signs were evident wherever Papuans from Kwato gained a foothold. At Gwavili in eastern Milne Bay, Vainebagi built a mission house in 1898. Biga Lebasi and Ruta his wife went to nearby Wagawaga at the same time and established a mission at the place where Moresby had landed in 1871.²⁵ Maivara, at the head of the bay, was resistant to mission ideas until Kago landed there and built a school. Before 1901 a European had been killed at Maivara and another had been rescued by Ketabu, Kago's mission helper, with a spear protruding from his neck.²⁶ While some rejected dimdim influence as malignant, others copied Kwato ways. In 1901, over 100 Gwavili villagers were attending Vainebagi's sermons, some seventeen in the white calico of believers.

To the missionary family at Kwato, Papuans who went about naked except for a leaf or grass skirt belonged to the past. At Kwato, Papuan coiffures were replaced by neatly-parted hair;²⁷ clipped moustache, commanding voice and English accent were affected; and on the bodies of the more intense devotees of the master of Kwato, even the black bow tie, coat and thick leather belt appeared. Thus attired, they travelled on Sundays to neighbouring islands - Sariba, Logea and

22 C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 12 May 1893, PL; see also D. Lewis, 'London Missionary Society Education...', 10ff.

23 MC, December 1897.

24 M. Billing, Diary, 3 January 1895, MOM 150.

25 C.W. Abel, Savage Life..., 178.

26 *Ibid.*, 179.

27 C.C. Abel, Photograph collection, KA.

Sidea - where they talked to 'crowds of children whose life is dark and evil' and realized 'what good things we at Kwato have'.²⁸ Abel compared the fervour of some of his Papuan evangelists to the glow of red-hot iron.²⁹

In eastern Papua the Papuan religious influence was hastened by the early withdrawal of Polynesians. As Abel became dissatisfied with the Samoan cadre, his thoughts turned to China, where he hoped the L.M.S. might recruit coolies as agricultural teachers in Papua.³⁰ When this possibility was dispelled by the Immigration Restriction Act of 1904, it was not again considered by Abel. By 1907 there were ten Papuan missionaries and seven Polynesians on the mission staff.

Papuan pastors, however, were not intended by Abel to replace the Polynesian patriarchate. A man who rejected apostolic succession and suspected the pretensions of a clerical caste was easily persuaded to do away with a specific order of ministers altogether. Instead, his preachers were lay Papuans who did 'personal work' among inquirers. Their testimonials suggest the methods of Moody and Sankey. 'Lily told Nora and prayed with her', one said, 'and Nora gladly gave herself to the Lord.'³¹ Another related that 'a Christian neighbour spoke to me of Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and since then Christ has been very "hot" in my heart'.³² Having denied the necessity of ordination, Abel sent his followers out to preach to the heathen, a task for which, according to New Testament precedent, neither Congregational nor any other kind of orders seemed necessary.

In the busy Papuan workers who delved and span on Monday and preached the living Word on Sunday was seen vividly the strength of Abel's methods. It also revealed the strength of his reaction to the Polynesians who, he said, had 'proved to be worse than useless'.³³ These converts who exchanged grocer's apron and joiner's leather for white preacher's calico on the Sabbath were indeed no professional clerics, but plain men whose work was 'voluntary service rendered out

28 KSM, September 1929.

29 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Buffalo, 11 January 1930, KA.

30 C.W. Abel to A.M. Campbell, Kwato, March 1904, KA.

31 Occasional Supplement to New Guinea Tidings, June 1926.

32 NGT, June 1926, 7.

33 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Kwato, - 1925, KA.

of love to Christ'.³⁴ That this service was elicited by gifts of tobacco, money and food would be unlearnt; he would accomplish with Papuan material what he had set out to do;³⁵ and it would be understood that the gospel belonged, not to the missionary or the paid Polynesian official, but to the people.

Congregational churches had been formed in Milne Bay, with pastors elected by the church members, long before the Mission seceded from the L.M.S. in 1918. The Kwato Council, 'a simple form of municipal government', first sat in 1905.³⁶ Councillors were elected from Logea villagers, by whom they could also be deposed; and pastors were liable to a similar fate.³⁷ The Kwato district was divided into nine congregations - Kanakope, Gwavili, Wagawaga, Maivara, Koeabule, Watunou, Divinai, Duabo and Kwato - each of which had a church or meeting house with a Californian cow-bell to summon worshippers at sunset. It was a compact mission field: Abel could reach by diesel launch no fewer than five congregations from Koeabule in less than ninety minutes.³⁸ Moreover, the Abel family kept a flock of blue carrier pigeons which could bring messages from any part of the coast in slightly more than an hour.³⁹ Abel was a family man who loved his fireside and spent comparatively little time directing his churches in the Bay.

Yet the centralising tendencies of the Mission continued to increase. Stone-Wigg, the exemplar of the sacerdotalism which Abel most distrusted, wrote with evident disapproval of Abel's 'complete control' over Kwato.⁴⁰ R.W. Thompson warned Abel's colleagues of the 'danger of the missionary becoming too much the father of the family'.⁴¹

34 C.W. Abel, Notes on Kwato, nd, KA.

35 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, nd, KA.

36 C.W. Abel to R.W. Thompson, Kwato, 4 April 1905, PL; C.W. Abel, Diary, 15 February 1906, KA; C.W. Abel, LD, 24 May 1925, KA. For formation of local government councils, see F. West, Hubert Murray..., 204-35.

37 Only one, Pastor Sema of Bou, was deposed by his deacons. C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Kwato, 7 November 1918, KA. In 1920 four of Abel's deacons were 'overwhelmingly defeated at the poll' among the Logea congregation. C.W. Abel, Lecture Notes 1920, KA.

38 C.W. Abel to - Blomfield, Koeabule, 12 October 1924, KA.

39 The launches took $7\frac{1}{2}$ hours to cover the same distance. KMT, December 1933.

40 See M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 13 October 1897, DA.

41 R.W. Thompson to C.F. Rich, London, 1 January 1904, WOL.

The fact that government census officers in 1919 and 1922 were unable to work satisfactorily in Milne Bay because so many people were at Kwato⁴² is an indication of the power of Abel's paternal influence over Milne Bay. The dismissal of Polynesians, argued on grounds of Papuan initiative, facilitated Abel's own dominance of the Kwato Mission.

By 1918 the first generation of Massim converts and their Polynesian teachers - Paolo Dilomi, Dagoela Manuwera, Edidai, Josia Lebasi, Ono and Ma'anaima - were dead. Though none of the younger students possessed Lebasi's 'greatness and worth',⁴³ Abel was convinced they could master the teaching outlined by William Williamson,⁴⁴ chairman of the K.E.A. auxiliary in Australia. Paternalist or not, this teaching was meant to instil self-reliance, which Booker Washington had called 'emancipation with the hands'.⁴⁵ In 1920 Williamson addressed the students:

Don't be merely obedient workers, be part of the management yourselves. Let us see that you are sharing the responsibility... In time we hope to see some of you properly taught to be blacksmiths, some engineers, some teachers, some planters... We shall try to give you the same opportunities of learning your trades as our own sons get in Australia. 46

By 1928 the mission had produced twenty-three trained joiners and carpenters; a team of boatbuilders who competed against Europeans for Government contracts;⁴⁷ and a printer who produced the Papuan Times, a village monthly newspaper in English.⁴⁸ Williamson also foresaw the day when Kwato would give an 'advanced education to an English-speaking people'.⁴⁹ Moreover, Abel was giving medical training

42 RMED PR, 16 March 1919; RMED OJ, 28 March 1922, 4 June 1932, CAO/CRS/G91.

43 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Kwato, 12 August 1912, KA.

44 William Williamson, a Sydney municipal alderman, also built the Malua Jubilee Hall for the LMS in Samoa. SDC Minutes, 13-18 December 1920, LXII, PMB.

45 Quoted in AMMR, 4 February 1910.

46 W. Williamson, Notebook, 1920, KA.

47 C.W. Abel to P.D. Abel, Kwato, 8 June 1929, KA.

48 C.W. Abel to P.D. Abel, Kwato, 8 June 1928, KA. The first two volumes, which were roneoed in 1916-17, were known as The Papuan Newspaper. Papuans also published News From Kwato 1937-40. Penueli, Pita, Manu and Daniel Sioni were the printers.

49 W. Williamson, Notebook, 1920, KA.

for hospital orderlies and spoke as early as 1922 of Papuan doctors and surgeons. So well could Papuans master their lessons that he was sure they could 'pass on, stage by stage, to a university'.⁵⁰

Abel's hopes of future triumphs with a Papuan élite not only contrasted with the limited goals held for subject races by most of his contemporaries, but also focussed attention away from an earlier conviction among Evangelicals that a missionary's business was exclusively with his convert's soul. On the contrary, Abel seems to have believed, as did Washington, in the necessity of economic and intellectual development as a prerequisite to political responsibility. The phrase, 'Don't be merely obedient workers, be part of the management yourselves' had radical implications. In 1921 Abel wrote that there was only one ideal for the British Empire, 'that there should be no barrier of race, colour or creed which should prevent any man by merit, from reaching any station if he is fitted for it'.⁵¹ He was occasionally puzzled by the attitudes of Australians to his schemes. One magistrate at Samarai told missionaries that the Government was 'not in sympathy with the native being intellectually raised to the standard of a clerk or office boy'.⁵² As Abel must have realized, there was no point in stimulating the production of Papuan leaders if they were not wanted. 'So few white men can be found who will credit the native with real ability', he wrote in 1922. 'They seem to think it lets them down if the Papuan is able to do something better than they.'⁵³

Sustained by the vision of a free enterprise society in which everyone was well employed and well educated, Abel was never troubled by romantic notions about noble savages. His faith was strictly pragmatic. Trained in English, mathematics, and Evangelical doctrine, the products of the Kwato system left little doubt among their hearers of their self-confidence in dealing with white men. Their attitudes sometimes had an anti-Australian tincture. When Williamson visited Wagawaga he was greeted by the Kwato teacher:

Ou gave an address of welcome. They were looking forward to the Kwato Association for guidance towards better things. Australians, he said, had been

50 C.W. Abel to P.D. Abel, Northfield, 29 December 1922, KA.

51 C.W. Abel, 'People of the Pacific...', in Occasional Paper of the LMS Laymen's Movement, 8.

52 AWMMS AR 1911-12, 115, SA.

53 C.W. Abel, LD, 8 June 1922, KA.

responsible for bringing into their country disease and sin which before was unknown and they had exerted an evil influence. But he thanked God that there were also others many of whom they believed were raised by God to lead the people of Papua out of darkness into light.

54

In order to give unity and vigour to the mission, Abel looked for lifelong association between educated Papuan boys and girls. He abhorred the idea of sexual relationships between his girls and white men, and once punished a girl for receiving a small gift from an Australian admirer. Near Wagawaga two white men had violated these principles: it was to them that Ou referred. On reaching maturity, a youth at Kwato applied to Abel for the hand of a girl. 'I do think we ought to do the choosing for them till they are more advanced', wrote Phyllis Abel, 'in their villages this is all arranged for them.'⁵⁶

Adam, a convert, made his decision in 1924:

Father I want to tell you what my choice is. This is what I want to tell you. I am a weak man. Please Father my choice is this: Lucy. This is all I have to say. Adam.

57

In a society where marriages were customarily arranged, some students had reasons for delight when mission marriages offered a choice. A male student, whose match was confirmed by the mission house, wrote gratefully to Phyllis Abel:

you are my very NEAREST friend and I know you very well just as if you and I have one father. Pray for me my dear little girl won't you?

58

But others were less fortunate. In 1912 Gogo's proposal of marriage to Dalai Kitalapu was rejected by Abel, and Dalai Kitalapu grew to old age a spinster.⁵⁹ Abel's was an unusually happy marriage which lasted thirty-seven years, and the unwavering devotion of husband to wife provided a model for Kwato women. Married or single, these women were more assertive than other Papuan women of the time.

Through sport, manual work, and Abel's pervasive paternalism, there emerged an affinity between the Abel family and its converts, a

54 W. Williamson, Notebook, 1920, KA.

55 Personal communication from C.C. Abel.

56 P.D. Abel, Diary, 20 June 1931, KA.

57 C.W. Abel, LD, 4 April 1924, KA.

58 M. Dickson to P.D. Abel, Kwato, 18 December 1933, KA.

59 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Koeabule, 15 September 1912, KA.

common outlook, and the consciousness of domestic links that blurred the distinction between races. As the Kwato Family matured, their relationship came to be regarded by Europeans as disturbingly physical and incompatible with the racial aloofness prevailing elsewhere in Papua. Missionary camaraderie was praised by such ethnographers as Bronislaw Malinowski and H. Ian Hogbin, normally severe critics of Missions.⁶⁰ In the home of Abel in China Strait visitors found none of the severity, vulgarity, cant or illiberality sometimes associated by Churchmen with Nonconformity: even Anglicans and anthropologists were compelled to agree that happiness was no monopoly of either the sacramental or traditional village systems.

For all its discipline and uncompromising theology, the Kwato Mission exhibited a quality of inter-racial life quite unrelated to the standards of the day. A Papuan, who could expect only the epithet 'boy' in Samarai, was given a name and a place of respect three miles away at Kwato. Instead of the rigid racial aloofness of nearby town and plantation, an evening on Kwato involved nearby complete social intercourse. Sometimes there were games; sometimes dances were held when the common room became a ballroom, with streamers and balloons, printed invitations, and gramophone or piano music; there were dances in which Papuan maidens were taught the waltz or foxtrot by European or Melanesian partners in white shirts and black ties.⁶¹ At other times members of prominent Samarai families, such as the Whittens or the Warrens, attended;⁶² and there were sounds of rowdy hilarity as Europeans were hoisted aloft by Papuans and carried high or low to the crescendo or diminuendo of the piano beside the only marble mantelpiece in Papua.⁶³ Then the sound of Keduruma playing a Mendelssohn sonata drifted across the dormitories, and it was time for sleep.⁶⁴ One visitor told Abel that if he reported what he had seen at Kwato not a

60 See B. Malinowski, A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term, 44; Abel described Hogbin as 'bitter about [other] Missions and very outspoken'. R.W. Abel to S. Abel, Kwato, 25 March 1945, KA. R.W. Abel's notes on C. Wedgwood and H.I. Hogbin, 1944, KA; B.M. Morris, Interview, Melbourne, 2 June 1972; F.E. Williams, 'A Visit to the Keveri Valley', 23, PNGA.

61 D. Sioni, Interview, Kwato, 31 May 1972; M. Dickson, Interview, Port Moresby, 10 June 1972.

62 C.W. Abel, LD, 26 December 1924, KA.

63 C.W. Abel, LD, 9 July 1926, KA.

64 C.W. Abel, LD, 16-18 August 1924, KA.

single white man in Papua would believe him; and Abel agreed.⁶⁵

Nevertheless, Charles and Beatrice Abel never forgot that the Massim élite needed them. They liked their Papuans, but stopped short of delegating them much authority. 'You would smile at the stupid muddles that they make', wrote Beatrice Abel. 'I say if there is a loophole for a mistake they go carefully into it.'⁶⁶ Her husband's diaries suggest that he got a great deal of fun out of the Papuans' fumbling attempts to imitate him. 'How absolutely incapable these people are of being put in charge of responsible positions!'⁶⁷ he wrote in 1924.

The incident which provoked this judgment was serious: a storeman, Tariowai, had knocked a thief unconscious with a block of wood before calling in the magistrate. More often, however, it was weakness of command rather than rashness which exasperated him. Abel admitted being barely under control when the missionary Bugelei of Vasaloni complained of his people, 'I've tried to speak. They will not listen.'⁶⁸ Another teacher, Philip Bagi, explained that at Kwato 'I blow the whistle and not one boy turns up, and so I don't call them, because they all hear... it is hard work.'⁶⁹ While not abandoning his belief that Papuans would one day occupy his place, the quick resort to violence in one or two cases and the weakness of others provides a clue as to Abel's reluctance to place unbridled power in Papuan hands. In 1924 he came to believe that Papuans were best as middlemen rather than as leaders:

No native is equal to the job. No native has the authority to enforce laws... Give us a white supervisor to every 25 and we could make a fine race of the Papuans, but it will never be accomplished in any other way. 70

His idyllic hopes for future Papuan leaders were often tempered by acute scepticism. Like other missionaries of his day, he was capable of euphemisms in public about the Papuan discharge of responsibility, but in private he came close to believing that the Papuan would be a calamity as a leader.

65 C.W. Abel, LD, 23 July 1926, KA.

66 B. Abel to C.C. Abel, Kwato, 17 July 1917, KA.

67 C.W. Abel, LD, 1 September 1924, KA.

68 C.W. Abel, LD, 12 February 1924, KA.

69 C.W. Abel, LD, 18 November 1922, KA.

70 C.W. Abel, LD, 28 September 1924, KA.

Through the dependence of Papuans on Abel's guidance in economic and religious affairs, the Kwato Mission by 1930 had assumed a number of functions characteristic of an independent political domain. Its Papuan officers ordained their own leaders and elected lay managers. Kwato children sang their own anthem and celebrated Father Abel's birthday (28 September) with an annual holiday. When Father travelled, it was on a canoe sixty feet in length carved in his honour by Pilipo of Barabara village and paddled by eighteen Tavara men: he jocularly called it his 'state barge'.⁷¹ Observers of the mission considered that a large number of Milne Bay villagers put the mission ahead of the government in importance.⁷²

Having quitted the L.M.S., Abel appointed his daughter Phyllis (1898-1955) and his sons Cecil (b. 1903) and Russell (1905-1965) to the mission staff. With a daughter trained at Ridglands Bible College in London and both sons graduates at Cambridge, he was able to thwart attempts by the L.M.S. to regain control of his mission. His death by accident in April 1930, when 150 Papuan followers were trained evangelists, caused little change in direction for the Christians of Kwato. A conditioning in the Protestant morality of the English middle classes was not easily outgrown. The students at Kwato knew they were Protestants, and they knew more clearly than other Papuans at the time what Protestantism meant. Born and bred in the system, the Kwato family necessarily perpetuated it.

II

IN 1924, when Cecil Abel was at Cambridge, he met Frank Buchman, the founder of the Oxford Group.⁷³ In an age when religious dogma was being eroded by biblical criticism and scientific advance, the appearance of a movement that emphasised Evangelical experience without the difficulty of Evangelical doctrine was readily welcomed. Combining individual confession with 'winning men to an experience of the Cross',⁷⁴ Buchman's simple methods won acclaim from Evangelical parties at the

71 C.W. Abel to W.R. Moody, Kwato, 18 November 1925, KA.

72 H.O. Topal, quoted in RMED PR, 16 March 1919; see also RMED PR, 4-7 June 1932, CAO/CRS/G91.

73 C.C. Abel to M. Parkin, Cambridge, 9 August 1924, KA.

74 L. Macassey, The Oxford Group..., 1-4.

University and the Keswick Convention;⁷⁵ and being free from complicated doctrine, it drew adherents from those increasingly discouraged by the formulations of orthodox Christianity.

Both C.W. Abel and his sons had encountered disciples of Buchman, but had been critical on the grounds that their fervour was insufficiently biblical.⁷⁶ But Buchman's philosophy was disseminated with an extraordinary speed and facility which belied the bland Pickwickian appearance of its author, and it was not long before a religious phenomenon of major proportions was being discerned.⁷⁷ Vital religion was common to the Kwato Mission and the Oxford Group, and only a crisis was needed to align the former with the philosophy of the latter. That crisis was provided in the death of Abel. Emerging 'battered and bewildered'⁷⁸ from the passing of a Father who had dominated Kwato for forty years, the Abel children found a substitute in the disarmingly simple philosophy of Moral Re-Armament.⁷⁹

Possessing his father's ability and willpower, but with his father's faith under steady intellectual attack at university, Cecil Abel's leadership had become one of increasing instability.⁸⁰ Like his father, he was stubborn and opiniated, but time had not mellowed his judgment. His mother's advice, to 'put not your trust in Man',⁸¹ was taken to heart by her son. Where Charles Abel had slowly eroded L.M.S. authority, justifying his actions one at a time over a period of thirty years, Cecil Abel openly flouted the expressed wishes of the Kwato Extension Association. In August 1927 the K.E.A. told Abel that it would not sanction the transfer of assets to the American society unless Cecil's matrimonial intentions with a Roman Catholic were

75 C.W. Abel to M. Parkin, Cambridge, 9 August 1924, KA.

76 C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Pennsylvania, 18 November 1922, KA. Cecil and Russell Abel both belonged to the Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union or CICCUCU.

77 F.N.D. Buchman, Remaking the World, 1, 92; L. Macassey, op. cit., 5.

78 P.D. Abel to R.W. Abel, Kwato, nd, KA.

79 The Oxford Group adopted the name Moral Re-Armament in 1938. L. Macassey, op. cit., 18.

80 See correspondence about Cecil Abel. See E. Curwen to C.W. Abel, Hove, 19 October 1923; C.W. Abel to B. Abel, Sydney, 9 February 1928, KA.

81 B. Abel to M. Parkin, Kwato, 11 January 1928, KA.

settled.⁸² The K.E.A. was not impressed with Russell Abel's loyal but ingenuous argument that if cannibals in New Guinea could be converted to Christianity, so could Roman Catholics.⁸³ Cecil retaliated by collecting supporters for a new Committee who could supplant the 'rotten old stiff' and the 'diseases' who ruled the K.E.A.⁸⁴ Goaded into decisive action, the K.E.A. passed a resolution asking Cecil to resign from membership.⁸⁵

A family that conceived its divine commission as the regeneration of Papua and trusted in its own unique historical role in that process was not easily thwarted by the will of petty overseas officials. During the marriage crisis the family supported Cecil unswervingly against their patrons, feeling, in Russell's words, the need 'to battle for our aims and principles and to champion the threatened trust in [the] Abels'.⁸⁶ They did not heed the criticism that the K.E.A. had failed to extend as its name implied.⁸⁷ Kwato emerged from the death of its founder estranged from its English supporters and with only a fragile hold on its American friends.⁸⁸

Above this shattered facade hovered the vision of Charles Abel, beckoning his heirs to complete his commission to redeem the Papuan race. That the commission rested uneasily on their consciences is echoed in the dreams of his eldest daughter, in which the father appeared urging her to speed his work. 'I woke in an ecstasy', wrote Phyllis Abel after one dream, 'with the memory vivid and real in my mind and great peace in my heart.'⁸⁹ But Phyllis Abel's dreams now

82 T. Wilson to C.W. Abel, Sheffield, 18 August 1927, KA.

83 R.W. Abel to C.C. Abel, Cambridge, 29 December 1927, KA.

84 R.W. Abel to C.C. Abel, Tolworth, 16 September 1931, KA.

85 E. Curwen to C.W. Abel, Hove, 30 October 1927, KA.

86 R.W. Abel to P.D. Abel, Kwato, 12 August 1930, KA.

87 R.W. Abel to C.C. Abel, Tolworth, 16 September 1931. Cecil returned in 1929 with his fiancée, V.B.N. [Nadia] Danielevitch, a nurse with whom Beatrice Abel quarrelled so bitterly that she had to be dismissed from the Kwato Hospital in 1930.

88 Between 1924 and 1929 the American income of the Kwato Mission rose from \$2323 to \$11,817, while that of the KEA fell to £100 p.a. In 1930 Abel's American supporters were planning a five-year scheme costing \$100,000. C.W. Abel to Abel family, at sea, 13 March 1930; C.W. Abel to B. Abel, New York, 27 March 1930, KA.

89 P.D. Abel, LD, 12 August 1930, KA.

coalesced with the vision of Buchman, whose prophetic voice cried, not in the Papuan wilderness, but into a dozen outstretched microphones in Geneva, New York and Stockholm.

The Oxford Group ideology in 1930 was plausible not only to the children of Abel but also to the aspirations of Papuans in Milne Bay. Preaching racial brotherhood and emphasizing public confession to break down barriers of suspicion, the Oxford Group was also tinged with an appeal to emotion, concrete experience and mysticism that made it easily assimilated with the thought-patterns of Papuans. Its simplicity and insistence on selfless 'team-work' by 'God-directed personalities', through which new revivals might be created, were heady doctrines to a people who had once before been intoxicated by the utterances of inspired prophets.

Buoyantly confident but poorly served by a vacuous philosophy and lack of intellectual depth, the Oxford Group echoed both the power and defects in Abel's own ministry. It spoke decisively of the necessity of moral revival through the four standards of absolute honesty, absolute purity, absolute unselfishness and absolute love. Illumination came through the emotions and was 'checked' by discussion with a group. There were a few categorical prohibitions: alcohol and tobacco, for example, were forbidden. In offering an opportunity to extend the historic mission of the Abel family to individuals in Milne Bay and unsaved masses beyond it, the teachings of Frank Buchman arrived at a propitious time.

In 1931 Cecil Abel took seven assistants to Duabo for a house party on Oxford Group lines.⁹⁰ There he recounted his experiences with Buchman and unfolded the technique of group confession. That Papuan initiates to the 'Pentecost of Duabo'⁹¹ readily related this to their revivalist experience was readily seen in an account by Merari Dickson to Beatrice Abel:

90 Philip Vainebagi, Makura Isalaela, Labioni Sioni, Merari Dickson, Osineru Dickson, Tiraka Anederea, Alice Wedega, and a European, Halliday Scrymgeour. See J. Parratt, 'A Note on Kwato and the Oxford Group' in Journal of the Papua and New Guinea Society, vol. 6, no. 1 1972, 91.

91 KMT, vol. x, no. 28, October 1932, 11. M. Dickson's earlier conversion was reported in C.W. Abel, LD, 18 August 1922. See also R.W. Abel, 'They Broke Their Spears', 89.

This is how I prayed to Him, I said, 'Lord, Thou knowest how weak I am, I'm the weakest boy on Kwato, and wilt thou Lord if it is Thy will open the way for me and let me have it now - But He said 'Merari? Do you 'Love Me' more than these? and He ask me again to tell everything to Him so I did. And He promised me to give that Love back to me.

Oh Mother, I'm absolutely blind, if only I could realize at the very first time... I made some borabora [lying] excuses. But still He has forgiven me and I can feel I'm quite different now. At Duabo I emptied myself to Him and oh... my heart overflows with these wonderful new Life and Joy. 92

The classic Evangelical phrases used by Dickson suggested that he had been converted, though he meant by this something quite different from what Beatrice Abel meant by conversion.⁹³

Others were prepared to use the Oxford Group for their own purposes. For ever since the prophet Tokeriu had spoken to the people of Gabagabuna of the flood that would wash away their villages, the Milne Bay people had regarded dreams as direct messages of the other world.⁹⁴ In the circles where Abel's message was heard, trembling and ecstatic utterance were seen as emblems of brokenness and surrender to the Spirit. An emphasis on shared confession, witnessing to emotion and 'walking in the light' had deep roots in the mental associations of Milne Bay people.⁹⁵

The village youths had not seen such events: but their elders were nurtured in revivalism. Even such 'life-changers' as Merari Dickson expressed astonishment at the results:

Well Russell I suppose you have heard how Kwato is. Gloriously Reborn, you cannot imagine, [sic] what a great change has been taking place in the hearts of every boy and every girl on Kwato... Oh Russ if you were here during the Xmas time you would hear each of these boys stood up with eyes full of tears giving their testimonies and confessing their old laulau [doings] before God and before all the people ... Today if you meet any class A boy you can see nothing but bright smiling face. 96

92 M. Dickson to B. Abel, Kwato, 9 January 1932, KA.

93 The Oxford Group claimed to be in the mainstream traditions of Christianity, which Beatrice Abel would have disputed.

94 See KMT, June 1931.

95 In a revival in 1926 at Wagawaga, for example, 'utter indifference' gave way to revival as 'men and women came in hundreds' to services. Occasional Supplement to New Guinea Tidings, January 1926.

96 M. Dickson to R.W. Abel, Kwato, 9 January 1932, KA.

As one by one the corps of Kwato native leaders, faltering under such glowing testimony, were 'Gloriously Reborn', they had no difficulty in initiating others. Adopting Buchman's adage that 'the best way to keep an experience of Christ is to pass it on',⁹⁷ boys announced their intention of departing forthwith to evangelise Logea, Sariba, the Buhutu valley, and even Samarai itself. No obstacle was offered by the Kwato staff to such God-directed ventures. Within a month, Joshua Pita had done 'wonderful work' on Sariba, with the result that the island was 'red hot with glorious results' and 'nearly every schoolboy [was] the Lord's'.⁹⁸ The 'Kwato Family' arranged tennis parties and cricket matches for unsuspecting Samarai sportsmen in order to give testimonials.⁹⁹ One Papuan cricketer, Maru, had guidance to witness on the cricket pitch, confessing fornication, and declaring that 'from now on, Jesus is my lover'.¹⁰⁰ Others like Josia Lebasi II and Solomon sailed to Samarai. 'Their one great thought is to share to others what they have', wrote Dickson, 'they are very strong with soul-winning work.'¹⁰¹

As the seed planted by Cecil Abel blossomed in the warm ground of Milne Bay, the transformation of incorrigibles into exemplary Christians became the talk of the plantations. 'You can talk of the Holy Spirit, but I've got all my silver back',¹⁰² exclaimed a planter's wife, more willing to relate domestic events than embark on theological explanations as to their cause. One village plumbed the depths of contrition by apologising through its headmen to a magistrate for the trouble it had caused in the past. To show proof of the new spirit of confession abroad, the villagers offered themselves as carriers and cleared ground for a sports field. Another community affected by the Oxford Group festooned the rest house with palm leaves and presented an astonished magistrate with piles of taro.¹⁰³ At Ahiona, where

97 F.N.D. Buchman, Remaking the World, 10.

98 P.D. Abel to R.W. Abel, Kwato, 25 February 1932, KA.

99 Ibid.

100 Ibid.

101 M. Dickson to R.W. Abel, Kwato, 9 January 1932, KA. On Sidea, Solomon wrote that 'These people are so ignorant that they couldn't understand what we mention. They could only say mamohoi [that's true]...'. Solomon - to R.W. Abel, Sidea, 8 February 1932, KA.

102 H. Beavis, Interview, Melbourne, 1 August 1972.

103 R.W. Abel, 'They Broke Their Spears', 91-2, KA.

MacGregor had hanged Hanewai for Ancell's murder in 1888, the headman Idiloni, long a tower of resistance to European officials, suddenly became meek. Idiloni had shot a Papuan labourer, locked a planter in his own copra store, and assaulted the magistrate sent to arrest him.¹⁰⁴ In 1932 Idiloni apologised to European officials after hearing of Buchman's methods and became an Oxford Group stalwart in Milne Bay.

There were some aberrations. At Wagawaga the village people removed their earrings, cut their hair, and killed the pigs. They told the magistrate, O.J. Atkinson, that the end of the world approached and that the event would occur on a Wednesday. Only one man doubted the prophecy, asking why the mission was building a memorial chapel to Abel if the end of the world was coming.¹⁰⁶ Having responded forty years before to Tokeriu's prophecies, and believing Abel had power to control the weather, Wagawaga people saw the Oxford Group as the harbingers of a millennium which they intended to await in the correct manner.

The Oxford Group left an indelible mark on a number of Papuan leaders in Milne Bay. Instead of feeling shame at being the sons of cannibals, Papuan members of M.R.A. drew pride at being a progressive élite and regarded themselves as collaborators with Europeans.¹⁰⁷ For the Oxford Group disregarded, even more than most other religious movements at work in Papua in the 1930s, contemporary notions of correct social relations between Europeans and Papuans, and flouted the standards of racial aloofness observed by most secular white men. To 'picture from ten to fifteen Papuans and about six white folk, sitting round in a circle', as the Kwato Mission Tidings invited its European readers,¹⁰⁸ was to depict a somewhat eccentric conventicle.

104 RMED OJ, 24 February 1923, CAO/CRS/G91.

105 J. Pita, Interview, Koeabule, 29 April 1972; D. Petelo, Interview, Koeabule, 25 April 1972.

106 RMED OJ, 24 February 1932, CAO/CRS/G91.

107 For Merari Dickson, MLC 1951-58, see Ian Grosart, 'Native Members in the Legislative Council...', in JPH, vol. 1 (1966), 151-2. Other MRA leaders were Osineru Dickson and Peni Frank, both of whom held legislative and consultative positions in post-war administrations.

108 KMT, June 1933.

But just as Abel's idyllic hopes for future Papuan leaders was often tempered by scepticism, so Kwato after his death achieved a measure of racial tolerance only at the price of regimentation. After Abel's death the flowering of an easy informality was blighted by pernicious indiscipline. Both the senior Papuan missionary, Tiraka Anederea, and Phyllis Abel urged Abel's sons to restore the use of the belt; and Anederea once accused Russell Abel of slackness.¹⁰⁹ The worst boys were then publicly expelled; some were thrashed and shaved; and when Cecil Abel felt that a flogging was necessary, he administered it with gravity. The result of a 'wave of sin' shocked even Russell Abel:

None of them are unaffected. Eric and Eli left a week ago with shorn heads for the Bay, Kanakope and Duabo. They were publicly socked first, having had to be brought and held down by force. Ghastly business. I've never seen anything like it on Kwato. 110

Abel's revulsion was overcome only by the argument that discipline was part of the grim business of training the Papuan. 'Our work could only succeed as applied to backward people', C.W. Abel had affirmed, 'if it is built upon character.'¹¹¹ Mission sergeants and corporals were appointed to enforce discipline.¹¹² Some sergeants caned their own cousins; brother caned brother before hastily summoned assemblies. Anederea was feared particularly by boys, being 'tall and fat like a Samoan'.¹¹³ Several boys were interned in solitary confinement for several weeks in a loft above the sawmill, a place particularly favoured for sexual offenders. One youth, Sila, was caught in adultery during an Oxford Group house party and was tried by his peers. 'We proceeded immediately to deal with the offender', wrote Cecil Abel, 'and had him thrashed and shaved. He will undergo the stiffest bit of penal discipline I have ever had to exercise on anyone.'¹¹⁴ In retrospect, offenders held no grievance. 'It was part of my training, and I was

109 R.W. Abel to C.C. Abel, Kwato, 14 July 1926.

110 R.W. Abel to P.D. Abel, Kwato, 26 September 1933, KA.

111 KEA Minutes, 10 July 1923, KA. See also B. Abel to R.W. Abel, Sydney, 3 April 1934; C.C. Abel to P.D. Abel, Kwato, 10 January 1934; P.D. Abel, Diary, 22 April 1931, KA.

112 C.C. Abel to B. Abel, Kwato, 7 September 1931, KA.

113 P. Frank, Interview, Ahioma, 27 May 1972.

114 C.C. Abel, Letter Diary, Koeabule, 31 March 1931, KA.

raised as a leader' said one internee of the sawmill loft.¹¹⁵ But at the time it bred resentment. Sila, wrote Phyllis Abel in 1931, was still 'thoroughly bad, in spite of all Russ's efforts with the rod!' But, she asked, 'is anything too hard for the Lord?'¹¹⁶

It was clear to Papuans that the primitive methods of correction which reached their apogee under the rule of Tiraka Anederea, Makura, Merari Dickson and Cecil Abel were altogether incompatible with the permissive methods of the village. A number of villages resisted the reign of discipline, and by 1938, four Papuan officers of the K.E.A. were serving sentences of imprisonment for assault and a charge was being heard against a fifth.¹¹⁷ So serious did J.H.P. Murray consider the actions of Papuan disciplinarians that he asked Cecil Abel to consider how a clash between Government and Mission might be avoided.¹¹⁸ Murray does not seem to have comprehended what Monckton saw: that in eastern Papuan villages with strong Kwato traditions, two systems of law were in operation,¹¹⁹ with different officials, systems of apprehension, and scales of punishments. 'All the village teachers have broken my law', wrote Phyllis Abel, 'I shall write a very strong letter to all, and fine any further breaches of our commands.'¹²⁰ Occasionally boatloads of offenders travelled to and from Kwato on their way to places of punishment, the most remote being Duabo, 1200 feet in the hills above Milne Bay, where Phyllis Abel ran a boarding school. Wagawaga people recalled that when Samarai gaol was full, magistrates asked Abel to ship offenders to Kwato for mission discipline, an alternative much preferred to Government punishment.¹²¹

115 P. Frank, Interview, Ahioma, 27 May 1972.

116 P.D. Abel to B. Abel, Kwato, 20 June 1931, KA.

117 H.W. Champion to C.C. Abel, Port Moresby, 22 December 1938, 2665/198/38, KA; C.C. Abel to H.W. Champion, Kwato, 4 December 1938, KA.

118 H.W. Champion to C.C. Abel, Port Moresby, 22 December 1938, 2665/198/38, KA.

119 C.A.W. Monckton, New Guinea Recollections, 234.

120 P.D. Abel to C.C. Abel, Kwato, 8 June 1928, KA.

121 P. Frank, Interview, Ahioma, 2 May 1972.

Lacking the ecclesiastical framework of its sister Missions, the Kwato community borrowed freely from the Dohnavur Fellowship in Tinnevely in South India, which Cecil Abel had visited in 1927.¹²² Founded by Amy Carmichael in 1860 for the rehabilitation of temple prostitutes, the aim of the Dohnavur Mission was to save children from a life of corruption.¹²³ It aimed at a radical cleavage between Mission and culture. Being independent of foreign mission control, Dohnavur was managed by a Council with senior members taking most decisions.¹²⁴ Under Cecil Abel's leadership, the constitution of the Kwato Council resembled that of Dohnavur in being boldly non-ecclesiastical. Judged from its ascetic discipline and intention, Kwato had few features which distinguished it from monasticism.¹²⁵

III

WITHIN three years of Abel's death a shaken community had emerged with a new structure and spiritual impetus. Thus fortified, the Abel family set out to carry through the project that had been their Father's last wish: to extend the Association beyond the narrow margin of Milne Bay.¹²⁶ But instead of mustering forces for a crusade in the Turama swamplands - by 1931, the Papuan Industries had been sold and the flag of the Unevangelised Fields Mission fluttered above the trans-Fly¹²⁷ - the Kwato leaders decided on a battlefield conveniently closer to family headquarters. The Abau area, 100 miles west of China Strait, was nominally part of the Mailu mission of the L.M.S. Receiving an

122 See J. Bell, Many Coloured Glass..., 112.

123 Articles of Association of the Dohnavur Fellowship, KA. See also R.W. Abel, Charles W. Abel, 240.

124 C.C. Abel to P.D. Abel, Suez, 28 May 1936, KA. For correspondence about Kwato constitution, see W. McDougall to A. Hood, New York, 28 April 1928, KA; P.D. Abel to B. Abel, Kwato, 21 April 1931, KA; P.L. Pierson to C.W. Abel, New York, 26 March 1929, KA.

125 'The Kwato Mission of Papua... Principles and Practice', KA.

126 Extension had been planned since 1927 when Abel realized that 'Kwato must have an outlet... Kwato is a university, its own world is too small in itself to warrant the teaching we are giving.' C.W. Abel, note, nd, KA. 'Extension' was explicit in the title of the KEA.

127 For UFM links, see N.C. Lumsden to C.C. Abel, London, 24 June 1935, KA; C.W. Abel to Duabo School, London, 11 February 1930, KA.

invitation to forget old shibboleths and revitalize the eastern flank of Mailu, now threatened by an invasion of Seventh Day Adventists, Cecil Abel gladly became reconciled with his father's former critics W.J.V. Saville and C.F. Rich.¹²⁸ In 1934, applying the idea of carrying regeneration to the masses, Kwato prepared to direct its vigorous apostolate to a completely virgin field at Abau.

Distinguished from their neighbours by their bark pigtailed as well as their ferocity in warfare, the mountain people of inland Abau had been a fertile source of trouble to divisional officers since the inauguration of British rule. In 1899 the internecine raiding of the mountain Keveri and coastal Kunika attracted the attention of the central government;¹²⁹ indeed, the Keveri had boldly ventured as far west as Hula, where terrified villagers erected high stockades for protection. The Keveri nocturnal raid and cannibal feast, seldom seen by Europeans, was greatly feared by coastal dwellers.¹³⁰

Sanguinary customs formed an inextricable part of Keveri culture, so much so, that no Keveri woman would accept a suitor until he had produced a finger of a dead man or a hornbill feather to prove his fighting ability.¹³¹ Much Keveri dancing and feasting were commemorations of the raid. But the rude intrusion of Government officials into their mountain glens after 1932 sadly disturbed the Keveri traditions; and two years later some of their fighting men languished in Port Moresby. It was in the long grasslands adjoining Abau courthouse that Russell Abel first met the Keveri;¹³² by this time they were familiar with coastal usage and could converse with Abel in police Motu.

The homicide for which the Abau region was renowned had been checked decisively before mission contact, and there were signs that

128 C.C. Abel to B. Abel, Metoreia, nd, KA.

129 BNG AR, 1899-1900, xvii; *ibid.*, 1910-11, 104. For a study of culture contact in the Abau sub-district, see D. Wetherell, 'Monument to a Missionary: C.W. Abel and the Keveri of Papua', in *JPH*, vol. 8 (1973), 30-48.

130 R.W. Abel, 'They Broke Their Spears', 2; F.E. Williams, 'Mission Influence Amongst the Keveri of South-East Papua', in *Oceania*, vol. xv, September 1944, 101ff. See also H. Nelson, 'Frank Pryke: Prospector (A Draft)', ANU 1973.

131 R.W. Abel, *op. cit.*, 1.

132 *Ibid.*

it would soon be defunct. But, as an entry in F.E. Williams' field notebook makes clear, the Keveri regarded the Mission primarily as a peace-keeping force:

Asked if they wanted missionaries... They answered eagerly, Yes... [interpreter] says too much fighting and murdering among them. The Govt. had said so. If they had a missy., this would stop. He pointed to Milne Bay as an example... One man interposed that they wanted a white missy., not a native. 133

The arrival of a large party of determined Papuan missionaries certainly consolidated the gain made by the secular power. Like John Wesley, they believed that the unadorned gospel of salvation converted on the instant; and so they approached the heathen more boldly and insistently than European pioneer missionaries had thought fitting. The result was that the Keveri were overwhelmed.¹³⁴

In 1932 a party of seventy Kwato evangelists inaugurated a missionary campaign in the basin of the Mori and Gadoguina rivers that flowed into the sea near Abau. Beginning at Duramu, where a small Kwato school had been erected, the party swept up the Mori River to Amau under Russell Abel. A pioneering group under Merari Dickson explored the hinterland of the Keveri mountains.¹³⁵ Six months later small groups penetrated the Owen Stanley Ranges and spearheaded an advance into the Keveri valley which straddles the main range between the south coast and the headwaters of the northward-flowing Musa River.

Contacting men of influence in the villages, usually those like Avia with an impressive homicide record, the groups set out to create a spirit of friendliness. At Amau, a village sage known as Belei was singled out as the hanai biaguna (head man) and impressed with the multi-racial solidarity of the party.¹³⁶ In other places the headmen were told directly that the Europeans and Papuans were 'all one family'.¹³⁷ Friendliness was seen as an end in itself;

133 F.E. Williams, Nemea Notes, Box 447, 118-137, PNGA. See also J.H.P. Murray to Minister for Territories, Port Moresby, 11 November 1936, CAO/CRS/G69.

134 F.E. Williams, op. cit., 59. Williams recorded that if young converts were warned by old Suau men to perform the soi feast, 'they would laugh and say, "Get out, this is not mentioned in the book". F.E. Williams, 'Notes...', 138-150, 1925, PNGA.

135 M. Dickson, Interview, Port Moresby, 15 June 1972.

136 R.W. Abel, op. cit., 8.

137 Ibid., 9.

doctrine, theology and custom were not at first mentioned. In each village a man of influence was selected, brought to Amau and instructed in Kwato methods before being returned to initiate his followers in the new religion. A number of the more promising leaders were taken to Kwato so they might inspect the model Christian settlement and draw their own conclusions.

The coastal evangelists set out to impress the Keveri with the new order. This was opposed not only to murder, but to strife of all kinds. Quarrelling, vengeance and violence were denounced: the people were to be friendly to all. No man was to attest to his virility by producing a victim's finger. The remarkable rapidity with which these precepts were disseminated was attributable not only to the government 'peace' but also to the conviction implanted by the Papuans, that unless old ways were given up the tribes would become extinct. Thus Belei of Amau harangued his followers: 'You young men. It is up to you. Heed what these folk are saying. That is the word of an old man. I have seen much. I say this is right for our people.'¹³⁸ According to Murray, the Kwato evangelists had done 'really wonderful work', but the test would come 'when they try to make the girls give up the insistence on the little finger'.¹³⁹

The psychology of non-resistance shrewdly applied by Papuan missionaries partly explains the rapid disarming of opposition. When threatened by ill-disposed villagers, the missionaries were told by Cecil Abel 'not to resist, nor repay violence with violence, but to trust in God and they would have no fear'. Williams wrote that the Papuans greatly admired Cecil Abel's own genius for friendship towards them and declared that he feared nothing. Williams also noted that the Kwato evangelists

... seem to possess, in their way of going about things, a sort of gentle forcefulness which must be well-nigh irresistible. I have the highest respect for the zeal, energy, and determination of these men; so much so that I feel fairly sure that any man whom they made a dead set at must crumple up. 140

Knowing that the traditional slaughter which had been their chief

138 Ibid., 11.

139 J.H.P. Murray to M. Pinney, 30 October 1936, quoted in F. West (ed.), Selected Letters..., 195.

140 F.E. Williams, 'Report on a Visit...', 84, PNGA.

preoccupation was now proscribed by the civil authorities, the Keveri accepted the fact that for better or worse a new order signalled by Kwato now prevailed over the old.

Beginning with initial friendship, the evangelists succeeded in having the outward formalities of Kwato discipline accepted by the Amau and Keveri people. In matters of etiquette, manners and adornment, the Mission style was punctiliously observed. Handshaking became a popular ritual.¹⁴¹ Prayer and worship punctuated the daily routine of village life. The early blast of the kibi or conch shell regulated periods of devotion from early morning to the last prayer-meeting late at night. After two early morning devotions the day of a Keveri villager was free, except for the evening meeting; and to these services the kibi, the Keveri muezzin, summoned faithful adherents. In place of homicide, F.E. Williams remarked four years after contact, 'the main preoccupation, solace and pleasure of the modern Keveri is just praying'.¹⁴²

In Amau, the conch shell was replaced by the more modern whistle, and here individual activities gave way to communal co-operation on a wide scale. A visitor noted:

A whistle... summoned all the villagers and the visitors who had come to meet us at an early prayer. The whistle was promptly obeyed. A further whistle announced a spell in the village, during which many natives were observed in private prayer.

The main meal of the day was a communal one, and here again the whistle brought the people together at once... An idea of sport had been brought back from Kwato, and the people were busy felling timber in preparation for a playground... There was general avowal that the old fashion was finished, that there would be no more killings and that they would show hospitality... to those whom they had previously regarded with malice.

143

Imitation of foreigners was achieved first among New Guinea converts and understanding of philosophy last. Accepting the evangelists' dictum about the proximity of cleanliness to godliness, the Keveri protégés were quickly convinced that an early morning bath was an essential adjunct to an early morning 'Quiet Time'.¹⁴⁴ Hence the

141 Ibid., 17, 41-2.

142 Ibid., 46.

143 SMH, 18 December 1936.

144 R.W. Abel, op. cit., 45.

blast of the kibi or whistle began a meditation beside a stream; and this was followed by a bath. Public and private confession introduced from Kwato were known as 'Big Confess' and 'Little Confess'.¹⁴⁵ Prayers and sermons were an imitation of European liturgy, and the preaching style of C.W. Abel was captured in the ecclesiastical modulation of the professional Papuan exhorter.¹⁴⁶ But imitation was followed by a modicum of understanding. The Keveri villagers knew that Dirava or God would help them conform to new rules of behaviour. Dirava would make them kind, peaceful-minded, forgiving and observant of cleanliness; he would lead them from evil ways of the past; and finally would reward them with life everlasting.

More than any other mission in Papua, Kwato represented a new social order where peace, material progress and racial brotherhood were parts of the same philanthropy. But it also stood for a repudiation of traditional social activities and a negation of those values which the Papuans had cherished. One of the signs of the presence of the Kwato Mission was the resolute blotting out of native tradition. Because the exchange was offered at a time of rapid social disintegration it is arguable that change would have overtaken the Keveri in any event.¹⁴⁷ But it could hardly have come with such cultural destruction as it did when the Keveri were invaded by an army of Abel's evangelists. What was gained through the peace was considerable: what was lost was irretrievable.

Between the rule of C.W. Abel and that of his sons the Kwato message shifted from one of cultural superiority to one emphasising racial brotherhood. In place of C.W. Abel's strenuous insistence on imposed change, Russell Abel stressed the voluntary nature of the

145 F.E. Williams, op. cit., 50.

146 Ibid., 47.

147 Moreover, F.E. Williams after visits in 1938 and 1940 said that 'the pre-existent culture of the [Keveri] people seems a very poor one, and some of the earlier forms of diversion were very objectionable, so that Christianity, which they would appear to be welcoming with open arms, must be of all the greater value to them'. Williams said there was 'every possibility' that converts might interfere with 'harmless' customs. F.E. Williams to H.W. Champion, Port Moresby, 24 January 1938. Williams papers 447, item 118-137, PNGA. See C.W. Abel's challenge to F.E. Williams' theories of cultural destruction in C.W. Abel, 'The Vailala Madness...', in NGT, January 1925, 6-8.

transformation. Questioned about his attitudes to traditional dancing, Russell Abel said:

The question we were asked on every hand was whether we disapproved of the feasts and dances, or put a taravatu, or ban, on the whole affair... We were able to assure them that... we had not come to make taravatu... and that we would hinder no one from going to the dance. 148

Abel's protestations probably had little effect. Generally commentators on culture change in New Guinea have stressed the reaction by the native people themselves to new forces introduced through contact with the West. Such change expressed on the one hand dissatisfaction with existing conditions, and on the other the inability to change because of inadequate resources.¹⁴⁹ Some writers argue that change was a reaction to the 'hopeless cultural vacuum brought about by the impact of the alien on the indigenous culture',¹⁵⁰ or a conscious effort by members of society to construct a more satisfying culture.¹⁵¹ In such a milieu Abel's parrying on the matter of traditional dancing was purely technical: the Keveri reply was that 'all that was darkness and sorcery, and they are finished with it'.¹⁵² If any further encouragement were needed, it was given by Papuan evangelists.

Papuan envoys schooled at Kwato regarded traditional dancing with unqualified disapproval. They knew that the Suau dance was conducted to songs like 'Gama i logalogoi si'u arinai' or 'Gama i enobili si'u arinai'¹⁵³ which were nothing but invitations to intercourse. The dance, they believed, was accompanied by seduction of married women, which was bad; and this resulted in a brawl between husband and seducer, which was worse. Finally, Father Abel had put his taravatu on it and had called on them to give up the old life 'lock, stock and barrel'.¹⁵⁴ His word carried the stamp of final authority.

148 R.W. Abel, 'Report to ARM, Abau', 1937, KA.

149 R. Firth, Elements of Social Organization, 111-13.

150 R.F. Salisbury, 'An "Indigenous" New Guinea Cult', Kroeber Anthropological Society Papers, 18 (1958), 67.

151 A.F.C. Wallace, Man and Culture..., 265.

152 R.W. Abel, 'They Broke their Spears...', 43.

153 'A man goes to a woman and has intercourse in the bush'; 'A boy sleeps with a girl in the house'. D. Sioni, Interview, Kwato, 31 May 1972.

154 See KMT, - 1933, 9.

The apparatus of their education - the cold baths, vigorous exercise, sport and rigid sexual separation - had been devised to quench the lusts set in motion by the dance. In 1922 three Milne Bay elders had asked Abel to petition J.H.P. Murray to abolish traditional dancing by law.¹⁵⁵

Not only was the ideology of the Kwato movement satisfying to a disoriented Keveri, but its general goals were attuned to the needs of those newly acquainted with the shattering experience of culture contact with the dimdim. Kwato's way with the Keveri was through the 'Quiet Time' and confession. Queried about such customs as polygamy, dancing, or decoration, the Kwato evangelist's usual reply was oblique: 'What does God say to you about this?'¹⁵⁶ Unable to muster a broad challenge to such sophistry in the name of Papuan culture, reluctant Keveri usually capitulated. By force of suggestion the hornbill feather, the insignia of homicide, disappeared; by the same means polygamy was dispensed with, and other institutions swept away. Under an Oxford Group convention that encouraged individuals to declare 'This was the word of the Great Spirit [Lauma Helaga] to me this morning',¹⁵⁷ wholesale reforms of social behaviour were effected.

Other emblems of Keveri culture, even those which the Abel family thought harmless, were denounced by Keveri leaders with ferocity. Symbols of the 'old ways', which existed in almost blasphemous proximity to new Christian ways, had to be destroyed. Drums went out of commission.¹⁵⁸ Bark pigtails, which the evangelists had said were 'dirty and for girls', were shorn off and the distinctive Kwato coiffure - short hair parted at the side - substituted. Bark loin cloths were stripped off and calico rami donned. Even artificial beads brought into villages by returning labourers were discarded.¹⁵⁹ But, in imitation of the Kwato evangelists, the red neckerchief was worn. In the Keveri Valley ornamental flowers such as the croton and dracaena, which Russell Abel had commended at Amau, were uprooted as they reminded

155 Ou, Kiriri and Kaku. Abel had referred the request to Samarai. C.W. Abel, LD, 27 July 1922, KA.

156 R.W. Abel, 'They Broke Their Spears ...', 48.

157 Ibid.

158 F.E. Williams, 'Report on a Visit...', 74.

159 Ibid., 74.

the villagers of the dance.¹⁶⁰ Because group consciousness would be awakened by decorations and symbols, all were violently dispatched.

The plucking out of visible trappings was a token of the demise of the communal activities of which they were a part. Large feasts, with food displays, brandishing of spears and formal distributions, were abandoned. The death ceremonies and elaborate system of exchanges known as the soi were declared wrong. Instead a funeral consisted simply of the saying of 'Aion' (Goodbye) as a body was interred.¹⁶¹ Traditional singing was given up, as so much of it was about raiding. While awaiting the arrival of Moody and Sankey choruses, the Keveri declared that until the hymns came they preferred not to sing at all. Even the telling of traditional folklore, a favourite evening pastime, was replaced by the prayer meeting and the 'Big Confess'. The thoroughness and consistency of the work of reformation, commented one visitor, left the villages with a cheerless and disconsolate appearance.¹⁶²

One exception to the general pattern of repression was handshaking. It was one of the most recognizable signs of Kwato activity that everybody engaged in the ritual of handshaking with all visitors. While Keveri natives were eager to reject customs which the Mission had condemned - or what they thought the Mission had condemned - they drew a line at shaking hands with their mothers-in-law. Baulked by such a frivolous and trivial objection, the Kwato evangelists insisted that a man should shake hands with everyone, even with his mother-in-law. When informed of this objection by Keveri men who, in Williams' words, were 'frizzled with embarrassment' the evangelists replied 'Rubbish! Shake hands!' Instead of yielding gracefully to their mentors, however, the Keveri stoutly refused to perform the ritual, but compensated for their shortcomings by vigorously shaking hands with every visitor. 'This wretched triviality', wrote Williams, 'was the only thing of which I heard a Keveri native say, "This is my fashion, and I mean to stick to it!"'¹⁶³

Radical regeneration of the Keveri masses was induced partly by the application of traditional spiritual beliefs. The idea of

160 Ibid.

161 Ibid., 76.

162 Ibid., 78. See R.W. Abel's defence in R.W. Abel to H.W. Champion, Kwato, 11 January 1937, CAO/CRS/G69.

163 F.E. Williams, op. cit., 17, 41-2.

supernatural punishment found a vibrant sounding-board in Melanesian spirituality, so often did it occur in pre-Christian thought as well as native sermons. 'If you do this you will die' was the crude eschatology which was carried readily into the Christian ethic as expounded by Papuan preachers. The belief that physical illness and death were encompassed by a sorcerer appeared to gain momentum from the Old Testament concept of divine retribution by God at the hands of His servants the missionaries. Many Keveri zealots evidently believed that those who persisted in old customs would 'die'. This did not mean physical death, according to Williams, but that they would not enjoy an afterlife.¹⁶⁴ In the imposition of the new Kwato morality such reasoning may have had a powerful influence.

In accordance with C.W. Abel's teaching that complete social change was essential for survival and that concentration of population was the only practical way to effect such a transformation, the evangelists soon began to regard Amau as a 'new Kwato' for the Keveri. Here the economy of the Keveri might be rebuilt where their spirituality was reborn. Typically the change was initiated by spontaneous inspiration. Russell Abel related the guidance received by Ofekule, an influential Keveri headman at Amau:

The team sat around on the floor with Bibles on their laps, studying the life of Abraham.

'And the Lord said unto Abram [sic], Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee.'

Ofekule interrupted.

'... Why, that is what God said to me! That is my guidance; that there is no future for us in the mountains; that we must leave the lands of our fathers and go to new country that he will show us.

165

Ofekule's inspiration was strengthened by evidence. The land at Amau was fertile and flat, and far better for horticulture than their own rocky mountains. Furthermore, it was not regarded by the Keveri as a foreign country: as far as the Keveri were concerned they were merely moving into another, although distant, part of their own land. Finally, unlike most Papuan subsistence gardeners, the Keveri exhibited

164 Ibid., 56, 64, 72, 80. Abel had always preached that one reason why prayer was unanswered was a return to the old ways. C.W. Abel, LD, 21 July 1912, KA.

165 R.W. Abel, op. cit., 45.

little attachment to their traditional land and felt no nostalgia for it.¹⁶⁶ With schools for the children, a church, hospital and a flourishing communal rice project managed by Papuans, Amau society would be a lively substitute for destitute mountain villages stripped of ceremony and activity.

Nor was the movement to Amau without parallel. Like many inland people, the Keveri had been placed at a disadvantage by contacts between their coastal enemies and the foreigners. The raiding of the Doriri, their Musa River neighbours, on the Maisena of Wanigela had been abolished by several crushing defeats by Government forces under C.A.W. Monckton after 1901,¹⁶⁷ establishing beyond doubt the supremacy of the coastal tribes. As mountain people later told visiting officers, they were under the impression that Government existed solely for the 'salt-water people'.¹⁶⁸ Their anxiety to benefit from culture contact can be illustrated by the welcome given by Hydrographers Valley to the first patrol in 1932:

The treatment received by the party was magnificent ... we were cheered into the village. Women rushed up with the food singing [and] shouting Oro... There can't possibly be a more willing crowd of people. 169

The relaxation of tension between mountain and coast was often followed by migration from the hills to more tractable coastal regions. Unlike other migrations, however, that of the Keveri was induced through moral and religious sanction. For Cecil Abel's affirmation that a large settlement would prevent such laloa dika as quarrelling, fighting and murder was part of the ongoing activity of the Kwato Mission in fulfilment of its founder's plan.

Initiated by revelation, fortified by force of suggestion, and confirmed by practical advantage, the migration of Keveri mountain dwellers was conducted with the thoroughness of a mass movement. By June 1939 most of the Ukaudi tribe had migrated to cottage settlements

166 F.E. Williams, op. cit., 66.

167 C.A.W. Monckton, Some Experiences..., 185, 208-232, 256, 275.

168 RM, Baniara, PR, 25 June 1915, RMED, CAO/CRS/G91. At Dogura, coastal people despised mountain villagers, describing them as 'stupid and dirty'. MN, 15 December 1900.

169 G. Elliott Smith, Tufi, 23 May 1932, RMNED OJ, Cape Nelson, 23 May 1932, KA.

across the river from Amau. Soon afterwards the Dorevaidi people dispersed from their upland valleys and came to the plains; lastly, the Kuroudi and Domara clans altogether abandoned traditional lands in favour of the new Jerusalem at Amau.¹⁷⁰ At the same time villages in the upper Musa River in northern Papua were shaken by the 'new way'. Fifteen villagers from Uiaku walked across the mountains to join the settlement.¹⁷¹ By 1940 Amau had become a metropolis for the Mori and Musa River basins, with a core of its original Kunika dwellers surrounded by sub-urban hamlets of mountain people.

If there had been any doubt among the Keveri people about the inerrancy of Ofekule's inspiration it must have dissolved on their arrival at Amau. The rice project provided large stocks of food for comparatively little effort. Smaller paddy fields were created nearby as replicas of the original model, orchards of citrus fruits from Australia were planted, and it was understood that to plant crops was as much part of 'God's work' as to preach and pray.¹⁷² Centralization offered tangible benefits for immigrants. The prospects for peace in general were enhanced; easier access, better communications, and more convenient co-operation were facilitated. Communal football among former enemies became a popular recreation. Keveri model settlements were regarded by the Mission as a living vindication of Abel's philosophy.

To Papuans perplexed by difficulties in cultural adjustment the Kwato Mission offered a solution that was available in no other part of Papua: a complete break with traditional society through the substitution of a new social order. The success of the theory of 'complete break' varied with the capacity of the organizers to provide adequate substitutes. At such stations as Kwato, Wagawaga and Amau, the concentration of trained leadership made feasible the complete break. But outside such relatively small settlements, communities anxious to imitate forms in accordance with 'God's plan' created grotesque caricatures of the original model and succeeded only in copying Abel's authoritarian style.

The further a community from the point of dissemination, the greater was the variation on the original theme. Eruru, on the northern

170 F.E. Williams, *op. cit.*, 63.

171 *Ibid.*, Uiaku on the Musa, not Uiaku in Collingwood Bay.

172 *Ibid.*, 62.

slopes of the range, fifty miles inland, offered a good example of a message in process of adaptation. Difficult of access and deprived of resources, the village was introduced to purely negative changes. Without industry, schools or sport, mere prayer was a bare psychological exchange for forbidden traditional pursuits.¹⁷³ It was at Eruru, however, that the most far-reaching prohibitions were effected in the abolition of singing and ornamental flowers. What they lacked in imaginative innovation the Eruru people made up by sheer iconoclasm.

Further down the meandering Musa River the thrust of the message penetrated every village, gathering fanciful accretions as it went. In June 1938 news of the 'new way' reached the middle Musa, and elevated villages were bidden to move to large central settlements on the river flats. At first these directions were ignored, but five months later two men claiming to be evangelists visited Morora village saying that Cecil Abel would be 'very angry' if the migration were not carried out and that he would 'bring the Amau government with him, who would imprison the villagers for not hearing Sesoru's [Cecil's] talk'.¹⁷⁴ Fearing retribution from Cecil's powerful friends, villagers hurriedly erected new settlements at Mukawara on the Musa. When Cecil Abel arrived in 1938 he was confronted with the results of a corrupted message which he traced to 'irresponsible members' of the Papuan team who had visited the mountain villages in his absence. Some villagers were 'furious' at the message. As one said: 'You come round to teach us one thing and then later you come round [and] say we are all wrong.' Realizing the discrepancies, Cecil wrote:

Already the Bibila people are having prayers and appointing leaders and monitors and what not!! ... I had [to] stop all this and say no leaders till I send a team... All new work MUST BE CHECKED in the future. It's because it's spread so fast that irregularities take place. 175

Close to the Musa estuary villages were variously affected by versions of 'Sesoru's talk'. At Liamo village the formality of public prayer was imitated strenuously. On Amau's model, the day began with a prayer uttered in Motu beseeching Dirava to keep their minds upon doing good. If they 'did good' they would have no illness, no stakes

173 F.E. Williams, *op. cit.*, 46.

174 J.B. McKenna, PRNED no. 6 of 1938-39, 25 January 1939.

175 C.C. Abel to R.W. Abel, Duram, 23 June 1938, KA.

would pierce their feet as they trod the bush paths, and skin eruptions would surely disappear.¹⁷⁶ The most orthodox village was Umwate, where the entire Kwato code was practised and the essentials of Keveri strictness observed. They explained that their attitude to the new way was practical: they were prepared to give up their devotions if the promised relief did not arrive in due course.

The message penetrated as far as the Hydrographers Ranges where it seems to have become absorbed in the more specific narrative of a cargo cult travelling in the opposite direction. Addressing an evangelist, a puzzled mountain villager asked: 'L.M.S. we know and Seven Day we know, but where do you get this from because we have never seen this kind before.'¹⁷⁷ In the Hydrographers Ranges it was understood that sorcery, murder, fighting and quarrelling were to be given up. The people in some villages shaved off their bark pigtails, killed pigs and married boys to girls to avoid promiscuity. But villagers also heard that the earth would turn upside down, villages disappear into chasms, and departed spirits revive to menace the living.¹⁷⁸

Following the outbreak of religious fervour in the Hydrographers Valley, the Kwato message spread northward where it reached inland villages in the Cape Vogel area in June 1941. Like the Keveri and middle Musa people, the people of Bibitan village were fastidious observers of decrees promulgated by the Baniara government. To these they added the mission canons against adultery and the outward manifestations of the 'Quiet Time'. Every male in the Bibitan area bathed at dawn and in the afternoon; the villagers went down on their knees to hear public confessions; and prayers were offered for protection against accidents. The magistrate who visited Bibitan commended the Mission morality, but he described bathing in the chilly mountain waters as 'foolish and unnecessary'.¹⁷⁹ The symbols of dress and bathing were tokens of the intense longing of inland Papuans to benefit from change, the same motive that two years before had shaped a random mass of people at Keveri into a coherent, migrating body.

176 Ibid.

177 C.C. Abel to R.W. Abel, Duram, 23 June 1938.

178 J.B. McKenna, 'Kwato Mission Influence in the NED Hydrographers Valley, Musa Area', 1940[?], KA.

179 Baniara Station Journal, 19 June 1941, CAO/CRS/G91, Item 61.

The rapid spread of the 'glorious rebirth' among the Keveri had its roots in increasing contact between Papuan people and an intruding culture. The hastiness of change was indicative of the inadequacy felt by inland people in the face of an alternative way of life. They wished to overcome their inadequacy; and in doing so had to choose between submission and imitation. They chose to imitate.¹⁸⁰ Backed by the prestige of European patronage and sanctioned by a retributive psychology, the Kwato evangelists won an easy victory, but the spread of the message outstripped their capacity to consolidate it. The basis of the movement was laid by the Abels, but the real process of cultural adjustment was initiated and carried through by the Papuans. Thus the opportunity was lost of sanctifying the past: old customs were simply overthrown.

IV

CHARLES Abel regretted the passing of traditional dancing less than the passing of traditional art. If religious conviction led him to frown on dancing, artistic sentiment moved him, like Frank Lenwood, to 'a feeling of reverence for the peculiar beauty' of Papuan design.¹⁸¹ In 1920 Lenwood had written that if art was associated with evil, it was the missionary's business to break the association rather than see the art destroyed.¹⁸²

In the early 1930s Abel's children had become convinced that their mission had more to do than turn out plumbers and joiners. Russell Abel felt they should, in Lenwood's words, encourage the old craftsmen to teach their patterns to the younger folk. By bringing carvers from Gwavili to teach the fifty Kwato tradesmen and apprentices, they drew the praise of anthropologists such as Williams where their father had drawn on himself a shower of missiles.¹⁸³

In 1934, Papuan craftsmen under the guidance of Arthur Beavis (1932-1967) began to erect a monument to Abel that would embody Massim

180 See also A.C. Haddon, Headhunters..., 171.

181 F. Lenwood to PDC, London, 11 February 1920, KA; see also C.G. Seligmann, op. cit., 36.

182 F. Lenwood to PDC, London, 11 February 1920, KA.

183 See F.E. Williams, 'Native Art and Education', Williams papers 447, no. 1-9, PNGA; C.C. Abel to H.W. Champion, Kwato, 7 June 1938, CAO/CRS/G69. See also H.E. Hogbin, 'Native Christianity...', in Oceania, vol. XVIII, no. 1, September 1947, 7.

design in wood and stone. As a piece of architectural innovation the Abel Memorial Chapel was excellent. Internally the most interesting part is the roof structure, with the marching repetition of vertical struts from heavy rafters down to the walls which support the shingled exterior. By taking a simple, traditional design and using it exceedingly well the Papuan craftsmen produced not only a statement of engineering that was completely new, but a stone rendering of Massim art that had never before been seen in Papua.

Whether good craftsmen made good mission leaders was more difficult to decide. Feeling the criticism from home boards that missionaries tended to 'dig in' and keep control away from their converts,¹⁸⁴ Abel had written in 1926:

Is it not time that they were allowed more
independence than they have had hitherto? How
can we give them more, and what form should it
take? 185

It was the second question which troubled Abel. Some villages tolerated his laws so long as he was there to enforce them. He inveighed against a body of natives, telling them they had not once come to him about improving the life of the stations: 'Never once. Wait, wait, wait, until called upon, and then for a few weeks do what they were told to do, and then slip back into old ways again.'¹⁸⁶

Between different currents Cecil Abel decided it was prudent to involve Papuans in the Field Council while retaining European members. In 1933 he placed three Papuans - Tiraka Anederea, Phillip Bagi and Merari Dickson - in executive positions on the Council. But the innovation came at a time when foreign membership was steadily rising. Between 1925 and 1938 the number of foreign missionaries grew from five to 21, making the proportion of Papuans to Europeans small. Moreover, Anederea was a veteran of an earlier regime and was often unfriendly to change; the phrase, 'Father would not have done this', was heard reproachfully from the Papuan end of the Council.¹⁸⁷ Russell

184 C.W. Abel, LD, 12 July 1926, KA.

185 Ibid.

186 C.W. Abel, LD, 20 July 1926, KA.

187 J. Pita, Interview, Koeabule, 29 April 1972.

Abel found himself saying that older Papuans had grown more conservative than he.¹⁸⁸

The three Papuan councillors may have felt a restraining hand necessary. Anederea had once questioned the Abels' leadership, and several of the older converts were suspicious of Russell Abel's more permissive attitude to the tabu upon Sabbath work and dancing.¹⁸⁹ There was also anxiety within the N.G.E.S. in America. Delavan Pierson disliked the Oxford Group and thought Cecil Abel over zealous in advancing its cause during his tour of America in 1936.¹⁹⁰ Other overseas patrons were becoming increasingly critical of the management of the mission. Tugged by both Papuans and Americans, the ship rocked gently at its moorings.

In 1937 Pierson presented an ultimatum to the Field Council in Papua to choose between the N.G.E.S. and the Oxford Group. The answer from Kwato was prompt: the N.G.E.S. was politely thanked for its help in the past, and bidden farewell.¹⁹¹ Where the L.M.S. had backed C.W. Abel with imposing resources and the American society was led by men of ample private means, the Oxford Group provided no money. The Kwato community paid the price of its third secession from foreign patrons by pooling incomes, abandoning regular furloughs, and sharing food with Papuans. Phyllis Abel attributed the financial instability to a loss of 'spiritual energy':

Can't we trust the Lord for the future? The Lord
has promised. Why can't we take Him at his word?
Common sense says we should be provident. But the
word is 'Take no thought for the morrow.' 192

Taking her pietistic trust to its logical conclusion, Phyllis Abel recommended a 'faith mission' with no regular financial support or overseas resources.¹⁹³ The more practical faith of C.W. Abel was

188 For R.W. Abel's comments on Papuan sabbatarianism and attitude to dancing, see R.W. Abel to S. Porteous, Kwato, 16 February 1945; R.W. Abel to C.C. Abel, Kwato, 14 July 1936, KA.

189 R.W. Abel to S. Porteous, Kwato, 16 February 1945, KA.

190 D.L. Pierson to C.C. Abel, New York, 23 March 1937, KA.

191 C.C. Abel, 'Kwato Fellowship Letter' (typescript), 20 November 1938, KA.

192 P.D. Abel, Diary, Kwato, 25 June 1931.

193 P.D. Abel to B. Abel, Kwato, 21 April 1931.

replaced by what the world was by now openly calling eccentricity.¹⁹⁴

For a time the Kwato Mission held on, keeping the 'Abel legend' warm and sustained by the weight of its achievements in the past. Small handicraft industries provided subsistence from tourist ships; and during the Pacific war, as a recreation centre for American troops, it made good its claim to be a solvent to racial barriers in Papua. In 1945 Cecil Abel declared that, in solving the problem of racial tension, his father's mission had been the 'pioneer in Papua',¹⁹⁵ a claim supported by such academic visitors as Camilla Wedgwood and H. Ian Hogbin.¹⁹⁶

Such assertions barely disguised the legacy of Abel's forty years as a missionary in Papua. A Congregationalist with a belief in a democratically elected ministry, and a scepticism of those exalted above their fellows, Abel was powerful in shaping a similar sentiment among Papuan Christians. But this was matched by an initial ignorance of their performance as leaders, and in the end he maintained a community which looked upwards for its authority.

The Kwato Mission bequeathed two unsolved 19th century Evangelical missionary problems to its Papuan élite: how to reconcile Melanesian culture with the Christian faith, and how to integrate new scientific knowledge about primitive societies into missionary policy. The Keveri valley was a self-contained example of what could happen when Papuan converts were set free from the inhibitions of missionary leadership while these problems were unsolved. Some technological improvements were made among the Keveri, but these were negated by a violent Papuan iconoclasm. Whatever Papuan converts had cherished as peculiar to themselves they were induced to reject as the price of conversion. High ideals were besmirched by a blind and narrow inflexibility, and the conversion of the Keveri was nothing more than a long act of intolerance in the name of God towards the traditions of their fathers.

Abel's promised land was one in which all shared a common inheritance, and its appeal to Papuans lay in the ventilation of

194 See C. Whonsbon-Aston, *Reminiscences*, nd, ms in writer's possession.

195 C.C. Abel, 'The Incorporated K.E.A.', ms. Kwato, 1946.

196 R.W. Abel, *Notes on C. Wedgwood and H.I. Hogbin*, 1944. Miss Wedgwood said that Kwato was 'the only spot in the whole area where there was no colour bar'.

Evangelical ideas in a situation of cultural confusion. Its weakness lay in its reliance on the personality of the European leader and belated trust in the value of traditional initiative. In 1944 a young Papuan leader disclosed some of the results in a letter to Phyllis Abel:

There was a lot of dependence at Kwato in the past, especially with us as Papuan Tanuagas [leaders]. This has been a weakness in the past and today we cannot grow to stand on our own feet and depend on God to guide us for any responsibility. The result is today... we can't do without your help. 197

In 1960 the Kwato Mission became a foundation member of the Papua Ekalesia and eight years later joined the United Church of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands.¹⁹⁸ By then Kwato had fulfilled many of its goals: the creation of a community of men with new aspirations, and the nurture of an élite which could survive under the conditions of the modern world.

197 Olive J. to P.D. Abel, Naura, 26 September 1944, KA.

198 R. Williams, United Church..., 1.

CHAPTER XIII

Methodist Preachers - Anglican Priests

I

THE expansion of Christianity in the islands of eastern Papua was partly the work of Papuans. Missionaries exercised little influence among the fight leaders, clan elders and sorcerers in Massim villages, so they had to develop a class of younger leaders who would impose their standards upon those about them. Though Methodism grew eventually to embrace almost all the members of prominent Dobuan lineages, its early influence was greatest among those over whose births, training, and marriages its ministers had presided - the children, particularly the orphans, of the villages.¹

Unlike its Polynesian counterparts, the Wesleyan church in Papua was voluntary or 'gathered', rather than supervised by those in authority. So long as there were fish hooks and calico to be had at mission stations, there would be children ready to gather at the source.² The drift of children into the station schools was encouraged in the hope that Papuans would eventually replace Pacific Islanders as missionaries. But given the number of Island teachers in eastern New Guinea, it was inevitable that some children would complain that they had been bullied into their religious observances. One Papuan preacher recalled being told as a child to attend school if he did not want to be hanged by the neck until he was dead.³

Such a case may well have been unique. Massim children continued their education by preference, and by 1895 more than fifty children had chosen to become boarders on Methodist stations.⁴ When the headstation was moved from Dobu to the larger site at Ubuia in 1906, the number of teacher trainees rose, from 47 to 70 in 1909, and to 173 in 1912.⁵ No distinction was made between boarders and teachers in training: villagers applied the term misionari indiscriminately

1 See chapter VII, pp. 211-29.

2 MR, 4 February 1918.

3 Ibid.

4 J. Benjamin, Victoriana..., 10.

5 AMMR, 4 February 1907; ibid., 4 January 1909; ibid., 5 February 1912.

to all. In 1898 the first teacher, Daniel Didiwai, was sent to the station at Wewemara, with a Dobuan gospel in his hand and his hair cut in the Fijian manner.⁶ As teachers of arithmetic and geography many of his fellow teachers remained irretrievably amateur. But they knew this was not their primary function, and when a visitor asked a class of students what they wanted to do when they grew up, they replied, 'become a missionary' in a chorus.⁷

Methodists put their trust in marriage and disliked celibacy in ministers of the gospel. Girls from Edugaura on Dobu at first objected to sharing their food with boys from Monomonona, whose fathers had eaten their relatives; but once these aversions were overcome, Bromilow was to hear of several romantic attachments.⁸ These alliances were not discouraged by missionaries, who sometimes allowed students to use the mission study for the proposal of a marriage.⁹ The first tapwaroro marriage in Kiriwina, in which six couples were joined in holy matrimony on 11 February 1900, was regarded by S.B. Fellows as a step towards the conversion of the Trobriands.¹⁰ In 1915 the Kiriwina teachers, Madiu Molilobida and Abigaili Didiwai, were married at Ubuia, with the whole mission community of 150 present in European dress; the bride wore a white dress and carried flowers.¹¹ These marriages broke no tabu and were usually smiled upon by elders; for, as M.K. Gilmour observed, most of the earliest mission marriages were a confirmation of arrangements made before the coming of the Europeans.¹² For a Protestant mission, marriage was important in the extension of its influence.

Several of the youths married by Fellows became Kiriwinan preachers. But perhaps the most interesting example of the link between custom and the mission was a young man of Wewemara village, Baniani Baloiloi. Born in about 1880 to a lineage of the kanagara or green parrot totem, Baloiloi's clan was connected with that of

6 Ibid., 5 May 1913; MR, 5 August 1941.

7 Ibid., 4 November 1918.

8 Ibid., 4 February 1909; *ibid.*, 4 June 1909.

9 O. Dixon, Interview, Sydney, 11 June 1972.

10 S.B. Fellows to S. Fellows, Kiriwina, 11 February 1900, ANG.

11 AMMR, 4 January 1915.

12 Quoted in C.G. Seligmann, The Melanesians..., 714.

Gaganumore and he had been sent to Dobu to learn the art of fighting.¹³ He had eaten flesh from the raids before the Methodist ships anchored in Dawson Straits. Entering Buruagura school in 1892, Baloiloi joined Poate Ratu's classes a year later. He was one of the earliest class members and may well have been the first convert to preach on Dobu:

he declaimed at great length, smote the table with the palm of his hand, and walked the platform in great style [wrote Bromilow], and said 'You may despise us because we are young and of the same race, but, I tell you, you dare not despise the message of God.

14

Baloiloi's influence spread wide: one advantage of the circuit system was that no preacher was allowed to stay long at the same station. Between his first appointment at He'umara in 1902 and his retirement on Dobu in 1940, Baloiloi was a preacher in eight districts.¹⁵ Four of his sons were preachers, both daughters married misionari, and seven grandsons became Methodist officials. Among other descendants were a magistrate, a patrol officer, and a co-operative chairman. Several of his grand-daughters married Papuan government employees.¹⁶ Another early missionary protégé was Eliesa Duigu, who accompanied Bromilow to Australia on two occasions, in 1907 and 1925, and helped him translate the Bible into Edugaura. A third was Gideoni, the Bromilow's first orphan convert, who joined the constabulary and left a son and grandson to follow in his footsteps, the latter eventually becoming a magistrate. Through initial conversion, advancing education and marriage alliance, the Baloiloi and Duigu families were able to turn their greater familiarity with the dindim into a source of esteem and influence.

But Baloiloi was never more than a village preacher. Just as MacGregor had obtained Pacific Islanders for the positions of sergeant and corporal in the constabulary,¹⁷ so Bromilow, according to the Anglican bishop who heard his views in 1901, did not expect the Papuans

13 N. Baloiloi, Interview, Dobu, 6 May 1972.

14 AMMR, 6 May 1896, NG synod minutes, 5 November 1940, SA.

15 He'umara, Bwaidoga, Deidei, Buruagura, Morima, Deidei, (second term), Sawadedi, Maiabori, Begassi. NG synod minutes, 5 November 1940, SA.

16 AMMR, 4 March 1908; see Appendix 6.

17 W. MacGregor to J.B. Thurston, 20 May 1890, encl. with J.B. Thurston to CO, 808/86/20159.

to become ministers, as they did not seem to have the power of making themselves obeyed like the Samoans.¹⁸ Bromilow did not alter this opinion on his return to Papua in 1920. 'What the Papuan needs is the Fijian or Samoan', he reiterated. 'The brethren tell me the Papuans make poor leaders and will not rule.'¹⁹ At the very time when Abel was feeling an optimism about the ability of Papuans, Bromilow was saying that their performance as leaders aroused no great expectations.

As Bromilow knew, the Methodist tradition in the Pacific Islands was strong with Fijian, Samoan and Tongan pastors. Simioni Momoivalu, Filimoni Faitete and Joni Kuli were representative of these in the Papua mission. In their shadow the Papuan pastors did not seem to cut an impressive figure. There had been a gleam of encouragement in Baloiloi and Duigu, but in Bromilow's eyes they were a disappointment, not because he thought Papuans were inferior, or less intelligent or resourceful than Polynesians, but because optimism in the eastern Pacific had played a large role in Methodist expectations. In short, while Massim society responded to patriarchal rulers from overseas, it did not often allow the same opportunities to Papuans.

None of this was foreseen in Methodist missionary strategy. Benjamin Danks, the mission secretary in Sydney, never accepted the assumptions that kept Fijian and Samoan teachers as spokesmen for their neighbours in the western Pacific. Instead, he instructed his staff in Papua, New Britain and the Solomons to 'select your men, carefully train them and then thrust responsibility upon them'.²⁰ Moved by the Edinburgh Conference of 1910, which had warned the churches that European supremacy under which their missions had flourished was no longer on the increase, Danks began urging his agents speedily to delegate responsibility. By 1912 the Missionary Review was quoting the maxim that the ultimate aim of missions should be to make themselves unnecessary.²¹

Plainly, missionaries in Papua were beginning to fall out of step with their patrons in Sydney. There is no sign that they were

18 M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 13 November 1901, DA.

19 W.E. Bromilow to A.J. Small, Dobu, 26 July 1920, FDC.

20 B. Danks to R.C. Nicholson, Sydney, 18 September 1911, MOM 60.

21 AMMR, 4 May 1912.

prepared for Danks' view that the highest office in the church was open to Melanesians, 'and very quickly open if they prove themselves'.²² So when they wrote to the home office about the sad shrinkage in Pacific Island workers, Danks gave them cold comfort:

I have been warning you and the other Districts for some years that this possibility would come upon you... your own Teachers and the Teachers in the Solomon Islands are capable of carrying much more responsibility than has hitherto been placed upon them. 23

Danks went unheard. On the rare occasions when official responsibility was entrusted to a Papuan before 1920, there is no evidence that it was due to prompting from Sydney. Not one Methodist missionary seems to have derived even a single idea about delegating authority from Benjamin Danks. One result of this tardiness in the field, perhaps, was a Papuan teacher telling his colleagues in 1916 that in wisdom and experience he and they were no more than ants beside the white men.²⁴

In the view of Methodist missionaries, appointments to high office in the church, though desirable for reasons of overall strategy, could not be justified on grounds of abstract principle alone. They did not think Papuans were ready to have control over church finances.²⁵ They thought their appointment as catechists and ministers ought to be delayed.²⁶ They said that while Papuans made good subordinates, they were often weak or tyrannical as leaders. So they argued that, in their relations with village people, Papuan teachers needed to be both supported and hedged by foreigners.

Though not a complete revelation of their activities, the recorded words of Papuan teachers are a testimony that it was difficult to separate missionary work from the social heritage of the people to whom it was directed. The teachers passed on the main teachings of Wesleyanism, but these were often supported by reference to fear of spirits. At Panaeiti a group of preachers, attributing to the Christian God the functions of retribution given to sorcerers, thanked the Lord that a snake had bitten a sinner to make him repent; now they

22 B. Danks to J.F. Goldie, Sydney, 1 April 1910, MOM 230.

23 B. Danks to W.W. Avery, Sydney, 13 March 1912, MOM 60.

24 E.M. Prisk, About People..., 25.

25 NG synod report, 1922, SA.

26 NG by-laws, 1918/389, SA.

prayed that a snake might bite another sinner also.²⁷ They passed on, too, through an ill-digested theology a set of injunctions which echoed the traditional preoccupation with evil spirits. J.G. Wheen, Danks' successor on the board of missions, overheard a sermon in which the words 'Get thee behind me, Satan', were translated into 'Setani, u na ota': 'Satan, you clear out.'²⁸ The preachers spoke against fighting and the sorcerers, and told their elders that the saved had already been gathered away from the damned:

our relatives are the missionaries - we have no
relatives in the village. You are not taparoro.
- You belong to the devil. We belong to Jesus. 29

In 1915, with the same readiness with which they were conducting their war against Satan and the sorcerers, some teachers volunteered to help the British cause in the fight against Germany. At Panaeiti, a group of teachers approached F.J. Barnes asking to be 'taught to drill like Britain's soldiers'. The missionary, a former member of the Launceston artillery, showed them to drill with sticks until they made an impressive martial display.³⁰

Some Massim villagers preferred to be damned with the sorcerers than go to heaven with the Methodist preachers. At Kitava they worked in their gardens rather than listen to sermons, so the teacher fell into the habit of beating people for not coming to church. It was his work, he told the magistrate, R.L. Bellamy. The people had no right to go out to their gardens on Sundays; if they did so it was his job to stop them.³¹ Mataio Gamaima, a teacher on Rossel Island, offended the people by firing a gun near their sacred stone, or yaba, in order to demonstrate that the spirits had no power, and when he was struck with ulcers they said it was the work of their sorcerers.³² In February 1923 a party of preachers returning from Sunday service near Bwaidoga found some men fishing in a creek. Losing patience, they broke the net and gave away the fish. In the meantime, the incensed

27 S.B. Fellows, miscellaneous notes, ANG.

28 MR, 4 August 1917.

29 S.B. Fellows to S. Fellows, Kiriwina, 19 January 1900, ANG.

30 MR, 4 March 1915.

31 RMSED PR, 7 November 1918, CAO/CRS/G69.

32 For Gamaima's career, see MR, 5 June 1944; see also NG synod report 1933, Misima QM minutes, Loaga, 29 June - 1 July 1939, SA.

Sabbath fishermen painted themselves and donned fighting regalia. They were prevented with difficulty by moderate villagers from attacking the Christians.³³ Later, a magistrate fined the preachers 10/- for the damage, and the fishermen 5/- for caning several of the congregation.³⁴ The devotion which endeared Papuan preachers to some missionaries deprived them of the respect and confidence of the magistrates.

Yet the tendency of officials to describe in their journals only cases of conflict meant that teachers loomed large in the written record only when there was trouble. The number of preachers whose crusades against sacred stones and Sabbath-breakers caused a collision with magistrates up to 1942 does not exceed half a dozen. But by 1910 there were over 140 teachers employed by the Methodist Mission. Nor is it safe to assume that teachers were any more consistent in their policies towards traditional practices than missionaries. Bromilow had permitted dancing, Barnes had suspected it, E.S. Johns at Kiriwina had admired it.³⁵ A survey in 1934 revealed that of five important circuits - Dobu, Misima, Duau, Bwaidoga and Kiriwina - dancing was permitted in the first two by day or night, forbidden in the second two at night, and permitted in the last by day.³⁶ Night dances were discouraged in places where there was agreement that they were contributing to sexual promiscuity; in most circuits there was no general rule against it.

At this time Methodists also began allowing variations in their attitude to polygamy. The fact that missionaries had not permitted polygamists to exercise power in the churches had afforded a formidable stick to critics. Bellamy, for example, had attributed to it the declining authority of Kiriwina chiefs. Both Malinowski and Murray, however, observed that the functions of the polygamous chiefs had already been usurped by belted policemen.³⁷ The complaint of a polygamist headman at Bwaidoga in 1912 plagued Andrew Ballantyne:

33 RMSED OJ, 12 February 1923, CAO/CRS/G69.

34 Ibid.

35 AMMR, 4 September 1912.

36 NG synod report, 1934, SA.

37 However, for Bellamy's view that chiefs as VCs were 'worse than useless', see CAO/CPI, set 35, bundle 38, Losuia Station Journals. See also B. Malinowski, Argonauts..., 63.

I married my second wife before the missionary came.
If I want to enter class I must put her away. How
can I do it after all these years? 38

At Kiriwina was a missionary who thought a man might be a Methodist without practising monogamy. J.W. Dixon, a former principal of Salamo Teachers' College, knew that while polygamous chiefs had always been given a place of honour at Methodist services, they could not hold office. He thought they should not be so disabled. So from 1932 a Kiriwinan with, for example, eight wives might be a steward, class leader or preacher in the Methodist church, provided that he did not take a ninth.³⁹ Dixon's permissive policy at Kiriwina was not copied at Dobu, where missionaries took advantage of the arguments advanced by functional anthropologists such as Malinowski, that traditional custom should not be disturbed. The reason given by the Methodist synod was that, except in the case of the headman Gaganumore, polygamy had not been a tradition on Dobu.⁴⁰

There was unevenness of policy also on some practical issues, such as the betel nut, church offerings and the kula transactions. Those who disliked betel nut for aesthetic reasons - that it reddened the saliva when mixed with lime - claimed that intoxication from the nut contributed to laziness. Three times between 1912 and 1940 Europeans in synod attempted to stop teachers using it, and each time the teachers strongly disagreed with the synod. In 1917, for example, every quarterly meeting in the Papuan islands returned a negative vote against its prohibition. Those at Hegahagai were most vocal:

- a. We do not think it is a wrong thing.
- b. It would be hard to break with it because the habit has grown with us from childhood.
- c. It keeps the breath clean and the teeth good.
- d. There is no wrong in giving or receiving betel nut only to those who think so... 41

Papuans did not always see eye to eye with Europeans on financial questions. Methodists stressed the duty of giving to the church, and to stimulate 'holy rivalry', the circuits indulged in competitive giving. Roused annually by their teachers to covet the reputation of

38 AMMR, 4 April 1912; see also A. Ballantyne to B. Danks, Bwaidoga, 22 December 1912, SA.

39 O. Dixon, Interview, Sydney, 11 June 1973.

40 NG synod report, 1931, SA. For Malinowski's view of sexual strictness on Dobu, see B. Malinowski, Argonauts..., 42, 364.

41 Hegahagai QM minutes, 16 October 1917, SA.

being the largest-hearted, village congregations tried to outbid one another as the wooden platters were passed around on Missionary Sunday or Papua Day, the winning congregation being rewarded by the loudest cheers.⁴² The value of Papuan offerings thus solicited rose from £188 in 1907 to £1621 in 1919.⁴³ In 1920 Baloiloi led the preachers to request that offerings be in kind; Gilmour however continued to insist upon a money collection. They finally agreed upon a compromise: the villagers would give carvings, woven goods and copra and the plantation labourers would give part of their wages.⁴⁴

There was disagreement, too, between Papuan teachers and missionaries about the kula trade. Malinowski's account was read and admired in missionary circles, but J.R. Andrew thought it 'idealistic', and believed the trade had degenerated since the time of Malinowski's visits.⁴⁵ In 1928 the Methodist synod recorded a strong condemnation of the 'opossum' (une kwaidola) transactions among teachers, on the grounds that teachers unable to shake off their debts were being pressed hard by their creditors to surrender their wages.⁴⁶ The synod did not condemn the simple 'straight across' (une kitomwa) transactions. Censures and threats of dismissal failed to dissuade some teachers from involvement in both types of exchange in the kula up to 1942.⁴⁷

In 1933 teachers in training at Salamo, the station in eastern Fergusson built by Gilmour to replace Ubuia, walked out of their classes and refused work. Their reasons were not connected with the kula. Since 1925 Gilmour's resignation from the mission had been sought by a group of his juniors on the staff, partly on grounds of his advancing age.⁴⁸ Several months before his retirement, a petition

42 AMMR, 4 December 1911.

43 MR, 4 February 1920.

44 D. Baloiloi, Interview, Ubuia, 7 May 1972.

45 J.R. Andrew to H.T. Shotton, Dobu, 23 July 1934; see B. Malinowski, Argonauts of the Western Pacific, London, 1922.

46 J.R. Andrew to H.T. Shotton, Dobu, 23 July 1934; see also NG by-laws, 1912/21, 1917/325, NG synod minutes, 21 October 1921, 7 October 1928, SA.

47 NG synod minutes, 24 October 1939, SA; B. Malinowski, Argonauts..., 334-350, 366-376.

48 G.P. Lassam to J.R. Andrew, Salamo, 11 November 1932, SA.

signed by four ministers invited Andrew forthwith to take over the veteran's chair.⁴⁹ When Gilmour bowed to the lobbying and departed in August 1933, fifty sympathisers among the students demanded leave to accompany him as far as Samarai. The strike that followed the refusal of the principal to grant leave led to the dismissal of twenty students.⁵⁰ Bromilow's resignation in 1907 had caused similar discontent among students, some of whom had then hoped to follow him to Australia. It throws light on the attitude of younger Massim to two old missionaries that they rebelled when one of them had to leave.

Massim teachers in the Methodist Mission not only preached a religious message, but made sure their children shared their secular advantages. From pastors' families came not only future preachers but also government officials, whose education enabled them to enter higher levels of administration. Using the trappings of tradition - the elders' sanction and the exchange of food - Duigu's son was united with his wife in the church at Salamo; but four of Baloiloi's descendants looked beyond the Massim clans for their Papuan wives, and four others married Europeans.⁵¹ This degree of acculturation marked some of Baloiloi's descendants out as representative, and others as being exceptional.

But Methodists dallied far behind the Kwato and Anglican missions in conferring ministerial ordination. This was due partly to a conviction that extension, not Papuan autonomy, was the primary aim of the mission, and partly also because they felt the difference between the Pacific Islanders' steady rule and the vacillating influence of Papuans. As Abel once remarked, in mission stations it was 'the hardest thing to make a young Papuan respect one of their own people'.⁵² In 1947 Duigu was eased into the ranks of the Methodist ministry, the first Papuan to become a circuit minister. He was then about sixty years of age; he died within ten years of ordination.⁵³ But

49 See R.L. McDonald to M.K. Gilmour, Suva, 11 March 1932, FDC; J.W. Burton to M.K. Gilmour, Sydney, 7 December 1932, SA.

50 O. Dixon, Interview, Sydney, 11 June 1973.

51 See Appendix 6.

52 C.W. Abel, LD, 27 May 1924; NG synod minutes, 1940, SA.

53 NG synod minutes, 1958, SA.

though promotion to the ministry was slow, Methodists were much less hesitant than their neighbours at Dogura in moving Papuans into the village pulpits.

When Leonard Murray, the Administrator of Papua (1940-1942), arrived at Dobu in June 1941 for the jubilee of the Wesleyan landing, 300 Massim preachers and teachers college students paraded in white calico at the wharf.⁵⁴ Filled with nostalgia, a Misima teacher, Sitanile Latara, said he wished his old savage father could rise up and see that great gathering. His father wore only a narrow belt, so that his enemies could find nothing by which to hold him. But now, he said, people in Papua were friendly, happy and well dressed.⁵⁵ Initially, tapwaroro had hastened the decline of old sanctions and brought new ethical requirements, and nowhere was this transition more rapid than among the teachers in the mission stations. Such teachers lived through a period of social perplexity and change. Everywhere they went they built schoolrooms and topped the village landscape with a cross. That would have been impossible if the missionary endeavour had been merely from European to Melanesian. And by being parents of educated children they were laying the foundations, though perhaps unwittingly, of a more national awareness among Papuans.

54 MR, 5 August 1941.

55 H.K. Bartlett to - Walker, Misima, 11 November 1941, ANG.

II

WHILE C.W. Abel was nurturing a Papuan élite which might survive the trials of contact with the modern world, and Methodists were hoping to lay solid foundations for a Papuan church ruled by village pastors, the Anglicans began to dream of a time when their church, too, would belong to native-born New Guineans. Some of them shared with Montagu Stone-Wigg the hope of being able to understand and learn from the Papuans, as well as teach them.⁵⁶ On the day of his consecration on 25 January 1898, he declared that his wish was 'to make the Church in New Guinea a Native Church, manned by a Native Ministry, and self-supporting'.⁵⁷

At the end of the 19th century the notion of the village church was still strong in English piety, and rural Melanesia reminded some Anglicans of rural England. Charlotte Yonge, the biographer of John Coleridge Patteson, first Bishop of Melanesia (1861-1871), was the most popular novelist of the English country parish.⁵⁸ The New Guinea Mission, in which trading was forbidden and where all lived in a state of pinching penury, gained a reputation for playing up romanticism instead, and this affected the Papuan clergy. In the minds of some missionary writers, a vague halo of Franciscan beauty hung about the Papuan priesthood.

Churchmen at Dogura were also vague about what authority should be vested in the Papuan clergy. Stone-Wigg was talking in 1901 of a diocese with 'not only a native priesthood, but also a native Bishop at its head'. Though the former was woven quickly into the mission, the latter seemed to him then a prospect belonging to a time 'infinitely future'.⁵⁹ Like Roman Catholics, Dogura clergy shrank from a hasty transfer of the episcopate; like Protestants, they wasted little time in creating a native ministry. The New Guinea via media - largely the work of Henry Newton - persisted almost to the end of the colonial period.

During his forty-eight years in Papua (1899-1947), Newton attempted to pass on the ideal of a Native Church. He was appointed

56 OP, 59/1.

57 Ibid.

58 C.M. Yonge, Life of John Coleridge Patteson missionary bishop of the Melanesian Islands (London, 1888).

59 OP, 59/1, M. Stone-Wigg, 'Address to Ninth Anniversary Conference', 26 July 1900, DA.

tutor of the first three Papuan theological students in 1903, and every Papuan clergyman ordained before 1947 was trained by him. Newton's basic conviction, enunciated in his book In Far New Guinea, was that cautious progress was safer than sudden missionary success. Towards Melanesian culture Newton's thought and actions were informed by the liberal sympathy that was characteristic of Churchmen of the day.

Yet throughout Newton's episcopate (1922-36), the idea of an authentically Papuan church remained a vision held captive by the paternal outlook and lack of originality of its leader. Where Gerald Sharp had placed the essence of leadership in a sharing of authority, Newton emphasized the monarchical character of the episcopal office. While Bishop of Carpentaria (1915-22), he had urged the appointment of a Protector of Torres Strait Islanders, to have almost absolute power, but with deep understanding and sympathy.⁶⁰ In New Guinea, he himself fulfilled the role in no small measure. Papuans born near mission stations, where from the cradle they were instructed in ideas of subordination to bishops, priests and deacons, responded according to an autocratic concept of leadership. A Wedau villager, asked if his people understood a point in an episcopal ruling, replied that 'if the bishop says it is so, it is so'.⁶¹

Not all of this was due to Newton's lofty understanding of his office. The growth of a Papuan ministry took place during a time when the material circumstances of Papua were declining. In 1901 there had been six Papuan pupil teachers to twelve Europeans; in 1911 the number of Papuans on the mission staff reached twenty to the European twenty-five. The mission drew no income from Papuans, and native workers were less charge on its meagre treasury, being expected to share the subsistence conditions of their people. In 1919 there were seventy Papuans and only twenty-five Europeans on the staff.⁶² Papuan clergy, first ordained in 1914, were also increasing: by 1928, when the dimdim numbered forty, there were ten Papuan clergy. Numerically the Anglican church in New Guinea was becoming more Papuan and less European; politically, though outnumbered by converts, foreigners still controlled its destiny.

While holding the most sanguine expectations for a future

60 Carpentarian, October 1917.

61 Nicodemus Kedaresi, quoted in SPAC Minutes, Dogura, May 1957, 43.

62 See NGM AR, 1900-01 to 1918-19.

Native Church, Newton's colleagues found that such visions faded before the hostility which some Papuan communities bore for one another. They knew why people on either side of a single village such as Wanigela worked at church building on alternate days to avoid encountering one another.⁶³ They saw that the behaviour of Papuan teachers was not always characterised by that love which a Christian ought to show his enemy. In October 1903 Clement Qaitavora wrote to Newton from Boianai:

Father, I am going to tell you what I did... I went to look for the Bogaboga people and I lost my temper. Bada I lost my temper not because of all the people but for one man I... ran and got a gun and two cartridges and in the village I shot into the air I changed my mind and shot wide and Father that was wrong that I did in God's eyes it was not what a Christian should do. I behaved like an ordinary man ... what I did was very bad and not what God sent me here for that I should get angry God knew...

I Clement have written this, my Father Newton. 64

It was difficult for a foreigner to accept the advice of Qaitavora's fellow teachers before the emergence of a tribal consensus, and this the Papuans did not have. So in 1901 Stone-Wigg and Newton inaugurated a loose annual gathering called the Oga Tara, to which spokesmen for the people were called along the 350 miles between Taupota and the Mamba River. In 1905, village councils began to be elected in places where there were more than fifty baptized Papuans.⁶⁵ Hoping that a new voice would be heard in the land, that of Papuan Christians, Stone-Wigg found it difficult to persuade any of the 100 members of his first Oga Tara to speak.⁶⁶ In private they were more talkative. Wedauans accused Dogura staff of appropriating more food to the Wanigelans. Chad's Bay people thought missionaries gave the Boianai clans too much attention. Wedauans disputed the Wamiran practice of fishing on their side of the Wamira River.⁶⁷ Taupota villagers angrily accused Newton of saying, 'We don't like you Taupota people, we like the Tamata [Binandele] people.'⁶⁸

At the beginning of the century the people of Taupota were particularly discontented with the policies of the Anglican Mission.

63 M. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 6 May 1898, DA.

64 C. Qaitavora to H. Newton, Wanigela, 17 October 1903, DA.

65 OP, 14/3; see also AMMR, 4 November 1912.

66 NGM AR, 1905-6, 11.

67 C. King to M. Stone-Wigg, Taupota, 13 January 1904, DA.

68 Ibid.

Being the place where Maclaren had originally planned the headstation, Taupota had provided most of the boarders, evangelists, and boat boys of the mission; but a large baptism at Boianai in January 1902 had robbed Taupota of the prestige it had once enjoyed.⁶⁹ In 1901 many villagers had openly defied the church by exchanging sexual partners, and sixty church members were suspended. Some of the Taupota people told King their anger was with Newton: 'He spoke to us Christians with some who were not Christians and classed us all together.'⁷⁰ They did not like the idea that Christianity was for all, giving them the same status as the people of Wamira, Mukawa, and the 'ignorant bushmen', the Binandele.⁷¹ Six months after the Boianai baptism, these tensions had erupted at an Oga Tara, in a tug-of-war innocently arranged between Taupota and Boianai. When the latter village won, a *mêlée* broke out among the 350 delegates on the plateau.⁷² On another occasion a mission football match turned into an ugly tribal brawl. Such things sharpened the authoritarianism in Newton.

The society of north-eastern Papua was much too divided and much too partisan in 1902 to respond to Stone-Wigg's high-minded vision of a Native Church. Undeterred, he decided that for Papuans it was not enough to have annual conferences and village councils; they must be on the synodical councils of the Australian church too. So in 1905 two Papuans, their heads brilliant with bird-of-Paradise plumes, sat among the black episcopal gaiters on the Governor's lawn in Sydney. On 11 October Edgar Meduedue of Taupota took his seat beside Stone-Wigg and Samuel Tomlinson at the General Synod of the Church of England in Australia, and was formally welcomed by Archbishop Saumarez Smith, the Primate.⁷³ On 26 October of the following year John Regita of Taupota and Francis Tutuana of Boianai were admitted in Brisbane to the inaugural Provincial Synod of Queensland.⁷⁴ On both occasions the Papuan members voted on constitutional questions and took part in the enactments, helping in the passage of a pension bill for Australian clergy and ratifying standing orders.⁷⁵

A voice in Australian church government was Stone-Wigg's way of nurturing Papuans in the distinct polity of his church and of

69 NGM AR, 1902-3, 16.

70 See C. King to M. Stone-Wigg, Taupota, 13 January 1904, DA.

71 C.A.W. Monckton, Some Experiences..., 258-9.

72 NGM AR, 1902-3, 14.

73 See OP, 3/7, 9/4; NGM AR 1905-6, 11.

74 OP, 12/1, 44/3.

75 NGM AR 1905-6, 11.

fostering the idea that tapwaroro belonged to them. But his axiom that 'those who are called to be saints must be trained to become saints'⁷⁶ meant the necessity of a higher modicum of literacy for Papuan trustees of the Anglican faith. In 1916, a class of six students met in the house of Edward Guise, the mission printer, and were given the name St Aidan's College.⁷⁷ By training teachers for work beyond their home districts, it was hoped that St Aidan's would help emancipate younger Papuans from narrower village loyalties. Aided by the Native Taxation Ordinance, which provided a subsidy for schools teaching English, ninety students trained at the college in the first ten years, only thirty-six however being judged sufficiently competent for teaching licences.⁷⁸

Governed by Alice Maud Cottingham, a diminutive spinster who later became a cripple and lived altogether thirty-seven years on the mission (1903-1940), St Aidan's College was the nursery of several Papuan church leaders who became legendary in their own lifetime. One of these was Felix Tokeimota, born at Boianai, and having, in Gill's opinion, 'the rare Papuan quality of true leadership'.⁷⁹ Tokeimota was regarded by some as the best teacher the mission ever produced. Another, Christopher Osembo, brought into the Anglican church some of the turbulence of his Binandele heritage.

Osembo was a nephew of Bushimai of Wade, who with ex-constable Dumai had instigated in 1897 the murder of Corporal Sedu and John Green, Government Agent on the Mamba.⁸⁰ Since the massacre of Green's party had been a direct cause of MacGregor's punitive expedition and his subsequent appeal for missionaries, the conversion of Bushimai's relative had a unique symbolic importance. Beatrice Grimshaw's vivid portrait of one of Bushimai's family may have been that of Christopher Osembo himself:

He would have stood out prominently in any company. His muscles were like the roots of trees, he had a brilliant, fierce, intelligent face, and he moved with the spring and strength of a leopard. He was gaily dressed, in a waist-cloth of painted tappa. 81

76 Ibid., 1907-8, 9.

77 OP, 53/1; NGM AR, 1918-19, 6. For a study of Anglican education, see D.J. Dickson, 'Government and mission in education...'. Unpub. Ph.D. thesis, Port Moresby, 1971.

78 CAO/CPI, set 5, vol. 21, Despatch 200 of 9 November, Despatch 211 of 25 November 1916; F. West, Hubert Murray..., 210ff.

79 S.R.M. Gill to H. Newton, Boianai, nd. [1921?], DA.

80 See Chapter II, pp. 57-8.

81 B. Grimshaw, Isles of Adventure, 205.

Sent to Dogura school in about 1904, Osembo became a pupil teacher at Wanigela in September 1907,⁸² and the head pupil teacher at Wedau in the following year. In May 1909, J.H.P. Murray visited Wedau and was 'received by the pupils, headed by a Mambare boy, known as Christopher, who read an address of welcome'.⁸³ Two years later, Osembo composed a hymn in the Binandele language, probably the first to be written by a Papuan. Appropriately, in the aftermath of the Mamba conflict, his hymn was entitled, 'Peace, perfect peace.'⁸⁴

The hopes of those who believed that Osembo would make good his training in the way of peace ran high in 1911. But he was endowed too with the temperament of his Binandele connexions which had cost the government much blood, both European and Papuan, and on occasions he discarded his training in favour of a harsher, angrier method. Sometimes he was gentle and paternal; sometimes he lost his temper. For this weakness he was suspended in 1913;⁸⁵ but in the next year Bishop Sharp was calling him 'a very good teacher, and one of the most intelligent boys we have had'.⁸⁶ Later in 1914 Osembo's gifts were useful to King and Mark Maravua, the Melanesian teacher, in translating into Binandele the gospel according to St Mark.⁸⁷ In about 1915 Osembo was installed as teacher at Uiaku in Collingwood Bay, where hostile converts had spurned missionaries from the rival village of Wanigela. Here he reproved the people, pointing out 'the difference the Mission had made to their lives' and how much it was for their good.⁸⁸

In habit as well as temperament, Osembo wavered between the English and Melanesian people thrown together in the mission. He hoped to educate the Wanigela people out of their hostility to their Doriri neighbours, so in 1915 he asked them whether their former enemies should wait any longer for the gospel. There were, he said, 'lots of people who had not heard, and who was going to carry the

82 H. Newton to M. Stone-Wigg, Dogura, 3 December 1907, DA.

83 TP AR 1908-9, 11.

84 HKM, 1 February 1912.

85 NGM AR, 1912-13, 15; HKM, 1 June 1912.

86 NGM AR, 1913-14, 16.

87 NGM AR, 1912-13, 17.

88 Wanigela Log, 30 April 1915, DA; OP, 48/7.

message?'⁸⁹ Some time in 1918 Osembo decided to ask Sharp for training for the priesthood. Sharp's equivocating reply is illuminating:

He is so very native, and frankly said once that he thought he could never give up betel nut. He has done excellently the last three years, especially as a teacher... Of course I have never taught that betel nut chewing is a sin, but I think it is entirely unfitting for a deacon or a priest. 90

Osembo preferred his betel nut and resumed teaching at Ambasi, where he was in virtual control of the mission after King's death in 1918. According to Sharp, when the Taro cult began emanating from the lower Mamba, Osembo 'stood like a rock, and denounced the taro-worship like a prophet of God'.⁹¹

Osembo's childhood had been spent among Binandele fighting men who, by tempering their ruthlessness with the military discipline of the British, had produced a soldier type, reliable and thorough, as the ideal Papuan policeman. He was used to severity. Comparing his father and the officer C.A.W. Monckton, his cousin Oia said that in the execution of a duty, Monckton 'hits us if we are not quick', but his father 'hits us first to make us quick'.⁹² Both Osembo and Oia, a corporal in the constabulary, appear to have copied Bushimai. During a period of tension at Emo, Osembo once threatened to call in Henry Newton, who would wear his mitre - believed to have magical properties - and turn unbelievers into stone.⁹³ On occasions of more severe strife he was known to utter threats of death:

I told him [wrote F.R. Elder] if he was going to threaten people with death he would have to give up his work. He says (he is quite wild at present) that 'for 25 years he has been blamed by the mission - called lazy and angry etc. - and he will give up altogether...'. I shall be sorry if he goes but if it is true that he is always threatening people with death he is better out. 94

Newton removed Osembo to Mukawa, where he had no need to bully the Christians. Mukawa was a few miles from Paiwa, where Oia had led the constabulary on a bayonet charge in 1903. In old age, Monckton

89 Ibid.

90 G. Sharp to H. Newton, Brisbane, 10 November 1921, DA.

91 NGM AR, 1918-19, 17; OP, 56/8.

92 C.A.W. Monckton, Some Experiences..., 193.

93 P.J. Rautamara, Interview, Sydney, 10 July 1971.

94 F.R. Elder to H. Newton, Eroro, - November 1925, DA.

recalled how 'Corporal Oia took command and rushed into the village... and through the night came... the awful 'Oough! aarr!' war cry of the Binandere - a war cry I thought I had long since drilled out of them - as each man sent his bayonet home and passed on for yet another victim.'⁹⁵ Monckton was recalling his corporal thirty years after the event. It is unlikely that the Paiwa would have overlooked the fact that the new Anglican teacher at Cape Vogel was the corporal's cousin. Asked why Osembo's commands were obeyed, a Mukawa man replied, 'he gave us an order and we obeyed'.⁹⁶ Osembo is remembered in local legend for his resonant baritone voice, as well as his volcanic temper.

Thus there were places where aggressiveness struggled with the religion of a loving God within the mind of the Papuan teacher. Sometimes the former mood won. In several Massim regions - Milne Bay, Kiriwina, the D'Entrecasteaux, and Collingwood Bay - hostility erupted sporadically between teachers and police.⁹⁷ An aggressive young Anglican teacher, Ernest Kasokason, was accused by a magistrate of inciting his clansmen to brawl with a constable. Kasokason replied:

It is true - in part. We belong to different [clans].
He is always picking on my people over small things.
They complained to me and they said, 'We will fight
him next time he is unreasonable' and I said 'Yes,
fight him.' 98

In 1915 a teacher at Boianai issued a writ for assault against members of the constabulary, and two years later the teacher Alexander Roron made a complaint against 'obscene and insulting' language and brutal treatment by other armed constables.⁹⁹ In the Anglican fold, missionary sometimes squabbled with missionary. The lay-reader Lucian Magumagu disagreed so violently with the European teacher A.D. Watson in 1923 that he seized the wooden cross from Eroro church and brandished it over the head of the other.¹⁰⁰

95 C.A.W. Monckton, New Guinea Recollections, 78-9.

96 P.J. Rautamara, Interview, Sydney, 10 July 1971.

97 See F.W. Walker to G.R. Le Hunte, Kwato, 26 January 1900, CAO/CRS/G121.

98 RMNED OJ, 19 June 1931 and 30 April 1931, CAO/CRS/G91.

99 F. Macdonnel to A/Government Secretary, Cape Nelson, 12 May 1915, CAO/CRS/G91; Uiaku Log, 12 July 1917, DA. See also OP 73/5.

100 F.R. Elder to H. Newton, Eroro, 2 August 1922, DA.

The trouble teachers experienced in asserting authority in an egalitarian society sometimes resulted in emotional instability. Deprived of the comforting landmarks of village custom, and hedged by the comparatively stern morality of the dimdim, New Guinea teachers tended to become irritable, quarrelsome, and finally rebellious. The teacher, Benedict Keroa, resigned from the mission only to discover that his mission-taught wife refused to live in his village. Keroa then had sexual relations with another woman, returning to Alice Cottingham at St Aidan's College 'weeping so bitterly' that she 'had to send him out till he could recover'.¹⁰¹

Such sexual voyaging was more common among unmarried teachers. Cedric Taugaia, a teacher at Sangara, described his trouble in 1925:

Father I thought of doing wrong, I wanted a woman,
and first I thought like this, if I go at night and
sleep with a woman, I shall be doing wrong; and
when morning comes when I go to the school or the
church what shall I teach the people of the children,
if I should do this I should be ashamed in the eyes
of God and man. 102

Newton's response was one of paternal solicitude rather than judgement:

My dear son Cedric,
... I am told that you went to Pongani and there
you slept with a woman... is the man lying or not?
I am not accusing you but I was told this...
Remember that being a teacher you must obey your
Master, and try hard not to disobey for the sake
of the children... they will follow you, and they
will think that obedience is for children and when
they grow up they will... not obey God our Father
and the Church, therefore we have to deny ourselves
for the sake of the children.
My son I send you greetings...
I your father
have written this letter. 103

With Christians on the ascendancy, there was a pronounced tendency to regard pre-contact customs as evil. At village council meetings at Cape Nelson, the magistrate W.R. Humphries noted that in discussing tradition the Christian members of the council voted straight out for the abolition of the custom, but the unconverted were not so

101 A. Cottingham to H. Newton, Dogura, 11 December 1922, 22 April - 8 March 1923, DA.

102 C. Taugaia to H. Newton, Sangara, 22 October 1925, DA.

103 H. Newton to C. Taugaia, Ambasi, 31 October 1925, DA.

emphatic.¹⁰⁴ At Gona, Father Clement Wadidika, whom Sharp had regarded as 'a saint', forbade the people to wear mourning garments.¹⁰⁵ Nearer the Mamba mouth, Father Stephen Mairot was beginning by 1929 'to boss the Ambasi people'.¹⁰⁶ At Sangara the teacher Andrew Uware caned unruly youths so violently that he drew blood.¹⁰⁷ The same severity evident at Keveri under Papuan gossellers from Kwato was strong in Anglican converts. At Sefoa, mission schoolboys recommended that a thief be castrated;¹⁰⁸ at Wanigela, they urged the priest to take his gun and shoot a misdoer.¹⁰⁹ Village councillors in Milne Bay told government officers they wanted permission to beat adulterers with rods.¹¹⁰

Newton opposed tyranny. Papuan converts stood at his elbow, warning him that dancing was 'bad'.¹¹¹ He wanted none of their advice. Early in 1922 Sharp told him that in the neighbouring diocese of Melanesia, dancing was supported 'to such an extent that when there is going to be a great dance the bishop solemnly blesses the dancers before they begin'.¹¹² Newton therefore spurned a request by a Papuan teacher at the first Oga Tara in his episcopate that traditional dancing be discouraged.¹¹³ He admonished Wadidika at Gona, saying that the mission had 'no claim on the heathen to give up their customs'.¹¹⁴ In 1927 Anglican teachers were told that they must cease using corporal punishment.¹¹⁵

104 RMNED OJ, 31 October 1930, CAO/CRS/G91.

105 G. Sharp to H. Newton, Brisbane, 10 November 1921, DA.

106 OP, 102/3; 86/5.

107 H. Holland to H. Newton, Sangara, 15 June 1923, DA.
Other Anglican teachers accused of violence were Tidman Somora and Clarence Sofa.

108 Sefoa Log, 24 December 1935.

109 Wanigela Log, 14 March 1910, DA.

110 RMED PR, 5/11, November 1931, Note II, CAO/CRS/G91.

111 For an analysis of Papuan missionary attitudes, see F.E. Williams, Drama of Orokololo, 430-44. See also D. Wetherell, 'Monument to a Missionary...', JPH, (8) 1973, 30-48.

112 G. Sharp to H. Newton, Brisbane, 18 May 1922, DA.

113 'New Guinea Notes', July 1927, vol. II, No. 8, 46, DA.

114 OP, 102/3.

115 'New Guinea Notes', 46.

Newton's instructions to ogababada were clear. A village councillor must not refuse communion to anyone.¹¹⁶ He must visit the people, especially when they are sick. He must read his Bible. He must not attempt to arrange a marriage.¹¹⁷ The bishop wanted Papuan priests and lay leaders to be more religious and less political. Some of them refused to see any difference, so he believed he must therefore apply the brake. There was a deeper problem: every year more and more plantation workers and policemen, mission teachers and boat boys, Christians and non-Christians, were returning to their villages caring not a jot whether their fathers' customs were honoured or not. Newton lamented this 'ridicule and abuse'.¹¹⁸ His decisions, delivered imperturbably during annual conferences, were usually on the side of tradition against the changes wanted by those Papuans who thought 'old ways' to be foolish and bad.

This uneasiness pointed to a greater hazard, to which writers in the Anglican fold were particularly susceptible - the failure of experience to measure up to the romantic ideal. Newton had inherited Stone-Wigg's vision for a Native Church, as well as the halo which in Anglican eyes hung over the natives of Papua. Both affected the judgment of missionaries. A clergyman told an audience of supporters in Westminster in 1920 that he thought Papuans combined the character of St John with the beauty of Apollo. But later he agreed they were wise to have discipline to keep their character pure.¹¹⁹

Bishop Sharp had been less equivocal. The Occasional Paper told its readers in 1921 that 'The Bishop objects to [Papuans] now being classified as savages because so many of them are Saints.'¹²⁰ Neither he nor Newton revealed unpalatable facts about the 'Saints': that Maclaren's payment for Dogura had been stolen by a Papuan;¹²¹ that missionary food had been urinated upon by Binandele on the Mamba;¹²² that King's mission had collapsed on his death; or that women in Milne

116 Ibid.

117 Ibid.

118 H. Newton, 'Twenty-two Years After', in M. Stone-Wigg, The Papuans, 43.

119 OP, 63/4.

120 OP, 66/3.

121 See p. 38.

122 A.D. Watson to H. Newton, Ambasi, 24 July 1922, DA.

Bay had borne children to John Guise, the most sophisticated of the mixed-race élite. 'One does not care to wash dirty linen in public',¹²³ was Newton's explanation. A mass of literature arose, which no one without experience could detect, which concealed an unbecoming side to Papuans, and which exalted virtue at the expense of accuracy.

Some Papuans possessed those special qualities which missionaries looked for in the mass in vain. A Taupota youth named Edric, for example, tried to save the mission launch Abiel Abbot Low in a hurricane and went down with the ship '[standing] at his post and faithfully doing his duty'.¹²⁴ At Wedau, Augustus Maipuli and Henry Berauaga, working with Jeremiah Bonagadona and Eric Wakuwakuta of Wamira, had translated the whole of the English Prayer Book by 1916.¹²⁵ Along the coast the practice of fasting before baptism was becoming widespread;¹²⁶ at Boianai the population of 1800 kept silent through the whole of Good Friday.¹²⁷ Missionaries aided by Wedauans continued to translate hymns, of which there were 100 by 1915 and 200 by 1927;¹²⁸ and hymnals were published also in the Mukawa and Binandele tongues.

The church offered Papuans no opportunity to get rich quickly. Some Europeans confessed that they never had the sense of being really poor until they visited the Anglican Mission. Although the A.B.M. was sometimes suspected of hoarding treasure which for some reason it did not distribute, the impoverishment of the mission was fully evident to its adherents. Papuan teachers were granted a trifle of 2/- monthly, with a 6^d increment for each child. Gill realized that the teachers' privileged position was being undermined by the affluence of the indentured labourer. He said that missionaries 'must not fall into the error of assuming that all our teachers want is "a feed of rice and a stick of tobacco".' On the contrary, a teacher should be 'comfortable and contented - able to live a life conducive to spiritual and intellectual development and free, so far as we can render it, from financial worry'.¹²⁹ At the Oga Tara of 1929, Papuan teachers

123 OP, 75/5.

124 NGM AR, 1910-11, 19; see also OP, 10/7.

125 CS, 28 August 1931.

126 OP, 5/3, 43/3.

127 Ibid., 5/3.

128 OP, 45/9.

129 S.R.M. Gill, 'A few reflections...', Boianai, 28 October 1918, DA.

produced a request for full wages and free food.¹³⁰ Newton, understanding at last the reason why enrolments at St Aidan's College had fallen to six, bowed to the demand and increased wages. But he disappointed the teachers by refusing to make more than a marginal increase, on the grounds that to do so would be ruinous to the mission finances. 'Thank you for explaining it to us', replied the spokesman for the teachers. 'We did not understand, now we know.'¹³¹

IF a teacher was good, he generated among the people a desire for a priest. In Anglo-Catholic missions the emphasis placed on the three-fold orders of bishop, priest and deacon gave the indigenous ministries an importance which cut through the particular racial notions associated with British colonialism. Because the message of Christianity was proclaimed as available for all men, the problem which the white race posed for a universal religion could be resolved by raising up a native priesthood. Through it Papuans could share the thought-patterns of Europeans; through it a Papuan might enjoy the prestige of the dimdim.

The first clergy were drawn from the household helpers gathered by King in the villages of Goodenough Bay. In November 1899 John Regita, Clement Qaitavora, Robert Madouna and Stephen Nuaria were baptized and absorbed into the clerical establishment at Dogura. Regita, son of the village constable at Wedau, became bishop's valet; Madouna was appointed cook.¹³² The leader of the group was a mercurial youth from Taupota whom Maclaren had noticed in 1891. So impressed had Maclaren been by the boy's shrewdness that he had asked his mother to lend him to the mission, 'to be trained in our schools, as he is a very intelligent fellow and his quickness in picking up English words is marvellous'.¹³³

The youth was almost certainly the one who came to be called Peter Rautamara. Born in about 1876, Rautamara followed the pioneer clerics to Dogura and was baptized in 1900. As a student he was so

130 OP, 84/4; see also D.F. Wetherell, 'A History...', 200-1.

131 Ibid.

132 C. King to M. Stone-Wigg, Dogura, 25 November 1899, DA.

133 MN, 17 April 1899; ibid., 24 June 1899; ibid., 17 October 1898.

exemplary that in 1904 he was chosen with Gregory Teroia of Boianai to accompany Stone-Wigg on a tour of Australia and New Zealand. In Sydney they were presented at Government House and in Melbourne they attended a cricket match.¹³⁴ Rautamara astonished audiences with his fluent handling of English, and in New Zealand he addressed the Waiapu Synod. One listener in Wellington was so carried away by Rautamara's eloquence that he pressed a cheque for £1,000 into Stone-Wigg's hands.¹³⁵

Both Stone-Wigg and Newton wanted to delegate authority to Papuan clergy. Newton told his students in 1903 that foreigners could not properly enter the lives of New Guinea people, and therefore Papuan clergy must shoulder the responsibilities.¹³⁶ Realizing that the ultimate survival of Papuan Christianity depended on the training of native leaders, Chignell said in June 1915 that if 100 white priests volunteered for New Guinea the next day, the bishop would prefer one-tenth the number of Papuan priests.¹³⁷

But the movement for native priests was strongest where candidates for the priesthood were least confident of their capabilities. Robert Madouna, one of the first three students at Newton's theological college in 1903, queried with foreboding whether white missionaries intended leaving Papua, leaving them to carry on alone. Two students begged not to be ordained when their time came as they were too fearful of their inexperience. Newton reassured Madouna that though the church would belong to Papuans, neither he nor his grandchildren, nor perhaps even his great grandchildren, would see the day when the church in New Guinea would stand alone.¹³⁸

Caution was the hallmark of paternalism. Nearly all Papuan clergy joined the Mission as children: few were ordained before they were thirty-five. Nurtured by older missionaries - forty-two was the average age of white clergy in 1905¹³⁹ - some Papuans had undergone

134 A. Ker to M. Stone-Wigg, Wedau, 22 June 1902; see also MN, 17 October 1898; *ibid.*, 17 April - 24 June 1899; NGM AR, 1904-05, 9.

135 OP, 57/2.

136 CC, 2 May 1904.

137 OP, 44/5.

138 CC, 2 May 1904; MN, 20 May 1904; see also A.K. Chignell, op. cit., 81.

139 NGM AR, 1905-06, 12.

long trials as teachers. Some were given vestments when middle-aged;¹⁴⁰ two died within six years of ordination and another while being trained.¹⁴¹ Greater initiative was offset by a loss of initiative, for by temperament and training, Papuans were thought more fitted to reap what others had sown.

Most clergy came from the ranks of the professional teachers. A few younger clergy were called directly from the village schools, one of whom, Andrew Uware, asked Newton whether he was fitted for the priesthood:

As I read [your letter] I saw that you were asking me to do a great thing and my heart leaped... I believe God is calling me through you. But my heart is troubled by these things: First I started school in 1914 and went on to 1921 and I have been a teacher for only four years. That is 11 in all. And in the Prayer Book I see that when a man is 23 he can become a deacon. I think I am 20 years old... Perhaps Mark Maravua [S.S.I.] can tell you how old I am. 142

Some candidates doubted whether they could gain freedom from ties of kinship. Villages in Bartle Bay, Boianai and Wanigela were often reluctant to let boys enlist in the mission, and at Dogura their students were 'extraordinarily homesick'.¹⁴³ But those from Taupota, Mukawa and the Mamba did not become easily homesick and enjoyed travel.¹⁴⁴ Like the Dobuans, they were used to long absences from home. The result was that nearly all the first Methodist misionari came from Dobu, but the first Wedauan Anglican priest was not ordained until 1939, almost fifty years after the missionary landing at his village.¹⁴⁵

140 Richmond Diala, student 1899, pupil teacher 1903, deacon 1924, priest 1929, died 1932. Mark Kerediredi, student 1897, deacon 1925, priest 1929, died 1932. OP, 96/81. 101/3.

141 John Regita, student 1896, deacon 1917, died 1923. Longer clerical terms were served by Francis Tutuana (1916-1935); Stephen Mairot (1919-1937); Edwin Nuagoro (1914-1969); and Peter Rautamara (1914-1971).

142 A. Uware to H. Newton, Sangara, 26 October 1925, DA.

143 MN, 20 February 1904; NGM AR, 1904-05, 23.

144 OP, 91/5.

145 Simeon Burorosi, a son-in-law of Philip Agadabi, one of the first two Anglican converts. Burorosi was ordained deacon in 1935 and priest in 1939. OP, 101/5.

Ordination came too early for a few Papuan clergy. At Mukawa, Father Edwin Nuagoro mingled weakness with rigidity in trying to cope with a troublesome congregation. To ensure his removal he made an indecent proposition to a parishioner: 'The people would not obey me, would not do what I told them, and I thought if I did this I should be moved elsewhere.'¹⁴⁶ Nuagoro was followed into suspension by the deacon Robert Madouna and the postulant Richmond Diala. In 1924 all three were restored after various suspensions from office.¹⁴⁷ Newton was too intelligent to be inflexible in such cases: for an offence which would have meant unfrocking and dismissal for a European, Nuagoro's term of exile was only nine months.

As more Papuans were ordained, the desire to keep priests pure in sexual habit as well as in doctrine complicated the work of the diocese. Some doubted in 1924, and many doubted earlier, whether Sharp had been right in having Nuagoro and Rautamara priested. Chignell, for example, had written in 1910 that

one of these men is possibly too weak in body and in moral character, and the other probably too obstinate and difficult for any bishop to admit either of them even to the lower order of the diaconate.

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Chignell may have felt vindicated in Nuagoro rather than in Rautamara. As a priest Rautamara could be as stubborn as Newton. But the stern face he often turned to his superiors contrasted with the indulgent attitude he was to show when he appeared as leader rather than follower.¹⁴⁹ Moreover, on the occasions when he harangued the Oga Tara he surprised his critics by a strong orthodoxy.

When Rautamara rose to challenge Newton on points of detail, according to witnesses, the bishop listened attentively to his views and sometimes yielded to his persuasions. Neither he nor Sharp agreed with Chignell that Rautamara was 'difficult':

The people go to him perfectly naturally to be married by him and to have their children baptized without ever dreaming of waiting for one of the

146 OP, 75/4; I. Percy to H. Newton, Didiwaga, 20 November 1923, DA.

147 OP, 77/1.

148 A.K. Chignell, An Outpost in Papua, 82.

149 G. Sharp to H. Newton, Brisbane, 18 May 1922, DA.

white clergy or the Bishop to come along; ... he leads a Christian life of much goodness and great simplicity; and he absolutely never loses his temper. 150

Rautamara's temperamental evenness, in contrast to the volatile behaviour of his colleagues, was probably the reason why he was chosen to pioneer a new mission station at Wamawamana near Cape Vogel.¹⁵¹ He was also thought fit to exercise authority over European missionaries at Taupota, where he was priest in charge from 1918, with an annual salary of £9, a Christian population of 700, and two European women subordinates - one a teacher and the other a nurse. What secular Europeans thought of white women being 'bossed' by a black man is not recorded; but some Taupota people began criticising it as full of 'unholy meaning' when Rautamara started visiting the teacher, Ida Percy, in her home.¹⁵² Newton maintained his predecessor's view that the Papuan priesthood was immune from criticism save that based on race. How 'futile and ignorant' wrote Sharp, was the criticism of those who thought of Papuans as 'savages' unable to understand Christianity.¹⁵³

But there were problems. Once converted and placed under a Papuan priest, most villagers wanted to remain Christian. What to do with a villager who did not, became a dilemma. He might find a visiting policeman sleeping with mission girls. He might have the problem of an excommunicate offending with wives of Christians. He might see a man solemnly holding a mock sacrament with a coconut shell for a chalice.¹⁵⁴ The matter of dissent meant less to a European, long used to a free market in religious ideas and moral practices; it meant more to a Papuan priest in a village precariously Christian.

At Boianai was a clergyman more warlike than Rautamara. The Reverend John Regita, the policeman's son and missionary from 1899 to 1922, was a genuinely religious man, a militant Christian whose wiry frame might have been more at home in his father's uniform or

150 NGM AR, 1918-19, 11; see also D.F. Wetherell, 'A History...', 204-5.

151 OP, 57/16.

152 I.M. Percy to H. Newton, Didiwaga, 6 August 1922; H. Newton to I.M. Percy, Dogura, 15 November 1922, DA.

153 NGM AR, 1914-15, 10.

154 ABM Review, 1 June 1934.

that of the Armed Native Constabulary. In 1920 Regita led a party of twenty-one ogababada and police in a raid on the property of Gregory Teroia, who had become excommunicate. Boianai then had 630 Christians and was the strongest Anglican district in New Guinea. In the absence of Gill, the magistrate Liston Blyth put Regita on trial, with seven councillors and Tokeimota, the teacher, on charges of arson. Blyth, who that year had married a missionary, decided to deliver a homily:

My friends, I wish to talk to you... about the destruction of the canoe of Gregory, this action was wrong and is such that you as Christians should not do, it is evil... not only have you fallen from grace by wreaking petty revenge on a poor outcast, but you have shown unto the people committed to your charge a very bad example. I am sad... Boianai is a place of which all we white men are proud... 155

In judging the most foolish act of Regita's clerical career, Blyth could have remembered that the clergyman had once been grossly insulted by his own police. He gaoled the constables in Regita's party and freed the rest, arguing that to imprison twenty-one officers of the church would have disorganized the mission at Boianai. Blyth later queried the Lieutenant-Governor whether a Papuan could be trusted with holy orders.¹⁵⁶ But Regita returned to his pulpit. The Anglican mission press reacted to the untoward incident in the usual way, by saying nothing.

IN 1929 a man visited the north-east coast of New Guinea which he had not seen for thirty years. He tried to contrast the district as he knew it with the district then. He thought Samarai looked more a town and found Wanigela lit by electricity where he remembered being met by men with spears and stone axes.¹⁵⁷ He landed at stations - Duvira, Gona, Naniu - which did not exist in 1900. But he was struck most by the change in a few individual Papuans. The schooner cabin boy from Taupota, nicknamed 'butter basin' in 1900, was the Reverend Mark Kerediredi. The former cross-bearer at Dogura was now the Reverend Peter Rautamara, who drew up 170 children in a square at Taupota for inspection. At Wanigela, Chignell's cook-boy, known as

155 Baniara SJ, 11 February 1920, CAO/CRS/G91.

156 Ibid.; L. Blyth to P.C. Shaw, Boianai, 28 February 1920, CAO/CRS/G91.

157 R.W. Mounsey, 'New Guinea Re-visited', in OP, 85/9.

'the brat', was the Reverend Gregory Awui.¹⁵⁸ The mission seemed more Australian and less English in character than before; and in the village churches, Papuans were now helping to direct liturgy.

Anglicans were uncertain how much their liturgy would bear improvisation. At the ordination of Francis Tutuana of Mukawa in 1923 the English ordinal was meticulously observed. One Papuan priest placed the chasuble over Tutuana's shoulder and another the stole around his neck. He swore the canonical oath and the oath of allegiance to the British sovereign, and kissed the Bible.¹⁵⁹ Three years later, however, a Wanigela congregation presented gifts of food, spears, cooking pots, armllets and tapa loin cloth to the newly-ordained Stephen Mairot.¹⁶⁰ Drums were first used at the Boianai harvest festival of 1929.¹⁶¹ Gum began to be used as incense; tapa cloth began to appear on altars and vestments.¹⁶²

This slight swing towards Papuan ceremonial was mirrored in secular discussions. An anthropological committee, under the chairmanship of Wilfred Light, met first in the late 1920s. In 1925 a lay teacher at Eroro, Charles Hall, was initiated in an Orokaiva kotopu ceremony alongside Notu village youths. Romney Gill succeeded Dasiga as headman of a Binandele clan in 1939.¹⁶³ There was a revival of interest among missionary editors in the publication of Papuan folklore.

In the Anglican Mission, length of service was venerated and departure regarded as desertion. By the time of Father Amos Paisawa's ordination in 1937 there was a solid core of Papuan and European veterans on the mission staff. Of the first fifty Papuan missionaries, seventeen had left during their first year, eighteen had remained for periods up to ten years, nine up to twenty years, and five for more than twenty years. Twelve of the first fifty European volunteers had left in their first year, but thirty-six had stayed for periods up to ten years. Another sixteen had greater merit, including Newton, Gill, and the Tomlinsons, each with over forty-five years. But Papuans such as Rautamara, Osembo, Madouna and Paisawa had spent their whole lives

158 A.K. Chignell, op. cit., 156-73; OP, 85/9.

159 OP, 74/3.

160 OP, 81/18.

161 OP, 85/7.

162 OP, 80/3; Wanigela Log, 23 May 1920, DA.

163 OP, 80/5.

with the mission. The senior members of the Anglican staff were as likely to be Papuans as Europeans, and their children and grandchildren were continuing the association by intermarriage.

Since the mission was beginning to form one people out of divided tribes, it was thought fitting that their common Christianity be displayed by a common centre of worship. Proposing the building of a cathedral to the Oga Tara of 1932, Newton explained that the building would demonstrate both the unity of the Papuan church and its capacity to function independently of foreign missions.¹⁶⁴ He was supported by Rautamara, who outlined his idea that each district collect a team of workers and levy contributions in food and materials for their upkeep. Most of the 11,000 converts of the mission by then had heard of the cement church at Boianai which had been built in 1929, and which was of better workmanship than previous buildings erected in the villages.¹⁶⁵ So instead of saying, as they had to Rautamara in 1923, 'you are a dimdim now, so you must pay for everything',¹⁶⁶ they began to regard a project conceived by a European as their own. In Goodenough Bay, villagers ransacked their savings to pay their share; Binandele canoes came from Ambasi with clay pots to exchange for the price of roofing iron. It took Papuan contractors, familiar only with palm leaf materials, five years to make visible at Dogura a unity of impression which existed probably nowhere else on such a scale in the South Pacific. The result, while it perhaps lacked the Massim charm of the Abel memorial chapel, derived its strength from a superb position as well as its graceful silhouette.

On the morning of 6 November 1939, Martin Modudula, clad in the fighting regalia of a Wedauan headman, met a procession led by J.W.C. Wand dressed in the canonical robes of Lord Archbishop of Brisbane and Metropolitan. He presented the certificate of consecration for the cathedral and recalled the coming of Maclaren to that place and his own baptism, by Newton in the Wamira River, on 31 March 1901.¹⁶⁷ Russell Abel reported the part played in the celebrations by Papuan clergy:

164 OP, 95/6.

165 OP, 96/5; ibid., 97/1.

166 I.M. Percy to H. Newton, Didiwaga, 6 August 1922, DA.

167 ABM Letter from me Martin Modudula, publication in writer's possession.

One was very conscious of the importance given to the natives in the whole thing, and of the lack of distinctions of colour in the ceremonies. White and native priests were alike, and a Papuan sitting on the platform with H[is] E[xcellency] and the rest was quite inspiring to see. 168

Then 700 dancers performed outside the doors, on ground where the father of Modudula had speared wallaby and fought the Qamana people.

Inside the cathedral, Abel wrote,

There must have been 3000 crammed in, and nearly 100 whites. There were processions, with banners, vestments, mitres & crooks, all very fine... The Archbp. knocked three times with his staff interspersing the knockings with responses such as 'Who is the King of Glory?' Response: 'The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory.' That bit was thrilling. The whole crowd simply roared in response. ... Then... the clergy and their satellites pirouetted about and processed around the spacious cathedral aisles. 169

THE achievements of Papuan teachers and clergy were limited by the caution of Churchmen like Newton in allowing them freedom of action. Moreover, the fact that Papuans no longer sat on the governing synods of the home church suggested a loss of original vision. But the ordination of Papuans argued for a goal other than federation with the churches in Australia. At a time when there were no Papuan doctors, magistrates or patrol officers,¹⁷⁰ no native Methodist ministers and only one ordained to the Roman Catholic priesthood, there were seventeen Papuan priests and deacons in the Anglican ministry.¹⁷¹ Even so, Newton said he had been 'erring on the side of caution'¹⁷² in ordaining so few.

Most missionaries liked Papuan priests and teachers. They gave them high respect and felt reverence for their mystical qualities

168 R.W. Abel to P.D. Abel, Kwato, 6 November 1939, KA.

169 R.W. Abel to P.D. Abel, Kwato, 6 November 1939, KA; see also J.H.P. Murray to P.D.F. Murray, 6 November 1939, quoted in F. West, Selected Letters..., 163.

170 For Native Medical Assistants and Native Assessors in courts, see TP AR 1936-7, 17; Baniara PR, 25 March - 16 May 1931, CAO/CRS/G91.

171 15 priests, 3 deacons. Wallace Kibikibi and Amos Ganasa, Newton's last theological students, were ordained in 1946. OP, 124/23.

172 OP, 100/5.

and a protective instinct for their political indiscretions. But the contribution of the Melanesian ministry, so important in the extension of mission influence in north-eastern Papua, made little impression on the written record. For the strength of the priesthood was felt at a time when Papuans lacked the sense of cohesion which produces an indigenous literature, or the perspective to judge the nature of their encounter with Christianity. Nevertheless, tribal fighting had disappeared and the rural structure of society was still largely intact. A Franciscan halo hung securely about these people and the Papuan priests who ruled them. Whether or not they went to church, they preserved a way of life in which, as Chignell once remarked, 'these men and women and children are probably happier now than they ever have been, or than they will ever be again'.¹⁷³

EASTERN New Guinea was an unfavourable field for the emergence of Christian leadership of a kind which Protestant missionaries had known in the Pacific Islands. Lack of hereditary leadership, an unstable base of tribal authority, and the inability of individual Papuans to express the common will, dispelled missionary hopes of an early triumph with Papuan leaders. Yet there were sufficient 'successes' among their teachers and pastors to temper their scepticism and give rise to the hope that Papuans one day would preside comfortably over the village churches.

The Papua Ekalesia created in 1960 and the United Church of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands formed eight years later embraced the Kwato and Methodist missions. But the Anglicans have also evolved some new structures. The formation in 1950 of the South Pacific Anglican Council was a step towards maturing Pacific Island affiliations. But the inauguration of a Province of Melanesia excluding Papua New Guinea in 1975 is a sign that ecclesiastical boundaries in the Anglican church are to follow those already established by colonial powers rather than take new directions along ethnic lines. More perhaps than other institutions, the missions have been plunged into a crisis by the sudden transfer of political power to indigenous people and the emergence of a nation-state in Papua and New Guinea.

173 A.K. Chignell, An Outpost in Papua, 29.

Appendix 1.1

Traditional Dobu song rendered into Methodist hymnody*

Manua ekaiale

That bird is an old female

Mwa'adega ukukeia

Where did she come from?

Esola gomwegomuega

From the village called Esolaia

Edi 'eya ukukeia

That's where she's from.

Aposetolo ebweu

One apostle

Ta tapwaroro manuna

For Christian work

Patimo ena'i suya

Disembarked on Patimo Island

Bwaga bwaga daitaia

Out on the sea

Edia loulitaia

I'm going to be there

tulagae palupaluna

My neck is straight

tuilenania bokobokona

My neck is crooked

lele bubebubi edi i ula' ula

to and fro.

Yeoba eno i gwae,

God spoke to John,

Wate wate wate

I am the beginning and the end

Wate wate wate

beginning and end

Wate wate wate

beginning and end.

* Madiu Baloiloi, Interview, Begassi, 29 April 1972

Appendix 1.2

Depopulation and venereal disease*

The connexion between promiscuous sexuality and depopulation in eastern New Guinea, alleged by some missionaries, lacks scientific confirmation. Analysis of the Asmat and Auyu people west of Merauke in West Irian, however, provides a useful analogy under similar conditions. From 1902, when Merauke was established by the Dutch government, the coastal Marind-amin population declined from an estimated 12,000 to 7000 in 1915.

The Marind-amin practised promiscuous ritual sexuality in which all men of a husband's clan copulated with each married woman. In addition, there was a ceremonial homosexual partnership with each pubescent boy. As anxieties mounted in association with culture change, this abundant sexuality apparently degenerated into copious promiscuous copulation. In 1921 medical investigations revealed that nearly every woman of marriageable age was infected by granuloma venereum, and that most women had been pregnant once or never. Ten years later, after an inoculation campaign and Roman Catholic discouragement of sexual ceremonial, only 2% of the Asmat and Auyu people among the Marind-amin were infected.

* R.T. Simmons et al, 'Blood Group Genetic Variations in West New Guinea', in American Journal of Physical Anthropology, vol. 27, 2 September 1967, 283-4.

Appendix 2

A Note on Fijian missionary emigration

The anxieties of the Fiji government about the emigration of Fijian teachers to western Melanesia dates from the beginning of Fijian missionary work in 1875. J.B. Thurston's enquiry of 1884 reflected these anxieties:

His Excellency would be glad to know why it is still considered necessary or desirable to engage Fijians (who must be ignorant of the language of the natives of New Britain) in this work, and what practical difficulties exist in the way of employing natives of New Britain... so as to render it unnecessary to take away from Fiji any part of its already sparse population.¹

Between 1875 and 1911 over 252 men, women and children left Fiji on missionary service; of these, however, records of only 160 could be found by the Commissioner for Native Affairs. In 1909 the Acting Administrator of Fiji, Sir Charles Major, refused permission to the Seventh Day Day Adventist mission for the removal of teachers.² In 1911 a second request was declined; and when the Methodist Mission requested permission in 1912 for the removal of teachers, Major refused on grounds of health.³

The appointment of Sir Bickham Sweet-Escott as Governor of Fiji in 1912 gave the Methodists an opportunity to reverse the decision, and the then Governor was lobbied in Australia by Methodist sympathisers led by Sir Samuel Way.⁴ A month after the Methodist Address of Loyalty had been received, permission was granted for the mission to transfer teachers from Fiji to the Solomon Islands and Papua. The resumption of missionary recruiting for these fields began soon afterwards, but Fijian teachers were not permitted to emigrate to Kaiserwilhelmsland.⁵

1 C.S. to A.J. Webb, Levuka, 13 December 1884, FDC onwards.

2 H. May to L.V. Harcourt, Suva, 4 April 1912, CSO 740/12, FNA.

3 L.V. Harcourt to A.J. Small, Suva, 4 April 1912, CSO 740/12.

4 See B. Danks to W. Hunt, Sydney, 3 July 1912, FDC; B. Danks to A.J. Small, Sydney, 11 July 1912, MOM 61.

5 A.J. Small to W.H. Cox, Suva, 13 August 1913, FDC.

Appendix 3Kwato speaks -

This poem, entered in the diary of the miner Jim Pryke for 3 January 1904, was Pryke's commentary on the death of C.S. Robinson, acting-administrator of British New Guinea (1903-4).*

Spare me Randolph! Reckless Randolph. Through the ages I have
lain
Prone amidst the tropic beauties of the fair Papuan main
Gemmed with atolls clad with palm trees set with Isle & Reef &
Sand
Sentry'd by Logea and Sam'rai Beauteous yet unhappy land.

From the sands at Matadona to my rock-bound western shore
Where the tidal current rages back & forth for evermore
Have my 'boys' and sina-sinas plied the Earis fitful stroke
Ere upon New Guinea waters yet the white-man's day had broke.

Came the horde of island pirates - Greek, Kanaka, Javane
German, Briton, Russ, & Yankee, Chow, Malay & Japane
Came their fish & pearling luggers, - filched my reef of fish
& pearls
Harried all my palms for copra, reived me of my brightest girls.

Fast upon their footsteps following came the sainted LMS
Shackled all my old time freedom garbed my girls in Christian
dress
Taught my 'boys' the sawmill's lesson, taught them Cant and
prying ways
Sent them sailing, spying, trading, round our sylvan Eastern bays.

And my 'Martyred' Master Christian justifies his office grand
Spreading Malice, Envy, Hatred over all this tropic land
Revelling in trumped up charges gainst the white men posted
round
Fouling all thats good & holy, planting Spite on virgin ground.

When Judge Robinson the upright strove to banish mission greed
Strove to punish evil-doers, meting out their proper meed
Rushed my greasy Pope to strike him, struck in manner underhand
Turned his kin and love against him, left him slain by his own
hand.

(contd. over)

* incorrectly dated. Robinson's death took place in June 1904.

Wearied out by toil and fever, harried left and right by foes
Tell me Randolph was it weakness that the 'better part' he chose
Left the spot to fester - his successor to rejoice
Left my King of Dusky Cricket, still to spread his baneful voice.

Tell me Randolph! Reckless Randolph! you who boomed the copper
show
Have you quoted yet the greatest evils I have come to know
Could you find no greater Evil than the bottles of Hunyadi
Nothing find more mal-a-propos than my Pontiffs silk-clad Lady.

Boiled-owls-head and soda water these are very trivial things
These no measure of misfortune to your fellow being brings
Greed and Slime and Mission malice, take a greater, higher, stand
When you set yourself to reckon all the scourges of my land.

* * * * *

Papers of Jim Pryke, ANL

Appendix 4

20 August 1921

To the Right Hon. W.M. Hughes, P.C.*

Sir,

... We, who are directly or indirectly interested in Papua, are deeply concerned with the agitation by a section of the white residents there, the objects of which include electoral representation for whites without similar representation for the natives.

We are of opinion that the Papuans, who number 300,000 or more, should in some way have an effective voice in the affairs of their country, as well as the thousand whites who are for a time resident in the Territory.

... The right to representation based upon taxation applies to both peoples. Indeed, it is admitted that the Papuans are more heavily taxed than the white men.

The view we are taking of the desirability of having native rights safeguarded is not only the view of the missionary societies working in Papua. It is clear from the progress of the agitation that the weight of official advice from your representatives in the Territory is in the same direction.

We submit to you our strong feeling that if electoral representation be granted to the white men, the interests of these protégés of the Empire should be secured by some provision whereby they also can receive adequate representation on the Legislative Council, either by some responsible persons nominated by the Lieut[enant] Governor, or in some such way as may commend itself to you and the Government of the Commonwealth...

Whilst placing our suggestions for elective reform before you, we should like to record our appreciation of the enlightened, sympathetic, and progressive administration of the present Lieut[enant] Governor.

We are,

Yours faithfully,

J.H. Harris (Anti-Slavery and Aborigines
Protection Society)

J.M. Williams (Church Missionary Society)

Geo. R. Le Hunte (Kwato Extension Association)

Frank Lenwood (London Missionary Society)

W.M. Goudie (Wesleyan Missionary Society)

* drafted by C.W. Abel. Original in Kwato Archives

Appendix 5.1

European Missionaries at Kwato, 1891-1942

		<u>arrived</u>	<u>left</u>
Frederick William Walker	Congregationalist	1891 1924	1894 1926
Charles William Abel	Congregationalist	1891	1930
Elizabeth Beatrice Emma Abel	Anglican	1892	1939
Margaret Evelyn Brookfield Parkin	Anglican	1894	1939
Victor Lyndon	-	1923	1926
Norman Curry	-	1926	1928
Phyllis D. Abel	Congregationalist	1923	1955
Cecil C. Geoffrey Abel	Congregationalist	1927	1950
Russell William Abel	Congregationalist	1928	1965
Halliday Scrymgeour	Presbyterian	1929	1967
Veronica Barbara Danielevitch	Roman Catholic	1928	1929
Harry Massam	Baptist	1929	1931
Elizabeth Mill	Baptist	1929	1933
Marjorie Abel	Congregationalist	1932	1942
Arthur Beavis	Anglican	1932	1967
John M. Smeeton	Baptist	1932	1942
Arthur Swinfield	Anglican	1932	1938
Elizabeth Swinfield	Roman Catholic	1932	1938
Margaret Drennen	Baptist	1931	1933
Mary K. Abel	Congregationalist	1932	1940
Raymond D. Whale	Anglican	1933	1942
Kathleen Whale	Plymouth Brethren	1938	1942
Berkeley D. Vaughan	Anglican	1935	1942
Freda Vaughan	Anglican	1935	1942
Joan Blake	Plymouth Brethren	1936	1942
Doris Purcell	Presbyterian	1937	1941
Frank Briggs	Methodist	1937	1942
Ida Briggs	Plymouth Brethren	1938	1942
Mildred Bath	Methodist	1938	1942
Geoffrey Baskett	Anglican	1938	1960
Robin Knight	Anglican	1938	1940
Margot Knight	Anglican	1938	1940
Nevil Brett Young	Anglican	1938	1942
Shiela Abel (Mrs R.W. Abel)	Presbyterian	1939	1967

Appendix 5.2

European Methodist Missionaries in Eastern New Guinea, 1898-1942

	<u>arrived</u>	<u>left</u>	<u>died</u>
William Edward Bromilow	1891 1920	1907 1925	
Harriet Lilly Bromilow	1891 1920	1907 1925	
John Thomson Field	1891	1899	
Frances Mary Field	1892	1899	
Ambrose Fletcher	1891 1920	1901 1923	
Samuel Fellows	1891	1900	
Sally Fellows	1894	1900	
George Bardsley	1891	1892	
James Watson	1891	1893	
Eleanor Walker	1892	1905	
Jeannie Tinney	1892	1902	
John Andrews	1893		
Minnie Billing	1895	1898	
Julia Benjamin	1897	1913	
Edith Lloyd	1897	1902	
Annie Colebatch	1898	1900	
James Williams	1898		1913
James Walsh	1899	1901	
James Osborne	1899	1910	
Edward James Glew	1900		1904
Fairleigh Lillie Glew	1901		1904
Matthew Ker Gilmour	1901	1933	
Nora Gilmour	1901	1933	
George Gatland	1903	1909	
Lise Truscott	1903		1908
Florence Thompson	1903	1907	
Laura Griffith	1903	1913	
Elizabeth Corfield	1904	1910	
William Charles Francis	1904	1908	
Andrew Ballantyne	1906		1915
May Jenness (Mrs A. Ballantyne)	1911	1916	

(contd. over)

	<u>arrived</u>	<u>left</u>	<u>died</u>
Janet Vosper	1906		
Jannett Gibb	1910		
Ethel Prisk	1910	1916	
Gordon Burgess	1910	1915	
Ernest William Harrison	1910	1913	
Ernest Samuel Johns	1911	1917	
Elsie Buchanan (Mrs E.S. Johns)	1906	1917	
Rosemary Lill (Mrs E.W. Harrison)	1910	1913	
William Wesley Avery	1910	1914	
Elizabeth Avery	1910	1914	
Doris Bembrick	1911	1915	
Lillian May Chenoweth	1910	1915	
George Holland	1911	1916	
Walter Enticott	1913	1916	
Arthur Henry Scrivin	1914	1931	
Margaret Jamieson (Mrs A.H. Scrivin)	1912		1922
Elsie Helen Warner (Mrs A.H. Scrivin)	1926	1931	
F.J. Winn	1912	1925	
William Green	1915	1920	
Olive Pickering	1914	1928	
Hilda Ferguson	1914	1916	
H. Keith Chapman	1916		
J. Ronald Andrew	1918	1933	
Margaret Hodge	1919		
Allan Davis	1920		
J. Egerton Jacob	1920		
Roy Taylor	1920	1939	
Harold Angas Lyth	1920	1925	
Edna Jessie Pink (Mrs H.A. Lyth)	1920	1925	
Guy Powles Lassam	1925	1934	
James Markey	1922	1928	
Ronald Walker	1923	1930	
John Henry Willis Dixon	1925	1942	
E.A. Clarke	1928	1934	
H.G. Judkins	1925	1934	

(contd. over)

	<u>arrived</u>	<u>left</u>	<u>died</u>
John Rundle	1928	1942	
Jessie Henry (Mrs J. Rundle)	1925	1944	
A.W. Guy	1928	1942	
John K. Arnold	1925	1942	
H.P.K. Gordon	1925	1942	
Thomas N. Cannon	1926	1928	
Miss F.J. Pearce	1928	1933	
D.R. Nicholls	1928	1932	
Olive Louisa Fielding (Mrs J.W. Dixon)	1929	1940	
R.V. Grant	1928	1942	
H.T. Williams	1929	1940	
Henry Bartlett	1930	1945	
S. Cowled	1930	1945	
N.W. Clarke			
Hedley Shotton	1930	1945	
D.A. Glasson	1931	1942	

Appendix 5.3

European Anglican Missionaries in Eastern New Guinea

(bp) bishop (p) priest (d) deacon

	<u>arrived</u>	<u>left</u>	<u>died</u>
Albert Alexander Maclaren (p)	1891		1891
Copland King (p)	1891		1918
Samuel Tomlinson (p)	1891		1937
Elizabeth Tomlinson	1891		1939
C.E. Kennedy	1891	1894	1898
Cyril Elwin	1893	1895	
W.H. Murray (p)	1895	1896	
Harriette Alice Murray	1895 1912	1901 1914	
Sophia McLaughlin	1896	1907	
S. Hoare	1896	1897	
J.A. Reynolds (p)	1896	1897	
Florence Agnes Thomson	1896	1904	
Edward Henry Clark	1896		1899
Montagu John Stone-Wigg (bp)	1898	1908	1918
Wilfred Henry Abbot (p)	1898	1901	
Sarah Sully (Mrs H. Newton)	1898	1914	1919
Robert Hardy Dakers	1898	1907	
W. Bayley	1898	1898	
Charles Sage	1898	1904	
Arthur Patrick Foott	1898	1900	
Ernest William Maymon Hines (p)	1899	1900	
Annie Ker (Mrs P.J. Money)	1899	1910	
Henry Newton (bp)	1899		1947
Francis de Sales Buchanan	1899		1921
Laura Oliver	1899		1924
Felix Albert Fernau (d)	1900	1900	
Frederick William Ramsay (p)	1900	1919	
Eric Lewis Giblin	1900	1906	
Frederick Smithson	1900	1900	
James Baird Stirrat	1900		1903

(contd. over)

	<u>arrived</u>	<u>left</u>	<u>died</u>
Ella Florence Challman	1900	1903	
Ellen Combley	1900		1911
Sydney Frederick Ford	1900	1903	
William McMullan	1900	1902	
Percy John Money	1900	1910	
Percy Charles Shaw (p)	1900	1921	
Frances Mary Synge	1900	1903	
Ernest Wesley Taylor (p)	1901		1903
Maud Nowland	1901		1934
Mary Alicia Newton	1902		1904
Elsie Scarth	1903	1906	
Norman Dodds	1903	1904	
Alice Maud Cottingham	1903		1940
George William Morris	1905	1906	
John Hunt (p)	1905		1928
Mrs F.W. Ramsay	1906	1919	
Maud Griffiths (Mrs P.C. Shaw)	1906	1921	
George Edward Downton	1906	1909	
Norman Atkins Fettell	1906	1915	
Leonard Bertram Drury	1907	1908	
Maria Johanna Peut	1907	1910	
Joshua Pearce	1907	1910	
Arthur Kent Chignell (p)	1907	1914	
Stephen Romney Maurice Gill (p)	1908	1954	
Isobel Robertson	1909	1911	
Ernest Owen Davies	1909	1915	
Honor Etta Winterbottom (Mrs Liston Blyth)	1910	1918	
Henry Holland	1910		1942
Gerald Sharp (bp)	1910	1921	
Albert James Batchelor	1911	1914	
Elizabeth Rattigan (Mrs A.K. Chignell)	1911	1914	
Edyth Parish	1912	1915	
Gertrude Robson	1913		1917
Louise Robson (Mrs E.O. Davies)	1913	1916	
Joseph Taylor	1913	1918	

(contd. over)

	<u>arrived</u>	<u>left</u>	<u>died</u>
Frank Raymond Elder (p)	1914	1934	
James Edward John Fisher (p)	1914	1922	
Margaret Bechervaise	1914	1915	
	1920	1941	
	1948	1950	
Robert Leck (p)	1915	1937	
Colin Robertson (p)	1915	1918	
Olive(?) Leck	1915	1937	
James Henry Whitehead	1915	1917	
Nellie Hullett	1915		1937
Maud Forman	1916	1933	
Ida May Percy (Mrs F. Rennels)	1916	1938	
Edith Jessett (Mrs J.E.J. Fisher)	1916	1922	
Arthur Prout Jennings (p)	1917		1955
Louise Russell	1918	1921	
Nellie Jones	1919	1921	
Ethel Slade	1919	1940	
Esme Stover	1919	1919	
Miss Russell	1918	1921	
Miss Grace Cornfield	1918	1919	
Miss Fielding	1919	1919	
Arthur Carson Flint (p)	1919	1922	
Maurice Ashbee Warren (p)	1919	1926	
Mrs M.A. Warren	1919	1926	
Miss N. Jones	1919	1921	
G.H. Benfield	1919	1920	
Flora Walldron	1920	1929	
James Benson (p)	1919	1921	
	1937	1955	
Bertha Benson	1920	1921	
Charles Leslie Hall	1920	1926	
E.C. Homer	1920	1923	
Mary Monypenny (Mrs C. Hall)	1921	1926	
Alfred James Thompson (p)	1921	1953	
	1956	1959	
Brenda Thompson	1921	1953	

(contd. over)

	<u>arrived</u>	<u>left</u>	<u>died</u>
C. Saunders (p)	1921	1926	
Sister Christine, SSA	1921	1921	
Mrs Ellery	1921	1922	
Alexander D. Watson	1921	1923	
Ilma Townson	1921	1942	
A.C. Flint (p)	1921		
May Groom	1921	1924	
Jessie McInnis	1922		1931
Harold Thompson (p)	1922	1933	
Edith Williams	1922	1933	
Nita Inman	1923	1945	
C. Wilfred Light (p)	1923	1937	
Margaret Light	1923	1937	
Lilian M. Caswell	1923	1956	
Alfred Harbord Lambton	1923	1936	
Mrs Ivy Saunders	1924	1926	
Olive Howie	1924	1926	
Mrs C. Miller	1924	1928	
Miss Butcher (Mrs C. Miller)	1925	1928	
F.D. Clarke	1925		1926
E. Margaret Devitt	1926	1951	
Cecil Gill (p)	1926	1933	
Mrs C. Gill	1926	1933	
Constance Peel	1926	1927	
Robert Jones	1926	1943	
Mrs Armitage	1926	1927	
Mrs J. Brooks	1927	1928	
Margery Brenchley	1927		1942
Dorothy Blake	1927	1941	
Henry Matthews (p)	1927		1942
Ellen Matthews	1927		1941
Mary Mills	1927 1935	1930 1946	
Colin Chittleborough (p)	1928	1933	
Mrs C. Chittleborough	1930	1933	

(contd. over)

	<u>arrived</u>	<u>left</u>	<u>died</u>
Ida Kent	1928	1947	
Mrs Frank R. Elder	1928	1934	
E.C. Yarrington (p)	1928	1934	
John Dewhurst Bodger (p)	1929 1972	1950	
Mrs C. Driver	1929	1933	
Lucy Willoughby	1929	1941	
Doris Downing	1929	1946	
Frere Henry Tremoyne Lane	1929		1944
Lilla Lashmar	1930		1942
Miss Turner	1930	1933	
Mrs H. Thompson	1932	1933	
Clement Lane (p)	1933	1936	
Robert Luscombe Newman (p)	1933	1959	?1971
Miss Grimaldi (Mrs R. Jones)	1933	1942	
Miss Sayle	1933	1935	
E.R.H. Kohnke	1933	1936	
Miss Matthews	1934	1935	
William H. MacGranahan	1934	1938	
Mrs H. MacGranahan	1934	1938	
Charles Whonsbon Aston (p)	1934	1939	
Clarice Halligan	1934	1936	
William T. Taylor (p)	1934	1941	
Mrs T. Taylor	1934	1941	
Marjory Arliss	1935	1942	
Violet Pigott	1935	1938	
Arthur Harry Buckland	1935	1942	
Mavis Eather	1935	1947	
Morva Kekwick	1936	1969	
James Thomas	1936	1939	
May Hayman	1936		1942
Philip Nigel Warrington Strong (bp)	1937	1963	
C.A. Guest (p)	1937	1937	
C. Woodhouse	1937	1938	
Mrs C. Woodhouse	1937	1938	

(contd. over)

	<u>arrived</u>	<u>left</u>	<u>died</u>
Dennis James Taylor (p)	1937		1951
Margaret Gibbon	1937	1941	
Dorothea Tomkins	1937	1967	
Peter Hirst	1937	1938	
Jack Salzmann	1938	1945	
Emily Clarke	1938 1965	1963	
Mavis Charlton	1938	1941	
Bessie Smith (Mrs R.L. Newman)	1938		1942
Elwyn Keith Clarke (p)	1939	1945	
Harold A.D. Graham (p)	1939	1941	
Leslie Wickham (Mrs D. Taylor)	1939		1951
Ena Somerville	1939	1951	
Vivian F.B. Redlich (p)	1940		1942
Oliver John Brady (p)	1940	1959	
Mavis Parkinson	1941		1942

Appendix 5.4

Loyalty Islands Missionaries in Eastern New Guinea, 1877-1886*

Waunaea	1877
Chatchma	1877
Kerisiano	1877
Gusene (Jerry)	1877
Mataika	1877
Isaun (Tom)	1878
Mamin	1878
Haxen	1878
Kaita	1878
Warivene	1878
Ipuneso	1878
Dieni	1880
Opau	1880
Diki	1884
Jerry	1886

* Collected by Dr Kerry Howe in 1971 at Ecole Pastorale, Chepenehe, Lifu, Loyalty Islands.

Appendix 5.5

Polynesian L.M.S. Missionaries in Eastern New Guinea, 1885-1917

	<u>arrived</u>	<u>left</u>	<u>died</u>
Ono and Pari (Rarotonga)	1885		1898
Mairi and Penua (Samoa)	1885		1898
Ma'anaima and Safua (Samoa)	1889		1910
Mataesi (Samoa)	1891		1899
Filimoni (Samoa)	1892		1905
Akaeakore and Munakoa (Rarotonga)	1895?		1898
Tengatae and Iuatoi (Rarotonga)	1895?		1898
Iakobo (Rarotonga)			
Peniata (Ellice Islands)	1898	1917	
Alefaio and Peniana (Samoa)	1898	1916	
Vaitupu (Samoa)	1898		1905
Maene and Vaiea (Samoa)	1898	1911	
Solomona (Samoa)	1899	1910	
Tuata (Samoa)	1902		1912

Appendix 5.6

Fijian Methodist Missionaries in Eastern New Guinea, 1891-1942

	<u>arrived</u>	<u>left</u>	<u>died</u>
Poate Ratu	1891	1901	
Joape Narara	1891		?1915
Sepuloni Lesei	1891		1903
Samisoni Leleca	1891		1899
Jeremaia	1891		1895
Samisoni Bola	1891		
Peni	1891		
Inosi	1891		
Jovesa Qoro	1891	1910	
Neimaia	1891		1893
Pilato Silimiratu	1891		1900
Mosese	1891	1901	
Eroni Naboubou or Baio	1891		1895
Sirugu	1891		
Samuela Vuetia	1891		
Ananaiasa	1892		
Jeremaia Inia	1892		1895
Juta	1892		
Jona Toqiri	1892		
Jotame	1892		1900
Etonia	1892		1899
Josefata Kasa	1895	1903	
Kolinio Cakakica	1895	1910	
Metuisela Fifita (Rotuma)	1895	1940	
Peni Raveli	1895	1912	
Ami Raveli	1895		1911
Samuela Naboutina	1895	1903	
Setareki Tuicakiva	1895	1904	
Sainivelati Soani	1895		
Eliesa Bari	1895		
Simioni Momoivalu	1895	1920	
Kolinio Qio	1896	1906	

(contd. over)

	<u>arrived</u>	<u>left</u>	<u>died</u>
Opetaiia Muanivanua	1896		1907
Anitonia	1896		
Peni Rokodaku	1896		
Laisiana	1896		
Josua Matenaniu	1897		1905
Jotama Namamandre	1897		
Kelepi Rogica	1897		
Jemesa Naisausau	1897		1897
Maikeli Tabua	1897		
Aselai Vakayadra	1897		
Koliniasi Vunigumu	1897		
Etonia	1897		
Solomoni Tavatava	1899		
Ratu Isei Vueta	1899		1912
Livinai B. Vueti	1899	1922	
Eneri Vuki Qaligarogaro	1899		1907
Jemesa Howson	1899		
Tavita Vakaturuturu	1899		
Josefata Ravuso	1899		
Ponipate Vula	1902	1916	
Filimoni Matewai	1902	1910	
Pauliasi Racumu	1902		1903
Epeli Tausia (Rotuma)	1902		
Ilisoni Inia	1902		
Keio Tamudu	1902		1906
Serupepeli Rokotuila	1903	1912	
Epieli Bote	1903	1917	
Kolinio Timoci	?1903	1907	
Misateka (Rotuma)	?1903	1907	
Elaisa Tubuna	1904	1907	
Lemeki Tiko	1904		1910
Apetiniko Riremeava (Rotuma)	1904	1931	
Kalipati Bolabasaga	1905		
Moritikei Mata	1905		1917
Samisoni Vavalu	1905		1911

(contd. over)

	<u>arrived</u>	<u>left</u>	<u>died</u>
Ami Raveli	1905		1912
Esekaia Vodo	1906	1928	
Timoci Modrau	1906		1912
Josaia Qoro	1906		1913
Akaripa Tuidrola	1906		1933
Aselai Rokodreu	1906		1910
Taniela Naivani (Rotuma)	1906	1914	
Mosese Konau (Rotuma)	1907		1935
Ilaitia Tuiteci	1907		
Agada Timoci	1907		
Samuela Veitala	1908	1911	
Rusiate Vunirewa	1908		1913
Esekaia Vodo	1908		
Serupi Ratu	1909	1917	
Epinisa Firimaitu (Rotuma)	1909		1911
Anasa Masiredia	1910		
Ratu Isei	1912		
Ilaita Tausia (Rotuma)	1913		1924
Apetiniko Riremoava (Rotuma)	1913		
Epieli Talaca	1914		
Joni Raciri	1914		
Samisoni Kaitu'u (Rotuma)	1914		1931
Pilikesa Soro	1915	1919	
Koliniasi Vasu	1916	1922	
Josefata Lotama	1916		
Ulaiasi Rerusoke	1916	1921	
Makalesi Soro	1916		1917
Samuela Vidiki	1918		
Esikieli Vaitala	1918		
Timasi Tubananitu	1918		
Antonio Rave	1918	1930	
Sainepilati Tuivotua	1922		1925
Poasi Naivalu	1922		
Esekaia Vunisa	1922	?1928	
Wilisoni Lagi	1925	1930	

(contd. over)

	<u>arrived</u>	<u>left</u>	<u>died</u>
Poasa Ravea	1925	1930	
Jonitani Suguturaga	1929	1939	
Jioji Nasavuila	1929	1935	
Epeli Dreganivitilevu	1936	1948	
Nacaniela R. Sivoyawa	1934		1937
Avenai Salabiau	1938	1942	
Joeli Kini	1940	1948	
Setareki Nasilivaia	1953	1958	

Appendix 5.7

Polynesian Methodist Missionaries in Eastern New Guinea, 1891-1942*

		<u>arrived</u>	<u>left</u>	<u>died</u>
Alesana	(Samoa)	1891		
Isaia Pati	"	1891	1920	
Joni Kuli	"	1891	1901	
Josefa Oleasoeleva	"	1891 1905	1901 1907	
Silivenusi	(Tonga)	1891		1894
Petuela	(Samoa)	1891		1895
Fausia	"	1891	1897	
Gasese	"	1891	1895	
Josefata	"	1891	1896	
Ma'anaima	"	1891		
Falaimo	"	1891		
Juta	"	1892		
Leva	"	1892	1912	
Foisaga	"	1892		
Josaia Mau	(Tonga)	1892		
Ioane Siatua		1895	1930	
Ioela	(Samoa)	1899	1907	
Iakobo	"	1900	1910	
Bogia		1900	1912	
Mamao Isareli		1900	1915	
Fa'asala	(Samoa)	1904	1911	
Filimoni Faitele	"	1910 1923	1915 1945	
Iframai Lotu	"	1911	1913	
Foisaga Mulipola	"	1916	1930	
Noa Alone	"	1923	1945	
Pologa	"	1929	1934	
Jonathan Fonua	(Tonga)	1930		
Isikeli Hau'ofa	"	1933	1970	
Papu	(Samoa)	1934	1938	

* This list is incomplete owing to loss of Samoa records.

Appendix 5.8

Anglican Melanesian missionaries in Eastern New Guinea, 1893-1942

	<u>Arrived</u>	<u>Left</u>	<u>Died</u>	<u>Place of work</u>
Harry Mark	1893		1909	Taupota, Wamira, Hioge
William Muiwa	1893		1893	Cape Vogel, Taupota
William Holi	1893		1899	Boianai
Robert Tasso	1895		1939	Awaiama
Peter Mussen	1895		1900	Taupota
Richard Bourke	1897		1919	Boianai, Uga
James Nogar	1898		1906	Wanigela
Timothy Gori	1900		1931	Dogura, Uiaku, Rumaruma
Johnson Far	1900			Dogura
David Tatoo	1900			Dogura, Mamba
Simon Devi	1900		1910	Boianai, Taupota-Uhuna, Topura
William Pettawa	1901		1907	Uiaku
William Kynu	1904		1908	Menapi
Thomas Bebeta	1905	1908		Bogaboga
Bartholemew Kara	1905			Mamba
Reuben Motlav	1905		1918	Hioge, Okein, Wanigela
Philip Nodi	1905			Wamira
Samuel Siru	1905			Hioge, Sinapa
Peter Sukoku	1905	1908		Mukawa
John Dow	1906			Dogura, Uhuna, Baiwapa
Mark Marovua	1906			Dogura, Gona, Ambasi
William Maso	1906			Dogura, Wanigela
Joseph Soso	1906		1910	Dogura
William Tari	1906		1907	Dogura
Peter Abunarie	1907		1909	Ambasi
Frank Daniel Arbinsau	1907		1910	Ambasi
William Bilo (Mago)	1907			Dogura, Varakauta, Pogaboga
Benjamin Canae	1907			Wedau
Ambrose Darra	1907		1927	Uiaku
Richard Foley	1907			Ambasi, Gona

(contd. over)

	<u>Arrived</u>	<u>Left</u>	<u>Died</u>	<u>Place of work</u>
Albert Lasmon	1907			Dogura
Albert Landar	1907			Ambasi, Gona
Samuel Matagunia	1907			Dogura, Menapi
Luke Pupuka	1907			Boianai
Harry Quy	1907		1909	Ambasi
Albert Rerep	1907		1922	Mukawa
Benjamin Saroa	1907			Dogura, Paiwa
Peter Seevo	1907			Wanigela, Okein
Thomas Terraboo	1907			Dogura, Wabubu
Daniel Veele Vili	1907			Wedau, Wamira, Dawakerekere
James Boga	1907			Wabubu
John Gela	1907			Paiwa
Harry Locar	1907			Oure
Thomas Town	1907			Dogura carpenter
Harry Solomon	1915			Hioge

Appendix 6. Missionary genealogy: the Baloiloi family of Dobu (Table A)

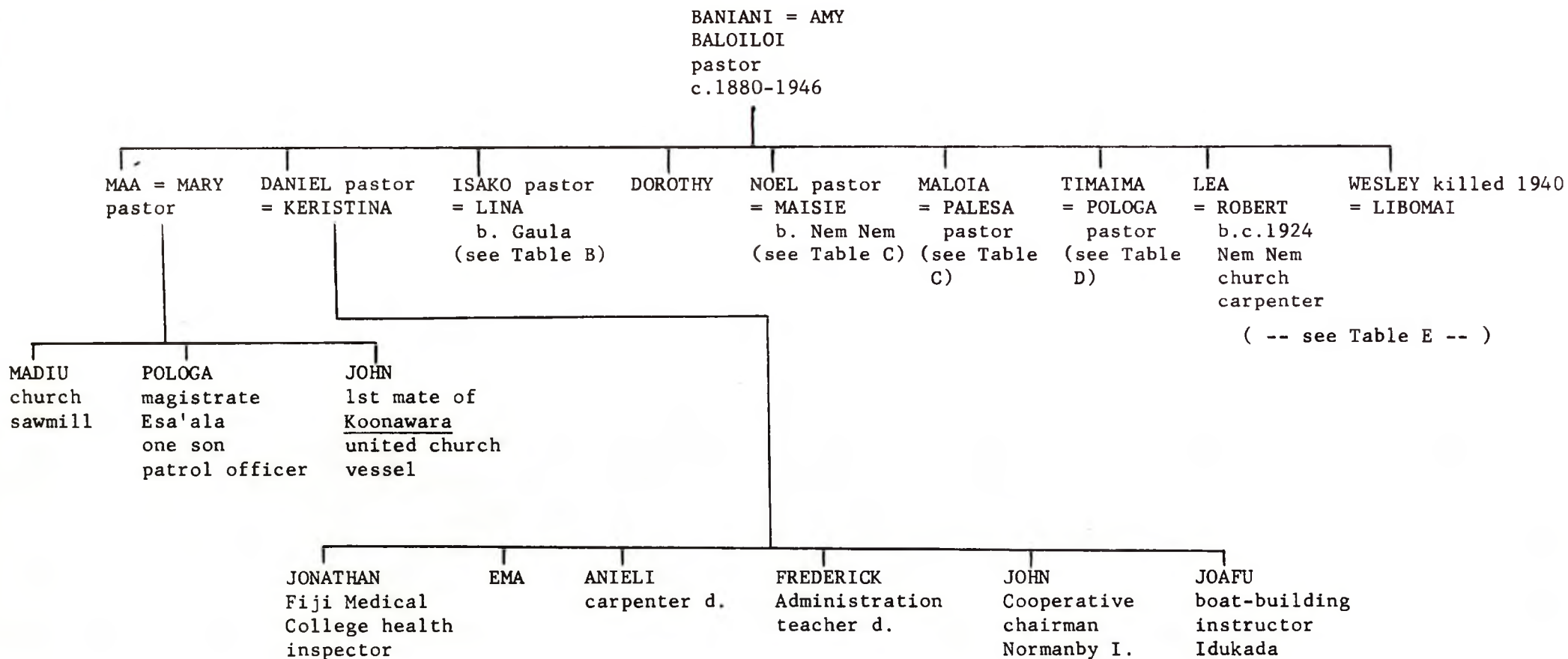


Table B

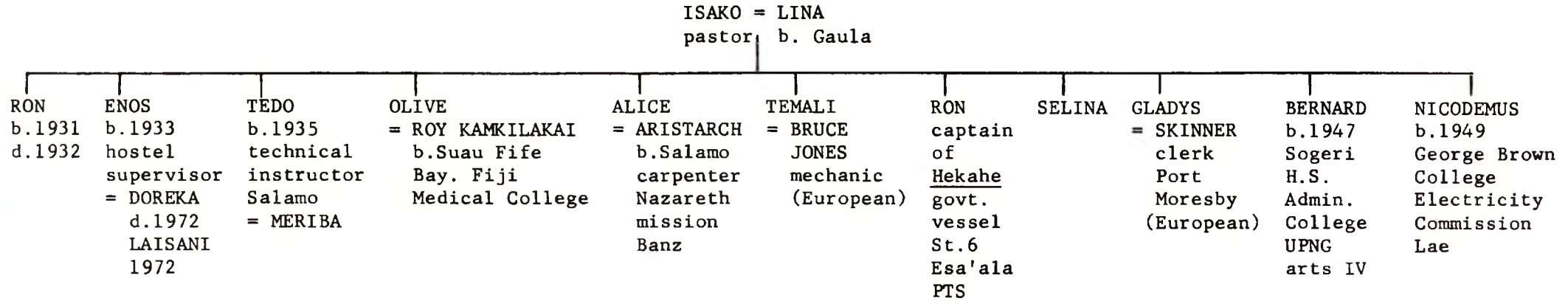


Table C

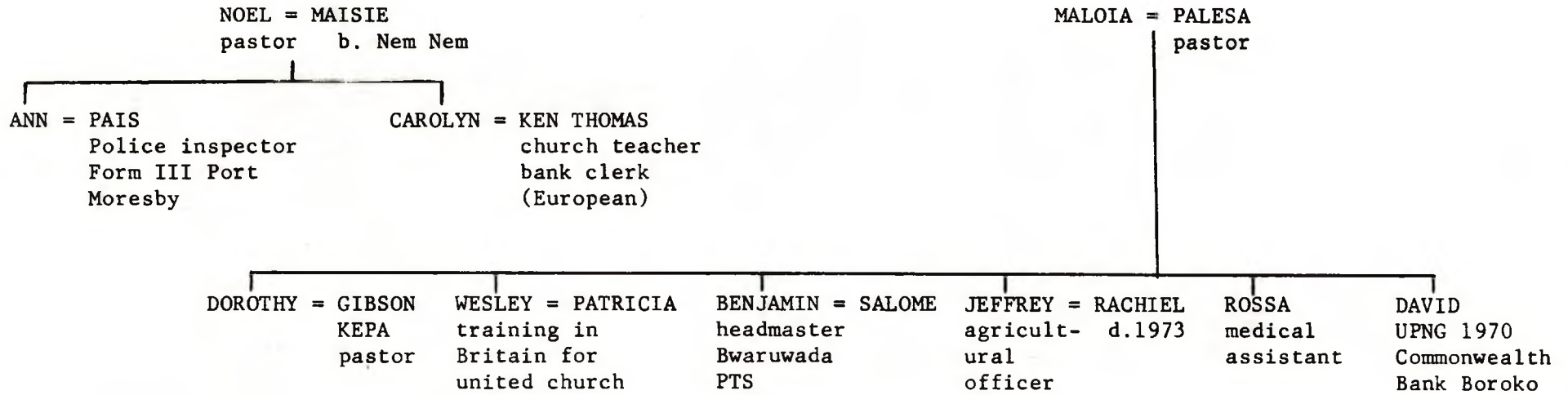


Table D

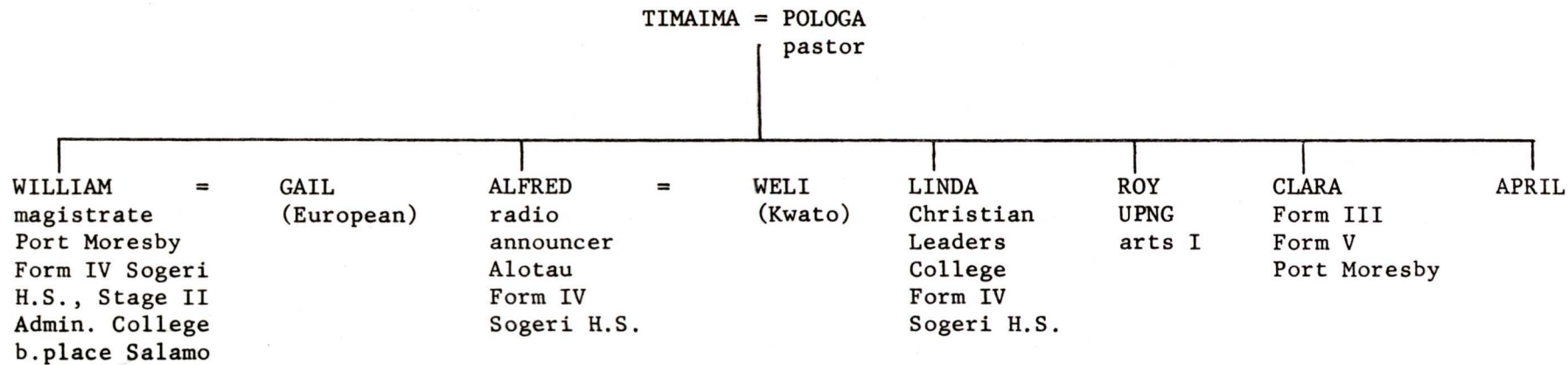
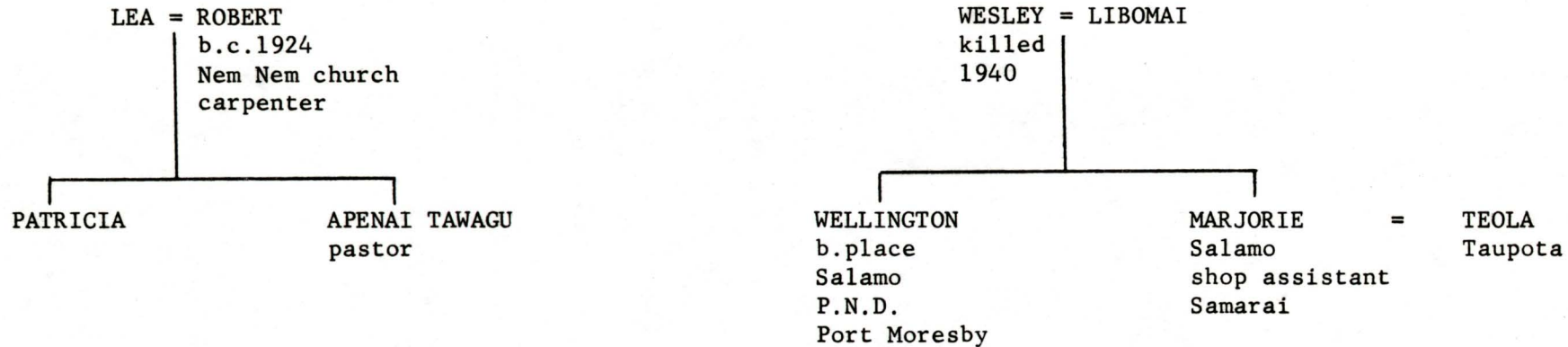


Table E



B I B L I O G R A P H Y

I Manuscripts in archives & private hands

Abel family: see Kwato Mission

Australasian Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society: see
Methodist Overseas Missions

Australian Board of Missions (Anglican), Sydney:

- (a) Minutes of meetings 1896-1942
- (b) Correspondence 1910-1942

Bardsley, G.H.: Diary 1891-1893 - Salamo Archives

Billing, Minnie: Diary 1893-1897 - copies in MOM and SA

Brown, George: (a) Diary 1891-1898
(b) Letter books 1896-1906 - MOM items 44-52

Dogura Archives (Anglican, Diocese of New Guinea) formerly held
at Bishops court, Dogura, now at UPNG:

- (a) Missionary correspondence 1891-1942
- (b) Station log books, Gona and Wanigela

Fellows, S.B.: Diary, miscellaneous notes, correspondence and
photographs, 1891-1900 - Australian National Gallery.
TS copy of diary also held in MOM

Fison, L.: 'Pilato and his comrades or Fijian volunteers in
Sydney', TS nd., copy held by D. Wetherell

Fiji District (Methodist Church) Correspondence (FDC) - Fiji
National Archives, Suva

- (a) Inwards and outwards correspondence of District
Chairman and Secretary
- (b) Minutes of Synod, 1875-1942

Gill, S.R.M.: (a) Letter books 1897-1953; 6 vols. TS, copies
held by UPNG, Canon J.D. Bodger of Alotau, MBD, Papua-
New Guinea, and D. Wetherell
(b) 'A few reflections', TS 1923, held by D. Wetherell
(c) Photograph collection, held by Canon J.D. Bodger

Green, John: Diary and letters 1893-1897, copies held by PMB

Kwato Archives, formerly held at Kwato, MBD, now at UPNG:

- (a) Beatrice Abel, diary and correspondence 1885-1930
- (b) C.W. Abel, diary and correspondence 1891-1920.
Letter Diary (LD) 1920-1930

- (c) Log of East End District 1891-1895, Notes on Kwato by C.W. Abel, Minutes of Combined Missions Conference 1920-1939 (CMC), Minutes of Kwato Extension Association. Principles and Practice of Kwato Mission, 1937
- (d) R.W. Abel, 'They Broke their Spears', TS, 1960
- (e) Correspondence of Papuan teachers (fragments). See also D. Wetherell, 'A Note on the Kwato Archives' in JPH vol. 8, 1973, 185

Lagi, Wilisoni: Autobiography, TS, 2 vols., Epworth House, Suva

London Missionary Society, London:

- (a) Papua Journals 1871-1901
- (b) Papua Letters 1871-1906
- (c) Papua Reports 1882-1906
- (d) Western Outgoing Letters to South Seas 1835-1906

London Missionary Society, Samoa District. Archives formerly held at Malua, Western Samoa. Copies held by PMB:

Samoa District Committee Minutes 1890-1930, correspondence 1890-1930

London Missionary Society, Papua District. Metoreia House, held at United Church, Hanuabada:

- (a) Minutes of New Guinea District Committee 1877-1940
- (b) Correspondence of NGDC 1890-1940
- (c) Miscellaneous correspondence 1890-1930

MacGregor, Sir William: Diary, vol. I-IV November 1890- April 1891; April 1891-August 1891; September 1891-October 1892; February-August 1892 - Australian National Library, MS 38

Methodist Overseas Missions, archives deposited in Mitchell Library, Sydney:

- (a) Letters from missionaries (items 23, 40-50, 119-20, 150, 167-81, 226)
- (b) Minutes of advisory and finance committee (from 1912 entitled Executive Committee), 1898-1921 (items 210-2)
- (c) Mission Board, 1880-1921 (items 2-3, 203-6)
- (d) Mission District Synods, 1902-1921 (items 175-89)

Murray, J.H.P.: Diary 1905-1910, ML.

Musgrave, A.: 'Memorandum on Prospective establishment of a branch of the AMMS in British New Guinea. Sydney, 27 November 1889', SA

Register of Criminal Cases, vols. VII-VIII. Central Court, Port Moresby, Papua

Resident Magistrate Eastern, North-Eastern, South-Eastern,
Northern, Mamba (Tamata) Divisions:

Patrol Reports
Station Journals
Official Journals

held in Commonwealth Archives Office, Commonwealth
Records Series, (CRS) Canberra

Robinson, C.S.: Diary, 2 vols. 1903-4 - National Archives of
Papua and New Guinea

Salamo Archives (Methodist Church NG District) held formerly
at Salamo, Papua, now at UPNG:

- (a) Correspondence of missionaries 1891-1942
- (b) Minutes of Synod, 1891-1942

Samoa Methodist Archives, Apia: Minutes and correspondence
of Synod, 1891-1900

Sefoa Log Book, 1930-1942 - held at Sefoa Anglican Mission,
Northern District, Papua New Guinea

South Pacific Anglican Council: Minutes, 1950-1960 - held by
the Ven. J.L. Bryce, Lautoka, Fiji

Stone-Wigg, Montagu: Diary 1898-1903 - DA

Sydney Diocesan Registry: 'Minutes of Proceedings of a Meeting
of the Metropolitan and Suffragan Bishops of the Province
of Australasia held at Sydney, from October 1st to
November 1st, A.D. 1850', nd.

Tinney, J.: Diary 1892-1902, MOM 137

Tomlinson, Samuel:

- (a) Correspondence 1891-1930 with Canon E.S. Hughes,
in W.G. Thomas collection, Melbourne Diocesan
Registry
- (b) Diary 1891-1893 - ML

Williams, F.E.: Collection, PNGA. Field notes, cuttings and
references of the Government Anthropologist of Papua,
1928-1943

Williamson, W.: Notebook, 1920, KA

II Official government and church publications

Australian Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society: see
Methodist Church

Church of England:

ABM Review (Sydney) 1910-1942

Australasian Missionary News (Sydney) 1889-1891

Australian Churchman (Sydney) 1900-1906

Carpentarian (Thursday Island) 1917

Church Chronicle (Brisbane) 1890-1900

Church of England Newspaper (London) 1930

Church Standard (Sydney) 1912-1950; later
Anglican, 1950-1960

Heralds of the King Magazine (Sydney) 1910-1920

Layman (Auckland) 1906

Messenger (Melbourne) 1886-1888

Mission Field (London) 1880-1900

Missionary Notes (Sydney) 1895-1905

Proceedings of General Synod, sessions 1881-1905 (Sydney)

Church of England, diocese of New Guinea:

Annual Report (Dogura) 1898-1942

New Guinea Notes (Dogura) 1925-26

Occasional Paper (London) 1903-1951

Rambles in Papua (Sydney) 1920(?)

Kwato Mission:

Memorandum and Articles of Association of Enesi
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