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CATHOLIC MISSIONS IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS
1845-1966

by

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the Degree of Doctor
of Philosophy in the Australian National
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from 1966 to 1969.

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PREFACE

THIS study seeks to trace, account for and evaluate the development of Catholic (in the sense of Roman Catholic) missionary activity in the Solomon Islands. In more general terms, it attempts to examine the efforts made to establish a European institution in a changing but resilient Melanesian cultural environment. The subject is, therefore, considered in the broad context of culture contact, for Catholicism was not planted in the Solomon Islands as an isolated or merely religious phenomenon. It came as part of a broad range of European influences which, by the end of the nineteenth century, had begun to make a significant impact on the lives of the islanders. Moreover, although the missionaries' efforts necessarily reflect their own assumptions regarding their task, these were also shaped, and their effectiveness largely determined, by the environment in which they occurred.

Focussing on the interaction of forces of indigenous and of exotic origin, the study readily falls into three parts, which correspond to three phases in the recent development of the Solomon Islands - early contact, colonial, and post-colonial. In the first period, 1845-55, the missionaries were confronted with a society in which traditional values and procedures were still virtually intact and in which Christianity was unable to gain a foothold. In the second period,

1898-1942, on the contrary, as a result of increased contact, the situation had changed markedly, and the missionaries succeeded in winning a large following in nearly every part of the group. Even so, their work was far from complete. In the third period, 1946-66, the years since the Second World War, with the future of European domination becoming less secure they have been forced to pursue new goals - to offer more advanced social services than in the past and to make serious efforts to ensure the vital coincidence of self-rule in Church and State.

Catholic missionary work in the Pacific has not attracted much critical attention from historians. There is a large literature, mainly in French and mostly concerned with Polynesia, but it is of a more or less propagandist kind, owing more to a spirit of piety than to the comprehensive examination of sources and prone to considering the missionary enterprise almost exclusively from the missionaries' point of view. Even the best of the early works, those published in the 1880s and 1890s by Monfat (Samoa, Tonga, Solomons) and Mangeret (Wallis and Futuna) were written to edify as well as to inform. The same is, unfortunately, true of useful later works such as those by Blanc (Tonga and Fiji), Sabatier (Gilberts), Darnand (Samoa), and Douceré (New Hebrides). Certainly, the relative neglect of the field is now beginning to be remedied and relevant guide lines are emerging. In 1968 Dupeyrat's valuable history of the Catholic mission in Papua, published in 1935, was joined by O'Reilly and Newbury's scholarly edition of

Laval's account of the Catholic mission on Mangareva. Nevertheless, there is nothing on the Pacific comparable to the studies written on Africa by Hastings, Todd, and Roland Oliver.

The Solomon Islands also lack adequate historical treatment. Studies of European imperialism in the Pacific have touched on them, but the first major historical publication to deal specifically with them is, appropriately, Jack-Hinton's recent account of their discovery by Europeans. Also important is Hilliard's thesis (1966) on the Protestant missions in the Solomons. To this work the present study owes much.

Although scattered and fragmentary, the available source material for the present work is extensive. It includes a considerable body of anthropological writing on the Solomons, some of which, by Hogbin and Keesing, has dealt perceptively with indigenous Christianity. Unfortunately, the most ambitious attempt, Tippet's Solomon Islands Christianity, is both historically unreliable, and is primarily concerned, despite its title, with the Anglicans and the Methodists. I have also drawn on: the plethora of travellers' tales and memoirs that the group has inspired; government reports and unpublished official documents, especially for the years up to 1916; certain indigenous writings; interviews with participants during a field-trip to the Solomon Islands from August to November 1966; and various official mission histories, including a Catholic one. The latter is Raucaz's, In the Savage South Solomons, first

published in French in 1925. But the main source has been papers in mission archives.

Unfortunately, most local records relating to the period 1898-1942 were destroyed during the Second World War, although other destructive agencies such as climate, tidal waves, mice and men, have, before and since, also taken a heavy toll on documents. On the other hand, a large amount of primary material has survived outside the group. Thus, an invaluable source for the northern Solomons has been the letters, journals and reports gathered on Bougainville and Buka in 1934-5 by Father Patrick O'Reilly S.M. of Paris. The largest and most complete range of archival material, covering Catholic activities in the whole group from the beginning to the present, is preserved at the Marist Fathers' headquarters in Rome. Were it not for these two deposits, and a smaller one at the Marist base in Sydney, 'Villa Maria', it is doubtful if the pre-war mission history could have been written in any detail, for very little Marist source material is available in print. Nor is much available on microfilm. It was necessary for me to visit the above archives - for which opportunity I am grateful to the Australian National University.

The danger in relying heavily on mission material is plain. How accurately does it present the other sides of the story - those of the government and of the islanders? At best, the answer can only be an approximation. Yet this does not seem to preclude the attainment of a useful degree of accuracy. There is

the leavening of other sources mentioned; there is the fact that most Marist material consists of informal, private correspondence in which the writers generally presented their observations factually and without varnish; and there is the fact that the large number of correspondents ensured an appreciable spectrum of discussion and opinion on most matters regarding the conduct of the mission and its relations with others. While it has not been possible to give a detailed account of the effects of missionization on the islanders - such would appear to be a task for the anthropologist rather than the historian - the material has, at least, been sufficient to establish their positive role in the making of Solomon Islands Catholicism.

Most of the documents consulted for this study were in French. I have, however, preferred to render quotations from them into English, as acknowledged in the footnotes. There, too, the location of documents has generally been stated, but no place of location is given for mission station journals where this is indicated in the title (e.g., 'Journal of Rokera').

IT would be impossible to thank personally everybody who assisted me to carry out this study. Nevertheless, I must first thank the Marist Fathers who not only threw their archives open for me but were unstintingly generous with their hospitality and with assistance of every kind. Since it would be futile to attempt to distinguish between the levels of kindness I have enjoyed, I do therefore follow the geographical

route of my researches in acknowledging a special debt of gratitude to the following: in Sydney - Fathers B. van de Walle, L. Mingam, T.L'Estrange, and C. Butler; in the Vicariate Apostolic of the South Solomons - Bishop D. Stuyvenberg, Fathers P. Geerts, N. Fox, J. Roughan, J. Wall, D. Moore, H. Kloosterman, J. McEvoy, M. Cruickshank and Brother F. Mauli; in the Vicariate Apostolic of the North Solomons - Bishop L. Lemay, Fathers G. Fahey, A. Lebel, W. Fingleton, F. Miltrup, P. Mallinson, G. Lepping, J. de Block, H. Kronenberg, H. Luecken, and C. Grenier; in Paris - Father Patrick O'Reilly; and in Rome - Father J. Buckley, the Superior-General, Fathers J. Bell, S. Bourke, J. Lambert, G. Lessard, K. Roach, Brothers Hugh and Maurice and Sig. A. Cacace.

Members of other religious congregations must be thanked also. Of the Marist Brothers, I thank Brothers Alban (Sydney), Donald (South Solomons), Finan (North Solomons), and Hilary (Rome); of the Missionary Sisters of the Society of Mary, Mothers Cyrilla (South Solomons) and Hortense (North Solomons) and Sister Emilienne (Rome); of the Sisters of St. Joseph of California, Sister Robert René (North Solomons); of the Pontificio Istituto Missioni Estere, Father Carlo Suigo (Rome); and of the Order of Preachers, Bishop E. Crawford and Father C. O'Grady (Western Solomons).

Others who have notably assisted me belong to the Australian National University. Mr John Heyward drew the maps. Miss Patti Fryer, Mrs Robyn Walker and

Mrs Rosamund Walsh contended patiently with a succession of difficult manuscripts and typescripts. Finally, a most valuable contribution has been the advice of, and criticism of my work by, staff and students of the Department of Pacific History. I am especially grateful to Professor J.W. Davidson for his unfailing sympathy, and to my supervisor, Dr Dorothy Shineberg, for her encouragement and guidance and detailed attention to my drafts. Also to be thanked are Dr W.N. Gunson and Dr Deryck Scarr, who commented on most of what I wrote, and Dr D.L. Hilliard, now of The Flinders University of South Australia. However, my greatest debt of gratitude is to my wife, Eugénie, who assisted me at every stage of this work, from note-taking to proof-reading, no less than on the home front.

ABBREVIATIONS

<u>A.C.P.F.</u>	Archivii Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide
<u>A.F.M.</u>	Archivio Fratelli Maristi
<u>A.M.O.</u>	<u>Annales des Missions de l'Océanie</u>
<u>A.P.F.</u>	<u>Annales de la Propagation de la Foi</u>
<u>A.P.M.</u>	Archivio Padri Maristi
<u>A.S.M.</u>	<u>Acta Societatis Mariae</u>
<u>B.A.H.</u>	Catholic Bishop's Archives, Honiara
<u>B.S.I.P.</u>	British Solomon Islands Protectorate
<u>C.O.</u>	Colonial Office
<u>M.C.</u>	<u>Missions Catholiques</u>
<u>M.E.O.</u>	Mission Education Office(r)
<u>O.R.</u>	O'Reilly Papers
<u>P.A.</u>	Prefecture Apostolic
<u>P.I.M.</u>	<u>Pacific Islands Monthly</u>
<u>Prov. V.M.</u>	Provincial's Papers, 'Villa Maria'
<u>P.V.M.</u>	Procurator's Papers, 'Villa Maria'
<u>S.D.A.</u>	Seventh Day Adventist
<u>S.M.H.</u>	<u>Sydney Morning Herald</u>
<u>S.M.S.M.</u>	Soeurs Missionnaires de la Société de Marie
<u>S.S.E.M.</u>	South Sea Evangelical Mission
<u>T.O.R.M.</u>	Tiers Ordre Régulaire de Marie
<u>T.P.N.G.</u>	Territory of Papua and New Guinea
<u>V.A.</u>	Vicariate Apostolic
<u>W.P.H.C.</u>	Western Pacific High Commission, Central Archives.

NOTE ON THE SPELLING OF PLACE-NAMES

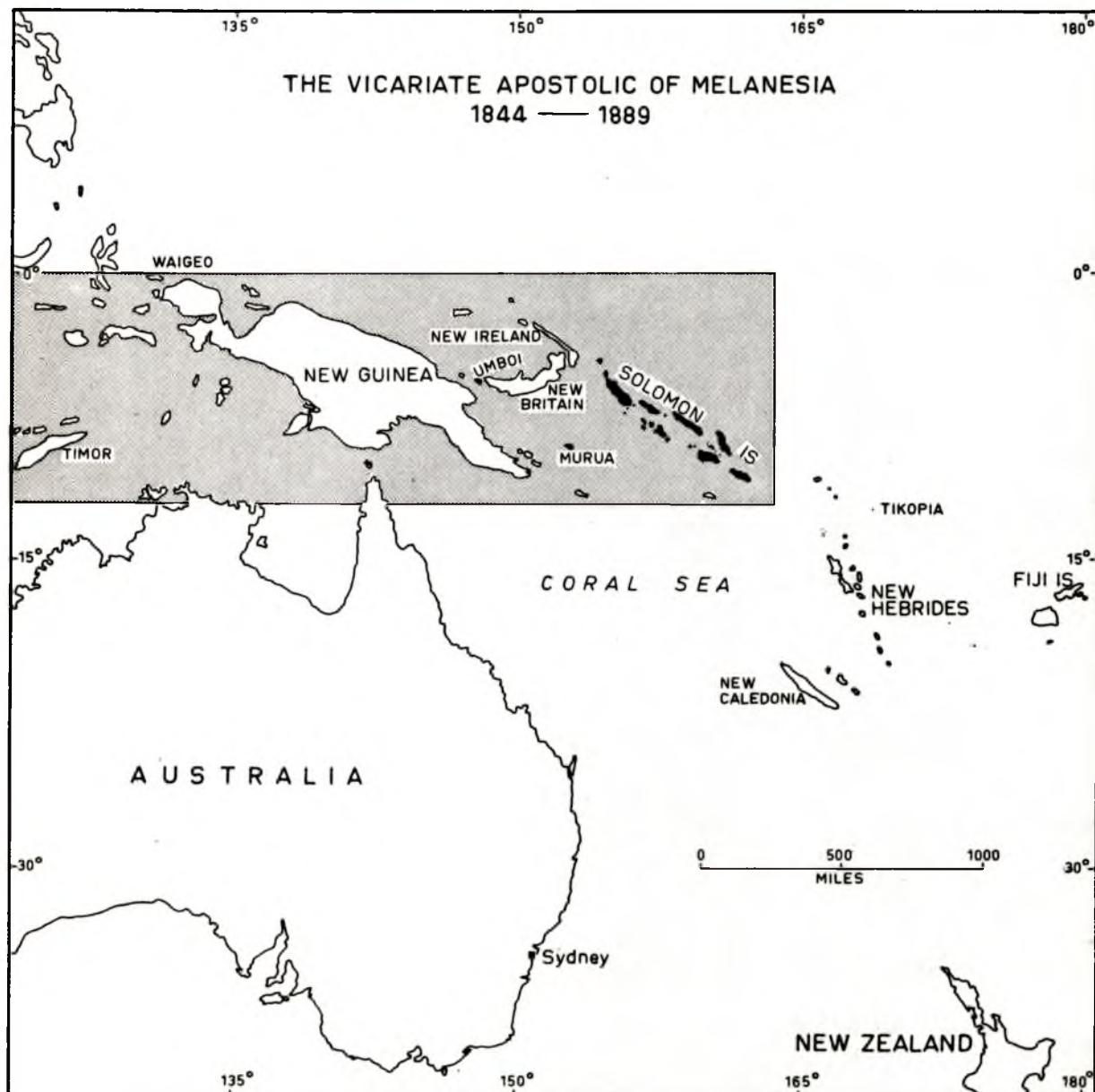
In general, I have followed the conventions of the Naval Intelligence Division's handbook series on the Pacific Islands.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

THE Solomon Islands are a segment of the island chain which extends from New Guinea to the New Hebrides. They lie between 5° and 11° south of the equator, roughly parallel with the curving north-east coast of Australia, 1200 miles distant. They consist, in addition to innumerable smaller islands, of seven main ones - Bougainville, Choiseul, New Georgia, Ysabel, Guadalcanal, Malaita, San Cristobal - which vary in length between 130 miles (Bougainville) and seventy miles (San Cristobal). Seas are frequently high and land surfaces, with the principal exceptions of southern Bougainville and northern Guadalcanal, are notably fragmented. From the air the dominant aspect of the islands is that of fold upon fold of hills and ranges covered with dense forest. However, soils are moderately fertile, the waters are rich in fish and the climate is a reasonable one by tropical standards.¹ The greatest natural hazard faced by the inhabitants of the group has been disease. Malaria and tropical ulcers are endemic. So were yaws, until they were

1

The geography of the group is described in Naval Intelligence Division, Pacific Islands (London, 1944), vol.III, pp.607-22; and in Colin H. Allan, Customary Land Tenure in the British Solomon Islands Protectorate (Honiara, 1957), pp.2-9.

virtually eradicated in a recent campaign sponsored by the World Health Organisation. The present indigenous population, overwhelmingly Melanesian in physical type and culture, but with several thousand Polynesians inhabiting outlying islands, numbers about 200,000. These are divided between two European administrations. The northern islands of Bougainville and Buka, with a population of 68,000, form part of the Australian-ruled Territory of Papua and New Guinea, while those to the south, with more than half their population on Malaita, constitute the British Solomon Islands Protectorate.

At the present state of knowledge, the pre-European history of the Solomon Islands is largely conjectural. Probably they were peopled over many centuries from south-east Asia.¹ Indigenous myths tend to present a relatively static view of the past - a past marked less by population movements than by the growth of a way of life in a particular locality.² Nevertheless, the divisive influence of a series of migrations, reinforcing that of geographical obstacles, has undoubtedly contributed to the pattern of political segmentation, cultural diversity and dispersed settlement characteristic of the group - as of much of Melanesia.

1

On the question of origins see the relevant works of Parsonson, Rivers and Shutler cited in bibliography.

2

See, for example, pp.10-12, below.

The sectionalism of the Solomon Islanders was (and is) well exemplified by the multiplicity of their languages - possibly seventy of them being spoken in the group, sixteen in Bougainville alone.¹ There was also wide variety in customs regarding birth, death, kinship, land tenure, sexual behaviour and so on.² Moreover, as numerous missionaries and other European visitors were to discover to their cost, warfare between communities, even those of the same language, was always imminent. For, traditionally, Solomon Islands villages were more or less self-contained units, often of a dozen people, especially in the interior, and occasionally of as many as 300 on the coast. And although linguistic and political divisions did not necessarily inhibit trade, the absence of any supra-local authority did mean that to venture from familiar territory was extremely dangerous. It also meant that, before the imposition of European rule, a dispute between neighbouring villages could generate a prolonged series of bloody reprisals,³ and that the

1

Details of Solomon Islands languages are given in A. Capell, A Linguistic Survey of the South-Western Pacific (Noumea, 1962), pp.166-203; Allan, Customary Land Tenure, pp.12-15; Jerry Allen and Conrad Hurd, Languages of the Bougainville District [Port Moresby, 1963], passim.

2

Important regional studies have been produced by Blackwood, Fox, Hogbin, Ivens, Oliver, Scheffler. For details see bibliography.

3

For examples of feuds see A.R. Tippet, Solomon Islands Christianity: A Study in growth and obstruction (London, 1967), pp.190-200; and below pp.170 ff.

pattern of hostility which commonly existed between 'bush'-dwellers and coast-dwellers was virtually endemic. For instance, on Malaita parties of women from bush and coast regularly exchanged produce, but always under the wary gaze of their armed menfolk; while in 1905 the annual report of the erstwhile German colonial administration noted that on Buka Island, at the northern extremity of the group, a section of troops was required to suppress an outbreak of bush-coast conflict.¹ Yet, despite the factors which traditionally served to keep communities apart, the various social and religious systems of the Solomon Islands were basically homogeneous. Everywhere they served the needs of people with primitive material technology, subsistence economies and little occupational specialization.

Within communities authority was diffused. Social cohesion derived not from subordination to the chiefs, but from ties of kinship. And these were reinforced and activated by a pervasive structure of reciprocal obligations rooted in the customary way of life. For instance in acquiring a wife or in building a house an individual usually needed to draw on his relatives for assistance, thereby committing himself to grant them an equivalent service. Similarly with the feast-giving needed to acquire the renown and the creditor-status

1

A.I. Hopkins, In the Isles of King Solomon (London, 1928), pp.161-2; Anon., 'Moeurs Salomonaises', Les Annales de Marie, 1930, pp.71-7; German New Guinea, Annual Report, 1904-5, pp.202-3.

that conferred leadership, the candidate was forced to rely heavily on the generosity and goodwill of his relatives, although his success in this was largely decided by his own talents and the extent to which they were respected by the community. For leadership had to be earned competitively. It was signified and measured by the ability, first, to accumulate (by one's own efforts and by way of investment from supporters), and then - mainly through formal, calculated feast-giving - to dispose of goods valued by the community. He who accumulated little, like he who hoarded his wealth - thereby putting no one in his debt - was of little account. Nor was the man who, though rich, was for some reason looked upon with disfavour and whose hospitality people might decline to accept.¹ Even where chiefly status was hereditary, as in certain Areare lineages of south Malaita possessing an araha title, the would-be leader had to earn the approval of his following, before his title became effective. Yet even then the leader remained only primus inter pares, a 'big man', an organizer of community activity (perhaps over several villages) but not a ruler.² As elsewhere in Melanesia, in contrast

¹ Douglas L. Oliver, A Solomon Island Society (Cambridge, U.S.A., 1955), pp.361-95; H.I. Hogbin, 'Social Advancement in Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands', Oceania, vol.8 (1937-8), pp.289-305.

² C.E. Fox, Threshold of the Pacific (London, 1924), p.299; W.G. Ivens, Melanesians of the South-East Solomon Islands (London, 1927), p.128; Oliver, A Solomon Island Society, pp.296-8; Daniel de Coppet, 'Land Tenure in Areare and on Small Malaita, British Solomon Islands', p.1, TS in the present writer's possession.

to Polynesia, the Solomon Islands offered no individuals to whom European governments could accredit consuls,¹ no kings who could gratify missionaries by precipitating mass conversions to Christianity and no patrons whose support guaranteed protection beyond the limits of their personal influence.

While having limited physical control of their environment the Solomon Islanders possessed animistic religious systems which were closely integrated with it and which sustained a thoroughly pragmatic approach to a familiar and rational, if difficult, cosmos. Little detailed study has been made of indigenous Solomon Islands religions. But the information available demonstrates their affinity with 'Melanesian religion' as described both by Codrington, drawing mainly on Banks Island's informants, and by Lawrence, on the basis of recent New Guinea research.² Unlike traditional Christianity, these religions were unconcerned with metaphysical absolutes, or with a distinction between religious and secular orders of being. Rather, they found their raison d'etre in offering causal explanations for, and ritual techniques

1

Deryck Scarr, Fragments of Empire (Canberra, 1967), p.2.

2

Peter Lawrence, Road Belong Cargo (Manchester, 1964), pp.28-33; P. Lawrence and M.J. Meggitt (eds.), Gods, Ghosts and Men in Melanesia (Melbourne, 1965), pp.1-25; Peter Lawrence, 'Politics and True Knowledge', New Guinea, vol.2, no.1, (1967), pp.41-2.

for dealing with, all circumstances bearing on human affairs. That is, in regulating the relations between men and the various spirits - some of them ancestral, and others of them who had never known human existence - whose putative influence suffused the indigenes' way of life. Regulation consisted in invoking and propitiating the spirits by means of prayers and sacrifices and by respect for the customary codes of behaviour. In return, it was widely believed, the spirits would apply mana, the basic causative power, to the interests of their suppliants.¹ This power underlay all human achievement. Consequently, the more successful a man was, the more adept he was assumed to be at dealing with the spirits, and the greater was his mana. In proportion to the mana obtained gardens would flourish, seas would be safe, ambitions would be realized, wives would be fruitful, good health would be assured - provided taboos were observed or that a rival was not countering with more powerful mana. For nothing happened by chance.

An important result of the Solomon Islanders' insistence on responsible and personalized causality was their ubiquitous practice and fear of sorcery, with its attendant counter measures - antidote or revenge. This was encouraged not only by their lack of

1

R.H. Codrington, 'Religious Beliefs and Practices in Melanesia', Journal of the Anthropological Institute, vol.X (1880-1), pp.261-316; and The Melanesians (London, 1891), pp.118, 191. See also Fox, Threshold of the Pacific, p.251; H. Ian Hogbin, 'Mana', Oceania, vol.XI (1935-6), p.241.

scientific knowledge but in a particular way by the unhealthy environment, which was apt continually to provide seemingly empirical validation of the effectiveness of sorcery. Thus the prevalence of disease ensured that shortly after a person had been cursed he or a relative could confidently be expected to fall ill, and the sorcerer might claim the credit. Sorcery was, of course, held responsible for much more than natural misfortunes. For example, in 1912 when a Malaita chief was killed while fishing with dynamite a stranger who had recently come to the village was charged with having put a spell on the chief to prevent him from hearing the fuse sputtering. Only the unexpected arrival of a police party saved the unfortunate 'sorcerer' from being put to death.¹

While present material well-being was the test of a person's access to mana, it was also a measure of the eminence and effectiveness as a dispenser of mana that would be enjoyed by his spirit after death. Thus, the spirits of notable people could expect to enjoy considerable relevance to human affairs. To adopt Codrington's generalization, they remained 'present in full activity in the places in which they dwelt as living men' until they were forgotten by their descendants, which might take three or four generations.² Continued remembrance depended on

1

Woodford to Sweet-Escott, 9 September 1912, encl. Sweet-Escott to C.O., 12 March 1913, C.O. 225/115.

2

Codrington, Melanesians, p.218.

continued effectiveness; spirits, like leaders, being obliged to prove themselves. As for the spirits of the undistinguished, they quickly entered on an aimless state of being in the various places of asylum. For the Siwai of south Bougainville there were three possible abodes for the spirits of the dead. There was Lake Luroru (or Ru'no'no') where the spirits of those who had been properly mourned would enjoy an eternity of ease and plenty; there was Kaopiri, a legendary lake of fire and blood where the souls of those who had been inadequately mourned suffered everlasting hunger; and there was the mysterious Irinoru where the spirits of those who had been killed in fighting endured perpetual anger and frustration. In the southern islands of the group the best known abode of the dead was Malapa, an island at the eastern end of Guadalcanal where, as Codrington records the spirits eventually turned into white ants' nests.¹ At the western end of Guadalcanal there was, also, said to be an equivalent to the Christian Purgatory, where the spirits of delinquents were condemned for a time to carry heavy loads. But, since the earliest references to this belief come from Catholic sources written during a period of religious rivalry, and since the place itself is very near the Anglican mission centre at Maravovo, the authenticity of the tradition is suspect.²

¹ Codrington, Melanesians, p.260; Oliver, A Solomon Island Society, p.76-7; Walter G. Ivens, Island Builders of the Pacific (London, 1930), pp.134-7; Hopkins, Isles of King Solomon, p.119.

²

Letter of Pellion, 10 January 1911, A.M.O., vol.XIII, p.71; L.M. Raucaz, In the Savage South Solomons (New York 1928), p.65.

The anthropocentricity implied in the foregoing account of the relations between men and spirits was further exemplified by the islanders' lack of interest in establishing rigorously logical explanations for the remote origin of things. Even among those of them who acknowledged a high god responsible for creation, such matters were of little moment. The creator was unvenerated. His work done, he became irrelevant, and retired - only the currently active spirits were considered important.¹ Other people, it seems, did not invoke a creator at all. Thus in the history, as told by themselves, of the people of Oau in Areare, south Malaita, things began in the following manner - the earth and the first three men were mysteriously born 'out of sugar cane'.² There was no woman, yet the man Porooa existed and he begot Ruainonipaina, from whom Mausioe was born. Then, one day Ruainonipaina saw a figure standing on the shore. He was rather afraid, thinking it to be a spirit. They started talking in signs and when the apparition pointed to its body the man felt at ease, for he realized it was a woman. He named her Mataroha, that is, 'grown wild, without being planted', and took her with him to become (it seems) the wife of

1

Harold W. Scheffler, Choiseul Island Social Structure (Berkeley, 1965), p.9; Tippet, Solomon Islands Christianity, p.3.

2

Ivens (Island Builders, p.303) recorded a similar legend at Sa'a, also in south Malaita, where, however, the sugar cane was said to have been fertilized by a creative ghost.

Mausioe. Since then the Oau have reproduced in a less mysterious fashion, with brothers at first marrying sisters and then cousins, until the introduction of shell-money, which could be used for bride-price, made it possible to insist on exogamy.

Far from being honoured, the founders of the line were scorned by their descendants. For, like spirits and would-be leaders, the mytho-historical figures of the past were assessed by the practical criterion of what benefits they had bequeathed to the present. Thus, the first three men 'knew nothing and were stupid':

...[they] did not live in houses but in caves. They did not cook food with fire but ate it after it had been lying for a time in the hot sun. They did not make gardens but hunted for food in the bush, for wild food like the fruits of the trees. They did not know how to catch fish, so they gathered and ate shellfish.

This is the way these three men lived long, long ago and it was not a good life, nor did it provide a good living for their children who came after them in their Islands of Malaita.

Praise is accorded only those people who, throughout forty-eight recorded generations, were credited with introducing something of value to the local culture. Included in this progressive enrichment were fire-making (in the 4th generation), gardening (6th), invocations to the spirits to ensure good health (14th), the use of stone tools (20th), canoe building (25th),

the use of shell-money (31st), the institution of the Araha title (36th), and so on.¹

Lacking the support of dogma and of institutionalized authority, and vindicated only by tangible results, indigenous religious allegiances were inherently transferable. Thus, they could properly be transferred to apparently more powerful spirits, especially when the social order to which they belonged was changing. But the same lack of definition also made the religion of the Solomon Islanders durable. Particular new allegiances could be incorporated into the existing system, overshadowing rather than replacing old and discredited ones, while traditional religious assumptions remained unchanged. Moreover, their permeation of the natural environment would enable traditional beliefs to survive in the awareness of the islanders, despite long-term exposure to and formal adoption of contrary ones.

The pragmatic attitude of Solomon Islanders towards their own world was also demonstrated in their relations with Europeans. First contact between the two races offers a case in point. In January 1568 a Spanish exploring expedition from Peru led by Alvaro de Mendana reached Ysabel. What the people thought of the strange new-comers is unknown. Possibly, as occurred elsewhere in the Pacific, they took them

1

'The History of the People of Oau', collected and translated by Fr P. Geerts, TS in the present writer's possession. The 'creation' section of this history is published in The Solomon Islands Farmer, vol.4, no.4, (December, 1968), p.41.

to be ancestral spirits.¹ Their first reaction joined curiosity with caution - 'many small canoes with Indians' came out to investigate the ships, but they kept their distance. Soon, however, curiosity prevailed and some of the 'Indians' ventured aboard, where they received gifts - and attempted to supplement what they had thus acquired by stealing more. A further significant precedent was created when one man earned a shirt by repeating the Pater Noster and the Credo.² Going ashore, the explorers were, in turn, welcomed with gifts of food, but after some days their hosts grew cold. Likely reasons for this sudden (and, to the Spaniards, unjustified) change of mood are readily found. The local chief had been offended when Mendaña, attending Mass, rejected his token of goodwill and alliance - a gift of meat consisting of a boy's shoulder with the arm and hand still attached.³

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Codrington, Melanesians, p.11; Dorothy Shineberg, They Came for Sandalwood (Melbourne, 1967), p.204; Lawrence, Road Belong Cargo, p.65.

2

Amherst of Hackney and Basil Thomson (eds), The Discovery of the Solomon Islands by Alvaro de Mendana in 1568 (London, 1901), vol.1, pp.108-9.

3

Ibid., pp.14-21. Tippettt contends that the gift was meant as an offering to Mendana's spirit, and that the chief interpreted the Mass as a ceremony in honour of the spirit. There is, however, no evidence in the basic source, Amherst and Thomson, to support these opinions. Nor is there evidence in the unauthoritative secondary source cited by Tippettt: Raucaz, Savage South Solomons, pp.59-60.

Moreover, the Spaniard's shortage of food would have tended to discredit them in the sight of the islanders while, at the most obvious level, the presence of 154 hungry strangers - spirits or not - surely represented an intolerable threat to the local economy.

Leaving Ysabel in order to explore and to supplement their larder from the islands to the south-east, the Spaniards again found the people uncooperative. They were received simply as predatory aliens (which, in fact, they were), and their passage was marked by a series of bloody clashes over food. After six months, with his ships rotting, his crew sick and his supplies dangerously low, Mendaña turned for home.

Later European visitors to the Solomons were also to find the islanders a force to be reckoned with, and no less ready to consult and protect their own interests than they had been in the sixteenth century.

CHAPTER II

THE VICARIATE OF MELANESIA, 1845-55

SO far as is known, for two centuries after Mendaña's visit in 1568 the Solomon Islands were unvisited by Europeans. Further expeditions, led in 1595 by Mendaña and in 1605 by de Quiros, failed to find the group, or any other gold-bearing land, and thereafter the Spanish authorities refused to finance more adventures in the south-west Pacific.¹ Thus, although the expansion of Catholicism ranked with the pursuit of wealth as a motive for Spanish exploration, the only Solomon Islanders to be baptized by the Spaniards were some that Mendaña had abducted from San Cristobal. He had intended that they should return home as messengers of the Gospel. Instead they died in Peru, puzzled and forlorn, one suspects, 'invoking the name of Jesus many times'.² And as time passed, map-makers began to doubt the very existence of their home-land, until Mendaña's discovery was ratified by those of English and French navigators

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For a detailed account of early European navigation in the group see Colin Jack-Hinton, 'The European Discovery, Rediscovery and Exploration of the Solomon Islands, 1568-1838' (Ph.D. thesis, A.N.U., 1962); published as The Search for the Islands of Solomon, 1567-1838 (London, 1969).

2

Amherst and Thomson, The Discovery of the Solomon Islands, vol.1, p.180.

in the eighteenth century - by Carteret in 1767 and Bougainville in 1768. Henceforth, a gradually increasing volume of European shipping was drawn into Solomon Islands waters, especially with the growth of Sydney.

Beginning as a prison settlement in 1788, this port soon developed into a commercial centre with interests extending to most parts of the Pacific. Those at first relevant to the Solomon Islands were whaling, and the gathering of bêche-de-mer for the trade with China. But while making the Solomons relatively well-known to sea-farers and supporting a limited trade at certain inlets and small islands these enterprises did little to alter the conditions of life there. Contact between islanders and Europeans was nowhere as intense as that which occurred at Tahiti on account of the pork trade with Sydney (1801-26) or in the New Hebrides and New Caledonia with the sandalwood trade (1830-65).¹ In the Solomons contact remained spasmodic until the late 1860s. When the first missionaries reached the group in 1845 the autonomy of the islanders was still intact, despite a widespread desire for iron tools, and the security of a European settler was no less precarious than it had been in the days of Mendaña.

Christian missionary activity spread westwards across the Pacific. The first in the field were Protestants of the London Missionary Society, which

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H.E. Maude, Of Islands and Men (Melbourne, 1968), pp.178ff.; Shineberg, Sandalwood, passim.

landed its first envoys at Tahiti, the Marquesas and Tonga, from the ship Duff in 1797. In the following years the L.M.S. gradually extended its influence to the Cook Islands, Samoa, Fiji, the Loyalty Islands and ultimately (1871) to New Guinea. Anglicans began work in New Zealand in 1814, and Methodists replaced the L.M.S. in Tonga in 1822. Sustained Catholic evangelism dates only from the entry of the Picpus Fathers into Polynesia in 1827. That the Protestants should have found the Pacific a practically virgin field and were so long unchallenged there may be accounted for by two main reasons. The first was the decline of Spain as an imperial power during the seventeenth century, for the Spanish missionary movement, which brought Catholicism to the Pacific, had functioned in close dependence on Spanish expansion. This dependence had been strikingly demonstrated in 1577 when twenty-two friars whom an apostolic Franciscan, fired by the reports of Mendaña's chaplains, had gathered at Seville to await transport to the Solomons were, shortly before their intended departure, diverted by royal decree to the Philippines.¹ The second reason was the absorption of Catholic energies, from the late eighteenth century, by the struggle for survival in Europe: the suppression of the Jesuits, the French Revolution and the conflict with Napoleon largely destroyed the Church's capacity for missionary work.

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Celsus Kelly, Calendar of Documents: Spanish voyages in the South Pacific and the Franciscan missionary plans (Madrid, 1965), p.33.

However, from the struggle there emerged a powerful new evangelistic force, a revitalized French Catholicism, zealous to restore all things in Christ and fecund of religious orders and vocations with which to do it. In the region of Lyons alone the Société de Marie (Marist Fathers) was one of twelve religious institutes of men founded between 1819 and 1855. Another of them was the Société des Missions Africaines.¹

Also characteristic of the new missionary movement was the extensive lay participation in what had hitherto been a 'highly professional affair' concerning the religious orders and the governments which supported them.² In 1822 Pauline Jaricot, the daughter of a Lyons mill-owner, founded the Oeuvre de la Propagation de la Foi which, by systematically gathering small donations, soon became the financial mainstay of nearly all Catholic missions. At Le Havre in 1845, Victor Marziou, a pious ship-owner, was encouraged by the Marists to found the Société de l'Océanie, a trading company whose ships were expected to provide free transport for Catholic missionaries in the Pacific, and (hopefully) to make money for the shareholders.³

¹ Jean-François Six, Un Prêtre, Antoine Chevrier: fondateur du Prado 1826-1879 (Paris, 1965), p.428.

² Stephen Neill, A History of Christian Missions (Harmondsworth, 1964), p.399.

³ Patrick O'Reilly, 'La Société de l'Océanie (1844-1854)', Revue d'Histoire des Missions, vol.VII, no.2, (1930) pp.227-263.

Furthermore, when the flag-ship of the Société, the Arche d'Alliance, sailed on its maiden voyage in 1846 it carried a young lay woman, Françoise Perroton, who had volunteered to assist the Marists on the island of Wallis.¹ Other women joined her and eventually they formed the Tiers Ordre Régulair de Marie which, in 1931, became the Soeurs Missionnaires de la Société de Marie (S.M.S.M.).

After entrusting the newly created vicariate of Eastern Oceania to the Picpus in 1833, the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (Propaganda), the Papacy's 'Ministry of Missions', sought means of evangelizing the western half of the Pacific. The Marists were recommended for the task. They were then an informal grouping of secular priests but their leader, Jean-Claude Colin, agreed to accept the mission in return for their recognition as an independent religious order.² Accordingly, the Société de Marie was canonically approved in April 1836 with Colin as its Superior-General. And in December Bishop Jean-Baptiste Pompallier sailed with the first Marist missionaries for a vicariate which included all of Micronesia and Melanesia, and Polynesia

¹ [C. Mayet], Auguste Marceau: capitaine de frégate commandant de l'Arche d'Alliance (Paris, n.d.) pp.281-7.

² J. Coste, Lectures on Society of Mary History (Rome, 1965), pp.104-9; Stanley W. Hosie, Anonymous Apostle (New York, 1967), pp.126-9.

westward of the Cook Islands.¹ Groping for footholds in this vast area, Pompallier at length set up his headquarters in New Zealand, leaving other men 1500 miles away on Wallis and Futuna. Marists appointed to New Zealand were similarly scattered and isolation and hardship were likewise their lot. Pierre Chanel was killed on Futuna in 1841 by people who scorned him for having apparently been abandoned, while his New Zealand confrères were so ill-provided-for that they had to beg food from the Maoris.²

Colin was appalled by this situation, not only because of the forced austerities, which to a large extent were due to Pompallier's financial incompetence, but because he expected the Marists, as members of a religious order, to have as their primary concern not the active apostolate, but the seeking of personal holiness according to the Marist Rule. For this, the maintenance of community life and a semi-monastic routine were deemed necessary. Accordingly, when Pompallier ignored his remonstrances - thereby bringing into the open the thorny canonical problem of jurisdiction over religious priests, who belonged to their superior by their vows and to the bishop by their ministry - Colin resolved to withdraw the Marists from

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The territorial divisions subject to the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda are ranked as follows, in order of increasingly independent jurisdiction: prefecture apostolic, vicariate apostolic, diocese. The head of a vicariate or diocese is usually a bishop, and the head of a prefecture usually a priest with quasi-episcopal powers.

2

Lillian Keys, The Life and Times of Bishop Pompallier (Christchurch, 1957), p.181.

Pompallier's control. He was, however, reluctant to forsake the Pacific, which had brought his order into being. Therefore, he recommended to Propaganda in May 1842 that Western Oceania be divided into a number of vicariates, where new efforts could be made to reconcile the Marist life with missionary function.¹

Consequently the vicariate of Central Oceania, extending from Samoa to New Caledonia (and where Colin's hopes were again to be disappointed), was created in August 1842. Sub-dividing was accelerated after Jean-Baptiste Epalle, one of Pompallier's severest critics, returned to Europe late in 1842 to report on the state of affairs in New Zealand. Indeed, Pompallier stimulated the sub-division. For he ordered Epalle not to return, thereby thwarting Colin's scheme to nominate Epalle as his coadjutor, to act as a Marist watchdog.

Pompallier also refused to receive any new Marist missionaries.² The result of this obstructiveness was that in the summer of 1843 Epalle, with Colin's blessing, presented Cardinal Fransoni of Propaganda with a plan for founding missions in Melanesia and

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Kevin J. Roach, 'Colin and the New Zealand Mission, 1838-1848', (D. E. H. thesis, Gregorian University, Rome, 1963), pp.194-204; Coste, Society of Mary History, pp.239-40, Hosie, Anonymous Apostle, pp.172-3, 219-21.

2

Colin to Fransoni, 28 October 1843, A.C.P.F. Scritture Riferite nei Congressi Oceanica, t.2.

Micronesia. Epalle pointed to the promise these islands held for the growth of the Church on account of their allegedly vast population and the fact that they had not yet been invaded by 'heresy', although there was talk in Europe of colonizing Melanesia. Here at last, he continued, Catholics had a chance to forestall Protestantism, but perhaps not for long.¹ Franson was impressed. In July 1844 the vicariates of Micronesia and Melanesia were created and Epalle was consecrated bishop. Micronesia, which the Marists never entered, extended from 125°E to 180° and from the equator to 13°N; and Melanesia from 125°E to 160°E, between the equator and 12°S - an area that included the whole of New Guinea and the Solomon Islands.² Not included, although geographically part of Melanesia, were the New Hebrides and New Caledonia, where Marists settled in 1843.

In his scheme Epalle had suggested beginning with a post in each vicariate - one at Ponape and the other on New Ireland. By December 1844 his plans for Melanesia were more ambitious and the need to head off colonizing interests felt to be more urgent:

...it would...be for the glory of Catholicism and of the Society as smartly as possible to possess ourselves of the principal groups and to send quam primum three or four priests and as many brothers to the Solomon Islands where there are seven large islands, the least

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Epalle to Franson, 1 August 1843, A.C.P.F., Acta, vol.207, pp.188-90.

2

Ibid., p.182.

of which is almost as valuable as Tahiti...; three or four priests and as many brothers for New Ireland and New Britain, each of which could be a diocese; three or four priests and as many brothers on each of the four or five principal points of New Guinea. To found immediately a single establishment strong and solid at all these places...[for] if once Europeans penetrate these islands the conversion of their inhabitants will present difficult obstacles, since we will have not only to combat infidelity but heresy and unbelief.¹

Calling for about fifty men such a scheme was hardly a practical solution to the general problem of balancing the conventual life against widespread evangelism, of making a little go a long way. But Colin strained his resources to treat his ally as generously as he could. Epalle left London for Sydney in the Bussorah Merchant on 2 February 1845 with seven priests and six brothers. A second party consisting of Jean-George Collomb, Epalle's coadjutor-elect for Micronesia, plus two priests and a brother left Le Havre nine months later; and a third, consisting of two priests, left Marseilles in October 1847.²

Like the Marists' initial entry into the Pacific, their excursion into Melanesia was made with scant reference to the environment in which they were going to work. The whole operation was viewed in narrow

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Epalle to Colin, 15 December 1844, A.P.M., OMM 411 (translation).

2

Details of the missionaries sent to Melanesia are located in A.P.M. OMM 000.

religious terms determined by their own assumptions and pre-occupations. For most of them the missionary vocation seems to have represented primarily a short road to sanctity. Apostolic success was seen as secondary to and dependant on personal holiness, and to be guaranteed by martyrdom. The only external factor considered relevant reflected a pervading sense of participation in the religious polemic of Europe: the emissaries of truth should reach the waiting islanders before those of Error and Mammon. Thus, the practical problems of coping with an alien world and its people weighed lightly upon Epalle. Six weeks before leaving London he questioned the propriety of:

...working perhaps too much to get all possible information and [of relying] perhaps....too much on human opinions.¹

In view of the pitiful amount of knowledge then available to the would-be settler in Melanesia this was a truly bizarre fear. The journals of the navigators (on which the Marists' correspondence is silent) and even interviews with navigators (the only one mentioned is Joseph du Bouzet, who sailed with Dumont d'Urville, 1837-40) yielded mainly geographic information and accounts of brief contacts with the islanders. But they offered little help on the matter of actually living in Melanesia.

Nevertheless, Epalle was complacent about both security and the winning of converts. After three years work among the Maoris he was prepared to assert that:

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Epalle to Colin, 15 December 1844, A.P.M., OMM 411 (translation).

...the Oceanian is disposed to Catholicism and nothing else is needed to win him but steadfastness and fearlessness in the face of privations, especially hunger.¹

Such a belief, owing much to the 'noble savage' illusion and to Chateaubriand's widely read glorification of martyrdom, further reduced any incentive for the missionaries to adapt their approach to their audience. Nor did a tendentious view of 'natural law', which one of Epalle's companions was later to apply to the people of the island of Murua: it was 'obscured in them by ignorance and depravity', but was not effaced, and was only 'a fire under the cinders which a breadth of divine grace can soon relight'.² Hence, again, the need for holiness; but hence, also, reason to regard as contumacy a sustained rejection of the Gospel, for 'natural law', with which the Gospel was equated, was assumed to enjoy a convenient measure of self-evident rightness. There was, however, some factual basis, stemming from missionary experience in Polynesia, for optimism about converting 'Oceanians'. The mass conversions that began for the L.M.S., in Tahiti after 1813, when King Pomare renounced his pagan deities, had Catholic parallels, on a smaller scale, but glowingly reported in the Annales de la Propagation de la Foi.

1

Epalle to Franson, 1 August 1843, loc.cit. (translation).

2

Montrouzier to his parents, 25 April 1848, A.P.M., OSM 208 (translation). For Murua see below pp.41 ff.

In 1841, 2,500 neophytes were baptized on Wallis; Futuna, after Chanel's death, was entirely Catholic by 1845; and New Zealand had impressive, though mendaciously inflated, figures to report by the end of 1841.¹

Even so, Epalle was not without his critics. The most humane of his colleagues, and the most effective missionary among them, Joseph Thomassin, believed that the bishop was:

...unfitted for his place. Without any talent for administration, he believed himself a great administrator because he raised and destroyed at will a thousand castles in Spain.

The least heroic of the band, Leopold Verguet, was likewise critical but his views, like Thomassin's, carried little weight.² More influential were those of Jean-Pierre Frémont and Xavier Montrouzier, both of whom shared Epalle's attitude and were to be in control of the mission at various times. Both stressed the primary importance of the Marists' own piety which, as Montrouzier pointed out, found its

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Keys, Pompallier, pp.172, 184-7; Coste, Society of Mary History, pp.238-42. After a month in Melanesia one Marist complained of the 'exaggerated, coloured and over-optimistic' letters published in the Annales: letter of Trapenard, 8 June 1849, A.P.M. OSM 208 (translation).

2

Verguet to Poupinel, 18 June 1848, A.P.M. Personal file - Verguet; Thomassin to Colin, 6 January 1854, A.P.M. OSM 208 (translation).

ultimate realization - both personal and functional - in martyrdom. In 1842, at the seminary of Montpellier in southern France, a lecture by a visiting Marist formed his interest in the Pacific and roused a lasting:

...passion [of] impatience to break the bonds that still attach me to earth...[to] flee across the seas to teach savage and infidels to love Jesus and Mary....The future I imagine for myself is so fine and so consoling; to suffer thirty or forty years or, rather, to be for some moments the object of the cruelty of barbarous people and after that to be able to say 'I am going to Heaven and I am leading thousands of souls there and my blood is going to be the seed of a host of Christians'.¹

Five years later, the tone was rather more subdued, but the priorities were unchanged:

...tell young people...who are disposed to come to the missions but are, perhaps, afraid of the apparent sterility of our ministry that the chance of martyrdom and the glory of being the first apostle of a country are well worth the pain of renouncing, for a time at least, the satisfaction of seeing the word of God flourish.²

EPALLE and his party reached Sydney on 22 June 1845. Four months later, on 23 October, they embarked on the Marian Watson a 146 ton sandalwood ship, 'tight staunch

1

Montrouzier to his brother, 5 December 1842, A.P.M. Personal file - Montrouzier (translation). For a detailed account of Montrouzier's views and career see my essay, 'Xavier Montrouzier: a missionary in Melanesia, 1845-97', in J.W. Davidson and Deryck Scarr (eds), Pacific Islands Portraits (in press A.N.U.).

2

Montrouzier to Jacquet, 17 December 1847, A.P.M. OSM 208 (translation).

and strong, sufficiently manned and armed for defence', for 'various places in the North and South Pacific Ocean'.¹ Epalle's plans were unfixed. He planned to explore his domain. In the course of this he hoped to visit the two places in the Solomons of which he had knowledge, Makira Bay (San Cristobal) and Thousand Ships' Bay (Ysabel). The first had been recommended by a Sydney whaling captain and the second had been charted by Dumont d'Urville. Then he intended to land two men at Ponape, in Micronesia (to prepare for Collomb), before establishing his headquarters on some small, safe and quickly-converted island to be used as a spring-board for the conversion of New Guinea. He favoured Waigeo, near the Vogelkop of western New Guinea.² But the Marists had much to contend with before they even saw New Guinea.

Reaching San Cristobal on 2 December they were welcomed, as had been predicted, by people desiring to trade. Ten days later they were also welcomed at Astrolabe Harbour in Thousand Ships' Bay. Here, while

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'Charter party between John Kettle, owner of Marian Watson, and Rev. Bp. Epalle, 11 October 1845', A.P.M. OMM 411.

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Epalle to Colin, 17 August 1843, *ibid*; Rocher to Colin, 4 December 1845, A.P.M. OP 458; Faramond to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 30 April 1846, Archives Diplomatiques (Paris), Correspondence Commerciale, Sydney, vol.1. For a valuable first hand account of the expedition until February 1847 see L. Verguet, Histoire de la Première Mission Catholique au Vicariat de Mélanésie (Paris, 1861), *passim*.

Epalle led exploring parties of missionaries and sailors ashore, others remained on board to acquaint themselves with the people who came out to trade. From these dealings it was learned that it would be dangerous for the explorers to venture beyond Maunga Point, at the mouth of the harbour, where the people were enemies of those they were currently mixing with. Epalle dismissed the warning, saying that islanders always disparaged their neighbours, and on 16 December led his party around the point. Two hours later they returned - the bishop with five axe wounds in his head and several others of the party with lesser injuries. The facts are clear. On reaching the shore Epalle had walked boldly towards a group of about forty armed and threatening men. Gifts - a piece of iron and then a tomahawk - failed to mollify their leader. Then a young man demanded Epalle's episcopal ring in exchange for two obviously bad fruit. Epalle refused, at which point a *melée* developed. Epalle was struck from behind and his companions fled to the boat. The attackers tried to wet the firearms, which the sailors unwontedly (at Epalle's behest?), had left there, but several shots put them to flight. Three days later Epalle died and was buried on the uninhabited island of San Jorge.¹

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Chaurain to Colin, 2 March 1846, A.P.M., OSM 208 (published, slightly edited, in A.P.F., vol.18, pp.546-65); S.M.H., 24 April 1846. Other useful accounts of Epalle's death found in A.P.M. OSM 208 are Montrouzier to his brother Henri, 21 December 1845, January 1846; Montrouzier to Favier, 24 February 1846; Montrouzier to Colin, 25 February 1846; Jacquet to Para, 26 January 1846.

There is no evidence for attributing the attack on Epalle to the islanders' previous experience of European contact, although the possibility cannot be discounted. There is, therefore, no reason for looking beyond the obvious explanation that it stemmed from his insensitivity to the seriousness of local rivalries in Melanesia. Identification with one group of people meant incurring the hostility of that group's enemies. Yet the attack is not to be seen wholly in traditional terms. For instance, the murder weapon (which, apparently, was not the gift tomahawk) was a European innovation. Moreover, subsequent events suggest that Epalle's death was possibly part of a broad pattern of social change consequent on the introduction of steel axes. These were extremely efficient weapons in close combat and, as has been suggested by recent New Guinea research, probably increased the mortality rate in Melanesian warfare.¹ Hence, it is not without significance that (as Pierre Rouillac, a Marist, was to learn fifty years later) following the attack on Epalle, Kiliu, the leader of the assassins, should wage a campaign that made him dominant in south-west Ysabel, but at the cost of reducing the inhabitants' ability to resist raids from New Georgia. As a result of these depredations the south-west coast of

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R.F. Salisbury, From Stone to Steel (Melbourne, 1962), pp.118, 123.

Ysabel was practically depopulated by the end of the nineteenth century.¹

Stunned by the loss of Epalle the Marists, now under Frémont's direction, retreated to the security of Makira Bay, which they named Port Sainte Marie. The residents of the bay welcomed them, particularly Maimara, chief of the large village of Oné. The welcome was confirmed, and the way smoothed for the buying of land by the assurance that the missionaries:

...were coming to live among them, not to take their riches, but rather to give them cloth and iron.

As to the choice of site, the Marists differed. Verguet, for instance, wished to live in the Oné village for the sake of protection and in order to strengthen relations with the villagers. But the majority, moved by pious distaste for the 'scandals' of the village preferred to remain at a decent remove from the nudity which prevailed there. Besides, proximity to the village could be disruptive of conventual routine. Accordingly, land was bought about thirty minutes' walk from Oné, at the mouth of a mountain stream. With the assistance of the Oné and the sailors a solid timber house was built there, although not without incident - Montrouzier was

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Rouillac to Verguet, 21 October 1900, A.P.M., OSM 208, published in M.C., 1901, pp.14-6; Woodford to O'Brien, 27 August 1898, encl., O'Brien to C.O., 11 October 1898, C.O. 225/55; Colin Jack-Hinton, 'Review Article: Hor'd here ick Majesty's,' Journal of Pacific History, vol.1 (1966) p.237.

speared in the back by an aggrieved husband (not an Oné) in retaliation for one of the sailors having, it was said, 'taken too much liberty with his wife'.¹

Early in March 1846, with the missionaries apparently securely established, the Marian Watson departed. Henceforth, for the apostles of the vicariate of Melanesia, the only regular contacts with the outside world would be the vessels which J.L. Rocher, the Marist procurator (mission agent) in Sydney, would arrange to visit them once a year with provisions.²

With the Marian Watson there also departed three missionaries, Montrouzier, to recuperate with his confrères in New Caledonia, and a brother and a priest, Prosper and Chaurain, who had been unnerved by the attack on Epalle and were being evacuated. Since Epalle had left one brother (Bertrand) at New Caledonia on the way to the Solomons the Marists now numbered nine. These settled down to following 'as well as possible the Rule of the Marist mother-house at Lyons'. Rising at 5 am., was followed by various spiritual exercises until breakfast at 9 am. Then the priests, and sometimes the brothers, set out in twos to visit

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Verguet to Colin, 5 January 1846, A.P.M. OSM 208 (translation); Montrouzier to his parents, 30 January 1846, *ibid.*; Montrouzier to his brother Henri, January 1846, *ibid.* (translation); Verguet, Première Mission Catholique, pp.111-8.

2

For a summary of the missionaries' contacts with shipping in the vicariate of Melanesia see Appendix F.

the villages of the bay. By 3 pm., they were back for further prayers and study. Frémont confessed that such a program might retard the growth of the mission but considered it essential 'to protect the piety of the missionaries and to shelter them from all spiritual dangers'.¹ In fact, the routine did little harm - regular short visits were sufficient to get to know the people and reduced the risk of boring them, a danger which Thomassin further reduced by announcing himself on a horn. By July 1846 Frémont could report that the mission's influence was increasing. Progress was being made, especially by Thomassin, in learning the local language; those who stole from the mission were forced by their fellows to return the booty; mission medical aid was sought; Verguet had won the confidence of Montrouzier's attacker and of his village; sick children were being presented for baptism, particularly to Thomassin, whose clients frequently recovered.²

Yet, at the same time, the apparent prosperity of the mission was being undermined. From about the middle of 1846 malaria began to torment the Marists.

1

Verguet, Première Mission Catholique, pp.125-6 (translation).

2

Frémont to Colin, 27 July 1846, A.P.M., OSM 208; Verguet to Colin, 13 March 1847, A.P.M., Personal file - Verguet; A. Monfat, Dix années en Mélanésie (Lyons, 1891), p.153.

Mindful of the danger of entering hostile territory, but conscious of a duty to reconcile warring villages, Frémont therefore decided to found a second post in a more salubrious locality. Late in 1846 a house was purchased at Pia, several miles north of Makira Bay, from rivals of the Oné for a dozen small axes. But illness delayed its occupation. When Montrouzier returned from New Caledonia on 11 February 1847 with Collomb, who had become Epalle's successor, and with two other reinforcements, Cyprian Crey and Brother Optat, he found his confrères in a torpor of resignation to the fever. Little ministry was done, but he was consoled to discover that 'the constitutions [of the Society of Mary] were in full force.' However, Collomb, who was not attracted by Epalle's policy of having large mission establishments, in which he felt the members 'would get on each other's nerves,' forthwith ordered that the house at Pia be occupied. Then, a week later, he departed for New Zealand to obtain episcopal consecration. He was consecrated by Bishop Viard at Kororareka on 23 May.

The first stage of Collomb's return to the Solomons brought him to the Marist station at Balade in New Caledonia. The mission here was in a precarious state. A famine and an epidemic were ravaging the north-west coast of the island and the Marists were thought to be responsible. In so far as contact with Europeans frequently meant the introduction into communities throughout the Pacific of diseases to which the islanders had no immunity the charge was probably

not unfounded. But in a world where the forces of nature were held to be subject to human manipulation the Marists were believed to be guilty of malevolent sorcery. They gave further offence, and also brought themselves into contempt, by refusing to distribute their own stocks of food, which had temporarily been augmented by the large supplies which Collomb was taking back to the Solomons. Finally, on 19 July, the hungry islanders attacked the station, looted the storehouse and killed a lay-brother. The survivors fled to the neighbouring station of Puebo, where they were besieged for a month, until being rescued by a French warship, the Brillante, and the Anonyme, a schooner belonging to the Société de l'Océanie.

Collomb had these events clearly in mind when, reaching Makira Bay in the Anonyme on 28 August, he found an even more dismal situation. Since his visit seven months before, four Marists had died. The remaining seven were now in a state of siege: the Oné were unfriendly and the bush villages were threatening to attack. The situation had begun to deteriorate a week after Collomb's departure when two priests and two lay-brothers moved to Pia. The Oné were severely piqued that their rivals should thus obtain access to the iron, fish-hooks, cloth, bottles and pieces of glass dispensed by the missionaries. Conversely, the Pia were delighted, and gratified their guests by their attentiveness at religious instruction. However, when Cyprien Crey died there on 18 March 1847 from fever and dysentery they refused to allow his burial in

their land, for fear of being troubled by his vengeful spirit (ataro).¹

Following Grey's death a new effort was made to find a sanctuary from malaria - a disease which the Marists, in accordance with prevailing European ideas on the subject, attributed not to the anopheles mosquito but to the dank, humid atmosphere of their surroundings. On 20 April two priests, Jean Paget and Claude Jacquet, and Brother Hyacinthe attempted to cross the island from Makira Bay to the north coast village of Wango, of which they had heard good reports. Unfortunately, as the Oné warned, this meant venturing into the territory of their enemies, the Toro, who lived in the mountains. Two hours walk from the coast the Marists were waylaid by the Toro and their allies, forced into a gully (for their blood would have made the track taboo) and killed. A Marist enquirer

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Collomb to Colin, 6 May 1847, A.P.M. OSM 208 (translation); Montrouzier to his brother Henri, 19 July 1847, ibid (translation); Frémont to Favier, 20 December 1847, ibid.; Verguet, Première Mission Catholique, pp.163-4, 189-90, 235-65, 281; Lillian G. Keys, Philip Viard: Bishop of Wellington (Christchurch, 1968), pp.60-1. Verguet left the Solomons in the company of Collomb in February 1847, but after experiencing the destruction of the mission in New Caledonia, returned to France, where he joined the secular clergy and eventually became a canon of the cathedral of Carcassone. He temporarily resumed his connection with Melanesia in the 1880s, when he became a propagandist for the Marquis de Rays's chimerical attempt to colonize New Guinea and the Solomons ('La Nouvelle France') e.g., Leopold Verguet, Grand Archipel des Iles Salomon: son étendue, sa fertilité (Marseilles, 1883).

seventy-five years later was told that perhaps 200 men from thirteen bush villages had participated in the attack, but this was almost certainly an exaggeration, probably in order to distribute the blame.¹

Soon after arriving at Makira Bay the Marists had learned the importance of the enmity between Oné and Toro, and had resolved to steer clear of it. But the Toro were not to be avoided. For the mission site, chosen for its seclusion, lay across their path to the sea. Even while the house was being built there were regular threats of attack from the Toro who, seeing only disadvantage for themselves in a Marist-Oné entente were said to have determined not to let any European settle in Arosi, that is, the north-western third of the island.² The attack did not eventuate, but the missionaries steadily confirmed their initial estrangement from the Toro. Verguet, for instance, prevented a man named Arouteia from stealing an axe by threatening to shoot him. On another occasion Arouteia stole a pig. The following day, when visiting the mission, he was captured and bound, until his

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Raucaz to Paget, 12 November 1922, A.P.M. OMM 000.

2

Verguet to Colin, 5 January 1846, A.P.M. OSM 208;
Verguet to his father, 24 January 1846, ibid.;
Montrouzier to his parents, 30 January 1846, ibid.;
Verguet, Première Mission Catholique, pp.134-5.

kinsmen ransomed him with another pig.¹ Such firm resistance to their frequent attempts at stealing showed the bushmen that they had little to expect from the missionaries and is itself sufficient to explain their treatment of the three en route to Wango.

The attack also had an unfortunate bearing on the Oné's relations with the surviving Marists. Shortly after learning of the Toros' action, the Oné had rejected appeals to join forces with the bushmen in wiping out the missionaries. Instead, hoping for a decisive victory over their enemies, they urged the Marists to lead them against the Toro:

...we will kill the wicked ones, we will
burn their houses, we will cut down their
coconut trees.

But the Marists, who had earlier disappointed their hosts by refusing to avenge the attack on Montrouzier, again refused.² Their action contrasts with that of two beachcombers resident at Makira Bay in 1860 who were to join in several campaigns against the bushmen. Indeed, as a third beachcomber was to note, one of the main reasons the Makirans welcomed Europeans was

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Verguet to Poupinel, 28 July 1849, A.P.M. Personal file-Verguet; Verguet, Première Mission Catholique, pp.118-20. For further examples of offence given to the Toro see Montrouzier to Jacquet, 17 December 1847, A.P.M. OSM 208; Monfat, Dix Années en Mélanésie, pp.223-4.

2

Frémont to Favier, 20 December 1847, A.P.M. OSM 208 (translation).

so that they could 'go to war with them'.¹ Not surprisingly, therefore, when the Marists declined to render this service, the Oné not only refused to help recover the bodies but some were said to have joined with the bushmen in eating them. For the next six weeks, however, the Marists were undisturbed-until the Toro, emboldened by the lack of reprisal, again became aggressive. They fired arrows at the gardener, they made an attempt to burn down the house and were rumoured to have struck an alliance with the Pia. By the end of June 1847, eighteen months after reaching Makira Bay, the Marists were keeping armed watch each night and on the outside walls of the house were hung lanterns which the Toro were persuaded were 'rifles that could see in the night'.

To make matters worse, relations with the Oné continued to deteriorate. Frémont did not help the situation by his punctilious reluctance to give gifts lest he infringe the vow of poverty - by which it was unlawful to dispose of community property. But the Marists' final and most serious offence was one they were powerless to avoid giving. They were charged with sorcery. About the beginning of July Maimara died, while in various contests with their rivals the Oné was beaten. Consequently, they began, says Frémont,

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Bradford to British Consul, 7 September 1861, Mitchell Library, Tahiti, British Consulate Papers, vol.5. In Letters 1857-66, Uncat. Mss. set 24, Item 8.

'to say that our God was turning against them and that we were the cause of their misfortunes'. These, it seems, even included an epidemic, and one young man told Frémont:

...everyone says that...your God will make us all die and they want you to go away when the ship comes.¹

Recognizing the situation as hopeless, Collomb had little hesitation about withdrawing. Indeed, as early as May 1847, two months before the disasters at New Caledonia and San Cristobal, he had formed the intention of restationing his men in pairs on islands in the northern part of the vicariate.² On 3 September, therefore, the Marists embarked aboard the Anonyme, leaving a few fruit trees as the principal monument of twenty months residence at Makira Bay. Yet the affair was not quite finished. In February 1848 the French corvette Ariadne sent a punitive expedition inland to avenge the murdered missionaries. The Oné willingly supplied guides.³

1

Frémont to Favier, 20 December 1847, A.P.M. OSM 208 (translation); Gennade to Francois, 10 December 1847, A.F.M.; Xavier Montrouzier, Notice sur le R.P. Joseph Thomassin, missionnaire apostolique de la Société de Marie, et sur les premières missions de la Mélanésie qui ont été le théâtre de son apostolat (new Caledonia, 1892), pp.31-8.

2

Collomb to Colin, 6 May 1847, A.P.M. OSM 208.

3

Villien to Colin, 14 March 1848, 2 April 1848, *ibid.*; Arche d'Alliance (1849), pp.316-21; John Webster, The Last Cruise of the Wanderer (Sydney, n.d.), p.73; Monfat, Dix années en Mélanésie, p.347. In January 1848 Auguste Marceau visited Makira Bay in the Arche d'Alliance, flagship of the Société de l'Océanie, but did not go ashore.

FROM San Cristobal the Marists proceeded to the island of Murua (or Woodlark), which a Sydney whaler, Captain Grimes, had discovered about 1836. Situated mid-way between the Solomons and New Guinea, Murua had been enthusiastically recommended to Collomb by another whaler, a Captain Cayle, who had been there three times. It was said to have 3000 inhabitants 'of very good character', to be fertile, and to have abundant fresh water.¹ The Marists soon found it possessed other advantages. The bay of Guasopa, in the south-east of the island, where they settled, was less swampy and more exposed to the wind than was Makira. Here fever gradually became less harsh (although Collomb suffered considerably) and by late 1850 it was said to have disappeared.² Moreover, there was no counterpart to the troublesome Toro-Oné division to complicate matters. For shortly before the Marists reached Murua a general peace had been concluded between several warring factions. Still, there were signs - particularly the islanders' embarrassment when asked about a shipwreck, of which traces were to be found here and there - that visitors had not always found the Muruans so amiable.

1

A detailed report of 1851 put the population at 'not over 2,200': Thomassin to his family, 12 October 1851, A.P.M. OSM 208. In 1941 the population was 823: Naval Intelligence Division, Pacific Islands vol.IV, p.293.

2

Montrouzier to Colin, 8 September 1850, A.P.M. OSM 208.

The explanation of this situation gathered by the missionaries agrees substantially with that given by the sole survivor from the shipwreck. In November 1843 the whaling brig Mary was lost at the Laughlan Islands. Most of the crew reached the shore. At first they were welcomed but after nine months their alleged demands on food and women turned the islanders against them. They then fled in a makeshift schooner to Murua, twenty-six miles westwards. Here again, it seems, they were well cared for - until a visiting party of Laughlan Islanders brought word of their misdeeds. The Muruans, too, perhaps, had an account to square with Europeans. In any case, they made common cause with their allies. All but one of the twenty-eight castaways, a young man named Valentine who was later rescued by the whaler Tigress, which had put in to obtain water, were killed; thereby paying a price that might otherwise have been exacted from the missionaries.¹

1

Letter of Trapenard, 8 June 1849, *ibid.*; Montrouzier to Séon, 18 June 1849, *ibid.*; Shipping Gazette [Sydney], 23 April 1855. For the survivor's account see R. Gerard Ward (ed.), American Activities in the Central Pacific, 1790-1870, vol.4, pp.8-9. According to the missionaries, the Muruans maintained that some of their number, while travelling south to the Louisiades had been shot at by whalers for refusing to hand over their women. In retaliation for this, the Mary's crew were alleged to have been attacked as they tried to land on Murua. However, the survivor's account, followed above, maintains that they were not harmed until the Laughlan Islanders arrived. This is the only marked discrepancy between the two sources. It is however a significant one. For instance, if Valentine's account is true, and as the only first-hand one it should be preferred, some doubt is thrown on the authenticity of the incident said to have occurred en route to the Louisiades. Moreover,

(footnote continued on p.43)

As it was, the Marists were welcomed. As the Anonyme anchored at Guasopa on 15 September 1847 it was met by a large number of islanders bringing out provisions, 'and inviting us to go among them'. The islanders' motives were blatantly materialistic:

Each [village] wished us to anchor near it
...solely to have the advantage of trading
with us, and thus obtain pieces of iron,
for which the natives are most avid.

A man named Pako, a self-assured individual who had once visited Sydney and who spoke a few words of English, appointed himself the missionaries' agent. He organized the purchase of land, and the building of a temporary house. Murua seemed full of promise. Montrouzier, dreaming of an indigenous Church that would one day flourish on the island, thought the 'savages' needed only a breath of grace to become responsive to the Gospel. There was to be ample opportunity to test his theory. For, whereas at San Cristobal the Marists had been preoccupied with the problem of survival, this was not the case at Murua. Here they were able to engage in a prolonged and explicit ideological confrontation with the islanders - but their arguments, so confidently presented, made little impression on people no less sure of the worth of their own values and assumptions. The indigenous

(footnote 1 continued from p.42)

the discrepancy also suggests that the Marists, like various other early missionaries in the Pacific may have been unduly prone to believe the worst of European traders and seamen in their relations with the islanders. For a discussion of this tendency in missionary literature see Shineberg, Sandalwood, pp.205ff.

religion, empirically validated in daily life and hallowed by usage, did not yield to the revelation of the one Creator and Savior of all preached by a handful of whitemen who cut hardly more commanding a figure than the late crew of the Mary had done.

Within three months of reaching Murua the Marists were making regular catechetical tours of the villages. Initially, public interest in their work was high but after seven months the novelty had worn off. The children tired of parroting Latin prayers, while the adults were offended at the mis-use of their language and bored by the repetition which imperfect knowledge of it forced on their teachers. Even so, Montrouzier was sure that they 'believe perfectly all that we tell them'. He impatiently attributed their lack of progress towards obvious Truth to wilful 'levity and the grossness of their ideas'. For instance, applying the test of practical relevance to the doctrine of the need to honour God the Creator and 'Prime-mover', on which the Marists grounded their catechetical approach, the islanders would ask if Jehovah was rich in iron and axes:

When we tell them 'all the chiefs of men, all the riches of the earth are nothing compared with Jehavah!', 'Oh!', they say, 'our stomachs are sick! Write to him, asking him to come to Murua for us to see him, and tell him to bring axes and iron'.

One man asked to 'leave by the next ship for Heaven to see how things worked there'.¹ After sixteen months,

¹ Montrouzier to his parents, 25 April 1848, A.P.M. OSM 208 (translation). For an example of the Marists' approach to teaching religion see Verguet, Première Mission Catholique, pp.159-60.

when his knowledge of their language was considerably improved, Montrouzier was still complaining of the islanders' frivolous approach to serious things:

We demonstrate the error of belief in munukuans [malevolent spirits]. They reply, 'But if there are no munukuans will we die?' And if you tell them it is because of the sin of Adam they shake their heads and exclaim 'I have never eaten the forbidden fruit myself, why am I sick?' Then, very proud of their objection, they laugh, make noise, and listen to nothing more. Formerly we used simply to deny the existence of these evil beings but, far from giving in, they impudently assured us that they had seen them.¹

Even the usually sympathetic Thomassin failed to appreciate that what was clear to him need not be clear to the Muruans; or that for the Muruans religion could be effectively treated as an intellectual exercise. He wrote:

To reason with our unhappy pagans is not to demonstrate the truth of our holy religion. They will frankly admit 'We are ignorant, we are wrong', but will not go any further. They will reply 'We act like that at Murua and our ancestors did the same'. They will say 'We live like this and we are content. If we abandon our prayers the universe will collapse, famine, plague and the lerous [spirits related to the munukuans] would not leave us any rest'. If you reason with them, they will laugh in your face.²

1

Montrouzier to Séon, 18 June 1849, *ibid.* (translation).

2

Thomassin to his family, 12 October 1851, *ibid.* (translation).

Meanwhile, dissatisfaction with the lack of progress at Murua had encouraged Collomb to commence a new post. In May 1848, after eight months on the island, he departed with three confrères aboard the Anonyme in search of more deserving souls. Montrouzier was left in charge at Murua. After visiting the south coast of New Britain, Collomb's party settled in a small bay on the north coast of Umboi (or Rooke), an island recommended by its strategic position in the straits between New Britain and New Guinea. Besides, the Anonyme had insufficient supplies for further exploration, and the healthy appearance of the people was thought to suggest that the island was free from malaria. Again the Marists were to be frustrated. The inhabitants of the bay, reserved at first, were reassured by a few gifts, but thereafter they disappointed the Marists with their sustained indifference to Christianity, although it is doubtful to what extent they understood what was said to them. Having acquired a smattering of the local language, Frémont adopted the same forthright, presumptuous catechetical style as used at Murua:

I tried to teach the natives the name of Jehovah. I taught them that it was he who was the great chief of Heaven and earth, that it was he who made and maintained everything. I spoke to them of Heaven, of Hell, of the obligation to pray, to be baptized etc. But, alas, this first seed fell on very wild ground...¹

1

Frémont to Colin, 24 June 1849, A.P.M. OSM 208. (translation).

In any case, the Marists were a poor advertisement for the power of their Jehovah. For despite their first impressions of the island, they were soon suffering terribly from malaria. Collomb died on 16 July and four months later he was followed by Gregoire Villien. And when Montrouzier visited Umboi in May 1849, he found the two survivors, Frémont and Brother Optat, sick, dispirited and ostracized. Consequently, he evacuated them to Murua where, two more priests having arrived in April, the number of Marists was brought to eight.

Meanwhile the situation at Murua had deteriorated even further. Here, lack of progress in the apostolate had led to greater emphasis on a monastic type of life which, under Montrouzier's superiorship, had exacerbated personal antagonisms among the Marists and alienated the Muruans. Among the former, Frémont protested only in his correspondence: Montrouzier's zeal, untempered by humanity, to observe the fullness of the Rule made him so unreasonable about matters of trifling importance that he appeared 'more full of the letter of the law than its spirit'. Others protested more openly. In June 1849 a lay brother, Aristide, ended a standing quarrel with the superior by returning to Sydney, while two priests, Thomassin and Piere Trapenard, seceded to establish a new mission post on the north coast of the island. This attempt lasted fourteen months, until the difficulty of buying food, on account of a famine, forced them to return to Gausopa.¹ Here, the

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Rocher to Colin, 2 November 1848, A.P.M. OP 458; Montrouzier to Colin, 14 May 1849, A.P.M. OSM 208; Frémont to Colin, 24 June 1849, ibid. (translation).

active ministry was now in abeyance 'for fear of further disgusting the savages', but Montrouzier rejoiced that the Rule was 'observed almost as at Lyons'. In fact, it had a Thebaid flavour. For instance, as an exercise in 'mortification', he once refused his subjects any food except bananas for ten days. And a penance of solitary confinement, for breach of the vow of obedience, was imposed on Eugene Ducrettet, a priest who protested. The most interesting reaction to the regime was that of Brother Optat who, becoming 'enamoured of some young girls,' was tempted to become a beachcomber. A 'great pallisade built around the house to keep the women away' failed to prevent 'improper familiarities...in the sight of all', and the affair only came to an end when Optat, with Ducrettet, departed for Sydney in September 1850.¹ Of eighteen Marists who had come to the vicariate of Melanesia since 1845, only five remained.

Montrouzier's dealings with the Muruans were similarly unendearing. Indeed, observing that 'they wish...that we remain among them [only] so as to trade with the ships which come to visit us' and certain that continued obstinacy was increasing their culpability at

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Frémont to Colin, 7 September 1850, *ibid.*; Montrouzier to his brother Henri, 8 September 1850, *ibid.* (translation); Ducrettet to Colin, 14 October 1850, *ibid.* The missionaries Montrouzier esteemed were 'formed men, who know how to occupy themselves in their room and do not regard it as time lost to establish houses of the Society in Oceania': Montrouzier to Colin, 8 September 1850, *ibid.* (translation).

turning from the Light, he considered that they did not deserve any effort to win their affection by mundane means. Thus, he was able to discourse on the folly of Muruan economics, insensitive to the fact that a promising opportunity for ingratiating the mission with the islanders was being allowed to slip by. In August 1850 he wrote that materially the mission lacked for nothing. Its immense garden yielded an abundance of melons, bananas, beans, taro and yams; the brothers frequently shot birds; and ample provisions were sent from Sydney. In contrast, the islanders were starving. To Thomassin they 'seemed no more than walking skeletons, searching all day for a few shellfish and wild herbs to eat in the evening'; yet Montrouzier, he reports, chose never to give a single marrow, saying that 'if you gave once, the natives would become too importunate'. 'As if', adds Thomassin, 'importunity dispensed from the duty of giving alms!'

However, what to a Christian might be alms-giving was the way to acquire rank, leadership and respect in Melanesia. Parsimony was an admission of unworthiness. Rather than capitulate to such people, the Muruans stiffened their resistance, assuming an air of patriotic defiance and contempt. If they caught a fish ~~at~~^{or} scavenged more successfully than usual, they would parade past the mission 'tossing their heads and saying with mock laughter "so the prayer of Murua is useless!"'

Of the cause of the famine, Montrouzier wrote, 'I believe it is a chastisement from God. It is also the result of a bad system'; namely, the Muruans'

fidelity to customary trading obligations. In his eyes they foolishly gave hospitality to their partners in the trading cycle and then exchanged large quantities of food for ceremonial items, such as pigs' teeth and bones of whale and cassowary. Such a judgement ignores several facts, one of which was, that Muruan commerce was not simply a matter of calculated material advantage. Trading obligations were particularly to be honoured through being bound up with the Kula system of gift exchanges. In this system was symbolized the reciprocity which was the highest social value of the inhabitants of the small islands east of New Guinea; it enjoined on its participants 'generosity in giving and honour in meeting debts' and set 'the tone of commercial morality'.¹ It was not something the Muruans could casually opt out of. The established trading pattern was, moreover, strengthened by another imperative at least as weighty as the ritual one. In serving the vital needs of the visitors it put them in a position of dependence on the Muruans, who were renowned for producing food surpluses. For the Muruans to withhold food would not only rupture valued alliance but, above all, would involve an intolerable loss of prestige. It would be tantamount to the admission that their mana was insufficient to sustain the status they claimed on account of their gardening prowess.

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Bronislaw Malinowski, Argonauts of the Western Pacific (London, 1922), passim; J.P. Singh Uberoi, Politics of the Kula Ring (London, 1962), pp.153, 159.

This was not a situation the Muruans would often have had to face, although climatic conditions might possibly have caused crop failures on other occasions. In the present instance, however, it arose from 'a kind of influenza' which ravaged the island about the middle of 1848. As a result the gardens were neglected and the harvest was poor. In spite of this the visitors were treated as usual - 'the taros were very small [and so] it was necessary to double them'.¹ Thus began a recurring pattern of epidemic, famine and population decline. It did not occur to Montrouzier that the missionaries could have been responsible for precipitating the economic imbalance - by introducing diseases to which the Muruans had no immunity.

By late 1850 the famine had passed. Muruan morale was buoyant. The missionaries found themselves more than ever despised as wretches whose country, it was said, must have been as worthless as themselves, or they would not have left it, and whose words, accordingly, were hardly to be taken seriously. This logic was still current in June 1851, when the Marists, receiving instructions to elect a prefect apostolic, unanimously 'dropped' Montrouzier and chose Jean Frémont.

1

Montrouzier to his brother Gabriel, 18 August 1850, A.P.M. Personal file - Montrouzier; Montrouzier to his brother Henri, 8 September 1850, *ibid.* (translation); Thomassin to Colin, 6 January 1854, A.P.M. OSM 208 (translation).

Occasion was also provided, by the presence of a ship, for Frémont politely to get rid of Montrouzier while, at the same time, making a new attempt to break the deadlock with the Muruans. Six youths were persuaded to embark for Sydney where, it was hoped, the marvels they saw would deflate their infatuation with their island and inspire admiration and respect for European ways - including religion.¹ Montrouzier was appointed their guide. Indeed, he was the obvious choice. Frémont remarked that his absence, 'will not prejudice the mission', while Trapenard had refused to stay any longer with him.²

Quite aware of their feelings, Montrouzier did not again return to Murua. Instead, he remained for nearly eighteen months in Sydney, where he wrote his zoological study, Essai sur la faune de l'Île de Woodlark ou Moiou (Lyons, 1857), which was probably the first book published by a long-term resident of the New Guinea area. Then, after investigating the mysterious - and still unsolved - disappearance of three Marists who had attempted to found a mission on

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Montrouzier to his parents, 25 July 1851, A.P.M. Personal file - Montrouzier; Montrouzier to Colin, June 1852, A.P.M. OSM 208. Interestingly similar to the Muruans' explanation for the missionaries' presence is that of certain San Cristobal people who asked if they had been chased from their homeland: Frémont to Colin, 24 July 1846, *ibid.*

2

Trapenard to Colin, 24 June 1851, *ibid.*; Frémont to Colin, 16 October 1851, *ibid.* (translation).

the island of Tikopia, he resumed his missionary career in New Caledonia, to where the Marists had returned in 1851.¹

Of the 'tourists' accompanying Montrouzier to Sydney in 1851, one of the six Muruans deserted at the Laughlan Islands, where, however, three other youths joined the party. As expected, all were soon awed - by 'moving houses' (carriages), by numerous large ships (clear proof that the white man had more than one vessel), and especially by the shops of ironmongers and butchers (the latter proving that it was not lack of food in the white man's country that had driven the missionaries to Murua). Indeed, the white man was truly vindicated. And when the travellers returned to Murua after two weeks (7-23 August) of this spectacle their tales inspired much enthusiasm for 'building Sydney at Murua'. By mid-1852 the metropolis had, it was said, become 'not a town but an entire world'. Moreover, in an alliance that has since become a familiar element in many Melanesian 'cargo' movements, the Muruan's material aspirations were associated with fervent esteem for the mission, through which, it was probably thought, a European level of affluence was to be attained. Catechism classes were suddenly well attended. 'A conversion movement was

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Hugh M. Laracy, 'The First Mission to Tikopia', The Journal of Pacific History, vol.4 (1969), pp.105-9; and 'Xavier Montrouzier'.

stirring.' Five years of frustration, it seemed to the Marists, were being rewarded.¹

Meanwhile, Colin, reluctant to continue staffing a mission where his men suffered so fruitlessly had, since early 1851, been asking Propaganda to relieve the Society of Mary of responsibility for the vicariates of Melanesia and Micronesia. Consequently, they were handed over to the newly founded Missioni Estere di Milano (Milan Foreign Mission Society), which was seeking work in the Pacific. Colin did, however, authorize Frémont and his companions to stay in Melanesia if their work was succeeding.² Thus, when seven Italians, five priests and two brothers, reached Murua on 8 October 1852 three of the four Marists elected to remain with them. Indeed, so certain did it seem that the Muruan harvest was about to ripen that, with ten missionaries on hand, it was deemed

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Thomassin to his family, 12 October 1851, A.P.M. OSM 208 (translation); Frémont to Colin, 16 October 1851, 25 June 1852, *ibid.*; Montrouzier to Colin, June 1852, *ibid.*; Rocher to Colin, 23 August 1852, A.P.M. OP 458 (translation). The connection between religion and millenarian 'cargo' movements is discussed below pp. 179 ff.

2

Colin to the missionaries at Murua, 23 June 1851, A.P.M. *Epistolae Variae*; Colin to Marinoni, 27 September 1851, Archives P.I.M.E., vol.28; Colin to Frémont, 19 January 1852, A.P.M. 410 *Sancta Sedes*; Favre to Franchi, 12 October 1875, A.P.M., *Epistolae Variae*. Founded in 1850, the Missioni Estere di Milano was renamed Pontificio Istituto Missioni Estere (P.I.M.E.) in 1926.

opportune to resume the Umboi-based assault of New Guinea.¹ Frémont returned to Umboi with four Italians including Paolo Reina, the new prefect apostolic. The others stayed at Murua with Thomassin and Brother Gennade.

Within a year, however, the missionaries' high hopes were dashed. Again Murua was smitten with a series of catastrophes. For the first six months of 1853 there was famine. One observer saw:

...a starving family eat a small taro one evening, snatching it from each other's mouth and crying, and dying from hunger.

Yet offers of mission help were rejected, even when the islanders, weakened by hunger were stuck by a:

...disease that in less than three months swept across the island wiping out a quarter of the population. A frightful illness which in a matter of three days could kill two, three and even six members of one family. It attacked the strongest. Among others, it affected eleven members of the chief's family ...seven villages were left completely deserted.

These calamities were enough to revive the resentments of 1849-50, although the missionaries widened the breach by ascribing the Muruans' misfortunes to divine displeasure of their tardiness in becoming Christians.

1

Colin had stressed the crucial strategic importance of the Umboi mission to the Italians before they left Europe: Colin to Frasoni, 21 March 1852, A.M.P. Epistolae Variae.

This was an argument that could easily back-fire. Pushed to extremes, it offered grounds as valid for destroying the agents of the tormenting deity as for capitulating to them - as, for instance, the Presbyterian missionaries, G.N. Gordon and his wife, found to their cost in the New Hebrides in 1861. But the Muruans, not wishing to lose a resident source of iron, restricted their protest to the plea 'tell your Jehovah to leave us in peace....You have your religion, we have ours'. Perhaps they were also restrained by the suspicion that Jehovah's sorcery was not entirely to blame for, as deaths multiplied, old rivalries were reactivated:

One village storms another. A third and a fourth take revenge on the first and second and by now there are already some twenty victims.¹

That was November 1853. The same month the three Marists withdrew, to join their fellows in New Caledonia.

During 1854 peace returned to Murua, but the fragile rapprochement between the islanders and the missionaries had been irrevocably destroyed. Desperate to avoid occasions of dispute, the Italians adopted a policy of complete isolation and ceased making gifts of iron, but only succeeded in worsening their situation. For the Muruans, having nothing more to lose, began to talk of attacking the mission. Meanwhile, the mission

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Salerio to Marinoni, 12 November 1853, Archives P.I.M.E., vol.28, (translated by the Library Translation Unit, A.N.U.). For the Gordon incident, see Shineberg, Sandalwood, pp.210-11.

on Umboi was faring no better than the attempt five years before. The people were interested only in iron and the missionaries - obviously incompetent to deal with the spirits that were said to be afflicting them - were constantly racked by fever. In January 1855 a priest, Giovanni Mazzuconi, left for Sydney to recuperate and in March Brother Giuseppe Corti died. In May the survivors returned to Murua.

Seven weeks later, however, the Italians, having decided their situation was hopeless, abandoned Murua also, 'not leaving behind a single heart that was truly regretful'.¹ The truth of this comment was demonstrated some months afterwards. On August 18, five days before his confrères reached Sydney, the recovered Mazzuconi departed for Murua aboard the Gazelle. Near Guasopa the vessel ran on a reef and the islanders, undesirous of further European company, looted the vessel and killed all aboard, as Timoleone Raimondi, Mazzuconi's former confrère, learned when he visited Murua in May 1856 to investigate the disappearance of the Gazelle.²

Of the surviving Italians, one (Carlo Salerio) returned to Italy in 1856 and another (Angelo Ambrosoli) remained in Sydney until his death in

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Salerio to Marinoni, 24 September 1855, Archives P.I.M.E., vol.28 (translated by the Library Translation Unit, A.N.U.).

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S.M.H., 14 June 1856. For detailed accounts of the Italians' essay into Melanesia see the works of Tragella and Suigo cited in bibliography.

1891.¹ The three others, however, left Sydney for Manila in August 1856, instructed by Propaganda to resume their attack on the vicariates of Melanesia and Micronesia from the east. In this they were to be assisted by Carlo Cuarteron, a Spanish priest charged with opening a mission in Borneo. But Cuarteron, a former sea captain ~~and~~ who had a ship at his disposal, after recommending Dorei Bay in the Vogelkop of western New Guinea as the best place for them to re-commence, became immovably immersed in his own work. The Italians stayed a year with him at Labuan in North Bornea before, in 1858, they retreated to Hong Kong where they hoped to find captains who were more helpful. As it happened, however, they became so absorbed in missionary work in Hong Kong - where Raimondi was to become the first vicar apostolic in 1874 - that the task in Melanesia and Micronesia was allowed to lapse.²

The ten years of Catholic activity in the vicariate of Melanesia could be cited as a cautionary tale against faulty technique and recklessness. Relying for success on their own spiritual life the missionaries made little effort to accomodate

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Anon., 'Obituary of Ambrosoli', Illustrated Biographical Sketches, Memoirs, etc. (Sydney, 1892), pp.28-31.

2

Rocher to Favre, 7 August 1856, A.P.M. OP 458; Ralph M. Wiltgen, 'A Difficult Mission', The Word in the World, 1969 (Techny, n.d.), pp.15-6.

themselves to the habits of life or thought of those whose souls they sought. They were peeved when people did not respond quickly and they knowingly disregarded indigenous political boundaries. Of one of the victims of the Toro, the prudent Verguet recalled, 'Father Paget had incomparable zeal but, like Bishop Epalle, he did not see the thousandth part of danger'.¹ Such risk-taking was self-defeating. Eventual withdrawal after a toll of eight lives had been taken, five of them in acts of violence, was harsh proof that the blood of martyrs could not be relied upon to be the seed of Christians. Yet it may be doubted whether anything the missionaries could have done would have overcome the dangers inherent in their environment. They had no defence against the malaria of San Cristobal and Umboi. Again, at Murua, even if Montrouzier had been less offensive, no amount of technique could have prevented introduced disease from raising a storm which the missionaries, far from the protection of their fellow Europeans, were in a poor position to ride out.

¹

Verguet to Poupinel, 18 June 1848, A.P.M.
Personal file - Verguet (translation).

CHAPTER III

MISSIONARY EXPANSION, 1898 - 1942

PART 1: The Setting

WHEN Catholic missionaries, again Marists, returned to the Solomon Islands in 1898, it was as part of a well established and steadily growing movement of European contact with the group. As a result their security was less problematical than half a century before and points of contact with the islanders had multiplied. The Solomons were politically divided between the empires of Britain and Germany, the growth of trade ensured regular shipping contact with Australia and European settlement had begun. Between 1893 and 1896 the number of resident traders rose from a dozen to about fifty, centred mainly on the north-east coast of Guadalcanal, New Georgia and in the Shortland Islands.¹ Among the islanders, many of whom were already Christian, there was considerable knowledge of Pidgin English, Fijian and Samoan. There was also a widespread addiction to tobacco, which fostered economic dependence on Europeans, and there was, moreover, an inhibiting and

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Woodford to C.O., 7 September 1893, C.O. 225/44;
 Thurston to C.O., 8 December 1896, C.O. 225/50;
 H.B. Guppy, The Solomon Islands and their Natives
 (London, 1887), passim; and The Solomon Islands and
their Geology (London, 1887), passim.

well-verified awareness that attacks on Europeans would meet with harsh reprisals. Even malaria was somewhat less severe for the returning Marists, unlike their predecessors, were abundantly supplied with quinine. Favoured by the changed conditions, they were able to win effective footholds in various parts of the group. Even so, the receptiveness of the islanders was not to be taken for granted, and the competing interests of other Europeans had frequently to be contended with.

Missionary activity in the Solomon Islands had resumed some years after the Marist withdrawal in 1847. In 1856 the Southern Cross had brought the Solomons within the ambit of the Melanesian Mission which George Augustus Selwyn, the Anglican bishop of New Zealand, had founded in 1849. Between 1856 and 1860 this vessel carried fifty youths from San Cristobal, Guadalcanal, Ulawa and Malaita to Auckland to be instructed in the lotu, as Christianity is widely known in the Pacific. This method of operating - moving young men from their home islands for training in a central school, which was transferred in 1866 from Auckland to Norfolk Island - long remained characteristic of the Melanesian Mission. It was, however, a leisurely method, for relatively few islanders were directly contacted, and the returned pupils, deprived for long periods of the guidance and support of their missionaries, easily reverted to heathenism. After nearly half a century of evangelism Anglican influence was slight except on Gela and Ysabel.

The first permanently manned Anglican post was founded at Siota, on Gela, only in 1895.¹

Meanwhile, the dominant European impact on the Solomons was being exerted through the labour trade in which, from the late 1860s, the islanders were recruited for work on plantations in Queensland, Fiji and Samoa. As experience of the trade developed, the instinct for adventure, the desire to escape punishment and, above all, the demand for European goods for themselves and their relatives were motives that led young men to recruit with enthusiasm. Full statistics of the trade are not available, but between 1871 and 1904 about 14,000 Solomon Islanders were taken to Queensland. The Fiji trade, which drew most of its recruits from the New Hebrides and which continued until 1911, took about eighty per year from the Solomons between 1900 and 1905.² Besides its economic effect (stimulating the indigenous appetite for axes, knives, cloth, muskets and tobacco by indulging it) the labour trade had profound religious and political effects. By demonstrating the white man's affluence it prepared the way for the adoption of Christianity, as will be discussed in the following chapter, while by bringing the islanders to the notice of other religious bodies

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For the Melanesian Mission see D.L. Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions in the Solomon Islands, 1849-1942' (Ph.D. thesis, A.N.U. 1966), Chapters II-V.

2

Woodford to C.O., 9 August 1905, C.O. 225/71; O.W. Parnaby, Britain and the Labour Trade in the Southwest Pacific (Durham, 1964), p.206.

it contributed to the breaking of the Anglican monopoly in the Solomons. Thus, contact with the labourers in Fiji fired both Marist and Methodist interest in the group. The Methodists founded a mission in New Georgia in 1902. Meanwhile, many of the Solomon Islands recruits who went to Queensland, most of whom were from Malaita, were converted to Christianity in the evangelical Protestant framework of the Queensland Kanaka Mission. From the Q.K.M. sprang the South Sea Evangelical Mission, which was founded in 1907 to follow the returned labourers back to the islands, consolidating and extending in the Solomons the work begun in Australia.¹

In its political dimension, the increase of European activity in the Solomons on account of the labour trade contributed to the wider concern of the British government to oversee the relations between British subjects and Pacific Islanders. For this purpose the Western Pacific High Commission was set up in 1877, with the Governor of Fiji doubling as High Commissioner. The flag was beginning to follow trade. At first it flew only from the mast-heads of men-of-war which paid periodic visits to the group partly to protect the islanders from Europeans, but, more conspicuously, to take reprisals for attacks on

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For the S.S.E.M., and Methodist missions see Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions', Chapters VI-VII.

Europeans. Despite this activity, Britain was resolved not to go further and to assume territorial responsibility for the group. Indeed, she would have preferred to see her subjects - and those of other nationalities over whom she could exert no jurisdiction - avoid it altogether. Her hand was, however, forced by political considerations.

In 1884 Germany, turning to an active, mercantilist colonial policy (complementing the return to protectionism at home) laid claim to north-east New Guinea and the Bismarck Archipelago, where German traders had been active since the 1870s.¹ This claim, by arousing Australian fear of having foreign neighbours, compelled Britain to shelter her protégé. Consequently, in 1886, following a similar operation in New Guinea in 1884, the Solomons were divided, north from south, into German and British spheres of influence, respectively. These spheres hardened into protectorates in 1893 when Britain formally annexed the southern part of the group in order to forestall a possible French annexation. The German share of the Solomons extended as far south as Ysabel until 1899, when the boundary was redrawn south of Bougainville, giving Ysabel, Choiseul and the Shortlands to Britain in return for her disavowal

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J.A. Moses, 'The German Empire in Melanesia, 1884-1914: a German self-analysis', in Second Waigani Seminar, The History of Melanesia (Canberra, 1969), pp.45ff.

of interest in Samoa, which then became a German possession.¹

As Britain had feared (but as Germany, who planned to promote large scale settlement in Melanesia, intended) annexation led to the responsibility of administration. In 1896 a Resident Commissioner, Charles M. Woodford, settled at Tulagi, near Gela in the British Solomons; while August Doellinger was appointed Stationsleiter at Kieta in the German Solomons in 1905. Zealously each - armed with a troop of police - continued the work of the warships, punishing assaults on Europeans and suppressing violence among the indigenes: 'the most fundamental action of Colonial rule' and the prerequisite for economic development.² Thus, by 1913 about 5000 labourers were employed on plantations in the British Solomons where, in 1915, the non-indigenous population exceeded 600, twenty-seven of them Marists. Development was slower on Buka and Bougainville, which remained largely recruiting grounds for enterprises elsewhere in German New Guinea, particularly in New Britain. By

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On the changing constitutional status of the Solomons in the nineteenth century see Scarr, Fragments of Empire, pp.133-5, 254-5. See also Paul W. van der Veur, Search for New Guinea's Boundaries (Canberra, 1966), pp.19-20.

2

F.J. West, 'The Historical Background', in E.K. Fisk (ed.), New Guinea on the Threshold (Canberra, 1966), p.18.

1915 Buka and Bougainville counted only forty-five Europeans, twenty-three of them Marist missionaries.¹

The suggestion that the Marists might return to the Solomons is first recorded in 1875, implied in a reminder from Propaganda that the vicariates of Melanesia and Micronesia were still without Catholic missionaries.² But the Marists were too busy elsewhere in the Pacific to take the hint. So, following the Marquis de Rays's abortive colonizing expedition to New Ireland, which again stirred Propaganda's interest, the vicariates were transferred to the Missionnaires du Sacré Coeur d'Issoudun, the first party of whom began work near Rabaul in 1882. The M.S.Cs were, however, too few to extend their operations quickly to the Solomons. In 1891, therefore, Propaganda suggested that the Marists assist them. The Marists demurred, for being subject to divided authority was not to their taste. Instead, on the advice of Julian Vidal, the Marist bishop of Fiji, they proposed to return to the Solomons on condition that they had sole jurisdiction for the mission which was, moreover, to include the whole group.³ This was not an haphazard reply. For

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Woodford to C.O., 16 May 1913, C.O. 225/119; B.S.I.P., Annual Report, 1914; *ibid.*, 1915; Pethebridge to Minister of Defence, 27 April 1915, Australian War Memorial Archives.

2

Favre to Franchi, 12 October 1875, A.P.M. Epistolae Variiae Generalium Societatis Mariae.

3

Persico to Nicolet, 26 August 1891, A.P.M. 410 Sancta Sedes, Correspondence Martin-Simeoni; Nicolet to Persico, 30 November, 29 December 1891, *ibid.*; André Dupeyrat, Papouasie (Paris, 1935), pp.43, 50-3. The progressive subdivision of the original vicariate of Melanesia (except for present-day West Irian) is illustrated by
(footnote continued on p.67)

some time Vidal had himself contemplated resuming the attack on the Solomons 'for fear of seeing the Protestants go first to plough their furrow in the soil soaked with the blood of Marist martyrs'. He was encouraged in this scheme by the urging of Cardinal Moran of Sydney and by the possibility of following up contacts made with Solomon Islands labourers in Fiji. The Marists had begun work in 1885 among 'these poor people placed here on the last rung of the social ladder and scorned by the Fijians themselves!' And by the end of 1891 almost 600 labourers had been baptized, about 120 of them from the Solomons and the others from the New Hebrides.¹

Despite the reluctance of the M.S.C.s to give up the German part of the Solomons, which the Marists, mindful of the link between Ysabel and Epalle, demanded, Propaganda favoured the Marist proposals. But it delayed acting until it had assuaged German nationalist sensitivities, which had already been offended by the predominance of Frenchmen among the

(footnote 3 continued from p.66)
means of sketch maps in Missions des Iles, No.96 (1959), pp.190-5. West Irian became a separate prefecture apostolic in 1902.

1

Vidal to Simeoni, 15 December 1891, A.P.M. 410 Sancta Sedes, Lettres Diverses (translation); Martin to Ledochowsky, 25 May 1895, A.P.M. OSM 208. For Marist relations with the labourers in Fiji see letter of Breheret, 6 November 1885, A.P.M. OF 330 (translation); 'Rapport 1891', *ibid*; 'Nos Missions en 1893', A.M.O. vol.IX. For a discussion of Moran's missionary views see Patrick O'Farrell, The Catholic Church in Australia (Sydney, 1968), pp.174-5. The only labourers the Marists systematically followed back to their home island were seventy men from Pentecoste in the New Hebrides: Rougier to Regis, June 1898, A.M.O., vol.x.

M.S.C.s in New Britain. Accordingly, members of the Society of the Divine Word (S.V.D.), a German order, were appointed to begin work on the north coast of the New Guinea mainland in 1896.¹ Finally, in deference to the political situation in the Solomons, two prefectures apostolic were erected there - that of the British Solomons in 1897, to be founded from Fiji and, in 1898, that of the German Solomons, to be founded from Samoa. The ecclesiastical boundary was, however, not altered so as to bring it into line with the redrawn political one of 1899. Rather, to avoid anomalies of nomenclature, the names of the prefectures were changed in 1904 - to that of the North Solomons and that of the South Solomons, respectively.

The pattern of diffusion of Catholic influence in each of these areas varied in detail according to local circumstances - and each will be described separately in the present chapter. Nevertheless, a basic similarity is to be observed. In each, diffusion was marked by the growth of a network of mission stations, each station being a complex of institutions built up around a resident priest. The striking emphasis placed on the construction and maintenance of stations by the Marists was not just a matter of convenience, but was reflective of Catholic doctrine. It stemmed from the fact that, while priests are necessary for the functioning of the sacramental system on which Catholic religious life is based, the rigid, European-normed, standards of discipline and education

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Wiltgen, 'A Difficult Mission', pp.21-4.

required for priesthood prevented ready delegation of the office of priest to people as culturally different from the Marists as were the Solomon Islanders. Therefore, effective evangelization and initiation of converts into the Catholic religion required numerous stations, each with the facilities for keeping a large number of people in sustained proximity to the priest. The developed mission station would consist of a church flanked by a presbytery and a convent (denoting "the Fathers' side" and "the Sisters' side") with each presiding over a cluster of classrooms and dormitories for boys and girls, respectively. There would also be a dispensary, a 'feast day village' to house visitors to the station and a plantation to provide funds for running the establishment. At the time of its destruction by war in 1942, the station at Visale on Guadalcanal was said to be the largest group of buildings in the Solomons. In addition to those listed above it possessed a bishop's house, a printery, and a novitiate for indigenous nuns.¹

Concomitant with, and to a notable extent shaping, the expansion of Marist activity through the Solomon Islands was rivalry with the Protestant missions. For the desire to forestall heterodoxy, which had played a part in bringing the Marists to the Solomons in 1845 as well as in 1898, also contained an imperative to righteous and active opposition. And at times this was

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B.S.I.P., Report of the Department of Education for the three years ending 31st December 1960, p.4.

no less pressing than the missionary's classic obligation of converting the heathen. As one authority speaking for an age less ecumenical than the present asserted in 1921:

...the Catholic Church alone has the mission of leading all men along the road of salvation. Neither Protestant missionaries nor those sent by other dissenting and separated churches have any authority to preach and evangelise. Christ gave no other mission than that which He entrusted to the Catholic Church.¹

PART II: The South Solomons

BISHOP Vidal, with the first party of returning Marists, reached Tulagi, the 'capital' of the British Solomons on 21 May 1898 aboard the Titus, the regular steamer from Sydney. With him were three priests, eight Fijian assistants and a Malaita labourer named Venasio, who had become a lay-brother in Fiji. His first problem was to establish a base. After considering Woodford's advice that Malaita was too dangerous for settlement and that land purchases would be disallowed in localities 'where there is already a mission in effective operation' (which ruled out Ysabel) and after visiting New Georgia, Vidal decided to settle on an island off the north-west coast of Guadalcanal. Here, where there were already four trading stations, he purchased the uninhabited

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Joseph F. McGlinchey (ed.), The Conversion of the Pagan World (Boston, 1921), p.10.

islet of Rua Sura from Samuel Keating, a trader, for £100.¹ He returned to Fiji in August and, after further supervisory visits in 1899 and 1901, was succeeded as Prefect Apostolic of the South Solomons in 1903 by Jean Ephrem Bertreux, formerly, director of the catechist school in Fiji.

Unlike the traders, who welcomed the Marists, the people of the coast opposite Rua Sura were antagonistic. They announced plainly that they had no wish to be interfered with. To confirm the point the villages of Rere and Susu refused to send children to school at Rua Sura, and Susu even refused to sell yams to the mission. The reasons for this resistance were complex and arose from both traditional and recent factors in the local situation. As for the refusal to patronize the school, recent deaths at the Anglican school at Siota had brought the word 'school' into local disrepute, while Rua Sura, having been used at one time for burials, was itself regarded by the people as an unsafe place for such an institution.² But the main

1

Woodford to Vidal, 22 December 1897, A.P.M. OSM 800; Bouillon to Colin, 17 July 1898, A.P.M. OSM 208; Guitet to Regis, 14 August 1898, ibid; Raucaz, Savage South Solomons, pp.81-4.

2

Bouillon to Duclos, 5 June 1898, A.P.M. OSM 208; Rouillac to Regis, 11 June 1898, ibid; Guitet to his parents, 22 June 1898, ibid.; Bertreux to Duclos, 17 August 1905, A.P.M. OSM 418. Eleven pupils died of dysentery at Siota in 1897: C.E. Fox, Lord of the Southern Isles (London, 1958), p.225.

source of disaffection was the Marists' claim to ownership of Rua Sura, which the islanders disputed. Keating, who bought the island from Wylia, the chief of Susu, about 1894, had never lived on it and the islanders had no reason to think that they had alienated the land, let alone the right to gather coconuts there or to use it as a fishing base. Now, however, the situation was changed. A pre-fabricated house was erected there by the Marists, work was begun on clearing the bush and - adding insult to injury - a fishing party of about thirty people was told officiously by the Fijians that in future it would be necessary to ask permission before landing on Rua Sura.¹ Furthermore, increasing the islanders' resentment and sense of loss was a mood of frustration and helplessness. For they were still smarting from the punitive expedition which Woodford had led into the district in September 1897 after a would-be planter had been killed in another land dispute.² Finally, as happened elsewhere in the group also, resistance was stiffened by the fact that the presence of the traders, by ensuring a ready supply of

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Smith to Collet, 1 January 1895, W.P.H.C. Inward Correspondence, General, No.96 of 1895; Guitet to Regis, 14 August 1898, A.P.M. OSM 208.

2

Woodford to O'Brien, 25 September 1897, enclosed in O'Brien to C.O., 12 November 1897, C.O. 225/52; Raucaz, Savage South Solomons, pp.180-2.

trade goods, freed the villagers of any economic necessity to come to terms with the missionaries.¹

Rebuffed by their immediate neighbours, the Marists directed their apostolate elsewhere. Their isolation on Rua Sura was first broken in August 1898 by the trader Lars Svensen, who recruited twelve labourers for them from Tangarare on the west coast of Guadalcanal, and then by the journeys of Pierre Rouillac, the outstanding figure among the founding Marists. The son of a Breton fisherman, a superb seaman and a querulous individualist - who believed, not without reason, that Vidal had sent him from Fiji to the Solomons in order to get rid of him - Rouillac spent most of his time at sea. From 1898 to 1902 he voyaged tirelessly, first in a small cutter and later in the eighteen ton schooner Eclipse. By the end of 1898 he had been twice to the island of Savo and to the south coast of Guadalcanal, and once to Makira Bay.² Everywhere he was welcomed, and was offered land.

1

Rouillac to Regis, September - October 1898, A.M.O., vol.X. For further comments on this type of situation see M.C., 1905, p.315; Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions', p.83; below pp. 103-4, 184.

2

Rouillac to Regis, 28 August 1898, 22 December 1898, A.P.M. OSM 208. Guitet to Colin, 4 December 1898, ibid. For Rouillac's later career in Australia see J. Duhig, Crowded Years (Sydney, 1947), pp.51-6.

Returning to Makira Bay in March 1899, however, he was told that the mission was not wanted. Retracting their promise to sell land, the people said that death was striking wherever Europeans settled and, indeed, since Rouillac's first visit several villagers had died and others had fallen ill. In contrast to this resistance, at Haununu, twenty miles south of Makira, Rouillac received four boys for the school at Rua Sura and easily obtained land. For this, so as to impress the turncoats of Makira, he paid the munificent price of five cases of tobacco and two cases of pipes, and incurred the displeasure of Woodford, who wrote:

...asking him in future not to pay in tobacco but in cash in the case of further contracts. Every box of tobacco put out means so much loss of business to the traders. Complaints have been made to me by a certain trader that he has been unable lately to buy yams on San Cristobal as the Marist Fathers, had been giving a stick of tobacco for two yams, whereas the recognized figure has always been ten.¹

But on a return visit to Haununu, a month after his first one, Rouillac found that the people there had also had second thoughts about receiving a missionary. Consequently, the land purchase was not finalized - although the tobacco was not returned. Nevertheless, Rouillac apparently continued, with advantage, to ignore Woodford's attempt at price-fixing. By June

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Bouillon to Martin, 17 March 1899, A.P.M. OSM 208; Woodford to O'Brien, 15 May 1899, W.P.H.C. Inward Correspondence, General, No.134 of 1899.

1899 even Rere and Susu, while still refusing to sell land or to patronize the school, were keen to trade with the Marists, who needed large quantities of food for the scholar-labourers (eighty in number) who had been brought to Rua Sura, mostly from Guadalcanal. Concurrently, the traders' sympathy for the mission declined as they regularly found recruits and supplies being reserved for their open-handed competitor.¹

Rouillac also opened Marist contact with Malaita, which he visited in 1899 and 1901, on the latter occasion bringing sixteen youths from Bina, in the Langalanga Lagoon, to Rua Sura for five months.² In 1900 he visited Ysabel and, following directions provided by Verguet, recovered Epalle's remains from San Jorge. The skull, broken in five places, was readily recognizable.³

The Marists were, however, too few to follow up all Rouillac's contacts. So, particularly in view of the lack of encouragement from San Cristobal, they

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Rouillac to Martin, 28 May 1899, A.P.M. OSM 208; Guitet to Regis, 30 May 1899, ibid.; Bouillon to Martin, 1 June 1899, ibid.; Menard to Martin, 13 June 1899, ibid.

2

Rouillac to Regis, 4 February 1900, A.M.O., vol.XI; ibid., 1 November 1901, A.P.M. OSM 208. ibid.

3

Rouillac to Verguet, 21 October 1900, A.P.M. OSM 208 (published in A.M.O., vol.X, and in M.C., 1901, pp.14-6). Epalle's remains were finally lost in 1942 when Visale, where they ^{were} kept, was bombed in the course of the Second World War.

decided to concentrate their efforts on Guadalcanal. The decision was made easier with the loss of the Eclipse on the reefs off Tangarare in 1902, and by Rouillac's subsequent withdrawal from the mission, when his plan to obtain a much larger craft was rejected. The Eclipse was not replaced by an adequate inter-island vessel until 1909.

The Marists' first successes were on the storm-wracked south or 'weather' coast of Guadalcanal, where traders rarely visited. At Moli, on his second visit there in December 1898, Rouillac's boat 'was surrounded all day by native canoes bringing yams to exchange for plugs of tobacco, pipes and matches'. To secure the supply of these items the people pleaded for a resident missionary and, to support their plea, sold land which sixty men immediately set to work clearing. Rouillac obtained a further foothold in the district in April 1899 after meeting, at Svensen's store at Marau, an ex-labourer who had known the Marists in Fiji. This man introduced him to Avuavu (or Longu) fifteen miles west of Moli, where more land was bought and thirty-six pupils obtained for Rua Sura. Predictably, the people of Avuavu were delighted when two priests arrived to build Rua Sura's first out-station there in October 1899. But on this occasion the missionaries stayed only six months. For the cupidity of the local villagers, who attempted to deny their neighbours access to them, led to a series of violent disputes which induced

the Marists to return to Rua Sura until tempers had cooled.¹ They resumed the post in 1901.

A more certain beginning was that made at Tangarare, at the western end of the weather coast. Following up the contact provided by Svensen, Rouillac bought land there in May 1899, and two priests occupied it in June 1900. They were warmly welcomed. Bile, the leading man of the district, proudly declared himself their protector, and when he died some months later this responsibility was claimed by Samu, chief of the village of Ravu. Samu had developed a taste for tobacco and cloth while labouring in Fiji - and this he clearly expected the missionaries to indulge - but contemporary observers saw more than economic aspirations behind his regard for the Marists. He also wanted a cure for his failing sight. In the welcome of most other people, however, the trade motive was dominant - although, at the same time, parents were generally agreeable to their children becoming Christian. In March 1901 there were forty-three boys, aged between ten and fifteen years, living at Tangarare. However, Ferdinand Guilloux, the founder of the station and posthumous 'apostle' of the area had to lament that for these, as for their elders, the main

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Rouillac to Regis, 22 December 1898, A.P.M. OSM 208 (translation); Rouillac to Regis, 11 June 1898 (correctly, 1899), 25 March 1900, *ibid.*; Bouillon to Martin, 26 June 1900; J. Boudard, 'Quelques aperçus historique sur la foundation d'Avuavu' (1956), TS in the present writer's possession.

concern was not religion but 'tobacco, pipes and other baubles'.¹

Moreover, regard for the mission did not inhibit the Tangarare people from looting the Eclipse when it ran aground in 1902, nor from threatening Rouillac when he attempted to stop them. However, the drowning of Guilloux while trying to free the vessel inspired - through the need to placate the dead man's spirit - a change of heart in the villages to the north of the station, near the scene of the wreck. The progressive adoption of Christianity throughout the district dates from that incident - 27 May 1902.²

Not all the leaders of Guadalcanal were as complacent as those of Tangarare and Avuavu about the encroachment of missionaries, despite the services they might render. One such dissident was Sulukavo, a powerful bush chief of the western part of the island. Since 1894 he had resisted Anglican efforts to acquire a foothold there, but was unable to prevent the settlement of a well-armed party at Maravovo in May 1900. In September, however, as a gesture of hostility towards all missions, he burned down a house owned by the Marists on land they had bought recently at Vaturanga

1

Rouillac to Regis, 11 March 1900, A.P.M. OSM 208; letter of Guilloux, 28 March 1901, ibid. (translation). For a discussion of Samu's relations with the mission see below pp.164-6.

2

Rouillac to Regis, 7 May 1902, A.P.M. OSM 208; Coicaud to Regis, 20 September 1902, ibid.; M.C., 1919, p.330; Raucaz, Savage South Solomons, p.134.

near Maravovo, and he threatened 'next time' to have blood. Woodford responded by burning a bush village and by promising severe reprisals if there was a 'next time'. There was not, although Sulukavo continued to utter his threats. In July 1901 all but two of the boys at Tangarare suddenly fled because their spirits had announced in a dream that the bushmen were going to destroy the station. For some time afterwards the coast people, attempting to exploit fear of Sulukavo for their own material advantage, made a business out of giving the Marists spurious 'warnings' of impending attack.¹ But police action was having its effect. Except for trouble at Avuavu in 1904, after Joseph Chatelet had intervened to save a party of Queensland returnees from being robbed by Gona, the former owner of the mission land, the Marists were never again in obvious danger from the islanders.²

As for the land at Vaturanga, the Marists never occupied it, not from fear of Sulukavo but because Woodford disallowed the purchase on account of its proximity to the Anglican post at Maravovo. He

1

Woodford to O'Brien, 21 September 1900, encl.
O'Brien to C.O., 12 November 1900, C.O. 225/59;
Guilloux to Regis, 12 July 1901, A.P.M. OSM 208
Bouillon to Regis, 21 November 1901, A.M.O., vol.X;
Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions', p.114.

2

Chatelet to procurator, 15 January 1905, A.M.O.,
vol.XI; B.S.I.P., Annual Report, 1905; Raucaz,
Savage South Solomons, pp.110-2.

defended his action by pointing out that at the same time he had similarly thwarted an Anglican attempt to enter the Shortland Islands, where the Marists of the North Solomons were newly established.¹ Woodford's actions betokened no hostility towards the missions. Rather, he welcomed them; but he was determined that their 'civilizing' influence (an aid to administration and an assurance to investors) should be widely distributed. To this end, he urged the Melanesian Mission to station a European missionary in north Malaita, as was done in 1902. And had the Anglicans not complied he would have invited the Methodists, who were then seeking a mission in the Solomons.² But Woodford was also concerned to remove opportunities for troublesome sectarian disputes. In consequence of these aims, he informally 'endeavoured to get the various Missions to agree upon separate spheres of action'.³ And where agreement was not reached, the same end was to be achieved, as he had advised Vidal in 1897, and as Sir William MacGregor ensured in British New Guinea (Papua), by disallowal of land purchases.

With the Protestant missions (except the Seventh Day Adventists) the territorial problem scarcely arose for there was substantial recognition of common ground.

1

Woodford to O'Brien, 21 September 1900, W.P.H.C. Inward Correspondence, General, no.61 of 1900; Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions,' p.121.

2

Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions,' p.128.

3

Woodford to C.O., 21 August 1913, C.O. 225/120.

Thus, the Methodists and the Melanesian Mission readily came to an agreement of 'comity' (or non-competition) whereby the former confined themselves to the western part of the protectorate and the latter to the eastern part. Likewise, the S.S.E.M., and the Melanesian Mission agreed not to compete against each other on Malaita.¹ The Marists, in contrast, would enter no such pact, although it seems that Woodford in 1900 offered them a monopoly on Guadalcanal if they would do so.² There were sound practical reasons for the Marists' refusal: to accept formal limitation of their field to work could be to curtail the future expansion of the mission; one mission could obtain a more advantageous sphere than another; and, furthermore, there was no guarantee that the spheres would be kept intact with the arrival of new missionary bodies which had not originally been party to them. But the basic reasons were doctrinal - the denial of any religious affinity with the other missions, as has been already noted, and the denial that the civil authority was competent in such a matter.

Such beliefs were, of course, compatible with a total Catholic monopoly, such as the Marists aspired to in the North Solomons. Conversely, they also

1

Hilliard. 'Protestant Missions', p.224; C.T.J. Luxton, Isles of Solomon (Auckland, 1955), pp.19-20. For a useful discussion of comity see Tippet, Solomon Islands Christianity, p.34.

2

Rouillac to Regis, 31 August 1900, A.P.M. OSM 208.

made the M.S.C.s bitter opponents of the government's restrictive 'spheres of influence' policy in Papua.¹ They did not, however, occasion serious disputes with Woodford, whose policy was in practice flexible. As the protectorate became more settled and the plantation economy developed (the B.S.I.P. administration was financed from internal revenue by 1906),² Woodford became noticeably less concerned to keep the missions apart. Marists and S.S.E.M. became neighbours on San Cristobal in 1909; a Marist challenge to the Methodists in New Georgia was frustrated in 1912, but was permitted in Choiseul in 1913, while the S.D.A.s were permitted to obtain land in New Georgia in 1914.

All these situations produced strife, the precedent for which had already been firmly set. When Woodford allowed a Marist station to be planted at Visale, twenty miles east of Maravovo, in 1904, the western end of Guadalcanal saw an unabashed contest for possession of souls. Marists and Anglicans vied to install 'teachers', to erect chapels in uncommitted villages and to dissolve the allegiance of others. Of an Anglican enclave near Visale the Marist Joseph Pellion wrote 'we are trying to force a breach there, convinced that these Anglicans are not inconvertible'.³ No violence is recorded but

1 Dupeyrat, Papouasie, pp.254-90.

2 Scarr, Fragments of Empire, p.266.

3 Pellion to procurator, 1910, A.M.O. vol.XII (translation); Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions', pp.116-7.

the followers of each mission waged a battle of abuse and misrepresentation. Much turned on the question of prestige. Marist sympathizers, for instance, were acutely embarrassed when Anglicans boasted that the Melanesian Mission possessed a steam ship and when it was claimed that the Marists, being French, had no place in a British colony and were likely to be expelled.

The Marist response to this telling line of attack, while reflecting Bertreux's penchant for the impressive, also accorded spectacularly with Melanesian procedures for establishing status. Unable to afford a steam ship, the Marists, on Bertreux's initiative, decided to counter the Anglican boast by building a stone church at Visale. In this they adopted a role approximating to that of the indigenous 'big-man' who outshone his rivals while providing his followers with a rewarding sense of participation in a notable achievement. The Catholic sympathizers of the district organized by Kokobi, the baptized Visale leader, enthusiastically supported the project:

...[even] pagans came - each village in its turn, some carried on their shoulders or on their heads the large stones for building the walls, or enormous trunks of trees for burning the lime, while others went along the shore looking for the coral stones...to be turned into lime by the...fire.

Opened in October 1910 after a year's work, the church - the only stone building in the Solomons at a time when even timber buildings still attracted attention - was widely and deservedly admired, a reaction which gratified the local Catholics who, unlike their rivals with the

Southern Cross V, had a claim to ownership of the building for having put much of their own labour into it. Catholic status was also enhanced by the feast given for 1200 people to celebrate the opening. Moreover, the sting was effectively drawn from the expulsion rumour when Woodford not only attended the celebration but also warmly praised the work of the Marists, thereby disposing of a canard that an English man-of-war was going to bombard the station.¹

The main Marist advantage, however, in the evangelization of Guadalcanal was superior numbers. For most of the period up to 1920, when crucial impressions were being made, the Melanesian Mission had only one European missionary there, as against eleven Marist priests, two lay-brothers and four nuns, the first of whom had arrived in 1904.² Guadalcanal was steadily ringed with mission stations, which eventually claimed over half the population. In addition to Rua Sura, Avuavu, Tangarare and Visale there were other posts which had to be abandoned, mainly because of sickness - Soumakarea, near Aola (1905), Moli (1903-7), Marau (1904-15) and Savo (1909-11).

1

Raucaz, Savage South Solomons, pp.162-7; Bertin to Raffin, 26 October 1910, A.M.O., vol.XIII.

2

Melanesian Mission Report, 1906. I owe this reference to Dr D. Hilliard. See, also, Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions,' pp.161-2; Fox, Lord of the Southern Isles, p.191. Marists commented on the disparity of numbers, also, but only to lament that they had no catechists so as to increase their advantage: Bertin to procurator, 1 July 1908, A.M.O., vol.XII; Boudard to Montauban, 3 May 1909, A.P.M. OSM 208.

Concentration of Marist resources on Guadalcanal brought the total of baptized Catholics there to nearly 1300 by 1912. The same year, in consequence of this progress, the prefecture was elevated to the rank of vicariate and Bertreux was consecrated bishop. Bertreux was a fastidious person and was noted for an exaggerated sense of propriety. Indicative of his sensibilities was the charge that he was 'very pleased with his mitre' and always insisted on correct 'etiquette, the genuflections, the ceremonies, the addresses of letters ("The Right Rev. Doctor")'.¹ Such foibles give credibility to the charge bruited among the Marists of the North Solomons that Bertreux induced Propaganda to transfer Ysabel, the 'martyr' island, to the South Solomons in 1912 in order to honour the South's change of status.² Be that as it may, it is improbable that the acquisition was intended merely as an ornament, for Bertreux was a vigorous expansionist. While dependent for transport from 1903-9 on the Verdelais, a schooner of scarcely five tons and suitable only for coastal waters, he had not sought to occupy points beyond Guadalcanal. But in 1909, on acquiring the thirty ton Jeanne d'Arc, he directed the Marists' attention to San Cristobal, New Georgia and Malaita.

1

Graton to Raffin, 10 August 1919, A.P.M. OSM 208 (translation). For further discussion of Bertreux's character see below pp.225, 230-1.

2

Boch to Raffin, 26 February 1919, A.P.M. OSS 331.

Had the 1914-18 war not stopped the supply of missionaries it is likely the Marists would have attacked Ysabel also.

After Rouillac was rebuffed there in 1899 the Marists' next recorded contact with San Cristobal was in 1906, following advice from their confrères in Fiji that a labourer, baptized with the name of Joseph, had returned home to the village of Veuri, inland from Wanoni Bay, on the north coast of the island. Emile Babonneau, who had worked in Fiji before coming to the Solomons in 1901, embarked for San Cristobal on a trading vessel, met Joseph - and urged him to be patient until a priest could come to minister to him regularly. But by Babonneau's second visit in 1908 Joseph had returned to Fiji. In the meantime the religious configuration of the island had started to change markedly. The S.S.E.M. were established at Risunga in Wanoni Bay and nearly all the villages of the north-west coast were occupied by catechists of the Melanesian Mission. Eight youths were, however, recruited for Rua Sura, where they worked on the plantation and 'more or less followed the school'. Here three of them were baptized, but with little overt effect. A Marist chronicler, (Babonneau) unappreciative of the pressures of the indigenous environment, noted that 'men of little will...when they returned to their villages [two years later] they abandoned their holy religion and returned to paganism'. More fruitful contact, however, resulted from advice received in 1908 from the Marists in Fiji that a party of labourers

was returning to Wanoni Bay. Visiting there on board the Jeanne d'Arc in September 1909, Bertreux found a baptized twenty-year-old woman named Selina leading the children of Kahua village in Fijian prayers and hymns each morning and evening. Land was purchased nearby (about two miles from Risunga) for £56 and two cases of tobacco. And in December 1909 Babonneau was stationed there with four youths from Guadalcanal. Six months later he was joined by Samuel Moreau and in 1914 two nuns arrived to open a girls' school.¹ A second station operated at Faumera (Star Harbour) at the eastern extremity of the island 1937-41 has, since 1950 been maintained on the south coast, first at Mami, then at Manivovo.

Despite rivalry, personal relationships between Marists and European members of the Melanesian Mission (which had a strong Anglo-Catholic bias) were always notably courteous, even on Guadalcanal. On San Cristobal they reached a peak of warm friendship and exchanges of hospitality between C.E. Fox and Babonneau. Thus, Fox could close a private letter with the promise 'I shall always pray for your work and rejoice sincerely in your success'.² Indeed, recognizing a 'common Catholicism',

1

'Journal of Wanoni Bay', introduction, (translation); Raucaz, Savage South Solomons, pp.193-4.

2

'Journal of Wanoni Bay', 1911; Fox to Babonneau, 15 May 1916, Wanoni Bay. This letter is reproduced in Appendix B. Good relations between the Marists and the Melanesian Mission are also noted in Rouillac to Regis, 23 September 1899, A.P.M. OSM 208; Woodford to C.O., 21 August 1913, C.O. 225/120.

he also thought it fitting to pass on to Babonneau a request for baptism from the people of Makira Bay.¹ And on one occasion, after having, in the Southern Cross Log (the bulletin of the Melanesian Mission), accused the Marists of unfair practices, he publicly retracted the charge on discovering he had been misled by the indigenes. He had alleged that the Marists had opened a school 100 yards from an Anglican one at Noranora and had induced four Anglicans to join it by threatening that all who did not do so would 'be for ever and ever in fire' when they died. In retraction, however, he explained that the Marists were only providing for their own people, since one of the four had been instructed by the Marists in Fiji and the other three were merely following their leader. As for the threat of Hell, this had originated not with Babonneau or Moreau, but with the Catholic faction in the village, who had wielded it against the Anglican's claim that Catholics worshipped the Blessed Virgin - a misrepresentation which he, Fox, had never taught.²

The Roman Catholic Babonneau, however, was not deterred in 1917 from persuading the village of Apenawai to retract its promise to accept a teacher from Fox. Nor was his successor, J.B. Podevigne, discouraged in 1935 from entering the island of Ulawa where there were already

1

Interview with Rev. Dr C.E. Fox (Taraoniara).

2

Southern Cross Log (English edition), June 1916, p.89; ibid., March 1917, p.46. I owe these references to Dr D.L. Hilliard.

about 700 Anglicans and only 300 pagans, 'about 120 [of whom] appear to want me'.¹

Marist rivalry with the S.S.E.M., however, was not leavened by mutual respect. It was embittered, on the Marists' side, by scornful incomprehension of a 'strange sect' undignified by a place among the historic churches, and on the S.S.E.M. side, by intolerance of 'Rome', 'the grossest perversion of pure Christianity', flawed by idolatry, mariolatry and disdain for the Bible.² The S.S.E.M., were the more aggressive. In 1915 the Reverend Donald McMillan snatched a religious medal from the neck of a Catholic and threw it into the fire. This action earned him the censure of the High Commissioner and the threat of expulsion.³ It also inspired an official circular advising the islanders, both Christian and pagan, that while 'Christianity stands for all that is good, no matter by whom it is taught' it was unlawful for the missionaries forcibly to interfere with their beliefs.⁴ Distributed mainly through the missions, the circular could have meant little to the islanders.

1

Fox to Babonneau, 12 February 1918, Wanoni Bay; Podevigne to Courtois, 15 August 1935, 30 October 1935, A.P.M. OSM 208 (translation).

2

'Journal of Wanoni Bay', 1912; Deck to Babonneau, 26 October 1918, *ibid.* See also, Raucaz, Savage South Solomons, p.196.

3

Barnett to McMillan, 20 July 1915, Wanoni Bay.

4

F.J. Barnett to all people of San Cristobal, 1 January 1916, *ibid.*

Certainly it did not restrain Dr Norman Deck, a nephew of the S.S.E.M., founder, who was appointed to Risunga in 1916.

Continued friction was a factor in the establishment of an administration post of Kira Kira, five miles from Wanoni Bay, in 1918. For Deck, too, demedalled Catholic necks, and on one occasion, he was officially rebuked for browbeating a woman into withdrawing her son from the Catholic Mission. Once, however, he had the last word: ordered by the D.O. to return medals he had taken, he could write to Babonneau 'I should also request that you in your turn will return the books taken from the former adherents of the S.S.E.M.'. ¹ But shortly afterwards he was again in trouble, being threatened with prosecution for advising a planter at Santa Ana that Catholics 'never deal fairly', were utterly without scruple and were unrestrained by 'honesty or truthfulness'. ² Such incidents ceased after Deck's transfer to Malaita in 1923, and open hostility between the rivals gave way to indifference and avoidance. This was momentarily relieved in 1929 when H.J. Waite, captain of the S.S.E.M. vessel Evangel, was summoned to operate on an abscess that threatened the life

1

Deck to Babonneau, June 1916, *ibid.*; Babonneau to Deck, 15 June 1916, *ibid.*; Deck to Babonneau, 4 April 1918, *ibid.*, Campbell to Deck, 27 May 1918, *ibid.*; Deck to Kuper, 9 October 1918, *ibid.*

2

Workman to Deck, 21 May 1920, *ibid.*

of one of the Marists.¹ The operation was successful. But in 1937, when Waite's daughter proposed the observance of comity in the district, Podevigne rejoined curtly:

The policy of the Catholic Church all over the world re the "Comity of Missions" being publicly known, I don't suppose I have to give you a personal answer on the subject.²

A striking precedent for this rejection had occurred in 1911 when the Marists entered the Methodist preserve of New Georgia. They were invited there by Norman Wheatley, a trader who thought it would be in his interest for another mission to balance Methodist power in that part of the group. Unperturbed by the trader's motive, Bertreux promptly sent two Marists to New Georgia, at the cost of withdrawing a priest from Savo and of temporarily stopping the mission's printing press, for Louis Raucaz, the leader of the expedition, was also the printer. A third priest was despatched in 1912 but the same year, after fifteen months of frustration, the party withdrew. Based on the island of Himbi in the Roviana Lagoon, the centre of Methodist influence, they had found the people sullen and un-cooperative while, with only a whaleboat at their disposal, their mobility had been restricted. It was Woodford, however, who delivered the final blow by refusing to approve their purchase of the only

1

'Journal of Wanoni Bay', August 1929.

2

Waite to Podevigne, 20 November 1937, Wanoni Bay; Podevigne to Waite, 25 November 1937, ibid.

piece of suitable land offered them.¹ And when the Marists withdrew Wheatley called the Seventh Day Adventists to his aid.²

Thwarted in New Georgia, the Marists turned to Malaita where, ironically, Miss Young, the founder of the S.S.E.M., had herself created an opening for them. This occurred in the following manner. In 1909, at Tarapaina, an Areare-speaking village at the north-east of Small Malaita, where her mission was represented by an ex-Queensland labourer, she gravely offended Araiiasi, the local ramo. As ramo, or professional fighting man and law-enforcer, and as spokesman for Iava'o, the hereditary araha, Araiiasi was the most conspicuous dignitary of the district. But Miss Young was no respecter of persons. She castigated the ramo for his crimes, which included the murder of his own child, and refused him gifts for smoking aboard her ship. Araiiasi did not take kindly to such treatment. Consequently, after consulting Iava'o, he called for the Marists whom he had met at Marau, where there was a colony of Areare migrants who maintained close and frequent contacts with their relatives in south Malaita.

1

Raucaz to his brother, 16 August 1911, A.M.O., vol.XIII; letters of Raucaz, 20 March, 20 December 1912, A.P.M. OSM 418; Raucaz to Chevreuil, 2 November 1912, P.V.M. It is interesting to note that Raucaz ignores the New Georgia episode in his official history of the mission.

2

Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions', pp.296-7, 416-7.

Bertreux answered the call in 1910, when he bought land at Tarapaina for £50 and a quantity of tobacco. He also distributed medals, with unexpectedly advantageous results. For Miss Young inadvertently strengthened the Catholic position at Tarapaina when, visiting there again in 1911, she outraged local feeling by snatching one of the medals from her teacher's neck and casting the 'idolatrous' emblem into the fire. Jean Coicaud, who had been stationed at Marau since 1905, was therefore, assured of a welcome when he spent some weeks at Tarapaina a month later. But he found the steep clay terrain unsuitable for a station. However, with Araiassi's help, he contacted Arisimae, ramo of Rohinari in the northern part of the Areare district, who sold him a large piece of flat, well-drained land for £80, four sacks of rice, two cases of tobacco and two pigs. Coicaud settled at Rohinari in July 1912.¹

As Coicaud acknowledged, the initial alliance with the ramo was one of mutual practical advantage. The mission obtained powerful protectors (Arisimae, said a trader, was 'known and feared over one half of Southern

1

Letter of Bertheux, 27 September 1911, A.P.M. OSM 418; 'Journal of Tarapaina,' introduction (based on oral evidence gathered by Fr. P. Geerts, who founded Tarapaina station in 1949); J.M. Wall, 'Evidence submitted at Tarapaina land dispute hearing, 14-15 February 1955', TS in Fr. Wall's possession; Raucaz, Savage South Solomons, pp.209-10. The position of ramo is discussed in W.G. Ivens, Island Builders of the Pacific (London, 1930), p.199.

Malaita'), while the ramo obtained a source of gifts, medical aid and protection should the government decide to punish them.¹ This last consideration soon became irrelevant for Arisimae, who was pardoned in 1916 when the systematic pacification of Malaita was begun under the zealous and often ruthless hand of W.R. Bell. It was not so for Araiassi who, anxious to acquire money for feasts in order to advance his prestige, continued to confront breakers of customs with the traditional alternatives for expiation: 'your money or your life'. In 1918 Coicaud cleared him of a false charge of murder, but Bell readily found a valid one.

In October 1916 a young man of Tarapaina had been accused of some sexual misdemeanour. Consequently, on Araiassi's orders, he was held captive for thirty-six hours to give his relatives a chance to redeem him, but when payment of the fine was not forth-coming he had been thrown into the sea and killed with blows from spears and canoe paddles. Learning that Bell had wind of this incident, Coicaud again intervened:

I pleaded extenuating circumstances for my old friend. He had only acted according to the code of the country....Moreover no one wished to plead for the victim.

As a result of these entreaties, the ramo was paroled for four years, first at Visale and later at Rohinari.

1

[J. Coicaud], 'Des gens rachetés par le Père dans le district de Rohinari', Buma (translation); Joseph H.C. Dickinson, A Trader in the Savage Solomons (London, 1927), pp.158-60.

Here he was baptized in 1922, before returning to Tarapaina. Henceforth, in keeping with his baptismal name of Petero, he directed his assertiveness and desire for rank into the new, and self-assumed, role of proselytizer: 'I wish to be the pillar of religion, because it is I who have brought religion to Malaita'.¹ Thus, he regularly accompanied the missionary on visitation, never ceasing, records Coicaud, to talk religion - each evening he would harangue the villagers until they fell asleep and early each morning he would run into their huts urging them to accept the medal. Arisimae, less indebted to the mission, remained true to his spirits, until being baptized on his deathbed in 1947.

Six months after the Rohinari station was founded, Raucaz began another at Buma in the Langalanga Lagoon, where Bertreux had bought land in 1909. Thereafter, the Marists' sphere of action on Malaita increased slowly. Rokera station was founded, to supplement Rohinari, in 1929 and Takwa was begun in 1935, to serve the Suava speakers of north Malaita, who had been contacted from Buma by Donatien Coicaud, brother of Jean, about 1920.² Marist resources, however, remained concentrated on Guadalcanal. This is somewhat surprising because in 1920 Bertreux, who died

1

Bertreux to Babonneau, [1918], Wanoni Bay; J. Coicaud to Dubois, 15 January 1929, A.P.M. OSM 208, (translation).

2

Raucaz, Savage South Solomons, pp.234ff.

in 1919, was succeeded by Raucaz, an experienced pioneer with first-hand knowledge of the evangelistic opportunities on Malaita. In 1921, and again in 1923, Raucaz wrote that Malaita, with a population he accurately estimated to be about four times that of Guadalcanal, was the hope of the mission.¹ Yet, in 1931, of sixteen priests in the vicariate only four were stationed on Malaita, together with two of the seventeen nuns.² Possible explanations of Ruācaz's lack of acumen are the rule against stationing Marists singly and the inflexibility of the station system. Resources once committed to Guadalcanal could not readily be diverted elsewhere. For the station-centredness of the Marists' operations, especially in view of the ill-success that was to attend their efforts of training catechists, meant that to close a station or reduce its staff could be, wholly or partly, to withdraw Catholic influence from a district. A further possibility, suggested by consideration of the situation in the North Solomons during the same decade, is that the already firm establishment of Protestant missions in the vicariate robbed Raucaz of the incentive to scatter his forces in order to counter them on any but the local level.³

1

Raucaz to Raffin, 30 October 1921, A.P.M. OSM 418; letter of Raucaz, 12 February 1923, *ibid.*

2

Convents were opened at Malaita at Buma (1928), Rokerā (1933) and Takwa (1937). Ruavatu, on Guadalcanal, received one in 1927, after Tangarare (1904), Visale (1908), Rua Sura (1911), Avuavu (1913) and Wanoni Bay (1915).

3

For the North Solomons see below pp.123-4.

Even so, as his critics charged, Raucaz could have increased Marist representation on Malaita at little cost to Guadalcanal.¹ Thus, he opened his episcopate by stationing Jean-Marie Aubin, Bertreux's former secretary, at Ruavatu, on the mainland opposite Rua Sura, and in 1923, in shifting the mission's headquarters from Rua Sura, which had outlived its usefulness as a place of security, he re-established them at Visale. Rua Sura was then leased to a neighbouring planter.

Aubin, a rather ineffectual person who was later to succeed Raucaz as vicar apostolic, made little impact at Ruavatu. For although the Marists had been able to buy land there in 1911, local resentment was still strong against them. Prospects for evangelization were also limited by the fact that Anglican influence had spread along the coast after the villages near Tasiboko were converted by their Gela allies in 1902.² From the late 1920s Ruavatu was, however, to be a useful base from which to counter Anglican and S.D.A. efforts to win the bushmen at the eastern end of Guadalcanal.

1

R.J. Pavese, 'Récit très véridique - des événements qui eurent lieu au Vicariat Ap. des Iles Salomon Mérid. (Océanie) les trois premières mois de l'Année Sainte et qui déterminèrent la fermeture de l'Ecole des Catechistes de Gausava, et l'exile forcé et inattendu de Son Directeur', p.18, A.P.M. Pavese Papers.

2

Aubin to Dubois, 7 November 1932, A.P.M. OSM 208; Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions', p.115.

PART III: The North Solomons

THE circumstances in which Catholic missionary work commenced in the German Solomons were strongly coloured by political considerations. The Germans' anti-French attitude, which made Propaganda hesitate before initiating the Solomon Islands missions, has already been noted. Next to make itself felt was the sensitive anti-Catholic factor in German politics, which at first delayed and then precipitated the Marists' entry into the German Solomons. Thus, the German Solomons were not proclaimed a prefecture apostolic until May 1898, nine months after the British Solomons, for there were already two Catholic missions working in German New Guinea - the M.S.C.s in New Britain and the S.V.D.s on the mainland. Propaganda, therefore, delayed appointing a third mission until Pierre Broyer, the Marist vicar apostolic of Samoa, who planned to visit Berlin in 1897, had consulted Baron von Richthofen, the German Director of Colonies. Broyer, though a Frenchman, was persona grata at Berlin on account of the Marists' support for German interests rather than British ones in the Samoan political imbroglio. And he received the assurances Propaganda desired:

The German government would be pleased to see Catholic missionaries undertake as soon as possible the evangelization of these still cannibal islands. In this case, the German government would forbid protestant sects to establish themselves in these islands. If not, the islands would be given to a Protestant sect to evangelize and access to them would in future be forbidden to Catholic missionaries.¹

1

Broyer to Ledochowsky, 17 March 1897 (translation), 27 March 1897, A.P.M. 410 Sancta Sedes, Correspondence Martin-Ledochowsky.

Broyer then returned to Samoa. He intended to begin work in the Solomons after a further visit to Europe in mid-1898 to obtain subsidies for the project. However, at the request of Fritz Rose, the German Consul in Samoa, he delayed this second departure for Europe for several months in order to assist the election of Joseph Mata'afa, the Catholic and pro-German candidate for the kingship of Samoa. Certain that this service would boost his favour with the German authorities, he received an unpleasant shock when he reached Sydney on 12 November. Here he was advised by Bishop Louis Couppé of New Britain to begin the mission immediately, for it was rumoured from Berlin that the government intended to prohibit the Marists from entering the Solomons. This was said to be in order to avoid pressure from the Centre Party (Catholic) to approve the foundation of a Marist house in Germany, where the growth of religious orders was discouraged. The rumour was given point by the fact that for some years Marist requests to enter Germany had been repeatedly refused. Therefore, in order to present the authorities with a fait accompli, Broyer instructed two of his priests to proceed from Samoa to the Solomons immediately.

In the event, no difficulties arose. The German New Guinea administration, valuing the missionaries as auxiliaries in developing the resources of the protectorate, gave them full encouragement. Moreover, in April 1899 the Marists were authorized by the Imperial government to open a seminary at Meppen, near Osnabruck in northern Germany, for the specific purpose of training German

missionaries for Samoa and the Solomons islands.¹ Significantly, this sudden reversal of religious policy coincided with the current moves consolidating German colonial responsibilities in the Pacific. For responsibility for German New Guinea was transferred from the Neuguinea Kompagnie to the Imperial government in April 1899, while Germany's claims for sole rights in western Samoa were accepted later in the same year by her erstwhile colonial rivals, Britain and the United States.

Broyer's envoys, Eugene Englert and Charles Flaus, reached the Solomons in March 1899. On the advice of Rose, they had set their course for the Shortland Islands, in the Bougainville Strait, the only area of European settlement in the German protectorate, and which were soon to be transferred to British control. At the Shortlands they were welcomed by an English-born trader, C.N. Tindal. Tindal readily negotiated their purchase of land on Poporang Island from Ferguson, the main Shortland chief, and recruited labourers from the Shortlands, Bougainville and Choiseul to clear it. The work was well under way when Broyer arrived in July. By this time, incidentally, the six gold sovereigns Englert had paid Ferguson had found their way into the trader's pocket.

1

Broyer to Hervier, 30 September 1898, A.P.M. ON 418; Broyer to Martin, 20 November 1898, *ibid.*; von Bulow to Broyer, 12 April 1899, A.P.M. G 200. Earlier Marist efforts to enter Germany had also stressed support for the Germans in Samoa, e.g., draft of a letter to Prince Hohenlohe [1895], A.P.M. G 57 000.

Although long familiar with Europeans, the Shortlanders were initially impressed by the Marists and their accoutrements. They 'marvelled at the sight of so many things they did not understand' - such as a prefabricated house, and the sight of Broyer in his official robes. And on seeing a group of religious statues, 'they just stood there, mouth agape, speechless in admiration'. Delighted by such a response, and noting that, thanks to Tindal, all the Shortlanders, even the children, wore the loin cloth, the Marists rejoiced that Providence was favouring their enterprise. They lamented that the Buka language, which they had learned from labourers in Samoa, was not understood by the Shortlanders. Yet, with premature optimism, the only difficulty they reported after six months was that of attracting adults to the lotu. The principal reason for this was the Marists' teaching that polygamy was incompatible with Christianity. For, as Ferguson replied:

...we old ones have our wives, we do not wish to destroy or abandon our customs, but [he continued] take our children and instruct them in religion. When the sisters come they will instruct our young girls and you will marry them in the European fashion.¹

Polygamy was not something that could readily be forsaken. It had vast social ramifications. It was a basic prop of the traditional social structure throughout the Solomons, for the labour of several wives was a key means of producing wealth and, hence, of attaining and

1

Flaus to Hervier, September 1899, A.P.M. OSM 61 208 (translation).

preserving high rank. Indeed, for this reason Ferguson's father, the renowned Gorai, had told Guppy as early as 1882 that he had no wish for missionaries to settle in his islands because 'they would insist on his giving up nearly all his wives'.¹ Polygamy was, however, a matter of particular moment in the islands of the Bougainville Straits for there it seems to have been practised on a scale unequalled in other parts of the group. Elsewhere, leaders rarely had more than three or four wives and for most men monogamy was normal.² At the Shortlands, in contrast, Gorai's death in 1894 created perhaps 100 widows and that of his son Kopana, who died in 1901, created fifteen. At Mono, thirty miles south-west of the Shortlands, Mule, in 1882, had between twenty-five and thirty wives, while the majority of men had two. In 1903, of the four leading Shortlands chiefs, one had twenty, another fifteen and the others ten, while lesser men commonly had two.³

1

Guppy, Solomon Islands and Their Natives, pp.44-5.

2

For further comments on Solomon Islands polygamy see Hopkins, Isles of King Solomon pp.106-7; Ivens, Melanesians of the South-east Solomon Islands, p.127, and Island Builders of the Pacific, p.120; Oliver, A Solomon Island Society, p.223.

3

Englert to Aubrey, 20 May 1901, A.P.M. OSS 61 208; Broyer to Regis, 19 August 1901. A.P.M. ON 418; Forestier to Gay, 17 February 1903, A.P.M. OSS 418; Guppy, Solomon Islands and their Natives, p.45.

The reasons for this situation are not clear. Gorai's household may well have been swelled by women belonging to the Alu people, who inhabited Shortland and its neighbour, Fauro, before they were conquered by Mono in the 1860s. Or the existence of an indigenous pottery industry at Shortland may have increased the islanders' purchasing power in the bride trade with Bougainville.¹ It is, however, also likely that the growth of polygamy owed much to the plentiful supply of European goods, which the islanders obtained from extensive contact with whalers and later with labour recruiters. For the people of the Bougainville Straits acted as middle-men for the supply of cloth, knives and axes to their trading partners in south Bougainville, who generally lived far from the coast.² Privileged access to these goods and a ready market for them among the more numerous inhabitants of the mainland, would surely have increased the islanders' traditional purchasing power. Certainly, by 1900 the Shortlanders were observed to be maintaining the

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Hugh M. Laracy, 'The Torau Speakers of Bougainville - an Historical Note', Oceania, vol.39, no.3 (March, 1969), p.234; Broyer to Sr Denyse, 2 November 1899, A.M.O. vol.X.

2

No detailed study has yet been made of the trade system of the Bougainville Straits. Brief accounts are given in Guppy, Solomon Islands and Their Natives, pp.27-8, 45; Oliver, A Solomon Island Society, pp.295-6. In 1883 Mulikupa (Mule) of Mono was said to obtain male 'slaves' from Buka and Bougainville: 'For a boy he paid necklaces, 4; iron hoops, 10; big axes, 1; tomahawks, 1; strings of beads, 3.' H.M.S. Dart, 'Report of Proceedings since 5 October 1883', Royal Navy Australian Station XVI.

system by regularly purchasing girls, and occasionally boys, from Bougainville with cloth obtained from Tindal and from the Marists themselves.¹

Conversely, twelve years later the system was in disarray. The inflow of women from Bougainville had diminished, with the result that while older and richer men were still able to obtain extra wives, younger men were frequently unable to obtain one at all - with the further result, assisted by disease, that the local birth rate had apparently declined sharply. Again, the reasons for this situation are obscure. Woodford suggests that fewer women were available on account of German efforts to stop migration from Bougainville. However, it might also be suggested, in view of the above speculation on the reasons for the unusual development of polygamy on Mono and in the Shortlands, that the economic base of the system had been weakened by the decline of the labour trade, and by the increase of traders dealing directly with the people of south Bougainville, where a Marist station was founded in 1905. Certainly by 1913 the Shortlanders appeared to be less prosperous than they had been fourteen years before. They were also more ready to adopt the lotu. And a conversion movement that had begun in 1909 with the baptism of Gorai's blind son, Bitiai, accelerated after 1913, when a number of leading men succumbed to joint government and mission

1

Flaus to Englert, September 1899, A.M.O., vol.XI; Broyer to Sr Denyse, 2 November 1899, ibid; Meyer to Valles, 1 September 1901, ibid.

demands to forsake polygamy in order to halt the population decline.¹

To challenge polygamy at the Shortlands in 1899, however, was to challenge a 'peculiar institution', which a very large proportion of the community had a personal interest in preserving. Nevertheless, Broyer took Ferguson at his word: the mission would concentrate on influencing the young people and nuns would be sent to attend to the women. But the implications of the thin end of the wedge were not lost on the Shortlanders. Thus, when two nuns - Sisters Claire and Ignace - arrived from Samoa in April 1901, they were refused all access to the women and girls. In September 1901 Poporang school held seven girls, all from Bougainville, and fifty-two youths, all but four of them from Bougainville and Buka. Even so, the Marists were otherwise satisfied with Poporang. Coconuts flourished in the sandy soil (by April 1902 nearly 6000 had been planted), and the island itself was, like Rua Sura, a convenient base from which to launch a vigorous north-directed programme of reconnaissance, recruiting of pupil-labourers and land buying. In this they were assisted by the traders, until Rouillac delivered an eight-ton cutter to them in December 1901.²

1

Woodford to Sweet-Escott, 17 July 1912, encl. Sweet-Escott to C.O., 3 September 1912, C.O. 225/106; Woodford to Sweet-Escott, 10 October 1912, encl. Sweet-Escott to C.O., 4 December 1912, C.O. 225/107; Boch to his mother, 20 October 1912, O.R.; Letter of Boch, 10 August 1913, A.P.M. OSS 418.

2

Estienne to Aubrey, 18 March 1900, A.P.M. OSS 208; Meyer to Regis, 15 September 1901, ibid.; Forestier to Regis, 1 April 1902, ibid.; Sr Claire to Gauthier, 26 July 1901, A.M.O., vol.X.

As in the British Solomons, the administration encouraged mission expansion, but with an explicitness that suggests a view of the missionary not only as a creator of conditions suitable for economic development, but as an active exponent of development. Meeting Rudolf von Bennigsen, the newly arrived Governor of New Guinea, in July 1899 Broyer was 'authorized...in writing to acquire in the Solomons all the land reasonably necessary for the mission'. And a year later, after visiting Poporang and seeing 'the extraordinarily active agricultural work' the Marists had done there, the governor was even more encouraging. Urging them to proceed to Bougainville, he wrote:

I am disposed to cede to the mission, in the port of Kieta, a piece of land...from 400-500 hectares on condition that work is done there not as mission but that it be agricultural work, as is being done^{at} Poporang.¹

Even more generous was Albert Hahl, who became governor in 1902 and whose encouragement of the Marists to take up land, including a piece of 1000 hectares, is recorded to have been repeated in 1903 and 1909.² Government authorization was, moreover, complemented by a widespread

1

Broyer to Regis, 28 July 1899, (translation), 26 February 1901 (translation), A.P.M. ON 418.

2

Forestier to Regis, 28 November 1903, 1 June 1909, A.P.M. OSM 208. Information on German land policy is contained in Second Waigani Seminar papers by Biskup, Sack and Wiltgen published in The History of Melanesia. For details see bibliography.

willingness among the islanders to sell land - and the Marists took full advantage of their opportunities. In 1900 an initial thirty-five hectares were bought at Kieta, on the east coast of Bougainville, from Sarai, the chief of Pokpok, the island at the mouth of the harbour. The price was ten axes, ten work knives, twenty lengths of cloth, a box of beads and six oared whaleboat.¹ In 1901, ~~opening~~ Marist contact with Buka, land was bought on the west coast island of Pororan and nine boys were obtained for Poporang.² In 1902 land was bought at Patupatuai on the Buin coast from the villagers of Kihili, who wanted mission protection against an expected attack from the Shortlands.³ By 1913 the Marists held 500 hectares at Kieta, 1000 at Buin, 120 at Koromira, 200 at Torokina, 125 at Buka, in addition to land at seven other places.⁴

Occupation of these sites was slow - mainly on account of malaria. Of ten priests who worked in the

1

'Journal of J. Forestier', 7 September 1900. O.R.

2

Meyer to Mme Letellier, 5 June 1902 (correctly 1903), A.P.M. OSS 208.

3

Flaus to Broyer, 19 November 1899, A.P.M. OSS 208; 'Journal of J. Forestier', 25 February, 12 May, 9-14 July 1902, O.R.

4

Letter of Goedert, 7 April 1913, *ibid.* Included in the Buka figure was land bought at Burunotui, on the mainland, in 1908. Other dates of acquisition were Torokina 1904, Koromira 1908, Rerebere (west Buin) 1909, Borobere (east Buin) 1914. At Rerebere and Borobere were later built the stations of Turiboiru and Muguai, respectively.

prefecture between 1899 and 1904 seven, including three who died there, remained an average of less than two years. By 1904, when the prefecture became canonically independent of Samoa and Joseph Forestier was named prefect apostolic, there was only one Marist post outside Poporang. And that post, Kieta, had not been founded without difficulty, for Sarai's right to sell the land had been disputed by Apotu, the leader of Rigu, a harbourside village, as well as by certain bush people. Thus, when Eugene Englert and his curate, Pierre Meyer, arrived at Kieta in October 1901 to take possession they found Sarai apprehensive and their mainland neighbours resentful. But Englert, harsh and overbearing in character, made no effort at conciliation. On the contrary, he directed that a Rigu garden fence on mission land should be dismantled to provide material for a house for the fourteen youths the missionaries had brought from Poporang; and he threatened to poison, and on one occasion shot at, Rigu pigs which invaded the mission garden.

Further offence was given in May 1902 when six youths returned to the bush villages of Toraurua and Tavidua disappointed with the pay they had received after spending three years at Poporang. Subsequently, the coincidence of local grievances against the mission was signified by an exchange of pigs between Rigu and Toraurua, and on 7 July a group of bushmen headed by Sietai of Toraurua and by Akuaku, one of the disgruntled ex-recruits, attacked the mission boys, who were clearing bush some distance from the house, and killed two of them. It is unlikely that this action was intended as a prelude to an attack on the missionaries,

as the Marists at first thought. For had they intended to do more than register a protest against the mission it is probable that the bushmen would have killed Meyer when he was visiting Toraurua the day before the attack on the boys. Nevertheless, the missionaries kept to their house, maintaining armed watch day and night, until being withdrawn to Poporang by Forestier a week later. The bullying Englert, his nerve broken by the affair, returned to Europe in August - bid good riddance by his confrères.¹

The same month Meyer returned to Kieta. He found the mission house and its contents undisturbed and the people repentant, fearful of reprisals, for Englert had made no secret of the fact that he would summon a man-of-war to punish them. Consequently, within a week of his return, Sietai and Akuaku presented Meyer with a pig and implored his protection. They received their answer on 13 March 1903 when the promised vessel, the Cormorant arrived. The captain declared himself 'ready to undertake any reprisals, punishments and expeditions' that Meyer suggested. Instead, the missionary persuaded him that such were no longer necessary, and to the islanders' profound amazement the Cormorant steamed out of Kieta harbour within an hour, without having fired a shot - but leaving the mission confirmed in local favour.²

1

'Journal of Kieta', 2 January - 28 July 1902, O.R.; Meyer to [Forestier], 8 July 1902, *ibid.*; Forestier to Broyer, 1 August 1902, A.P.M. OSS 208.

2

'Journal of Kieta', 13, 18 August 1902, 13 March 1903, O.R.; Meyer to Martin, 25 March 1903, A.P.M. OSS 208 (translation).

The significance of Meyer's action was not lost on the people of Numanuma, forty miles north of Kieta, whose reputation for ferocity gave them as much reason as any on Bougainville to fear a man-of-war. Thus, visiting them a month later, in April 1903, Meyer obtained eleven boys and in June obtained land, on conditions that he intercede for Numanuma, also, should occasion arise.¹

Warships were a ponderous means of creating peace. The likelihood of punishment for indigenous violence, and hence the value of mission protection, increased with the establishment of an administrative post at Kieta in September 1905, seven months after Francois Allotte and John Rausch began the Marists' second Bougainville station at Patupatuai.² The first to suffer from the enforcement of 'law and order' were the Nasioi people of the mountains behind Kieta, against whom the administration officer, Doellinger, found it 'necessary to take the field no less than seven times' in 1906.³ Chastened by this severity and preferring not to attract similar attention the Buin, inland from Patupatuai, began regularly to allow Allotte to mediate in their inter-village disputes. However, when in 1907 he gave asylum to a notorious sorcerer, whom men from the important village of Morou had attempted to kill, respect for the

1

Meyer to Mme Letellier, 5 June 1902 (correctly 1903), A.P.M. OSS 208.

2

A previous attempt to found a station at Patupatuai had failed in 1903, when J.B. Perpezat died of blackwater fever after three week's residence there.

3

German New Guinea, Annual Report, 1906-7, p.253

missionaries slumped. Threatened with violence, they appealed to Kieta and Doellinger came to their aid. At the head of a troop of police, he led an expedition against Morou, killing two men and burning several houses.¹ Yet the expedition was grudgingly undertaken, for Doellinger, and later Governor Hahl, allegedly resentful of Allotte's 'political' activity, blamed the Marists for having brought the trouble on themselves through needless interference with native customs. Allotte suggests that since the murder of ten Sacred Heart missionaries in New Britain in 1904 the administration had been critical of the risks taken by missionaries. And he records Hahl's caution that in future the Marists were not to invoke government force to promote mission influence as, it seemed to the Governor, they were doing.²

To Allotte this attitude sprang from jealousy of Marist 'political' activity in setting disputes. But such an explanation assumes that at that time authorities were alarmed lest the mission usurp the functions of government in Buin, which is unlikely. A more plausible reason is that they did not wish to be forced to divert to Buin any part of the limited resources committed to

1

Allotte, 'Buin', O.R.; Allotte to procurator, 2 August 1906, A.M.O., Vol. XII; German New Guinea, Annual Report, 1907-8, p. 308.

2

Allotte, 'Buin', O.R.; 'Journal of J. Forestier', 27 July 1907, O.R.

developing the area around Kieta for settlement. For 'the Germans were not interested in patrolling as large an area as possible but in concentrating on areas small enough to be administered permanently with the staff available',¹ or which were of particular economic significance, say, as recruiting grounds.² Nevertheless, the display of force the Marists had been able to summon was sufficient to impress the Buin with the danger of actively opposing the mission. When, after Doellinger's withdrawal, Allotte summoned a meeting of local leaders, assuring them that asylum would be granted anyone who required it, all agreed to accept his invitation to resume diplomatic relations. The agreement was sealed by a grant of land for a chapel near Morou and the Marists subsequently moved freely throughout the Buin plain, despite continued feuding between villages. When police were next despatched to Buin, in 1913, it was not to protect the missionaries but because of the changed economic significance of the area. It was to ensure peaceful conditions for the recruiting of labourers required by the new plantations which had grown up on the east coast since 1908, hard on the heels of 'law and order'.³

1

P. Sack, 'Land Law and Land Policy in German New Guinea', in The History of Melanesia, p.8.

2

For example, of an expedition to quell a bush v coast conflict on Buka it was plainly stated that 'Consideration for the unhindered progress in the recruiting of laborers was the primary motive for [the] intervention...': German New Guinea, Annual Report, 1904-5, pp.202-3.

3

Ibid., 1912-3, p.571; C.D. Rowley, The New Guinea Villager (Melbourne, 1965), p.110. For a discussion of the relevance of the Buin feud to the Marist mission, see below pp. 170-5.

Meanwhile, Marist expansion was steady, though uneventful. Further stations were founded at Koromira, south of Kieta, in 1908, at Burunotui, on Buka, in January 1910 and at Torokina, on the west coast of Bougainville, in 1911. Recognizing the progress in the German protectorate, although the Marists had only about 350 baptised converts there by 1910, Forestier transferred his headquarters from Poporang to Kieta at the beginning of that year.

In the British section of the prefecture, however, Marist progress was slight. Forestier had accepted an invitation to visit the north-east coast of Choiseul in 1903, but when the people, who were hoping for a resident missionary to defend them against warlike neighbours, refused to provide children for Poporang, the contact lapsed.¹ Subsequently, in 1905, the Methodists began work in the south of Choiseul. A second Marist visit there in 1909, however, fared no better than the first, while in 1907 and 1908 Marist visitors were also coldly received at the island of Mono. This latter rebuff reflected indigenous politics. The Mono people were unwilling to accept a mission identified with their rivals in the Shortlands. Their reluctance was strengthened by the fear that to do so would stimulate traffic between the two islands, which could lead to the Shortlanders reclaiming land rights abandoned by their forebears, who had migrated from

1

Forestier to Regis, 21 May 1903, A.P.M. OSS 208.

Mono.¹ As for the Shortlands themselves, despite the conversion movement that had begun there in 1909, the new Christians remained apathetic. Nevertheless, between 1910 and 1914 the station at Poporang occupied a place of singular importance in the scheme of Marist activities. It was the base from which was fought the first round of a struggle against the northward advance of Protestant influence.

Directing the Marist effort was Maurice Boch, whom Forestier left at Poporang when he shifted to Kieta. Boch was the most colourful of the Marists to work in the North Solomons. Born in Alsace, he had been a subaltern in a French cavalry regiment when a sermon preached by Bishop Broyer at Sedan in 1897 aroused his interest in the Pacific missions and inspired him to join the Society of Mary. The decision was bitterly opposed both by his allegedly bigoted German Protestant father and by his French Catholic mother, who was counting on his military career to boost the family fortunes.² But to no avail. Boch reached the Solomons

1

Boch to his mother, 13 August 1910, 26 January 1911, O.R.; Boch to Forestier, 1 December 1910, O.R. The Methodists had visited Mono in 1905: Luxton, Isles of Solomon, p.103. Early Marist visits are described in 'Journal of J. Forestier', 27 August 1907, 28 October 1908, O.R. For observations on Mono suspicions of Shortland see Heffernan to Woodford, 9 October 1911, encl. May to C.O., 21 December 1911 (confidential), C.O. 225/98; Woodford to May, 9 November 1911, encl. May to C.O., 6 January 1912 (confidential), C.O. 225/103.

2

Boch to Forestier, 26 April 1907, O.R.

in 1908, where he soon became a popular figure. Among the islanders he had a reputation for openhandedness, while in 1916 the European residents of the Shortland Islands district petitioned Forestier not to transfer him to Buka.¹ Among his colleagues he was known for his fondness of classical music, for his carefully waxed moustaches and for his urbanity, a quality well illustrated by his musing on being alone:

Does solitude depress me? Not at all! For despite having no socius I have a companion, my pipe, my very dear pipe which, humanly speaking, satisfies me completely. There was a time when, sporting a mane like a horse and with natural teeth, I was well equipped to conquer pretty features and worthy qualities. But were I still marriageable, instead of being a Marist, and was my hair still elaborately done, and did my mouth contain an ivory keyboard instead of black, furrowed stumps, I would prefer my pipe to the prettiest girls in the world...Would it not be wise for the next chapter to prescribe the pipe for all Marists? This move would at once double our forces, and would thus provide a socius at all stations.²

Boch was, however, also a man of combative dislikes in whom, not surprisingly in view of his background, detestation of Germany was exceeded only by his obsessive horror of Protestants. Thus, despite the previous rebuffs, a rumoured Methodist occupation of Mono induced

1

Nathaniel Crichlow and thirteen others to Forrestier [sic], 29 June 1916, O.R.

2

Boch to Rausch, 15 February 1914, P.V.M. (translation).

him to visit the island again in 1910 and to place a catechist there. But the man was ignored and in 1911 Mono accepted the Methodists. Three years ^{later}, Boch was more successful in winning two of the three villages on Fauro, an island thirteen miles east of Shortland which the Marists had neglected until the Methodists showed interest in it.¹

But it was on Choiseul that competition became most heated. A new opportunity for the Marists to enter there occurred when a youth from the north-west coast who had committed some offence in his village found his way to Poporang in 1911. In February 1912 he was sent home, laden with gifts for his elders; and in September Boch followed him, distributing tobacco and briskly, as he said, 'opening fire on the Methodists'. The barrage was successful and Boch obtained an option on land at the mouth of the Tambatamba river, opposite an islet occupied by a Tongan Methodist teacher. However, returning in November, he found the owners professing unwillingness to sell. The reason was soon apparent. Two weeks after Boch's previous visit John F. Goldie the Chairman of the Methodist Mission (in Boch's view 'a heinous miscreant' and 'the demon of Rubiana') had returned the fire. He had rebuked the trader who had taken Boch to Choiseul, had snatched medals from people wearing them, and had brow-beaten the would-be land sellers into retracting their offer. Then, turning to the Resident Magistrate

1

Boch to his mother, 24 March 1912, 8 March 1914, O.R.

at Gizo, N.S. Heffernan, he informed him of the retraction; charged that, in any case, Boch had bribed men of no account to 'sell' land they did not own; and, finally, threatened that if the Marists did move into Choiseul he would station European missionaries at Tambatamba and on Shortland, in which event, trouble could be expected.¹ Taking Goldie at his word, Heffernan asked Boch to withdraw, only to be told that Catholics could not in conscience accept 'spheres of influence' and that to do so in the present instance 'would [make Choiseul] our Fashoda, and its few thousand inhabitants would be forever lost to God!²

A court of enquiry, however, vindicated Boch's stand, finding Goldie to be 'quite in the wrong and the facts... not as [he had] stated.' The land had been freely offered by the rightful owners and the retraction, as the Tongan teacher deposed, arose from Goldie's threats, the Tambatamba people being prepared to 'tell [Europeans] anything for peace sake'. But Boch's victory was largely lost in the peace, for the Marists, concentrating on Bougainville and Buka, were unable to keep the Choiseul post effectively manned.³ From January to September 1914

1

Boch to his mother, 29 June 1909, 8 September 1912, 20 October 1912, 1 December 1912, O.R.; Goldie to Heffernan, 14 December 1912 (two letters), encl. Sweet-Escott to C.O., 20 May 1913, C.O., 20 May 1913, C.O. 225/116.

2

Letter of Boch, 16 October 1912 (translation), A.P.M. OSS 208; Boch to Raffin, 11 February 1913, O.R.

3

Boch to his mother, 25 February 1913, O.R.; Heffernan to Woodford, 26 February 1913, encl. Sweet-Escott to C.O., 20 May 1913, C.O. 225/116.

Joseph Bertin resided at Tambatamba, until being invalided to Sydney, and for the next six years Choiseul's few Catholics were ministered to from Poporang. Then, in 1920, after a chapel at Warisi was violated by Methodists, Albert Binois was transferred from Buka to Tambatamba. But he was transferred to Poporang in 1925, and Choiseul again received only sporadic Marist visits until Binois was permanently re-stationed there in 1931.¹ Religious rivalry, meanwhile, had reached a peak in Bougainville.

Six weeks after the outbreak of war in Europe in August 1914 Australian troops overwhelmed a token force at Rabaul to take control of German New Guinea.² A military administration remained in charge until 1921, when Australia received the territory from the League of Nations to govern as a class C Mandate. The direct impact on the Marist mission of the change from German rule was slight. The missionaries, even the French ones, resented the suspiciousness with which the Australians at first regarded them, but only one, a German lay-brother, Franz Gickshaff, refused to take the oath of neutrality and was deported.³ In 1924 two minor land claims were

1

'Journal of Choiseul', O.R.; Boch to his mother, 9 September 1920. A.P.M. OSS 418; A Binois, 'Histoire de la mission de Choiseul', M.C., 1925, pp.474-6, 489.

2

S.S. Mackenzie, The Australians at Rabaul (Sydney 1927), passim.

3

Waché to Courtais, 27 December 1914, P.V.M.

disallowed, but in 1925 two leases (Muguai and Turiboiru) were converted to freehold and three new freeholds (Monoitu, Mamaregu, and Sovele) were acquired in south Bougainville in consideration for the mission's ceding a large part of the Patupatuai property to the administration.¹ In 1926, in accordance with the German Missions Ordinance, which applied to the whole territory, title to all Marist property reverted to the administration which forthwith relinquished control to a board of trustees belonging to the mission.² German traders, by contrast, were expropriated and deported. Yet in the records of the Marists the transition to Australian rule figures as a major disaster. It is alleged to have resulted in a change of policy whereby Protestant missionaries were allowed to enter Bougainville and Buka in the 1920s. But the validity of this charge - which aroused Marist distrust of the Australian administration - is doubtful.

That Protestants had not worked in the German Solomons is a fact. That they had been officially excluded is, however, unproven, as is the corollary that the Marists had been accorded an exclusive right to evangelize the area. Von Richthofen's promise of a monopoly to Broyer in 1897 - the force of which may be questioned since the Neuguinea-Kompagnie was at that

1

Boch to Rausch, 12 October 1924, 7 June 1925, P.V.M.; Boch to Poncelet et al, 9 February 1936, A.P.M. OSS 800.

2

Commonwealth of Australia, German Missions Ordinance, no.6 of 1926.

time responsible for governing the territory - stands alone. It is not recorded as being repeated by any of the Governors of New Guinea. Their encouraging the Marists to acquire stations was, however, noted several times - in 1901, 1903 and 1909. Similarly, after meeting officials in Berlin in 1900, Flaus mentions being assured of access to land, but says nothing of monopoly.¹ Moreover, if the Marists did have a guaranteed monopoly Forestier was apparently unsure of it in 1905 when he wrote:

It is necessary that our missionaries occupy the chief parts of Bougainville and prevent the infiltration of Protestants.²

Nevertheless, other Marists - and well before there were Protestants in the prefecture - had been convinced that they possessed such a guarantee. Possibly they were thinking of the 1897 promise, although Boch states that the assurance was given to Flaus. All agree that it was given verbally.³

Whether or not the Marists did have an official monopoly, their opinion that they had was undoubtedly strengthened by their enjoyment of a de facto one. This,

1

Flaus to Martin, 18 May 1900 A.P.M. G 408. Flaus had returned to Germany to begin the Marist house there. He returned to the Solomons in 1906.

2

Forestier to Marion, 5 June 1905, A.M.O., vol.XI (translation).

3

Boch to his mother, 8 December 1908, O.R.; letter of Allotte, 1912, A.P.M. OSM 208; 'Journal of J. Forestier, 25 October 1916, 2 April 1918, O.R.; Boch to O'Reilly, 5 February 1935, O.R.

in turn, may be accounted for by the fact that their most obvious potential rivals, the Methodists, were too busy elsewhere; until 1916 the German Solomons were within the short-staffed New Britain Methodist district. Moreover, no evidence has been found to suggest that Methodists from New Britain were ever refused entry to the Solomons. It was not until 1914 that, with the progress of Goldie's mission in New Georgia, the Methodists seriously began to consider extending their work to Bougainville. For with the taking of Mono they were assured of a good reception in the Siwai district, west of Buin in south Bougainville, with which Mono had close trading relations. (Shortland, on the other hand, and whose trading route the Marists had followed to Bougainville, traded with Buin). It is noteworthy, in view of the Marist pretensions, that the Methodists claimed to have had the approval of the German authorities for their planned advance - which, in fact, began in 1916.¹ That year Methodist boundaries were altered to include the former German Solomons in the New Georgia district and the first indigenous Methodist teachers entered Siwai from Mono. Theirs was a brief sortie, for the alleged involvement of one of them in a local feud, following their advance into Buin in 1917, led to their expulsion in March 1918.² But the Marist respite was likewise brief. For the teachers returned to Siwai in

1

Wheen to Cox, 21 March 1914, 25 July 1914, Mitchell Library, Methodist Overseas Mission, Letter Books; Luxton, Isles of Solomon, p.104; Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions', p.307-8.

2

'Journal of J. Forestier', 11, 16 November, 12 December 1917, O.R.; 'Journal of J.B. Poncelet,' 10, 22, 27, 29 March 1918, O.R.

1920 and were soon followed by European missionaries. In 1922 A.H. Cropp, with three Fijian teachers, settled at Skotolan, on the west coast of Buka; in 1924 H.G. Brown settled at Teop Island, opposite Numanuma; and in 1926 A.H. Voyce began a station at Tonu in Siwai.¹ A third mission came to Bougainville in 1924 when one Sekata of Lavelai, a village on the south-east coast, disenchanted with the Marists, called in the S.D.A.s. He did so on the recommendation of a local man who had come under S.D.A. influence while working at Tulagi.²

In centring their work on Buka, the east coast of Bougainville and south Bougainville the Protestant missions were far from encountering, as has been suggested, 'a field of almost virgin soil for missionary enterprise.'² The truly virgin fields were the north-west and south-west of Bougainville and the mountains of the interior, but the newcomers entered areas where contact with the Marists was already extensive. This is suggested by certain figures: Patupatuai, with over 700 living Catholics in 1920, had by that time recorded a total of 985 baptisms, fifty-two of whom were Siwai baptized between 1912 and 1917; Koromira, where ninety-five boys were at school in 1912, had recorded 688 baptisms by

1

Luxton, Isles of Solomon, p.120, 124-9.

2

The invitation to the S.D.A.s is reproduced in Appendix C; Charles H. Watson, Cannibals and Headhunters (Washington, 1926), pp.264 ff.

3

Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions', pp.307-8.

1920, as compared with 616 at Kieta; while in 1915 Burunotui began installing ex-schoolboys as catechists in the main villages of Buka where, by 1922, there were 530 baptized Catholics.¹

Naturally, the Protestant advance met a vigorous Marist response. This was directed by Boch, who had returned temporarily to France in 1918, anxious, as he said, to help return Teutonic glory to the past and to avenge the destruction of the cathedral of Rheims, in which he had been ordained.² He had enlisted in the French army but the Armistice was signed before he reached the battle lines. However, on returning to the Solomons in 1920 as prefect apostolic, Forestier having died in 1918, Boch found ample scope for his unexpended belligerence. Fore-warned by the 'raid' of 1916-18, he anticipated the main Protestant attack. Consciously disregarding the celebrated rule that Marists should not be deployed singly he broke up communities in order to increase the number of posts they occupied on

1

These figures are drawn from statistical summaries, A.P.M. OSS 3321; baptismal register, Turiboiru; G. Schank, 'Histoire de Koromira', 1924, O.R. The first catechist appointments on Buka were: 1915 - Gagan, Hahalis; 1917 - Pororan, Hanahan; 1919 - Lontis, Hitau; 1920 - Lemankoa, Lemanmanu, Tohatsi: Paul Montauban, 'Historique de la mission Catholique de Buka', 1924, pp.8-9. O.R.

2

Boch to Forestier, 18 September 1914, O.R.; Boch to procurator, 29 October 1914, 15 April 1915, P.V.M.

Bougainville and Buka, from six in 1920 to twelve in 1924.¹ He abandoned the coast station of Patupatuai and scattered the missionaries through the less accessible but more populous inland areas of the south Bougainville plain - Muguai in 1921 and Turiboiru and Monoitu (Siwai) in 1922. Leon Chaize, at Torokina since 1910, was appointed to Sipai on the then unpacified north-west coast of Bougainville in 1921 but, finding the people menacing and unfriendly, he withdrew after some months and went on to Buka. Here, as in Buin, the original station, Burunotui, was replaced by three new posts in 1922 - Gagan, in the centre of the island, and Lemanmanu and Hanahan on the cliff tops of the north and east, respectively. And in 1923 one of the two priests at Tinputz, a station begun in 1920 on the north-east coast of Bougainville, was placed at Teop a few miles to the south.² Furthermore, taking advantage of their traditional trading links with Lemanmanu and Hanahan, respectively, Boch also extended Marist influence to the outlying islands of Nissan and the Carterets. The first, which he had visited in 1917, received catechists in 1926, and the second in 1928.³

1

Boch to Raffin, 9 August 1921, O.R. Boch was forced to defend this breach of Marist custom and to give assurances (which were unrealized) that it would be rectified: Boch to Rieu, 22 November 1926, O.R.; Boch to Dubois, 2 January 1927, O.R.

2

P.A. North Solomons, 'Rapport quinquennal au Propagande, 1922,' O.R.; J.B. Poncelet, 'A retourner à Turiboiru', 1935, O.R.

3

Boch to Forestier, 19 October 1917, O.R.; Boch to Rausch, 8 January 1929, P.V.M.; Conley to Dubois, 12 September 1939, A.P.M. OSM 208; Tippet, Solomon Islands Christianity, pp.185-7. Forestier had visited Nissan and the Carterets briefly in 1909 en route to New Britain: 'Journal of J. Forestier', 13-14 March 1909, O.R.

Having re-deployed his existing forces Boch proceeded to augment them - through systematic catechist training. For this purpose, Burunotui was reopened as a school in January 1924, and sixty-five pupils embarked on a three-year course of catechetics and the 'three R's' under the direction of Thomas Wade, a newly arrived American, the mission's first English-speaking priest and later its first bishop. The outstanding feature of the catechist school was that in order to counter the prestige enjoyed by the Methodists by virtue of the fact that they knew English, which many of the young people wished to learn, Wade also taught English.¹ This threat to the appeal of Catholicism became more explicit with the arrival of the S.D.A.s, who made a point of teaching English, so that as more English-speaking Marists joined the Mission Boch employed them as he had Wade. A second American, John Conley, arrived in 1926 and was appointed to begin a second 'English' school at Patupatuai, drawing his pupils from the stations of south Bougainville. But this plan foundered when the Marist authorities in Europe insisted that he be placed with a socius. Accordingly, Conley was stationed at Turiboiru. Here, until he replaced Wade in 1928, he was forced to operate a purely local school - for boys from Kieta, Koromira, and even Siwai refused to dwell inland amidst people they distrusted.² In his turn, Emmet McHardy,

1

Boch to Rausch, 20 October 1923, P.V.M. The significance of the islanders' desire to learn English is discussed below pp.181 ff.

2

Boch to Dubois, 28 November 1925, O.R.; Boch to Poncelet, 26 July 1926, O.R.

a New Zealander who arrived in 1929, was put to teaching English at Tunuru, in order to combat S.D.A. influence in the mountains behind Kieta.¹ And James McConville, an Irishman, conducted an 'English' school at Katuka in Siwai from 1931 to 1932, when, the pressure having eased, all catechist training was centralized under his charge at Chabai in north Bougainville.²

Meanwhile, to make the most effective use of the catechists - of whom there were 356 by 1935, most of them formally trained - Boch had directed that every station district be sub-divided into sectors, each under the control of a Head Catechist assisted by a number of subordinates. Each catechist was to instruct the people in the village in which he resided and to resist Protestant influence in the neighbourhood. And once a month the Head Catechists were gathered at the mission station to report on events in their sectors and to receive instructions. In return for these services, Head Catechists were paid 10/- per month and their assistants 5/-, both amounts being supplemented by payments in kind, two calicos (loin cloths) per month and two sticks of tobacco per week. However, during the depression of the early 1930s, these wages were reduced

1

Wade to Rausch, January 1929, P.V.M.; McHardy to seminarians, 16 June 1929, A.P.M. OSS 208. McHardy was the first New Zealand Catholic priest to become a 'foreign missionary'.

2

J. Schlieker, 'Methodism in South Bougainville'; and 'The Catholic Mission of Siwai', Lebel Papers. Interview with Fr J. McConville (Tsiroge).

to a general rate of 10/- per four months, plus ten sticks of tobacco and three issues of calico.¹

Besides reorganizing their own forces for defence, the Marists also challenged their rivals directly. Boch fired the first shot in 1922 when, emulating Goldie's action of 1913, he protested that Cropp had used threats to acquire land at Skotolan. But, as had happened on Choiseul, an official investigation disproved the charge.² Nevertheless, opportunism continued to flourish. In 1925, during Cropp's temporary absence to get married, Leon Chaize, at Gagan, welcomed the chance to 'make a series of excursions into his little domain'; in 1929 Charles Seiller manhandled S.D.A. teachers out of a Catholic village near Kieta; while in 1939 at Konua, on the north-west coast of Bougainville, another Marist, Adam Muller, finding a newly built but unpaid-for Methodist chapel in a village 'paid for it, made an altar and blessed it as a Catholic chapel.'³ For his part, Cropp was alleged to have claimed that the Marist lotu, belonging to the days of German rule, had no place in an Australian territory. Certainly, in 1929 Boch found it expedient to send McHardy around the vicariate 'as living

1

Boch, Lettre Circulaire, no.12, 20 June 1925, O.R.; V.A. North Solomons, 'Quinquennial Report to Propaganda, 1935,' p.8, O.R.

2

'Journal of J.B. Poncelet', 22, 24 September 1922, O.R.; Rev. A.H. Cropp, personal communication.

3

Chaize to Dubois, 1 March 1925, O.R. (translation); Boch to Dubois, 26 January 1929, O.R.; A. Muller, 'Histoire de la mission de Kunua', Lebel Papers (translation).

propaganda to show that the Catholic Church really can embrace a Britisher or two'. The Marists were also embarrassed by the rumour that Cropp's followers would know English within a few months, and would then be exempt from government taxation.¹ While at Tunuru in 1931, McHardy complained, New Zealand's disastrous Napier earthquake, in which several of his former colleagues were killed and the Marist seminary destroyed, was tellingly represented by the S.D.A.s as proof of divine displeasure with the Marists.²

However, feelings ran most high in Siwai where the Methodists who, thanks to their Mono connections, eventually attracted half the population, were reinforced by an influx of teachers from New Georgia in 1928. The Marists were ready for them. The year before Boch had equipped a squad of catechists in south Bougainville with bicycles in order that they might the more quickly visit threatened villages, challenge Protestant emissaries and report back to their priest. And in November 1928 he issued instructions that forceful

1

Montauban, 'Historique de la mission catholique de Buka', p.10, O.R.; Emmet McHardy, Blazing the Trail (Providence, R.I., 1935), p.25. The extent to which such stories were a distortion of Cropp's words is not known. Probably it was considerable. Yet they are significant for besides suggesting what various islanders thought he had said they helped shape the Marists' view of their own vulnerability and of the counter-action that needed to be taken. Bold claims for the benefits of Methodist schooling also worried the Marists in Siwai. See, for example, Boch to Schlieker, 22 February 1936, O.R.

2

McHardy to Schaefer, 14 February 1931, A.P.M. OSS 208.

catechists, 'even insufficiently trained ones', be placed in each village and that station work be subordinated to visiting, even if it meant making the schoolboys 'a troop of peripatetic scouts accompanying the [priests]...from village to village'.¹ Visiting Siwai two months later and observing the graceless competitiveness with which the rival missions sought to extend their influence, the Government Anthropologist was told that the 'seeds of [sectarian] conflict were actually on the point of germinating into violence.' He suggested to Boch that the missions reach a modus vivendi, only to be told:

If the Protestants wish to have peace with us, let them go where we are not...; where our influence is established...there will be a fight for each individual village if necessary.

Indeed, fighting did break out shortly afterwards when Methodist and Catholic factions destroyed each other's chapels at Osokoli and Hukuha - thus hastening the appointment of a Judicial Commission (conducted by Judge Phillips of Rabaul) to investigate the situation. No official rulings emerged from the Commission which, noting wrongs on both sides, considered the Marists most to blame for transmitting their animosities to their

1

Boch to Propaganda, 28 August 1926, O.R.; Boch, Lettre Circulaire, no.27, 29 November 1928, P.V.M. (translation).

followers.¹ The display of government interest in mission activities (and the threat of further action it was thought to contain) did, however, have a pacifying effect. Rivalry continued in Siwai into the 1930s. But it was more discreet and, indeed, decreased as the number of people uncovered to one side or the other declined.

Also conducive to the lowering of tension was the less truculent lead given to the Marists by Wade, who succeeded Boch in 1930. In that year Wade was consecrated bishop and the Prefecture Apostolic of the North Solomons was elevated to the status of a vicariate. But Wade did adopt Boch's expansion policy. He continued to scatter missionaries singly, but with the difference that his purpose was less to hold ground already won than to extend Marist influence into hitherto neglected areas which in the 1930s were being opened up by government patrols completing the task of pacification. Thus were founded

1

E.W. Pearson Chinnery, Notes on the Natives of South Bougainville and Mortlocks (Taku) (Canberra, n.d.), p.87; Boch to Dubois, 26 January 1929, O.R. (translation); 'Journal of J.B. Poncelet', 2 January - 6 April 1929, O.R.; Judge Phillips, 'Report of Commission into Policies and Activities of Missions in the District of Kieta', 26 April 1929, O.R. Chinnery's report contains a notable chronological error. It states (p.69) that he was in south Bougainville between 24 November 1929 and 11 March 1930. The years cited should, in fact, be 1928 and 1929 as the following points indicate: Poncelet dined with Chinnery on 6 January 1929, Boch spoke to him a few days before 26 January 1929, and on p.88 the report itself states that Chinnery was in Siwai in December 1928. Moreover, the official enquiry 'into the whole question of local mission expansion' which Chinnery says he is going to recommend (p.87) occurred during March and April 1929. Oliver, A Solomon Island Society, pp.313-4, thus errs in assigning Chinnery's visit and the enquiry to 1930.

stations at Sovele, in the Nagovisi district, in 1930; at Sipai and Kuraio in north-west Bougainville in 1934 and 1941, respectively, and at Asitavi in 1935 to serve the mountainous areas behind Numanuma. Attention was also given to the remoter parts of the vicariate, and in 1939 John Conley was stationed at Nissan, where he was joined by Florent Waché in 1941.

By 1942 the Marists' net had - except for the Anglican and Methodist heartlands in the centre of the group - been spread throughout the Solomon Islands. In terms of material and personnel this was an impressive achievement, involving about 120 missionaries stationed at thirty-four posts - twenty-two in the North Solomons and twelve in the South. It was, however, an essentially limited achievement. And although the pattern of its growth had been influenced to an appreciable extent by indigenous demands the maintenance of the network, no less than its construction, was dependent almost wholly on the continued supply of European resources. Nevertheless station-building had largely achieved its primary purpose, so that when Marist missionaries were again forced to flee the Solomon Islands they left behind them a considerable flock that called itself Catholic.

CHAPTER IVEVANGELIZATION, 1898 - 1942

In 1942, after forty-four years of Marist evangelism, there were well over 30,000 Solomon Islanders who were baptized Catholics. Two-thirds of these were in the Vicariate Apostolic of the North Solomons.¹ At the same time another 50,000 islanders were adherents of one or other of the four Protestant missions.² The Marists' followers had, therefore, been gathered out of a broad movement in which almost half of the total population of the group had turned from paganism to Christianity. The extent of the movement was, moreover, magnified by the fact that the bulk of the Christians belonged to the younger age groups. Clearly, then, Catholicism entered the Solomon Islands at a time when Christianity generally was in the ascendant and when, as the ubiquity of the movement suggests, similar forces were operating to produce both Catholics and Protestants. For which branch of Christianity Solomon Islanders accepted was largely adventitious, and depended less on theological differences between the various missions, than on where they located their activities. This in turn, was governed, as was shown in the previous chapter, by a

1

For statistical summaries of Catholic growth in the Solomon Islands see Appendices G-M.

2

Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions', p.545.

variety of factors independent of the creed professed by the missionary.

Thus, the increase in the number of Catholics steadily followed in the wake of Marist expansion. In the Vicariate Apostolic of the South Solomons by 1918, twenty years after the Marists' arrival at Rua Sura, nearly 3,000 Catholics were claimed for Guadalcanal, nearly 300 for San Cristobal and only 136 for Malaita. By 1936 the situation had changed notably, on all islands. Although Catholics now exceeded 5,000 on Guadalcanal they had risen to 3,000 on Malaita, while by 1947 Malaita, with nearly 6,000, was ahead of Guadalcanal.¹ Meanwhile, from about 1920, the increase in the North Solomons outstripped that in the southern vicariate as the Marists, with twenty years start on their Protestant rivals and a less dispersed population to deal with than their confrères in the South, intensified their activities in Bougainville and Buka. In 1920 the North had just over 4,000 Catholics, but by 1936 this figure had grown to more than 21,000.² Such figures suggest the rate at which Solomon Islanders became Catholics during the primary period of evangelization up to 1942, by which time growth rates were tending to stabilize. The degree of competition the Marists had to face during that period and the

1

V.A. South Solomons, 'Rapport au Propagande, 1918', A.P.M. OSM 208; statistical summaries, *ibid.*

2

Statistical summaries, Lebel Papers.

allocation of their efforts are more clearly reflected in the proportion of Catholics in the population of the various islands. Thus, in 1957, the year for which fullest statistics are available, there were no Catholics in Ysabel, New Georgia or Gela. At the same time, Buka and Bougainville were underestimated at sixty-three per cent Catholic. However, Malaita, with a comparable population, but where the Marists were preceded by the Melanesian Mission and the S.S.E.M. and which, moreover, they neglected in favour of Guadalcanal was, proportionally, slightly more Catholic than Choiseul. These figures are summarized in the following table:

TABLE 1

The distribution of Catholics in the principal
Solomon Islands, 1957.

Islands	Catholics	Total pop.	% Catholic
Bougainville and Buka	32,500 ⁺	51,608	63 ⁺
Choiseul	700	4,572	15
Malaita	9,444	46,000	21
Guadalcanal	7,577	14,981	51
San Cristobal	2,138	5,813	37

1

Total population figures for the B.S.I.P. are taken from Allan, Customary Land Tenure, pp.16-17, and Catholic figures are taken from statistical reports in B.A.H., except for Bougainville and Buka, where both sets of figures are taken from Territory of New Guinea, Annual Report, 1956-57, pp.117, 227. The Catholic figure given in the latter report is an understatement. It could be near 40,000. In 1967 Catholics, 54,615, accounted for 80% of the Buka-Bougainville population of 68,046: ibid., 1966-1967, pp.194, 399.

Behind the bland face of these statistics there lies the question, 'How did the Marists obtain their following among the Solomon Islanders'? Why did the missionaries who returned to the Solomons in 1898 succeed where their predecessors had failed? The short answer is that conditions of life in the group had changed: the islanders' needs were greater and the status of Europeans had been elevated. The explanation offered in the present chapter attempts to place the occasions of conversion within the wider framework set by complementary Melanesian and Catholic ideologies and by European impact on the Solomon Islands. These occasions often varied from place to place and from person to person, although material on individual conversions is, unfortunately, extremely limited. Generalization, however, is facilitated by the occurrence of the conversion movement less as a congeries of individually discrete religious experiences than as a popular acculturative reaction to a widely prevailing situation.

In its most literal sense 'conversion' implies 'turning from something to something else: you put earlier loyalties behind you.'¹ In the present study this is taken to mean the Solomon Islanders' acceptance of the religious authority of the missionary and the implied rejection, at least nominally, of behaviour and of aspects of the traditional system of spirituality which

¹

A.D. Nock, Conversion (London, 1961), p.134.

he disallowed. It was formally signified by baptism. The 'inner reality' of conversion so defined is obscured by the disparities of language, culture and religious concepts between the missionary and those he would convert. Nevertheless, both Catholic and Melanesian beliefs were such that they could both conduce to the islanders' sincere and valid adoption of Catholicism, if not to their understanding of it. For the islanders, religion was an intrinsic part of life as it was actually lived - an assortment of assumptions taking their validity from custom and from their ability to provide solutions to problems of the temporal order. It was 'applied' religion, apt to favour the adoption of new and apparently more effective religious allegiances in response to new situations. Catholicism, on the other hand, focussed on beliefs and on certain behavioural norms dictated by an authority which professedly transcended circumstances and which were contained in an abstruse, systematic and literately formulated ideology. Yet this did not impair its comprehensiveness in the Solomon Islands. For within the terms of their theology the Marists could easily accommodate a wide range of motives for conversion. The essential condition, faith in the rightness of Catholic doctrine (which, in practice, meant assent to the missionary's teaching), required a minimum of theological appreciation and was readily satisfied; while sacraments effective ex opere operato could, it was believed, make their sanctifying impact on the soul regardless of deficiencies in the neophyte's understanding. The islanders were also accommodated, and conversion further made to appear less a break with

indigenous custom than an adaptation of it, by overt similarities between Catholicism and their traditional religious beliefs: the externalization of religious power in objects which might be taken as instruments for the dispensing of mana - the Eucharist, blessed medals, Holy Water, rosary beads; the belief in life after death; and the practice of honouring the dead.

The Solomon Islanders' ideological aptitude for conversion to Christianity was activated by social factors. When the Marists returned to the Solomons the adequacy of the islanders' traditional control over their world was being reduced by the introduction of new problems of disease, economic dependence and fear of European wrath. Alternatives to traditional routines and assumptions were being demonstrated, and Europeans were established on a level of authority, well-being and knowledge far superior to that of the indigenes. For instance, in making European goods available as never before the labour trade had (like the Muruans' visit to Sydney) provided irrefutable evidence of the white man's affluence and had yoked the Solomon Islanders to European commerce. It had also offered the disturbing excitement of travel and, for some, means of escaping the discipline of village life.¹ Furthermore, social cohesion and confidence in customary nostrums were weakened by the advent of epidemic diseases such as whooping cough, dysentery, measles, influenza and respiratory infections which could not easily be contained within the framework

1

Scarr, Fragments of Empire, p.145.

of the traditional culture. The scale, course and effects of their impact have not been, and probably cannot be, fully evaluated. Nevertheless, a dispiritingly high incidence of sickness was undoubtedly widespread. According to Woodford, dysentery was comparatively unknown in the British Solomons in 1897, yet in 1914 inter-island recruiting was officially restricted in order to limit the spread of the disease. San Cristobal was particularly hard hit. In 1916 it was reported that 'fully one-third of [its] population have died within the last three or four years principally from dysentery and chest complaints.' In 1920 the island was estimated to have three deaths for each birth.¹ Such a desperate situation, as Guiart noted in respect of New Caledonians threatened with expropriation and the collapse of their way of life, could create the need for new rallying points promising security and hope. This was a role easily filled by Christianity with its offer of a new life as well as membership of a protective institution.²

1

Woodford to Vidal, 22 December 1897 (copy), A.P.M. OSM 800; Barnett to Sweet-Escott, 22 September 1914, W.P.H.C. Inward Correspondence, General, no.2499 of 1914; Campbell to Barnett, 11 November 1916, encl. Barnett to Sweet-Escott, 13 November 1916, *ibid.*, no.3269 of 1916; 'Journal of Wanoni Bay', 1920.

2

Jean Guiart, 'The Millenarian Aspect of Conversion to Christianity in the South Pacific', in Sylvia L. Thrupp (ed.), Millenial Dreams in Action (The Hague, 1962), p.132.

Similar needs were inspired by European power, which was as weighty an element in the indigenes' conception of Europeans as was affluence. While pacification helped free the islanders from fear of their neighbours it generated a painful respect for 'government' and 'police', and a compelling reluctance to incur their displeasure or even to attract their attention. In 1906, therefore, Ruacaz found villagers near Tangarare trembling at his approach simply because he had equipped the crew of his whaleboat with red caps similar to those worn by Woodford's police.¹ And from Marau in 1915, as from Buin in 1934, Marists reported that the threat of police action effectively inhibited the practice of infanticide.² Indeed, this threat, made imminent by

1

Ruacaz to procurator, 10 July 1906, A.M.O., vol.XIII.

2

Bertheux to Bonnet, 4 September 1912, A.M.O., vol.XIII; M.C., 1915, pp.23-4; Annales de Marie, 1935, pp.319-20. The joint opposition of mission and government to violence is reflected by three refrains in a traditional Buin lament for a murdered man:

...murder has become forbidden
since one must follow the paper,
the paper that came from Kieta.

...murder has become forbidden
since Father Allotte* outlawed it,
Allotte* from Koropoo.

...murder has become forbidden
since the kiap outlawed it,
the kiap from Kieta.

- from 'Mikimaka', in Don Laycock, Akaru (Port Moresby, 1969).

* The published text mistakenly has 'Aloysius' instead of 'Allotte' ('Aarotie').

the missionaries' frequent readiness to 'turn informer' in such matters, was a potent inducement to the abandonment of customary violence of various kinds in all parts of the group.

The new maladies, cupidity and fear did not invariably or immediately impel people towards the missionary. He could, as has been seen, be blamed for illness, spurned if goods were available from other sources, and resented because of punitive actions. For instance, the Marists at Marau were severely embarrassed in 1913 when two leading men fell ill after attending Mass, the illness being attributed to the fact that their spirits did not wish them to become Christian.¹ Nevertheless, in general, the existence of widespread and enduring problems beyond the competence of indigenous solutions overshadowed particular vindications of the spirits' power and provided abundant occasions for seeking mission assistance.

This seeking, moreover, at least at the level of conversion, cannot be explained in purely secular terms. And even the act of initially welcoming a missionary - even where clearly motivated by the desire for tobacco - may well have had religious implications. For, as contact increased, Europeans developed a mystique. This was temporarily seen in the case of the Muruans, who had initially found their first missionaries unimpressive beings. And John Renton reported similarly disdainful

1

Letter of Allet, January 1913, A.P.M. OSM 208.

opinions from Malaita, where he lived as a castaway from 1868 to 1875:

The whiteman only presented himself to them as a nomadic race eternally roving about over the sea in his big canoes.

If the whiteman had any island at all, they argued, it must be a very small one - much smaller than their Malayta - their magnificent Malayta - otherwise they would not require to leave it and come trading for yams and coconuts.¹

Yet this prejudice was soon replaced by such a passion for recruiting that the eventual cessation of the Queensland labour trade was to be a cause of lasting bitterness on Malaita.² And, at length,^{not} only did the white man's 'island' cease to be despised but on his authority, even more remote parts such as Heaven and Hell were appropriately admired or feared. As early as 1882 Gorai recognized the changing situation when he deprecated the inferior position of his race in 1882 with the remark 'White man, he savey too much. Poor black man! He no savey nothing.'³ Wonderment at the sight of church statues and European buildings later implied a similar respect.⁴ Moreover, the symbols of European

1

J.G. Marwick, The Adventures of John Renton (Kirkwall, 1935), p.37.

2

Charles Fox, The Story of the Solomons (Taroaniara, 1967), p.65.

3

Guppy, The Solomon Islands and Their Natives, p.22.

4

For examples see above, p.101; letter of Sr Irenée, 2 April 1905, A.M.O., vol.XI; Ernault to Rausch, 31 January 1925, P.V.M.

power, though feared, were also admired, so that the missionary, already esteemed as a protector, was able to profit from his association with them.

Thus, even the worldly-wise Shortlanders were said to be impressed with the worth of the Catholic religion when the Resident Magistrate from Gizo attended Mass at Poporang in 1908.¹ Similarly, on Guadalcanal about the same time the Marists, most of whom had completed a two-year term of military training in the French army, were acclaimed for having been soldiers, a distinction which helped offset the disadvantage, then being alleged by Anglican sympathizers, of their not being British. As one Marist, Jean Boudard, wrote in 1909:

...one of the first questions which is often asked of you is this 'Have you been a soldier?' Good for you if you can reply affirmatively. You will immediately be classified as 'a strong, brave man'. Your prestige will be established. Everywhere it will be said 'He has been a soldier'.

In addition to their assumed military prowess the ex-soldiers were esteemed for the courage they were thought to display in visiting strange villages and in their not being deterred by difficulties of terrain : 'often people have said to me [continued Boudard], "You walk well, you cross rivers in fine style, but then you have been a soldier"'.² The Solomon Islanders'

1

Boch to his mother, June 1908, O.R.

2

Boudard to Montauban, 5 March 1909, A.P.M. OSM 208 (translation). Similar points are made in Raucaz to his sister, 8 May 1907, A.M.O. vol.XII; Bertin to procurator, 3 November 1908, ibid.

respect for superior power was also strikingly (and, for the Marists, somewhat embarrassingly) reflected in the North Solomons in scorn for Germany after her defeat in World War I. On account of this feeling - and of its converse, esteem for the victors and, by association, for their language - Boch found it expedient to appoint his German missionaries to work among the less sophisticated villagers. Thus, he was forced to inform the Marist superiors (although his own personal anti-German prejudice seems never to have affected relations within the mission) that:

The Germans can be used in the south and in the west of Bougainville and in the east as far north as Kieta...but it is important that all the northern part be worked by the Anglo-American element....As to the English part of the prefecture (Shortlands and Choiseul), there again priests of the English language are desired by the natives. The heads of these people were so turned against the Germans by the war that the arrival of missionaries of that nationality would be seriously prejudicial to the mission....The Germans can succeed very well among the bushmen, but for the civilized natives it is necessary to increase the English element.¹

In the Solomon Islands' context admiration for the white man's attainments implied regard for his mana and, hence, recognition of the superiority of his religion - with a corresponding loss of confidence in the traditional one. For, as Freytag has it, in a world where secular and religious were fused :

¹

Boch to Dubois, 7 May 1929, O.R. (translation).

...the presence of the white man and all the new things and conditions which accompany him are of religious significance.¹

He was more powerful and more prosperous than the indigenes and yet was un beholden to their spirits. This situation established the logical propriety of conversion - which would be acted upon when circumstances made it desirable to do so. This is ⁱⁿ turn, was largely determined at the family or village levels, with the young being surrendered for mission membership as acquaintance with the missionary increased, and with their elders following as the need arose. Loyalty to kinsmen generally ensured that members of the group adopted the same allegiance as their fellows.² Mass conversion movements were comparatively rare and it is significant that the most notable ones, which occurred in south Bougainville and Buka, each involved a large population closely settled on easy terrain and possessing larger political units than were usual in most parts of the Solomons.³

If conditions in the Solomon Islands had changed, so, too, had the approach of the Marists. Those who worked in the group from 1898 onwards were cast in a different mould from their confrères who earlier had

1

Walter Freytag, Spiritual Revolution in the East (London, 1940), p.165.

2

Cyril S. Belshaw, Changing Melanesia (Melbourne, 1954), pp.3-4.

3

These movements are discussed below pp.170-3, 185-7.

suffered fruitlessly in the vicariate of Melanesia. The missionaries' concern with their personal sanctity had now become far less conspicuous and while they still viewed their vocation in strictly religious terms these were of a less naive, less enthusiastic, less hopeful but more pastoral kind. For by the end of the nineteenth century, the Society of Mary had had six decades of practical, sobering experience in the Pacific missions. The difficulties of the situation were known. The jurisdiction dispute - essentially a teething problem - had been long settled, and pious illusions had been shattered. For much of what the Marists had achieved in New Zealand had been destroyed by the Maori wars of the 1860s and, while slow progress had been made in New Caledonia, Protestant predominance remained unshaken in Fiji, Samoa and Tonga. Moreover, the exhilarating prospects of martyrdom and mass conversion had been replaced by the example of long and patient careers like those of 'Captain' Brehérent in Fiji or of Father Breton, 'the hermit of Vavau', in Tonga.¹ At the same time the Society of Mary had grown to strong maturity and, spreading beyond France, was recruiting members in many countries of Europe and the English-speaking world. There was, therefore, as the changing racial composition of the missionaries subsequently attested, no

1

A. Monfat, Les Tonga ou Archipel des Amis (Lyons, 1893), p.412; Anon., The Marist Missions in the South Seas (Lyons, 1932), pp.36, 40-4.

fear that the supply of Marists for the Solomons might dry up.¹

Such considerations sustained a missionary approach that was paternalistic, pragmatic and minimal - unambitious beyond the task of evangelization. Thus, after about thirty years on Guadalcanal, Jean Boudard was unconcerned that 'it needed three generations at least to bring the true meaning of Christianity to the people.'² As for developing an indigenous clergy the possibility was not seriously voiced until 1939, in Wade's report to Propaganda.³ In 1848, in contrast, when the Marists were still hopeful of success at Murua, Montrouzier had written:

... all the future is in the young.
We are working zealously to instruct
them so as to make catechists. And
who knows if later it will not be given
us to realize the wishes of the Holy See
and form priests among them, and thus
naturalize the Catholic Church in these
parts.⁴

¹

For details of individual missionaries see Appendices Ai-iv.

²

D.C. Horton, The Happy Isles (London, 1965), p.135.

³

V.A. North Solomons, 'Report to Propaganda, 1939',
A.P.M. OSS 12jo.

⁴

Montrouzier to his parents, 25 April 1848, A.P.M.
OSM 208 (translation).

Yet in 1928 Boch would state that the Melanesians simply lacked the intelligence for priesthood. At the same time, however, he confessed to being more than satisfied with their unquestioning if uncomprehending belief:

They love the Catechism, especially the illustrated Catechism; they accept the Faith without difficulty because it is sufficient to believe, 'beati qui non viderunt et crediderunt'...¹

This position was underpinned, of course, by the assurance that the power of the sacraments made up for deficiencies in the neophyte's understanding. Since Baptism guaranteed membership of the True Church little needed to be asked - nor, in fact, was asked - of those who would be Catholics.

Marist tolerance owed little to anthropological study. Their correspondence betrays no acquaintance with anthropological literature, and anthropology has never been part of their training. Indeed, with few exceptions they have, in the Solomons at least, been strikingly uninterested in it. Studying the native cultures has been a hobby, a foible, that individuals might indulge if they chose. Thus, shortly after his transfer from Buka to Nissan in 1939, John Conley wrote:

I am interested in ethnology in so far as it directly effects my work but have no desire to collect native stories, songs etc., except as a favour for someone else.

¹

P.A. North Solomons, 'Rapport au Propagande, 1928', O.R. (translation).

He gladly left such diversions to '...our anthropologist, Father Montauban'.¹ Not surprisingly, therefore, the Marists' direct contribution to the scientific knowledge of the Solomons - the publication of a few grammars, vocabularies and legends - has been extremely limited.² Nevertheless, Dr C.E. Fox, who called the Marists 'the best linguists in the Group', also asserted that there have been few Europeans who have known so much about the people.³

To this end the steady multiplication of mission stations served the Marists well. It put them as closely in touch with the villages as their numbers would allow, an objective the Marists also sought - in accordance with the established Catholic missionary practice - by their use, as far as possible, of the local languages in their dealings with the islanders. Usually a different language, and sometimes more than one, was used at each station. In the North Solomons vernaculars began to give way to pidgin-English for preaching and for school work in response to the Protestant challenge in the 1920s. At the same time, the separation of

1

Conley to Dubois, 12 September 1939, A.P.M. OSS 61 208.

2

For these publications see the works by Rausch, Grisward, Bouillon, Muller, and Montauban, cited in bibliography. Montauban also supplied much material used by Patrick O'Reilly, in his writing on the Solomons.

3

Charles E. Fox, Kakamora (London, 1962), p.138.

Marists also made it difficult for newcomers to learn the indigenous languages from the veterans. But in the South Solomons vernaculars were employed almost exclusively until 1942. Since then they have yielded to English only in the schools, whereas in the North English has come into general use throughout the vicariate.

The Marists also fostered rapport with the islanders through the tendency for missionaries to remain for long periods at the same post, particularly if they had helped found it. For instance, Jean Boudard remained at Avuavu from 1907 to 1942; except for a break between 1942 and 1946, Donatien Coicaud was at Buma from 1917 until 1957 while his brother Jean was at Rohinari from 1912 to 1942; and in the North Solomons, J.B. Poncelet served in south Bougainville from 1913 to 1950, except for the period 1942-6, while Leon Chaize, at Torokina from 1911 to 1920, was on Buka from 1921 to 1942. Identification with the islanders was further strengthened by the Marists' normally life-long commitment to their task.¹ If the villagers were, as a Marist reported from Tangarare in 1908, flattered that a white man should seek to take a personal interest in them they could, therefore, find considerable reassurance of

1

In fact, official vacations for Society of Mary missionaries (i.e. for priests and brothers, not for nuns) were introduced only in 1925 - six months leave in their homeland after fifteen years service. In 1947 the term of service was reduced to seven years, and the right to a vacation was extended to nuns also.

the genuineness of that interest in the spectacle of a young missionary growing old and perhaps dying in their midst.¹ It was a phenomenon which, incidentally, pointed a telling contrast with the transience - as noted with some bitterness on Malaita in the 1940s - of government officials.²

Another powerful means of gaining rapport - and of providing an inducement to conversion - was the Marists' paternal indulgence of the material desires of their parishioners. Thus, Joseph Pellion wrote from Tangarare in 1903:

...to keep and increase [their] good dispositions
...it is necessary to join with the natives, to
be one of them, to take part in their festivals...
But one cannot go there empty handed: it is
necessary, according to the number of guests to
take 100, 200, 400 sticks of tobacco, sometimes
even a whole case.³

The year before Jean Coicaud shortly after arriving at Avuavu had noted that

To win a little tobacco...[the Solomon
Islander] will promise whatever you wish.
In his honeyed language he will regale
your ears, with the names 'friend' ...
'brother' ... 'chief'...⁴

1

Bertin to procurator, 1 July 1908, A.M.O. vol.XII.
See also Oliver, A Solomon Island Society, p.318.

2

See below p.304.

3

Letter of Pellion, 31 June 1903, A.P.M. OSM 208 (translation).

4

Letter of J. Coicaud, 5 May 1902, ibid. (translation).

And later, after filling the pipes of the thirty-five bushmen he reflected that 'it is by these little gifts that the missionary wins the affection of the natives'. The lesson was effectively applied on Malaita where he began work in 1911 and where in 1966 people still fondly recalled that 'Fr. Coicaud loved us with tobacco and calico'. The scale of his generosity is indicated by the fact that raiding Araiassi's village in 1918, W.R. Bell confiscated a 25lb box of tobacco given to the ramo Coicaud.¹

In the North Solomons benefaction was notably stimulated by the Protestant incursion. This was particularly so in Buin, where J.B. Poncelet was known to bolster wavering faith not only with tobacco, calico and tinned meat but also with gifts of money. Such tactics were prudently discouraged by Boch who, however, some years before, had himself been censured for excessive openhandedness.² Poncelet accordingly adopted more constructive measures. He observed the Methodists gaining influence among the Buin of the mountains (Kugara), who were without copra income, and hence fearful of their inability to pay the government tax, by arranging a cash income for them through the sale of handicrafts. He,

1

Letter of J. Coicaud, 10 September 1903, *ibid.* (translation); 'Journal of J. Coicaud', Rohinari; 'Journal of Tarapaina,' 1918; interviews at Parakunu village, Malaita, assisted by Fr J. Roughan (Rohinari).

2

Forestier to Regis, 28 February 1913, A.P.M. OSS 61 208; Boch to Dubois, 28 November 1925, O.R.; interviews with Frs Lebreton (Tarlena) and Lebel (Monoitu).

therefore, did likewise. From 1935 until the end of the decade he encouraged curio-making, bought the products himself (they were mainly plaited belts and bracelets) and marketed them through Marist houses overseas.¹

Allied with their generosity in helping them attract a following was the Marists' considerable restraint in interfering with native custom. This did not preclude, of course, the staging of what Tippetts has called 'power encounters'.² In these the Marists verified their mana by directly affronting the spirits - for instance by throwing a medal into lake Luroru, an abode of dead souls in Buin, or by assisting in childbirth a Malaita woman whose husband was forbidden by taboo even to point in her direction.³ Nor, as has been noted, did tolerance extend to violence. But for other elements in the indigenous culture, only customs explicitly contrary to Catholic teaching were proscribed for the baptized - notably, polygamy and direct invocation of the spirits. The latter, which no effort was made to police, included actions such as sacrificial offerings of food and the Areare practice of pa'ahou,

1

Poncellet to O'Reilly, 6 June 1935, O.R.; Poncellet to Dubois, 14 December 1935, 5, 31 August 1936, 1 June 1937, 25 April 1938, A.P.M. OSM 61 208.

2

Tippetts, Solomon Islands Christianity, p.102.

3

Annales de Marie, 1927, pp.563-8; Halbwachs to Dubois, 8 July 1927, B.A.H. See also M.C., 1915, pp.23-4.

whereby soon after marriage a wife was obliged to confess to her husband any previous sexual experience in order to prevent harm to their children. In general, the Marists were complacent about the pervasiveness of the spirits' influence. Their real enemy was Protestantism, not ~~an~~ outclassed and yielding paganism. They did not challenge exercises such as garden magic, and never made intensive efforts to define the moral compatability of Catholicism and native custom. Thus, practices such as bride price, marriage and funeral feasts, cicatrization and tatooing, the segregation of women in menstruation and in childbirth, and siwa (the adoption or purchase of a child as a replacement for a dead person) all remained outside the field of mission regulation. As for nudity, it inspired little indignation except, characteristically, with Bertreux and with certain of the nuns, who seemed to find it an affront to their sex.¹ Nevertheless, the wearing of light clothing - skirts for females and loin cloths for males - was generally encouraged. However, this stemmed not from religious necessity but from a vague sense of propriety, and was, moreover, in accord with the indigenes' own taste for European fashions. 'I hate to see my future Catholics clad only in a small medal,' wrote Jean Coicaud in 1925, after 600 people around Tarapaina had enrolled

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Letter of Bertreux, October 1903, A.P.M. OSM 208; Bertreux to Raffin, 18 October 1904, *ibid.*; Bertreux to Raffin, 10 November 1918, A.M.O., vol. XIII; letter of Sister Leon, 21 November 1912, A.P.M. OSM 498.

as catechumens in reply to his promise that all who did so would receive a length of cloth. An urgent appeal to the readers of the Annales de Marie quickly provided the cost of 600 'suits' and Coicaud honoured his promise the following year. He later reported that '...all is going well here, a conversion movement is growing in south Malaita'.¹

Other examples of accommodation may also be cited. In 1930 the curate at Ruavatu accompanied a dancing troupe on a tour of feasts so that they could fulfil social obligations, and at the same time advertise their Catholic allegiance. Jean Coicaud cut down three coconut trees as a sign of mourning for Arisimae's wife. And Bishop Wade allowed the cremation of Catholics in south Bougainville rather than offend, and perhaps alienate, the people by insisting on the burial of the dead.² Moreover, contumacious pagans, though argued with, seem rarely to have been upbraided. Rather, where possible, they were drawn into informal mission adherence by being given medals - of which, in 1918, J.M. Aubin ordered twenty-four gross.³ Reception of a

1

J. Coicaud to Dubois, 15 March 1925, Annales de la Société de Marie, 1925, pp.564-7 (translation);

J. Coicaud to Dubois, 16 February 1926, A.P.M. OSM 208;

J. Coicaud to Rausch, 8 March 1926, P.V.M. (translation).

2

Annales de Marie, 1930, pp.125-6; 'Journal of J. Coicaud,' 4 September 1914, Rohinari; V.A. North Solomons, 'Report to Propaganda, 1935', O.R.; Emmet McHardy, Blazing the Trail (Providence, R.I., 1935), p.75.

3

Aubin to Chevreuil, 12 June 1918, P.V.M.

medal was without sacramental importance, yet it was still a significant action. Like allowing a chapel to be erected in a village or allowing children to attend a mission school, it was an admission of the worth of Christianity and, more particularly, was a recognized gesture of sympathy for the Marists and of rejection of their rivals.

Conversion statistics suggest the effectiveness of the Marists' approach. So too, perhaps, does the fact that Protestant missionaries were often disdainful of it. To John Metcalfe, the Methodist, the Marists 'listened to native custom too much', particularly in regard to bride-price. Questions such as its rightness or the rates that should be charged, to which the other missions gave considerable attention, the Marists ignored. Norman Deck of the S.S.E.M. was appalled by the Marists' 'low standards'. And his opinion was echoed by the Anglican Bishop Wilson: 'It is such an easy religion that the people are greatly attracted'. Similarly, the Melanesian Mission Report for 1909 complained 'some of our people cannot see why they should not work or fish on Sunday, as the Romans do'.¹

BEGINNING work among pagans the Marists (like the missionaries of other denominations) generally found the

1

Bishop Wilson to his wife, 5 September 1909, TS in possession of Rev. J.C.L. Wilson, Havelock North, New Zealand; Melanesian Mission Report 1909, p.45. I owe these references, together with notes of an interview with Rev. J.R. Metcalfe, to Dr D.L. Hilliard. For Deck's comment see above, p.90.

adults, i.e., those most committed by habit and interest to the old religious allegiances, hesitant to adopt Christianity. In both vicariates, therefore, the children were soon regarded as the hope of the mission and the Marists' efforts were mainly directed to drawing as many as possible of them into the stations to 'school'.¹ Here, where study was a novelty, discipline generally light, calico and tobacco regularly obtained and the spirits impotent, pupils eventually, almost as a matter of course, received baptism. Normally, their catechumenate lasted about eighteen months although in the North Solomons, during the years of the Marist monopoly, it was often extended to three years. In each vicariate, however, infants were baptized whenever the parents approved and the baptism of adults, where there were no matrimonial impediments, was at the priest's discretion. A catechumenate of six months, including a period at the station, might be required to test an adult candidate's sincerity and to extend his knowledge of Christianity. But on occasion, and especially once mission influence

1

P.A. North Solomons, 'Rapport au Propagande, 1902', also reports for 1903, 1904, 1906, 1908, 1909, A.P.M. OSS 3321; Raucaz, Savage South Solomons, p.258. Complementary to this policy was the remarkable willingness of parents that the young should join the mission; see for example, Annales de Marie, 1927, pp.563-8. Mission schooling discussed at length in the following chapter.

became established in an area, the demand was itself sufficient to obtain baptism.¹

As for the pupils, they usually returned, directly or via the plantations, to their villages. Here some would act as teachers and prayer leaders, but most helped diffuse awareness of the lotu simply by their presence and their conversation - whetting the interest of their fellows with tales of what they had seen and learned.

Concentrating on schools as their main evangelistic tool, the Marists did not try to gather their followers into special mission villages. Except for an early and half-hearted attempt at Poporang to settle newly-wed school pupils on the mission station,² they made no attempt to form those reductions of chrétientés - Christian communities living, working and praying under mission aegis - which figured prominently in Catholic missionary work in, for instance, ^{Paraguay} ~~Uruguay~~, the Congo and New Caledonia.³ General sympathy for Christianity

1

P.A. North Solomons, 'Rapport au Propagande, 1906' and 1908, A.P.M. OSS 3321; Boch, Lettre Circulaire, no.12, 8 August 1928, P.V.M. Interviews with Frs G. Lebreton (Tarlana) and D. Moore (Honiara).

2

Broyer to procurator, 6 August 1903, A.M.O., vol.XI; letter of Sr Claire, 15 March 1904, *ibid*; letter of Sr Matthieu, February 1907, *ibid.*, vol.XII.

3

For descriptions of these institutions see John Francis Bannon and Peter Masten Dunne, Latin America (Milwaukee, 1947), pp.257-60; Ruth M. Slade, English-Speaking Missions in the Congo Independent State, 1878-1908 (Brussels, 1959), pp.170-82; and my 'Xavier Montrouzier'.

among the Solomon Islands villagers and the protection of European rule made such segregation unnecessary. Moreover, the absence of any significant class of 'second rate citizens', such as slaves, who, being especially accessible, could absorb a notable part of the missionaries' effort, reduced any incentive to build communities outside the existing social order.

Christianization was, nevertheless, associated with significant population shifts - from the interior to the coast, and to villages which (increasingly since the Second World War) have tended to spring up in the vicinity of mission stations. In part, these movements reflect Marist pressure on the people to abandon isolated mountain hamlets for more accessible locations, but in the main, they have been due to indigenous initiatives. For Solomon Islanders were (and are) accustomed to shifting their villages for a variety of reasons, especially in response to the demands of agriculture, defence or health. Thus, for converts, change of residence often signified rejection of pagan religious loyalties and, besides offering some assurance against retaliation by the disowned local spirits, provided easier access to the religious, medical and material benefits available from the mission. It also made it more convenient for visiting children at school, while the regular appearance of shipping at coastal villages brought diversion and trade to replace, to a limited

extent, the stimulation taken from village life by 'law and order.'¹

An important role in evangelization was played by the nuns. When possible, two or three of them were appointed to each station. They attended to the chapel, cooked the priests' meals, and ran a dispensary. But their main task was running a girls' school - to bring the island women within the range of mission influence and to produce potential Christian wives for graduates of the priests' school. In 1903 Bertreux lamented the absence of girls from his three Guadalcanal stations and appealed for nuns, to overcome the islanders' refusal to entrust their daughters to institutions staffed only by men. The following year Sisters Irénée and Bartholemy of the T.O.R.M. arrived at Tangarare. And by 1907 a 'good number' of the girls who frequented their school had been baptized, and a second convent was planned for Visale.² The extent to which pupils

1

For examples of such movements see Allotte to procurator, 2 August 1906, A.M.O., vol.XII (Buin district); Turupatu, June 1922 (Visale district); [Joseph] Bertin, 'Villages chrétiens de Guadalcanal dans le district de Tangarare', M.C., 1928, pp.510, 534-5, 572-3. For further discussion see Allan, Customary Land Tensure in the B.S.I.P., p.40; Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions', pp.158, 493-4; Murray Chapman, 'Population Research in the Pacific Islands', mimeograph copy in the present writer's possession; see also below, pp. 310-11.

2

Letter of Bertreux, 10 March 1903, A.P.M. OSM 208; P.A. South Solomons, 'Rapport au Conseil Central de la Propagation de la Foi, 1907', A.P.M. OSM 3321.

intermarried is unknown but it presumably grew with the increasing school attendances - although there was no mission compulsion in the matter. Arranging of marriages remained the affair of the partners' families, subject only to the mission's prohibition of polygamy and the general ruling that Catholics should marry Catholics. Marriages between Catholics and Protestants were, of course, severely prohibited - although where the prohibition ran counter to indigenous economic obligations it was not always respected. To marriages between Catholics and pagans, however, the Marists offered little resistance. For such unions not only served to extend the limits of Catholic influence but usually resulted in the conversion of the pagan party who, more often than not, was the woman, since evangelization advanced more rapidly among boys than girls. Moreover, even if the pagan avoided conversion it was reasonably assumed that, at least, the offspring would be saved from Protestantism.¹

Girls were always more difficult to obtain for school than boys, and more expensive gifts were required by their relatives. The reason was plain. Nunly chaperoning, while normally protecting the girls' against infringement of sexual taboos and, therefore, often preserving their marriage value, could not compensate for the loss of their labour to the village economy.

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P.A. North Solomons, 'Rapport au Propagande, 1928', also 1935, O.R.; Boch, Lettre Circulaire no.26, 8 August 1928, P.V.M.

Consequently the Marists were often constrained to buy girls. In 1902 Forestier purchased several of them for about £4 each from Buin, (where they were not freely offered to the mission until 1918).¹ On other occasions, however, - particularly when founding stations - the Marists purchased not only girls, but also boys and even adults. It was a guaranteed means of obtaining an initial following and of creating a core of potential assistants - for those who were purchased belonged to the mission. Girls who were purchased were usually given as wives to catechists, who were often themselves purchased, and whose work could impede their earning sufficient capital, or sufficient goodwill among their relatives, to obtain a wife in the normal fashion.

The art of evangelization by purchase was most notably demonstrated by Jean Coicaud. In 1902 he and Emile Babonneau, appalled at the rampant infanticide at Avuavu, founded a crèche there and announced their willingness to buy children for pipes and tobacco.² Coicaud continued the practice at Marau, where he was stationed in 1904. He brought it to its fullest development at Rohinari, where he commenced the station

1

Forestier to Regis, 1 April 1902, A.P.M. OSS 61 208; J.B. Poncelet, 'Notes sur la station de Buin', 1924, O.R. For the events that occasioned the offering of girls to the mission in 1918 see below p. 171.

2

Anon., 'Vie de R.P. Babonneau', 1932, B.A.H.; letter of J. Coicaud, 20 September 1902, A.P.M. OSM 208.

in mid-1912, and where he made his first inroad into local society by providing a sanctuary for refugees and a place for disposing of social undesirables. Fortunately, Coicaud recorded a number of case histories which illustrate this work in some detail. It began in January 1913, when he was given Petero Kaihione, a ten year old boy covered with sores and near death. However, under Coicaud's care the child recovered, to become a priest's main mentor in the Areare language, and to be the first adult baptized at Rohinari (25 December 1915). Eventually, he married Adela Poikana, whom Coicaud had bought from her father for a quantity of shell money after the girl (aged 15 years) had fled to the station to avoid punishment for uttering a curse. By 1924 the couple were working as catechists at Takataka on the south-east coast of Malaita. Meanwhile Petero's family had followed him to Rohinari. Some time after handing the lad over, his parents, anxious to escape a feud which had already killed several of their kinsmen, themselves sought asylum with Coicaud. They also asked the missionary to adopt their remaining children. These three, two girls and a boy, and their eventual spouses also became catechists.

Another refugee to what Coicaud sometimes called his 'orphanage of widows' was Petero's 'aunt' Elena Losioa, who also made a distinctive contribution to the foundation of Catholicism in Areare. On the demise of her pagan husband, being threatened with death according to custom, she had fled her village and asked Coicaud to buy her. He did so, and then sent her to Visale school, where she was baptized. Here, however, she wilfully

insisted on marrying a Malaita labourer named Alikì. The couple then returned to Rohinari, but subsequently Alikì absconded with Elena to the S.S.E.M. station at Onepusu - where, soon afterwards, and on the same day, they both died. This dramatic event served the Catholic cause well. For it was widely interpreted as an act of divine retribution, a belief which Coicaud assiduously fostered in his preaching.¹ Coicaud's most famous protégé, however, was an orphan whom he obtained new-born and for nothing in 1914. This was Senoveva (Geneveive), who was suckled by Coicaud's nanny goat for several weeks before she could be placed in the care of the nuns at Visale. In her turn, Senoveva, too, was married to a catechist - Kristiano Qora. She now lives with her large family on Buma station, serving, through her children, the mission that saved her from having her brains knocked out against a tree. One daughter is a trained teacher, two others belong to the indigenous sisterhood and her eldest son is studying for the Marist priesthood.²

The bulk of Marist converts, however, were drawn steadily and willingly from society at large, from people well disposed to accepting the white man's religion.

1

J. Coicaud, 'Des gens rachetés par le Père dans le district de Rohinari', Buma.

2

The story of Senoveva is recounted in 'Journal of J. Coicaud', Rohinari; Raucaz, Savage South Solomons, pp.222-3.

Parents offered their children for baptism and, with conspicuous frequency, 'big men' encouraged their followers to join the mission - while themselves holding staunchly to their heathen customs. Arisimae, whose most memorable religious act was lighting his pipe from the Mass candles at Rohinari, was one such patron.¹ Sulukavo was another. In 1906, less than a year after a police party had burned his village, he came to Tangarare to announce:

...that henceforth he wished to live at peace and to do no harm to anybody. From now on he accepts religion not for himself exactly, because he is too old, but for his people. He wished that all be made Catholics.²

In 1907 Torelala, the main Savo chief, made a similar announcement but this boost to the Catholic cause was partly undone the following year when he was arrested for killing a child on the advice of a sorcerer.³

Again, the case of Samu of Ravu provides an illustration of a common pattern of conversion.⁴ Samu

1

Raucaz, Savage South Solomons, p.219.

2

Raucaz to procurator, 10 July 1906, A.M.O. vol.XII (translation).

3

Letter of Boudard, 11 February 1908, *ibid*; Pellion to procurator, 8 November 1909, 16 August 1910, *ibid*.; letter of Pellion, 11 June 1909, A.P.M. OSM 208. In 1959 Savo had 464 Catholics and 601 Anglicans: Norma McArthur, Report on the Population Census of 1959 (Honiara, 1961), p.68.

4

For early Marist contact with Ravu, and with the beginning of conversion in the Tangarare district, see above pp. 77-8.

welcomed the Marists when he first met them in 1900. Initially, as has been already noted, he had hoped that they would repair his sight. This did not occur but, perhaps fortunately for the missionaries, he never went completely blind. In any case, there was a variety of other factors to ensure his continued esteem for the mission. He was said to be gratified when, about 1903, the priest at Tangarare, Pierre Bouillon, attended the funeral rites (pagan) of Paoura, the deceased chief of Ravu, and on succeeding Paoura, Samu found the alliance with the missionaries a useful prop for his own prestige, which was diminishing both on account of his poor sight and because the decline of warfare restricted opportunities for the assertion of leadership. A further reason for keeping on good terms with the mission was the hope of obtaining some relief from the dysentery which harrassed Ravu. Consequently, infants were early baptized there and children were sent to Tangarare school. And by 1907 Samu himself was repeating Catholic prayers and expounding Catholic doctrine, but only women and children gathered in the village chapel to hear him. By 1913 Ravu counted 150 converts. Yet the men held aloof and it was not until a wooden chapel, a feature of some distinction in any village at that time, was blessed at Ravu in 1918 that their resistance subsided. Even so, Samu, despite his penchant for catechetics did not follow them; he had too much to lose. He had, he said, seven wives who were necessary to tend his gardens and to care for his pigs. Moreover, he was afraid that to abandon his spirits would further reduce his people's respect for him - and perhaps bring

retribution from the spirits. Besides, he argued, as a Catholic he would have to go to Confession but, old and blind and being fifteen miles from the priest, he would find this difficult. However, he promised to accept baptism just before dying, when such considerations lost their force. About 1920 he fell seriously ill - and was duly baptized. He later recovered, but remained faithful to his 'new' religion until he died in 1926. Of the fate of his surplus wives the records are silent.¹

As the case of Samu demonstrated, Solomon Islanders readily turned to the missionaries for cures to physical ailments, even those of the most complex kind. Indeed, the islanders' traditional predisposition to relate medical prowess to religious mana was confirmed by their often seeing the missionary in the dual role of evangelist and physician - and it was not infrequently reflected in the pledge 'Cure me and I will become a Catholic.'² Nor was such confidence necessarily misplaced. The missionaries' medical stock-in-trade - disinfecting sores and, from the late 1920s, giving N.A.B. injections against yaws - were often strikingly effective. Thus Emmet McHardy writes of a tour across central Bougainville in 1931:

1

Bertin to procurator, 3 November 1908, A.M.O., vol.XII; Bertreux to Raffin, 10 November 1918, A.M.O., vol.XIII; letter of Bertin, M.C., 1913, pp.26-9; Bertin, 'Villages chrétiens de Tangarare', pp.552-3.

2

See for example, letter of Bertheux, M.C., 1915, p.22.

In nearly all the villages visited the routine was pretty much the same....First came a bit of a rest, then the checking off of all the little ones baptised in the village, then the baptism of new babies and after that the attending to their physical wants, washing of sores, giving of injections, etc. This latter was by no means the most unimportant feature of the trip. In the fortnight I gave just under two hundred injections. It requires a deal of coaxing to get quite new people to submit themselves or their children to the needle, but once one has already had a trip through the district, and the people know the value of the N.A.B., they are very keen on it. In the more sophisticated places they are a bit of a nuisance, for they want injections for almost everything - from framboesia to a cough.¹

The health services expected of the mission extended also to prevention. Here, again, the distinction between the missionaries' religious and medical abilities was blurred. Thus, baptism was commonly expected to ward off disease (which was one reason for having children baptized), while the station easily became a sort of sanctuary. In 1914 the Marists at Wanoni Bay won a foothold in their first inland village (Roga) when a father brought his five children to the station so that they might be safe from a malevolent spirit which, it was believed, had just killed the sixth one. In this case, the father's regard for Babonneau's mana was confirmed by the station's relative immunity from the diseases which at that time were ravaging the villages. Babonneau, however, claimed

¹

McHardy, Blazing the Trail, p.159.

the credit for the nostrum with which he dosed his charges, laudanum and flour cooked in red wine.¹

Apart from the relative effectiveness of European and indigenous remedies, the latter often had the clear disadvantage of being more expensive - especially when the illness was long and the spirits had to be invoked through an intermediary. Mission assistance, in contrast, was (and is) gratis.

The desire for protection against the harsher implications of contact with Europeans was also a fruitful stimulus to conversion. For instance attempted land-grabbing by planting interests at Kakabona, near present day Honiara, in 1909 inspired the villagers to couple a request for catechists with the demand that the Marists intercede with the government to prevent further land alienation in the area. The move succeeded, and Kakabona became Catholic. A similar reaction occurred near Suu on Malaita in 1916, when villagers, fearing the encroachments of the Malaita Company, which had close links with the S.S.E.M., turned to the Marists for help and baptism.²

But more dramatic than such cases were movements of conversion inspired by fear of police action. Thus,

1

'Journal of Wanoni Bay', 14 February 1914; 'Vie de R.P. Babonneau', B.A.H.; letter of Moreau, M.C., 1915 p.197.

2

Pellion to procurator, 8 November, 1909, A.M.O., vol.XII; 'Journal of J. Coicaud', 1916, Rohinari.

following an expedition to Wanoni Bay in 1915 to arrest the murderers of Jack Laycock, a labour recruiter, a rumour swept San Cristobal that 'the government' required everyone to become Christian. Consequently, as Babonneau noted, the villagers rushed to place themselves under the patronage of one mission or another.¹ A similar phenomenon was also observed during the pacification of Malaita. It occurred after opposition to 'government interference in customary killings for violation of the rigid sex code', and resentment against the confiscation of rifles obtained during the labour trade, erupted in October 1927, when W.R. Bell and his party of fourteen were killed while collecting tax at Sinerango in the Kwaio district.² Shortly after the massacre a Marist, Joseph Halbwachs, who recalls meeting

1

'Journal of Wanoni Bay', 1915; Raucaz, Savage South Solomons, pp.197-8. Of the islanders' conception of 'government' about this time the leader of the expedition wrote: 'On my first visit to the island over this case with police we were spoken of by the natives as 'Man-of-war'...the words 'police' and 'soldiers'...they did not use...till brought to Tulagi and all they generally seemed to know about the Government was that [it] was living on the island of Gela but what it really was they had a very poor idea'. Campbell to Barnett, 11 November 1916, encl. Barnett to Sweet-Escott, 13 November 1916, W.P.H.C. Inward Correspondence, General no.3269 of 1916.

2

Roger M. Keesing, 'Christians and Pagans in Kwaio, Malaita', The Journal of the Polynesian Society, vol.76, no.1 (1967), pp.86-7.

Bell at Uru two days before, received thirty-five Kwaio boys to take to Buma station and some weeks later, in the bush behind Uru, he enrolled nearly 200 adults as catechumens. By August 1928, after a severe punitive expedition, more than 800 people around Sinerango had accepted medals. However, the concentration of Marist resources on the west coast of Malaita impeded efforts to follow-up these contacts. In 1958 only 187 Catholics were claimed among the Kwaio of east Malaita.¹

The most spectacular mass flight to the Marists occurred in Buin. It arose from a feud that was sparked in 1909 by the adultery of Kaleba of Bagui with the wife of Kunkei of Morou. The feud had claimed thirteen lives, including that of Kaleba, by 1913 when police first intervened in a vain attempt to crush it. On this occasion Kunkei was captured and taken prisoner to Kieta. Shortly afterwards, however, he escaped back to Buin - only to be killed by three kukurai (government-appointed village headmen), Kopana, Mota and Kisu, at the instigation of the Bagui. Retaliation for this act began when Kisu was killed at Kikimogu in June 1915. Several police expeditions attempted to arrest those responsible, but they were unsuccessful. Nevertheless, Buin remained relatively undisturbed until the Australian

1

Letters of J. Coicaud, 17 November 1927, 22 August 1928, A.P.M OSM 208; Halbwachs to Rausch, 7 May 1928, P.V.M.; interview with Fr J. Halbwachs (Ruavatu).

authorities began systematically to impose formal administration - whereupon the Morou-Bagui feud became part of a much wider conflict between the indigenes and the government. This conflict began in April 1918, when census-taking, a preliminary to taxation, aroused 'great agitation everywhere'. The people immediately turned to the missionaries for assistance. Representatives from most Buin villages gathered at Patupatuai, and, offering children for the school, begged the Marists to obtain the repeal of the new policy. But such pleas were ineffective and agitation increased sharply when tax-collecting actually began in June.

Consequently, the houses of defaulters were burned by police at Artsini, Ibirei and Barilo while at Kaitu two police were killed and one seriously wounded when the villagers fought back. Three villagers were also killed. Opportunities for combining further protest against the government and, for the Bagui, of continuing to revenge Kunkei coincided in 1919. In May of that year Mota was sent with two police to Morou to organize, as had recently been done elsewhere, the amalgamation of several dispersed hamlets into one administratively convenient 'line' village. Recognizing a common threat, Morou and Bagui and their allies joined forces. At the instigation of Perokana of Morou who, like other hereditary aristocratic leaders, mumira, resented being subordinate to government appointees such as Mota, who was a man of no traditional status, the three were killed. Also killed was Antonio Kagaba, the Marists' only catechist in the interior, who had tried to shield Mota.

Government retribution was harsh. Morou was destroyed. So, too, were the club-houses of other implicated villages, most notably an enormous one recently completed at Kikimogu which, it seems, had been built as a symbol of a hoped-for rallying of all the Buin under Tiperau, the most renowned of the mumira. Numerous people were arrested. And the three main assassins, who included Babala, the son of Kunkei, were, after a trial in Rabual, publicly executed at Morou, at grisly intervals between January and May 1920.¹

Living inland from the harbourless coast, obtaining European goods mainly through middlemen, untouched by planters and almost unscathed by the administration the people of south Bougainville had been little disturbed by Europeans during German times. Their social stability was also fostered by the real authority and respect enjoyed by the mumira. Accordingly, conversion was slow. Baptism figures for Patupatuai station mounted from two to fifty seven per year between 1906 and 1915. They received a boost in September 1916 when Posenā, kukurai of Muguai,

1

J. Grisward, 'Les troubles entre Morou et Bagui de 1912 à 1920', O.R.; 'Journal of J.B. Poncelet,' 11 April-25 June 1918, 4 May-13 June 1919, 'January-10 May 1920, O.R.; Richard C. Thurnwald, 'The Price of the White Man's Peace', Pacific Affairs, vol.IX, no.3 (1936), pp.347-57. For comments on the administrative history of south Bougainville see Oliver, A Solomon Island Society, pp.318-22; Rowley, The Australians in German New Guinea, 1914-1921 (Melbourne, 1958), p.35.

who had been one of the first pupils at Poporang and who had married Api from the sisters' school in 1904, announced the wish of about 300 of his people to join the mission. Baptisms were 107 in 1916 and 168 in 1917.¹ But with the events of 1919-20 this movement became general. A week after the third execution all the men of Morou attended Mass at Kugumanu, and catechists were being clamoured for in a host of villages. By the end of 1920 nearly every Buin village possessed a chapel-school and the whole district, from Lavelai to the Mibo River (as well as several villages in neighbouring Siwai) was occupied by the mission's catechists. And Buin baptisms, 188 for Patupatuai in 1920 were, with the founding of the inland stations (inspired by the Protestant threat), 172 for Turiboiru and Muguai in 1921, 218 in 1922, 223 in 1923 and 392 in 1924.²

To the Marists, the conversion of Buin reflected, first, the people's desire for and, when the danger had passed, gratitude for, mission protection. The assiduity with which the missionaries, who had accompanied police patrols as interpreters, ensured that innocent people were not arrested gave substance to this view. So, too, did the fact that none of those who followed the advice of the Marists, and the example of the Christians, in readily acknowledging submission to the government came

1

'Journal of J. Forestier', 19 March 1904, O.R.; Allotte, 'Notes sur la station de Buin', O.R.

2

Grisward, 'Les troubles entre Morou et Bagui', O.R. For baptismal figures, see Appendix L.

to any harm. Being in the Christian camp offered the assurance of being on the right side of the police. This matter was simplified by the fact that no Christians had been involved in the attack on Mota. Indeed, the plan had been kept secret from them. It was entirely the affair of pagans led by the mumira.¹ However, the conversion movement which followed the defeat of the mumira and the burning of the club houses is not to be understood just as an expedient reaction to the reprisals. It was part of a wider movement, inspired by the disintegration of the traditional order, for the wholesale acceptance of European values - for the 'replacement' of a defeated culture by another that was more relevant to present circumstances.

Something of the broad social nature of the change was glimpsed at San Cristobal two years after the murder of Laycock. Visiting Manogear where the murder had occurred, a trader was told by the local inhabitants:

All place here he been, get saved along
Christian Gospel, belong Rome. Some place
they like Jesus belong Roman Fadder, and
some they like Jesus belong Miss Young
and Docketer Deck. Close up this place all
same Sydney now! No gammon! More better
you come, put one store along this place,
then altogether man he can get wash along
soap.²

1

Grisward, 'Les troubles entre Morou et Bagui', O.R.

2

Joseph H.C. Dickinson, A Trader in the Savage Solomons
(London, 1927), pp.181-2.

Similarly in Buin, the old life gave way to the new. As an oral tradition collected in the area has it, 'Tiperau's thoughts stayed in his mind and he did not finish he plan'.¹ Henceforth, taxes were paid, new villages formed (although not necessarily lived in) and roads and bridges built under the direction of the kukurai. Recruiting agents flocked to Buin and found the young men avid to sign on. And what is, perhaps, of greatest significance, the values and preoccupations reflected in the people's songs changed sharply. In 1908, the anthropologist Thurnwald records, they had sung of feasts and feuds, of sacrifices to the spirits and of the mysteries of nature. Twenty-five years later, having become Christians, they sang, instead, of the wonders and the wealth of the white man's world.² Indeed, it is not unlikely that they expected Christianity to help them obtain these things for themselves.³

Before discussing this aspect of conversion it is convenient to note the bearing of other-worldly considerations on mission membership. Besides offering tangible benefits, the missionaries also spoke authoritatively of a Hell to be avoided, and of a Heaven

1

'Tiperau unites the tribes', a story collected in Buin (1968) by Dr D.C. Laycock, Department of Linguistics, A.N.U. I am grateful to Dr Laycock for this reference.

2

Richard C. Thurnwald, 'Profane Literature of Buin, Solomon Islands', Yale University Publications in Anthropology, no.8 (1936), pp.14-5.

3

For discussion of this point see below pp.179ff.

to be attained. Expounded and comprehended mainly in terms of physical pain and pleasure, these eschatological absolutes were often persuasive arguments for conversion. Adults were regularly prepared to signify their trust in 'the water that makes me happy' by welcoming it when they were dying (when they had nothing to lose) and by having their children baptized (who had everything to gain).¹ The following conversation between a stubborn polygamist and a Marist illustrates the point:

'I have two wives. I am satisfied with that'.

'And the great fire?'

'Yes, I will be in the great fire...It is my business'.

'At least give me your baby so that I can baptize it'.

'Willingly, so that he will go to Heaven, but leave me alone.'²

The conversation also suggests that the Marists, with expedient disregard for the refinements which steer Catholic orthodoxy away from such an uncompromising conclusion, took no pains to disabuse their hearers of the belief that Hell was the certain fate of the unbaptized. In this situation insuring against God the 'unlovely tyrant', to use Hogbin's phrase, was more noticeable than the honouring of God the Comforter. A

1

Letter of J. Coicaud, June 1906, A.P.M. OSM 208 (translation); J. Coicaud to Serre, 17 August 1925, *ibid.*

2

Foltzer to Raffin, 5 May 1922, *ibid.*, (translation).

Marist contentedly reported from Kieta in 1905 that the lotu was thriving - that the people, impressed by the pictures of Hell in an illustrated catechism, had no wish to go with the devil when they died.¹ And the year before, the same consideration had made Kokobi, the Visale chief, a Christian before any other of his people:

He was one day mute and absorbed in contemplation of the picture of Hell. Suddenly, fearful, he gave the book back - 'remove that picture, it makes me afraid'. Sometime later when I [Joseph Pellion] was speaking to him of baptism he replied, 'Do to me what you will, but I do not want to go into the fire.'

Of those who spurned Christianity he always said, 'that is because they have not seen the fire'. Every Sunday he would ask:

Show us the fire so that the new-comers will see it and will be afraid of it and will follow the lotu faithfully.²

Yet, as the comment of the polygamist cited above indicates, the effectiveness of the threat of Hell was not unlimited. It was only one of a combination of factors that contributed to the conversion of Visale. Kokobi's dramatic reaction was a personal one - even so the ground

1

Hogbin, Experiments in Civilization, p.189; letter of Seiller, 21 September 1905, A.P.M. OSS 61 208.

2

Pellion to procurator, 15 January 1906, A.M.O., vol.XI, (translation). Pellion to Bonnard [1906], A.M.O., vol.XII, (translation). For a similar example see Blackwood, Both Sides of Buka Passage, p.513.

was well prepared for it. The chief was a widower and had, moreover, already been impressed by the power of Christianity - as demonstrated by the impunity with which the baptized boys Pellion brought with him from Rua Sura to Visale had defied local taboos. They had decorated the chapel with leaves from a sacred palm tree and had eaten forbidden shellfish. Kokobi's people, however, were slow to follow their leader's example and required more immediately relevant reasons for conversion. The deaths of several children in 1904 and 1905, shortly after their baptism, temporarily deterred other candidates for the sacrament. But as the spirits remained impotent against an epidemic which took a heavy toll in the area, baptisms resumed in 1907. Visale, which had once been a group of villages with a population of possibly 1,000, contained by 1909 only 200 people. Of these 177 were Catholics. Parallel with this movement was the decline of the annual feast in honour of Puraka, the great tindalo (spirit) who inhabited the high peak that rose behind Visale. Each year fewer and fewer people took part in it. But the coup de grâce, when it came, was unexpected - and altogether worthy of the tindalo who had for generations presided over the district. At Easter 1910 the sacrifice site at the base of the hill collapsed into the sea. Pouraka, it was believed, had taken his leave. And at the opening of the stone church at Visale later in the year the last notable follower of the discredited, irrelevant and unwanted deity adopted the new religion.¹

I

Pellion to procurator, 1910, A.M.O., vol.XIII; Raucaz, Savage South Solomons, pp.153-4. For a discussion of the significance of the Visale church see above, p.83-4.

While disease and fear prompted many Solomon Islanders to become Christians their conversion may, in general, still be characterized as a movement towards rather than an escape from - be it from traditional evils or from the rough edges of the contact situation. This was noted above in relation to Buin. Guiart, generalizing for the South Pacific but drawing mainly on Melanesian sources (New Hebrides and New Caledonia), makes a similar observation. According to his analysis, conversion occurred within a framework of millenarian expectation - as with the early Christians.¹ Believers were assured of a joyous future. Overshadowing the prospect of the Beatific Vision was that of a new life here-and-now, shorn of frustration, deprivation and, by implication, inferiority to Europeans. Evidence from the present area of study supports Guiart's hypothesis, particularly as it concerns the mission as teacher. This also accords with the Melanesian view that the 'true knowledge' which ensured well-being was essentially religious knowledge. The identification was, of course, strengthened by the fact that intellectual access to the white man's world was available only under mission auspices.²

1

Jean Guiart, 'The Millenarian Aspect of Conversion to Christianity in the South Pacific', pp.136-7.

2

Lawrence, 'Politics and "True Knowledge"', pp.41-2.

The Marists early encountered keen interest in European knowledge. Sarai asked for a school at Kieta in 1899 and in 1905 (when, incidentally, fear of Hell was reportedly strong there) it had fifty boys and six girls.¹ In 1901, when Guilloux's pupils temporarily fled Tangarare the leader of a neighbouring village asked the missionary to conduct services and classes there, lest the boys forget what they had learned.² By the second decade of the present century the desire for literacy had become an important factor in the spread of Christianity. To many islanders the ability to read and write - particularly in English - seemed to be the crucial difference between Melanesian and European, the key to the latter's astounding prosperity and the means of dealing with him on his own terms.³ For some, the acquisition of European educational skills did bring tangible advantages. It could lead to appointment as a government headman or, during the 1930s, to employment as Native Medical Practitioner, wireless operator or

1

Flaus to Broyer, 19 November 1899, A.P.M. OSS 61 208; letter of Seiller, 21 September 1905, ibid.

2

Guilloux to Vidal, 26 November 1901, A.P.M. OSM 208.

3

Hilliard, 'Protestant Mission', pp.474-5; Hogbin, Experiments in Civilization, pp.180-1. For discussion of the same situation in Polynesia see G.S. Parsonson, 'The Literate Revolution in Polynesia', The Journal of Pacific History, vol.2 (1967), pp.39ff; J.M.R. Owens, 'Christianity and the Maoris to 1840', The New Zealand Journal of History, vol.2, no.1 (April 1968), pp.34-7.

clerk in the embryonic civil service of the British protectorate. But such positions were few, a fact which, with the relative lateness of their occurrence, serves only to underline the visionary nature of widespread enthusiasm for education.

The Marists, few of whom were English-speaking, taught thousands of their pupils to read the simple religious manuals printed in the native languages. They were, however, embarrassed by the demand for English. In 1911 the Tangarare pupils were said to have 'incredible' concern for learning English, which they called 'the language of Sydney'.¹ Since Sydney was the port which supplied Europeans throughout the south-west Pacific with most of their goods the association of English with affluence is obvious. Indeed, in Melanesian millenarianism, Sydney, the symbol of material well-being, has not uncommonly been identified with Heaven.² Well, then, might Bertreux lament in 1917, following a tour of his vicariate, that:

...a knowledge of English is absolutely necessary for the missionaries...everywhere [I was told]...the pagans esteem our mission but do not come to us because we do not know English.³

1

M.C. 1911, p.76 (translation).

2

For example see Lawrence, Road Belong Cargo, pp.77, 192; below p.187. For a less mystical, but similarly imitative view of Sydney see S. M'Farlane, The Story of the Lifu Mission (London, 1873), p.11.

3

Bertreux to Raffin, 15 September 1917, A.P.M. OSM 418 (translation).

The problem became even more acute from the 1920s, and then especially in the northern vicariate, when Protestant missionaries made the opportunity to learn English more accessible than it had been since the days of the labour trade. In the South Solomons, the Melanesian Mission taught no English until 1931. And the S.S.E.M., while using pidgin-English from 1920 to instruct trainee teachers in the English Bible, gave no encouragement for teaching it at the village level. There the emphasis was on vernacular preaching.¹ But the Methodists and Adventists, in contrast, shared a reputation for teaching English which, as has been seen, heightened Marist concern at their northward advance into the former German territory. In 1927 Boch complained to Propaganda:

The taste for English aroused among the natives by the Protestants is the most serious obstacle they set for us...it is necessary that the priests and nuns who are going to join us be able to speak and teach this language. Some months ago the Adventists were attempting to win followers in our villages, using the argument 'We have not come to disturb your lotu; but as you are very ignorant, we have come to hold classes here and we will teach you all that the white men know.'²

In 1931 McHardy described the possibility of the Methodists' 'starting an English school down in Siwai with a real

1

Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions', pp.209, 386-7.

2

Boch to Propaganda, 10 August 1927, O.R. (translation).

school-master [as]...easily the most dangerous thing they could do'. Likewise, among the Shortlanders, 'school' had become an idée fixe by 1925 and their desire for English was such that the Marists, worried lest they invite the Methodists to assuage it, were obliged to commence an English class into the evenings for labourers on the mission plantation.¹ The same problem arose on Guadalcanal, where the Adventists began work in the late 1920s. Several Catholic villages around Ruavatu defected to them. And Boudard at Avuavu considered the Adventists, 'the recognized experts in the magic of education', a far greater threat than the Melanesian Brotherhood. Despite such fears, very few Catholics did change their allegiance. Indeed, changes of mission, for whatever reason, seem to have been relatively rare throughout the group. Conversion was for pagans, for the uncommitted. But the chance to learn English could exert a strong influence on which mission they chose. In 1939 the Adventists claimed 700 adherents on Guadalcanal, mostly won from among the pagans living inland at the eastern end of the island.²

1

McHardy to Schaefer, 14 February 1931, A.P.M. OSS 61 208; Boch to Dubois, 4 May 1925, O.R.

2

Boudard to [Dubois], 4 May 1934, A.P.M. OSM 208 (translation); Graton to [Dubois] 10 May 1935, ibid.; Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions,' pp.446-8, 466. For Marist comments on the difficulty of converting Protestants see Bertin to procurator, 9 July 1910, A.M.O. vol.XII; Bertheux to scholastics, March 1911, A.M.O. vol. XIII; M.C., 1919, p.330.

It was on Buka, where the Marists were well known but where, by 1920, few had committed themselves to mission membership, that the Marists most feared the desire to learn English. In the event, the Protestant challenge was substantially defeated, but in the Marists' triumph were the seeds of a spectacular rejection of the mission four decades later. Marist contact with Buka had begun in 1901 when nine youths were obtained from the west coast islet of Pororan, opposite Burunotui. However, the deaths of three of them deterred others from coming to Poporang and mission contact with the island remained spasmodic until Burunotui station was founded in January 1910. As elsewhere where European goods were relatively easy to procure - Buka had been steadily recruited since the 1870s - the offer of Christianity was initially met with sceptical indifference. Of the fifty youths at school at Burunotui in 1915 (thirty-five of them baptized) it was predicted that 'all without exception will sign-up with Europeans and will quickly lose the little religious instruction we took such pains to give them'.¹ Despite such keenness to obtain 'good-pay', for which they could drive a hard bargain,² there developed among the Bukas a resentfulness at having to earn it from Europeans. At first, says

1

Paul Montauban, 'Historique de la mission catholique de Buka', p.8, O.R. Montauban to Raffin, 4 September 1915, A.P.M. OSS 208 (translation).

2

A description of negotiations between Buka Islanders and labour traders is given in Estienne to Forestier, 9 July 1900, O.R.

Montauban, who worked on Buka from 1914 till 1958, they had welcomed Europeans as ancestral spirits - a conclusion supported by the similarity of sound between sine, the local abode for the souls of the dead, and Sydney. But, as familiarity established the humanity of Europeans without reducing the disparities between them and the islanders, they were seen as having misappropriated goods produced by the spirits and intended for Buka. This was a religious problem. It required a religious solution. In the first recorded attempt of this kind (1913-14) Muling of Lontis essayed to obtain the Bukas' entitlement by means of sorcery. Thus, meeting Montauban on the beach near Lemanmanu in 1914 Muling drew a circle in the sand around the missionary and declared that from it he could bring forth all the wealth he wished. However, the popular excitement aroused by the repetition of this claim so alarmed the German authorities that they quelled the movement by imprisoning the 'prophet' and his associate, Novite.¹

Meanwhile, interest in the missionaries grew slowly. By 1918 six important villages possessed chapel-schools and in 1919 land was offered to the Marists at Gagan, Hanahan and Lemanmanu.² These posts were taken up in 1922 to check infiltration by the Methodists - whose

1

Paul Montauban, 'Affaire des propheties et du cargo', O.R.; Montauban to O'Reilly, 29 August 1935, O.R.; Territory of New Guinea, Report, 1935-6, p.21

2

Paul Montauban, 'Historique de la mission catholique de Buka', p.8, O.R.

most feared weapon was, moreover, effectively defused by Wade's 'English' school at Burunotui. In September 1925 less than two years after its commencement Boch estimated that the school had 'saved' Buka. With ninety-one 'promising and enthusiastic' pupils it had confirmed in a particular way the Bukas' confidence in the Marists.¹ It thereby helped ensure major gains in the conversion movement which was detonated by the advent of the Methodists and was boosted by the epidemics which attacked the island in the late 1920s. 509 baptisms in the year ended June 1924 were followed by 1014 the next year, with a peak of 1357 being reached in 1929. In 1931 Buka was adjudged to be 'the most Catholic part of the whole vicariate' and in 1936 6144 Catholics were claimed there in a total population estimated at 6810.² Except for a handful of pagans the rest were Methodists. These were located in the southwest of Buka and in the north, where in 1931 the leader of Tanamalo village, joining the conversion movement, chose the same mission as his allies on the island of Petats, opposite the Methodist station, at Skotolan.³

1

Boch to Dubois, 14 September 1925, O.R. (translation).

2

McHardy, Blazing the Trail, p.151. For Buka conversion statistics see Appendix M.

3

Boch to Dubois, 11 February 1931, O.R.; Blackwood, Both Sides of Buka Passage, p.17.

Learning in 1927 that the large village of Lemanmanu had decided to be baptized en bloc and that at Hiltopan, as at Hanahan, 150 people attended lotu each morning and evening, Boch rejoiced. The 'eagles' and the 'fowls' (the totems of the two Buka clans) were, he wrote 'beginning to fly above the pagan superstitions which [hitherto]...had held them bound'.¹ That their flight may not have been on the course intended by the missionaries is suggested by Wade's observation in 1928 that the people were very interested in Sydney which 'was for some time [according to local rumour] the future abode of good people'. Yet the implications of this identification caused no concern. Indeed Wade even sought to exploit it. Noting that the islanders were occasionally worried by the fact that they 'never [saw] a real, practising white Catholic other than missionaries', he attempted to allay the suspicions this observation caused and also to strengthen the attraction of mission membership by displaying photographs of Sydney Catholics attending Mass and receiving Holy Communion. Earlier he had sought to impress the people by showing them pictures from Chicago, but without success - 'they know nothing of the place, nor are they interested'. But Sydney was different. Consequently, he even considered paying for 'five or ten good Sydney Catholics to come here and publicly practice their faith'.²

1

Boch to Dubois, 15 May 1927, O.R. (translation); Annales de Marie, 1927, p.592; ibid. 1928, p.101.

2

Wade to Rausch, 20 July 1928, P.V.M.

However, a more powerful incentive to religious fervour than such eminent example was to sweep the whole of Buka a few years later.

In 1932 Pako of Malasang, assisted by his relative Muling (the 1913-14 'prophet'), both of them pagans, and Terasim, the Catholic catechist of Pororan, inaugurated a new line of preaching: the zealous practice of the lotu would bring to Buka ships laden with cargo for the islanders - to make them as rich as the Europeans. The Catholic lotu, it was argued, had become dominant. Sacrifices to the spirits were forbidden; it was, therefore, necessary to approach them through the lotu. There was to be frequent attendance at prayers and frequent reception of the sacraments; customs disapproved of by the missionaries were to be abandoned. At the same time, however, the spirits were still to be approached directly. Indeed, this fundamental operation of the pagan religion had been reinforced and sanctified by the Catholic practice of seeking divine assistance through the mediation of the 'Holy Souls in Purgatory' - and possibly by the adopted practice of internment, which made the dead more approachable than did the former custom of sinking corpses in the sea. Accordingly, village cemeteries were cleaned and decorated and people gathered in them at night to pray.¹

1

Montauban to O'Reilly, 29 August 1935, O.R.; P. O'Reilly, 'Sorcellerie et civilisation Européenne aux îles Salomon', La sorcellerie dans les pays de mission (Paris, 1937), pp.142ff. Worsley is incorrect in stating that Pako 'called for the renunciation of both paganism and
(footnote continued on p.189)

In this atmosphere of intense anticipation the arrival of ships naturally sparked great excitement. Several times the islanders attempted to claim the cargo they carried, or to tax the passengers and, when that failed, to prevent them from landing. Again the authorities feared for law and order. In November 1932, therefore, the three leaders were arrested, and imprisoned in Madang. Here Pako died.¹

During 1933 the movement was quiescent. Then, in 1934 Sanop, an ex-tultul, a pagan, revived it at Gogohe. From here it again gradually spread through Buka, and down into northern Bougainville. Excitement intensified after Sanop shifted into Pako's former residence at Malasang in April 1935 and declared that a mysterious voice regularly heard coming from the house - and which he (Sanop) interpreted - was that of Pako's spirit.² The message was more aggressive than before.

(footnote 1 continued from p.188)

Christianity'. Peter M. Worsley, The Trumpet Shall Sound (London, 1957), p.115. Regarding interment, many of the Buka had adopted this custom from Europeans before the coming of the missionaries: letter of Binois, 1910, A.P.M. OSM 208; Blackwood, Both Sides of Buka Passage, p.487.

1

Rabaul Times, 25 November 1932; Montauban to Dubois, 26 October 1933, Annales de Marie, 1934, p.187; Worsley, The Trumpet Shall Sound, p.116.

2

The voice was, in fact, produced by an accomplice of Sanop hidden in a secret compartment of the house: Patrick O'Reilly and Jean-Marie Sédès, Jaunes, Noirs et Blancs (Paris, 1949), pp.196-7.

The cargo was now to include a quantity of arms with which to rid Buka of all Europeans, including the missionaries.¹ These, it was said, had deliberately withheld the knowledge and ritual needed to acquire goods - in order to continue the odious subjection of black man to white. But faith in the lotu itself was still strong. 'Pako' instructed that its deficiencies could be overcome by more fervent observance and by the rejection of customs, such as pottery making, for which there would be no need when the cargo came and which represented a link with the way of life the islanders aspired to escape from. However, 'Pako' also announced a significant theological innovation. Emancipation from the missionaries, who had so failed their people, was to be anticipated by the abandonment of Confession - for Christ's death, it was said, had expunged sins once and for all. There could be no suggestion that the Bukas were unworthy of the things they yearned for.

In July and August 1935, during a month-long tour of the island, Montauban found everywhere the belief that a new age of ease, affluence and black supremacy was about to dawn. The signs were familiar. The cemeteries were adorned. But most striking was

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In view of this hope, Tippet's opinion that the drilling of 'soldiers', which was widespread on Buka at this time, 'must be mystical because it has no other value' is surely ill-founded. Tippet, Solomon Islands Christianity, p.201

the zeal with which the lotu was practised and the extraordinary desire for baptism 'among the old, including Methodists'. He returned 'with a rich booty of 200 baptisms and a considerable number of first communions and regularized marriages, etc.' However, he again found the distinction between the missionaries and the lotu sharply drawn, as when, in the centre of the island, he met Pako's spokesman among the Solos-speakers. This was Kisu, a pagan, self-styled 'Master Hell'. According to Kisu, cargo originated in Hell, and the deceitful missionaries had deliberately painted Hell in black colours in order to conceal this fact from their converts. As for Kisu's liturgy, his followers were expected to genuflect on entering a cemetery and special emphasis was placed on winning the support of the spirits of Bishop Wade, the 'chief of the lotu'. To this end banners carrying the legend 'Pako, Bishop, Master Hell' were flown from masts in the cemeteries and the sign of the Cross was performed to the invocation 'Maria, Jesu, God, Bishop'.¹

The crisis came in October. Rumours that leaders at Tinputz on Bougainville were planning 'liberation' even before the arrival of the cargo - 'one rifle is enough for us' - precipitated government action against the whole movement. Numerous arrests were made and

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Montauban to O'Reilly, 29 August 1935, O.R. (translation); Territory of New Guinea, Report, 1933-1934, p.22. For a similar inversion of orthodox Christianity see Worsley, The Trumpet Shall Sound, p.103.

Pako's house was burned. The excitement subsided.¹ The Bukas returned to their neglected gardens. But they did not lose hope. Cemeteries continued to be well kept, churches were filled, the Bishop was honoured - and when Japanese troops occupied Buka in 1942 they, in turn, were to be enthusiastically greeted as the harbingers of fortune.²

The chain of incidents on Buka from 1913 to 1945 has been cited as a prime example of the continuity of Melanesian 'cargo cults' in the face of continuing social dissatisfaction.³ It equally well exemplifies the enduring social role of Melanesian religion and its ability to transform Christianity into its own image. The lotu adopted in the 1920s was clearly expected to achieve what Muling's sorcery had failed to do in the previous decade. And in the 1930s as the Bukas' condition remained unchanged, that expectation became increasingly impatient. For it was hardly to be expected that an institution which was vindicated by the temporal eminence of Europeans should not be judged by the same criterion as the religion it had superseded. Was it effective? Thus, at the height of the agitation

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Montauban to O'Reilly, 15 October 1935, O.R. (translation); Territory of New Guinea, Report, 1935-36, pp.21-3; Worsley, The Trumpet Shall Sound, p.119.

2

Montauban to Courtais, 5 April 1938, A.P.M. OSS 61 208; O'Reilly and Sédès, Jaunes, Noirs et Blancs, pp.197-200; below, p.259.

3

See Worsley, The Trumpet Shall Sound, Chapter VI.

in 1935 Montauban wrote, 'the steamers are constantly expected, as long as that belief lasts...the danger for religion is not too great'. But he rightly wondered:

...when these grown-up children realize that the purpose of religion is not to obtain cargo for us here below how will they behave then? There will surely be a reaction...¹

Indeed, the reaction was even then beginning as Sanop and Kisu, allowing no exceptions to their resentment of Europeans, preached distrust of the missionaries. It reached its climax a generation later when 3000 Bukas not only rejected government authority but severed their connection with the lotu as well as with the missionaries and sought God's assistance in their own way.²

In other parts of the Solomons besides Buka, converts were, by the 1930s far from complacent about their lot. Life in Christ proved to be cold comfort amid continuing social discontent. W.C. Groves remarked in 1939 on the pervading mood of disappointment among the people of Gela who had enthusiastically embraced Christianity several decades earlier, and who had recently responded with similar enthusiasm to abortive political efforts to improve their situation.³ Marist sources also

1

Montauban to O'Reilly, 29 August 1935, O.R. (translation).

2

This question is discussed below, pp.319-22.

3

William C. Groves, 'Report on a Survey of Education in the British Solomon Islands Protectorate', sect.2, pp.12-3; Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions', pp.69-71, 109-10, 475.

abundantly attest the resentment and disillusion among the converts when the missionary ceased to appear as a benefactor. A protest by unpaid catechists on Guadalcanal in 1914, school strikes at Poporang in 1928, 1929 and 1931, a short-lived refusal by Kieta Catholics to attend Mass in 1928 and a three-years boycott of the mission begun by Tangarare Catholics in the 1933 all made the point that only to be a Christian was not enough. Solomon Islands converts wanted more than just a creed.¹

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Boch to Dubois, 19 August 1928, 7 February 1929, 15 October 1931, O.R.; Boch to Dubois, 23 August 1928, A.P.M. OSS 12jo; Binois to Rausch, 28 December 1928, 9 February 1929, P.V.M.: The Tangarare incident is discussed below, pp. 232 ff.

CHAPTER V

MEDICINE, EDUCATION AND CONSOLIDATION, 1898-1942

THE Marists' broadly tolerant acceptance of things as they were was complemented by a narrow religious conception of their missionary role. In the years before 1942 they were preoccupied with evangelism, an activity which achieved its purpose when the convert was baptized, safely ensconced in a Christian marriage, and beyond the reach of Protestantism. The religious and social advancement of the converts beyond the minimum level was of little concern to them. Thus they were generally unperturbed at providing no sophisticated education for medical services. Nevertheless mission activities and the relations between the Marists and their converts were by no means static. For, as was indicated in the previous chapter, and as will be discussed further in the present one, conversion did not dull the edge of indigenous self-interest. Moreover, the Marists, uncommitted to the 'improvement' of their followers, were more than ready to raise the quality of the social services they provided when it became necessary in order to protect their access to the islanders against the encroachments of Protestantism or the government.

The Marists' limited view of their task closely resembled that of the two non-German administrations of the Solomons, neither of which had a constructive 'native policy'. Rather, government aimed at keeping

the peace, superintending relations between Europeans and islanders and ensuring that the copra industry was adequately supplied with labourers. For copra production was the basis of the European economy in both parts of the group, the respective administrators of which had no more determined aim than that of balancing the budget. Since income was largely consumed by the cost of administration there was little finance available for social services.¹

Lack of funds similarly curbed Marist activities. Most Marist money was spent, hand-to-mouth, on maintaining a large European staff on a number of mission stations, beach heads in the evangelistic advance; and on buying rice to supplement the gardens of the school children. Unlike the various Protestant missions the Marists were supported by no organization such as a home church with a particular interest in providing for their needs. Regular grants came from the Propagation de la Foi which distributed funds collected throughout the Catholic world for 'the missions,' but, in contrast to the 1840s, at no time did these cover all costs. Nor, despite early hopes, was the deficit made up by the sale of copra, the production of which, mainly through the labour of school boys, especially in the South Solomons, was rarely very efficient.² Further finance came from appeals (say, to

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C.S. Belshaw, 'The Postwar Solomon Islands', Far Eastern Survey, vol.XVII (1948), pp.95-8; P. Biskup et al., A Short History of New Guinea (Sydney, 1968), pp.95, 97.

2

Figures showing annual copra income and the cost of running each mission are given in Appendix N.

the readers of Missions Catholiques) for special projects, from Mass stipends, and from gifts solicited by the missionaries. Each priest was expected to meet, as far as possible, the needs of his own station, mainly by canvassing family and friends. Even in the 1960s this remains a necessary source of revenue. Contributions have never been systematically demanded from the islanders.

Yet economic stringency alone, while its influence can scarcely be over-estimated, is insufficient to explain the modest scope of the policies and undertakings of either the Marists or the administrations, especially in regard to education. The necessary sense of purpose was also lacking; and, in each case the only fixed goal was extremely remote from the islanders' undeveloped capabilities. Thus, the ultimate objective of the Marists was an indigenous Church staffed by Solomon Islands clergy comparable in training with their European counterparts and observing the rule of celibacy. For, as Pope Benedict XV wrote in his encyclical letter, Maximum Illud, in 1919:

...the main care of those who rule the missions should be to raise and train a clergy from amidst the nations among whom they dwell, for on this are founded the best hopes for the Church of the future.

...their training should be full, adequate in extent of studies and length of years, such as is given to priests of civilised nations. Nor should the indigenous priest be trained for the sole purpose of assisting foreign missionaries in a subordinate ministry, but he must be...rendered able one day to undertake with credit the administration of his own people.

Similarly the Australian and British administrations, as trustee and protector, respectively, could expect that eventually their charges would need to be able to control their own affairs in a British-type polity. However, in the pre-World War II colonial order neither ecclesiastical nor political authorities in the Solomons were aware of any 'sense of time running out' for the achievement of these ends, or even convinced that they were attainable.¹ Consequently, there was no incentive to provide the sort of education they called for. As it was, civil authority was not delegated to Solomon Islanders above the rank of headman (luluai in the Australian Solomons) or police-boy, offices which required scant training. For its part, Catholic education was geared to imparting a modicum of religious instruction to as many pupils as possible and to producing catechists, low-level auxiliaries for the missionaries.

For the most ambitious approaches to indigenization, education and medical work in the Solomon Islands prior to 1942 it is therefore, necessary to turn to the Protestant missions. They tended to be better financed than the Marists and to have more adaptable standards for the delegation of responsibility than either the Marists or the administrations. J.F. Goldie, the Methodist chairman for 49 years (1902-51), and a substantial businessman, was unashamedly more concerned

1

West, 'The Historical Background', p.19.

with the temporal rather than with the strictly spiritual aspects of mission work. He was a strenuous advocate of 'industrial mission' and insisted that 'the adoption of Christianity by a people should be accompanied by their mental, moral and physical improvement'.¹

Consequently Methodist schooling, while being closely allied with plantation work - but in terms of a fashionable socio-missiological theory and not, as with the Catholics, from simple economic necessity - differed in quality from that given by the Marists. By 1926 most of the young people in New Georgia were literate, and in 1934 the few indigenous clerks in the B.S.I.P. government service were all from Methodist schools. In large part these results were due to the efforts of qualified full-time teachers.² Methodist medical work was equally notable. Between 1922 and 1942, a total of fourteen trained European nurses were employed in it, and in 1927 a doctor arrived in New Georgia to take charge of fully equipped hospital, where nurses and medical assistants were also trained.³ As a Church-builder, however,

1

Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions', p.311. In 1930, in criticism of Goldie, the Methodist synod affirmed that 'the spiritual needs of the native are of supreme importance compared with his social, commercial and political interests'. But the rebuke fell on deaf ears. Ibid., p.316.

2

Ibid., pp.334-6; Luxton, Isles of Solomon, pp.112-4.

3

Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions', p.319.

Goldie was less progressive. The first indigenous Methodist minister was not ordained till 1938.¹

In this there is a sharp contrast with Melanesian Mission policy. An Anglican from Gela received the diaconate in 1882 and the first indigenous priest was ordained in 1901. By 1928 there were as many Solomon Islands priests as there were European and by 1950 all district work was in the hands of fifty Melanesian priests and thirty deacons.² Their scholarship was slight and in style of life they scarcely differed from other villagers, yet they made possible a sacramental Christian life at the village level and were themselves evidence of a commendable attempt to adjust the Church to its people. But social work, was of less concern to the Anglicans than to the Methodists. A half-hearted attempt at industrial mission, begun in 1909 for the purpose of reviving by means of craft-training the Melanesian's interest in life, which was supposedly being destroyed by the pressure of European contact, had collapsed by 1925.³ As for Anglican medical work, a hospital was operated at Marovovo between 1913 and 1917 and another, still in operation, was opened at Fauambu on Malaita in 1928.⁴

1

Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions', p.339.

2

Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions', pp.175-7. Anon., District Clergy in Melanesia (Southern Cross Booklet No.3, London, 1950), p.4.

3

Hilliard 'Protestant Missions', pp.187-90.

4

Ibid., pp.148, 201-3.

The S.S.E.M., however, was relatively indifferent to the temporal welfare of the islanders, despite its numerous lay staff (including a doctor and a dentist). Rather, it was preoccupied with offering salvation through the acceptance of a clearcut scriptural fundamentalism. Thus placing an emphasis on belief and on the eschewing of complex institutional forms which allowed rapid devolution of 'church' responsibility to the islanders themselves. Accordingly, S.S.E.M. education aimed particularly at the training of village leaders, and by 1940 these were directing their followers' religious affairs in virtual independence of the European missionaries.¹

Finally, the S.D.A.s, even more fundamentalist than the S.S.E.M., and convinced of the imminence of the 'second-coming' of Christ, readily entrusted islanders with religious authority. In 1935, only twenty years after the mission began work in the Solomons, its first native pastors were ordained. Medical work was a special S.D.A. interest, though as a proselytising device rather than as a humanitarian activity. Adventist industrial training was, however, highly regarded in official circles.²

Yet, although the Protestant missions set the standard for broadening and developing their work among the Solomon Islanders, neither the Marists nor the

1

Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions' pp.396, 400-1.

2

Ibid., pp.458-62.

administrations were completely outdone. In the British Solomons, a small government hospital was founded at Tulagi in 1913, but it was mainly for the convenience of European residents. It served the islanders indirectly through 'dressers' who were trained there from 1922.

Small government grants were also made in support of mission medical activities.¹ The situation was similar in the North Solomons, where a doctor was stationed at Kieta in German times, and where the Australians set up hospitals in 1922 (at Kieta) and in 1926 (at Buka Passage).² As for the Marists, it must be said that in each vicariate - and in accordance with the inescapable humanitarian implications of the notion of Christian charity - first aid and the administering of N.A.B. injections, to counter yaws, were a regular activity at all mission stations and on tours of the villages. Moreover, both priests and nuns often devotedly nursed sick islanders, while Maurice Boch earned a reputation as a surgeon (self-taught) that was honoured far beyond the Shortlands.³ Bishop Raucaz deserves to be remembered for the child-endowment scheme he operated from 1925 until his death in 1934 in an effort to promote better child care.⁴ But against

1

Hilliard 'Protestant Missions', p.148; B.S.I.P., Annual Report, 1924-5.

2

L.P. Mair, Australia in New Guinea (London, 1948), p.180; Brian Essai, Papua and New Guinea (Melbourne 1961), pp.199-206.

3

South Seas Weekly, 25 January 1930; Rabaul Times, 12 December 1930.

4

Turupatu, No.43, (1925), p.165. A couple would receive £1 per annum for five living baptized children, plus 10/- for each child after the first.

these admirable but piecemeal efforts must be set the opinion voiced by Bishop Aubin in 1936, that special training, which would make it possible to provide more sophisticated medical services, was inadvisable for prospective missionaries:

Some missionaries have no aptitude for it. Others, on the contrary, strongly risk, once in the mission, giving themselves too exclusively to the practice of medicine to the detriment of their duty of state. That is, the ministry of souls.... Besides this loss of time there is the possibility of spiritual danger for the missionary. There are some treatments that a priest ought not to give to women and young girls and even, in some cases, to young men, because the virtue of chastity is here involved. His sacerdotal dignity and his reputation forbid him.

To Aubin the missionary had 'no need of very profound medical knowledge', and could easily obtain as much of it as he required on the spot.¹ With its hyper-sensitive awareness of the dignity of the priesthood such thinking reflects a lingering trace of the self-centred piety which suffused the Marists' early venture into the vicariate of Melanesia. It also clearly stressed the prevailing view that the missionaries' obligations to the islanders were of an essentially spiritual kind - a view which almost certainly owed much to the social Darwinian opinion, widely current in the first decades

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Aubin to Dubois, 5 March 1936, A.P.M. OSM 418 (translation).

of the twentieth century, that the native people of the Solomon Islands, as of other islands in the Pacific, were a dying race. Thus in 1912, a Marist writing from Guadalcanal assured a correspondent that he 'and the other missionaries [believed] that the day was not far off when many of these islands will be depopulated'. In the meantime, the missionaries were busy trying 'to send to Heaven the relics of the race'.¹ Similarly, in his history of the South Solomons mission published in 1928 (English edition) Raucaz wrote that 'We seem to be assisting at the death agony of this race, formerly so strong'.² Such an opinion accorded neatly with the various other factors - such as the high level of training needed for priesthood, the assumption that the colonial situation could endure indefinitely, and the immediacy of the Protestant challenge - that tended to restrict the Marists' conception of their task and to emphasize the urgency of evangelization. For people who were dying needed nothing so much as the minimum of instruction - and baptism, which would ensure their entry to Heaven. Indeed, given the presumed likelihood of their extinction, there was little point in seeking to reverse the process by purposeful educational or medical means - even if the Marists had had the resources to do so. In harmony with this resigned attitude, was the fact that no serious efforts were made to supplement the limitations of the priesthood with the skills of missionaries who

1

Letter of Pavese, 25 November 1912, A.P.M OSM 208 (translation).

2

Raucaz, Savage South Solomons, p.57.

were not priests. Thus, the few lay-brothers in the Solomon Islands vicariates were usually preoccupied with construction or plantation work. Among the nuns there was, likewise, no particular demand for those with professional qualifications. For instance, of the thirty-six S.M.S.M. who worked in the North Solomons up to 1943, three were nurses and five were teachers; while of the twenty-four who worked in the South, only two (who arrived in 1938 and 1939, respectively) were nurses and one was a teacher.¹

During the 1930s a notable effort was, nevertheless, made to improve its quality of Marist medical services. It is significant, however, that this was inspired not by concern for the bodies of the Solomon Islanders, but by the abiding desire to save their souls from Protestantism. The move itself was occasioned by the action of a Methodist nurse, Elizabeth Common, who, assisted by Mrs Cropp, opened a baby-care centre at the Methodist station at Skotolan on Buka in 1928. Thus, at the beginning of 1929, after noting that the Methodist advance was to be regarded as an epidemic, Boch, with unintentioned irony, commented that 'the danger I most fear is the establishment of hospitals'. And at the end of the year, after reviewing the general progress of the Marists' rivalry with the Methodists he commented grimly:

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See Appendices Aii-iii.

It is their nurses, alas, who are beginning to present us with a problem on Buka on account of their effective care of the sick and of little children.¹

To defend the standing of Catholicism, therefore, Boch, early in 1930, established a convent of nuns at Lemmanmanu - 'It is urgent because of the success of the Methodist nurses' - and directed an appeal for doctors and nurses to a German Catholic medical missionary organization. For, as another Marist, J.B. Poncelet, later observed, 'It was necessary to resist this propaganda by employing the same means'.²

Boch's appeal to Germany was fruitless. However, Thomas Wade, newly appointed Vicar Apostolic of the North Solomons - and who was still anxious to bring lay people into the mission - took up the cause with greater success when he went to Sydney to be consecrated in October 1930. The first person to answer Wade's call for help was a nurse, Amy Richardson, who left Australia for the Solomons in March 1931. Later the same year she

1

Boch, Lettre Circulaire, no.28, 2 January 1929, P.V.M. (translation); Boch to Dubois, 29 December 1929, O.R. (translation); Luxton, Isles of Solomon, p.141.

2

Boch to Dubois, 12 March 1930, O.R. (translation); V.A. North Solomons, 'Rapport au propagande, 1930', O.R.; Poncelet, 'A retourner à Turiboiru' (1935), O.R. (translation). Other convents in the North Solomons were founded at Poporang (1901), Kieta (1905), Patupatuai (1908), Burunotui (1912), Koromira (1912), Torokina (1915), Tinputz (1921), Gagan (1922), Turiboiru (1922), Monoitu (1933).

was joined by three other Australian nurses - like herself, unmarried. Together, the four founded an efficient hospital at Hahela in the south of Buka. Then, in 1933, the nurses were reinforced by a young Australian doctor, J. Luxford Meagher, who, in order to spread the benefit of his services, itinerated continually through Buka, Bougainville and the Shortlands until ill-health forced him to withdraw in 1936. Meanwhile, further hospitals staffed by nurses had been set up at Patupatuai (in 1934), and at Poporang (in 1935). To ensure continued support for this new line of activity, Wade inspired a number of prominent Sydney Catholics to form the Marist Mission Medical Society, which was founded in Sydney in 1935, with Nurse Richardson as organizing secretary. In this capacity she recruited five more nurses for the North Solomons and in 1937 appointed two others to the South Solomons, where they opened a hospital at Buma on Malaita. Unfortunately, the work late begun was soon to be halted by war.¹

IN the promoting of education, the administrations of the Solomons were even less active than they were in that of public health. Probably, this would have been less true of Bougainville and Buka had not the former German protectorate been transferred to Australian control after World War I. For the transfer aborted the German

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For a fuller account of the improved Marist medical work see Amy R. Richardson, There Came to the Solomons (Sydney, 1943), passim.

scheme for the thorough-going economic development of New Guinea, together with the concomitant plans for training the islanders as artisans and clerks to serve the needs of the large settler community that was envisaged. To this end subsidies had been paid to missions which taught the German language, and in 1907 the government itself had set up a school at Rabaul to teach German and to give trade training.¹ The significance of these developments for the present study lies in the determined resistance they met with from the Marists. For to the Marists, government intervention in education, as an encroachment on what the mission regarded as its proper field of activity, was a measure to be resisted at all points. This hostility was rooted in the doctrinal assumption that the Church's right to educate ought not to be restricted, a principle which (as a Marist spokesman was to think it necessary to inform the High Commissioner in the B.S.I.P. in 1953) found classic expression in Pope Pius XI's encyclical On the Christian Education of Youth (Divini Illius Magistri, 1929):

The Church has inherent in herself an inviolable right to freedom in teaching. She is independent of any sort of earthly power both in the origin and exercise of her mission as educator; not merely in regard to her proper end and object, but also in regard to the means necessary and suitable to attain that end. The Church

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German New Guinea, Annual Report, 1907-8, p.319.

has every right to make use of every other kind of human learning and instruction which is the common patrimony of individuals and society, and above all to decide what may help or harm Christian Education.¹

Such a position did not necessarily preclude the possibility of close cooperation with governments in the matter of education. For instance, the other Catholic missions in the German territory willingly taught German. Nor did the establishment of government schools necessarily deny the mission's right to have its own schools. However, the Marists in Bougainville and Buka, thinking in terms of the nineteenth and early twentieth century attacks on the traditional prerogatives of the Catholic Church in France, Germany and Italy, clung to the belief that any reduction of the extent of the Church's control over education was meant as an attack on religion. In this they were, of course, not alone. A similar belief also enjoyed currency among many Catholic authorities elsewhere, as in Australia and New Zealand, who saw a dire secularist threat to Christianity in the formation of state educational systems which, in an effort to accommodate pupils of divergent creeds, tended to favour secular or non-denominational teaching.

For their part, when the question was first raised, the Marists in the German Solomons firmly insisted on teaching only in the native languages, rather than submit to the measure of surveillance which acceptance of the

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Quoted in draft of Aubin to Stanley, 27 April 1953, M.E.O. Papers, Honiara.

subsidy for teaching German would entail.¹ Indeed, ~~Eugene~~^{Charles} Flauss, whose task it was to act as Marist spokesman at the government post at Kieta put his case to Doellinger in 1909 with such vigour (reinforcing argument with threats and abuse) that he was fined fifty marks for offensive behaviour. Subsequently, in January 1910, Forestier used the occasion of the contre-temps to transfer Flauss to Buka and - following Marist expansion on Bougainville - to shift the mission's headquarters from Poporang to Kieta.² Yet Forestier's educational views were no less pronounced than those of Flauss. Thus, when, in 1910, recruitment for the 'neutral and atheistic' government school at Rabaul was extended to Bougainville, and when Bishop Broyer was strenuously opposing a scheme for a system of government schools in Samoa, Forestier wrote deploring the school-laws the 'free-masons, organized by Satan [were] establishing throughout the world'.³ But Forestier's greatest fear

1

In 1911 it was said that 'All the Missions except the Neuendettelsauer and the Marist Mission impart instruction in the German language in their schools': German New Guinea, Annual Report, 1910-11, p.435. Since this also applied to the other Catholic Missions in German New Guinea it is likely that personal factors also contributed appreciably to the Marists' refusal.

2

Forestier to Regis, 11 February 1909, A.P.M. OSS 208; Flauss to Regis, 2 June 1909, *ibid.*

3

Forestier to Gay, 26 July 1910, A.P.M. OSS 418; (translation); Stephen Neill, Colonialism and Christian Missions (London, 1966), pp.259-60. Considerable correspondence relating to the Samoan education dispute is located in A.P.M. ON 418. Forestier's opinion of government education is strikingly similar to that
(footnote continued on p.211)

was that government schools would eventually be founded on Bougainville itself. In the hope, therefore, of discouraging such a step, he planned to reverse the mission's policy of not teaching any German by founding at Kieta a school which satisfied government standards, but for which no subsidy would be accepted. Consequently, in 1911 and 1912 he issued urgent appeals to the Marist Brothers for trained German-speaking teachers to staff it.¹ But none were available at the time, and so the project lapsed - a fate that was confirmed by the ending of German rule shortly afterwards. Nevertheless, Forestier's action was important as a demonstration of the jealousy with which the Marists regarded the Church's educational role and of the type of effort they would make to maintain it. It was a precedent which bore abundant fruit four decades later.²

(footnote 3 continued from p.210)
expressed by Bishop Moran of Dunedin in respect of the 1877 Education Act in New Zealand:

'this bill was the Freemason's programme and was nothing more nor less than the embodiment of their principles and their determination to destroy, if possible, the Catholic Church and faith. The Freemasons of this country were the dupes of those on the Continent and were misled by them.' Quoted in Hugh M. Laracy, 'The Life and Context of Bishop Patrick Moran' (M.A. thesis, V.U.W., 1964), pp.114-5.

1

Forestier to the Superior General of the Marist Brothers, 25 December 1911, 3 December 1912, A.F.M. The Marist Brothers [of the Schools], a specialized teaching congregation, were originally part of the Society of Mary, from which they separated in 1852.

2

See below, chapter VIII, passim.

Another, and no less enduring, reason why missionaries, whether Catholic or Protestant, should resist government interest in education should also be noted. This was the practical fact that in the Solomon Islands situation the operations of all missions focussed heavily on the school, which was the only feasible means of imparting a knowledge of Christianity to large numbers of people. Apart from the question of the proper spheres of Church and State, the missions could, therefore, fear that to submit mission schooling to government direction opened the way to their losing the ability to achieve the purpose that had brought them to the Solomon Islands.

However, between the wars the problem of state interference in mission education did not seriously arise. This was particularly so in the Australian Solomons after 1927 when, in conference with the administration, the various missions of the Mandated Territory of New Guinea, 'declined to accept subsidies or any form of control over their educational activities'.¹ For its part, therefore, the administration operated a few ill-provided-for schools of its own - none of them in Bougainville or Buka - to train the few auxiliaries it needed. In the British Solomons, in modest contrast, as in Papua, the administration's contribution to education consisted in meagre and unobtrusive efforts to work through the

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J.A. Miles, 'The Development of Native Education in Papua and New Guinea', South Pacific, Vol.10, No.6 (1959), pp.154-60. The date of the conference is incorrectly stated in Miles' article as 1937 (p.159).

missions. Thus, from 1926 to 1938 annual grants of never more than £50 were paid to missions that gave some technical training. The Marists never qualified for a grant, but they were unconcerned at the deprivation. However, as will be discussed below, their equanimity was disturbed when, also in the 1930s, the administration threatened to make a more determined effort to raise education standards in the protectorate.

In consequence of the official indifference to education in the Australian Solomons the only external influence on the development of Marist schooling there was rivalry with the Protestant missions. As already described, the entry of the Protestants into Bougainville and Buka stampeded the Marists into multiplying mission stations, training catechists and teaching English. A converse effect of the incursion was to reduce the attention they could give to station schools. For the separation of missionaries and the emphasis given to the work of stamping out Protestant influence in the villages meant that often a station was without its pastor for considerable periods of time. Statistics, incomplete as they are, suggest that for much of the 1920s and 1930s far fewer pupils attended mission station schools in the North Solomons than in the South. In 1931, when the southern vicariate had 786 enrolled the North had only 528.¹ These latter did, moreover, tend to be short-term pupils, who were being prepared for baptism and for their first Holy Communion.

1

For school statistics see Appendix H.

The vagaries, environmental and human, which commonly impeded educational efficiency in the Solomon Islands situation will be discussed below mainly in connection with the southern vicariate for which documentation is more abundant. It might, however, be surmised that the availability of numerous seriously trained catechists in the North Solomons (unlike the South) in some degree compensated at the village level for the deficiencies of the vicariate's station schooling. That the Marists thought so seems to be suggested in the fact that attendance statistics for the North generally neglect the distinction between station schools and village ones. It was not so in the South, where Bishop Raucaz told Propaganda in 1921 that he would no longer report figures for so-called village schools.¹ Raucaz's successor, J.M. Aubin, likewise, had few illusions about the standard of his village schools, as he implied in 1936:

A new pagan district is opened to mission influence. The villages each send two or three representatives, young men as a rule, to the central mission station to learn religion, and with it they learn a little reading and writing. Now, if possible, the missionary will send a formed teacher back into the new villages, and there he will start his work of teaching. But often trained teachers are impossible to find, so that the missionary is obliged to send back

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V.A. South Solomons, 'Rapport au Propagande, 1921', A.P.M. OSM 3321.

those young men after only two or three years of instruction or to send perhaps some older Christians of good-will, but no special training to give some elementary instruction in religion ...no one could call such teachers efficient.... They are men of good will...¹

Even so, there was little enough in the educational quality even of the station schools of the South Solomons on which the Marists might pride themselves. The main objective of these institutions was less the transference of knowledge or skill than the fostering of a sense of identification with Catholicism and of acceptance of mission authority. Certainly the instruction given had little secular content apart from the elementary literacy in the vernacular or in the mission's lingua franca which was needed to familiarize the pupils with the catechism and with hymns and prayers. The station school achieved its purpose in training the pupils in Catholic worship and teaching in an atmosphere of relative immunity from taboos and from the demands of the spirits. And in order to ensure that they absorbed mission influence to the maximum extent the policy was to keep them at school for as long as possible. That is, until they married.² As the official history of the mission, has it:

1

Aubin to Ashley, 10 July 1936, A.P.M. OSM 202

2

Babonneau to Vidal, 26 December 1901, A.P.M. OSM 208;
Bertin to procurator, 1 March 1912, A.M.O., vol.XIII;
letter of Bertin, 15 November 1926, A.P.M. OSM 208.

...the sole means of rearing and training the native children as Christians is to keep them away, at least, for a certain number of years, from their heathen surroundings and the corrupting influences of the older people, even Catholics, who just know enough catechism to save their souls.¹

A scholastic career might last ten years. Yet, since there was no curriculum to follow and little equipment and since each station superior, regardless of his interest in pedagogy, was his own director of education, instruction tended to be informal and haphazard. At Avuavu in 1909 Jean Boudard gave his pupils three half-hour classes each day - reading in the morning, writing in the afternoon and catechism in the evening.² At Tangarare in 1912 the policy was to hold class until the pupils became restless, and then send them off to work in the plantation and gardens,³ while in 1933 it was said that

Each holds school according to his mood and some extravagant things are seen: hours of class prolonged indefinitely then suppressed completely; some classes cut so short and so often without surveillance that the people complain 'We deprive ourselves of our children to send them to school and they are not taught.' It is also certain that the average of three

1

Raucaz, Savage South Solomons, p.258.

2

Boudard to Montauban, 3 May 1909, A.P.M. OSM 208.

3

Bertin to procurator, 1 March 1912, A.M.O. vol.XIII.

classes of catechism per week of 25 minutes maximum, often less, is not sufficient to produce savants, when it is necessary to learn everything word for word.¹

Efficient school organisation was, also, often impeded by the impermanence of the scholars. On a tour of the villages the priest's bearers or boat's crew would usually be drawn from the school boys. But often the boys themselves would abscond to work on plantations. In 1907 Bertin wrote from Tangarare this had been a passion with them for the last two years:

They wish, like those who return from Queensland, to have many clothes which they do not always know how to wear, but which they change ten times a day. With this they would also have an old rusty rifle, some bottles of scent, some combs etc. The prospect of all these riches easily makes them forget that they have to prepare for baptism or first communion. They will come back proudly to display all this and others will leave to try their luck in turn.²

In an effort to make it more difficult for pupils to abscond Woodford, in 1907, at the Marists' request, issued 'strict orders that no natives [were] in future to be recruited from [Catholic] stations'.³ He did not,

1

Graton to Raucaz, 28 September 1933, A.P.M. Pavese Papers (translation).

2

Bertin to Regis, 23 August 1907, A.M.O. vol.XII (translation).

3

Woodford to Bertreux, 27 January 1907, quoted in Babonneau to Barley, 1 November 1919, Wanoni Bay. This ruling continued to be enforced after Woodford's retirement: Barley to Babonneau, 3 November 1919, and Workman to Bouillon, 9 February 1920, Wanoni Bay

however, go as far as Doellinger, who often assisted the Marists to enforce against truants the unofficial contracts for three or five years schooling they or their relatives had entered into with the mission and which were regularly employed in the German Solomons - at least at Kieta and Koromira - to ensure a measure of educational stability.¹ But the attraction of the plantations remained constant. In 1932 sixteen of the thirty-two pupils at Ruavatu left suddenly to seek their fortunes.² Moreover, the recurring complaints in station journals suggest that recruiters continued to tempt pupils by anchoring near mission stations.³ But the charge that this was deliberate should be tempered by the fact that pupils were easily tempted and, further, that since mission stations were generally sited near convenient anchorages, the desire for shelter (and for social contact with the missionaries) also served to

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Forestier to Gay, 26 July 1910, A.P.M. OSS 418; G. Servant, 'Notes et Souvenirs', Lebel Papers. The system of unofficial contracts seems to have developed from a demand by some of the first pupil-labourers brought to Poporang: '...to be able to keep the twelve or thirteen young people that we believed came here out of good will and as children of the mission, we have had to take them on and enrol them as labourers; without that they were all going to leave us. Their engagement is for three years, on condition that at the end of this period we give each of them a trunk, an axe, a knife, some yards of cloth and a little tobacco'. Estienne to Aubry, 18 March 1900, A.P.M. OSS 208 (translation).

2

Aubin to Bertin, 20 August 1932, P.V.M.

3

'Journal of J. Coicaud', October 1913; 'Journal of Wanoni Bay', 1917, 1920, 1922; 'Journal of Rokera', 1936.

attract recruiters to the locality. Certainly, there is no evidence that recruiters ever depleted schools and it would seem that they were generally wary about signing-on those who could reasonably be regarded as school-boys. For instance, the most specific Marist complaints of which record has been found concern pupils aged 20 and 24, respectively. The complaints were dismissed by officials on the ground that people of that age were eligible for recruitment wherever they were found.¹

A greater threat to regular schooling, however, was shortage of food at the mission stations. For this reason it was often necessary for the pupils to be sent back to their villages. The problem became particularly acute from the 1920s on the long-established stations on Guadalcanal, as school rolls increased and as the age-level of the pupils dropped. For the first pupils had been young adults, aged 'twelve, fourteen, sixteen years and more'. To many of these, school was a prelude or a substitute for recruitment, and their maturing physical strength was invaluable for gardening and for copra-making. Consequently, they cost the mission little to maintain except when the gardens failed. But the situation changes as evangelization advanced: as more infants were baptized at birth, the missionaries acquired

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'Journal of W.R. Bell, Clansman, No. 66', 25, 27 June 1910, in W.P.H.C. Fiji Immigration Dept: Government Agents' Journals. I owe this reference to Mr Peter Corris, Department of Pacific History, A.N.U. See also Cromar to Babonneau, 1 November 1919, Wanoni Bay; Barley to Babonneau, 3 November 1919, *ibid.*

a claim to more and younger children - and insisted they come to the station at the age of seven or eight when, presumably, they were more impressionable, but when their capacity for hard work was more limited. As a result, mission finances were strained by the growing need to buy rice.¹ And in 1920, when the price of rice trebled, it was necessary to close the school at Rua Sura, whose coral supported a fine plantation but no gardens. Tangarare and Avuavu were also hard hit at this time. At the former station 130 boys and sixty girls were sent home.² Similar large-scale expulsions occurred in 1939, when the copra market collapsed. Visiting Wanoni Bay in that year, W.C. Groves found a school of only eleven boys and eight girls; and at the beginning of 1940 there were only six boys and six girls.³ A significant, though ineffectual product of the crisis was a circular letter from Aubin urging that village schools be set up and, which was more drastic (and quite without precedent), that parents be asked to contribute to the cost of their children's education.

1

Aubin to Dubois, 27 May 1937, A.P.M. OSM 208; Raucaz, Savage South Solomons, pp.257-8. At Kieta in 1910 the mission maintained seventy boys at a cost - for calico - of £1 each per annum: Forestier to Gay, 26 July 1910, A.P.M. OSS 418.

2

Bertin to Raffin, 22 April 1920, A.P.M. OSM 208; Bouillon to Raffin, 28 August 1920, ibid.; Raucaz to Raffin, 28 September 1920, ibid.; Raucaz to Courtais, 25 November 1929, P.V.M., M.C., 1921, p.162.

3

'Journal of Wanoni Bay', 1939, 1940; letter of Simler, 6 August 1939, A.P.M. OSM 208.

Between 1929 and 1938, said Aubin, 4175 children had attended station schools, at a cost to the mission of £13,400, in addition to the expense of providing for the construction and staffing of the schools.¹

Despite its deficiencies Marist schooling was ordinarily sufficient to ensure that after several years a pupil possessed some familiarity with Catholic doctrine and had a smattering of literacy. The range of literature available to him, however, was extremely limited and offered no real access to the wider world of the Europeans. The policy of the Marists in both parts of the group was to provide books of catechism, hymns, prayers, Sunday Gospels and Bible stories in the vernacular of each area in which they worked. In the North Solomons where a press was installed at Torokina in 1927, such works were all the mission did produce for its scholars. The situation was slightly different in the South where a press was set-up at Rua Sura in 1910. In addition to the usual devotional works, it printed a mission newspaper, Turupatu, bi-monthly from 1911, and in 1924 selections from the Fables of La Fontaine. Both were in the Gare language which, owing to the Marists' early success at the western end of Guadalcanal, had been espoused as the official language of the mission.² It had been hoped that Gare would

1

Aubin, Lettre Circulaire, 13 May 1939, B.A.H.

2

Aubin to Morella, 10 May 1949, B.A.H.; Raucaz, Savage South Solomons, p.122.

become the lingua franca throughout the mission, but this was not achieved. Nevertheless, knowledge of it was considerably diffused through its use in the catechist schools, which drew students to Guadalcanal from other areas; through the sending of Malaita children to Guadalcanal until the 1930s, when the Malaita stations became adequately staffed with priests and nuns; and by the use of Guadalcanal catechists in other islands. Gare thus has its place in what was undoubtedly one of the main achievements of Marist schoolings (and that of other missions) - the extension of the limits of communication and of peaceful contact between the members of various Solomon Island communities. Also contributing to this extension were the enthusiasm for letter-writing that schooling often inspired among its adepts and the intermingling of pupils at mission schools. Among Marist pupils only one serious breach of order is recorded - a pitched battle, bush versus coast, at Buma station in 1927. One man was seriously injured, but there were no fatalities.¹

BESIDES its quantitative purpose, the influencing of as many pupils as possible, Marist schooling also had a qualitative one, the providing of catechists or teachers. When beginning work in the Solomons, the Marists had brought Pacific Islands auxiliaries with them. Perhaps a dozen Samoans were taken to the North Solomons before the

¹

Turupatu, No.53 (April, 1927).

practice was discontinued in 1903. In the South, eight Fijians from the catechist school at Wairiki and a Malaitaman, Brother Venasio, a member of the Fijian sodality of the Little Brothers of Mary, came with Vidal in 1898. Eight more came from Wairiki in 1899 and it was said that about thirty Fijians (including some women and children) had come to the Solomons by late 1901. Thereafter, no more assistants were imported until two Fijians, two Wallisians and a Futunian arrived as crew of the Jeanne d'Arc in 1909. The reason for the early abandonment of the policy of importing assistants from Samoa and Fiji - who were used less as catechists than as labourers, cooks and boats-crew - was their tragic susceptibility to malaria, a condition possibly encouraged, as the Marists suggest, by their intense fear of the Solomon Islanders.¹ Many of them died and most had to be repatriated shortly after they arrived in the group. In 1912 Bertreux recalled the sad fates of some of the Fijians:

Teofile came here from Wairiki with his wife and four children, and saw them all die only a few months after his arrival. He lives now with the savages of the interior [of Guadalcanal] more savage than them and barely possessing the use of his reason.

1

Rouillac to Regis, 11 June 1899, 16 November 1901, 13 December 1901, A.P.M. OSM 208; Estienne to Forestier, 10 August 1900, O.R.; M.C., 1900, p.181.

Another victim was 'Atanasio, a charming young man from Wairiki, very pious and of limitless devotion [who] went insane and on returning to Fiji [in 1905] did not regain his reason'.¹

From the beginning, therefore, the Marists were forced to find local assistants. Unlike the indigenous teachers employed by the Protestant missions in the Solomons, as elsewhere in the Pacific, these were seldom used as the spearhead of evangelization and were accorded little scope for individual initiative. They were used to follow up contacts established by the European missionary and to lead prayers and give instruction in villages that had already signified their interest in the lotu. Most catechists were obtained in a haphazard manner. Each priest was expected to find among his pupils boys willing to represent the mission in villages other than their own, while it was hoped that any ex-pupil would be prepared to serve as catechist when he returned home.

Always there were some who attached themselves to the mission and served with stalwart fidelity. One such was Bitiae, the son of Gorai, of the Shortlands. Another was Petero Supara, who spent thirty years as a roving evangelist, first on Guadalcanal and later on Malaita. After the two priests at Marau died during a dysentery epidemic in 1915 Petero took charge of the station - baptizing the new-born and the dying, and preaching

1

Letter of Bertreux, 1912, A.P.M. OSM 418 (translation).

regularly in the chapel.¹ Natural selection, however, produced few Bitiaais or Peteros, so it became necessary to try to procure them systematically. The circumstances in which this was done in the North Solomons have already been discussed.² In the South, where the Protestant challenge was present from the beginning, the Marists, not surprisingly, thought of formal catechist training much earlier. But here their efforts to implement it failed spectacularly. Nevertheless, these efforts are of the utmost significance. For in their failure they - like the Buka affair - clearly reveal the tensions inherent in the relations between the mission and its followers. Moreover, in throwing light on the limitations of the Marists' appreciation of these tensions, they reveal a lack of sympathy for and understanding of indigenous values that contrast ironically with their tolerance when the people, docile if ill-informed, were disposed to cooperate with the mission.

This latter consideration is particularly relevant in the case of Bishop Bertreux whose episcopate, so notable for the geographical expansion of the mission, was marked by his ill-success in developing other facets of mission work. Bertreux's practical grasp of the situations he was dealing with was weakened by his

¹ Turupatu, No.111 (December, 1936).

² See above, pp.125 ff.

preoccupation with maintaining what he regarded as his personal and episcopal dignity. For instance, as several of his confrères recalled with considerable bitterness after his death in 1919, he was prone to making grand but ill-considered gestures and promises, any criticism of which he regarded as a grave affront. Thus Henri Graton, who had been in the mission since 1907, mostly at Visale, marked the bishop's death with a long obituary cataloguing what he considered to be the pretensions and blunders of Bertreux's episcopate. The evidence cited is considerable. For instance, Bertreux had made 'magnificent promises' about teaching English to half-caste girls in a school which was opened for them at Visale in 1910. But no serious effort was made to fulfil the promise. Several parents withdrew their children. Until its demise in 1919 the school limped along with between three and nine pupils under the direction of a German nun, Sister Antonia, whose own knowledge of English was notably deficient. Indeed, in 1916 Father J. Nicolas, the head of the Marist province of Oceania had been constrained to observe that the school was inadequate in respect not only of its English teaching but also of the general training in cooking, washing, sewing and child-care which the European fathers of the girls had wanted for their daughters, and which Nicolas thought appropriate to their status.¹

1

Graton to Raffin, 10 August 1919, A.P.M. OSM 208; Sr. Antonia to Martin, 7 July 1911, 16 February 1916, 18 October 1916, A.P.M. OSM 498; Nicolas to Martin, 20 October 1916, A.P.M. OP 418; Bertreux to Martin, 30 March 1918, A.P.M. OSM 418.

Another failure was that of a native brotherhood which Bertreux attempted to found at Rua Sura in 1912. The venture collapsed within months, when the 'brothers' tired of being treated simply as unpaid plantation labourers. And a similar fate met the 'English' school for boys - mainly half-castes - which Bertreux, after proudly advertising his intention, opened on Rua Sura in 1918. The teacher was Brother George Dwyer, an Australian who had joined the mission as a layman in 1911 but who had been professed as a Marist in 1915. However, most of George's time was taken up not with pedagogy but with his duties as mission printer while the children, like the 'brothers', were discouraged by the amount of time given to copra-making. Doomed by neglect, the school collapsed within a year.¹

Completing the pattern of fiasco defined by these incidents, was Bertreux's essay at formal catechist training. The venture was launched at Rua Sura early in 1910 with a class, drawn mainly from Tangarare, of seventeen married couples and eighteen youths.² Their course, which lasted two years, was begun under Raucaz and, after his departure on the Marists' abortive sortie into New Georgia, was completed under Pierre Bouillon. From Rua Sura they were posted to villages in western Guadalcanal to help hold the line against Anglican influence. A second class completed the course in

1

Graton to Raffin, 10 August 1919, A.P.M. OSM 208.

2

P.A. South Solomons, 'Rapport au la Propagation de la Foi, 1910', A.P.M. OSM 3321.

March 1914, when old and new graduates gathered at Tangarare for a retreat. Whatever satisfaction Bertreux may have felt at this event was not shared by the catechists, who saw it as an occasion not only for spiritual refreshment but also for obtaining redress of material grievances.

The course at Rua Sura had been far from agreeable to them. Food had been scarce and plantation work constant. Indeed, in view of the lack of garden land there, Raucaz, had suggested in 1911 that the catechist school be transferred to Tangarare. Bertreux, however, had refused; replying, says Graton, that the students' labour was necessary for copra-making. According to another of the bishop's critics, R.J. Pavese, this left so little time for instruction that the catechists learned no more than school children and were disappointed at being little more than unpaid labourers.¹ Moreover, when they graduated from Rua Sura, their resentment at such treatment was aggravated when the £6 per annum which, in 1910, Bertreux had publicly promised to pay catechists was not forthcoming. Frequently since then had they been heard to complain 'Na pater are perogami' ('the Fathers deceive us'). During the retreat, therefore they took the opportunity to present the bishop with a petition, reminding him of his promise and requesting an annual salary of £12 for themselves -

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Turupatu, No.7 (July 1914); Graton to Raffin, 10 August 1919, A.P.M OSM 208; R.J. Pavese, 'Récit très véridique', p.125, A.P.M. Pavese Papers.

plus £8 for their wives. Bertreux's reaction was wholly negative. Outraged by the request, which he even refused to discuss, he immediately stormed aboard the Jeanne d'Arc and set sail. The catechists, thereupon dispersed to their villages and the school was not resumed - but a legacy of distrust of the mission remained at Tangarare.¹

The catechists' part in this affair is further evidence that the Solomon Islanders' cooperation with Europeans, even in the matter of religion, was far from being unconditional. For all that it offered in the hereafter, the mission was not exempt - even by its supposedly élite subjects - from serving the needs of the present. Thus, the expectations that were often involved in conversion, together with initial experience of the mission as a conspicuously generous institution, were scarcely conducive to acceptance of the proposition that the apostle should willingly leave all things (or, indeed, anything) to preach the Gospel of Christ. Nor did the fact that the Marists, to all appearances, shared in the common affluence of Europeans provide any inducement for Melanesians to serve the same God without

1

Graton to Propaganda, 24 October 1935, A.P.M. OSM 12jo. See also Pavese, 'Récit tres veridique', p.124; A.P.M. Pavese Papers; Graton to Raucaz, 28 September 1933, *ibid*; Graton to Dubois, 5 November 1934, *ibid*. These accounts of the failure of the Rua Sura catechist school were occasioned by the failure of a second such school at Tangarare in 1933.

receiving any comparable benefit themselves. It is, therefore, significant that it was not only the Marists' followers who placed a high value on their services. In 1909 the Reverend G.K. Mair of the Melanesian Mission wrote:

I have made two trips to Gela in hope of getting men [for Guadalcanal]. They were both fruitless. Three men did offer, but they each wanted a salary of £12 per annum.¹

And about the same time Goldie was having similar trouble with his Fijian and Samoan teachers in New Georgia.²

Even allowing that the catechists' demand may have been excessively mercenary, and recognizing the mission's financial stringency, which increased the subversive temptation to take advantage of any available cheap labour, it is still not possible to absolve Bertreux from major responsibility for the failure of the catechist school. He wilfully disregarded the advice of his confrères in siting it at Rua Sura, which already had a bad name as a school; his promise of £6 per annum was obviously rash; and his reaction to the complaint needlessly added insult to injury.

1

Melanesian Mission, Annual Report 1909, p.46. I owe this reference to Dr D.L. Hilliard.

2

Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions' pp.288-9.

The most trenchant of Bertreux's obituarists had been Raucaz:

His death, to tell the truth, leaves few regrets among the confrères of the Solomons. Our mission had a certain exterior appearance of life and prosperity but at bottom things have been stagnant, have vegetated. The bishop wished to follow his personal ideas against those of the fathers of the mission. He would hardly accept advice, and still less warnings. This is not my personal opinion, it is that of the majority of the fathers of the mission. Our catechist school has been a complete fiasco because the bishop was determined to put it at Sura, against the advice of everyone....We have lost thousands of pounds in the exploitation of [Rua Sura]. Nothing has been done to remedy this and all the stations of the mission have suffered...

I have not much more to say. The Bishop, coming from Fiji [after twenty-three years there], never liked the Solomons. May we not be given in the future a superior coming from another mission, or at least so attached to his former mission as to make much misery for himself and for his missionaries.¹

In the light of these strictures, it was appropriate that Raucaz should be appointed to succeed Bertreux as vicar apostolic in 1920. He had come to the Solomon Islands directly from France in 1903 and, being spared few of the practical hardships of the pioneer at Tangarare, New Georgia and Buma, had little taste for the pretensions of his predecessor. Moreover, he had

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Raucaz to Chevreuil, 19 February 1919, P.V.M. (translation).

artisan skills which extended not only to printing but also to carpentry and mechanics. Even as bishop he was responsible for maintaining the engine of the Jeanne d'Arc and in 1925 expressed satisfaction at having 'put the new motor in the Hambia myself'.¹ But, above all, in contrast to Bertreux, he was respected by his confrères, who welcomed the positive leadership he was expected to bring to the mission. To some extent this hope was realized. In 1923, as has been noted, he abandoned Rua Sura, and in 1932 he founded an indigenous sisterhood.² On the other hand, he was apparently heedless of the evangelistic opportunities waiting on Malaita. And his attempt to re-establish a catechist school was, ironically, to end in a chaos that laid bare flaws in the conduct of the mission as grievous as those for which he had castigated Bertreux, and that revealed a grimmer side of Marist paternalism.

The decision to resume catechist training was taken at the Marists' retreat in 1926. To implement it Raucaz looked first to Visale and Tangarare to supply married couples who would be willing to work in heathen villages. None were forthcoming. For resentment at Bertreux's breach of faith fourteen years before was still keenly

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Raucaz to Courtais, 18 July 1925, Prov. V.M.;
 Raucaz to Rausch, 16 November 1925, P.V.M. (translation).

2

See below p.251.

felt, and potential candidates now insisted on a clear undertaking with regard to salary before they would enrol. Raucaz did nothing to dilute their suspiciousness by promising payment but refusing to say how much it would be. Certainly it would not have been £15 per annum, as called for by some.

The appeal for trainee-catechists was therefore re-directed to unmarried people and extended to other districts. When the school finally opened in May 1928 at Gausava, thirty minutes' walk from Tangarare, its pupils were twenty-one young men from Avuavu, Buma and Rohinari. All had accepted the terms, which Raucaz eventually offered: on completion of the two-year course they would work among heathens, and would receive £3 per annum if they remained on their home island and £4 per annum if they worked on another one.¹

This offer was, however, rescinded at the missionaries' retreat in 1929. Straitened finances curtailed the urge to evangelize, and a majority of the Marists in the vicariate, wary of committing even a small proportion of their funds to meeting new fixed obligations, opted for employing the new catechists in Christian villages - a position in which, as was the practice, they would be paid according to the

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Turupatu, no.52 (February 1927), and no.54 (June 1927); L. Raucaz, 'Règles Proposées pour Futurs Catéchistes', 11 February 1928, Wanoni Bay; Pavese to Dubois, 4 July 1928, A.P.M. OSM 208.

discretion of the individual missionaries. Raucaz yielded to the judgement of his priests - and the mission again broke faith with its people.¹ Na Patere are perogami.

However, a final and more ambitious attempt to redeem this obviously precarious situation was made early in 1930, a few months before the first class was due to graduate. The attempt was made by the director of the catechist school, Rinaldo Joseph Pavese, in circulating a document entitled 'Plan pour l'Association des Catechists'. Besides stressing the relevance to the catechist situation of the doctrine that 'the labourer is worthy of his hire', Pavese also stated clearly the advantages of attaching the future catechists to the mission by means of a firm economic link. Those of them, therefore, who promised to retain their office for life should, he proposed, be formed into an association, so as to give them a recognized status within the mission; further, the mission should undertake to contribute £6 towards their bride-price, when it was required, and should pay them £4, £6 or £8 per annum, depending on whether they worked in their own village, in another village but in their own mission district, or in another district. But again the Marists refused to be bound by such a contract and the scheme was still-born. It is, perhaps, significant that only twelve of the twenty-one candidates completed the course in 1930, although these were succeeded by a second intake of thirty-five youths,

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'Décisions de la Retraite,' September 1929, Wanoni Bay.

including some from Tangarare.¹ A third group of twenty-five were at the school when it collapsed in May 1933.

The central figure in this collapse, indeed, the man who precipitated it - and who did, therefore, attract from his confrères a disproportionate share of the blame for the upheaval which followed it - was Pavese.

Rinaldo Joseph Pavese was an extraordinary person, a man of exquisite religious sensibility - emotional, overwrought and often acutely conscious of being in direct communication with God and the Blessed Virgin. While a student at the major seminary at Asti in northern Italy (1901-6) he read in the Annales de la Propagation de la Foi of the drowning of Ferdinand Guilloux at Tangarare in 1902 and resolved to take the dead missionary's place.² Accordingly, he joined the Society of Mary and, as was the custom, volunteered for 'the missions'. Providence, so he believed, brought his plan to completion. He was appointed to the South Solomons and in October 1910, after spending the usual six months familiarization period at Rua Sura, was stationed at Tangarare. Except for six years (1922-8), during which he was appointed to Visale, he remained here

1

R.J. Pavese, 'Plan pour l'Association des Catechistes,' 13 January 1930, Wanoni Bay; Turupatu, no.73 (August 1930).

2

M.C. 1919, p.330; A.S.M. no.18 (1955), p.511.

until June 1933. During this time he became the mission's acknowledged expert in the Gare language, visited the villages tirelessly, and saw most of the district become Catholic between 1910 and 1917.¹

Among the islanders Pavese was venerated. They responded warmly to his expressive piety and appreciated the humane interest he always took in their affairs. Five of his former pupils interviewed in 1966 confessed to standing in awe of him. They recalled his tears when he preached - and the miracles he worked; for instance, bringing a dead boy back to life. Yet, significantly, their dominant memory was that he had closely and naturally shared their life. He worked in the garden with them, ate the same food and attended to his own laundry. He had no 'house-boy'. If they were sick he nursed them and gave them special food. He was, they insist, 'Number 1'.²

In contrast, his colleagues respected his zeal, but generally regarded him as a figure of fun, a circumstance which may well have reinforced his sense of identification with the islanders. Thus, even in 1966 Joseph Halbwachs, who had arrived in the Solomons with Pavese, recalled with some scorn his former colleague's

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There were 1312 baptisms during this period: 1910 - 116, 1911 - 143, 1912 - 163, 1913 - 194, 1914 - 228, 1915 - 90, 1916 - 156, 1917 - 122. M.C. 1919, p.330.

2

Interviews with Cassiano Gagai (Rohinari); Gaspare Horiratana (Rokera); Abaramo Osifera (Buma); Cristiana Qaro (Buma); Sosimo (Buma).

propensity for casting medals overboard so as to ensure calm seas: 'Pavese left a chain of medals from Beaufort Bay to Cape Hunter'.¹ However, far less conducive to winning the respect of his confrères were Pavese's grandiose preoccupations with offering himself as a victim for the welfare of the Church and with rebuking his fellow-Marists, from the Superior-General down, for supposed deviations from the ideals of the Society as laid down by Father Colin. His fears were quickened in 1923 by rumours that, in response to the world-wide expansion of the Society of Mary, an English-speaking Marist, an American, would be elected Superior-General. Such a choice, breaking the succession of Frenchmen, would, feared Pavese, destroy the essential humility of the 'esprit mariste' by introducing its antithesis, 'americanisme'. This he later defined as:

...that worldly spirit, that love of well-being, of the bourgeois life, of noise, of fame, that 'bluff', that sensualisme, that concern for appearances which reigns in some degree throughout the world, but especially in the United States.²

Desperate to avert such a scourge Pavese laid his soul open to the acting Superior-General, L. Dubois:

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Interview with Fr. J. Halbwachs (Ruavatu); Graton to Courtais, 25 March 1928, Prov. V.M.

2

Pavese to Raffin, 24 September 1916, A.P.M. OSM 208; Pavese to Rieu, 18 April 1923, A.P.M. Personal File-Pavese; R.J. Pavese, 'Tabitha Cumi!', 1934, pp.24-5, A.P.M. Pavese Papers (translation).

...in the month of May 1912 I offered myself as victim...for the triumph of the Church over its enemies. Thanks to the happy solution of 'the Roman Question' and for the development of our dearly beloved religious family God did not judge it opportune to make me die that year, because there still remained much for me to do...

[But] today I really believe that the time has come for me to leave this earth and go to Heaven not for the sake of celestial repose and beatitude but because of my certainty ...of being better able to procure the glory of God, the honour of Mary, the good of the Church and of our Society and the salvation of souls.

To these ends, therefore, Pavese implored Dubois to join with him in offering his (i.e. Pavese's) life to the Divine Mercy and Justice.¹

As it happened, a Frenchman, Ernest Rieu, was again elected. Yet even he was not to be trusted. Pavese was soon extremely disquieted at the 'americanisme' which led Rieu to build a 'palazzo,' instead of a much smaller dwelling, as the Marists' new headquarters when they were transferred from Lyons to Rome in 1925. But about affairs in the South Solomons mission he was even more uneasy. Returning from Sydney in 1926 after his second novitiate, a six-month period of spiritual stocktaking, and physical rest, which heightened his 'holy nostalgia for Heaven', he was scandalized by his confrères' over-indulgence in tobacco, by their habit of public bathing and by the

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Pavese to Dubois, 18 April 1923, A.P.M. Pavese Papers (translation).

alleged worldliness of their conversation.¹ Then, in April 1931, the vicariate received an American priest, an enterprising young man named Albert Lebel. Pavese was aghast: the wolf was in the sheep-fold. Predisposed to finding fault with the new-comer, Pavese's conviction of the mission's spiritual decline intensified when Lebel was permitted to start a boy scout troop at Visale in 1932. Further, he was shocked by the religious 'indifferentism' in Lebel's statement in Turupatu that Baden-Powell 'was a Protestant and put all religions on the same footing'; and early in 1933 he saw an insult to the Saints when Lebel gave the impious name of Scout to a new launch which he had bought for Visale.² The upshot of this accumulating irreverence was that Pavese felt himself called to purify the mission. During Holy Week 1933, therefore, he again made his oblation of himself, and dramatically associated his pupils with him:

I...proposed that they sign a paper upon which I had written, 'We the pupil-catechists of Gausava consent that God may take our Father, so that our Religion may live in the Solomons'. Quite spontaneously,...they all put their signature...I had said to them 'If I die, I will protect and will help you from on high. If I live, I will protect and aid you from here below, but it is necessary that things change, because they can no longer continue as they are'.

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Pavese to Raffin, 1 January 1921, A.P.M. OSM 208 (translation); Pavese to Courtais, 16 November 1931, Prov. V.M.

2

Pavese, 'Récit très veridique', p.107.

From this time onwards, claimed Pavese:

...I acquired over my dear pupils an authority, an ascendancy, an absolute prestige. They listened to me as they would have listened to Our Lord himself.¹

When God did not claim the sacrifice, Pavese assumed that he was meant to employ more direct methods. Most of his graduates had soon abandoned their posts for more remunerative employment, but not before they had, on his instructions, and with the prurience expected of them, reported to him on the conduct of the various missionaries. He learned, for instance that women regularly entered presbyteries in the course of household duties without a blouse and without a companion, that Donatien Coicaud at Buma had told a catechist that children might go naked, and that some priests performed 'indelicate' medical operations. Construing such incidents as evidence of rampant immorality, Pavese reported his findings to Raucaz shortly after Easter, and instructed the bishop to gather all the priests for a retreat which he (Pavese) would preach. The order was ignored. Then, on 10 May 1933, Raucaz came to Tangarare on the Jeanne d'Arc to collect the S.M.S.M. for their retreat at Visale. The visit triggered a dramatic series of events. Learning of Raucaz's arrival, Pavese marched with his schoolboys to the station, confronted

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Ibid., p.81 (translation). For comments on Pavese's sense of mission see letter of Bouillon, 10 May 1933, A.P.M. Pavese Papers; letter of Bouillon, 17 May 1933, A.P.M. OSM 208; Courtais to Courtais, 12 April 1934, ibid.

the bishop on the verandah of the mission house, repeated his demand for a retreat and when it was rejected, ordered the bishop to surrender his episcopal ring. Again Raucaz refused and, besides, ordered Visale's seven Gausava pupils to board the Jeanne d'Arc. This they did. Pavese returned with the others to Gausava.

Four days later, several bands of people passed through Gausava on their way northwards, intent, as they told Pavese - so he reports - on closing the Tangarare station schools in retaliation for Raucaz's removal of the seven trainee-catechists. The same evening, 14 May, Samuel Moreau, the superior at Tangarare, arrived at Visale - weeping. He reported that a group of men brandishing knives and sticks and shouting had run onto the station, threatened him and had dismissed the children. A week later the Visale schools, also, were deserted, while at Tangarare a total boycott of the mission was in operation.¹ Although Pavese had not instigated these developments, he did, however, support them. On being recalled to Europe in June 1933, an order he readily obeyed in the expectation that the validity of his case would be readily conceded by higher Church authorities, he urged the people not to send their

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Simler to Bertin, 10 March 1933, Prov.V.M.; J. Coicaud to Bertin, 23 March 1933, ibid.; letter of Moreau, 25 July 1933, A.P.M. OSM 208; Graton to Cardinal Fumasoni-Biondi, 24 October 1935, A.P.M. OSM 12jo; Pavese, 'Récit tres veridique', p.42. I am grateful to Fr. D.J. Moore for a detailed and coherent verbal account (confirmed by subsequent documentary research) of the 'Pavese affair'. Fr Moore was at Visale when Moreau arrived there and he himself spent the second part of 1933 at Tangarare.

children back to school until his return. And he repeated this injunction in letters during the next twelve months. In fact, however, he was never to return.¹ He was constrained to spend most of 1934 in a Trappist monastery in France as penance for his insubordination, and the last twenty years of his life were spent teaching at a Marist school in northern Italy.²

In the Visale district the reaction against the mission seriously affected only a few villages centred on Kakabona. Most were easily persuaded to abandon all forms of boycott. But Kakabona, where Pavese's outstanding former student, Karolo Tsilivi, appointed himself curé and preached, taught and baptized in what he called the 'Lotu Gausava', resisted until May 1934.³

At Tangarare, however, nearly all the Catholic population of 1,400 remained in revolt until late 1936. Here no one came to the station except for medical treatment, and a number of girls (some aged 18 and 20) who chose to remain with the nuns were forcibly abducted by their relatives.⁴ The sacraments were spurned.

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Letter of Raucaz, 7 September 1933, A.P.M. OSM 418; V.A. South Solomons, 'Rapport au Propagande, 1934', A.P.M. OSM 12jo.

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A.S.M. no.18 (1955), p.511.

3

Raucaz to Podevigne, 8 September 1933, Wanoni Bay.

4

Raucaz to Dubois, 6 March 1934, A.P.M. Pavese Papers. An account of the 'Disturbances at Tangarare', written by Fr E. de Klerk in the Tangarare station journal mentions five cases of abduction between 27 August 1933 and 2 February 1934.

Visiting southwards from Tangarare in April 1934, J.M. Aubin was refused hospitality in village after village and was everywhere told 'We will not return to the lotu until Pavese returns'.¹

Meanwhile, a more aggressive line of resistance to the mission had also emerged. This had reached its peak in March 1934 at the village of Sugu. Here a koti ('court') organized by ex-catechists, but attended by several hundred people and presided over by the local headman, had 'tried' the bishop and had declared him 'guilty' of improper interference with Filomena Ngaovova, formerly a schoolgirl at Visale. The girl's father, Toma Boko, formerly catechist at Ravu, celebrated the indictment by gathering the crucifixes and ornaments from eight neighbouring village chapels and depositing them in the luma (canoe house) at Sugu. However, the D.O. from Aola, who investigated the charge, found it to be absurd.² Indeed, he was about to have Batista Quri, formerly catechist of Labi, tried for defamation of character, for having circulated a letter calumniating Raucaz's morals, when word was received that Raucaz,

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Letter of Aubin, 11 April 1934, A.P.M. Pavese Papers; Aubin to Bertin, 12 April 1934, Prov. V.M. (translation).

2

Aubin to Bertin, 12 April 1934, Prov. V.M.; Aubin to D.O., Aola, 18 April 1934, copy in 'Journal of Tangarare'; Graton to Bertin, 30 May 1934, P.V.M.; Aubin to Bertin, 5 June 1934, *ibid*; Aubin, 16 July 1934, A.P.M. Pavese Papers; Aubin to Dubois, 7 August 1934, *ibid*.

whose health had been failing for some months, had died in Sydney on 22 July. At Aubin's request, the trial was cancelled.¹

The foregoing description makes the point that the Tangarare affair was substantially a negative movement - mainly defined by its being anti-mission. It was a withdrawal from the mission rather than a reversion to the customary religion or a rejection of Catholic teaching - although a number of Catholics did take second wives. It was a protest rather than an effort to construct a new doctrinal or institutional synthesis or to attain new ends. Nor was there any tendency to adopt Protestantism. An S.D.A. teacher was, in fact, invited to Ravu by Toma Boko but this, it seems, was merely to spite the Marists, because for the duration of his stay there the villagers ignored him.² Nor was there any general effort to discard other forms of European authority. The refusal to pay taxes, made early in 1935 by four Tangarare leaders who had been convicted in March 1934 for breach of the peace on account of their part in the abduction incidents, was an isolated occurrence and inspired among others neither enthusiasm nor emulation.³

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Raucaz to D.O., Aola, 26 March 1934, copy in 'Journal of Tangarare'. Quri's letter is quoted in letter of Aubin, 5 July 1934, A.P.M. Pavese Papers.

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Aubin to Bertin, 13 October 1934, Prov. V.M.; de Klerk to Rieu, 17 September 1936, A.P.M. OSM 208.

3

Graton to Dubois, 2 January 1935, *ibid.*; Boudard to Dubois, 24 March 1935, *ibid.*

Nevertheless, it cannot be maintained that the movement had no positive content, or that its opposition to the mission was quite gratuitous. The generally accepted Marist interpretation has it that the people were led astray by an erring priest. Even allowing for Pavese's obvious charisma, such an explanation is unconvincing. It accords too neatly with the passive role in which the Marists had cast their converts, and it ignores the possibility that the rebels could have had considered reasons of their own for protesting against genuine grievances. The same objection is applicable, though to a lesser extent, to the view that the catechists were responsible for the revolt. Certainly they took the lead in rallying the villagers' resistance to the mission. For instance, it was Paolo Kole, Guilloux's companion when he was drowned in 1902, the first Tangarare person to be baptized and the chief catechist of the district, who became the nominal leader of the movement and who ordered the abduction of the school girls and the attempt to smear Raucaz.¹ Yet the catechists were in no position to command the mass obedience of people who were unwilling to follow them.

The enthusiastic unity of the movement is, however, explained by the fact that the people sympathized with the catechists' resentment at the mission's continued

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For this action Kole was convicted by the D.O. and fined £1, while three abductors each received two months gaol. Raucaz to Bertin, 5 March 1934, Prov. V.M.; Raucaz to Dubois, 6 March 1934, A.P.M. Pavese Papers.

refusal to pay them a salary. This sympathy was sustained by disappointment that mission membership, far from bringing material benefits, had brought hardship. That tangible rewards had been expected is suggested by the fact that hope for Pavese's return took on clear overtones of millenarian aspiration: when he came back, it was said, he would make bountiful amends for the mission's alleged parsimony and dishonesty. Thus in 1934 Aubin recorded the allegation that the missionaries, each of whom was said to be paid from Rome and to have a deposit of money in Sydney, had misappropriated funds such as those from the Propagation de la Foi, which should have been distributed to the Catholic people and to the school children. Graton observed the same distrust:

...the people expect to receive from him [Pavese] the money and gifts of which we have [reputedly] deprived them...because of our white skin these people do not believe that we could be short of money.¹

And in May 1935 Paolo Kole advised a Visale leader who had urged him to submit to the new bishop, Aubin, not to sell his allegiance for a few omea le (little gifts without value) 'or you will not see the things which we demand ... [for] he [i.e. Aubin] will make impossible the return of Pavese'.²

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Aubin to Rieu, 8 August 1934, A.P.M. OSM 418; Graton to Fumasoni-Biondi, 24 October 1935, A.P.M. OSM 12jo (translation).

2

Paolo Kole to Williame Manganikogou, 7 May 1935, quoted in de Klerk to Rieu, 17 July 1935, A.P.M. OSM 208.

But, as Pavese failed to reappear, hope gradually gave way to disillusion. Between late-1935 and late-1936 the Tangarare people, urged by an energetic Dutch priest, Emery de Klerk, and frightened by a series of earthquakes, which were taken as signs of divine displeasure, drifted back to the mission. In July 1935 de Klerk noted that people were speaking less of Pavese, and that, 'one of the worst leaders, Abaramo, catechist of Sunavutu [had] made his submission'; in January 1936 the Tangarare school reopened with twenty-two boys and twenty-eight girls; by February Sunavutu had rebuilt the chapel it had earlier destroyed; in July Paolo Kole confessed to de Klerk 'you have won the battle'; while in September de Klerk blessed the renovated chapel at Avisi, where:

Before Mass, Toma Boko (...who had violently ejected Aubin from his house) made a public retraction...and promised to build a new church at Ravu....

The girl who had calumniated Raucaz, likewise made a retraction, declaring that she had spoken under duress and that Raucaz was absolutely innocent.¹

There had, however, been another reason for mass resistance to the mission, more pressing than, although related to, the people's belief that the Marists were

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De Klerk to Rieu, 17 July 1935 (translation), 8 February 1936, 17 July 1936, 17 September 1936 (translation), A.P.M. OSM 208. De Klerk's comment of 17 July 1935 is no doubt relevant to his success: 'The people like it very much if you speak their language correctly, they compliment me on my pronunciation and on my progress. It has been said 'Soon he will speak it like Father Pavese', and that is great praise....'

cheating them. This was resentment of mission demands, which were made in a particularly harsh manner at Tangarare by Samuel Moreau - a fact which helps explain why the revolt was less marked in the Visale district.

Moreau arrived in the Solomons in 1908. In 1910 he was appointed curate to Babonneau at Wanoni Bay, where he spent the next nineteen years. A flock of about 450 Catholics was gathered during this period, although for the last half of it they received little pastoral care. During the 1920s villages were rarely visited, both on account of Babonneau's poor health and because Moreau preferred to concentrate his energies on the mission station, erecting buildings of permanent materials - including, in 1923, a cement church such as adorns missionary establishments in various parts of the Pacific. But the cost of development was high. The Wanoni school became a plantation 'where the pretended scholars made copra' and supplied cheap labour, while their overseer earned an unenviable reputation for irascibility. Moreau enhanced this reputation by threatening parents who, increasingly, refused to send their children to school and by retrieving run-away pupils with the aid of the police. Even so, the school which had about forty boys and more than thirty girls in 1921 had but four boys in 1930.¹

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'Journal of Wanoni Bay', 1928; letter of Podevigne, 6 March 1931, A.P.M. OSM 208 (translation); letter of Graton, 26 August 1934, A.P.M. Pavese Papers; Graton to Bertin, 29 August 1934, P.V.M.

Among his confrères, who were scarcely aware of the ill-feeling he had generated at Wanoni Bay, Moreau was known as being 'firm', a man who got things done. Accordingly, early in 1931, after a holiday in France, he was transferred to Tangarare, where the people were thought to have grown slack. Besides, Tangarare needed a new church. Moreau, therefore, introduced what his curate, Graton, disapprovingly called 'the Wanoni system'. As a result, copra production increased, but at the cost of heightening the already strong resentment felt by parents at losing the labour of their children, particularly that of their daughters. The prolonged residence at the station of large numbers of girls placed a strain on village economies throughout the district that Pavese in a long and lucidly argued defence of his opposition to Raucaz described as 'absolutely cruel'. Consequently, in 1932, when Tangarare had 120 girls and as many boys, Paolo Kole petitioned Raucaz 'to allow the school girls to return to their villages after Confirmation so as to help their families, instead of staying to make copra and tend the cows etc.' Raucaz refused the request, while Moreau further underlined the clash between mission and village interests by rebuking Kole ('you are preventing us from doing our work') and by refusing him Holy Communion. Meanwhile, Moreau had also increased his unpopularity by his severity. In protest at this, a number of the older boys left the school in March 1931 and a month later the priest was assaulted by a youth from Malaita. To avenge a broken rib suffered in this attack, Graton, who was on the station at the time,

reports that Moreau 'had the boy tied to a post and beat him with stick, feet and fists until he asked for mercy', before turning him over to the D.O. - who sentenced him to three months imprisonment.

Moreau's behaviour also destroyed whatever incentive the villagers may have had to contribute to the fund for the new church. In his Christmas sermon for 1932 Moreau berated them for their stinginess and, careless of the seriousness with which Melanesians regard cursing, caused further offence by calling them tinoni mobuli (rotten people). Again a complaint, with a request for Moreau's removal, was sent to Raucaz, and again it was rejected. Whereupon, the catechists resolved to call a boycott of the schools at Easter. Pavese claims to have talked them out of this decision, but the events of 10 and 11 May 1933 took the matter out of his hands.¹ Through his personal breach with Raucaz there welled-up a powerful expression of the indigenes' own dissatisfaction with the treatment they had received from the mission.

IN contrast to the indigenous reactions against the mission in both vicariates in the 1930s - and to the Marists' failure to understand them or to take constructive remedial action - the decade was also

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Letters of Graton, 4 August 1933 (translation); 18 April 1934, 26 August 1934, A.P.M. Pavese Papers; Pavese, 'Récit tres veridique', pp.55-71. Interview with Fr D. Moore.

marked by more positive efforts by the Marists to advance beyond simple evangelism. Thus, in each vicariate indigenous sisterhoods were founded to supplement - in practice, in a menial capacity - the work of the European nuns. In 1932 Raucaz founded the Daughters of Mary Immaculate, the first two members of which took their promises in 1935. Much cajoling by the missionaries and payment approximating to a bride-price was often necessary before parents would allow their daughters to enter the congregation, yet by 1942 it had twelve professed members, four novices and two postulants. Similar progress, was also made by the congregation of the Little Sisters of Nazareth in the North Solomons. Begun in 1937 it had ten professed members by 1941.¹ That sisterhoods should develop with relative ease may be easily accounted for. On the one hand, life as a nun had much to attract women who, unlike men, had little alternative to village life. It was more comfortable than life in a village, and offered the means of continuing to satisfy the relatively sophisticated tastes developed during several years attendance at the station school. On the other hand, church law imposed on nuns none of the educational qualifications which impeded the development of an indigenous clergy.

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'Foundation and Development of the Congregation of Native Sisters of South Solomons Vicariate', B.A.H. interview with Mother Wendeline (Turiboiru).

Yet even in education could the Marists point to some improvement during the 1930s. In the North Solomons the boost given to Marist education by the Protestant challenge generated an incentive to raise the standard of the work so well begun, while towards the end of the decade Propaganda became increasingly insistent that the Marists take steps to create an indigenous clergy. Accordingly, in 1936, in the North Solomons, the catechist school at Chabai was placed in the charge of James Hennessy D.D., a diocesan priest from Boston who, in response to an appeal by Wade, had volunteered to spend five years in the mission. A further advance occurred in 1941 when Hennessy was replaced by three Australian Marist Brothers (F.M.S.), all of them trained teachers. As a consequence of several years of intensive schooling four Chabai pupils, two in 1939 and two in 1940, were deemed fit to be sent to the minor seminary that in 1938 had been opened at the M.S.C. headquarters at Vunapope in New Britain. Two of them, Aloysius Tamuka, from Buin, and Peter Tatamas, from Buka, were ordained priests in December 1953.¹

In the South Solomons educational improvement occurred initially as a reluctant response to a wakening official interest in native welfare. Thus, in 1931 the

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The two who abandoned their course, Antony Kears in 1941, and Paul Lapun in 1947, have both had notable careers: Kears as a local government figure on Buka, and Lapun as a Member of the House of Assembly for the Territory of Papua and New Guinea. For Kears see, Albert Maori Kiki, Kiki (Melbourne, 1968), pp.109-12.

desire to stimulate the missions to produce more candidates suitable for training as 'dressers' and medical assistants caused the government to offer grants-in-aid to schools which conformed to prescribed standards. English was an optional subject but particular stress was to be paid on the teaching of arithmetic - which would be useful for measuring medicines. However, the grants offered - an amount equivalent to the headtax in respect of each pupil aged over sixteen years - were too small to provide any real incentive. Raucaz considered them 'derisory, to say the least and the conditions impossible'. In any case, the Marists' main task was pastoral, not pedagogic. Noting in 1932 that 'We are a little pressed by the government to give our natives a more solid instruction', Raucaz lamented that 'to concern ourselves seriously with education' was impossible; it would require 'three fathers in each station', two for the station and one for the villages. Nevertheless, as a token gesture of goodwill, while preferring to remain 'free, exempt from keeping books and from receiving annual inspections', he incorporated the suggested curriculum in a Program of Studies for Catholic Mission Schools, which was printed, and circulated to all stations and, as Pavese disgustingly alleges - ignored.¹

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'Draft of the Rules Concerning Education [1931]', A.P.M. OSM 202; Raucaz to Courtais, 26 November 1931, P.V.M. (translation); Raucaz to Dubois, 11 February 1932, A.P.M. OSM 418 (translation); Pavese, 'Récit tres veridique', p.67.

Adopting a stronger line in 1934, the Resident Commissioner, F.N. Ashley, issued a draft Education Regulation, which would empower him to close any school he deemed unsatisfactory. Raucaz' first reaction to the draft betrayed his preoccupation with the Tangarare revolt. Instead of insisting on the duties of the organizers it should, he complained, insist on the duties of those for whose 'improvement' the schools existed. Thus, education should be made compulsory, fees should be charged and those who organized school boycotts should be punished. These recommendations were rejected out of hand by the conference convened at Tulagi to discuss the draft in February 1934. The Marists did, however, have more apposite objections to the regulation, which they made known to Archbishop Myers, the Catholic representative on the Colonial Office Advisory Committee on Education. Late in 1934 a sub-committee of this body, which included Myers, sustained the Marists' objections. The power the regulation would accord the R.C. of controlling every aspect of education in the B.S.I.P. was held to be too sweeping, while the curriculum, with its emphasis on academic skills, was deemed to have scant bearing on local needs.¹

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Raucaz to Ashley, 15 January 1934, 10 July 1936, A.P.M. OSM 208; 'Report of Education Conference, Tulagi, 5 February 1934', ibid; 'Report of the Sub-Committee appointed to consider certain proposals for the promotion of Education in the British Solomon Islands Protectorate [1934]', ibid.

Faced with the sub-committee's report and the opposition of the missions, for the Marists' were not alone in opposing government intrusion, Ashley dropped the regulation. Yet the affair was not without results. One notable one was that the Marists were led to fear that an Education Regulation was, nonetheless, imminent. Anxious, therefore, to put a potentially crucial element of the missions school structure beyond reproach, and aware of the sub-committee's recommendation that education should aim at improving the quality of village life, Aubin set up a new catechist school at Marau in 1936. Directed by a New Zealand Marist, Denis Moore - and shunned throughout its existence by boys from Tangarare - the school aimed at giving a solid general education to potential village teachers and leaders. Only boys aged between fourteen and eighteen years and who could already read and write were accepted for a two year course in which the language of instruction was English, and in which academic learning was balanced by craft and garden training. There were fifty boys at the school in 1938 when Moore handed it over to three Marist Brothers from Australia, who soon raised its roll to seventy. Of these, two youths from Takwa were sent to Fiji in 1940 to begin preliminary studies for the priesthood at the Marist college at Cawaci. And the same year what was to be a very successful two-year catechist course for a dozen married couples - none of them from Tangarare - was launched at Rohinari.¹

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Letter of Aubin, 28 February 1936, Wanoni Bay; Marau School, 'Annual Report, 1937-8', A.P.M. OSM 202; V.A. South Solomons, 'Rapport au Propagande, 1939-46', B.A.H. The students for the priesthood did not complete their course. Lawrence Sutatafu returned to the Solomons in 1948, and Stephen Pita in 1953.

Meanwhile, at Marau, completing the pattern of serene and solid progress, which seemed at length to be crowning the Marists' work, the brothers continued Moore's policy, with the result that W.C. Groves, who had been commissioned to advise the administration on educational policy, judged in 1939 that the Marau school:

...in the matter of adapting its work to local conditions and relating its program to native life, and in the quality of the scholastic side of its teaching,...is the outstanding educational institution in the Protectorate.

The same year, when the Marists were being forced to close their schools because they lacked money to buy food, the High Commissioner authorized an ex gratia grant of £250 to help keep that at Marau open.¹ Although well-meant, the gesture was paltry and betokened no sense of urgency. But the time for such gestures was passing. The advent of the Second World War was soon to put an end to the tentative broadening of interest by mission and administration in the question of what to do with the Solomon Islanders. At the return of peace the answer was to be taken out of their hands by a new world order in which colonialism was out of fashion and which required that Solomon Islanders be prepared for self-government. Henceforth, the ruling objective in education was to be not religious or social but political.

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Aubin to Dubois, 11 July 1939, 10 October 1939, A.P.M. OSM 418; William C. Groves, 'Report on a Survey of Education in the British Solomon Islands Protectorate' [1940], section 111, p.6.

CHAPTER VI

WAR, 1942-5

THE impingement of the outside world on the Solomon Islands reached a climax in 1942. The group became a battlefield in a global war. After destroying Pearl Harbour in ^{December}~~October~~ 1941, Japanese forces drove rapidly southwards. The following ^{February}~~January~~ they captured Singapore and Rabaul and bombed Buka Passage, Kieta and Tulagi. Since, with the fall of Singapore, the Solomons (as, indeed, the south-west Pacific) were virtually undefended against invasion, the bombing was the signal for European civilians to be officially advised to evacuate the group.¹ The edifice of European dominance was quickly dismantled.

Among those who heeded the voice of prudence were most of the commercial community (exclusive of the Chinese) and a number of missionaries - all the Adventists, and most of the Methodists and S.S.E.M.² On the other hand, the majority of the Anglican missionaries remained, although Bishop Baddeley took the precaution of shifting

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Colonial Office, Among those Present (Honiara, 1962), p.II; Eric Feldt, The Coast Watchers (Sydney, 1967), p.36.

2

A.G. Stewart, Trophies from Cannibal Isles (Washington, 1956), p.196-7; Luxton, Isles of Solomon, pp.171-81; Not in Vain, Jubilee Issue, 1954, p.13; Dr D.L. Hilliard, private communication.

his headquarters from Taroaniara, near Tulagi, to Auki on Malaita.¹ The Resident Commissioner of the B.S.I.P. did likewise, in contrast to the District Officer at Kieta who led the flight from the Australian Solomons. The Marists, however, did not move at all. Bishops Wade and Aubin, encouraged by a missionary tradition that did not disdain martyrdom, but believing also that the Japanese would be tolerant of non-combatant missionaries, were hopeful of reaching a modus vivendi with the invaders. Therefore, recalling the parable of the hireling shepherd, who abandoned his flock when danger threatened, they instructed priests, brothers and nuns to stay at their posts.² There remained also, in both parts of the group, a skeleton staff of administrative officers who, with a sprinkling of planters, traders, and missionaries, formed a network of coast watchers. The coast watchers' main task was to observe enemy movements and to report them, by radio transmitter, to Australian and American military authorities.

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Fox, Lord of the Southern Isles, pp.83-4, 88-90; and Kakamora (London, 1962), p.120.

2

'Journal of Sr Celestine', 23 January 1942, held by Sr Robert René (Hahela); 'Journal of Wanoni Bay', April 1942; V.A. South Solomons, 'Rapport au Propagande, 1942', A.P.M. OSM 3321; letter of Seiller, 28 December 1945, A.P.M. OSS 208; M.C., 1946, pp.25-6.

Native reactions to the European retreat from the Solomon Islands were generally undemonstrative. There were, however, certain notable exceptions. Thus, houses and stores were looted at Buka Passage, Kieta and at Tulagi, while an observer in north Malaita in April 1942 noted a grim sense of fatalism among the people who, fearing themselves abandoned and due for destruction, feasted extravagantly - lest the Japanese deprive them of the enjoyment of their pigs and gardens.¹ On Buka, in contrast, there was a sense of elation as the cargo cult revived. Passing aeroplanes sparked rumours that Pako was aboard and was coming with the cargo. And, later, the Japanese were welcomed in the expectation that they would confer the wealth which, it was widely believed, had been withheld from the Bukas first by the German régime and then by the Australians. But this hope and the excitement it caused, subsided after May 1943 when the Japanese beheaded three cult leaders who had planned to hasten the millenium by means of a human sacrifice.²

Missionary contact with the Japanese began on 8 March 1942 when Japanese warships visited Carola Harbour on the west coast of Buka. Here Percy Good, a planter, and Father James Hennessy of Lemanmanu were

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Feldt, Coast Watchers, pp.80, 94; Palmer to Kimbell, 1 March 1945, New Zealand Tablet, 30 May 1945.

2

[J. Lamarre], 'Hahalis - Cargo Cult - Welfare', TS in the present writer's possession, pp.1-2.

interviewed and then placed on parole - on condition that they did not communicate with the Australian or American authorities. On the following days, Marists on Bougainville - including an Australian and an American - were similarly treated. Wade's hopes, it seemed, were being realized. However, on 15 March, following a radio broadcast from Australia which imprudently announced the news of their visit to Carola, the Japanese returned to punish the suspected betrayal of their movements. The news had, in fact, originated from a coast watcher located in north Bougainville. Nevertheless, Good was beheaded and Hennessy was taken captive to Rabaul.¹ There, at the end of June, with 1,100 other prisoners - including D.C. Alley, the Methodist missionary from Teop on Bougainville - he was put aboard the ill-fated Montevideo Maru, en route for Japan. Off the Philippines the ship was torpedoed by an American submarine. None of the prisoners survived.²

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J. Lamarre, 'War Comes to Buka', TS in the present writer's possession, pp.1-2; Feldt, Coast Watchers, pp.97-8. This was not the first occasion on which coast watchers' reports had been indiscreetly broadcast: *ibid.*, p.38.

2

Minister for External Territories to Bergeron, 30 October 1945, P.V.M.; Luxton, Isles of Solomon, p.194. The existence of the Montevideo Maru has been denied, and the claim made that the prisoners were in fact, executed somewhere in New Guinea: Leo Scharmach, This Crowd Beats Us All (Sydney, 1960), pp.30-1; P.I.M., October 1960, pp.30-6. But these views have been convincingly refuted: A.J. Sweeting, 'Montevideo Maru - Myth or Merchantman?', Australian Territories, vol.I, no.2, (1961), pp.36-8.

The Japanese occupation of the Solomon Islands began at Buka on 30 March 1942 and, extending southwards, reached Tulagi on 2 May. Their treatment of the islanders - whom they hoped to have as co-operative members of the Greater South-East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere - was, initially, considerate and even flattering. Food was paid for, women were unmolested, and a policy of generous fraternization was followed.¹ This policy reached its fullest development on Buka, where the largest Japanese base in the Solomons was located, and which was not seriously disturbed by American bombing until late 1943. The Japanese represented themselves as liberating the islanders from white mis-rule. Native officials were given new insignia of office, and were regularly consulted on matters of local interest; schools teaching Japanese customs, language and songs were set up (and enthusiastically attended); and the cult of ancestors was encouraged.² At Kieta, where a school was also founded, local sympathy for the Japanese was further enhanced by the action of certain German Marists in overtly expressing approval of the new regime.³ In the circumstances - regardless of the

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A. Muller, 'War Memoirs', p.14, A.P.M. Box 26. For supporting evidence on the question of the general propriety of Japanese sexual behaviour towards their war-time subjects see also Scharmach, This Crowd Beats Us all, p.264; Peter Ryan, Fear Drive My Feet (Melbourne 1960), p.118; H. Ian Hogbin, Transformation Scene (London, 1951), p.8.

2

O'Reilly and Sédès, Jaunes, Noirs et Blancs, pp.165-90.

3

Letter of Seiller, 28 December 1945, A.P.M. OSS 208; Feldt, Coast Watchers, p.101.

Germans' consciousness of their country's alliance with Japan - this action was not unreasonable. The Axis powers were still in the ascendant in Europe, Africa and Asia and the mission could gain little from antagonizing those who might well become permanent rulers of the Solomons. But Wade, whose neutrality was linked with firm faith in an eventual Allied victory, thought otherwise. He insisted that the missionaries refrain from speaking in favour of Japanese rule and was later pained to learn that as a result of the Germans' action:

...U.S.A. aviators forced down over Bougainville were instructed to avoid Catholic natives and to confide their chances to Methodists.¹

In general, Japanese treatment of the missionaries was also, at first, conciliatory. Radios and a little food were confiscated, but the operation of mission stations was undisturbed, although visiting of the villages was curtailed. Nevertheless, as the fate of Hennessy early demonstrated, neither the relative forbearance of the Japanese nor the missionaries' intention of avoiding an active partisan role were adequate guarantees of non-involvement in the hostilities. The missionaries' detachment was dependent less on their own decisions than on the actions and policies of the combatants. These, in turn, were subject to the contingencies and fluctuating demands of the war. Bishop Aubin realized the precariousness of his situation after his first visit from a Japanese officer at Visale

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Wade to Bergeron, 29 August 1946, P.V.M.

on 3 July 1942, and, afraid of being labelled a collaborateur, resolved henceforth to have no dealings with the Japanese except in the presence of his three assistants (a Dutchman, a Canadian and a New Zealander). He gave positive content to non-cooperation on 5 July, the day the Japanese began to build an air field at Lunga, twenty miles east of Visale, by refusing to communicate orders to the people of Guadalcanal, or to help recruit labour. T. Ishimoto, formerly a carpenter at Tulagi, and latterly a Japanese officer with responsibility for civil affairs, did not press the point. Indeed, some days earlier he had returned linen which Japanese soldiers had stolen from the mission. Now, he employed his own efforts in labour recruitment, although Visale was used as a recruiting centre. However, in fixing the following notice to the door of the presbytery Ishimoto did make it clear that missionaries and islanders were subject to Japanese rule:

Notice No. 1

All the inhabitants of this island must be ordered by Japanese Government to cooperate for Japan. Any inhabitants against it should be severely punished by Japanese Martial Law.

Order No. 1

Men only, over 14 years and less than 50 years have to work for Japanese troops at some places in this island. After a months labour they will be given the identity as a civilian on this Island. During work for Japanese troops they will be supplied with houses, meals, tobacco, etc.¹

¹ 'Diary of J.M. Aubin' (extracts), 2, 3 June 1942, TS in the present writer's possession.

At Marau, at the eastern end of Guadalcanal, relations between the Marist Brothers and a small camp of Japanese were also relatively amiable - until the American landings on Guadalcanal on 7 August 1942. Indeed, the landings were the signal, throughout the group, for Japanese attitudes towards the missionaries - at least those of them whose countries were at war with Japan - to change sharply. Once Japanese dominion was challenged the missionaries, formerly tolerated as harmless, were regarded as a potential fifth-column for, if not actual agents of, the Americans. Thus, the Marist Brothers at Marau, suspected (wrongly) of having radioed information to American ships on the eve of the landings, were acquitted only after intensive interrogation. Even so, they were due to be removed to a prison camp when their guards were called away to assist the attempt to dislodge the Americans from the Lunga airfield, renamed Henderson Field in honour of an American killed three months before in the battle of Midway Island.¹

The missionaries at Ruavatu station, between Lunga and Marau, were less fortunate. On 31 August two priests, Henry Oude-Engberink (a Dutchman) and Arthur Duhamel (an American), with two nuns, Sisters Sylvia and Odilia (both French), were taken to the Japanese camp at Tasiboko, where they were killed. A

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[Br Ephrem], 'Marist Brothers in the Solomons', St Joseph's College Annual, 1943, pp.80-2; and 'A Marist Brother Missioner in the South Solomons,' The Red and White, 1943, pp.5-7, 10.

third nun, Sister Edmée, who had been permitted to stay behind to supervise the station, found shelter with coast watchers in the interior. The circumstances surrounding the incident at Tasiboko are obscure. Probably, as had occurred a week earlier when the Ruavatu missionaries were taken on a similar excursion the Japanese asked them to go to the Americans and persuade them to surrender. If so, the request was apparently again refused for on the morning of 3 September the four were taken into the bush and bayoneted. The Japanese had clearly lost patience. However, assuming 3 September to be the correct date (Aubin calculated it with the aid of Avelino, a Ruavatu schoolboy who had accompanied the missionaries to Tasiboko) it is obvious that the executions could not have been (as has been claimed) in retaliation for the American attack on the camp on 7 September. It should also be said that there is no evidence for the oft-repeated assertion that the nuns were raped before being killed. Mr Justice Webb, in his official report on the affair, pointing to the fact that the Japanese had taken the two youngest nuns (whose bodies had been found naked) was satisfied that they had been. This argument, however, - which seems to involve the unfounded assumption that the Japanese should be expected to act in such a manner - also overlooks the significant fact that on the previous expedition to Tasiboko Edmée was in the party while Odilia, the youngest nun was left behind.¹

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Sr Edmée to Aubin, 12 June 1943, B.A.H.; J.M. Aubin, 'Account of Captivity of Missionaries of Ruavatu,' B.A.H.; Missions des Iles, no.4, March 1947, pp.71-3: For non-mission accounts of the affair see William Webb, (footnote continued on p.266)

As the battle for Henderson Field - the focal point of the Guadalcanal campaign - intensified, Visale, also, became increasingly unsafe. At the beginning of September, therefore, after the station had been bombed, Aubin and his staff shifted to Tangarare. And here they remained until the commander of the American forces, General A.A. Vandegrift, ordered the evacuation of all missionaries. Between October and December 1942 ten Marist priests, eight brothers and nineteen nuns left the war zone. However, with Vandegrift's reluctantly given consent, Aubin - who had argued strongly against the evacuation order - was permitted to stay and to retain a staff of six priests on Malaita and two on San Cristobal.¹ Nevertheless, the Wanoni Bay station, remained at full strength for the third priest and the two nuns there simply refused to leave. Another Marist recalcitrant was Emery de Klerk of Tangarare, who was later commissioned by the Americans, and was

(footnote 1 continued from p.265)

William Webb, 'Summary of facts and findings from the Report on Japanese atrocities and breaches of the rules of warfare in the neighbourhood of the Territory of New Guinea and Papua', (1943) p.4, National Library of Australia; S.M.H., 15 March 1943; Russel of Liverpool, Knights of Bushido (London, 1958), p.269; Robert Leckie, Challenge for the Pacific (London, 1966), p.165.

See also references in note 1, above, p.261.

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Aubin to Bergeron, 7 September 1942, 18 October 1942, 24 November 1942, Prov. V.M. 'Diary of J.M. Aubin', 7 August - December 1942.

decorated for his work as a Labour Corps recruiter and as an intelligence adviser.¹

By mid-November 1942 the Japanese counter-attack on Guadalcanal had been repelled and their whole southern thrust brought to a halt. Henceforth, the Marists of the South Solomons were out of danger, unlike those of the North, where the realization that they would have to fight in order to hold what they had won had also been tragically reflected in the Japanese treatment of the missionaries. Those from 'enemy' countries were weeded out. Thus, on 15 August 1942, a week after the first battered aircraft from Guadalcanal returned to Buka, the three Australian Marist Brothers were taken from the catechist school at Chabai, in north Bougainville. They were never seen, nor heard of, again. And a week later the five Buka missionaries were gathered at Hahela where, wrote one:

We were all to live together...and discontinue our mission work: we were forbidden to have any contact with the natives; they were not allowed to come near the station. Human wisdom reproaches us for not having escaped at that moment. But even at that time we trusted the Japanese and had hopes of being able to minister to the spiritual needs of our natives. We could not abandon our priestly work in order to seek security in escaping.

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De Klerk to Aubin, 15 January 1943, B.A.H.; extract from Annex N of the Final Report of the Commanding General, 1st Marine Division, Phase V, p.9, enclosed in a personal communication from the U.S. Marine Corps, Historical Branch; Missions des Iles, No. 36 (December 1951) p.108; and No. 110 (August 1961), p.134.

Towards the end of the month they were transferred to Sohano, the small island in Buka Passage, from where, in December, three of them, all Frenchmen, were transferred to Gagan in the centre of Buka. The other two - Americans - remained at Sohano until August 1943. Then, with American bombing increasing, they were shifted to prison camp at Rabaul, where they met clergy from all over New Guinea, as well as their two confrères - Fathers Boch and Lepping - taken from the Shortlands in September 1942, and also those from Buin.¹

On Bougainville, where the Japanese were more easily avoided and nationalities more mixed the movements of the Marists exhibit greater variety than on Buka. The priests and nuns of Buin, all French, were deported to Rabaul in October 1942, while in December, those from Koromira, Germans, were taken to join their fellow Germans at Kieta. With the work of the mission now facing complete disruption Wade found the continued presence of his missionaries in such a dangerous situation increasingly unjustifiable. Most of the remaining nuns were, therefore, evacuated by U.S. submarine on the last night of 1942.² However, three nuns (evacuated in March 1943), eighteen priests and five lay-brothers were still at liberty when, in February 1943, the

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Lamarre, 'War Comes to Buka', p.3-7. Scharmach, This Crowd Beats Us All, is a useful though anecdotal account of the life of the missionary prisoners-of-war at Rabaul.

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O'Reilly and Sédès, Jaunes, Noirs et Blancs, pp.105, 114-6; Feldt, Coast Watchers, pp.198-203.

Japanese ordered all missionaries to report to Kieta. The English-speaking ones prudently ignored the order but the Germans who were still at large, perhaps with equal prudence and hopeful to be able to salvage something of their missionary role, complied. They were joined, in April, by the two priests from Nissan, who were charged with having communicated with the Americans. These were Florent Waché, a Frenchman, and John Conley, who were killed in January 1944 - Waché in an American bombing raid on Kieta and Conley (who survived the raid) by beheading.¹

Meanwhile, Japanese patrols were operating further and further afield, to the discomfort both of the reculant missionaries and the coast watchers. The latter, fearing disclosure of their whereabouts if any of the missionaries were captured, therefore, ordered their withdrawal. But the removal of one danger only accentuated another, for the missionaries had done much to smooth relations between the coast watchers and the islanders, on whose goodwill the practicability of coast watching largely depended. They had endorsed the coast watchers' requests for carriers, they had placated villagers from whose gardens food had been taken, and had counselled them against revealing the coast watchers' whereabouts to

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Notes regarding Fathers Conley and Waché, Lebel Papers; O'Reilly and Sédès, Jaunes, Noirs et Blancs, pp.154-7; T.A.G. Hungerford, 'The Nuns' Patrol', Stand-To, August-September 1950, pp.5-7.

the Japanese. It was no accident, therefore, that following the retreat of Wade and his remnant in May 1943 there was a marked decline of native sympathy for the coast watchers. Indeed, this had been predicted by the missionaries, although the mounting Japanese pressure, and the islanders' residual pragmatism, which inclined them to defer to the stronger power, were contributing factors. By June the coast watchers themselves were appealing to be evacuated. They were, accordingly, taken off in July. However, they returned to Bougainville with some of the previously evacuated missionaries (now military chaplains) in November, when American forces landed at Torokina to establish a base from which to attack New Guinea and, eventually, to complete mopping-up operations in the Solomons.¹

Meanwhile, the Japanese had made considerable use of the German missionaries, who remained on Bougainville, for liaison with the islanders. By December 1943 the eight German priests and two brothers were divided between camps in Buin and in the mountains behind Kieta. From these they were frequently assigned to accompany patrols - interpreting, advising on terrain, and helping procure food.² At other times, although always regarded as prisoners, they were accorded opportunities

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O'Reilly and Sédès, Jaunes, Noirs et Blancs, pp.124-6; Feldt, Coast Watchers, pp.204-14. Interview with Fr A. Lebel (Monoitu).

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O'Reilly and Sédès, Jaunes, Noirs et Blancs, pp.154-5. Interviews with Fr F. Miltrup and Br Xaverius (Kieta).

for pastoral work. They were permitted to make extended tours of the villages, and mission interests were protected, as is shown in the following incident. When the missionaries were evacuated from Buin, five members of the indigenous sisterhood had been left at Turiboiru in the charge of Jean Mege, a catechist. Mege's task had been made difficult by one Tome of Nabaku who, in order to curry favour with the Japanese N.C.O. in charge of the Aku patrol post, had forced people to surrender mission goods left in their custody. In return, Tome had been allowed to enforce traditional marriage claims on two of the nuns, taking one of them as his second wife. But when the German missionaries appointed to Buin late in 1943 learned of this affair and protested to the Japanese authorities at Kieta the N.C.O. was severely reprimanded.¹

However, as the tide of war ran more strongly against them, Japanese regard for the feelings of their subjects declined sharply. Concern to retain the

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F. Miltrup, 'War Memoirs', p.14. A.P.M. Box 26; A. Muller, 'War Memoirs', p.7, *ibid.*; 'Diary of J.B. Poncelet', p.64, *ibid.* Two of the ten professed members of the Little Sisters of Nazareth had died at Kieta in 1941. The surviving eight were stationed at Turiboiru early in 1942, and were dispensed from their promises when the European missionaries were taken to Rabaul in October 1942. Three of the eight then took advantage of this dispensation to return to their villages. In the South Solomons, when most of the Marists were evacuated late in 1942, the indigenous nuns were stationed at Buma, Rokera and Wanoni Bay.

goodwill of the indigenes was eroded by the need to ensure survival as the Allied advance towards Japan cut supply lines and left the Japanese in the Solomons to fend for themselves. Many of them starved. Of a company of 140 men stationed at Pankama, near Kieta, for two years from mid-1943 only twenty-nine survived: 'twenty-two were killed in fighting and eighty-nine died from starvation or sickness mostly caused by starvation.' To avoid a similar fate others attempted to supplement the yield of their inadequate gardens by gathering mangrove roots and coconuts, and by stealing food from the indigenes - with dire results. The natives might be prepared to accept Japanese, no less than Australian or German, overlordship - but they did not, as Feldt observes, surrender the vassal's rights to ensure his own subsistence. Adam Muller, who was stationed at various garden-camps behind Kieta, until his rescue in March 1945, dates the rise of guerrilla war against the Japanese from July 1944, when a Japanese patrol to Orami village failed to return, and a patrol of seven men which was subsequently ordered to inquire into the matter was wiped-out at Guava. In some places, says Muller:

...practically all the pigs of the natives were killed, [and] the coconut palms and sago palms cut down. In some few cases whole gardens of whole villages were stripped...and even not-bearing plants were uprooted. This was now a question of life and death for the natives. And when here and there a case of cannibalism

became known there was no more holding them.
 'Ju Tink Mipela kilim nating ol Japan?
 Me no kilim nating,' I was told.¹

The increasing desperation and harrassment of the Japanese also affected their treatment of the missionaries. By 1945 German nationality was no longer protection against the suspicion of communicating with the enemy or of conniving at the activities of the islanders. Such suspicions possibly explain why Gerhard Weber was beheaded at the end of a patrol in north Bougainville in April 1945. And with the surrender of Germany in May the plight of the remaining missionaries became even more precarious. They were frequently threatened with death, and several who had the opportunity gratefully escaped to the Allied lines before the surrender of Japan brought the war to a close in August 1945.²

In terms of personnel the war had cost the Marists dearly. Two priests and two nuns were killed in the South Solomons, while the northern vicariate lost four

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Muller, 'War Memoirs', p.14; Feldt, Coast Watchers, pp.103, 203. Similar deterioration in the Japanese treatment of the islanders also occurred on the New Guinea mainland: Lawrence, Road Belong Cargo, p.110.

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Notes regarding Fr Weber, Lebel Papers; O'Reilly and Sédès, Jaunes, Noirs et Blancs, pp.157-8; interviews with Fr F. Miltrup and Br Xaverius. For New Guinea examples of unfavourable treatment by the Japanese of German missionaries see Scharmach, This Crowd Beats Us All, pp.29-30, 261; Ralph M. Wiltgen, 'The Death of Bishop Loerks and His Companions', passim, reprinted from Verbum, Nos 6 and 7, (Rome, 1964, 1965).

priests, six brothers and two nuns. Materially, the results were similar. In the South Solomons the stations at Visale, Ruavatu and Marau were totally destroyed, and the others deteriorated from lack of maintenance, while in the North Solomons all but one of the mission stations, Poporang, were levelled. The problem of reconstruction was immense - but mission resources were adequate. Indeed, as it affected the Society of Mary, the war proved to be^a fruitful stimulus both to missionary vocations and to the generosity of Catholics in Australia, New Zealand, Holland and, particularly, in America. Within fifteen years of the armistice, when vegetation had long since covered most of the evidence of battle, all the stations had been rebuilt or repaired and the missionaries were more numerous than ever. But there was no return to the status quo ante bellum. Locally and internationally the war had profoundly shaken the foundations of the colonial situation in which the missions had been planted.

CHAPTER VIITHE MARISTS AND THE INDIGENOUS CHALLENGE TO COLONIALISM,
1945-66

In the political and social evolution of both the British and the Australian Solomons - as, indeed throughout much of the colonial world - the Second World War stands as a watershed between the unhurried paternalism of European rule and positive advance towards independence. Internationally, it introduced an ethos of decolonization. Locally, it sparked a powerful proto-nationalist movement. The immediate local effects of the war were, however, far from uniform. In the southern part of the Solomons, where large numbers of openhanded American troops were based following the early defeat of the Japanese, the war brought unprecedented prosperity. Here the return to pre-war conditions was unwelcome and the British authorities had to contend with the sustained protests of 'Marching Rule'. In the northern and central islands which, for the most part, lay within the war zone until 1945 and where, consequently, the return to normality was less to be regretted, the transition was less eventful. Yet, although the war did not create new problems in these parts of the group it did not dissolve or diminish old ones. Thus, it marked but a phase in the continuum of discontent on Buka, which was to reach a climax in 1962 with an outburst of violent opposition to the Australian

administration and a large scale rejection of the Catholic mission. Taken with the rise of the Christian Fellowship Church, in which a large part of the Methodist following in New Georgia rejected European religious leadership in 1960-1, Marching Rule and the Buka affair help characterize the post-war decades as a period of marked and constructive re-assertiveness by the indigenes!

Also characteristic of the post-war period have been the more positive European reactions to the new situation. The administrations have attempted to guide the islanders' interest in conducting their own affairs. Opportunities for joining in the work of government have been expanded and programs of economic, social and educational development have been introduced. Mission policies show similar features. Notable among the Protestant religious bodies has been the progress from the status of European-controlled 'mission' towards that of indigenous 'church'. In 1963 two Anglican Solomon Islanders were consecrated assistant bishops; in 1964 the S.S.E.M. became the South Sea Evangelical Church, and in 1968 the Methodists were incorporated in the United Church which embraces Papua, New Guinea, and the Solomon Islands. The Catholic response to the new conditions has been most clearly marked by improved standards of mission education (as will be discussed

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For an account of the rise of the Christian Fellowship Church see Tippet, Solomon Islands Christianity, pp.219 ff. The other movements mentioned are discussed below in the present chapter.

in the next chapter) and (as will be shown in this one) by realistic efforts to secure for the islanders the temporal benefits to which they aspire. For in retaining their followers no less than in winning them have the Marists found it important to 'make friends with the mammon of iniquity'.

THE Marching Rule protest was centred on Malaita. It arose directly from the war although the roots of discontent lay in the commonplaces of the pre-war colonial situation, such as the obvious disparities of wealth and authority between Europeans and islanders and the former's disregard for indigenous customs and values. Specific grievances noted on Malaita by C.H. Allan, an administrative officer, included the trifling penalty enforceable for adultery (six months' gaol instead, perhaps, of death) and the hardships of the aged when so many young people left the villages to work on plantations.¹ Nor was there lack of precedent for the islanders to react against their experience of subordination to Europeans. It may be found in the Fallowes and Pavese movements of the 1930s, in the Bell murder of 1927 and even, perhaps, in the fact that European prestige was felt to be sorely endangered at Tulagi when the American negro boxer Jack Johnson beat Tommy Burns in Sydney for the World

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Colin Hamilton Allan, 'The Marching Rule Movement in the British Solomon Islands Protectorate', (Dip. Anth. thesis, Cambridge, 1950), p.42.

Championship in 1908: 'a black man had triumphed over a white'.¹

But prospects for achieving a new order of things did not seriously arise until the sudden collapse of the familiar non-indigenous order in 1942. The withdrawal of the hitherto invincible British authorities from Tulagi was both a breach of trust and a damaging admission of their inability to protect the Solomon Islanders from a feared enemy. Further, this admission was sealed by the non-collection of the annual ten-shillings poll tax between 1942 and 1949. The tax, introduced in 1920, had been a crucial element in the establishment of government control on Malaita. For payment signified submission - but not a negative or defeatist kind. Rather, to the islanders, in accordance with the Melanesian sense of reciprocity, it constituted an acknowledgement of the government's power and of the value of its friendship, and an entitlement to protection. When the tax was not collected and protection not provided, the contract was dissolved. Moreover, in comparison with the American forces, who landed on Guadalcanal in August 1942, the British were shown to be of very minor account and the advantages - material and psychological - of continuing to propitiate them appeared dubious.²

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Jack McLaren, My Odyssey (London, 1923), pp.238-9.

2

'Report on Marching Rule', included in 'Malaita Annual Report, 1946'. As the files containing this and certain other unpublished official material cited below in relation to Marching Rule are still confidential their location has not been stated.

Not only did the Americans, who had little interest in the problem of maintaining white prestige, which had concerned so many of the pre-war civil population, possess vastly more goods than the British but they shared them more generously with the islanders.¹ About 3,000 Solomon Islanders most of them from Malaita, met the Americans on Guadalcanal as recruits in the Solomon Islands Labour Corps. Thanks to side-earnings and gifts, their earnings were generally far in excess of the £1 per month fixed by the British authorities, a sum which itself was twice the standard pre-war wage for a labourer. Many others, who remained in their villages, and that not only on Guadalcanal, profited directly from the sale of fruit, curios and native building materials.² Thus in August 1943 American ships collected 4,600 rao, leaf building panels, from Waisisi village in south Malaita, paying 1/- for four. And in February 1944 a Marist stationed at Rokera noted that 'the people speak only of dollars and Americans'.³

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For discussion of a parallel situation in New Guinea, with Australian troops in the role of Americans, see K.E. Read, 'Effects of the Pacific War in the Markham Valley, New Guinea,' Oceania, vol.XVIII, no.2 (1947), pp.108-9.

2

Ibid; 'Malaita Annual Report, 1945'; Cyril S. Belshaw, Island Administration in the South West Pacific (London, 1950), pp.68-9; Worsley, The Trumpet Shall Sound, p.173.

3

'Journal of Rokera', 28 August 1943, 18 February 1944.

As unsettling to the islanders as this new affluence, was the spirit of comradeship and consideration, the lack of hauteur, with which the Americans treated them. For instance, when, on British initiative, the residents of a village near Lunga were refused access to an American camp where they had been accustomed to doing laundry work, a party of Marines promptly installed a washing machine in the village, about a mile away, and ran a lead to it from the camp generator.¹ Also unsettling for the islanders was the sight of negro soldiers enjoying perquisites hitherto reserved for white men in the Solomons.² So, too, was the anti-colonialist, anti-British strain of much American talk and the frequently given advice that the islanders should have a chief of their own.³ A new realm of possibility having been opened up by these experiences, the islanders, not unnaturally, aspired to enter it.

Consequently, in the middle of 1943 Malaita members of the labour corps and certain Gela people attempted to 'buy' American rule. The move apparently succeeded when the money, like later offerings, was accepted - on behalf of the American Red Cross. But

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Interview with Fr J. Wall (Honiara).

2

On San Cristobal the negroes were thought by some to be the descendants of the people Mendaña had abducted in 1568, an opinion which may well have encouraged the islanders' desire to enjoy similar privileges.

Interview with Fr J. Espagne (Ruavatu).

3

Interview with Alikì Nonohimae (Rohinari).

in 1944 the Resident Commissioner learned of the practice and had it stopped. A portion of the money was returned to the donors. Nevertheless, rumours of an American takeover remained current. They may have been encouraged by the opinion of various Americans that the U.S. should retain a permanent base in the Solomons, but they were firmly denied by the American Commander in 1944 in an interview with Nori, a Labour Corps spokesman and soon to be a Marching Rule Leader.¹ Even so, the islanders were not to be deterred from 'going it alone', although the hope of American intervention never entirely disappeared from Marching Rule.

Open resistance was first noticed at Ataa in north Malaita early in 1944, when returning Labour Corps men refused to acknowledge the authority of the government-appointed headman. But a defineable movement first showed itself in the Areare district of south Malaita late the same year. This was Marching Rule - 'Marching' being a corruption of the Areare word māsina, meaning

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'Report on Marching Rule', 1946; W.J. Marquand, 'Community Development in the British Solomon Islands Protectorate, with particular reference to the Marching Rule Movement on the Island of Malaita', pp.7-10, photocopy in the present writer's possession. For comments regarding the alleged need for permanent U.S. bases in the Solomons (and elsewhere) see William Herbert Hobbs, The Fortress Islands of the Pacific (Am Arbor, 1945), p.160; Belshaw, Island Administration, p.70.

'brother' or 'brotherhood'.¹ It aimed at improving the quality of native life and at making the islanders masters of their own affairs. Under the leadership of Hoasihau, the district headman and a nephew of the great ramo Arisimae, a series of meetings was held to collect money to set up a chief who would be responsible for all dealings with Europeans. Then, early in 1945, two notables of Waisisi, Aliko Nonohimae and Nori, also began collecting money. The alleged purposes were to buy a plantation, and to hire European experts who could satisfy the people's need for improved housing, agriculture, education and medicine. By June nominal leadership of the movement had passed to Timothy George of Walande, Small Malaita, who probably owed his position to the belief that his facility in English and his experience of the outside world (he had been born in Queensland during the labour trade and had spent his first years there) equipped him better than any other of his compatriots to deal with Europeans. The same month a 'patrol' 300 strong went from Small Malaita up through Areare and Kwaio to eastern Kwara'ae

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'[Recently] the origin of the word "Marching Rule" was explained to me. It comes from "Māsina Rulu"; a rule which requires that the people of the Solomons should live and act among themselves as brothers and sisters': Fr P. Geerts in 'Journal of Rokerā', 30 October 1948. See also Worsley, The Trumpet Shall Sound, p.173. Tippet is being less than fair to the Malaitans in countenancing the views that "Māsina Rulu" was 'attractively mysterious, with no local meaning' or that it was a corruption of "Marx's Rule": Solomon Islands Christianity, p.204.

spreading the word. Meanwhile, through a community of migrants from the Lau Lagoon who were settled near Walande, the discontent in north Malaita had coalesced with the movement in the south.

By the end of 1945 Malaita was divided into nine districts, largely corresponding to the administrative districts. Each of these had its own 'Head Chief', who was vaguely subject to George and was assisted by several lesser 'chiefs'. These, in turn, were responsible for particular sub-districts, where they were complemented by a local council and various categories of subordinates such as clerks, 'Custom Chiefs' (authorities on lore) and 'duties', whose role resembled that of the policeman or the party-whip. In all districts the leaders ordered the drawing up of codes of laws for the proper ordering of society in accordance with what was, or what was thought to be, indigenous custom. They also encouraged the practice of compiling genealogies - of which the Oau 'generation' discussed in the Introduction is an example - in order to establish the islanders' prescriptive right to their land and to affirm their faith in the traditional cultural values associated with it. Thus, the araha, Ruainoni Wainora said of himself in concluding the Oau 'generation':

He has followed all the rules his father and grandfather taught him and he has taught them to his children. He also taught them all the rules and customs of his place of Oau. Ruainoni Wainora still follows and talks about the rules he got from his forefathers because he is proud of everything they did for his people on these Islands of Malaita.

Complementing the conservative strain in Marching Rule, the forward-looking purposefulness of the movement became particularly pronounced in 1946. On their chiefs' orders, Malaitans started leaving their scattered hamlets in the bush and their healthy artificial islands in order to live the new life in new large villages, called 'towns', on the coast.¹ Also, during the year large meetings were held at various towns before, in November 1946, the Marching Rule came fully into the open with a mass rally at the government station at Auki. The nature of the movement is suggested by the fact that the principal demand made here was not for political independence, but for a minimum wage of £12 a month, which would make possible a measure of social independence. For with higher wages fewer young people would need to leave their villages, yet there would be more money available to pay for social services - such as hiring a doctor on a three-year contract for £300 a year. To the chagrin of the administration, which desperately needed labour for the reconstruction of the Protectorate's economy, the wage claim was backed by a call for a general strike early in 1947.

Taking a further initiative in June 1947, at a meeting at Auki attended by an estimated 7,000 people, Marching Rule leaders announced the policy of taking over the local native courts, which had been set up

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'Report on Marching Rule', 1946; 'The History of the People of Oau'.

in 1943 to be presided over by the Headmen. Henceforth, presided over by Custom Chiefs, the courts would deal with all cases except murder, which would be left to the government.¹

1946 also saw Marching Rule begin to affect other islands. Following traditional lines of communication it spread from Areare to Ulawa, where Catholics and Anglicans who were bitterly divided in January were by May joined in 'open opposition to the government'.² From Ulawa it spread to San Cristobal. From Areare (following the route by which Catholicism had come to south Malaita), it also entered Guadalcanal, through Marau. At the western end of Guadalcanal it inspired Jacob Vouza, the war hero, and Matthew Belamatanga, a former Catholic catechist at Tangarare to start related movements of their own. And in 1947, Vouza's strongly millenarian movement spread to Gela and Ysabel, where it revived the anti-government sentiment earlier activated by the Fallowes movement. These latter outbreaks were firmly resisted by the Melanesian Mission. With those on Guadalcanal, they were finally crushed when the government (persuasion and threats having failed to enforce submission) began, in August

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Marquand, 'Community Development in the B.S.I.P.', pp.7-12; 'Journal of Buma', 2 November 1946, 3 March 1947, 25 June 1947.

2

Parsonage to Aubin, 30 May 1946, B.A.H.

1947, to arrest rebel leaders who, it officially alleged, had 'sought to establish an organized terrorism and robbery of the native people'.¹

On Malaita and San Cristobal, however, where Marching Rule was more strongly organized, resistance was only hardened by the government's new aggressiveness. Fences were built around the 'towns' and 'sentries' were posted at the gates. In June 1949 2,000 men were serving sentences, mainly for refusing to pull down the fences.² And some months later, when plans were announced for reintroducing the poll tax and for a census (commencing 1 November 1949), an observer at Buma noted:

...all the natives are now feverishly working their gardens in preparation to go to gaol for five months.³

Nevertheless, by late 1949, although the outward resistance of Marching Rule was still unbroken, morale was beginning to crumble. Village, and especially 'town', food supplies had dwindled on account of the amount of time and energy people expended on erecting new buildings and on attending meetings - and because of the mass arrests. In January 1950 it was observed in north Malaita that:

1

Broadcast by the Resident Commissioner, 31 August 1947 (Catholic Mission Press, Tanagai).

2

P.I.M., July 1949, p.43.

3

Stuyvenberg to Dubois, 29 October 1949, A.P.M. OSM 208.

Young unmarried men are generally more antagonistic than the older or married men, who make no statements in court and go to prison with no enthusiasm such as was evinced in the previous arrests.

A young man at Tauba village stated 'that he was prepared to pay tax if the Government would build him a good stone house with gas cookers like those in Sydney'.

Disappointment did, however, also foster more extreme forms of protest than civil disobedience. Thus, at the same time, it was strongly rumoured that Marching Rule was about to 'show out its power' to the government.

That is, to force recognition of its claims by resort to violence. There was 'speculation in the markets if Marching Rule would dare a coup on the lines of the Bell incident', and an ex-police sergeant in the Fataleka district was said to be melting down

'lead shot to make single bullets for a shot gun.'¹

And in February 1950 a policeman was, in fact, fatally wounded in a skirmish with Marching Rule supporters in north Malaita.² Moreover, as the likelihood of attaining success through secular efforts, receded the millenarian strain in the movement also became more marked. As early as March 1949 the Rokera missionaries reported as prevalent in their district the belief that death was about to ravage Malaita, preparatory to the arrival of beneficent Americans. Consequently, people were

1

'Intelligence Report on Marching Rule Activities in North Malaita, January 1950'.

2

B.S.I.P., Annual Report, 1949-50, p.39.

neglecting their gardens and cutting down food trees, for they were no longer necessary. Instead, they were building beacons to guide the transports ashore and were digging air-raid shelters for protection against the bombing attacks that were expected to be made on the British and their sympathizers.¹ By January 1950 similar ideas were current in north Malaita, where defensive positions were built in the bush as hideaways from the tax-gatherers and for shelter during the expected Armageddon between the British and the Americans.

But this growing hysteria was off-set by mounting dis-illusionment and willingness to submit. It was in January 1950, also, that a Marching Rule chief at Uudi in north Malaita demonstrated his break with the whole movement by paying the tax, giving the census information and by naming one of his pigs 'Next Week' in derision of the cargo stories and the hoped-for millenium. Hens and dogs in the same area were known to be called 'Promise' or 'Bye and Bye' for the same reason.² Sensing the change of mood, the Resident Commissioner, in June 1950, released the nine Head Chiefs imprisoned since August 1947, on condition that they renounce their opposition and agree instead, to preach obedience to the government. The terms were accepted. By the end of the year recruiting had revived and the

1

'Journal of Rokera', 10-18 March 1949.

2

'Intelligence Report...January 1950'.

government had obtained most of its taxes, although pockets of resistance remained until 1955.¹

Assessments of Marching Rule vary. C.H. Allan, whose opinion seems unduly to reflect the exasperation of the government he was serving, saw it as a lamentably negative and anti-aculturative movement. Certain 'admirable objectives' (improved educational and social services) were overshadowed by cargo cult, terrorism, civil disobedience and the desire to revert to an outmoded way of life. Peter Worsley, on the other hand, considering its practical objectives and methods, characterized it as 'not a cult, but a political party'. The latest commentator, A.R. Tippet, taking Worsley's secular view further, declared that 'religion was not a basic drive in this movement'. Closer examination suggests that all these opinions, especially those of Allan and Tippet, need qualification.²

Against Allan's view several points may be urged: after the war the government did not offer the people any incentive to make acquiescence to British rule seem anything else but a retrograde step; the millenarian strain did not become prominent until relatively late in Marching Rule, and the intimidation of the few who resisted the movement cannot explain

1

'Journal of Tarapaina', March-August 1952, April 1954-June 1955; Geerts to Aubin, 31 May 1955, B.A.H.

2

Allan, 'Marching Rule', p.92; Worsley, The Trumpet Shall Sound, p.182; Tippet, Solomon Islands Christianity, p.204.

the enthusiasm of the majority who favoured it. As for Marching Rule's insistence on the preservation of custom, Allan's suggestion that it was 'born from... fear of the future' is by no means fair. On this point the Malaita District Commissioner wrote sympathetically - if rather naively - in October 1946:

Native customs persist in all the more civilized countries of the world where they form the bases of normal social intercourse....No one who has been to a Public School or elder University fails to appreciate the flavour they add to ordinary existence.¹

Besides, Marching Rule's regard for traditional values flourished in association with a view of European culture, and with a willingness to work systematically to obtain various elements of it, that were far from being anti-acculturative. British authority might be substantially rejected but not European medicine, education, economic benefits, religion or the means of enjoying them. Thus, the shift to the 'towns' was due to much more than the expectation of American cargo. Not only did the 'towns' provide an opportunity to express on a large scale the unifying brotherliness esteemed by Marching Rule but, since long before the war, life in coastal settlements had been identified with enjoyment of the advantages brought by Europeans. Indeed, pacification, by reducing to irrelevance the vulnerability of such villages to

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'Report on Marching Rule', 1946.

sea-borne attack, and by making it possible for the islanders to trust a wider circle of neighbours, had played a crucial role in this process. There was, moreover, a well-established tendency for Christians, especially S.S.E.M. and Anglicans, to leave the fastness of their bush hamlets and gather on the coast, while a government-directed re-settlement scheme that was warmly welcomed in Areare in 1940 set a further precedent.¹ The fact that the 'towns' resembled the American camps is consistent with the imitation of a proven, and not entirely unfamiliar model. For the Americans, the exemplars of well-being, had demonstrated life in large communities, while the vast gardens they made had suggested how this way of life might be sustained.

In reply to Allan, then, it might be said that Marching Rule did aim at acculturation, but in such a way as to preserve the Melanesian's own identity. The same reply might be made to Worsley whose account of Marching Rule does not indicate what lay behind the particular mundane objectives it aimed at, or what larger purpose they subserved. For Marching Rule was a socially and culturally reintegrative movement - not just an acquisitive one. As evidence to be discussed below indicates, a heavy and pervasive emphasis was placed on asserting the dignity of Melanesians and of ensuring its recognition in all aspects - traditional and introduced - of their way of life. The islanders' sense of their own worth had

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'Malaita Annual Report, 1944.'

been offended by the disparities between European and Melanesian under British rule. But it had been powerfully heightened by their contact with the Americans and by Christianity. It is, therefore, a serious shortcoming in the work of the three commentators referred to that they pay little attention to the fact that Marching Rule was a movement of people who had been profoundly influenced by Christianity. To this influence the movement owed its organization, its ideology, and an anthem. 'Jesus he say "Yes" for Marching Rule' was a popular song of the day.¹

In 1942 nearly half of Malaita, with a total population possibly underestimated at 40,000, was Christian - 9,000 S.S.E.M., 5,000 Anglican and about 4,000 Catholic.² Relations between the various missions and their followers differed considerably, as was to be strikingly shown within the general Christian orientation of Marching Rule. Anglican ministry on the island was performed almost entirely by Melanesian priests and deacons. Delegation of responsibility was, however, most pronounced in the S.S.E.M. By the end of the 1930s the S.S.E.M. teachers were practically independent of their European missionaries - being doctrinally, institutionally and economically largely self-sufficient. Indeed, there was a deepening estrangement between the two groups marked by the

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Interviews with Frs J. Espagne and P. Geerts, who were on San Cristobal and Malaita, respectively, during Marching Rule.

2

Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions', pp.233, 407; Appendix Ji-ii.

Europeans' ignorance of the local languages, their rather priggish disdain for the Melanesians as social and religious inferiors and the restriction of a great part of their activity to their head station at Onepusu.¹ In contrast to the Anglicans, the Catholic clergy were, for reasons already discussed, all Europeans but unlike their S.S.E.M. counterparts they maintained close personal contact with the villagers, even during the war years.

The leadership and lines of communication of Marching Rule were supplied by the S.S.E.M., whose teachers, chosen where possible from the sons of village notables, trained in the exercise of leadership, and empowered to levy money from their followers for religious purposes frequently enjoyed an importance in the village which exceeded that of the headmen. Eight of the nine Head Chiefs - the exception was Nonohimae, a pagan - were or had been S.S.E.M. teachers. Moreover, stationed in a network of villages throughout Malaita, accustomed to meet regularly for conferences and maintaining close contact by letter, the teachers formed an effective and ready-made 'fifth column'.²

Also remarkable for Christian content were the ideals and spirit of the movement. These are suggested by its name. And, paradoxically, in view of the

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Hilliard, 'Protestant Missions', pp.396-8.

²

Ibid, pp.385-7, 395-6.

divisions and belligerence that traditionally had characterized Malaita, they were realized in the sense of unity Marching Rule created among the people of the island and in the lack of violence which marked its proceedings. No doubt fear of reprisals (for the aftermath of the Bell murder was not forgotten) also acted as a deterrent to violence, yet it was a consciously held and respected ideal of brotherhood that was demonstrated in the Marching Rule 'towns' - where language barriers, bush-coast antagonisms and religious differences were of little account - and that was professed by Marching Rule devotees.

During a six months sojourn on Malaita in 1933 the anthropologist H.I. Hogbin 'never once had the slightest response from the Sermon on the Mount, which appeared to be regarded as a passage of no particular relation to native concerns'.¹ In contrast, a document said by its provider to show 'how we work inside Marching Rule, along 1947, 1945' contained, in outlining a general program of improvement, the following statement of social norms:

We must show works of friendship among ourselves and show it to others as well. We must show works of charity, works of mercy and works of sympathy. We must show to other people. Whatever good we can do for ourselves and others as well. We must be hospitable to foreigners, kind to the poor and be honest in whatever we do or say. If we do that then we are sure

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Hogbin, Experiments in Civilization, p.183.

that many other good people will respect us, our lands, our money, our children and whatever belongs to us. But most of all we must keep the ten Commandments of God which are well respect in our Customs by our ancestors, who although they may have broken them, have preserved them by words of mouth which is called Tradition.¹

It is important to notice, however, that this new social, love-thy-neighbour, dimension was awakened in Solomon Islands Christianity not directly by missionary teaching but through its being exemplified by the Americans. The Americans - who, it must also be noted, were virtually the first non-missionary Europeans, the islanders had seen openly professing Christianity² - were a catalyst which, according to a Catholic informant at Tarapaina in 1966, made people from 'Areare, Saoti,

1

Document entitled 'Conference of Araha', in the possession of Donasiano Houa (Tarapaina). The linking of 'Custom' and 'Tradition' as valid moral authorities suggests Catholic influence, and also suggests a line of teaching stressed by the Marists in countering S.S.E.M. claims for the self-sufficiency of the Bible. However, the quality of the English (and the fact that it could be written in English at all) suggests that in the form in which it was sighted the document was not produced until some time after the Marching Rule period. Most likely it was translated from an Areare original, by a pupil from the Marist Brothers' school Tenaru. Interview with Fr P. Geerts.

2

For examples, see Henry P. van Dusen, They Found the Church There (London, 1945), pp.42-3, 50-2.

Kwara'ae' meeting on Guadalcanal agree that they 'must be one brother...yumi must go one way, alsame Gospel'.¹ Moreover, the Americans' generous, friendly treatment of the islanders implied a severe religious condemnation of the British. This is expressed in a document emanating from Areare and found circulating in north Malaita in 1949. The familiarity it evinces with the scriptures and, above all, the confident literalness with which it applies them to actual circumstances, indicate S.S.E.M. origin.

The document begins by cataloguing the grievances of the Solomon Islanders. The basic one is the 'great distinction between them and us'. Under British rule, it complains, the islanders have never enjoyed the friendship, love or sympathy of white men, and are never likely to:

We are never allowed in their houses - never to eat or drink out of their cups or plates etc., never to sit on their chairs - not even those of us who were advanced and educated and were above the standard of the majority.

Life of the plantations has 'been hard going and for the benefit of the exploiter'. 'We have been used as beasts of burden or engines for work'. And:

If it happened a [court] case was raised between Native and White it mostly fell on the native side to be the guilty party and punished with imprisonment.

¹

Interview with Donasiano Houa. 'Saoti' (South) is an Areare term for the language of Saa.

Moreover, 'we have never had the White man's best or ever [been] taught or shown anything above the ordinary'. Yet 'the Scriptures (God's word) say man was created equal'. God was 'no respecter of persons' and 'shared his love toward all mankind equally'. Not so the British who, in keeping with their record, when the war came, left the Solomon Islanders to their fate. But then, the document continues, with 'the natives' hopes utterly gone', 'a new dawn broke'. American bravery 'freed us from our fears'. Until the Americans came 'we never [knew]...the true love and friendship mentioned in the bible'. They gave their lives: 'Greater love hath this than no man'. They shared what they had: for it is better, 'Not to love in thought nor in words but in deed and in truth'.¹

But Marching Rule's respect for Christianity did not necessarily extend to missionaries. S.S.E.M. personnel, whose evacuation ratified the pre-war estrangement were shunned by their people. Thus, at the village of Suubabona in north Malaita in 1947 Norman Deck was accused by the people of having deserted them, and was not allowed to land. Besides, he was no longer needed.

1

Document presented to District Headman Maekali in the Malu'u area, appended to 'Intelligence Report, Marching Rule Activities, North Malaita', November 1949. The resentment of Solomon Islanders at being treated as inferiors, and at not being invited to eat or drink with Europeans is also discussed in Fox, 'A Missionary in Melanesia', p.58.

The fundamentalist religion he taught, stressing the overriding authority and adequacy of the scriptures, their immediate relevance and the validity of individual interpretation was inherently subversive not only of subjection to a supposedly unjust political regime, but also of his own religious authority:

You have taught us all that was in the Bible.
You have taught us to read. Now let us
manage our religion ourselves.¹

The Anglicans also lost ground, on account of their loyal opposition to Marching Rule. Fox was largely responsible for aborting the outbreak on Gela, but on Malaita resistance was led by the Melanesian clergy. Such a stand well became the representatives of the unofficially established religion of the British protectorate. But it is important to note that they did not have an entirely free choice in the matter. For in Marching Rule the appellations 'British' and 'English' acquired a severely pejorative sense. Members of the Church of England were, therefore, forced to choose between the movement and their church.²

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Patrick O'Reilly, 'Malaita: Un exemple de revendications indigenes', Missions des Iles, no.15 (1948), p.150 (translation). Interview with Fr K. Kamphuis (Tanagai). See also Allan, 'Marching Rule', pp.53-4; Marquand, 'Community Development in the B.S.I.P.', p.6.

2

Fox, 'A Missionary in Melanesia', p.59, and Kakamora, pp.131-2; Allan 'Marching Rule', pp.59-61; interview with Archdeacon H. Reynolds (Honiara).

Such embarrassments did not confront the Marists. In contrast to the Bible-centredness of the S.S.E.M. situation, the crucial importance of the priestly ministry in the Catholic religious system confirmed rather than eroded the dependence of the people on their missionaries. In contrast to the Anglicans, members of the Church of Rome were not caught in the dilemma that troubled those of the Church of England. The Marists' capital of goodwill was, moreover, increased by several other factors - the practice of the Catholic religion by large number of the Americans,¹ the baptism of Nori in 1947² and, above all, their explicit approval of Marching Rule. Jean Tiggler of Rokera, a Dutch priest who died of blackwater fever in 1945, may even have helped prepare the ground for it. He is fondly remembered in Areare for having, like the Reverend R.P. Fallowes on Ysabel a decade before, criticized the meagre improvements Europeans had made in the lot of the Solomon Islanders. And it is said that he set up, with Arisimae's approval, three Catholic 'chiefs' (each of them catechists) to settle all disputes involving Catholics in the Rohinari area. A few minor cases were settled in this fashion before the Labour Corps recruits returned and Catholics were

1

Interview with Fr J. Wall. S.S.E.M. adherents were likewise encouraged by the fact that many of the Americans similarly professed evangelical beliefs. 'Report on Marching Rule', 1946.

2

O'Reilly, 'Malaita', p.151; interview with Philip Solodia (Takwa).

enthusiastically absorbed into Marching Rule.¹ Certainly, as the movement gathered momentum, the Marists, recognizing a coincidence of interests with the islanders, rejoiced. For the new 'towns' were a blessing that far outweighed concern for any embarrassment Marching Rule might cause the government. They facilitated the ministry to Catholics, the contacting of heathens, and they reduced the need for arduous tours of the bush. In March 1947, six months before the Resident Commissioner likened Marching Rule to 'a military despotism like those of Nazi Germany and Japan which recently threatened the world', Bernard van de Walle of Rohinari wrote:

The Marching Rule has done only good for the advancement of our religion. The lagoon is ripe. There are fine villages of sixty to eighty people where formerly there were only one or two families.

And in 1948 when fear of arrest was tempting some to abandon the 'towns' and communal gardens, Peter Geerts of Rokera urged the people to stay where they were and assured them they were breaking no laws.²

1

Interviews at Rohinari with Aliko Nonohimae and Michael Asipara. The three Catholic chiefs were Juliano Maahanu (Wairaha), Michael Asipara (Rohinari), Juliano Kaihoa (Uhu).

2

Broadcast by the Resident Commissioner, 31 August 1947; van de Walle to Aubin, 12 March 1947, B.A.H. (translation); 'Journal of Rokera', 20 September 1946, 5 July 1947, 14 November 1947, 28 May 1948.

Such sympathy was also encouraged by Marching Rule's reciprocal sympathy for the Marists. For instance, large crowds of 300 and 400 people flocked to the mission stations on Malaita and San Cristobal for feast days, the missionaries were frequently given gifts, and money was regularly offered for Masses to be said for the release of the nine chiefs.¹ Above all, and despite the prominence of religious tolerance in the Marching Rule ethic, the Marists made numerous converts. Thus, the baptism rate doubled in San Cristobal and trebled on Malaita, where Catholic numbers increased by 42%, rising from 5,410 to 7,694 between 1946 and 1950. Not only did the movement from heathenism accelerate but many Anglicans also shifted their allegiance, a fact which helps explain the increase in adult baptisms in north and south Malaita and in San Cristobal, in contrast to the relative steadiness of the figures for central Malaita (Buma district), where Anglicans were fewer.² In 1948 an ~~an~~ order circulated through San Cristobal that everyone should enter the Catholic Church. Probably emanating from the catechist Monita, who tended to become the leading Marching Rule spokesman on the island after the arrest of O Bi Ezechiali, S.S.E.M.,

1

'Journal of Rokera', 25 December 1944, 25 December 1945, 1 January 1948, 28 March 1948; 'Journal of Buma', 1 November 1947, 25 December 1948.

2

For statistical summaries see Appendices J and K.

it had its greatest effect at Star Harbour. Here about 200 Anglicans complied.¹ About the same time a similar movement occurred on Malaita, most notably among 300 Anglicans (and some S.S.E.M.) near Takwa, who also obeyed a Marching Rule order to return to their ancestral homeland at Hautonima in Areare.² Not surprisingly, Melanesian Mission authorities protested indignantly at Marist 'sheep-stealing'. The charge was, in fact, ill-founded. Nevertheless, as Fox somewhat archly points out, the Marist had few qualms about accepting the windfall Anglican unpopularity brought them, and they resolutely added insult to injury by re-baptizing the converts.³

Although they retained the good-will of Marching Rule the Marists were not immune to the islanders' renewed assertiveness and their refusal to be beholden to Europeans. This was not necessarily disadvantageous, as was shown by the manner in which the mission was frequently provided with goods and services. The emphasis was placed not on obtaining an exchange or on settling the debt but on demonstrating the fact that the islanders were calling the tune. Thus, in July 1946 the Buma saw-mill

1

'Journal of Wanoni Bay', 1948; interview with Fr J. Espagne.

2

'Journal of Rokera', 15 July 1948.

3

Fox, Kakamora, p.132; interview with Archdeacon H. Reynolds. Fr J. Espagne, on San Cristobal, delayed baptism for several years in order to test the sincerity of the would-be converts. Interviews with Frs J. Espagne and P. Geerts.

crew refused to renew their three-year contract, but did not disdain day labour. At the same time volunteers freely brought gravel for the new Buma church. And in August the people at Kwa in the Langalanga Lagoon refused to sell food but insisted, instead, that the mission accept 300lb of panas - for nothing.¹ Similarly, at Rokera in August 1947, Marching Rule members were willing to help the mission, but not to work for money. In October the system was modified. They would work two or three weeks for money, and then help for one or two weeks without pay. However, in accordance with the movement's tendency to foster formal codes and procedures the hours of work were precisely fixed for both these situations. When paid, men would work from 7 a.m.-11 a.m. and from 1 p.m.- 5 p.m.; and when unpaid, from 8.30 a.m.- 11 a.m. and from 2 p.m.-5 p.m. And as late as January 1950 the people were still exercising a very patronly role in building a new station at Tarapaina. Peter Geerts wrote at that time :

Last week the Marching Rule sent thirteen men to help me. Tomorrow thirteen others will come. They work only for their food and for some notebooks, ink, kerosine, rosaries and calico.²

The Marists were, however, far from complacent when Marching Rule, seeking to reintegrate all facets of life

¹

'Journal of Buma', 2 July, 3 August, 2 November 1946.

²

'Journal of Rokera', 16 August, 12 October 1947; Geerts to Aubin, 22 January 1950, B.A.H.

under Melanesian auspices, turned its attention to church discipline. At Takwa, Rokera and San Cristobal the missionaries firmly opposed attempts to implement sets of rules (similar to those drawn up for use in the custom courts) that catechists had formulated for the behaviour of Catholics.¹ The fullest of these was promulgated at Rokera on 5 April 1947. Its author was John Apui, the head catechist of the district, and who, the year before, had led the anti-government agitation on Ulawa.² It opens with a concise statement of Marching Rule's purpose: 'Now that we have the "Marching Rule" it is as if we are working on our own for a good way of life'. This was an objective, says Apui with which the government, belonging to a foreign country, and its officers, who - in sharp contrast with the Marists - rarely stayed long in one place and for whom private interests were paramount, never seriously concerned themselves. The aspect of this dereliction of duty that was central to Apui's charge was the fact that the government was indifferent to 'the good running of the Church'. Marching Rule in contrast, aimed at ensuring the welfare of both body and soul, through the Church and the Council, respectively. Consequently Alik and Hoasihau approved a plan proposed by two catechists, Michael Asipara and

1

Parsonage to Aubin, 14 April 1947, B.A.H.; Aubin to Halbwachs, 28 July 1947, B.A.H.

2

Parsonage to Aubin, 30 May 1946, B.A.H.

Juliano Kaihoa, both of whom had been involved in Tiggler's scheme, for:

...all the catechists of the Catholic Church to put a penalty of any Christian [i.e. Catholic] who might do anything wrong in Church.

The common identity of the social and religious communities - their unity of personnel and interest - was recognized by according the Council jurisdiction over serious offences, by making disobedience to a catechist a Council matter, and by sharing revenue from fines between Council and Church. Thus, the catechist might impose five shilling fines, for example, for truancy, irreverence in Church, eavesdropping, while the Council would impose £12 fines for pig-stealing, adultery, polygamy and abortion.¹

For about two months Apui enforced 'The Teaching of the Catholic Church', as the code was known, - until Geerts forbade the practice. Apui, however, retained his office until January 1949, when he was dismissed for calling a strike of the Rokera catechists when his demand of a salary of £12 a year was rejected. A month later, at a meeting called by Geerts, more moderate counsels prevailed. The catechists agreed to resume their duties, at £3 a year² - but not before the release of Alikī Nonohimae.

1

This document is reproduced in Appendix D.

2

'Journal of Rokera', 1-3 January 1949; Geerts to Aubin, 18 January 1949, B.A.H.

Further warning that mission interests might not coincide with Marching Rule activities was contained in the mood of frustration that was emerging in the movement by 1950. While 'cargo' expectations and talk of impending violence mounted, religious enthusiasm seemed to be declining towards indifference. Thus, when in January and February S.G. Masterman, the District Commissioner of Malaita, fearful of the danger of bloodshed, besought van de Walle's aid in crushing Marching Rule, the missionary was ready to assist. Conscious of the risk of being scorned by his flock for using 'missionary work to further the Government's work' he exhorted the catechists to take the initiative in urging the people to submit. But the urging was ignored. The catechists reported that it would be necessary to provide an alternative to Marching Rule.

Consequently, the Catholic Welfare Society was founded under van de Walle's direction in March 1950 to secure the spiritual and material welfare of its members. The headmen and the new D.C. of Malaita, C.H. Allan, were informed - and, so it seems, raised no objections. Membership was restricted to Catholics, who paid a small fee and agreed to:

1. Listen to the Priests, and obey all the laws of the Catholic Religion.
2. Follow all the Kings Regulations or Laws.

Each village was to elect a committee to ensure that both communal and private gardens were planted, that villages were kept clean, that suitable shelters were built for women in childbirth, that adequate pig fences

were built and that cash incomes were obtained from increased copra production and the sale of artifacts.¹ It was a practical scheme for improving the quality of village life by providing a simple organizational framework to give focus to the existing demand for improvement. The response was instant. By the end of April the catechists had persuaded nearly all of Rohinari's 825 Catholics to comply with the census and to agree to pay the tax - which were conditions of membership. Those who had no cash they organized for copra-making, and from others they collected the tax themselves and presented it to the headmen.

Success tends to beget imitation. Learning of van de Walle's project, Geerts on his own initiative founded a similar society at Tarapaina - with similar results. In May, despite pressure from Marching Rule diehards who claimed that to join the C.W.S. was tantamount to selling out to the government, 820 members were enrolled. A few heathens and Anglicans even decided to become Catholics in order to join.²

But as Areare enthusiasm for the C.W.S. increased, government tolerance declined.³ The Society was

1

Van de Walle to Masterman, 9 May 1950, Rohinari; van de Walle, 'History of the C.W.S.', 27 October 1950', and 'Catholic Welfare Society: Rules', *ibid.*

2

'Journal of Tarapaina', 17 April, 18 May 1950; letter of Aubin, 20 December 1950, A.P.M. OSM 418.

3

Unfortunately, government records relating to the C.W.S. were not available. However, the possibility of distortion in discussing the movement is to some extent reduced by the fact that mission sources also contain considerable detail regarding dealings with, and copies of correspondence with, government officials. Interviews with Fr P. Geerts and Mr C.H. Allan (Vila) have also proved useful.

apparently feared as a potential 'front' for Marching Rule, if not as an actual form of Marching Rule, recharged and in a new guise. But it is also clear that the government was reluctant not to accept any intermediary between itself and the islanders in bringing the latter to heel. The surrender was to be unconditional. Such considerations explain why a counter movement, Patana, proposed by the Anglican Fox was disallowed in 1948.¹ They became more relevant when the government, having obtained the cooperation of the nine chiefs, who were released in June 1950, was at last beginning to reimpose its authority directly on its subjects. In July, therefore, Allan forbade anyone but Headmen to take any part in collecting taxes; thereby revoking, as van de Walle stoutly alleges, the approval he gave just one month before for catechists to assist in this work.² The political point was made. Even so, the government was uneasy. In September the newly appointed Resident Commissioner, H.G. Gregory-Smith, visited Rohinari and instructed van de Walle that the C.W.S. would have to be dissolved. The reasons given for this requirement were that the catechist at Hautonima had refused to pay his tax until ordered to do so by a missionary; that another man, when asked what the Society's funds were for, had

1

Fox, 'A Missionary in Melanesia', p.32, and Kakamora, p.132-3.

2

Allan to Geerts, 10 July 1950, B.A.H.; van de Walle, 'History of the C.W.S.'

replied 'might be for schools'; and, finally, that various C.W.S. members had stated that they wanted one of their number on the Malaita Council, a proposed local government measure. In the light of van de Walle's reply, Gregory-Smith's reasons appear to have been little more than pretexts. Thus, countered van de Walle, as the catechist was breaking C.W.S. rules his behaviour was no reason for ending the Society; as for the funds of the C.W.S., they were to be used for buying such items as tools, seeds and watertanks, but should the society later concern itself with education this would offer no threat to law and order; and, finally, C.W.S. members would surely be entitled to elect whomsoever they wished to the Council.¹ But the Resident was not to be dissuaded. Shortly afterwards he advised Bishop Aubin that he 'wanted the C.W.S. to cease, because of the circumstances prevailing on Malaita'. Aubin complied at the end of November, after obtaining, as he says, Gregory-Smith's firm assurance that the demise of the C.W.S. should be announced by those who had founded it.² In fact, this did not happen. Before receiving Aubin's letter the missionaries, like the Areare, were advised of the dissolution by the government headman, Hoasihau, acting

1

Van de Walle, 'History of the C.W.S.'

2

Aubin to van de Walle, 13 November 1950, Rohinari;
 Aubin to van de Walle, 28 November 1950, B.A.H.;
 Aubin to Geerts, 29 November 1950, copy in 'Journal of Tarapaina', 13 December 1950.

on Allan's instructions.¹ To the end, then, the government insisted on imposing a political solution on a social problem. Possibly this approach has been vindicated by the fact that the political development of Malaita has, after the shaky beginning of the Malaita Council in 1952, proceeded steadily, although self-help and social improvement at the village level, at least in Areare, have made no comparable advance.

It is somewhat ironic in view of their earlier popularity (yet consistent with Marching Rule principles), that in the post-Marching Rule years the Marists should have had appreciable reason for disquiet on Malaita. This is particularly so in regard to the security of their land titles, few of which have been precisely surveyed and the limits of which are, therefore, open to dispute.² Most notable is the Tarapaina case. In 1948 certain heathens of the area, stimulated by Marching

1

Van de Walle to Hoasihau, 8 December 1950; Hoasihau to van de Walle, 8 December 1950; Aubin to van de Walle, 22 December 1950, Rohinari.

2

For example, the Buma land was bought in the following fashion: 'There was no possibility of exploring to neighbourhood; even those who sold the land were unwilling to venture on shore. We had to be satisfied with rowing along the coast and fixing the limits of the land by trees visible from the sea'. Raucaz, Savage South Solomons, p.209. Regarding 'fixing the limits', Fr J. Wall writes: 'Bishop Aubin says that he climbed the masts of the Joan of Arc with the natives to do this. Presumably, the same method was followed at Tarapaina'. 'Evidence submitted at Tarapaina land dispute hearing, 14-15 February 1955.'

Rule to retrieve what they regarded as their own, began claiming part of the station land. The agitation persisted and spread to the Tarapaina Catholics who by 1954 were threatening to join the Anglicans if the mission did not give way. The matter was finally settled in 1958 when a court decision awarded the land to the claimants.¹ However, the same land consciousness - fed also by the increasing pressure on coastal lands - has contributed to disputes which are presently brewing around other mission stations. The dangers of this situation are reinforced by the fact that the Marists are by no means exempt from the widespread suspicion that their interests, like those of other Europeans in the group, are contrary to those of the islanders. Thus, in 1962 after the first delivery of food received under an American aid program designed to augment the diet of school children, Bishop Daniel Stuyvenberg, who had succeeded Aubin in 1958, wrote:

On my arrival in Buma, the people made trouble. They said that now at long last the food-supplies from America had arrived but that after all this waiting the Mission had taken it, but that it really belonged to the people of Malaita.²

1

'Journal of Tarapaina', 14 November 1948, 29 July 1954, 29 June 1958. Land was also claimed at Buma and Wanoni Bay during Marching Rule: 'Journal of Buma', 19 July 1947; Parsonage to Moore, 9 February 1949, B.A.H.

2

Stuyvenberg, Circular letter, 19 June 1962, Rokera.

Should the islanders again assert their identity in an enthusiastic mass movement, the Marists may not be as favoured as they were during Marching Rule.

This possibility, together with the example of the Anglicans in founding the Church Association¹ and an awareness among the newer and younger missionaries of the relevance of Catholic social teaching (as stated in the encyclical Evangelii Praecones, 1951), prompted the Marists to accede to an appeal made by the Areare catechists in July 1953 to make a second attempt at improving social conditions.² In November the Malaita priests, meeting at Buma, decided to revive the C.W.S. The High Commissioner approved the new society which was a more ambitious conception than its predecessor. It aimed at creating a complex economic base: all the Catholics of Malaita were to be enrolled in producer and consumer cooperatives, which were to be set up in each station district and coordinated so as to obtain the benefits of bulk buying and marketing. In each village or group of villages a committee was to organize (outside the normal family economies) the cooperative production of livestock, garden produce and tobacco, and, in the long run, copra and cocoa. The consumer cooperatives were to consist of principal

1

Simler to Aubin, 8 February 1952, B.A.H.; 'Journal of Rokera', 20 November 1953; Nicolas Peterson, 'The Church Council of South Mala,' Oceania, vol.36 (1965-6), pp.214 ff.

2

'Journal of Tarapaina,' 19 July 1953; Geerts to Aubin, 28 July 1953, 3 December 1953, B.A.H.

stores at the various mission stations, each with a number of subsidiary stores scattered throughout the district. Profits from the operation were to be spent on health and education.¹

The history of the venture is less grand than the blueprint, although it started well enough. By the end of 1954 stores, each with a cooperative bakery, were founded at Rokera, Rohinari, Buma, Dala and Takwa. Business boomed. In July 1955 the missionaries optimistically agreed that the C.W.S. needed its own vessel for supplying the stores. But their ambition subsided as profits gave way to deficits - mainly on account of the inability of the indigenous storekeepers to refrain from giving credit. And with the demise, first of the village stores and then of the station ones, the basic revenue-producing stage of the venture failed and the whole scheme, inexpertly supervised and inadequately grounded in village life, collapsed. By 1966 only the Dala store survived. That at Takwa had become a purely mission concern in 1962, while the others did not survive the 1950s.²

Since this failure the Marists of the South Solomons have had few qualms about abandoning direct involvement in the task of economic development and

1

Resolutions passed at meeting of Malaita Fathers, 24 November 1953, Rohinari.

2

'Catholic Welfare Society, Takwa: Statutes', B.A.H.; 'Resolutions of Catholic Welfare Society Meeting', 4-8 July 1955, Rohinari; interviews with Bishop D. Stuyvenberg, and Frs K. Kamphuis, B. van de Walle, P. Geerts, and J. Snijders.

concentrating their energies on education. But then they have not had the incentive which rudely forced a much wider conception of the missionary role on their confrères of the northern vicariate.

THE immediate problems of post-war re-adjustment in the Australian Solomons were few. The last two years of the war were a time of increasing hardship for the indigenes, and the Torokina base never offered the rich opportunities for reward or for comradeship with Americans as did those on Guadalcanal or on Manus Island, in the Admiralty group, where a movement comparable to Marching Rule began in 1946.¹ Consequently, in the Australian Solomons the end of the conflict was an occasion of relief rather than of disappointment. Moreover, the replacement of American troops on Bougainville by Australians at the close of 1944 helped prepare the way for the smooth return to Australian administration.² But quiescence is not to be confused with docility. For instance, the situation on Buka, which was eventually to affect Marist policy throughout the vicariate remained far from settled.

1

For details of the movement on Manus see Theodore Schwartz, 'The Paliau Movement in the Admiralty Islands, 1946-1954', Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History, vol.xiix, part 2 (1962), passim.

2

Gavin Long, The Final Campaigns (Canberra, 1963), p.22.

Shortly after the war an indiscreet kiap (government official) raised in the Bukas false hopes of receiving vastly increased wages - 4/6 or even £1 per day was spoken-of.¹ The official fixing of plantation wages at 15/- per month, plus food and tobacco was, therefore, an embittering blow. By 1950 none of the Bukas were willing to work on local plantations. Yet their bitterness at presumed deceit was considerably sweetened and the post-war years turned into a time of relative affluence by the policy of the Australian authorities, unlike the British, in paying compensation for war injuries and for war damage to property.² Many of the Bukas attempted to invest their money, and the first years of the 1950s saw a remarkable growth of cooperative societies for the production and marketing of copra and even the emergence of native entrepreneurs. But enthusiasm unleavened by skilled management could neither ensure success, nor endure without it. By the middle of the decade economic frustration was again widespread on Buka.³

1

P. Montauban, 'Le Grand Rêve Buka depuis la Guerre', Missions des Iles, no.15 (1948), p.138.

2

Linden A. Mander, Some Dependent Peoples of the South Pacific (Leiden, 1954), pp.261-2; Allan, Customary Land Tenure, p.51.

3

I am grateful to Mr Max Rimoldi, Department of Anthropology and Sociology, A.N.U., for information regarding Buka commerce in the 1950s, as well as for other information relating to the Hahalis Welfare Society, on the study of which he is currently engaged.

Such was the situation in 1954 when John Tiosin, a seventeen-year-old youth, the son of Patrick Soles, a Catholic catechist of more than twenty years standing, was recalled from high school in Rabaul to assist in the financial management of one of the faltering concerns - that headed by Koruats, the tsunono or hereditary leader of Hahalis. During 1955 Tiosin also taught in the mission station school at Hanahan. But in 1956 he returned to his mother's village of Basbe, near Hahalis, in order to concentrate his attention on the task of social improvement. From Basbe, under Tiosin's leadership, there grew a new cooperative - the Hahalis Welfare Society. Its membership also included the villages of Hanahan and Ielelina although until 1960 its funds were spent exclusively on Basbe which was transformed into a model village, which earned the praise of officials and missionaries alike for its cleanliness, efficient working of copra and new chapel.

But in 1960, also, a further trait began to be observed among the members of the Welfare (as the society is generally known) - increased sexual licence. During 1960 the numbers attending confession at Hanahan decreased sharply while the number of unmarried pregnant girls rose. By Easter 1961 licence had become institutionalized in the so-called 'Baby Garden' located near Hahalis village. Here about two dozen girls, generally with the approval of their relatives, were (and are) available for the satisfaction of any

man who chose to avail himself of the service.¹ The rationale of the institution is many faceted and difficult to define. The institution itself strongly suggests a line of continuity between the Welfare and earlier cargo-cult thinking in the area - an assumption that the old way of life must be abandoned before the new can succeed; hence, for instance, the cessation of pot-making at Malasang in 1932. More explicitly, Hahalis had been the centre of cult outbreaks in 1938 and 1943 in which the key to the cargo had been associated with the rejection of restrictive sexual morality (and, on the latter occasion, as has been noted, with the planned offering of a human sacrifice). Indeed, Tahaha, one of the three cult leaders beheaded by the Japanese in 1943, was the mother of Tiosin's wife, Elizabeth.² But whatever ritual significance it may have the Baby Garden also has other functions. For some, the opportunities it offered for freer sexual experience were themselves an inducement to support the Welfare. But, at a more complex level of motivation, it is also an expression of changes within the traditional authority structure. As such it represents the reaction of the young men against the power of the older leaders, a reaction which has also led the Welfare to abolish bride-price. Consequently, the tsunono no longer have

1

J. Lamarre, 'Hahalis - Cargo Cult - Welfare', passim, mimeograph copy in present writer's possession.

2

See above, p.259.

the exclusive privilege of access to a number of women and their traditional right to control the marriage and sexual life of their subordinates has been abrogated. Indeed, the Baby Garden situation is commonly represented by its protagonists as a sort of trial marriage, enabling young people to contract relationships for which they themselves are personally responsible.¹ A further reason given by Welfare supporters in defence of the Baby Garden is that - equating numbers with strength - it is an attempt to 'fill up the land'. That is, to produce more people so as to replace the numbers lost during earlier decades of population decline.

But no reason could win mission approval for a venture which so clearly transgressed the Christian moral code. This issue occasioned the final break between the mission and the Welfare in July 1961. Early in the month, addressing a public meeting of Welfare members, the Hanahan missionary, Joseph Lamarre, denounced the Baby Garden as being against the laws of God, of the Church, of the Government and of their ancestors. But they were unmoved: 'Mipela i laikim dispela pasin'. Told that it was sinful, they replied: 'Maski, mipela i laikim peccato na mipela i laik go long hell'. From scorn for the ultimate penalty that the missionary could invoke to the formation of independent lotu was but a short step. In the second week of July Francis Hagai, Tiosin's second-in-command, and

1

Kiki, Kiki, pp.115-6.

also a former mission teacher, informed Lamarre that on the following Sunday, 16th, the Welfare, allegedly recognizing that its members were excluded from the established lotu through mortal sin, as defined by the missionaries, was starting its own lotu: 'we [will] pray to God in our own way, so that he may be sorry for us when we die'. About the same time the Welfare also withdrew its children from the mission school and its sick from the mission hospital.¹

Congregationalist in structure and with services consisting of hymn-singing and Bible-reading, sori lotu, as the Welfare sect is known, is believed to put its adherents more directly in contact with God (conceived of as a kind father) than worship led by a priest. It is, therefore, regarded as more likely to ensure success for the petition that God has compassion for his suppliants not only at death but in the midst of their temporal poverty. The suppliant attitude is clearly stated in Welfare hymns:

Lotu bilong ol Welfare Society
Ol i kalim sori long im.

Sunahan [God] you brought up our villages,
 now hear our prayer and send us all the
 things that we need.

And again:

Hahalis Lotu

Let us bow down,
 O God we are here,

¹

Lamarre, 'Hahalis - Cargo Cult - Welfare', p.6.

We are nothing,
 We are bowing down before you.
 You enlighten our mind,
 And our will,
 And our work,
 So that we will get
 Everything that is good on earth.¹

Such sentiments suggest a cargo-cult element in the Welfare. There is, however, little evidence to indicate that the liturgy of sori lotu is anything more than a form of petitioning. Nevertheless, it has assisted the Welfare to tap the residual religio-millenarian sentiments of the community, particularly of the older people, and to channel them into support for a program of secular efforts at amelioration. For the emphasis of Tiosun's and Hagai's operations is on practical economic measures. Since 1960, the coconut plantations of the Welfare villages have been extended, numerous villages (for the Welfare has spread) have been equipped with roofing iron and water tanks and several stores have been opened. Moreover, in June 1966 the Welfare was registered as a private company, and the same year Hagai attended a course in business management in Sydney.²

Yet, even if the instrumental, cargo-bringing function is played down, sori lotu still has much in common with the traditional religious system.

1

Copies of Welfare hymns collected by Fr Lamarre, Hanahan.

2

Francis Hagai, 'Explaining Hahalis', New Guinea, vol.1, no.6 (1966), pp.12-4.

Priestless and co-terminous with the Welfare, it again gathers the social and religious dimensions of indigenous life together under wholly indigenous auspices. In this it bears a marked similarity to Marching Rule where, also, although ecclesiastical autonomy was claimed, especially by the S.S.E.M., Christianity was not disavowed. Indeed, in each case Christianity furnished much of the ideology for the assertion of indigenous claims. However, the adepts of sori lotu (mostly Catholics) - cut off from the priest, the objective centre of their former religious system - have shown a greater propensity for theological innovation than did the adherents of Marching Rule. While still claiming to be Catholics and insisting that they are excluded from the Sacraments not by choice but by mission injunction, they stress the superior worth of sori lotu. Indeed, according to Tiosin, an independent lotu became necessary because the Marists withheld part of God's teaching. Cited in support of this charge is the fact that they did not provide the people with the Bible which, through an increasing knowledge of English, is becoming more accessible, but only with the catechism. This objection, a criticism of Marist policy in the terms of a wider Christianity, reinforces, and is reinforced by, the Welfare's basically social grievances. The deprivation is a convenient focus for distrust of missionaries who, since the 1930s, have been under censure for having failed to enrich their followers, and for having deceived them in order to keep them subordinate - and who, in so doing, have offended God. For in addition

to being flawed by mistranslation and by misunderstanding of Buka culture, the catechism is said to be wrongfully interposed between God and man. It is said to contravene the command 'my will be done on earth' (and not that of the missionary). For the moral precepts it prescribes are said to constitute a denial of the doctrine that whatever the good God created must itself be good - a principle which both dis-inhibits the ability of individuals to will and approves the objects of their willing, and so absolves the Welfare from any guilt on account of the Baby Garden.¹ As Hagai is reported to have said:

...I believe that man was born with desire.
If God made us like this, we should be
able to satisfy desire. If a man wants
a girl and the girl is willing, nothing
should stop him from taking his pleasure.
If there are children the Welfare Society
should be able to look after them.²

Beginning as the affair of several neighbouring villages and virtually ignored by the administration - which regarded it only as a mission problem - the Welfare became a Buka-wide movement of major political significance in 1962. In January of that year a mass meeting was held at Basbe, attended by visitors from even north and west coast villages, to advertise Welfare ideas. The audience was told - in total reversal

1

M. Rimoldi, 'Transcript of interview with John Tiosin', TS in Mr Rimoldi's possession.

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Quoted in Kiki, Kiki, p.115.

of the 'package-deal' concept that had conduced to conversion - that since the missions (both Catholic and Methodist) had done nothing for the people they should have their own lotu; and, similarly, that since the government had done nothing for them, they should refuse to pay the poll tax.¹ The advice was sympathetically received. A month later a police party 155-strong, attempting to arrest Tiosin and other tax defaulters, was met by a belligerent crowd of about 1,000 people and, after a bloody skirmish, was forced to retreat.² Subsequently 400 more police were rushed to Buka to arrest the rebels, 256 of whom were later sentenced to between three and six months gaol. As after earlier displays of force in reply to Buka assertiveness, the Welfarers temporarily came to heel. Tiosun paid the tax, through the missionary at Hanahan, within hours of the clash, while after the arrests his followers returned to religious services at the mission and again sent their children to school. However, the situation changed dramatically when in May, following a successful appeal, the rebels were released after serving two months of their sentences. They returned to Buka, triumphant: 'we fellow winnim government'.³ The prestige of the Welfare was

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Lamarre, 'Hahalis - Cargo Cult - Welfare', p.8.

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Clancy to Fahey, 20 February 1962, Hanahan; Sr Robert René to Lamarre, 22 February 1962, ibid.

3

Keith Willey, Assignment New Guinea (Brisbane, 1965), p.108; Fahey to Lemay, 28 February 1962, Hanahan; interview with Fr G. Fahey, who was stationed at Hanahan at this time.

instantly restored. Subordination to European direction, both civil and religious, was again renounced, and between August and Christmas 1962 the 700 Welfare members of the Hanahan district were joined by about 3,000 of their clansmen (including 300 Methodists) from the Lemanmanu district. By May 1963, 250 Catholics from Gogohe had also joined. Lemanmanu, formerly one of the most populous parishes of the vicariate, was left with only 400 Catholics, while Hanahan retained 1,500 and Gogohe 1,600. Gagan was unaffected.¹

Although economic frustration lay behind the Welfare's comprehensive rejection of European authority, the uneven pattern of distribution of Welfare membership does not primarily reflect varying degrees of dissatisfaction. Rather, it conforms to a traditional political grouping - that of the Nabuin (crow) moiety, one of the two totem clans between which most of the Bukas are divided. Most of the Nakarib (eaglehawk) moiety, in contrast, have retained their mission allegiances - in the adoption of which clan rivalry had also figured - and have also preferred to join the government-sponsored improvement agency, the local Government Council.² Had there been no such clan structure, the whole of Buka might well have joined the Welfare.

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Interviews with Frs B. Zumsande (Gogohe) and P. Demers (Lemanmanu).

2

Personal communication, Mr M. Rimoldi.

The Lemanmanu defection was, however, also bound up in a peculiar fashion with the Catholic mission. From mid-1959 to August 1962 Gerard La Pointe, an American priest, was in charge at Lemanmanu. A tall dark-haired man, he bore some resemblance to John Conley, the former Lemanmanu pastor, also an American, who was beheaded by the Japanese. Indeed, he was rumoured to be a re-incarnation of Conley. The resemblance was strengthened by the considerable amount of building he did at Lemanmanu, which also ensured that he inherited Conley's popularity - a condition largely inspired by the fact that deliveries of building materials to the station in the 1930s were welcomed as advance instalments of cargo from America.¹ Conley's church was always crowded. Similarly, when a new church with a capacity of 400 was completed in 1961, it was filled to overflowing twice each Sunday. Gratified by such attendances, yet unaware of the expectations that were evidently focussed on him, La Pointe further roused the hopes of his parishioners by discussing with them a scheme for buying a plantation and forming a cooperative. But these plans were dashed early in 1962 when Bishop Leo Lemay, who had succeeded Wade in 1960, refused a loan of £30,000 needed to finance the operation. Shortly afterwards six-sevenths of the hitherto most fervent Catholics of the vicariate turned to the Welfare.²

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For example, see Montauban to O'Reilly, 26 October 1933, Annales de Marie, no.76 (1934), p.187.

2

Interviews with Frs P. Demers, G. Lepping, and G. Lapointe.

Reactions against the mission have not been confined to Buka. Bougainville has seen several which, like the Buka cults of the 1930s, have emphasized a ritual solution to economic problems. In 1959, at the village of Pateaviavi, inland from Tearouki, the fruitlessness of a program of cemetery-centred devotions (led by the catechist) culminated in a plot to kill the local missionary, whose prayers were assumed to be obstructing the arrival of the cargo. The plot collapsed when the leaders were arrested.¹ A more serious outbreak, centred on Akopai village, began among the Keriaka people late in 1960. Again the missionaries were blamed for the cult's ineffectiveness, and in May 1961 the priest at Kuraio fled in fear of his life while the mission station was looted by angry villagers. Again the leaders were arrested, and the movement subsided.²

It is the distinction of the Buka incident, however, that it forced both government and missions to adopt more constructive measures in order to allay unrest. In 1963-4 the government removed the immediate occasion of economic frustration on Buka by building an all-weather, vehicle road - the first in the Bougainville district - around the east coast of the island from Buka Passage to the port of Kessa. As a

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Interview with Fr G. Fahey.

2

Allan and Hurd, Languages of the Bougainville District, p.31; interview with Fr W. Mentzer.

result copra could be marketed more easily and a cash income readily obtained - although the Welfare, more affluent but less belligerent than before, continues to flourish. The Marists' response to the problem has been to organize economic development projects in various station districts throughout the vicariate. Appropriately, this process began at Lemanmanu under Paul Demers, who succeeded La Pointe. With the remnant, Methodist as well as Catholic, who had not joined the Welfare, Demers formed a cooperative timber milling society in 1962. 100 members contributed a capital of £600 to the society while the Methodist mission and the Marist mission, joining in a gesture of expedient, though sincere ecumenism, contributed £100 and £300 respectively. The £1,000 thus gathered bought a portable Dolmar sawmill which the members, directed by an elected President, a Methodist, take turns in working, and which has enabled them to extract a valuable commodity from a hitherto wasted resource. The specific purpose of the project is to provide the members with the means of obtaining a European-style house. Time spent working on the saw is credited to a member's account at the rate of eight shillings per day, the daily wage of the area. Then, according to the balance in his account, he may obtain timber from the sawmill at a cost of £2 per 100 super feet while other necessary materials, bought by the cooperative with money obtained by selling timber to non-members (principally to the Administration) at the market price of £6.10 per 100 super feet, may be obtained at less than cost price. Built on concrete

piles, with timber or fibro-cement walls, with windows and a detached cook-house, with aluminium roofs to catch rain water and with concrete tanks in which to store it, the houses built by Demers' Haku Development Society have important advantages over native-style houses, beside that of prestige. For instance, they are more hygienic, and, of greatest value to people whose future will be increasingly bound-up with a cash economy, they are more solid. They do not occasion the unproductive drain on time and labour required by houses built of soft-wood and with sago-palm roofs, which need constant maintenance and which have a life expectancy of about five years. Between June 1964 and October 1966 thirty of the new dwellings were completed. A second saw bought in 1966 with the aid of an Oxfam grant of £1,000 was expected to hasten the completion of a further sixty houses.¹

Following Demers' example, the priests at the other stations on Buka organized similar timber-milling and house-building cooperatives. On Bougainville, however, where indigenous coconut plantations were relatively less extensive than on Buka and problems of communication greater, the emphasis of the projects has been on building the basis for a cash economy. These projects have, therefore, tended to be more ambitious, to be much more dependent on aid from international

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P. Demers, 'Application for Oxfam grant', 9 October 1965, TS copy in present writer's possession; interview with Fr P. Demers.

development agencies and to require a greater degree of missionary direction. The most notable are those in the backward and isolated west and south-west of the island. In 1966 Sovele and Moratona stations in the Nagovisi district each received a bulldozer from German agencies for road making - to enable the district to have regular vehicular links with the port of Jaba in the west and with the Buin-Siwai road in the east. By that time Moratona already had five sawmills (of American provenance) in operation, producing timber for houses while helping to clear land for proposed agricultural development and stock raising.¹ At Torokina, where few of the people's coconut trees had survived the war, the mission project took the form of a systematic replanting scheme which began late in 1964. Seed nuts were at first supplied gratis from other mission stations, but this source of supply was soon exhausted and in 1966 Oxfam granted \$7,000 for the purchase and transport of additional seedlings.²

On the north-west coast of Bougainville a development program was began at Kuraio in 1962 by William Mentzer, whose predecessor, Roland Dionne, after more than twenty years residence in the district

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'The Moratona Development Project', Torokina; F. Elixmann 'The Sovele Development Project', photocopy in present writers possession'; interview with Fr F. Elixmann (Sovele).

2

Grenier to National Catholic Welfare Conference, 12 August 1965, 3 May 1966, Torokina; interview with Fr C. Grenier (Torokina).

had been ejected by the cargo cultists. With a boldness inspired by the desperate mood of the Keriaka people Mentzer himself assumed a role akin to that of a cult prophet - assuring them that they would obtain wealth if they followed his instructions. As a result, between 1962 and 1966 1,400 people shifted from the mountains to new villages on the thinly populated coastal plain, where they planted 300,000 coconuts and 70,000 cocoa bushes. A similar scheme, financed, like the Kuraio one, by a \$5,000 grant from the Freedom from Hunger Campaign, was begun in the neighbouring Sipai district in 1963. Here, over 1,800 people (1,400 Catholics and 450 Methodists) were resettled on the plain. By the beginning of 1967 they had planted 250,000 coconuts and in that year began the planting of 500,000 cocoa bushes. Ancillary to the planting, each district has a sawmill producing timber for driers, fermentaries and storehouses, and a road of about twelve miles linking the plantations with the shipping point near the mission station. In each case the mission tractor is on call to haul the crop to the coast. There it is collected by a mission ship, although this service will be inadequate when the new plantings are productive. Joint copra production of the Kuraio and Sipai schemes, 740 tons in 1965, was expected to be 1,500 tons in 1967 and 3,460 tons in 1971.

Noting this growth rate with satisfaction, the Sohano District Development Committee (an official body) in 1966 expressed extreme concern lest marketing opportunities were not commensurately expanded. If not,

it warned, frustration could be immeasurably greater than ever before. The problem is, however, beyond the resources of the Marists, who regard it as one for the administration to solve. A solution will probably be provided by the increased shipping in Bougainville waters consequent on the development of a copper mining industry near Kieta. Of more immediate concern to the missionaries are the social consequences that could arise, for instance, at Sipai, where people with an annual per capita income of four dollars in 1963 could have an income of over seventy dollars per month in 1971. Yet, whatever problems affluence may bring, the projects, throughout the vicariate, will have contributed, in a way that sorcery, conversion, labouring and cargo cult have not, towards giving the islanders feasible access to the European standards of material well-being which they have long admired.¹

1

Sohano District Development Committee, minutes of first meetings, 11-12 January 1966, TS in possession of Bishop L. Lemay (Tsiroge); personal communication from Fr B. Brosnan (Sipai); interviews with Frs B. Brosnan and W. Mentzer and Mr P. Mollison (District Commissioner, Sohano). For a summary of Marist development projects in the North Solomons see Appendix O. For a survey which places the present social and economic development role of the Marists in a Territory-wide context see Micheline Dewdney, 'The Contribution of Voluntary Aid Organisations to the Development of New Guinea, 1966-67,' New Guinea Research Unit Bulletin (Canberra, 1969), no.26, passim.

A further aspect of the Marists' determination to identify the mission more closely with the interests of the islanders has been their outspoken defence of indigenous land rights against government encroachment. This issue has arisen in the 1960s owing to the resumption of large areas of native land on Bougainville for timber-milling and mining enterprises directed by Australian commercial interests. To the government, seeing development in the wider context of Papua-New Guinea, these enterprises were necessary for the building of a national economy, to sustain eventual self-government - but this consideration could not console the owners for the loss of their land, which to them is a cultural as well as an economic resource. Their indignation was, moreover, increased by the reluctance of the government to pay them a royalty from the profits to be made by the operations.¹ On this issue the missionaries came to their aid. In 1965, the Marists severely criticized the terms of a timber lease granted at Tonolei Harbour in southern Bougainville. But the administration stood firm.² In 1967, however, Marist protests were influential in

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T.P.N.G. Administration, 'Current Events', bulletin no.1, 30 September 1966; with attachments a) 'Mining Ordinance Commentary' and b) 'Statement by the Assistant Administrator (Services) on the A.B.C. Report of a Meeting of Roman Catholic Priests in Bougainville', mimeograph copies in present writer's possession.

2

Mirror, 4, 5, 10, 11 February 1965, 25 March 1965; The Australian, 11 February 1965.

bringing the government to concede royalties to villagers whose lands were required for the vastly more important copper-mining project at Panguna near Kieta.¹

It would be unfair to suggest that moral considerations - the obligations of the virtues of justice and of charity - have had no part in bringing the Marists resolutely to promote the material interests of the islanders. Bishop Lemay was, however, somewhat overstating his case when he told the Administrator of Papua-New Guinea in regard to the mission's stand in the mining dispute: 'If there is a conflict with the Administration it can only be because the Administration is not being fair to the people'.² For protection of native rights is also closely bound up with the securing of mission interests. Indeed, others of the Marists, adopting a sort of political fundamentalism, were inclined to stress the practical need to retain the good-will of the islanders: 'The Australian administration is planning to leave the territory, but we wish to stay; obviously, therefore, if forced to choose, we should identify ourselves with the people rather than with the government'. A certain ambivalence also surrounds the development projects.

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Minutes of Marist Fathers' meeting, 20 September 1966, and press release, 23 September 1966, mimeograph copies in present writer's possession; Catholic News, September 1966, The Age, 26 November 1966, 7 February 1967.

2

Lemay to Cleland, 16 August 1966, copy in possession of Bishop Lemay.

The priests directing the projects acknowledge a moral duty to help the people obtain a comfortable supply of temporal goods. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that this duty did not become an inducement to action until after the Marists had suffered a reverse that demonstrated the precariousness of their hold on their following and made them fear for the future of their work in the vicariate. The projects were undertaken as insurance policies. They reflect the hope that people whose economic aspirations were being satisfied under mission aegis would be disinclined to reject a religious attachment that, ironically, and to a large extent, had its origin in those same aspirations.

But such economic measures are not a complete solution to the problem of firmly establishing Catholicism in the Solomons. They do not directly advance the religious knowledge of their beneficiaries, nor do they make the functioning of Catholicism less dependent on the services of expatriate missionaries. Ultimately, therefore, they are a means of buying time in which the missionaries must train indigenous successors, must achieve the transition from mission to church, if the work of evangelization is to be consummated and secured. For with the rising tide of Melanesian-consciousness in the Solomon Islands - as seen, for instance, in the land disputes on Malaita and Bougainville, in the mystique attached to the

preservation of 'custom' on Malaita and Guadalcanal,¹ in the Buka 'revolt', and as fostered by the advance towards political independence - an institution that does not outgrow the colonial mould in which it was built will be in grave danger of being swept away.

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See, for example, William Davenport and Gülbün Çoker 'The Moro Movement of Guadalcanal, British Solomon Islands Protectorate,' The Journal of the Polynesian Society, vol.76 (1967), pp.123-75.

CHAPTER VIIIEDUCATION, 1945-66: THE LINKING OF CHURCH AND STATE

IN the decades prior to 1942 Catholic mission education in the Solomon Islands was emphatically an adjunct to evangelism. This has become less true in the post-war years in which all missions, Catholic and Protestant alike, have become increasingly preoccupied with imparting secular academic instruction. By 1966 most of the Marists and their recent allies, the Dominicans, to speak only of the Catholic missionaries, were spending the greater part of their time in the class-room.¹ Many of them held recognized teaching qualifications, and their services earned substantial government subsidies; they followed government curricula and the usual medium of instruction was English; moreover, they were assisted by numerous lay volunteers from overseas and by qualified indigenous teachers, graduates of recognized training establishments, both government and mission. Highlighting the development of the Marists' concern for education is the fact that in 1967 they opened a high school with a fully graduate staff of Aruligo near Honiara. It was the second school in the B.S.I.P. to offer a full secondary course. The first was the government high school, which developed out of the

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For the Dominican entry into the Solomons see below pp.385-6.

government primary school at Auki between 1958 and 1962, and which was transferred to Kukum, near Honiara, in 1966.¹ But striking as it is in itself the recent development of mission education finds its fullest significance in a wider context, which also offers further sharp contrasts between the pre-war and post-war operations of the mission. Concomitant with educational development have been notable changes in the Marists' relations with government and with the Protestant missions. In the first case a virtually negative relationship has given way to close, if qualified, partnership for common ends. And in relation to the Protestants, a spirit of antagonism has largely given way to respect and sympathy which owes much not only to the world-wide growth of Christian ecumenism but also to the recognition that the interests of all missions were alike threatened by the growth of government educational pretensions.

The development of government interests in education, which precipitated the improvement in mission education, represents a new departure rather than the working out of tendencies already operative in the Solomon Islands situation before the war. In so far as the pre-war governments of the Solomons had education policies these were of the vaguest kind. The policy stated for the Mandated Territory in 1922 was to train natives for their 'general betterment' and to train 'a certain

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B.S.I.P., Report of the Department of Education for the three years ending 31st December 1963, p.13.

number' as artisans and clerks.¹ Faced with the refusal of the missions to cooperate and with the positive opposition of the planter community, fearful lest education made the 'kanakas' forgetful of their place, the administration did not find these objectives sufficiently compelling as to pursue them with any vigour. Indeed, a member of the League of Nations' Permanent Mandates Commission remarked of New Guinea in 1939 that 'she knew of no territory under mandate in which education progressed so slowly'.²

In the B.S.I.P., influenced by the advance of education in other parts of the British colonial empire, the official impulse to educate was somewhat stronger than in the Australian territory, although the purpose remained ill-defined.³ Thus, in 1940, W.C. Groves, the educationist, wrote in his report on the protectorate:

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Territory of New Guinea, Annual Report, 1921-22, p.89.

2

Mair, Australia in New Guinea, p.173. For a valuable account of the history of government education policy in Papua and New Guinea, see H.K. Colebatch, 'Educational Policy and Political Development in Australian New Guinea', in R.J.W. Sellick (ed.) Melbourne Studies in Education, 1967 (Melbourne 1968), pp.102ff.

3

For discussion of the B.S.I.P. administration's interest in education in the 1930s, see above pp.252ff. Government efforts to improve education in Kenya, however, had begun in the early 1920s. See Roland Oliver, The Missionary Factor in East Africa (London, 1952), pp.263ff.

Where education will lead these people to in the long run it is impossible to know.... [However], we know there is an educational job to do. Our educational philosophy and our belief in the evolutionary improvability of human social life demand that the challenge be accepted and the task grappled with.¹

Despite the emphasis on 'evolutionary improvability' this view reflected a relatively static conception of the Solomon Islands situation. Education was concerned less with taking the islanders towards some new and remote goal than with helping them to get the best out of their present situation.

Groves' ideas represented the furthest point educational thinking reached in the Solomon Islands prior to the Second World War. The thinking of the post-war period has been significantly different. It has been dominated by the recognition of a political rather than a social objective for education and by international pressure for greater educational and political development in the group. For this situation the war itself was largely responsible. While weakening the capacity of Britain and France to maintain empires, it confirmed the position as world leaders of the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A., the ideological anti-colonialism of whom was enforced by the United Nations Organisation, which solemnly enjoined its members to 'respect the

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Groves, 'Education in the B.S.I.P.', Part 1, sect.4, pp.3-4.

right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live'. This injunction, contained in the U.N. charter, implied the further obligation of actively helping the subject peoples to acquire the educational prerequisites for self-government.

Since ex-German New Guinea was more open to direct pressure from the U.N. than was the B.S.I.P., which Britain held on her own account, the Australian part of the Solomons was, not surprisingly, affected by a more ambitious education policy than the British islands. However, apart from the difference in constitutional status between the two colonial administrations, there was also a sharp difference of educational policy between them. Thus, the ruling notion of the Australian administration was that of 'uniform development': education was to be diffused throughout the indigenous community and the whole population was to be enabled to share the benefits of the emerging social and political order. It was a policy which accorded well with the prime objective of mission schooling, that of achieving as wide a spread of contact as possible. On the other hand, it contrasts with the policy that came to be followed in the B.S.I.P. which, in accordance with standard British colonial practice, inclined to the training of an élite rather than to the development of universal education, to the education of leaders rather than of an electorate, and so preferred to concentrate educational resources. Leaving primary schooling to the missions, the British administration would assist it to the extent that it could produce

the few recruits needed for secondary training under government auspices.

But regardless of these differences positive educational progress under each administration was at first slow, both on account of the problems of reconstruction and the lingering assumption that there was still abundant time in hand. 'Native policy' had a predominantly social welfare bias. This showed itself in an overwhelming concern for public health rather than for education. Government spending on health far exceeded that on education;¹ and in 1946 and 1947, when government aid to mission schools was insignificant in the Australian Solomons and non-existent in the B.S.I.P., fully government-financed leprosaria staffed by Marist nuns were set up at Tetere, near Honiara, and at Piva, near Torokina, respectively. Even so, the governments in both parts of the group, recognizing the obligations imposed by the changed political situation, had assumed formal responsibility for education almost immediately after the war, and what was of particular concern to the missions, brought Church and State into unprecedentedly intimate contact. Governments lacking the resources and/or the will to build complete education systems of their own found it both necessary and advantageous to obtain the assistance of the missions which, in addition to

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Colebatch, 'Education and Politics in New Guinea', B.S.I.P., Annual Report, 1946-47, et. seq.

possessing schools and staff, already commanded a clientele with an established habit of school-going.

Before the war, except for the fact that the presence of the government helped ensure suitable conditions for evangelization, government and mission generally were functionally independent of each other. Indeed, the Marists, conscious of the anti-clericalism that frequently afflicted Catholic missions in French-ruled territories, tended to count themselves fortunate that the governments of the Solomons took so little interest in their affairs, and were usually careful not to antagonize officialdom.¹ There were sporadic protests, as when British and Australian officials (in contrast to the Germans), heeding indigenous custom rather than church law, permitted divorce or polygamy for Catholics,² and when the Australian administration in 1936 sold to the Methodist mission part of the land on the Buin coast

1

Boch to his mother, June 1908, O.R. The same point is made strongly in Edward Jacomb, The Future of the Kanaka (London, 1919), p.178.

2

Boch to Raffin, 11 February 1921, A.P.M. OSS 418. Concerning the Germans, Boch was 'grateful for [their] policy regarding our Christians, who were judged, when necessary, no more according to pagan customs but according to the Christian law freely embraced by them (polygamy, for example)' : Boch to O'Reilly, 20 December 1934, O.R. It seems, however, that such cases were few. Boch suggests that polygamy (and hence government permissiveness) became more of a problem to the Marists as the commercial development of Bougainville in the Australian era brought more islanders money with which to buy more wives : Boch to W.R. McNicoll (Administrator of New Guinea), 26 February 1935, O.R.

which it purchased from the Marists in 1925;¹ but none of these issues produced any significant conflict. Indeed, the comment of a Colonial Office official who visited the B.S.I.P. in 1912 was applicable in both vicariates and lost little of its force in the decades after it was made:

The French Mission appears to be viewed with most favour by the local white community. It has confined itself strictly to missionary and educational work and has not interfered with 'political' or outside matters.²

Nevertheless, there was ample precedent, as has been seen, to indicate that with government including education in its proper field of activity the Marists would cease to be so conspicuously apolitical.

Even so, like the other missions, they were, in the post-war years, prepared to cooperate extensively with the government. For while determined not to surrender their religion-based educational role, they were aware that the new policy of indigenous development would not be reversed and that they must come to terms with it; for, to adapt advice written for Catholic missionaries in Africa, 'who owned the schools would own the Solomons'. Catholic efforts in training potential leaders was partly seen as an investment to ensure the security of Catholicism in the group when

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Holmes to Boch, 8 February 1936, A.P.M. OSS 800; Boch to Holmes, 23 February 1936, *ibid.*

²

Vernon to C.O., 24 December 1912, C.O. 225/113.

European overlordship was taken away. To aim at no more than turning 'agrarian animists into a Catholic peasantry' would be to weaken Catholic representation among the decision-makers of the future and, in the short term, to alienate Catholics who looked to education as the way to advancement.¹ In this last regard post-war Marist education compares with efforts to ensure the economic well-being of the Catholic community. Finally, religious and political incentives to educate coincided in the realization that the improved education standards would facilitate the growth of a native clergy - which would be both the fulfilment of the work of the European missionaries and the most reliable insurance for the future of Catholicism. Indeed, as early as January 1946, Bishop Aubin sent twenty Solomon Islands youths to Fiji to continue their studies with the Marist Brothers at Cawaci.² Three, who did not complete their course, were candidates for the priesthood but several of the others became Native Medical Practitioners. Nevertheless, in the Solomons themselves, the Marists did not take the lead in educational development and, without government subsidies, were in no position to do so. Improvement in mission education has, therefore,

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Oliver, The Missionary Factor, p.276. Interviews with Bishops D. Stuyvenberg and L. Lemay.

2

V.A. South Solomons 'Rapport au Propagande, 1946', B.A.H.

largely occurred as a series of responses to government initiatives.¹

THE post-war educational development of the Australian Solomons may conveniently be taken as beginning in October 1946 at a conference convened in Port Moresby between representatives of the government, on the one hand, and of the various missions working in the Territory of Papua and New Guinea, on the other. The missions welcomed the government's proposal to pay them a grant-in-aid subsidy for their schools; but they were disturbed over the plan of W.C. Groves, newly appointed Director of Education for the territory, for fitting mission schools into a four-level school structure - village, primary (or station), district, and secondary (or teacher training) - of which secondary was to be a government monopoly.

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The outstanding exception to this pattern has been the founding of the Catholic high school at Aruligo in 1967. Founded with a minimum of government encouragement and unsubsidized - for such an establishment was officially deemed unnecessary - the school was a deliberate effort both to ensure a high proportion of Catholics among the better educated Solomon Islanders and to avoid disappointing able graduates from Catholic primary schools who were unable to secure places in the government high school. It was also hoped that the school would produce better educated candidates for the priesthood. Interviews with Bishop D. Stuyvenberg and Major G.F. Bovey (Chief Education Officer, B.S.I.P.).

However, in the face of strong protests led by Bishop Wade and the Anglican representative at the conference, both of whom were anxious to preserve the potential integrity of their school systems, Groves conceded the missions' right also to operate secondary schools.¹

By Bishop Aubin, apprehensive of the extent of government interest in education in the B.S.I.P., the concession was enviously hailed as a great victory.² In fact, it was of little moment. The principle of the Church's unlimited right to educate had been successfully defended - but the Marists were far from founding secondary schools, and when they did so it was to be not in spite of, but at the instigation of, the government. For almost a decade after the war Marist schooling in the North Solomons proceeded at a leisurely pace. In accordance with the government's hope of achieving universal literacy in English - considered a prerequisite for the uniform political advancement of the whole indigenous population - a smattering of English was taught in all station schools. But very few pupils reached standard six, the end of primary schooling according to the nine class curriculum issued by the government in 1950, and the attainments of those who did so were low. Village schooling remained

¹

Missions des Iles, no.5, (April-May 1947), pp.103-4.

²

Aubin to Parsonage, 14 January 1947, Wanoni Bay.

haphazard and was served, as before the war, not by trained, regularly-paid teachers but by catechists. The 'district' school which the Marist Brothers reopened at Kieta in 1949 had, like the pre-war schools at Burunotui and Chabai, its raison d'être in catechist training. Instruction for the annual intake of about thirty boys was, however, geared to the government curriculum for classes five to nine.

The systematic mobilization of mission educational resources by the government began with the demand of a United Nations visiting mission in 1953 that the Australian government pay 'particular attention to the creation of a large and competent corps of elementary school teachers' so as seriously to combat illiteracy. The same year the government had instituted a teacher-training course for students who had completed two years of post-primary schooling (which at that time was given only in certain government schools). Even so, the figures for post-primary pupils and teacher-trainees together totalled only ninety for the whole of the Trust Territory at that time. Consequently, emergency teacher training courses, drawing on a wider range of students, were instituted in 1954. The government decided to subsidize the missions for training primary school graduates as village teachers.¹

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T.P.N.G. Department of Education, Circular Memorandum No.10 of 1954, M.E.O. Papers, Tsiroge; Colebatch, 'Education and Politics in New Guinea', p.124.

Thus, in addition to the existing two-year training course (course C), two new courses, each of one year's duration, were established - course A, for pupils who had completed class six, and course B for those who had completed class eight.¹

The Marists greeted the scheme warmly, for two reasons: first, because it provided a useful form of professional employment for pupils who had completed their education; and, second, because they feared that inefficient village schooling by the mission represented an invitation to the government to set up village schools of its own. Government intervention at the village level, argued the Marists, militated against the continued identification of 'school' and 'mission'. Their fear on this account was given point by their observations of a marked tendency for mission and government to be regarded as opposing principles, loyalty to one being strained by service to the other. For instance, they claim to have observed among government employees such as police and clerks and their families significantly poor attendances at religious services and, more recently, a preference for sending their children, when possible, to government schools; the children, subsequently, have tended to describe themselves as 'belong government' rather than 'belong mission'.² Also feared by the Marists was the

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T.P.N.G. Department of Education, Circular Memorandum No.16 of 1954, M.E.O. Papers, Tsiroge.

2

Interviews with Bishop L. Lemay and Frs T. L'Estrange (Mission Education Officer, 1955-60), A. Lebel and P. Mallinson (M.E.O. since 1966).

possibility that the growth of government primary schools, from which pupils would be drawn by government secondary schools, would reduce the proportion of the future leaders that had been intensively exposed to Catholic influence. As it was, the inadequacy of village school education was partly compensated for by conducting classes one and two (the village school classes) at the station schools. But this was merely a palliative which, while doing nothing to improve village school standards, severely strained station resources. Accordingly, in 1956 the Mission Education Officer (M.E.O.) issued the following warning:

Our present system is not in the interests of the Mission. Our foundations are not solid. The present policy of overloading our Mission Station schools with Village School pupils, with our present inadequate staffing facilities is leaving the door wide open for the Government to set up Village Schools. Within certain Mission Station areas there are noticeable gaps inviting Government attention. If we do not fill these gaps (remember, when education becomes compulsory no child will be obliged to travel more than three miles to a school) the Government will. Until now we have enjoyed an open go, but the day is getting closer when we will no longer have this field of Village School Education to ourselves.¹

Consequently, as trained mission teachers became available they were appointed to areas where it was

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M.E.O., Circular no. 8, 10 November 1956, M.E.O. Papers, Tsiroge.

suspected that government schools were likely to be set up.¹

Teacher training in the vicariate was begun in 1954 by the Marist Brothers at a second school which they had opened at Tarlena in north Bougainville in 1953. At first only the A course was taught although in 1956 the B course also was offered to pupils, most of whom had finished their schooling a year or two before. But it was not until 1961, after substantial increases in the subsidies paid for trained indigenous teachers, that candidates were regularly accepted for the B course. The same year, in further response to the new subsidy incentive, the Brothers extended their teaching at Kieta to the secondary level, so that in 1963 the first trainee started on the C course there.² Meanwhile, in complement to the Brothers' work, a teacher training school for girls also had been started at Asitavi by the S.M.S.M. in 1957. By the end of 1966 a total of 455 students (142 of them female) had been trained as teachers by the Marist mission. The growth of this work is indicated in the following table which shows

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Interviewed at Kieta in 1966, Mr R. Dennehy, Assistant District Commissioner, recalled that in 1961 he had intended to start six new government primary schools in the vicinity of Kieta. He advised the Marists of his plan but dropped it shortly afterwards, when newly qualified mission teachers were appointed to the villages he had mentioned.

2

L'Estrange to Groves, 9 August 1956, M.E.O. Papers, Tsiroge; Colebatch, 'Education and Politics in New Guinea', pp.126-9. The Marist Brothers operated their school at Tarlena from 1953 to 1961, but teacher-training was transferred from Tarlena to Kieta in 1958.

the number of pupils annually completing each course (or year of the course):¹

TABLE II

Teachers trained in the Vicariate Apostolic
of the North Solomons

YEAR	<u>A</u>		<u>B</u>		<u>C</u>	
	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>		<u>Male</u>	
1954	23					
1955	10					
1956	30			29		
1957	31	26				
1958	22	0				
1959	24	18				
1960	27	19				
1961	12	0		8		
1962	16	17	(1st year)	(2nd year)	(1st year)	(2nd year)
1963	22	15	10		1	
1964	4	9		10	5	1
1965	19	22	2		4	5
1966	12	16	6*	4	5	4
TOTALS	252	142		51		10

* includes three females at Asitavi

¹

The table is based on figures obtained from the principal of each school in 1966.

A further device for harnessing the missionaries to the government's education program was the S-grade teachers' certificate. This was awarded in 1957, 1958 and 1960, on the passing of a qualifying examination, to Europeans with three years' teaching experience in mission schools. Most of the priests and nuns in the North Solomons, judging their liability to government inspection a small price to pay in order to earn the subsidies they could obtain as qualified teachers, procured the certificate.¹ Similarly, and in even sharper contrast to the independence formerly cherished by the Marists, since 1960, when the S-certificate examination was discontinued, new missionaries have usually attended a six months training course in Rabaul in order to qualify as E-grade teachers.

In the B.S.I.P. where the administration, aiming at the creation of a unified education system rather than at co-ordinating several different ones, was less inclined to concede the essential independence of mission schools than were the Australian authorities, the cooperation of government and missions in the matter of education was initially more difficult to achieve than in the Australian Solomons. Thus, the administration's first straw in the wind - a draft Education Regulation circulated in 1946 and which

1

Caldwell to Roscoe, 20 August 1957, M.E.O. Papers, Tsiroge; T.P.N.G. Department of Education, Circular Memorandum, no.117 of 1956, no.13 of 1957, no.45 of 1958, no.38 of 1960, *ibid.*

claimed for the government the right to control all education in the protectorate - was very quickly blown off course. According to a Marist source:

It was not seriously discussed except that the Government was told semi-officially that we did not like it.¹

However, the assertion of government interest in education resumed after the arrival in the protectorate in June 1947 of a Director of Education, Mr C.A. Colman-Porter. A joint conference of all parties concerned with education was called for 19-20 November of that year. The Marists were extremely uneasy ~~of~~ *about* what it portended. Thus, an agenda circulated six weeks before the meeting drew from them a stinging, detailed and relentlessly suspicious six-page reply of a type that was to be often repeated before mission and government interests were eventually reconciled - seven years later. Nothing was taken for granted. The agenda had announced that 'The Director will address the conference on the proposed educational development scheme'. But to the Marists it was 'a grave injustice' that anything as concrete as a 'proposed educational development scheme' should even have been formulated at such an early date. They feared that the conference was going to be presented with a virtual fait accompli, in violation of a promise allegedly

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J.M. Wall, 'Report on the Negotiations between the Mission and the Government in the Matter of Education', [1954], p.1, M.E.O. Papers, Honiara.

twice made (in 1946 and early in 1947) to Bishop Aubin by Sir Alexander Grantham, then Western Pacific High Commissioner, that before the government took any decisive steps in regard to education 'every reasonable opportunity for discussion would be afforded to the Missions'.

Again, the conference was scheduled to 'draft points to be incorporated in an education ordinance'. This proposal, too, was considered to be 'unjust'. For to have to draft an ordinance in an afternoon, as the Marists construed the situation, could be to stampede the missions into a position that might later be found to be untenable. Another point challenged was the fact that voting rights at the conference were explicitly conferred on 'persons holding a recognized diploma in education', but not on missionaries who, though professionally unqualified, had been teaching in the Solomons 'for ten or twenty years'. Marist suspicions were magnified by the further fact that voting rights were, however, allowed to 'members of the Director's staff', ex officio, even though they had neither residential qualifications nor 'recognised diplomas'. Although at that time the director had only a staff of one, it was feared that 'Anyone may be temporarily employed on the Director's staff for the duration of the conference and, by that fact, qualify for admission to the conference with the right to vote on any issue raised.'¹ Willingness to attribute bad intentions could

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Moore to O.C. Noel (Resident Commissioner B.S.I.P.), 22 October 1947, *ibid.*

hardly have been taken further, yet in the circumstances the Marists' objections cannot be dismissed simply as carping. The agenda, high-flown and little calculated to allay the fears of those with a vested interest in education was, after all, an official document and the readiness of the government to compromise was still an unknown quantity. However, the government's reply to the protest reassured the Marists that no final or binding decisions would be taken at the conference and that the missions might send as many representatives as they wished.¹

When the conference eventually met, the Director of Education faced a wary audience of members of the five missionary bodies working in the protectorate. It was the first time that all missions had gathered for any common purpose (indeed, the first admission that they had one). The core of the proposed Educational Development Scheme was a plan for setting up a multi-course college to produce practitioners of the various skills required in the Protectorate - teaching, engineering, fitting, agriculture, commerce, medicine and so on. Students were to be housed, according to religious denomination, in a series of 'constituent colleges', each with a minister of the particular denomination as 'dean'. The college would be established with government funds, and maintained by fees and an education tax. Other proposals were that schools would

1

Trench to Moore, 10 November 1947, *ibid.*

remain 'primarily a mission function' and that the members of the conference should constitute themselves into the General Education Assembly. This institution would meet annually to decide policy and would have an executive organ, the Central Education Council, which would include one nominee from each educational body and would meet quarterly.¹

The unanimous reaction of the missions to these proposals was one of guarded approval. They agreed 'to full co-operation with each other and with the Government' for the purpose of raising educational standards, and accepted the idea of the Central Training College. And they approved the General Education Assembly, but under the name of 'Advisory Council for Education'. However, they rejected the exercise of any control over their particular activities by Central Education Council, and they insisted that when an Education ordinance was drafted it be submitted for consideration to the Advisory Council.²

However, neither Colman-Porter's grandiose scheme, nor his willingness to accept the compromise suggested by the missions, were well received by his superiors in the Western Pacific High Commission.

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C.A. Colman-Porter, 'Address at the Education Conference, 19 November 1947', *ibid*.

2

'Minutes of the Education Conference, 19 November 1947', *ibid*; D.J. Moore, 'Points Agreed upon at the Education Conference, 19-21 November 1947', *ibid*.

Consequently, the Director of Education resigned his position in April 1948, while the draft which, the following August, was submitted to the missions (individually and not in conference) took little account of the agreements reached at the conference in November 1947. Based on the Fijian Order in Council, 1897, it placed every detail concerning education in the protectorate under the direct control of the Resident Commissioner and set stringent standards for the quality of school amenities. An Advisory Board was to be set up but its membership was to be entirely at the discretion of the Resident Commissioner; no school was to be established without being formally registered, but this, too, was at the discretion of the Resident Commissioner, who would consider such factors as the assured continuity of the school, access, drainage, light, ventilation, seating accommodation and the willingness of the school management to accept any pupil who wished to attend - regardless of denomination. It was also the prerogative of the Resident Commissioner to regulate the operation of all schools in such matters as curricula, text-books, qualifications of teachers, teacher-student ratios and holidays - regardless of whether or not the schools were in receipt of the grant-in-aid, which it was at his discretion to make. Fines of £50 and three months gaol were prescribed for breach of the regulations, and education was to be compulsory. Parents who failed to send their children to school were to be fined £2 a week - and that at a time when labourers might receive £2 a month.¹

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'King's Regulation Relating to Education, 1948' (draft), *ibid.*

The draft regulation - which one critic described as 'the most ghastly bungling I have ever seen' - roused the missions to concerted and vigorous protest.¹ To the Melanesian Mission it was 'wholly at variance' with the 'essential principle' that missions might freely establish their own schools. Moreover, as mission schools were intended to teach children of a particular persuasion it was 'to destroy [their] raison d'être' to make entry into them of children from other missions a condition of registration'.² The Methodist Synod was similarly refractory, declaring that:

...[it] pledges itself to assist to the full extent of its capacity any ordinance which provides reasonable representation and authority for those enjoyed in educational work, but it must respectfully refuse to hand over what authority it now possesses, unless it is given the assurance of full collaboration and reasonable assistance from a sympathetic, not a dictatorial Administration.³

1

Quoted in Mander, Some Dependent Peoples, p.346.

2

'Views of the Melanesian Mission on the Draft Education Regulation, 1948', encl. Hoey to Moore, 2 September 1948, M.E.O. Papers, Honiara.

3

'Resolution on the proposed King's Regulation relating to Education in the B.S.I.P. by the Solomon Islands Methodist District Synod, 29 November 1948', encl. Metcalfe to Aubin, 2 December 1948, *ibid*.

Marist criticisms were cast in the form of a detailed commentary on each section of the draft regulation and, like those of the other missions, they focussed on the assumption of complete authority by the government. A distinctive feature of the Marist criticisms was the extent to which they were couched in terms reminiscent of the 'state aid for private schools' controversy, with which the author of the commentary, D.J. Moore, as a New Zealander, was amply familiar. Thus, the draft was also denounced for providing that while the government would fully support all schools it might found on its own behalf, it would only partially support mission schools. Moore argued that:

All parents whose children attend the same grade of school have a strict right in justice to equal financial assistance for the education of their children irrespective of whether the school is a Government school or not.

Public money, the argument continued, ought to be available equally to all sections of the public. Moreover, in patronizing mission schools, on most of which a considerable amount of money would have to be spent even to bring them up to the standard required to qualify for a grant-in-aid, it was said that Catholic parents were being penalized for following their consciences and that their natural right freely to determine the education of their children was being infringed.¹

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'Views of the Catholic Mission on the B.S.I.P. Draft Education Regulation (1948)', *ibid.*

Whatever moral force it might have had in his own community Moore's argument was singularly inappropriate when invoked in the Solomon Islands. Here, in a colonial situation, where there was no suggestion of representative government and where the money to be dispensed by the rulers had not been contributed by the ruled, it is difficult to see by what prior right any section of the community might presume to curtail the government's liberty to dispose freely of its funds. Government money was not public money in a proprietorial sense. It is, however, doubtful if the government would have been susceptible even to more logical criticism of its plans. For while it withdrew the draft of 1948, this was only a prelude to its taking a firmer line with the missions, who were apparently regarded as obstructionists.¹

In March 1949 Howard Hayden, Director of Education in Fiji, visited the Solomons in the capacity of Education Adviser to the High Commission for the Western Pacific. His declared purpose was to secure mission cooperation with future government education policies. According to the official minutes of a conference between Hayden and representatives of the

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Unfortunately, unpublished records relating to post-war educational development in the B.S.I.P. were not available from official sources. But this lack is to some extent overcome by the fact that the Marist sources (on which the re-construction attempted in this chapter is largely based) contain not only detailed and apparently objective reports of relevant events and discussions, but also contain an extensive body of correspondence and other documents of government provenance.

various missions, agreement was reached on a wide range of topics. These included a new condition of eligibility for grant-in-aid (that a mission undertake to supply a certain number of students to the newly-founded teacher training college at Nasinu, Fiji), and recognition of the government's right to prohibit the establishment of a school in any area where it thought existing education facilities were adequate.¹

However, the unanimity of the meeting, as purported in the minutes, is belied by the fact that Hayden's recommendations, which were not voted on, involved no concessions to the missions, which had so vehemently opposed the 1948 proposals. According to Moore, admittedly a partisan observer, the discussion really amounted to Hayden's statement of recommendations he would make to the High Commissioner as the basis of a new education regulation. Moore informed Archbishop Myers, who was still the Catholic representative on the Colonial Office Advisory Council on Education, that Hayden had prefaced his remarks on education in the Solomons by saying that the Government had been 'dilly dallying' with the question and that as it had 'hung in the balance for so long, the Missions would not be allowed any further opportunity to express their views on any proposed regulation'. Writing within three weeks of the event, to a confrère in Fiji Moore also alleged that:

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'Minutes of the Education Conference in the Draft Regulation for the B.S.I.P. 19-21 March 1949', M.E.O. Papers, Honiara.

When I pursued my point [i.e. questioning the right of the government to forbid the establishment of a mission school] by stressing the natural right of parents to have their children educated according to their consciences [Hayden] became quite heated and dismissed my case with the words 'you must not insist'.¹

Also objected to was the Nasinu scheme which the Marists in Fiji - loathe to entrust their students to a secular educational institution - had already refused to have anything to do with. Besides, argued Moore, since Nasinu could take only two Solomon Islands Marist candidates each year, the benefits resulting from their training would be insufficient to make an appreciable impact on education in the Solomons. It was, therefore, not worthwhile for the Marists to submit their school system to government control for such a small return. In any case, Moore continued, the standard of school accommodation required in order to qualify for a grant-in-aid, was higher than the Marists could afford to provide - the Nasinu condition was, therefore, impracticable. Significantly, it was not included in the new draft regulation which was issued in December 1949.

But that was the government's only concession to the missions. For again the draft stipulated that no school could be established without the approval of

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Moore to Myers, 12 April 1949, *ibid*; Moore to L.A. Doherty (Director of Catholic Education in Fiji), 4 April 1949, *ibid*.

the Resident Commissioner, and the fullness of government authority was even more strongly emphasized. In contrast to the 1948 draft, which had required that a board be set up to advise the Resident Commissioner on all educational matters, that of 1949 provided that a consultative committee could be set up to advise the Director of Education - who was wholly subordinate to the Resident - but only if asked to do so. In keeping with Hayden's alleged threat, which Moore repeated to Miss Gwilliam, the Educational Adviser to the Colonial Secretary, no conference was held to discuss the draft.¹ Nevertheless, the missions again made their protests. That of the Marists, running to eighteen close-typed foolscap pages, stressed willingness to begin improving education standards, if the mission ^{were} given the necessary money and if its right freely to operate schools was not curtailed.²

But the government was adamant that no area of schooling should be exempt from its control. Another draft was issued in 1950 and was discussed at a missions-administration conference in Honiara in September of that year. While shifting the focus of educational responsibility from the Resident Commissioner to the Director of Education, the new measure satisfied the missions only to the extent that it guaranteed them

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Moore to Gwilliam, 10 December 1949, *ibid*; Moore to Myers, 5 February 1950, *ibid*.

2

'Views of the Catholic Mission (B.S.I.P.) on the Proposed King's Regulation relating to Education (1949)', *ibid*.

an opportunity formally to express their opinions on educational policy and practice - an Advisory Committee with representatives from each mission was required to be set up to advise the Director on all educational matters.¹ Again the well-rehearsed protests were repeated. But, when yet another draft, announced as being the final one, was issued in 1951, it continued to with-hold from the missions the right to conduct any educational establishment independent of government control. No school was to be established without government approval, and 'school' was defined so as to include seminaries, novitiates and catechist training centres, as well as the most informal village school. Nor was any school to be eligible for a grant-in-aid if admission was restricted to pupils of the appropriate religious persuasion.²

The draft of 1951 was unchanged when it was formally promulgated on 19 January 1953 as the B.S.I.P. Education Regulation. Printed copies of the regulation were distributed and there was required only proclamation of the date on which it would come into operation.³

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B.S.I.P. 'King's Regulation relating to Education, 1950', *ibid*; 'Views of the Catholic Mission (B.S.I.P.) on the Proposed King's Regulation relating to Education (1950)', *ibid*.

2

'Views of the Catholic Mission on the Draft Regulation of Education (1951)', *ibid*.

3

B.S.I.P. Queen's Regulation, no.4 of 1953.

The missions' cause seemed lost. Yet the Marists did not despair of retrieving the position even at the eleventh hour. After considering a plan to petition the Catholic members of the British Houses of Parliament, they called for a special meeting between the High Commissioner, R.C.S. Stanley, and Bishops Wade and Aubin to discuss amendments to the regulation. This took place in Honiara on 13 July 1953, but failed to dissolve the impasse. Stanley conceded that any 'school maintained solely for the purpose of training religious personnel' should not be bound by the regulation, but he resolutely stood by section II, which prescribed that:

Any controlling authority desiring to establish a non-Government school... shall before any steps are taken to procure a site or building or to collect money therefor apply to the Senior Education Officer...for his approval to the establishment of the school.

Stanley defended his stand on the grounds that the regulation did not deny the mission's 'basic right to have its own schools'. But the bishops, on the contrary, objected that 'section II gave them no right, but only a gracious permission from the government to establish schools'.¹ And this they regarded as an inadequate guarantee of the liberty to carry out what they held

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Wall to Aubin, 27 April 1953, M.E.O. Papers, Honiara; Dwyer to Moore, 7 May 1953, *ibid*; Aubin to Stanley, 7 May 1953, 28 May 1953, *ibid*; Stanley to Aubin, 13 May 1953, *ibid*.

to be a divinely ordained function. It was a point on which they could not yield.

Aware of the need for mission cooperation if the government's education plans were ever to succeed, Stanley was apparently impressed by this sustained opposition, which had effectively blocked all proposals for development since 1948. Consequently, he delayed the introduction of the regulation and agreed that efforts to effect a reconciliation should be continued by lower-ranking members of the government and Marist hierarchies. His hopes were realized. In the course of these further discussions the purpose of the contentious section II was clarified - and its scope thereby shown to be wider than the purpose required. Thus, the Attorney-General ruled that the purpose was to ensure that scarce mission and government educational resources were not spread too thinly. This interpretation opened the way to agreement. For the Marists were prepared to accept limited and defined government control for the sake of improving educational standards in particular schools, so long as their right freely to found and conduct the numerous low-standard schools needed to impart a modicum of religious teaching to a widely scattered village population was not thereby impaired. They were, therefore, prepared to accept a distinction between two different types of school: 'registered' schools, which would be subject to government regulation, and hence eligible for government grants; and schools that were 'exempt' from all government regulation, that is, schools that

existed 'primarily for the purpose of giving bona fide religious instruction'. The former category included station schools, and the latter covered both village schools (on which little money was ever spent) and training establishments such as seminaries.¹ While not offending mission sensibilities, the distinction between 'registered' and 'exempt' schools also satisfied the government, to which it gave as much control over mission schools as it required. Consequently, the 1953 regulation was repealed and the distinction incorporated in a new regulation which was issued - and received without dissent - the following year.²

WHILE the wrangle over the formulation of the B.S.I.P. education regulation was in progress the Marists were, of course, operating their schools in their own way. In 1947 the Marist Brothers' central school was re-established at Tenaru, near Honiara, to provide a four year course for an annual intake of about twenty boys. Besides giving this school a more

1

Wall, 'Report on Negotiations regarding Education', pp.3-5, *ibid.* Wall's account, followed above, is supported by the minutes of the meeting and by the Marists' formal rejoinder to the minutes: 'Notes of a discussion on 13 July 1953 and the Education Regulation', and 'Comment on and Reply to High Commissioner's notes of a discussion on the Education Regulation, 1953,' *ibid.*

2

B.S.I.P. Queen's Regulation, no.17 of 1954.

academic bias than the one they had run at Marau, the brothers, in 1950, produced a number of elementary word and number books (in English) for use in mission schools throughout the vicariate. Yet, in general, the quality of mission education was unimpressive, as Moore described in 1949:

The most we can do in our Catholic village schools at present is to teach the children to read and to write in their native dialects. There are one or two schools where better results are achieved. Our station schools are, at the best, very elementary. Some so-called schools are not schools at all. Very little time is spent in the class-room, rarely more than three hours a day. Many of our teachers (native and European) have no training whatever: some are absolutely incapable of imparting instruction....There is no organised syllabus, very few school books, and in many instances, even in station schools, buildings and equipment are extremely primitive.¹

Equipment in mission station schools in the B.S.I.P. began to improve from 1952, when the government began paying grants-in-aid to the missions. Payment was based on the number of qualified teachers or university graduates employed in mission schools, a condition which made the post-war inflow of American missionaries (particularly nuns), whose training has tended to be broader than that of their non-American colleagues, especially advantageous to the Marists.² Further

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Moore to Doherty, 4 April 1949, M.E.O. Papers, Honiara.

²

In 1954, of £6,000 allotted to the missions under this system, the Marists received £2,444.

stimulus to improvement was provided by the introduction in 1957 of an official syllabus, which set up a seven year primary course culminating in the Senior Certificate examination. A pass in this examination was required for entry to the teacher training college founded by the government at Kukum, near Honiara, in 1959. Unlike their counterparts in New Guinea, where government and mission each trained their own teachers for their own school system, Kukum graduates have mostly taught in mission schools. Approximately one third of the 143 students who completed the Kukum course between 1960 and 1966 were absorbed by Catholic schools.¹ The only other officially recognized teacher training college in the protectorate was founded by the Marists at Visale in order to make fuller use of the abilities of the indigenous nuns. Founded in January 1961, in disregard of the narrow elitist bias of government educational policy, but following the Kukum syllabus, it was not recognized until September 1962, a few months before the first class was due to graduate.²

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B.S.I.P., Annual Report, 1964-5, p.48, and 1966, p.44.

2

Bovey to Moore, 6 September 1962, M.E.O. Papers, Honiara. The other missions in the Protectorate also carried out teacher training, but this was not of such a standard as to be recognized for the award of a B.S.I.P. Grade III teacher's certificate. The Methodists and S.D.A.s usually had a number of students attending mission-run training colleges in New Guinea where, after a one-year course, they qualified for the A certificate but, again, this was not recognized as the equivalent of the B.S.I.P.'s Grade III certificate for which two years training were required.

In 1963 lay women joined the nuns at Visale and by the end of 1966 the course had been completed by twenty-eight students, a figure which brought the total number of locally trained teachers in the B.S.I.P. to 171.¹

In the Australian Solomons, in contrast, Catholic institutions alone had produced 284 certificated teachers over the same period (1959-66) and 455 since teacher training had begun there in 1954.²

In the Australian Solomons where the emphasis on teacher training has led to the improvement of village schools, and by 1966 was even tending to reduce the teaching burden of the priests, thereby increasing their opportunities for pastoral work, Church and State have not seriously clashed on the question of education.³

1

B.S.I.P., Annual Report, 1964-5, p.48, and 1966, p.44;
B.S.I.P. Department of Education, Annual Report, 1966, p.5.

2

See above, p.350-1.

3

Missionaries in the North Solomons have been particularly assisted in station teaching by European lay volunteers, whose fares to and from the vicariate are usually paid by the mission. Thanks to the E-course of teacher training the mission is able to draw on unqualified people (in addition to qualified), have them trained at Rabaul, and then receive a subsidy for their services to help meet the cost of their maintenance and travel. Volunteers from Europe and America undertake to remain in the mission for five years, and those from Australia and New Zealand for two years. In the B.S.I.P., where only people who are formally qualified before coming to the group are eligible for subsidies, the missions have much greater difficulty in attracting volunteers.

Even so, a certain tension has arisen from the Marists' difficulty in completely reconciling the religious and academic objections in education. It is a question of quantity versus quality. Thus, in 1963 (and the situation had not changed notably by 1966) the Director of Education criticized the Marists' preference for drawing pupils into junior classes rather than for keeping them at school in the higher classes. He lamented the 'rather startling wastage' in Catholic schools in the Bougainville district, as shown in the following figures for primary class enrolment:¹

¹

Roscoe to La Pointe, 14 August 1963, M.E.O. Papers, Tsiroge. Wastage was, of course, not only a local or a Marist problem. Roscoe also cited figures for the other missions in the Bougainville district, but for which the rate of wastage was less than that of the Marists:

Seventh Day Adventist								
Year	Prep.	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	Total
1961	0	15	41	23	12	31	13	135
1962	129	103	70	60	23	35	26	446
1963	279	188	105	68	22	20	8	690
Methodist								
1961	596	412	319	260	161	77	53	1878
1962	587	354	363	229	195	117	85	1930
1963	567	554	428	283	194	130	107	2263

(footnote continued on p.372)

TABLE III

Primary Class Enrolments in the Vicariate Apostolic
of the North Solomons

Year	Prep.	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	Total
1961	3259	1629	1105	821	403	252	86	7555
1962	3224	1682	1336	870	569	326	125	8132
1963	3490	2181	1583	1276	856	279	99	9764

However, there was no direct conflict of policies such as arose in the B.S.I.P. (where the limited scale of teacher-training made the Marists increasingly station-bound) when the administration proposed to intensify the elitist bias of the education structure - and was again met by the united opposition of both Catholic and Protestant missions.

(Footnote 1 continued from p. 371)

In the B.S.I.P. the rate of wastage from Marist schools has also been lower than in the Australian Solomons, but this is at least partly due to the fact that village schooling is less formally developed in the B.S.I.P. The following figures show class enrolments in Marist station schools in the B.S.I.P. in 1965 (when there were, also, 934 pupils in village schools):

I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	Total
886	629	541	364	169	113	88	2790

Source: Moore, Catholic Education, South Solomons, 1965, p.30.

In a White Paper issued in August 1962 the B.S.I.P. administration announced a scheme for ensuring the annual production of sixty pupils with full secondary education. For this a high degree of mission cooperation was required. Suitable pupils were to be procured by concentrating the bulk of government and mission resources on certain high-standard 'designated' schools. Completion of the eight-year plan (1963-70) was to see forty junior primary (standard I-IV) designated schools feeding into twenty senior primary (standards V-VII) designated schools feeding into two government secondary schools. The government was to pay two-thirds of the capital cost of £A1,300,000 needed to provide buildings of the quality required for designation; and the missions one-third. All teachers in designated schools were to be qualified, classes were to be limited to thirty pupils, no child over the age of seven was to be enrolled in Standard I, and there was to be rigid selection of pupils at each stage. About 'one-sixth of children of school age [would] be provided for in fully designated schools'.

Even one-third of the capital cost of the scheme the missions found a prohibitive expense. But this was only one objection. As Moore argued on behalf of the Marists, 'the restricted intake would defeat our main purpose which is to provide primary education for the maximum number of Catholic children'; and the class size limit would mean that 'a substantial number of children already enrolled' in station schools would

need to be expelled, thus creating 'discontent and unrest among our people'.¹

Seconding Moore's criticisms, the leaders of the Methodist, Anglican and Catholic missions meeting in June 1965 at the residence of the Anglican Bishop of Melanesia prepared a joint statement of their inability to accept the designation scheme unless basic changes were made in it. Thus, they declined to accept designation for junior primary schools but expressed their willingness to accept it for their few and, already relatively select, senior primary schools. Reluctantly, the High Commissioner acceded to these demands. In 1966 four mission schools (including that of the Marist Brothers at Tenaru) were awarded the extra subsidies appropriate to designation.² But as this compromise was unable to produce the desired number of pupils ready to start secondary schooling

1

Moore to Bovey, 16 February 1965, M.E.O. Papers, Honiara; B.S.I.P., White Paper, no.3. Educational Policy, (Honiara, 1962), passim. A useful discussion of the designation scheme is given in Bernard Schaffer, 'The British Solomons', New Guinea, vol.1., no.5 (1966), pp.44-6. Information on the scheme was also gained in interviews with Major G.F. Bovey, Mr D. Ruxton (Education Officer for the Diocese of Melanesia), and Fr D. Moore.

2

Moore, 'Designated Schools: resumé of meetings held in Honiara, June 1965', *ibid*; B.S.I.P. Department of Education, Circular and Appendix ED/G/121, 31 January 1966. A copy of this document is in my possession by courtesy of Major G.F. Bovey.

at the age of twelve or thirteen the scheme, five years after it was announced, was soon dropped. In 1967 it was replaced by a new scheme which, taking a more practical view of the missions' crucial place in the education structure, aimed at a more general, though slower, raising of educational standards in the protectorate through the expansion of teacher training.¹

The post-war educational development in the Solomon islands has been both qualitative and quantitative. Education has become more serious and the number of pupils has grown steadily. Thus, in the Australian Solomons the enrolment in Catholic schools (both village and station) rose from 6004 in 1955 to 11074 in 1965, while in the B.S.I.P. over the same period the attendance at Catholic station schools increased from 1094 to 2790.² The new situation has, however, accentuated old problems. For instance, the withdrawal of more and more pupils to station schools has increased the strain on both village labour forces and on school gardens. Nevertheless, food shortages have not seriously disrupted Marist schooling in the B.S.I.P. since 1962. This is because of the availability

1

B.S.I.P. News Sheet, no.19 of 1967, 7-20 October.

2

See Appendix H for a full summary of annual school enrolment figures. To give a particular example of recent school growth, at Tabago mission station in Bougainville the school enrolment increased from 277 to 449 between 1962 and 1966. Interview with Fr W. Fingleton (Tabago).

of food supplies ~~supplies~~ donated by an international relief agency sponsored by the Catholic bishops of America, Catholic Relief Services. Indeed, the American food has become a major prop of educational efficiency - and of ecumenical respect - throughout the protectorate, having been made available to the Anglicans since 1963 and, since 1965, to the Methodists, S.S.E.C. and S.D.As.¹ This situation contrasts with that in the North Solomons, to which the U.S. prohibits the supply of food on account of Australia's policy of selling wheat to the People's Republic of China,² and where failure of the gardens may still cause the suspension of school, especially of junior classes, for weeks and even months.

Another problem, but one for which no easy solution can be found outside the Solomon Islands, is the fact that lengthy sojourns at station schools and the academic bias of the schooling offered, ill-equip young people for settling into village life. The

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The quantities (lbs.) of food supplies to the B.S.I.P. under this scheme for the period 1 April 1962 - 30 June 1964 were as follows:

	<u>Flour</u>	<u>Vegetable Oil</u>	<u>Milk Powder</u>	<u>Cornmeal</u>
1 April 1962 - 31 December 1962	136,000	53,998	9,018	-
1 January 1963 - 30 June 1963	180,000	71,980	36,000	90,000
1 July 1963 - 30 June 1964	480,000	71,925	114,000	198,000

Figures supplied by Bishop D. Stuyvenberg.

2

Interview with Bishop L. Lemay.

problem is made more difficult of solution by the further fact that academic education, while required for the creation of mission and government élites and even, perhaps, of an informed electorate, tends to be held in exaggerated esteem by the islanders on account of the rewards it can lead to and the status it can confer - through white-collar employment. But opportunities for such employment are limited. For the majority of those who aspire to it, like those who in earlier times hoped to learn the 'secret' of the white man's wealth, education is as likely to lead to frustration as to contentment. To the extent therefore, that it does not contribute to a stable way of life for the laity, or is not supplemented by economic development, progress in education may create problems for the establishment of Catholicism in the Solomon Islands as well as solve them.

CHAPTER IXSOLOMON ISLANDS CATHOLICISM, 1946-66

As with the other varieties of Christianity in the group, Catholicism entered the Solomon Islands under the aegis of a powerful, invading European culture, and was adopted by the Solomon Islanders largely in accordance with the values and assumptions of their own culture. After seven decades of continuous missionary effort this original European-Melanesian dualism is still far from being synthesized in a structure that is stable, orthodox and indigenous. Rather, Solomon Islands Catholicism remains an uneven amalgam. It consists of an administrative structure controlled and predominantly maintained by Europeans, together with a body of indigenous laity whose religious mentality is shaped by a mingling of both traditional and Christian beliefs.

In contrast to the Protestant missions, who were more able to delegate ecclesiastical responsibility to the islanders, the number of expatriate Catholic missionaries has increased rather than declined since 1946. A striking indication of this continued dependence on European personnel has been the increase of the Sisters of St Joseph of California. Bishop Wade brought four of them to the North Solomons in 1940 to assist the S.M.S.M. but by 1966 the services of seventeen were employed to staff three convents on

Buka and one at Tarlena on Bougainville. Indeed, throughout the group, considerably more Catholic missionaries began work in the twenty years between 1946 and 1966 than in the forty-four years between 1898 and 1942. Their total number in 1966, 230, was nearly twice what it had been in 1942. These increases are indicated in Tables IV and V.¹

Significant progress has, nevertheless, been made in developing the indigenous component of the church structure, especially in regard to nuns. In 1947 each of the vicariate sisterhoods was recognized as a religious congregation. Although, canonically, they are still directly subject to the local bishop, their members are now bound by vows instead of annual promises, and are usually trained in nursing or teaching. On some stations, they have replaced the European nuns. Solomon Islanders have also, since 1956, been professed as Marist teaching brothers and as lay-brothers in the Society of Mary.² A start has, furthermore, been made with the systematic training of priests. In the North Solomons, where two of the pre-war seminarians completed their broken and rather haphazard course in 1953, a preparatory seminary was opened at Chabai in 1948. In the South Solomons one was begun at Tenaru, near Honiara, in 1951. From these institutions youths were sent to continue their studies first at the regional (New Guinea and the

1

The figures are based on Appendices Aii-iv.

2

The Catholic Weekly, 19 July 1956.

TABLE IV

Non-indigenous Catholic missionaries beginning work in the Solomon Islands in the periods 1898-1942 and 1946-66

Periods	Vicariate	Priests	Bros. S.M.	Nuns	Bros. F.M.S.	Total
1898-1942	North	48	12	40	3	197
	South	<u>49</u> 97	<u>7</u> 19	<u>35</u> 75	<u>3</u> 6	
1946-1966	North	47	12	58	13	247
	South	39	10	37	7	
	West	<u>6</u> 92	<u>2</u> 24	<u>16</u> 111	<u>0</u> 20	

TABLE V

Non-indigenous Catholic missionaries working in the Solomon Islands in 1942 and in 1966, respectively

Years	Vicariate	Priests	Bros. S.M.	Nuns	Bros. F.M.S.	Total
1942	North	30	6	28	3	121
	South	<u>21</u> 51	<u>5</u> 11	<u>25</u> 53	<u>3</u> 6	
1966	North	40	12	62	3	230
	South	37	11	45	3	
	West	<u>6</u> 83	<u>1</u> 24	<u>10</u> 117	<u>0</u> 6	

Solomons) minor seminary opened near Rabaul in 1955, and then at the major seminary opened at Madang in 1963. The first Solomon Islander to trace this route to the priesthood was Michael Aike of Malaita, who was ordained in December 1966.¹ Numerous others will, presumably, follow him. Indeed, some have already done so, although it is unlikely that in the foreseeable future their numbers will be sufficient. As the mission situation in Africa (which, in general, resembles that in the Solomons) suggests, as the post war out-pouring of European missionaries declines and the indigenous population increases, the need for priests will become progressively great.² Such being the case, the standard of training required and the opening up of other avenues of employment for highly educated Solomon Islanders do, therefore, further suggest that the elevation of the Solomon Islands vicariates to the status of dioceses, which occurred on 1 January 1967, represented more an act of faith in the remote prospects of Catholicism than an expectation of attaining in the short term a self-sustaining Solomon Islands Church. Progress towards the staffing of an indigenous Church may be summarized as follows:

1

Patrick Murphy, 'Holy Spirit Regional Seminary', The Word in the World, 1969, pp.86-7; 'Journal of St Vincent's Seminary', B.A.H. The South Solomons seminary was closed in 1962. Since then candidates for the priesthood have followed the normal course of schooling prior to being sent to Rabaul.

2

See Adrian Hastings, Church and Mission in Modern Africa (London, 1967), chapter VI.

TABLE VI¹Solomon Islands clergy and religious, 1966

Vicariate	Priests	Bros. S.M.	Nuns	Bros.F.M.S.	Total
North	2	9	28	4	
South	<u>1</u> 3	<u>8</u> 17	<u>75</u> 103	<u>6</u> 10	<u>133</u>

Even were there sufficient indigenous priests to replace the present contingent of Europeans substantial problems of Church operation would, however, still remain. Besides that of maintaining the large and costly complex of ancillary institutions² - educational, industrial, medical and economic - that European missionaries have built up would be the problem of providing adequate pastoral care. Catholicism would still be a station-centred religion, remote from the village-life of the laity. An attempt which, at best, can go only a meagre way towards closing the gap has been the revival, in each vicariate, of catechist training. A more practical effort would be the institution of a married diaconate, a measure which is currently being discussed in various mission countries as a means of avoiding the bottleneck of the priesthood in bringing more of the religious essence of Christianity to the people.

1

See Appendices Aii-iii.

2

For a useful discussion of this question see Tippet, Solomon Islands Christianity, pp.125-31.

Commensurate with the growth of mission staff, has been the geographical, as well as qualitative, expansion of Catholic missionary activity in the group since 1945. Besides the re-occupation of most of the thirty-four pre-war mission stations twenty-three new posts have been founded. In two cases these reflect the missions' awareness of the new need for closer contact with the government. Thus, shortly after the war, the headquarters of the South Solomons vicariate were established at Honiara (near the then American base at Lunga on Guadalcanal), on account of its being designated the new capital of the B.S.I.P. Similarly, the headquarters of the northern vicariate were located at Tsiroge, near the island of Sohano, which replaced Kieta as the administrative centre of the Bougainville district. But with the obvious exceptions of these, and of the leprosaria at Piva and Tetere, most of the new posts were designed to intensify Catholic ministry in areas that hitherto had been relatively neglected. Consequently, three of the four new stations on Malaita - Tarapaina, Uru, Ataa - were located on the east coast, while on Bougainville three new inland stations - Moratona, Deomori, Haisi were founded in the southern part of the island's mountain spine. An inland station, the first in the southern vicariate, was also founded at Tsuva, on Guadalcanal - in 1965.

The most conspicuous post-war effort to fill the gaps in the net of Catholic influence was, however, the erection in 1959 of a third vicariate, that of the

Western Solomons. This domain comprised the Shortland Islands, Choiseul, New Georgia and Ysabel. Since the only Catholic villages on these islands were those on Choiseul and the Shortlands it is not surprising that the proposal for such a vicariate first came from the South Solomons, which had no stake there. Aubin, pre-occupied with Guadalcanal, Malaita and San Cristobal, suggested it in his report to Propaganda as early as 1937.¹ Propaganda took up the idea in 1951. And, despite the vehement opposition of Boch who, having spent most of his career at Poporang, protested that he 'would prefer to die a hundred times rather than be present at this dismemberment', Wade dutifully gave it his support.² Suppressing his own nostalgic distaste for relinquishing the first station to have been founded in the North Solomons, and considering, rather, the practical inconvenience caused by his vicariate's being divided by an international boundary, he wrote:

At times there is great difficulty in passing from the Territory of New Guinea to the British Solomon Islands Protectorate. Customs and medical clearances must be obtained, money deposited for the return of each member of the native crew and the same regulations generally observed as if one was clearing for Mexico.³

1

V.A. South Solomons, 'Rapport au Propaganda, 1937', B.A.H.

2

Boch to Dubois, 25 February 1952, A.P.M. OSM 208 (translation).

3

Wade to Morella, 16 April 1954, B.A.H.

Society of Mary authorities were, however, reluctant to take responsibility for staffing a third vicariate in the Solomons. But not so the newly-founded Australian province of the Order of Preachers (Dominicans), which was seeking a Pacific mission field. In January 1956, therefore, the first party of Dominicans joined the Marists at Poporang to begin a trial period of missionary work. In 1957 they opened a school and a hospital (staffed by a nurse) at Moli on Choiseul; in 1958 a missionary was stationed at Gizo (the commercial and administrative centre of the district); and in 1959 they took charge of the new vicariate. The first vicar apostolic, Bishop E.J. Crawford settled at Gizo in 1960.¹

Unlike most other elements in the pattern of mission expansion the function of the vicariate was not evangelistic - at least, not directly so. For there were scarcely any pagans remaining in the area and it was not the Catholics' intention to stir up dissension by attacking established Methodist, S.D.A. or Anglican positions. Rather, the Dominicans' task has been to ensure more intensive pastoral care for an existing Catholic flock. This includes not only the Catholics of the Shortlands and Choiseul but also the Catholics among the Malaita men who supply much of the plantation labour in the Western Solomons, and the numerous Catholics among the migrants from the Gilbert

1

Catholic Missions, vol.XLVLL, no.31 (1966), pp.15-8; interview with Fr C. O'Grady.

Islands who have been re-settled on Wagina Island at the south of Choiseul. Mainly as a result of this latter influx, Catholic numbers in the vicariate - which were those of a good-sized station district in either of the other vicariates - rose from 1751 in 1959 to 3009 in 1966.¹

Elsewhere, however, as the Protestant missiologist A.R. Tippettt notes in respect of Malaita, a notable result of the post-war expansion has been the advance of Catholicism among the remaining pagans of the group.² Although the millenarian attraction of Christianity appears generally to have declined - pagans have had time enough to see that few Christians have obtained much of the white man's power and wealth³ - other inducements to conversion remain. Prominent among these are still the expense of venerating the spirits and the frequent failure of customary remedies to cure illness. The medical inducement is enhanced by the fact that not only has the quality of European drugs and medicine improved steadily but they have

1

See Appendix G.

2

Tippettt, Solomon Islands Christianity, p.49. In 1955, noting that there were only about 12,000 pagans left in his vicariate, nearly all of them on Malaita, Bishop Aubin wrote 'When we have more missionaries we will open two new stations [on Malaita] so as to bring to the true faith as many as possible of these pagans and prevent them from going to the Protestant sects, which seek to win them'. V.A. South Solomons, 'Rapport au Propaganda, 1955', B.A.H. (translation).

3

For example see Keesing, 'Christians and Pagans in Kwaio', p.97.

become more accessible as both government and missions - in accordance with their more purposeful post-war view of their task - improved their medical services also. While tending to weaken pagan religious allegiances, such improvements have, no doubt, also helped lower the death rate among Christians. They have, therefore, contributed to the sustained growth of Catholic numbers in both North and South Solomons. Thus, between 1953 and 1966 the two vicariates saw increases of 65 per cent and 68 per cent, respectively, notwithstanding those lost by the Marists of the North Solomons to the Welfare or to the Dominicans.

Striking as such figures are, the most celebrated post-war Catholic gain consisted not of Solomon Islands villagers but of a group of twelve Anglican nuns - the Community of the Sisters of the Cross - who trod 'the path to Rome' in the South Solomons in 1950. At their head was the founder and superior of the community, Mother Margaret of the Cross, an independent-minded Englishwoman of sixty-one years. A former Cambridge student she had, after spending some years in an Anglican sisterhood in England, South Africa and India, come to the Solomons in 1929 to help extend the Melanesian Mission's work among women.¹ With her was her close friend and confidant, Sister Gwen of the Cross, a graduate of London University. Gradually, these two

1

For glimpses of Mother Margaret's background see the biography of her brother, John Marlowe, Late Victorian (London, 1967), pp.3-14.

attracted others to their side until in 1950 there were five European and seven indigenous nuns divided between two girls schools, one at Torgil in the New Hebrides and the other at Bunana near Gela.

In intellectual terms, the conversion of the Sisters of the Cross represented acceptance of the historical claims of the Church of Rome to be the one true Church - a confessional hazard to which the Anglo-Catholic wing of the Church of England is particularly susceptible. Indeed, the attractions of 'Rome' had long been felt by various members of the community.¹ Thus, although the initiative for the transfer came from Mother Margaret she found two of her fellows well prepared for it while the cohesiveness of the community and her own dominating personality were enough to ensure that the rest would follow. Of the indigenous nuns she wrote several months before the move:

They are always averse to change. They are very happy as they are, and the unknown as such is alarming. At the same time they have been fully conscious that there is none in the Melanesian Mission to whom they could turn for help except ourselves, no one whom they really trust. They listen very well to Catholic doctrine and history. The thought

1

For instance, Mother Margaret had flirted with Catholicism at Cambridge; most of Sister Gwen's immediate family had already turned Catholic; and the father and brother of Sister Veronica (an Oxford history graduate) lost their Anglican parishes in New Zealand for being too 'High Church'. Personal communication from Mother Margaret; Gwen of the Cross, God, Truth and Thirteen (Melbourne, 1956), passim; interview with Sister Dismas (formerly Veronica), Suva.

of the Catholic Church as steadfast from the start impresses them greatly. The few questions they ask reveal such pitiful ignorance e.g. 'Was it in the Catholic or English Church that there were first Sisters?'¹

More immediately worrying to the community, however, than historical arguments was the problem of maintaining the religious community life in a context where the tradition of it was weak and the position of the nun ill-defined. Already, under Bishop Baddeley (1932-47), this had caused considerable tension. But it became more acute with the determination of his successor, Bishop Caulton, that 'the number of white members of the Order should not exceed one-third of the female white staff of the mission'.² Appalled by the potential threat to the community's growth from the very mission it served, Mother Margaret was also disappointed by the difficulty of obtaining recruits. On furlough in England in 1948-9 she was able to attract only one postulant. The many she interviewed did, moreover, compare unfavourably with her travelling companions on the return voyage from England to New Zealand - twenty-four young Irish Catholic girls who were coming out to join the Sisters of Mercy in Auckland.

Making this comparison seems to have been crucial in prompting Mother Margaret's decision. She envied

¹

Mother Margaret to Aubin, 1 February 1950, B.A.H.

²

Fox, 'A Missionary in Melanesia', p.52.

the girls the chance to live as nuns in a setting where this was fully accepted. Shortly afterwards, therefore (on the voyage from New Zealand to the Solomons aboard the Southern Cross) she informed Caulton, so she claims, of her inclination to secede to 'Rome'. Caulton, allegedly, failed to take the matter seriously, and Mother Margaret, afraid lest pressure be brought to bear on the indigenous nuns, never raised the matter again.¹ The Melanesian Mission was, therefore, taken by surprise when the Sisters of the Cross, meeting at Bunana in July 1950, formally announced their intention of becoming Catholics. They had, however, been in close communication with Bishop Aubin since January.

The voyage from Bunana to Visale (after Anglican authorities had indignantly summoned the Marists to come and collect the Sisters of the Cross) was not the last of the community's religious journeys. With the European nuns still seeking the fullness of the conventual life, the sisterhood soon began to break up as its members gradually departed to join well-established Catholic orders. Three, originally from the New Hebrides, joined the D.M.I. Finally, Mother Margaret, with her only remaining companion, Sister Petronella, a native of Sikaiana, entered the Sisters of Mercy in Auckland in 1960.

1

Personal communication from Mother Margaret.

LITURGICALLY, no less than institutionally, the style of Catholicism that has been built in the Solomon Islands is of a standard, northern European kind. The minor acts of piety are the same, the prayers and hymns are mainly translations, there has been little effort to decorate churches with distinctive indigenous art forms, there has been no effort to incorporate indigenous customs into the performance of the sacraments. Yet, behind this facade of external conformity, lies an authentically Melanesian quality of belief. Unlike the missionaries, who have contributed to this situation - and to the progress of evangelization - by their readiness to accommodate indigenous culture (although in a negative way), the islanders have been constantly adaptive in their acceptance and application of Christianity.

Conversion in the Solomon Islands, as has been discussed, did not involve the islanders in a denial of the validity of traditional religious principles. Belief in the relevance of the spirits and in the power of religion to secure temporal well-being was not destroyed by, but, rather, was overlaid by, Catholic doctrine. The latter was generally presented, and accepted as, a superior, rather than a different, kind of religious force. For instance, at Tangarare in 1907 Raucaz gladly obliged when three of his parishioners brought him a bag of shell money to bless in order to chase a spirit from it. Similarly, inland from Asitavi in 1938, Albert Lebel acceded to a request to bless a house which was said to be inhabited

by troublesome spirits. So great an impression did this therapy make that some time later people from a Methodist village came - with a similar purpose in mind - and stole the bottle of Holy Water Lebel had used in his 'exorcism', and which he had left with the local catechist.¹

Such incidents, the unavoidable outcome of ingrained religious syncretism, are still of common occurrence. On Malaita Catholic villagers frequently petition for Masses to be said to counter the influence of the spirits - a request the missionaries treat as an approximate expression of the orthodox belief in the propriety of honouring the souls of the dead or of praying for their consolation.² The Solomon Islanders' disposition to appreciate Catholicism in terms of their traditional religious assumptions is also demonstrated by the action of pagan converts in taking formal leave of their spirits before accepting baptism, and by the readiness with which Christians resort to invocation of the spirits should European medicine prove ineffective against an illness. Conversely, even in the third and fourth generations, Christians are prone to attribute misfortunes to infringement of custom or of Church law and confidently expect to undo the wrong by confessing it in the sacrament of Penance.

1

Letter of Raucaz, 4 April 1907, A.M.O., vol.XII; Lebel to his friends, 24 February 1938, Lebel Papers.

2

For examples of these petitions see Appendix E.

Nevertheless, until misfortune actually occurs, and prompts the effort to find a resolution, Solomon Islands Catholics, it is widely considered among the Marists, tend to lack a 'sense of sin'. Feeling themselves, on the one hand, largely innured to retaliation from the spirits, they are, on the other, relatively unmoved by mission teaching on the inherent wrongness of various sorts of behaviour. As one missionary writes:

There is a certain serenity, seriousness, alertness, distrustfulness, something unfathomable but reliable in the behaviour of the pagan. There is a certain light-heartedness in the behaviour of the ChristianThe Christian lies more easily, steals more quickly, cheats more frequently, takes sexual offences less seriously. The pagan does these things, too, - but much less, for he is afraid of the consequences.¹

This situation (for which the missionaries are not alone responsible) may represent a further shortcoming of the Catholic achievement in the Solomon Islands. Not only is doctrine impure and the institutional Church still alien but the religious sanctions of the old social order have been broken down and Christian moral values have not compensated for them.

To conclude upon a note of unrelieved lamentation would, however be misleading. Regrettable as the Christian's mentality may be from the strictly religious point of view it is scarcely different from that which

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P. Geerts, 'The Elements of Fear and Pride in Melanesian Spirit Worship and Customs'. TS is the author's possession.

prevails among Europeans. And in so far as it involves emancipation from the dominance of the spirits it may well assist Solomon Islanders to adjust to the secular world into which they are being drawn with increasing rapidity, and to gain fullest advantage from the programs of educational and economic development offered by mission and government. Yet the positive attainments of Christianization are not only speculative. Indeed, they provide reason for satisfaction. Against the contribution of the Catholic missionaries to social disruption (including sectarian divisions) must be set their role in extending the possibilities of communication between people of different languages and localities, in providing a convenient point of contact between Melanesian and European culture and, through schooling, helping equip the people to resume command of their own affairs. Finally, against the doctrinal confusion of so many of the islanders, must be set the eminent degree to which acceptance of the Gospel message was exemplified in Marching Rule, as well as the example of those young people who have so far contributed to the emergence of a truly indigenous Catholicism by opting for the life of priest, brother or nun.

APPENDIX ACATHOLIC MISSIONARIES IN THE PREFECTURES AND VICARIATES
APOSTOLIC OF MELANESIA (1845-55) AND OF THE SOUTH,
NORTH AND WESTERN SOLOMON ISLANDS (1898-1966).

The following lists have been compiled mainly from curricula vitae in the archives of the congregations to which the missionaries belonged. They are not intended as a compendium of all information available on the missionaries but, rather, as a basis for further investigation. Missionaries, European and indigenous, are grouped according to their congregation and religious status and are listed in the order in which they joined the mission.

The form of entry is as follows: name (religious, then secular, in the case of brothers and nuns), country or district of origin, professional qualifications, period of service in the mission, principal postings during that time. Postings within the mission have rarely been precisely recorded, and then almost exclusively for the priests. Efforts have, therefore, been directed to noting here the earlier, longer and more influential postings in a particular area. Where no or limited details are available significant postings are shown in a general or partial form, to indicate districts or islands with which a missionary was notably associated during his term of service.

The following symbols and abbreviations have been used:

+ mission service was terminated by death
 (Dr) doctor of medicine
 (G) university graduate not a doctor of medicine
 (N) qualified nurse
 (T) qualified teacher
 P.A. prefect apostolic
 V.A. vicar apostolic.

Aust.	Australia
Belg.	Belgium
Can.	Canada
Eng.	England
Fr.	France
Gr.	Germany
Ir.	Ireland
Ital.	Italy
Lux.	Luxembourg
Neth.	Netherlands
N.Z.	New Zealand
Sol. Is.	Solomon Islands
U.S.A.	United States of America.

APPENDIX AiMELANESIASociety of Mary-Priests:

Chaurain, Etienne	Fr.	1845-46	
Epalle, Jean-Baptiste	Fr.	1845 +	V.A. 1844-45
Frémont, Jean-Pierre	Fr.	1845-53	P.A. 1851-52
Jacquet, Claude	Fr	1845-47 +	
Montrouzier, Xavier	Fr.	1845-51	
Paget, Jean-Pierre	Fr.	1845-47 +	
Thomassin, Joseph	Fr.	1845-53	
Verguet, Leopold	Fr.	1845-47	
Collomb, Jean-Georges	Fr. (G)	1847-48 +	V.A. 1847-48
Crey, Cyprien	Fr	1847 +	
Villien, Grégoire	Fr.	1848 +	
Ducrettet, Eugene	Fr.	1847-50	
Trapenard, Pierre	Fr.	1847-52	

Brothers:

Aristides (Brun du Puy)	Fr.	1845-49
Charles (Vincent)	Fr.	1845-47
Gennade (J.B. Rolland)	Fr.	1845-53
Hyacinth Joseph Chatelet)	Fr.	1845-47 +
Prosper (Rouesné)	Fr.	1845-46
Optat	Fr.	1847-50

Milan Foreign Mission Society - Priests:

Ambrosoli, Angelo	Ital.	1852-55	
Mazzucconi, Giovanni	Ital.	1852-55+	
Raimondi, Timoleone	Ital.	1852-55	
Reina, Paolo	Ital.	1852-55	P.A. 1852-55
Salerio, Carlo	Ital.	1852-55	

Brothers:

Corti, Giuseppe	Ital.	1852-55+
Tacchini, Luigi	Ital.	1852-55

APPENDIX Aii
SOUTH SOLOMONS

Society of Mary - Priests:

Vidal, Julian	Fr.	1898,99,01	P.A. 1897-1903
Bouillon, Pierre	Fr.	1898-1934 +	Rua Sura-Visale Savo 1909-11
Guitet, Joseph-Maria	Fr.	1898-1900	Rua Sura- Tangarare
Menard, Joseph-Aloysius	Fr.	1899-1901	Rua Sura- Tangarare
Guilloux, Ferdinand	Fr.	1901-02 +	Tangarare 1901-2
Coicaud, Jean	Fr.	1901-42	Marau 1904-12 Rohinari 1912-42
Pellion, Joseph	Fr.	1902-13 +	Visale 1904-13
Vigne, Julian	Fr.	1902-14	Himbi 1912
Babonneau, Emile	Fr.	1902-31 +	Wanoni Bay 1909-31
Bertreaux, Jean-Ephrem	Fr.	1903-19 +	P.A. 1903-12 V.A. 1912-19
Raucaz, Louis	Fr.	1903-34 +	Tangarare 1903-10 Rua Sura 1910-11 Himbi 1911-12 Buma 1913-17 Visale 1917-20 Rua Sura 1920-23 Visale 1923-34 V.A. 1920-34
Chatelet, Louis	Fr.	1903-06	Avuavu 1903-6

Bertin, Joseph	Fr.	1904-29	Tangarare 1905-29
Boudard, Jean	Fr.	1907-42 1946-56 +	Avuavu 1908-42 Visale 1946-56
Graton, Henri	Fr.	1907-37 +	Visale 1907-30
Aubin, Jean-Marie	Fr.	1908-67 +	Rua Sura 1908-20 Ruavatu 1920-23 V.A. 1935-58
Moreau, Samuel	Belg.	1908-35	Wanoni Bay 1910-29 Tangarare 1931-33
Pavese, Rinaldo	Ital.	1910-33	Tangarare 1910-22 Tangarare 1928-33 Visale 1922-28
Halbwachs, Joseph	Alsace	1910-	Avuavu 1910-20 Buma 1921-35 Takwa 1935-60
Teytard, Jean-Baptiste	Fr.	1911-16 +	Himbi 1911-12
Coicaud, Donatien	Fr.	1912-42 1946-57 +	Visale 1913-14 Rohinari 1914-17 Buma 1917-42 Buma 1946-57
Foltzer, Emile	Gr.	1920-30 +	Malaita
Ernoul, Georges	Fr.	1924-33	Guadalcanal
Simler, Jules	Alsace	1926-66 +	Rokera 1929-66
Valléry, Leon	Fr.	1929-32 +	Avuavu
Brugmens, Aloysius	Neth.	1929-42	Wanoni Bay
Podevigne, Jean-Baptiste	Fr.	1930-40	Wanoni Bay- Faumera
Lebel, Albert	U.S.A.	1931-33	Visale 1931-33
Moore, Denis	N.Z.	1931-41 1947-48	Marau 1936-8 Honiara-Tanagai 1947-68
Courtais, Eugene	Fr.	1931-56 +	Wanoni Bay
Bertheux, Henri	Fr.	1911-15 +	Marau 1911-15
Allet, Albert	Fr.	1912-15 +	Buma 1914-15 Marau 1915

van Mechelen, Peter	Neth.	1932-42 1946-62	
Wall, James	N.Z.	1933-	Visale 1933-42
van de Walle, Bernard	Neth.	1933-42 1947-60	Rohinari
de Klerk, Emery,	Neth.	1935-60	Tangarare
Durand, Firmin	Fr.	1935-51	Wanoni Bay
Centauro, Remo	Ital.	1936-41	
de Theye, Albert	Neth.	1936-42 1945-64	Avuavu
Scanlon, Desmond	N.Z.	1936-42 1945-47	
Stuyvenberg, Daniel	Neth.	1937-	Buma 1939-59 V.A. 1959 -
Oude-Engberink, Henry	Neth.	1937-42 +	Ruavatu 1937-42
van Houte, Aloysius	Neth.	1938-42 1948-53	
McMahon, Michael	Can.	1939-41	San Cristobal
Palmer, Claude	Aust.	1939-55	
Tiggeler, Gerard	Neth.	1939-45 +	Rokera 1939-45
Duhamel, Arthur	U.S.A.	1939-42 +	Ruavatu 1939-42
Parsonage, Thomas	N.Z.	1941-50	Wanoni Bay 1941-50.
Espagne, John	N.Z.	1946-	San Cristobal
Leemans, Karel	Neth.	1947-	San Cristobal
Geerts, Peter	Neth.	1947-	Tarapaina 1949-58 Rokera 1958-
Chaisson, Paul	U.S.A	1947-51	S. Malaita
Kamphius, Kristian	Neth. (G)	1947-	Takwa 1948-64
Devlin, Arthur	U.S.A.	1948-56	Dala 1950-56
van der Riet, John	Neth.	1949-	Ataa 1962-
Kennedy, Francis	N.Z.	1950-	Malageti 1954-56
Neyret, Jean-Baptiste	Fr.	1951-59	

Loft, Anthony	N.Z.	1952-64	
Fox, Noel	N.Z.	1951-	Wanoni Bay 1951-61
Laarveld, Bernard	Neth.	1951-	Uru 1958-
de Block, Joseph	Neth.	1953-65	Avuavu 1953-65
McEvoy, John	Ir.(G)	1953-	Buma 1953-
Snijders, John	Neth.	1954-	Dala
van Duin, William	Neth.	1954-	Marau 1955-
Giesselink, John	Neth.	1956-	
Koning, Theodore	Neth.	1956-	
Cruickshank, Michael	Aust.	1956-	Wanoni Bay 1960-
Smozylo, Walter	U.S.A.	1956-58	
Shen, Thaddeus *	Hong Kong	1956-62	Honiara 1956-62
Morosini, Louis	U.S.A.	1958-	
	(G)		
Roughan, John	U.S.A.	1958-	Rohinari 1960-
	(G)		
Bellenoit, Michael	U.S.A.	1959-	
	(G)		
Leppen, Siebo	Neth.	1959-	
Hundleby, Peter	N.Z.	1959-	Tsuva 1965-
Loft, Gerald	N.Z.	1959-	Malaita
O'Reilly, William	Ir.	1960-	
Kloosterman, Herman	Neth.	1960-	Tarapaina 1960-
Bruns, Gerard	Neth.	1960-	
Kernan, Nigel	Ir.(G)	1962-	
Hooymayers, Cornelius	Neth.	1962-	
Kluwen, Joseph	Neth.	1962-	
Arkwright, Norman	Eng.	1964-	
	(G)		
Volkers, John	Neth.	1964-	
Soucy, Niel	U.S.A.	1965-	
	(G)		

* Not Society of Mary

Chung, James*	Hong Kong	1965-	Honiara 1965-
Galvin, John	U.S.A.	1966-	
	(G)		
Smith, Adrian	Ir.	1966-	
Frey, Jerome	U.S.A.	1966-	
	(G)		
Aike, Michael*	Sol.Is.	1966-	

* Not Society of Mary

Society of Mary - Brothers:

Jean-Claude (J.-C. Charvin)	Fr.	1908-31 +
George (Richard Dwyer)	Aust.	1911-42 1946-57 +
Roberto (R. Moiso)	Ital.	1920-42 1946-68 +
Gerard (Joannes Pot)	Neth.	1934-42 1946-61
Michael (Henry Cunningham)	Aust.	1935-42
Anthony (Joseph Burke)	Ir.	1935-41
John (J. Raphael Slagle)	U.S.A.	1941-42 1946-
Andrew (George Aylyffe)	Aust.	1946-
Chanel (Henry Dixon)	N.Z.	1947-
Joseph Chanel (Howard Gordon)	U.S.A.	1953-59
Gregory (William Gregory)	N.Z.	1955-
Leonard (L. Ashley Sydenham)	Aust.	1956-
Colin (C. John Campbell)	Aust.	1960-
Clement (Albert Turnbull)	N.Z.	1960-
Jerome (Marino Hura)	Sol. Is.	1960-
Joachim (Joachim Kona)	Sol. Is.	1961-
Mark (Albert Varaolia)	Sol. Is.	1961-
Frederick (Daniel Lemana)	Sol. Is.	1963-
Gerard (Hugh Connell)	Aust.	1965-
Campion (Edward Buckley)	Eng.	1965-
John (J. van der Laar)	Neth.	1965-
Christian (Lusiano Sikwa'ae)	Sol. Is.	1965-
Paul (Maemae)	Sol. Is.	1966-
John (Diau)	Sol. Is.	1965-
Patrick (Raemidiga)	Sol. Is.	1965-

Missionary Sisters of the Society of Mary:

Barthelemy (Marie Guérin)	Fr.	1904-21 +
Iréné (Marie Coupry)	Fr.	1904-42 1946-65
Léon (Berthe Léauté)	Fr.	1906-42 1946-63
Antonia (Elizabeth Ernstsneider)	Gr.	1909-42 1946-52 +
Salome (Jeanne Rouleau-Lapointe)	Fr.	1911-13 +
Patrice (Martha Hermouët)	Fr.	1911-31 +
Laurent (Josephine Launay)	Fr.	1911-42 1946-58 +
Noémie (Melanie Jaumouillé)	Fr.	1911-42 1946-
Simone (Emilie Boirivant)	Fr.	1912-18 +
Brigitte (Emilie Hessin)	Fr.	1912-42 1946-
Raphael (Marguerite Margand)	Fr.	1914-42 1946-
Edmée (Marie Bonnet)	Fr.	1914-43 1946-53 +
Pierre (Marie Jeanroy)	Fr.	1916-19 +
Salomé (Eugenie Hermouet)	Fr.	1919-42 1946-
Gonzague (Marguerite Rouillard)	Fr.	1920-26
Sylvia (Fanny Lossois)	Fr.	1920-42 +
Christophe (Blanche Perodeaud)	Fr.	1923-28 +
Radegonde (Eudoxie Naud)	Fr.	1923-27 +
Reine (Josephine Ernault)	Fr. (T)	1923-42 1946-
Stephanie (Marguerite Rousseau)	Fr.	1924-42 1946-
Xavier (Marie-Anne Rouaud)	Fr.	1926-42 1946-
Basil (Helen Dunn)	U.S.A.	1927-32

Geraldine (Isabelle Picard)	U.S.A.	1929-42 1946-
Evangeline (Laura Bernard)	Can.	1929-42 1946-
Fernande (Jeanne Rondel)	Fr.	1930-42 1946-
Lucien (Maria Lammer)	Gr.	1932-34 +
Theresa (Anita Cartier)	U.S.A.	1932-42 1946-
Methoda (Maria Fabcic)	Ital.	1932-42 1946-
Faustina (Giuseppina Pezzaioli)	Ital.	1933-42 1946-50
Amabile (Maria Vezzoli)	Ital.	1934-37
Loyola (Georgette Charriau)	Fr.	1935-42 1946-62
Odilia (Anna-Maria Iitis)	Fr.	1935-42 +
Sylvester (Emiline Duguay)	U.S.A.	1936-
Georges (Anne-Marie Koelsch)	Fr.	1937-42 1946-52
Immaculata (Bertha Penny)	Eng.(N)	1938-42 1946-
Frances (Patricia Ross)	N.Z.(N)	1939-42 1946-
Hermine (Hermine Deveau)	U.S.A. (T)	1946-56
Joseph (Ann Beck)	Aust. (N)	1946-
Gerald (Rita Parent)	U.S.A. (N)	1947-
Bernadette (Mary Mercovich)	Aust.(T)	1947-
Assumpta (Theresa Douillard)	U.S.A.	1947-64
Irene (Jeannette Bérubé)	U.S.A.	1948-
William (Victoria Martin)	U.S.A. (T)	1948-

Jude (Marie-Antoinette Pelletier)	U.S.A.(N)	1949-
Francine (Florence St.Onge)	U.S.A.	1949-51 (GT)
Claudette (Rhea Letourneau)	U.S.A.(T)	1949-
John (Cecilia Lyons)	Aust. (N)	1949-65
Harold (Laura Moore)	U.S.A.(M)	1950-
Mauricia (Cecile Mailloux)	U.S.A.(T)	1951-
Corinne (Gloria Fournier)	U.S.A.	1951-54
Cyrilla (Thérèse Deveau)	U.S.A.	1951- (GT)
Kateri (Catherine Cronin)	U.S.A.(T)	1952-58
de la Salette (Marie Chaloux)	U.S.A.	1954-
Philothea (Elizabeth Blake)	U.S.A.(T)	1954-
Dismas (CLaire O'Brien)	Aust.(GT)	1954-
Christine (Antonia Dekkers)	Neth.	1952-
John Patrick (Hilda Martin)	U.S.A.(N)	1957-
Denyse (Kathleen McKeon)	Aust. (T)	1958-
Henry (Imelda Bérubé)	U.S.A.	1959-
Magdaleine (Yvonne Coutelen)	Fr. (N)	1960-
Emmanuel (Marie Joyce)	Aust. (T)	1960-65
Barnabas (Maisie McLaughlin)	N.Z. (N)	1961-
Placida (Phyllis Doucet)	U.S.A.	1962- (GT)
Jovita (Marguerite Levasseur)	U.S.A.(N)	1962-
Camillus (Lorna Tinkler)	Aust. (N)	1963-65
Josette (Mary Keegan)	Aust.(GT)	1964-
Madonna (Theresa Maher)	Aust. (T)	1964-
Francis Bernadone (Frances Reed)	Aust.(GT)	1964-66
Tarcisius (Pauline Rae)	Aust.(GT)	1965-
Oliver Plunkett (Margaret Hyland)	N.Z. (N)	1965-
Rosalie (Alicia Ryan)	N.Z. (T)	1965-
Bernadette (Marie Lamerand)	Aust.(GT)	1966-
Ida (Mary Snyder)	U.S.A.	1966- (Dr)

Marist Brothers of the Schools (F.M.S.):

John William	(Roberts)	Aust.	1938-41
Ephrem	(Stephens)	Aust.	1938-43 1946-52
James	(Thrift)	Aust.	1938-43
Irven	(McDonough)	Aust.	1941-43 1946-50 1961-66
Colman	(Carroll)	Aust.	1949-63
Gervaise	(Shekelton)	Aust.	1951-54
Godfrey	(Boshell)	Aust.	1952-58 1965-66
Francis Borgia	(McGinty)	Aust.	1954-55
Alphonsus	(Laumanasa)	Sol. Is.	1958-60
Howard	(Sukuata)	Sol. Is.	1958-61
Edwin	(Meresinihinua)	Sol. Is.	1959-60 1962-64
Chanel	(?)	Aust.	1961-2 1964
Bernard	(Kangu)	Sol. Is.	1962-63
Benedict	(Kinoko)	Sol. Is.	1963-64
Donald	(Mahon)	Aust.	1964-
Raphael	Tura)	Sol. Is.	1964-
Alban	(Doyle)	Aust.	1966

Daughters of Mary Immaculate:*

Aloisia	Takwa	1935
Teresia	Wanoni Bay	1935
Margarita	Savo	1936
Bernarda	Wanoni Bay	1936
Bernadetta	Rohinari	1939
Ioana	Buma	1940
Iulia	Tarapaina	1942
Lusiana	Rohinari	1942
Silvia	Buma	1944
Odilia	Wanoni Bay	1944
Alberta	Avuavu	1945
Angete	Buma	1946
Ulalia	Buma	1946
Sanele	Tarapaina	1951
Benedita	Wanoni Bay	1951
Madalena	Wanoni Bay	1951
Dorotea	Mami	1951
Basilia	Rokera	1951
Enerika	Rokera	1951
Eleni	Mami	1952
Paulina	Takwa	1954
Gabriela	Rohinari	1954
Clotilda	Takwa	1955
Victoria	New Hebrides (N)	1956
Bernardina	Rohinari	1956

* The dates given are those of religious profession.
 Since 1947 the D.M.I. have taken formal vows.
 Hitherto they had taken promises.

Anastasia	New Hebrides	1956
Senoveva	Buma (T)	1956
Donasiana	Tarapaina (T)	1956
Angela	Buma	1956
Rita	Takwa	1957
Elisabete	Wanoni Bay	1957
Sesilia	Buma	1957
Dominica	Tarapaina (T)	1957
Katarina	Mami	1957
Isabella	Tangarare	1957
Noela	Savo (T)	1957
Francina	Takwa (T)	1958
Lusia	Rohinari (T)	1958
Scholastica	Takwa (T)	1959
Domitilla	Marau	1959
Veronika	Mami	1959
Paula	Rokera	1959
Anna	Tarapaina (T)	1959
Mikaela	Avuavu	1960
Goretti	Avuavu	1960
Rosa	Dala	1960
Karolina	Savo	1960
Rosaria	Rohinari (T)	1960
Daniela	Rohinari (T)	1960
Emmanuela	Tarapaina (T)	1960
Tarsisia	Tanagai	1961
Celina	Takwa (T)	1961
Rosanita	Tarapaina	1961
Luisa	Takwa	1961
Christiana	Buma (T)	1961
Joanita	Tanagai (T)	1961

Faustina	Ataa (T)	1961
Margaret	New Hebrides	1962
Batistina	Takwa (N)	1962
Bernarda	Marau	1962
Josepha	Avuavu	1963
Adriana	Dala	1963
Teresia	Takwa (N)	1963
Juliana	Buma (N)	1963
Antonia	Takwa (N)	1963
Patrisia	Takwa	1964
Loretta	Dala	1964
Josephine	Tanagai	1964
Eleonora	Visale	1965
Corinne	Savo	1965
Maureen	Tanagai	1965
Francisca	Savo	1965
Laurensia	Takwa	1965
Augustina	Ataa	1966
Vincensia	Takwa	1966
Celestina	Tangarare	1966
Emiliana	Russell Is.	1966
Philippa	Buma	1966
Jacinta	Tanagai	1966

APPENDIX A iiiNORTH SOLOMONSSociety of Mary - Priests:

Englert, Eugene	Gr.	1899-1902	Kieta 1901-2
Flaus, Charles	Fr.	1899-1900 1906-15	Poporang 1899-1900 Kieta 1906-9 Burunotui 1910-15
Broyer, Pierre	Fr.	1899, 1901, 1903	P.A. 1899-1904
Estienne, Nicholas	Fr.	1899-1900	
Perpezat, Jean-Baptiste	Fr.	1901-3 +	Patupatuai 1903
Meyer, Pierre	Lux.	1901-3 +	Kieta 1901-3
Forestier, Joseph	Fr.	1900-18 +	Poporang 1900-9 Kieta 1910-18 P.A. 1904-18
Seiller, Charles	Fr.	1903-43 1946-51 +	Kieta 1903-43 " 1946-51
Laurent, François	Fr.	1903	
Liogier, Pierre	Fr.	1904-5 +	
Grisward, Joseph	Lux.	1905-46 +	Monoitu 1922-38
Allotte, François	Fr.	1904-43, 1946-48+	Patupatuai 1905-18 Tinputz 1918-40
Rausch, Jean	Lux.	1905-12	Patupatuai 1905-8 Koromira 1908-12

Binois, Albert	Fr.	1908-50 +	Burunotui 1910-20 Tambatamba 1920-25 Poporang 1925-31 Tambatamba 1931-49
Boch, Maurice	Alsace	1908-18 1920-42 1946-53 +	Poporang 1908-16 Burunotui 1916-18 Poporong-Kieta 1920-30 Poporang 1930-42 Poporang 1946-50 P.A. 1920-30
Goedert, Nicholas	Lux.	1909-40 +	Koromira 1912-21? Muguai 1921-40
Servant, Guillian	Fr.	1910-59 +	Koromira 1911-19 Hanahan 1922-38
Chaize, Leon	Fr.	1911-46	Torokina 1911-20 Sipai 1921 Burunotui 1921-22 Gagan 1922-28
Bertet, Joseph	Fr.	1911-14 +	Tambatamba 1913
Montauban, Paul	Fr.	1914-58 +	Burunotui 1914-22 Lemanmanu 1922-28 Gagan 1928-58

Poncelet, Jean-Baptiste	Belg.	1913-42 1946-50	Patupatuai 1913-21 Turiboiru 1921-42 Turiboiru 1946-50
Morel, Amatus	Fr.	1916-43	Torokina 1923?-32
Strock, Jean-Baptiste	Lux.	1918-28	Teop 1924-28
Schank, Pierre	Lux.	1920-42 1946-56 +	South Bougainville
Wade, Thomas	U.S.A.	1923-59	Burunotui 1924-28 Lemanmanu 1928-30 V.A. 1930-59
Lebreton, Gabriel	Fr.	1927 -	Mission Ships
Conley, John	U.S.A.	1926-43 +	Turiboiru 1926-28 Burunotui 1928-30 Lemanmanu 1930-39 Nissan 1939-42
McHardy, Emmett	N.Z.	1929-32 +	Tunuru 1929-33
Kloster, Anthony	Gr.	1929-38 +	
Muller, Adam	Gr.	1929-	Sipai 1934-39 Torokina 1939-42
McConville, James	Ir.	1930-43 1946-52 1958 -	Chabai 1932-36
Tonjes, Bernard	Gr.	1930-48	Sovele 1930-42
Brosnahan, Timothy	U.S.A.	1931-33	
Schlieker, Joseph	Gr. (T)	1932-65 +	Monoitu
Wissing, Anthony	Gr.	1933 +	

Lebel, Albert	U.S.A.	1933-	Asitavi 1934-40 Hahela 1954-60 Monoitu 1960-
Desjardins, Louis	U.S.A.	1934-39	
Caffiaux, Paul	Fr.	1935-	Buka
Hébert, Honoré	U.S.A.	1936-43 1946-7	Patupatuai 1937-42
Weber, Gulielmus	Gr.	1936-45 +	
Hennessey, James *	U.S.A. (G)	1936-42	Chabai 1936-41 Lemanmanu 1941-2
Lamarre, Joseph	U.S.A.	1937-43 1947-	Hanahan 1937-42 Hanahan 1947-61
Dionne, Roland	U.S.A.	1937-43 1946-	Kuraio 1940-43 Kuraio 1946-61
Fluet, Henry	U.S.A.	1937-60	
Miltrup, Frank	Gr. (T)	1938-	
Lepping, George	U.S.A.	1938-42 1945-	
Junkers, Arthur	Lux.	1939-48	
O'Sullivan, Richard	Aust.	1940-	
Logrip, Robert	U.S.A.	1946-54	
Clemens, Thomas	U.S.A.	1946-57	
Kleman, Francis	U.S.A.	1946-55	
Barrett, Charles	U.S.A. (T)	1946-59	
Moran, Leonard	U.S.A.	1946-54	
Hogan, Thomas	U.S.A. (T)	1947-64	
Flannery, John	Aust.	1947-56	

* Not a member of the Society of Mary

Hannan, James *	Aust.	1947-48	
McGuire, Patrick *	Aust.	1947-50	
Brady, Thomas *	Aust.	1948-50	
Maher, John *	Aust.	1948-50	
Brosnahan, James	N.Z. (T)	1948-64	Choiseul 1948-56
Fingleton, Walter	Aust. (T)	1948-	Tabago 1959-
L'Estrange, Thomas	Aust. (T)	1948-58	
Moore, James	U.S.A.	1948-	Moratona 1949-
Keady, John	U.S.A. (T)	1949-	
Rondeau, Andrew	Can.	1950-66	
Lemay, Leo	U.S.A. (G)	1950-54 1960-	V.A. 1960-
Elixmann, Francis	Gr. (T)	1951-	Sovele 1960-
Scanlon, Desmond	N.Z.	1951-53	
Mentzer, William	U.S.A.	1952-	
Pelletier, Gerard	U.S.A. (T)	1952-	
Demers, Paul	Can. (T)	1952-	
Caldwell, Lancelot	Aust. (T)	1953-62	
Fahey, Robert	U.S.A. (T)	1953-62	
Luecken, Herman	Gr.	1953-	
Tamuka, Aloysius *	Buin	1953-	
Tatamus, Peter *	Buka	1953-	
Grenier, Carlton	U.S.A.	1955-	
Kutulas, Nicholas	U.S.A.	1955-	
Mills, Vincent	Aust. (T)	1955-66	
Springer, Francis	U.S.A. (GT)	1955-	
Dowden, Leo	Aust.	1956-58	

* Not a member of the Society of Mary

Fahey, George	U.S.A.	1958-
Lapointe, Gerard	U.S.A.	1958-
	(GT)	
Wöste, William	Gr.	1958-
Sicard, Paul	U.S.A.	1959-66
Duffy, Edmund	Ir. (T)	1960-
de Klerk, Emery	Neth.	1960-62
	(G)	
Zumsande, Bernard	Gr.	1961-
Wiley, Robert	U.S.A.	1962-
	(T)	
Bourgea, Roger	U.S.A.	1962-
	(T)	
Geers, Franz	Gr. (T)	1962-
Brosnan, Bernard	Aust.	1963-
Kronenberg, Henry	Neth.	1964-
	(T)	
Mallinson, Patrick	U.S.A.	1964-
	(GT)	
Mahoney, Denis	N.Z.	1965-
de Block, Joseph	Neth.	1965-
Harding, James	Aust.	1965-
	(Dr)	
Tuohy, Philip *	N.Z.	1966-
McMahon, James	Ir.	1966-

Society of Mary - Brothers:

Paul (Bernard Jahnke)	Gr.	1905-13
Joseph (Franz Bisch)	Gr.	1905-11 +
Carol (Jaschke)	Gr.	1905-44 +
Franz (Gickshaff)	Gr.	1908-14
Joseph (William Paul)	Gr.	1910-22
Bruno (Schilder)	Gr.	1926-42, 46-65 +
Jules (Stranen)	Lux.	1927-
Gregory (Giefers Anthony)	Gr.	1929-43 +
Xavier (Francis Koch)	Gr.	1930-
Henry (Samuel Simmonds)	N.Z.	1935-42 1946-48 +
Paul (Frederick Riggs)	U.S.A.	1940-43
Joseph (John Redman)	U.S.A.	1940-43 +
Michael (John Brosnan)	N.Z.	1947-
Laurence (L. Hampton)	N.Z.	1951-
Anschar (A. Moorman)	Austria	1951-
Philip (P. Kerley)	Aust.	1954-
Edward (E. Herbel)	Aust.	1954-55
Pius (John Alex)	Gr.	1956-
Patrick (P. Thompson)	Aust.	1957-
Albert (Holi)	Sol. Is.	1959-63
Heribet (H. Kasselmann)	Austria	1960-
John Bosco (Vabetenasue)	Sol. Is.	1960-
Martin de Porres (Ovaro)	Sol. Is.	1961-62
Justin (Taria)	Sol. Is.	1962-
Dominic Savio (Ulena)	Sol. Is.	1962-66
Louis (Makauke)	Sol. Is.	1962-
Robert (Bogoninu)	Sol. Is.	1963
Kevin (Honghuruho)	Sol. Is.	1963-

Ambrose (John Peri)	N.Z.	1963-
William (W. Archer)	N.Z.	1963-
Aloysius (A. Graeme)	Aust.	1965-
Herman Joseph (Tarutoro)	Sol. Is.	1966-

Missionary Sisters of the Society of Mary:

Claire (Etiennette Rochette)	Fr.	1901-40
Ignace (Madeleine Schaal)	Fr.	1901-43 1946-59 +
Mathieu (Marie Couesse)	Fr.	1903-21 +
Boniface (Wendelina Grüber)	Gr.	1903-13
Claver (Maria Vincke)	Gr.	1905-30 +
Placide (Marie-Anne Letort)	Fr.	1905-42 1946-48 +
Camille (Marie Steil)	Lux.	1906-44 +
Damien (Marie-Rose Le Cardinal)	Fr.	1905-27 +
Mathias (Agnes Sattelberg)	Gr.	1908(or 9) - 41 +
Ursule (Gesina Schütte)	Gr.	1910-24
Adelaide (Marie Richard)	Fr.	1912-41 +
Ludovica (Franziska Mosner)	Gr.	1912-63 +
Robert (Augustine Plumelet)	Fr.	1913-21
Lidwina (Catharina Didelot)	Fr.	1913-43 1946-63 +
Crescentia (Clara Monning)	Gr.	1914-42 1946-
Adelberta (Helena Jaspers)	Gr.	1915-
Martial (Marie Fardeau)	Fr. (N)	1919-42 1946-
Imelda (Germaine Charpantier)	Fr. (T)	1920-23
Simone (Anne-Marie Rivaud)	Fr. (T)	1921-33
Dolores (Mary Quigley)	Eng.	1922-42 1946-
Elie (Mary Anna Leclere)	Can.	1923-42 1946-50
Wendelina (Maria Ritcher)	Fr.	1924-42 1946-

Melanie (Alexandrine Pavageau)	Fr.	1926-43 1946-
Domitilla (Lucie Pedrault)	Fr.	1927-42
Henriette (Lucienne Goudreau)	U.S.A.(N)	1929-43 1946-
de Sacré-Coeur (Margaret-Mary Abbott)	Eng. (T)	1931-42 1946-
Remi (Florida Lachance)	U.S.A.	1932-42 1946-48
Coecilia (Denise Le Guen)	Fr. (T)	1932-42 1946-
Laura (Delia Leveillé)	U.S.A.	1932-35
François Xavier (Marie-Louis Delétroz)	Fr. (T)	1933-43 1946-
Andrea (Anne-Marie Petit)	Fr.	1933-42 1946-54
Gisèle (Antoinette Chaverot)	Fr.	1935-43 1946-
Hortense (Marie-Jeanne Dagenais)	U.S.A.	1936-42 1946-
Blaise (Hélène Bodinier)	Fr.	1937-42 1946-
Fabian (Catherine Doherty)	Ir.	1938-42 1946-
Kevin (Nora Wholey)	Ir. (N)	1939-42 1946-
Severina (Louise Visco)	U.S.A.(N)	1946-58 +
Clara (Margaret Anna Koelzer)	U.S.A.(N)	1946-
Dolorita (Helena Kovach)	U.S.A.(N)	1947-
Wilfrid (Lauretta Plante)	U.S.A.	1948-
Juliana (Florabelle Roper)	U.S.A.(T)	1948-
Catherine (Emma Martinuzzi)	Aust. (T)	1948-
Borromeo (Mildred Wongsam)	Jamaica (TN)	1949-

Joanita (Catherine Landry)	U.S.A.(T)	1949-67
Immacula (Marianne Carrol)	U.S.A.(T)	1949-
Ambrose (Marie Sharkey)	Can. (N)	1951-56
Camilla (Yolanda Bertulli)	U.S.A. (Pharmacist)	1951-55
Emilienne (Carmen St Pierre)	U.S.A.	1951-63
Leo (Cecilia Ouellette)	U.S.A. (Dr)	1951-
Michael (Florence Sedlack)	U.S.A.	1951-
Barbara (Stephanie Fella)	U.S.A.	1952-58
Lawrence (Rita Edge)	U.S.A.(T)	1952-
Theresita (Marcelle Fluett)	U.S.A.(T)	1952-
Regis (Mercedes Kirst)	U.S.A.(N)	1955-62
Concilia (Catherine Keogh)	U.S.A.(T)	1955-
Melita (Frances Dunn)	U.S.A.(N)	1955-
Leona (Florence Ouellette)	U.S.A. (GT)	1957-
Isaac Jogues (Sylvia Kircher)	U.S.A. (GT)	1957-
Tressa (Elaine Bauman)	U.S.A.(N)	1957-
Augusta (Annie Harris)	Can. (N)	1959-
Helena (Patricia Mahoney)	U.S.A.(N)	1959-
Alexander (Jane Stewart)	U.S.A. (GT)	1962-
de Lourdes (Thérèse Lapointe)	U.S.A. (GT)	1962-
Theresanne (Mary Gahan)	U.S.A. (N & Anaesthetist)	1962-
Gerard (Gail Colquhoun)	Aust. (T)	1964-
Louis de Montfort (Jill de Montfort)	Aust. (T)	1964-
Marylin (Hildegard Kunsel)	Gr. (T)	1965-
Joyce Ann (Joyce Ann Edelman)	U.S.A.(N)	1966-
Stephen (Katherine Maloney)	U.S.A.(N)	1966-
Maurine (Margaret-Mary Cole)	Aust.	1966-

Sisters of St Joseph of California:

Isabelle Aubin	U.S.A.	1940-42, 46-56
Irene Alton	"	1940-42, 46-66
Celestine Belerger	"	1940-42, 50-
Hedda Jaegar	"	1940-42, 56-58
Bertha Vigeant	"	1946-62
Marian Durand	"	1946-
Alice Bessette	"	1948-
Humila Belanger	"	1948-66
Elizabeth Lirette	"	1950-66
Andrew Carufel	"	1950-53
Robert René Fortier	"	1953-
Clarice Doyle	"	1954-
Margaret-Mary Marcotta	"	1956-63
Dolorosa Ruiz	"	1957-
Eymard Meloche	"	1957-65
Dennis Marie Dionne	"	1957-
Karen Wilkens	"	1957-64
Benedicta O'Toole	"	1961-
Martin Flood	"	1962-64
Damien Erwin	"	1962-
Vincent Marie Tellerico	"	1962-64
Miriam Eckerg	"	1963-
Hébert Laroche	"	1963-
Clare Oldsfield	"	1965-
Miriam Joseph Thibault	"	1965-
Frances Thérèse O'Born	"	1965-
Celeste March	"	1965-
Stella Marie Tee	"	1966-

Marist Brothers of the Schools (F.M.S.):

John William (Roberts)	Aust.	1941-43 +
Augustine (Mannis)	Aust.	1941-43 +
Donatus (Fitzgerald)	Aust.	1941-43 +
Borgia (Connell)	Aust.	1948-56
Simeon (McKenzie)	Aust.	1948-62
Jude (Featherston)	Aust.	1949-56
Ephrem (Stephens)	Aust.	1954-59
Francis Brogia (McGinty)	Aust.	1956-60
Kevin (Eaton)	Aust.	1957-60
Clarence (Cunningham)	Aust.	1957-58 1960-65
Edwin (Meresinihinua)	Sol. Is.	1958-
Raphael (Tura)	Sol. Is.	1958-60
Joseph Adrian (Lukwaku)	Sol. Is.	1959-61 1963-65
Bernard (Kangu)	Sol. Is.	1960-61 1965-67
Cornelius (Keating)	Aust.	1961-66
Michael (Kaminei)	Sol. Is.	1961-
Finan (Mahony)	Aust.	1961-
Elwyn (Connell)	Aust.	1961-63
Alphonsus (Laumanasa)	Sol. Is.	1962-67
Howard (Sukuatu)	Sol. Is.	1962-
Edward (Maher)	Aust.	1962-64
John (Mauro)	Sol. Is.	1963-67
Godfrey (Boshell)	Aust.	1964
Berchmans (Murray)	Aust.	1965-

Congregation of the Sisters of Nazareth:*

Cecilia	(Odilia Bouai)	Turiboiru	1947
Francis	(Cecilia Woite)	Tinputz	1950
Joseph	(Magdalena Kahoga)	Hantoa (T)	1955
Veronica	(Martha Hihono)	Lemanmanu (T)	1956
Pauline	(Joana Tsiosi)	Hanahan (T)	1956
Regina	(Anna Laburai)	Piano (N)	1957
Savio	(Magdalena Kausa)	Monoitu (N)	1957
Assumpta	(Magdalena Hokuto)	Monoitu (T)	1958
Domitilla	(Elizabeth Kanihai)	Monoitu (N)	1959
Maurice	(Emilia ?)	Nila	1959
Georgina	(Marcellina Kisohe)	Nila	1959
Vincent	(Margarita Bohin)	Gagan (N)	1959
William	(Joana Arisie)	Kuraio (T)	1959
Andrew	(Lucia Matabeu)	Kuraio (T)	1959
Jacinta	(Gabriella Tsieri)	Kuraio (T)	1959
Matthias	(Catherina Amamisia)	Kuraio (T)	1959
Carmel	(Margarita Lahiau)	Hanahan (N)	1962
Celine	(Josephine Taunau)	Nila (T)	1962
Severina	(Veronica Hita)	Monoitu (T)	1962
Robert	(Magdalena Ingesi)	Monoitu (T)	1962
Aloysius	(Agatha Berapinopino)	Tearouki (N)	1962
Patrick	(Elizabeth Bovoro)	Tearouki (N)	1963
Stephen	(Hortense Sigal)	Hahela (T)	1963
Stella	(Josephine Api)	Hahela (T)	1964
Gabriel	(Margarita Lesi)	Nissan (T)	1965

* The dates given are those on which the sisters took vows of profession.

Celestine	(Veronica Salei)	Lemanmanu	1965
Benedicta	(Maria Sahutsi)	Lemanmanu	1965
Martina	(Martina Mansa)	Hanahan (N)	1965
Michaeline	(Catherine Riabet)	Carterets	1966
Raphael	(Rapahelia Siamea)	Tabago	1967

APPENDIX Aiv
WESTERN SOLOMONS

Order of Preachers - Priests:

McDonald, Peter	Aust.	1956-	
Loughnan, Anthony	N.Z.	1956-	
Meece, Dominic	Aust.	1957-	
O'Grady, Cyril	Aust.	1958-	
Tarrant, Stephen	Aust.	1960-	
Crawford, Eusebius	Ir.	1960-	V.A. 1960-

Brothers:

Dominic (Mahoney)	Aust.	1956-60
Paul (Purcell)	Aust.	1957-

Nuns:

Bonaventure (Joan Dolahenty)	Aust.	(GT)	1956-58
Amata (Kathleen Clark)	Aust.	(T)	1956-68
Stephen (Helen Rankin)	Aust.	(T)	1956-58
Philomena (Dorothy Cooper)	Aust.	(T)	1956-
Christopher (Kathleen Slattery)	Aust.	(T)	1957-
Rose-Columba (Margaret Freer)	Aust.	(T)	1957-62
Paul-Francis (Noeline Magree)	Aust.	(NT)	1957-
Antonina-Mary (Ellen Kelly)	Aust.	(T)	1959-69
Francis (Nancye Downey)	Aust.	(T)	1959-64 +
Dolores (Dorothy Ryan)	Aust.	(T)	1959-

Pauline (Pauline Wallace)	Aust.	(T)	1960-64
Elizabeth (Eileen Connelly)	Aust.	(T)	1962-65
Patrick (Mary Grant)	Aust.	(T)	1965-
Damian (Bernadette Ryan)	Aust.	(T)	1966-
Mark (Margaret Leaney)	Aust.	(T)	1966-
Francesca (Anne Hogan)	Aust.	(T)	1966-

APPENDIX BLETTER OF REVEREND C.E. FOX TO FATHER E. BABONNEAU S.M.

May 15. 1916

Dear Father

I am so sorry to have missed you. We must have been at Funarite when you passed I think. I heard at Napasuvai of your great walk and was looking forward so much to a talk with you both.

Please thank the Sisters for a meal fit for a king. Eggs and delicious bread, after 3 weeks in a whaleboat you can think what a treat they were. And your boys were so kind and hospitable. I kept my dog tied up in the boat shed this time so the cats were in peace.

Warren has gone to the war. We are all going to a conference at Maravovo when the ship comes at the end of June. I shall be away about 3 weeks and then may settle at Nōrañora for a time. I baptised 3 chiefs and 60 of their people on the other side. One very wet Sunday we spent in a copra shed at Haununu, the chief was unfriendly and would only allow us the copra shed - rather small for 10, but dry and we said our Mattins and Evensong in comfort.

Well, loquacitas is nutrix vanitatum.

I shall always pray for your work and rejoice sincerely in your success.

Yours faithfully

Original: Wanoni Bay.

C.E. Fox.

APPENDIX CLETTER OF MAMATAU TO SEKATA

Tulagi
Sol. Is.
March 19th 1924

Mamatau to Sekata

Dear Sekata,

I want to talk to you Sekata. time I stop along you, you say you no like him this fellow Mission Catholic, because he kill him altogether this fellow man belonga you. You say you want him nother kind mission so you tell him me go look him. alright now me go look him now me send him this fellow Pastor Wicks. him master belong mission Seven Day. This fellow mission he no alsame Catholic. He no make him humbug along altogether boy. Suppose some men along Buini talk along you along this fellow mission you no believe him because me savy this fellow mission He Good fellow. No Gamon.

Me want to come along you and me want to bring him this fellow missionary but me no can come now because Master belong me want me to stop along him. He no let in me go now alright now me no go me send him Luavao to talk along you for he savy talk along you and talk along white men.

Now Sekata you think good fellow along this fellow mission and you look out good fellow more.

Now me finish along talk along you.

Mamatau

Original: O.R.

APPENDIX DTHE TEACHING OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH¹5th April, 1947

Now that we have the 'Marching Rule', it is as if we are working on our own for a good way of life.

Until now we have been misled because the Government has been leading us. The Government comes from a foreign country and he will not look after us properly because he is not of our stock. He has done some good things for us and also some bad things: such matters as should make the good running of the Church, he does not give much attention to. His attention is directed to getting more money for himself. When he gets enough money, he returns home and another man takes his place.

And so it is now necessary that we should work for our own interest and, two types of work must be established: work for the body and work for the soul. The Church (Catholic) works for the soul and the Council works for the body.

Michael Asipara and Iuliano Kaihoa, two catechists of the Catholic Church in the Areare District have been approached and they in turn have discussed this matter

1

Written by John Apui. The Areare original of this document is in the possession of Fr P. Geerts. The version given here was translated by Rev. Br Francis Mauli S.M., and the translation checked by Fr Geerts, who also supplied the glossary.

with Hoasihau representing the D.O. (District Officer) and Aliko the head of the Marching Rule. Aliko and Hoasihau have given permission to all the Catechists of the Catholic Church to put a penalty on any christian who might do anything wrong in the Church.

Therefore from now on, you are forbidden to take any cases of minor offence to the Council. All these cases the catechist should settle in his own village. Should anyone disobey a catechist then he must be handed over to the Council and the Council will penalize him with a heavy penalty of £1: 10/- for the Church and 10/- for the Council. Should he fail to pay this fine, he should be punished in the Church for 4 weeks. If not he should serve a 4 weeks sentence for the Council. The Council will put a fine on him because he disobeys a catechist, the Araha (The Lord of the Village) or the Catholic Chiefs of his home. When a catechist orders that a man should pay a fine of 5/- and he refuses to pay it, the catechist must punish him in church for a period of 1 week. For 3 days he must stand before the altar during morning and evening prayers. When standing before the altar, he must face the congregation. For the remaining three days, he must say a whole rosary after morning and evening prayers after everyone else have left the church. If he pays his fine of 5/-, then 3/- should be given to the Church and 2/- to the Council. If he is fined 10/-: 5/- for the Church and 5/- for the Council. If he does not pay this he must be punished in the church for two weeks. One week standing before the

altar and one week saying the rosaries. When he is fined £1, then 10/- for the Church and 10/- for the Council. If not, he must be punished in church for four weeks: standing for two weeks and saying the rosaries for two weeks.

Things for which penalties are incurred

1. Keeping a child from school	Penalty	5/-
2. A child runs away from school	"	5/-
3. Worshipping other gods	"	£1
4.* <u>Haneia unu</u> and <u>Sunaniahu</u>	"	£1
5.* <u>Aihanehane</u>	"	£1
6.* <u>Horikana</u> , <u>Sahu</u> and <u>Surunori</u>	"	£1
7. Bad language, bad jokes, being nude in the presence of others or performing bad signs with the hands or the mouth or to incite others to do this	"	5/-
8. Criticising the Catholic Church	"	5/-
9. Laughing and playing in church	"	5/-
10. Causing those who pray to laugh	"	5/-
11. Ridiculing Hymns and Prayers	"	5/-
12. Scandalizing children	"	5/-
13. Quarreling with priests or catechists publicly	"	£1
14. Swearing, cursing, slandering, preventive cursing, speaking evil against someone	"	5/-

* See glossary below, p.440.

15. Making someone taboo or not taking certain food after someone is dead	Penalty	5/-
16. Quarreling or secret talk to cause any quarrel	"	5/-
17. Lying, jealousy, false witnessing	"	5/-
18. To report what is wrong in the village to the priests, catechists, chiefs or to the lord of the village (<u>Araha</u>) is not forbidden. If it is hidden away in the village then what is wrong is not fixed. God will be angry. To talk about it only among the common folks or to cause anger or to take a message between a boy and a girl	"	5/-
19. Standing beside a house or behind a house to listen secretly to what is being said inside	"	5/-
20. Waiting to catch someone along the road or in the bush	"	5/-
21. Pretending to be in church while abandoning one's faith	"	£1
22. To take money for what is not true, the money must be returned and the person must be fined	"	£1
23. Stealing, cheating, taking something without permission	"	5/-
24. Opposing the Church or telling the people not to help support the priests and catechists	"	5/-

25. To fine because of someone who is Penalty
 dead, or anyone who orders the
 people to do that fine " £1
26. Any catechist who quarrels with his
 own people whom he teaches or who
 jokes to them or fights them without
 any cause must be fined " £1

10/- is given to the Church, 10/- to the Council. And if this catechist or the teacher beats someone causing this person to bleed, he should be fined 5/- for the Church and 5/- for the Council and 10/- is given to the beaten person. Because you catechists should not quarrel. If any of your belongings are stolen, or if people tell tales about you, or your children are badly treated by someone, or people speak evil about you, or speak falsely about you, do not judge them. It is the duty of the Council, the chiefs and the lords of the villages. They will speak on your behalf.

THE TEACHING OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH ON MARRIAGE

It is good that christians should marry. Any man who refuses to marry should become a Brother. Any woman who refuses to marry should become a Sister. It is not good to live a single life because God does not create man to lead such a life. Any man or woman who has a very bad or infectious disease such as leprosy, T.B.,

yaws or asthma must not receive the Sacrament of Matrimony, because Matrimony must not be taken lightly. God made the Sacrament for christians to create new people with Him, so that healthy people will be born into his church and so fill up Heaven. Those who marry with bad diseases, they abuse the Sacrament, and the babies born from such wedlocks are doomed to death and are unhealthy. Many diseases will come from this, the villages will be empty and the church will not be populated.

The two couples desiring marriage must prepare themselves for at least three weeks. After three weeks the two must come before the priest to receive the Sacrament of Matrimony. If they have been living together before receiving the Sacrament, when they receive the Sacrament they commit a grave sin called sacrilege because they abuse a sacred thing of the church.

1. If a man and a woman love each other, and it is made public knowledge and afterwards one of the party refuses to marry, the one refusing must be taken before the Council and must be fined £2.
2. Any catholic who desires to marry a pagan partner or a member of the protestant sect, it is good that the two must first go before the Council so that the partner must first become a catholic. If he or she fails to keep the promise then he or she must be fined £12 and there is no marriage.
3. If two catholics wants to marry and another catholic interferes by his words or forbids them without any real good reason, that person must be fined £2.

- 4.* Haahou is forbidden, if a catholic woman confesses she must be fined £2. And if any man forces a woman to make a public confession then that man must be fined £2.
5. It is forbidden to marry two wives. Any catholic man who is already married and again marries another wife he must be fined £12 and then leave his second wife.
6. Any catholic who divorces his wife and then marries another must be fined £12 and his second wife must leave him.
7. Any catholic who causes trouble to another because of confession or fights etc. must be fined £1.
8. Any husband who speaks badly of his wife or uses bad language at her or curses her troubles her or beats her or uses all the wicked things against her, must face a fine of 5/-. If the wife does the same thing towards her husband, the same fine is applied.
9. If parents curse their children, they must be fined 5/-.
10. If the parents do not teach and advise their children, they should be fined 5/-.
11. If a Catholic woman drinks any medicine which causes sterility for life or the woman is pregnant and interferes with the child through abortion by fire or by medicine or by any other abortive methods, she must be fined £12.

* See glossary below, p.440.

12. A man or woman who gives medicine for abortive purposes must be fined £12.
13. A young man or woman should not play together or touch their bodies. If they do so, they should be fined £1. If they cannot meet the fine they must marry unless they have a bad sickness.

Catholics must not be surprised when the catechists judge you. What is bad now will make you good later on. Do not refuse to pay your fine. Hoasihau and Alikí are helping the church by allowing these penalties to be given to God so that the catholic villages will not be lost.

You have already been told what money you have to pay to the Council, that money will make the Council grow. If you do not pay your fine, the Church will not also grow. See, church articles like chalices, ciborium, paten, tabernacles, and holy vestments for the altars and bells and everything for the churches. The prices for these articles are very dear. So you must not refuse to give your fine to the church so that your chapels will be good. The money you give as fine, portion you give to the council will be put into the treasure for its own use. All the important men of the village must see and know about them. One part of the money goes to the chapel of the village also this money must not be given to another village. This money is to be used for the building up of the village.

These are some offences which do not need a fine:

1. One who does not go to prayer.
2. One who breaks the fast in Lent.
3. One who is lazy to pray on holydays.
4. One who works on Sunday.
5. One who swears at the sun or birds or any creatures created by God.

Those who commit such offences, the Catechist must punish him in Church.

These are some of the more serious offences which a catechist cannot handle alone:

1. Stealing money.
2. Stealing pigs.
3. Committing sins with very small girls.
4. Sins with a married woman.
5. Divorce, and getting another wife.
6. One man marrying two wives.
7. Hindering childbirth.
8. Killing children.

Those who break these major rules will be taken before the Council, because breaking these rules bears a heavy fine (£12): £6 for the church and £6 for the council.

GLOSSARY

<u>Haneia Unu</u>	Judgement by hot stones (trial by fire)
<u>Sunanihau</u>	Ordeal by fire.
<u>Aihanehane</u>	A cure for sickness, using <u>ria</u> (ginger) or other trees.
<u>Horikana</u>	Singing incantation to a ghost in order to know a cure for a sickness.
<u>Sahu</u>	Lime on which incantations are done and which is then put over the doorway outside, or on the ridgepole or blown around in the house; used as protection for the house, inhabitants or belongings against evil spirits or sickness.
<u>Surunori</u>	A ceremonial purification used in the <u>totora</u> . A moss growing on a tree is put in the palm of the hand, upon which a ghost is invoked; the moss is then rubbed on the stomach-region, before starting to eat in order to purify the food lest the person becomes ill.
<u>Totora</u>	A feast provided for young unmarried men, celebrating their conquests over young women.
<u>Haahou</u>	Public confession of sexual delinquencies; made by betrothed or married women in order to ensure the birth of healthy children.

APPENDIX ETWO PETITIONS FOR MASSES, KWAIO DISTRICT, MALAITA, 1966.¹

Farther John Ioane,

[Say] Mass for the side [relatives?] of mother Maria Lusia, to the name of the spirit Boo [who was also named?] Tutuitau.

And in the names of the [following] big spirits of the people: Aaikwasi, Elkwataimae, Daumalu, Daualea, Daufua, Maduii, Aato, Lolofo, Futaione, Fufulimauli, Lualaeafuna, Kwaasifanua, Maeni, Manufoo, Kwaloafu.

This Maria Lusia she gives ten and five [shillings] for a Mass [for?] these left behind by Boo Tutu[i]tau.

1

These petitions were received by Fr J. Galvin, of Buma, by whose courtesy the originals are in the present writer's possession. The English translations which precede each petition were made by Bishop D. Stuyvenberg.

Farther John Soane

Ma Latana Adalo Lana Ma
Mita, Gula Ana Gaia M. Lusia
Ma Boo Ma Latana Tu Tui Tau,

Ama Lataga Inoni Adaloki
Aikwasi, Ekwataimae, Daumalu,
Daualea, Dufua, Madui, AAtor,
Lohofor, Futaione, Fufulimanti,
Lualesfuna, Kwassifuna,
Maeni, Manufo, Kwalofo?

Ni, Maria Lusia, & Kwatei Lana
Akisa

Tee Akwala Ma Mima,
Wana Onoma Boo tutu tau.

1 Kwaleo
 2 Tofuage
 3 Kwagio
 4 Ruuinao
 5 Finisi
 6 Kekefe
 7 Vio
 8 Fidianiu
 9 Tagimou
 10 Unda
 11 Lamosu
 12 Fouinao
 13 Foanga
 14 Tarikalao
 15 Lalate
 16 Dafou
 17 Kwailau
 18 Kwalau
 19 Basirua
 20 Buarii
 21 Mumute
 22 ifugagala
 23 Lakwasia

24 Maunibo
 25 Falaia
 26 Gelekwalo
 27 Geleuma
 28 Loulou
 29 Maekwangafia
 30 Fotoia
 31 Kwainiia
 32 Firuniau
 33 Ganaka
 34 Niuafea
 35 Nengena
 36 Ladaa
 37 Gailoa
 38 Lalakwa
 39 Fofona

The spirits,
 to break the
 influence.

[Say] Mass because of suffering
 [from?] spirits. The spirits
 of Kwaleo. Pray for those
 [others, also?]. Pray for this
 place. Pray also because of
 the [power?(maekwanga, literally
 means 'thinking')] of the
 spirits, [so as] to break
 the influence [of it?].

- 1 Kwaleo
- 2 Jofu age
- 3 Kwagro
- 4 Ruuinao
- 5 Finisi
- 6 Kekefe
- 7 Vio
- 8 Fidiani
- 9 Jagimou
- 10 Unaa
- 11 Lamosu
- 12 Fouinao
- 13 Joanga
- 14 Jarikalao
- 15 Lalate
- 16 Dafou
- 17 Kwailau
- 18 Kwalau
- 19 Basiria
- 20 Buarii
- 21 Mumute
- 22 Ifugagala
- 23 Lakwasia
- 24 Maunibo

- 25 Talai
- 26 Gelekwal
- 27 Geleuma
- 28 Loulou
- 29 Maekwangafia
- 30 Fotoia
- 31 Kwainia
- 32 Firuniau
- 33 Ganaka
- 34 Niuafea
- 35 Nengena
- 36 Ladaa, Maada L. Ki
- 37 Gailoa } anamatooni
- 38 Lalakwa } olaesuaani
- 39 Jofonu

O Misa usia A DALO
 i USU tau. A DALO
 MA. LA. KWALEO
 Faasiai Kwaa
 Faasia fanua Lei.
 O Misa Lou usia la
 MAEKWANGA maadalo
 na tooni moolaesuaani

APPENDIX F

Shipping contacts of the Catholic missionaries in the Vicariate Apostolic of Melanesia, 1845-56. (All contacts, except that marked *, were deliberately arranged).

Ship	Months (part or whole) in which the missionaries had contact with the ship in the vicariate.	Occasion and/or functions of contact
<u>Marian Watson</u>	December 1845-March 1846	Marists travel from Sydney to the Solomon Islands; visit Ysabel. Then settle at Makira Bay, (San Cristobal). Chauvain and Prosper evacuated to Sydney, Montrouzier taken to New Caledonia to recuperate.
<u>Clara</u>	July 1946	Visit to Makira Bay by Bishop Douarre of New Caledonia.
<u>Arche d'Alliance</u>	February 1847	Visit of Collomb to Makira Bay; return of Montrouzier from New Caledonia.

Ship	Months (part or whole) in which the missionaries had contact with the ship in the vicariate.	Occasion and/or functions of contact
<u>Anonyme</u>	August-October 1847	Return of Collomb from New Zealand, via New Caledonia; evacuation of San Cristobal; transfer of mission to Murua.
<u>Arche d'Alliance</u>		[Visit to Makira Bay January 1848. Finding the Marists gone, attempted to sail to Murua, but was forced back to Sydney by bad weather].
<u>Ariadne</u>		[Visit to Makira Bay February 1848. Punitive expedition against the Toro.]

Ship	Months (part or whole) in which the missionaries had contact with the ship in the vicariate.	Occasion and/or functions of contact
<u>Anonyme</u>	April-July 1848	Arrival of Villien at Murua; Collomb, Frémont, Villien, at Optat leave Murua and commence mission on Umboi.
<u>Marian</u>	April-May 1849	Arrival of Trapenard and Ducrettet at Murua; Frémont and Optat evacuated from Umboi to Murua; Aristide evacuated to Sydney.
? ['whaling ship']	1849	Ship arrived Sydney 14 December 1849 and brought news of the missionaries; it had called unexpectedly at Murua some time before.
<u>Dancer</u>	August-Sept. 1850	Ducrettet and Optat evacuated from Murua to Sydney.

Ship	Months (part or whole) in which the missionaries has contact with the ship in the vicariate.	Occasion and/or functions of contact.
<u>Bride</u>	June-July 1851	Montrouzier and a party of eight youths from Murua and the Laughlan Islands brought to Sydney.
<u>Bride</u>	September 1851	Islanders returned to Murua.
? ['trading ship']	mid-1852	Ship left Sydney in May and returned in September. Captain had agreed, for £40, to call at Murua.
<u>Jeune Lucie</u>	October-November 1852.	Arrival of Italian missionaries at Murua; Frémont, Reina, Mazzucconi, Ambrosoli and Corti re-open mission on Umboi; Trapenard evacuated to Sydney.

Ship	Months (part or whole) in which the missionaries had contact with the ship in the vicariate.	Occasion and/or functions of contact
<u>Supply</u>	October-November 1853	Remaining Marists evacuated to Sydney; Frémont from Umboi and Thomassin and Gennade from Murua.
<u>Jeune Lucie</u>	January 1855	Visit to Murua and Umboi; Mazzucconi taken to Sydney (arrived 19 April) to recuperate.
<u>Phantom</u>	May-July 1855	Italians evacuated from Umboi and Murua to Sydney (arrived 23 August)
<u>Gazelle</u>	September 1855	Returning Mazzucconi from Sydney (deported 17 August) to Murua, the ship was wrecked and looted near Guasopa Bay.
<u>Favourite</u>	May 1856	Raimondi visits Murua to investigate fate of Mazzucconi.

APPENDIX GTOTAL LIVING BAPTIZED CATHOLICS IN THE PREFECTURES AND
VICARIATES APOSTOLIC OF THE SOLOMON ISLANDS, 1900-66.

YEAR	SOUTH	NORTH	WESTERN
1900	-	5	
1901	-	15	
1902	40	28	
1903	59	45	
1904	-	50	
1905	-	50	
1906	-	70	
1907	-	85	
1908	-	183	
1909	-	280	
1910	-	353	
1911	-	-	
1912	-	639	
1913	1,472	-	
1914	-	1,155	
1915	-	1,216	
1916	-	-	
1917	2,647	1,566	
1918	3,006	-	
1919	-	-	
1920	-	2,787	
1921	-	3,024	
1922	-	3,416	
1923	4,389	4,080	
1924	-	5,031	
1925	-	6,453	
1926	-	7,266	
1927	5,429	8,262	
1928	5,893	9,506	
1929	5,998	10,809	
1930	6,256	12,514	

YEAR	SOUTH	NORTH	WESTERN
1931	6,899	14,013	
1932	6,853	15,093	
1933	7,081	16,655	
1934	7,201	18,888	
1935	7,322	20,522	
1936	8,884	21,632	
1937	9,560	23,091	
1938	9,929	24,612	
1939	10,879	26,830	
1940	11,474	-	
1948	14,199	-	
1949	15,234	-	
1950	16,049	-	
1951	16,768	-	
1952	17,444	32,690	
1953	17,753	34,467	
1954	17,843	36,097	
1955	18,414	37,680	
1956	18,749	39,479	
1957	19,159	-	
1958	20,486	-	
1959	21,046	43,370	1,751
1960	21,729	-	1,871
1961	22,372	-	1,880
1962	23,175	46,523	1,970
1963	23,611	48,408	2,086
1964	24,687	48,347	2,744
1965	25,462	50,126	2,845
1966	26,262	52,960	3,009

Sources.

North: reports in A.P.M. OSS 3321

South: reports in A.P.M. OSM 3321 and 040
 'Rapports au Propagande, 1946-58', B.A.H.
 vicariate statistical summaries, 1958-66,
 in the present writer's possession.

Western: personal communication from Fr C.O'Grady O.P.

APPENDIX H

Pupils attending Catholic mission primary schools in the prefectures and vicariates apostolic of the Solomon Islands, 1900-66.*

SOUTH				NORTH		
YEAR	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
1900						54
1			80			70
2			60			80
3			105			-
4			88			70
5			77			140
6			-			150
7			[240]			205
8			128			228
9			[355]			272
10			-			257
11			[279]			-
12			[307]	270	90	360
13			[870]			515
14			338			453
15			[849]			445
16			-			433
17			-			306
18			[928]			-
19			600			521
20			-			[975]
21			613			[891]
22			614			[1,433]
1923	377	253	630			-
"	[626]	[440]	[1,066]			-
1924	440	282	722			-
"	[696]	[515]	[1,211]			[2,206]
1925	458	303	761			-
"	[725]	[540]	[1,265]			[2,291]

* The unbracketed figures show the number of pupils in station schools; the bracketed figures show the total pupils in village and station schools.

<u>SOUTH</u>				<u>NORTH</u>		
YEAR	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
1926	456	360	816	324	36	360
"	[700]	[570]	[1,270]	[1,616]	[688]	[2,304]
1927	485	355	840	272	86	358
"	[687]	[552]	[1,239]	[1,904]	[1,021]	[2,925]
1928	454	333	787			
"	[634]	[497]	[1,131]			[3,223]
1929	447	345	792			453
"	[633]	[515]	[1,148]			[3,207]
1930						377
"						[3,286]
1931	444	342	786			528
2	472	313	785			-
3	487	397	884			-
4	327	249	576			514
5	268	187	465			477
6	296	256	552			517
7	380	284	664			-
8	375	308	683			
9	405	306	711			
1947			579			
8						
9	457	360	817			
1950			-			
1	564	392	956			
2	566	411	977			1,953
3	475	283	758			2,153
4	593	357	950			-
5	655	439	1,094			
1956	641	441	1,082	2,304	999	3,303
"				[4,240]	[1,764]	[6,004]
1957	681	491	1,172			

SOUTH				NORTH			WESTERN		
YEAR	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
1958	-	-	1,298						
1959			1,381						
1960			1,546				[298]	[233]	[531]
1961	864	597	1,461			[7,555]	[282]	[243]	[525]
1962	1,115	758	1,873			[8,132]	[276]	[254]	[530]
1963	1,351	874	2,225			[9,764]	[277]	[236]	[513]
1964	1,488	961	2,449	[5,386]	[5,061]	[10,447]	[372]	[342]	[714]
1965	1,645	1,145	2,790						
"	[2,212]	[1,524]	[3,736]	[5,777]	[5,297]	[11,074]	[420]	[354]	[774]
1966	[2,523]	[1,799]	[4,322]	[6,074]	[5,634]	[11,708]	[425]	[362]	[787]

Sources.

North: reports in A.P.M. OSS 3321.

German New Guinea, Annual Report, 1911-2.

Roscoe to La Pointe, 14 August 1963, M.E.O. Papers, Tsiroge.
vicariate statistical summaries, 1964-6, in present
writer's possession.

South: reports in A.P.M. OSM 3321.

Moore, Catholic Education 1965.

B.S.I.P. Annual Report, 1966.

vicariate statistical summaries, 1959-66, in the present
writer's possession.

Western: personal communication from Fr C. O'Grady O.P. (nila).

APPENDIX I1

GUADALCANAL - CATHOLIC POPULATION, 1913-65.

DISTRICT*	1913	1915	1923	1936 ^a	1946	1950	1955	1960	1965
Rua Sura	130								
Tangarare	685	900	1,290	1,495	1,566	1,650	1,723	1,890	2,208
Avuavu	116	159	1,029	2,095	2,410	2,603	1,714	2,056	2,267
Marau	45						<u>1,147</u> 2,861	<u>1,371</u> 3,427	1,465
Tsuva									<u>827</u> 4,559
Visale	430	500	1,266	1,477	1,304	994	1,094	1,137	1,361
Tanagai- Honiara (1947-55)						<u>512</u> 1,506	<u>708</u> 1,802		
Tanagai								692	646
Honiara								<u>287</u> 2,116	705
Yandina									<u>279</u> 2,991
Ruavatu		65	200	415	579	727	934	1,092	906
TOTAL	1,406	1,624	3,785	5,482	5,859	6,486	7,320	8,525	10,664

Notes to Appendices I, J, K.

- * Stations are grouped according to the original mission districts in which they are located.
- a Comparison with the vicariate total for 1936 suggests that all or some of the station totals for that year have been inflated by about 8% by catechumens.

Sources:

reports in A.P.M. OSM 3321 and 040.
station statistical returns 1935-66, B.A.H.
vicariate statistical summaries, 1959-66, in the present writer's possession.

APPENDIX Iii

GUADALCANAL-ANNUAL BAPTISMS, 1913-66.

YEAR	VISALE			TANGARARE			AVUAVU			RUAVATU		
	CHILD	ADULT	TOTAL	CHILD	ADULT	TOTAL	CHILD	ADULT	TOTAL	CHILD	CHILD	TOTAL
1913	43	57	100	71	123	194	23	32	55	-	-	-
1918	60	87	147	56	63	119	85	160	245	-	-	-
1923	-	-	143	-	-	115	-	-	118	-	-	55
1924	-	-	143	-	-	112	-	-	126	-	-	27
1925	-	-	87	-	-	106	-	-	171	-	-	42
1926	-	-	68	-	-	92	-	-	310	-	-	37
1927	-	-	60	-	-	92	-	-	166	-	-	38
1928	-	-	66	-	-	92	-	-	229	-	-	21
1929	-	-	67	-	-	74	-	-	97	-	-	18
1930	-	-	50	-	-	69	-	-	130	-	-	31
1931	-	-	75	-	-	79	-	-	135	-	-	45
1932	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1933	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1934	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1935	-	-	-	66	0	66	84	46	130	-	-	-
1936	-	-	-	80	0	80	84	23	107	-	-	-
1937	-	-	-	65	0	65	85	51	136	-	-	-
1938	-	-	-	61	6	67	81	79	160	-	-	-
1939	-	-	-	62	3	65	95	64	159	-	-	-
1940	-	-	-	57	0	57	87	44	131	-	-	-
1941	-	-	-	61	1	62	-	-	-	-	-	-
1942	-	-	-	59	0	59	-	-	-	-	-	-
1943	-	-	-	43	0	43	-	-	-	-	-	-
1944	-	-	-	55	0	55	-	-	-	-	-	-
1945	-	-	-	62	0	62	-	-	-	-	-	-
1946	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	40	52	30	11	41
1947	48	3	51	50	0	50	-	-	-	43	5	47
1948	47	3	50	70	1	71	64	2	66	27	9	36
1949	51	2	53	57	0	57	94	5	99	41	7	48
1950	51	0	51	59	1	60	79	17	96	23	51	74
1951	59	9	68	100	6	106	107	25	132	34	14	48
1952	75	8	83	65	8	73	143	64	207	32	1	33
1953	67	8	75	56	3	59	79	44	123	31	24	55
1954	74	21	95	87	7	94	133	36	169	49	27	76
1955	72	40	112	74	3	77	145	79	224	51	25	76
1956	79	35	114	52	10	62	119	60	179	59	19	78
1957	73	17	90	86	4	90	100	17	117	56	11	67
1958	76	24	100	71	0	71	42	79	121	60	22	82
1959	91	8	99	60	3	63	-	-	-	72	22	94
1960	108	0	108	72	3	75	117	33	150	47	4	51
1961	72	8	80	79	2	81	153	30	183	65	12	77
1962	111	17	127	88	0	88	113	12	125	61	5	66
1963	104	15	119	73	4	77	65	22	87	30	33	66
1964	74	10	84	69	4	73	161	25	186	52	5	57
1965	153	29	182	91	4	95	190	26	216	53	2	55
1966	135	14	149	84	3	87	-	-	-	49	5	54

APPENDIX Ji

MALAITA - CATHOLIC POPULATION, 1913-65.

DISTRICT	1913	1923	1936*	1946	1950	1955	1960	1965
Rohinari	14	97	1,578	2,257	845	925	965	1,104
Rokera					<u>2,176</u> 3,021	555	668	710
Tarapaina						<u>1,920</u> 3,400	<u>2,233</u> 3,866	<u>2,414</u> 4,228
Buma	19	150	993	1,806	2,318	2,214	2,619	3,023
Dala						<u>632</u> 2,846	830	938
Uru							<u>202</u> 3,651	<u>283</u> 4,244
Takwa*			746	1,347	2,355	2,571	3,023	2,357
Ataa								<u>1,069</u> 3,426
TOTAL	33	247	3,317	5,410	7,694	8,817	10,540	11,898

APPENDIX JiiMALAITA - ANNUAL BAPTISMS, 1913-66.

YEAR	ROHINARI			BUMA			TAKWA		
	CHILD	ADULT	TOTAL	CHILD	ADULT	TOTAL	CHILD	ADULT	TOTAL
1913	0	0	0	0	1	1			
1918	5	5	10	45	-	45			
1923			31			35			
1924			35			68			
1925			79			91			
1926			79			59			
1927			44			47			
1928			131			98			
1929			164			111			
1930			137			165			
1931			167			114			
1935	154	50	194	68	71	139			
1936	167	49	216	48	28	176	101	5	106
1937	104	42	246	29	47	76	83	15	98
1938	111	58	269	49	108	157	127	41	168
1939	109	61	170	41	51	92	57	21	78
1940	122	67	189	74	53	127	121	29	150
1941	97	41	138	52	47	99	76	31	107
1942	118	44	162	57	35	92	81	11	92
1943	73	36	109	59	77	136	52	-	52
1944	85	15	100	90	58	148	110	15	125
1945	66	47	113	96	66	162	87	36	123
1946	195	117	312	94	48	142	122	32	154
1947	149	147	296	127	78	205	112	105	217
1948	205	129	334	104	67	171	261	122	383
1949	136	66	202	93	46	139	161	160	321
1950	76	56	132	147	79	226	146	39	185
1951	250	31	381	105	54	159	97	43	140
1952	100	8	108	116	103	215	90	31	121
1953	110	12	122	107	28	135	119	39	158
1954	117	24	241	120	37	157	104	31	135
1955	114	9	123	99	56	155	105	51	156

	ROHINARI			BUMA			TAKWA		
YEAR	CHILD	ADULT	TOTAL	CHILD	ADULT	TOTAL	CHILD	ADULT	TOTAL
1956	142	17	159	145	74	219	122	49	171
1957	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1958	120	19	139	144	44	188	98	72	170
1959	127	17	144	131	37	168	108	30	138
1960	149	15	164	132	24	156	108	13	121
1961	179	30	209	148	63	211	115	44	159
1962	158	15	173	164	51	215	130	26	156
1963	151	29	180	159*	26*	185*	109	25	134
1964	171	41	212	147	55	202	133	53	186
1965	154	25	179	160	32	192	135	53	186
1966	176	11	187	146	39	185	148	23	171

* Does not include Dala.

APPENDIX K1

SAN CRISTOBAL - CATHOLIC POPULATION, 1913-65.

DISTRICT	1913	1923	1936	1939	1946	1950	1955	1960	1965
Wanoni Bay	33	357	796	813	943	1,224	1,428	1,694	1,919
Faamera (incl. Ulawa 1938-41)				<u>377</u> 1,190					
Faamera-Mami					<u>321</u> 1,264	<u>442</u> 1,666	<u>586</u> 2,014		
Manivovo								<u>669</u> 2,363	<u>718</u> 2,637
Ulawa					167	203	263	301	263
TOTAL	33	357	796	1,190	1,431	1,869	2,277	2,664	2,900

APPENDIX KiiSAN CRISTOBAL AND ULAWA - ANNUAL BAPTISMS, 1913-66.

	SAN CRISTOBAL			ULAWA		
YEAR	CHILD	ADULT	TOTAL	CHILD	ADULT	TOTAL
1913	2	15	17			
1918	9	27	36			
1923	-	-	58			
1924	-	-	58			
1925	-	-	36			
1926	-	-	66			
1927	-	-	54			
1928	-	-	30			
1929	-	-	41			
1930	-	-	55			
1931	-	-	45			
1935	41	10	61			
1936	50	89	139			
1937	101	119	220			
1938	58	43	101			
1939	93	88	181			
1940	106	70	176			
1941	102	34	136			
1942	41	33	74			
1943	43	14	57			
1944	41	11	52	7	11	18
1945	-	-	-	5	7	12
1946	46	9	55	-	-	-
1947	58	44	102	8	0	8
1948	59	47	106	7	0	7
1949	50	19	69	9	12	21
1950	92	118	210	6	0	6
1951	91	129	220	17	9	26

	SAN CRISTOBAL			ULAWA		
YEAR	CHILD	ADULT	TOTAL	CHILD	ADULT	TOTAL
1952	84	34	118	3	4	7
1953	87	61	148	9	15	24
1954	65	20	85	14	0	14
1955	65	7	72	6	2	8
1956	90	14	104	7	0	7
1957	76	24	100	13	14	27
1958	66	13	79	13	2	15
1959	77	44	121	11	0	11
1960	70*	6*	76*	-	-	-
1961	89	16	105	-	-	-
1962	93	15	108	13	0	13
1963	97	2	99	5	3	8
1964	86	4	90	-	-	-
1965	77	1	78	-	-	-
1966	84	8	92	5	2	7

* Does not include Manivovo.

APPENDIX L

Figures (incomplete) for annual baptisms
in Buin and Siwai, 1906-42.*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Patupatuai</u>	<u>Turiboiru</u>	<u>Muguai</u>	<u>Monoitu</u>
1906	2			
1908	18			
1909	19			
1910	19			
1911	13			
1912	21			
1913	37			
1914	35			
1915	57			
1916	107			
1917	169			
1918	163			
1919	137			
1920	<u>188</u>			
1921		75	97	-
1922		85	133	61
1923		165	58	79
1924		209	84	124
1925		87	-	111
1926		239	-	52
1927		222	-	152
1928		264	-	164
1929		261	-	102
1930		244	-	100
1931		286	-	82
1932		337	-	77
1933		-	-	152

* Figures do not exist for the Siwai stations of Katuku (1931-8) and Piano (1937-4), nor for Turiboiru and Muguai except for the years shown. The Patupatuai baptisms 1912-7 include fifty-two Siwai.

Year	<u>Patupatuai</u>	<u>Turiboiru</u>	<u>Muguai</u>	<u>Monoitu</u>
1934		-	-	157
1935		-	-	148
1936		-	-	104
1939		-	-	256
1941		-	-	226
1942		-	-	314

Sources:

Baptismal register for Patupatuai - Turiboiru,
1906-31, Turiboiru.

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'Baptêmes annuels de la station de Buin',
signed J.B. Poncelet, 29 September 1924, O.R.

APPENDIX M

Annual baptisms and total baptized Catholics,
Buka, 1910-61

<u>Year</u>	<u>Baptisms</u>	<u>Catholics</u>
1910	6	-
1911	0	-
1912	10	13
1913	18	-
1914	28	65
1915	12	65
1916	-	108
1917	-	-
1918	-	-
1919	-	-
1920	-	320
1921	209 (26)*	448
1922	103 (43)	530
1923	372	-
1924	509 (209)	1091
1925	1012 (279)	1995
1926	-	-
1927	-	-
1928	1185 (676)	3667
1929	1367 (792)	4422
1930	1902 (541)	4254
1931	-	-
1932	-	-
1933	-	-
1934	751 (397)	5894
1935	607 (168)	6188
1936	529 (189)	6144
1952	-	6770
1961	-	8841

* The figures in parentheses indicate the number of adults included in the baptism figures.

Sources:

1910-36: Statistical summaries, A.P.M. OSS 3321.
 1952-61: Statistical summaries, Lebel Papers.

APPENDIX N

Annual expenditure and income from mission plantations of the Prefectures and Vicariates Apostolic of the North and South Solomon Islands, 1901-56.

	NORTH		SOUTH	
YEAR	INCOME	EXPENSES	INCOME	EXPENSES
	£*	£*	£*	£*
1901	20	750	0	1,200
1902	48	1,040	0	1,800
1903	100	1,520	-	-
1904	100	1,600	0	1,800
1905	100	1,520	12	2,000
1906	100	960	-	-
1907	160	1,356	0	1,673
1908	485	1,778	0	2,217
1909	-	-	148	2,132
1910	-	-	180	1,606
1911	484	1,813	172	2,006
1912	-	-	-	-
1913	748	3,032	440	2,179
1914	612	2,562	612	2,842
1915	880	2,548	536	1,940
1916	720	1,520	-	-
1917	480	1,500	-	-
1918	800	2,480	614	2,492
1919	1,435	4,000	750	3,880
1920	2,465	4,896	-	-
1921	779	3,763	1,010	3,020
1922	400	3,890	1,100	3,280
1923	860	9,007	1,080	2,412
1924	1,084	4,714	803	2,075

* From 1901-30 the amounts cited are in £ sterling, and from 1931-56 in £ Australian.

	NORTH		SOUTH	
YEAR	INCOME	EXPENSES	INCOME	EXPENSES
	£	£	£	£
1925	1,738	6,065	1,300	2,373
1926	1,540	5,852	1,908	3,170
1927	3,051	9,005	1,664	3,276
1928	4,285	9,387	-	-
1929	4,138	9,305	-	-
1930	3,709	9,402	-	-
1931	3,133	9,102	142	6,017
1932	-	-	484	6,212
1933	2,593	9,890	556	7,449
1934	1,063	-	413	5,407
1935	1,840	8,831	103	4,052
1936	-	-	541	5,247
1937	3,350	11,188	1,840	8,521
1938	2,290	7,188	2,841	9,579
1939	1,950	8,937	845	8,219
1949	-	-	1,408	15,279
1950	-	-	-	-
1951	-	-	3,113	16,619
1952	-	-	2,175	30,979
1953	-	-	4,370	23,901

	NORTH		SOUTH	
YEAR	INCOME	EXPENSES	INCOME	EXPENSES
	£	£	£	£
1954	-	-	3,637	27,578
1955	37,500	84,296	3,014	29,900
1956	28,720	81,538	5,144	30,222

Sources

North:

A.P.M. OSS 3321
 " OSS 333
 " OSS 12jo

South:

" OSM 3321

APPENDIX 0

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS ORGANIZED BY THE CATHOLIC MISSION IN THE VICARIATE
APOSTOLIC OF THE NORTH SOLOMONS AS AT OCTOBER 1966:

DISTRICT	PROJECT	MEMBERS	CAPITAL (\$ Australian)			EQUIPMENT
			Members ' contributions	Grants		
				Amount	Source	
Lemanmanu	Milling Housing	110*	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	Oxfam	2 sawmills
Hanahan	Milling Housing	200*	4,000	1,000	"	2 sawmills
Gagan	Milling Housing Copra	20*	2,000	6,000	German Govt.	1 copra dryer
Gogohe	Milling Housing Copra	150*	3,000	2,824 9,412 2,000	" " Misereor	1 tractor 1 workshop 1 sawmill
Hantoa	Milling Housing	150*	2,000	nil		1 sawmill

DISTRICT	PROJECT	MEMBERS	CAPITAL (\$ Australian)			EQUIPMENT
			Members' Contributions	Grants		
				Amount	Source	
Sipai	Resettlement Planting	1850	\$ nil	\$ 5,000	Freedom from Hunger Campaign	1 sawmill
Kuraio	Resettlement Planting	1500	nil	5,000	"	1 sawmill 1 tractor
Torokina	Planting	1100	nil	7,000	Oxfam	
Sovele	Road-making Land clearing	3500	nil	11,059	German Govt.	1 bulldozer
Moratona	Milling Housing Roadmaking Land clearing	220	nil	10,000	N.C.W.C. Misereor	5 sawmills 1 bulldozer
Turiboiru	Milling	100*	2,000	nil		1 sawmill
Tabago	Milling	100*	2,000	nil		1 sawmill (2 rice hullers since 1951)

* Denotes membership based on shareholding, usually one per family. The unstarred figures refer to actual or potential beneficiaries of projects.

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