

MR. THEODORE F. BEVAN'S
FIFTH EXPEDITION
TO
BRITISH NEW GUINEA.

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David Mitchell Esq^{re}

*from 'his obliged & obedient servant'
the author.*

MR. THEODORE F. BEVAN'S

FIFTH EXPEDITION

TO

BRITISH NEW GUINEA.



PRELIMINARY PRESENTATION PAMPHLET (ILLUSTRATED).

(LIMITED TO 100 COPIES.)

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1888.



Respectfully yours
theodore Bevan

EXPLORATION

*In February last, .
Mr. T. F. BEVAN, F.R.*

*An expedition (con
under Mr. BEVAN'S le
Majesty's Special Comm*

In THIRTY-FOUR

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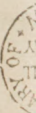
*emptying into the Gul
ascended for a distance*

Owing to imaginary difficult discovery by Captain Blackwood in is but one of numerous subdivisions Before the allotted time had expired river, lying between Bald Head and at the point where the party turned 200 yards wide. With the exception previously known to exist in British fairly well known. The two new Fly River, that they have been proved

Considerable tracts of country cleared, and which would then be suitable Douglas River has been tested, per fruit be of an excellent cigar flavour. Mr

"It shows t

In other places, dense forests of well-navigable for deep-draughted vessels. The sago palm of commerce was also



PROSPECTUS.



EXPLORATION IN BRITISH NEW GUINEA.

In February last, Mr. PHILP (of Messrs. Burns, Philp & Co.), offered Mr. T. F. BEVAN, F.R.G.S., the use of s.s. "Victory" for six weeks' work.*

An expedition (comprising 21 persons all told) was thereupon formed under Mr. BEVAN'S leadership, with the sanction and approval of Her Majesty's Special Commissioner, the HON. JOHN DOUGLAS.

In THIRTY-FOUR DAYS' actual exploration

TWO NEW LARGE RIVERS,

emptying into the Gulf of Papua, were discovered, and in each case ascended for a distance of ONE HUNDRED MILES.

Owing to imaginary difficulties the Aird River had been previously left totally unexplored since its discovery by Captain Blackwood in 1845. It has now been proved by this last expedition that the so called Aird is but one of numerous subdivisions in the delta of a larger river, which Mr. Bevan has named the Douglas. Before the allotted time had expired, access was also found into an equally important and previously undiscovered river, lying between Bald Head and Orokolo in the Gulf of Papua (named by Mr. Bevan the Jubilee River), and at the point where the party turned back, nearly 100 miles by river course from the coast, it was still over 200 yards wide. With the exception of the Fly River, no other rivers offering facilities for navigation were previously known to exist in British New Guinea, the coast line of which, however, had for many years been fairly well known. The two new rivers have in each case this most important additional advantage over the Fly River, that they have been proved to afford *ready access to mountain ranges.*

Considerable tracts of country in the deltas were covered with scrub that, in some places, could be easily cleared, and which would then be suitable for tropical planting. A sample of tobacco obtained from natives on the Douglas River has been tested, per favor of Mr. J. H. Maiden, of the Technological Museum, and pronounced to be of an excellent cigar flavour. Mr. Maiden added—

"It shows that New Guinea is suitable for the growth of cigar tobacco."

In other places, dense forests of well-grown and varied *timbers* came down to the water's edge; while these rivers, navigable for deep-draughted vessels for great distances inland, offer unequalled facilities for *floatation* purposes. The sago palm of commerce was also observed in considerable plenitude.

* Prior to his last expedition Mr. BEVAN had spent the latter part of 1884, early months of 1885, also from September 1885, to July, 1886, in British New Guinea.

Eighty miles from the coast, on an alluvial island in the Philp River (a tributary of the Douglas), specimens of metamorphic slate, quartz, together with black sand, the latter containing uniformly a few auriferous indications, were found. Mr. C. S. Wilkinson, Government Geologist, reports that they were "probably brought down from the primary formation forming the mountains, which may not be more than 20 or 30 miles distant." And adds:—"We may therefore anticipate *mineral discoveries* being made in these mountains." Mr. Wilkinson continues:—"It is probable that where the ranges are composed of the slate and granite formations the vegetation will not be so dense, for these rocks do not produce such rich soil as do the basaltic, dioritic, or limestone formations, and may therefore be easily explored."

The country was found to be but very *thinly* inhabited beyond the coast line, and no natives or traces of them were seen in the higher waters of either river. Friendly relations were entered into with four new tribes living in or near the deltaic portion of the rivers. The temperature averaged (March-April, 1887) 86° in the shade at noon and 72° at daybreak. Owing to the almost daily scouring of the rivers mosquitoes and malaria were unknown.

Collections were made of zoological, botanical, and ethnological specimens, and an interesting series of photographs illustrative of the natives, also river scenery, was taken. Baron Von Mueller, in describing two plants new to science, which this expedition obtained, spoke in eulogistic terms of the exploring party, and added that through their—

"Skill and courage the regions of the Aird River system have now become opened up to civilisation and commerce, with the additional hopeful prospect of ready access to high and likely *salubrious* main ranges for mining and rural enterprises."—(See Proceedings Linnæan Society, July, 1887.)

The zoological collection was sent intact to the Australian Museum, and the few specimens new to its collections were donated to that institution. That these discoveries and collections were the result of *six weeks'* exploration offers a hopeful prospect of further and enlarged results as following on more extended operations.

Her Majesty's Special Commissioner, Hon. J. Douglas, in writing from Port Moresby, under date 13th May last, to Mr. Bevan, said:—

1. "I beg to congratulate you on the important discoveries made by the expedition under your leadership. 2. I hope that at some future date you may be able to follow up your explorations among the fine rivers running into the head of the Papuan Gulf. They appear to be likely to provide a *highway for commerce* into the interior of New Guinea."

The firm, to whom he was almost entirely indebted for the means of carrying on his recent discoveries, wrote as follows to an evening paper, under date 5th August, 1887:—

NEW GUINEA EXPLORATION.

To the Editor.

SIR,—Our attention has been drawn by Mr. Theodore Bevan, F.R.G.S., to a notice that appeared among your "Brevities" of Monday, 1st instant, which stated that we deny that we have anything whatever to do with the Bevan New Guinea Expedition. This statement must have been printed under a misapprehension. We not only have something to do with the expedition (our Mr. Philp being one of the Committee appointed to forward Mr. Bevan's views), but the plan itself has our warmest sympathy and support. As stated to your shipping reporter, the launch was not provided by us, nor are we solely responsible for the fitting out of the proposed exploring party, as we were almost entirely for the last one conducted by Mr. Bevan. The public of this and the neighbouring colonies, and the Government of New South Wales, fully recognise the value of the discoveries made by Mr. Bevan, and the able manner in which the expedition was conducted. Thanks to this, Mr. Bevan is, to a great extent, independent of us on the present occasion, and the help we are rendering him is of so unimportant a nature as to be unworthy of mentioning alongside the great aid he is receiving from an intelligent and interested body of scientists, mercantile firms, &c. Only on this account is it, that we are not making ourselves solely responsible for Mr. Bevan's expedition, and if it were, or yet becomes necessary, we shall be ready and willing to help him to the fullest extent with something more than our mere countenance and sympathy, and we much regret that anything we may have said should have given rise to so thoroughly a mistaken view of our relationship to Mr. Bevan's forthcoming expedition. We remain, &c.,

BURNS, PHILP, and CO. (Ld.).

The true importance of adding to our knowledge of these new rivers may be rightly estimated when it is realised that they drain 50,000 Square Miles of territory, or One-seventh of the whole of New Guinea.

Under these circumstances, Mr. Bevan is desirous of acting upon the Special Commissioner's recommendation of following up his discoveries, and hopes to recommence work in September-October next. His plan briefly is—

"To endeavour to trace to their sources the main tributaries of the Douglas (which has superseded the Aird), and the Jubilee rivers; also to determine, if possible, with respect to same, the exact position of the German boundary. Should opportunity present itself, he is also anxious to explore the at present unknown country between the Douglas and the Fly rivers."

(For the sake of clearness it is well to state that the field of Mr. Bevan's work is between 200 and 300 miles to the north-west of Port Moresby, and even a greater distance from the site of the explorations now being carried out on the Owen Stanley range by the Victorian branch of the Royal Geographical Society. For the purely scientific objects of the Victorian expedition the sum of £2000 was recently collected in Melbourne, including a grant of £1000 from the Government).

His project has been rightly understood by the Press as being merely for purposes of discovery and the dissemination, in the broadest of public interests, of more accurate information respecting territories now almost unknown.

In recognition of Mr. Bevan's past services, the New South Wales Government have placed at his disposal a suitable *steam launch*, while the Queensland Government have allowed him the services of a thoroughly competent *surveyor*, and have approved of their s.s. "Albatross" towing the launch over to New Guinea waters.

With the object of helping to promote the necessary funds and giving the work their co-operation, a Committee has been appointed, comprising, amongst others—

SIR ALFRED STEPHEN (*Lieutenant Governor*)

HON. WM. MACLEAY, M.L.C.

HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR OF SYDNEY

W. McMILLAN, ESQ., M.L.A.

(ALBAN J. RILEY, ESQ.)

ROBERT PHILP, ESQ.

SIR EDWARD STRICKLAND, K.C.B., F.R.G.S.,

RICHARD WYNNE, ESQ.

(President Geographical Society)

CHARLES MOORE, ESQ., and

HON. S. A. JOSEPH, M.L.C. (President Chamber

DR. ANDREW GARRAN.

of Commerce)

Together with the Council of the New South Wales Branch of the Royal Geographical Society,

J. T. CALDWELL, 70 Pitt-street, Secretary.

Over £250 has been already subscribed, including donations of £100 from Messrs. Burns, Philp and Co., and £50 from Rt. Hon. Lord Brassey. It is hoped that at least £1,000 will be easily raised.

With the view of enabling the Expedition to start in September before the rainy season commences, your support and patronage are particularly solicited.

Signed and Approved on behalf of the Committee this 16th day of August, 1887.

ALBAN J. RILEY
EDWARD STRICKLAND
S. A. JOSEPH
WILLIAM MACLEAY.

N.B.—Donations to the "Bevan New Guinea Exploration Fund" should be made payable to the Hon. Treasurer, His Worship the Mayor (Alban J. Riley, Esq.), Town Hall, Sydney, N.S.W.



PREFACE.

EXTRACT from Speech of the Premier of New South Wales (Sir Henry Parkes, G.C.M.G.) after Mr. Bevan's return from his *fourth* Expedition.

"It was clear," he said, "that more PRACTICAL results would follow Mr. Bevan's expedition than any that had before been carried out in New Guinea, and it was of great importance that the knowledge gained should be followed up with further research."
—(Sydney *Daily Telegraph*, 14 July, 1887.)

* * * * *

REPORT on a small Collection of Plants from the Aird River System, obtained by Mr. Theodore Bevan during his recent (fourth) Expedition, submitted by Baron von Mueller, K.C.M.G., M.D., PH.D., F.R.S., &c.

I MOST gladly connect with this beautiful and probably fragrant plant (*Mussaenda Bevani*) the name of the explorer, through whose bravery and skill the regions of the Aird River system have now become opened up to civilization and commerce, *with the additional hopeful prospect of ready access to high and likely salubrious main ranges for mining and rural enterprises*.—From Vol. II (Series 2nd) of the "Proceedings of the Linnean Society of New South Wales," 27 July, 1887.

* * * * *

LETTER from Baron Sir Ferd. von Mueller, President Royal Geographical Society of Australasia, to Mr. Theodore Bevan, F.R.G.S., &c., after the latter's return from his *fifth* Expedition (dated Melbourne, 10 February, 1888).

"I AM not altogether sure, dear Mr. Bevan, whether I expressed my *admiration of your heroic conduct* in bringing—in the face of so much peril and almost superhuman toil of yourself and your brave little band—your telling enterprise to so successful and safe a conclusion."

* * * * *

"The best reward is its accomplishment, and *that* will ever remain an *historic* fact!"

EXTRACTS condensed from letter of the Vice-President of Royal Geographical Society of Australasia (Sir Edward Strickland, K.C.B., &c.) to the Government of New South Wales, dated Sydney, 7 January, 1888.

“I MAY be permitted to remind you that the work of that dashing and successful explorer—Mr. Bevan—is of high importance not only to the science of geography, but also to commerce.”

* * * * *

“Mr. Bevan has largely contributed to the unfolding of the hidden secrets of New Guinea *to an extent which never has been equalled.*”

* * * * *

“Working with the slenderest means, he has boldly pursued his discoveries far into the interior of the country, navigating most tortuous and difficult rivers, with the result that he has unfolded to the world a system of waterways of inestimable value—equal in grandeur and practical utility to anything similar known in other countries for purposes of commerce.”

* * * * *

“His work too has been characterized by a conspicuous regard for *humanity*. He has throughout *never injured a native* nor lost one of his own men.”

* * * * *

“Mr. Bevan deserves to be received with distinguished honor; and *well rewarded* for his rich contributions to the prospective wealth of the State by his marvellous and all-important discoveries!”

* * * * *

SYDNEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

AT the quarterly meeting of members, held at the Chamber of Commerce on Monday, 19th March, 1888, the Chairman (Hon. S. A. Joseph, M.L.C.) stated:—

WITH reference to the discoveries made in New Guinea by Mr. Bevan, he hoped that gentleman would be able to obtain from the British Government some sort of concession by which he would be enabled to initiate a *large commercial company* for the purpose of promoting commerce with that new country. There was no doubt

that the country contained a large number of products, such as timber, bark, gutta-percha, sago, hemp, tobacco, resins, beeswax, and spices, to develop a trade in which it only required a certain amount of perseverance and a sufficient amount of capital. He thought that it would be possible, by creating a trade with New Guinea, for the Government to obtain a revenue which might be applied to the reduction of the cost of government of those islands.—*Sydney Morning Herald*, March 20, 1888.

SYDNEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

The Chairman stated :—

WITH reference to the New Guinea exploration question, it was known that subscriptions towards the carrying out of Mr. Bevan's exploration had been raised by the Chambers of Commerce in Sydney and Townsville, and the result of Mr. Bevan's latest trip had been eminently satisfactory. The New South Wales Government had also assisted by the loan of a steam launch; whilst the Queensland Government had sent one of their own surveyors to accompany the party. The result had been that all the previous surveys had been confirmed; and in addition much new work had been done by Mr. Bevan. The advantages accruing to science through this expedition had been acknowledged by the Royal Geographical Societies of London and Australia. *They* (the Sydney Chamber of Commerce) *considered also that the expedition had been of great advantage to commerce, and hoped that Mr. Bevan would get further concessions from the British Government to enable him still further to promote the cause of commerce.* There were, as was well-known to them all, numerous articles indigenous to the islands of New Guinea, which only required perseverance and capital to make them useful articles of trade, such as timber, bark, gutta-percha, sago, hemp, tobacco, resins, beeswax, and spices, all of which merely wanted developing to make them articles of commerce. It would be to the interests both of science and commerce to assist Mr. Bevan in his work of exploration, as he had no doubt that ere long they would derive a revenue from these sources which would more than repay them for their expenditure.*—*Sydney Daily Telegraph*, March 20, 1888.

* N.B.—See correspondence at the end of pamphlet (Letter to the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies).

PREFACE.

EXTRACT from Letter dated Thursday Island, 17th March, 1888,
from H.M. Commissioner for British New Guinea (Hon. John
Douglas) to Mr. Bevan.

* * * * *

2. With regard to your second expedition (Fifth Expedition: though second to the Papuan Gulf), I can only say that I was not informed of your intentions with reference to it,* and if any special sanction had been required from me I think I should probably have refused to give it, on the grounds that it was a *most hazardous thing* to navigate the waters and rivers of the Papuan Gulf in such a steam launch as the "Mabel." *Nevertheless you justified the risks incurred*, and returned to Thursday Island after a second *successful* expedition in which your previous discoveries were *verified*. I congratulate you, and those who accompanied you, *on having survived the perils of a most hazardous voyage*. *You deserve all the credit due to those who run such risks in the cause of geographical discovery*. I congratulate you further on the *peaceful* relations which, *throughout*, you maintained with the native inhabitants of the country you explored.

* * * * *

* In writing the above the Hon. John Douglas was no doubt temporarily oblivious of the fact that under date Granville, New Guinea, 14th October, 1887, he wrote expressing his acknowledgments and thanks for information supplied by Mr. Bevan in reference to the latter's Fifth Expedition. (See Correspondence, page 48.)



TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
Map (at end of pamphlet).	
Preface	iii-v
Short Narrative of Mr. Bevan's Fifth Expedition	1-28
Official Report of Mr. H. J. Hemmy, L.S. (commissioned by Queensland Government to accompany Mr. Bevan's Fifth Expedition)	29-32
Correspondence between Rev. W. G. Lawes and Sir Edward Strick- land, K.C.B. (President Royal Geographical Society, N.S.W. Branch), "Wickham v. Queen's Jubilee River"	33-35
Correspondence between Mr. Bevan and the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies	36-41
Comparative statement of Progress in German New Guinea, and Retrogression in British New Guinea under the Protectorate ...	42
A few words concerning the <i>true</i> character of the Papuans ...	42-43
Correspondence between H.M. Special Commissioner for British New Guinea (Hon. John Douglas) and Mr. Bevan	45-54

[Published in Sydney "Daily Telegraph."]



MR. BEVAN'S FIFTH EXPEDITION.

No. 1.

ITS ORIGIN.

WHEN Mr. Bevan returned to Sydney in May, 1887, with plans and reports of the discovery of two great rivers in British New Guinea (see "Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society," published in London, October, 1887) as the result of an inexpensive private expedition, it might have been expected that public support would at once have been rendered towards a continuance of the work so successfully begun. New Guinea, however, has been such a drain on colonial patience and pockets, and there have been so much mismanagement and so many failures in connection with it, that Mr. Bevan had to suffer for the sins and shortcomings of others. In short, the response to his appeal was most limited and discouraging.

The Government of this Colony, as also that of Queensland, would render nothing but indirect assistance; and the Commissioner for New Guinea (Hon. John Douglas), who had been the first to express a "hope that Mr. Bevan would be able to continue his explorations," gave nothing to aid him in so doing.

As the fruits of an energetic lecturing campaign some £400 only were forthcoming to meet the very heavy expenses that are inseparable from New Guinea exploration. This amount was made up by donations from Messrs. Burns, Philp, & Co., the Chambers of Commerce of Sydney, N.S.W., and Townsville (Q.), Lord Brassey, E. C. Merewether, Esq., Hon. Wm. Macleay, Richard Wynne, Esq., and from members of the N.S.W. branch of the R.G.S., and a few others.

Mr. Bevan left Sydney early in September, prepared to start at once for New Guinea. Fresh difficulties, however, awaited him. The China steamer "Tsinan," by which it had been arranged to ship the launch, was quarantined at the last moment, and the managers of another line of steamers broke a similar promise.

Ultimately the British India Company came to the rescue and had the "Mabel" hoisted on board the R.M.S. "Chyebassa," in Brisbane, and that fine steamer discharged launch and machinery safely at Thursday Island at the end of October. This service, it is only due to mention, the B. I. Company rendered free in the interests of exploration and *colonial expansion*.

Owing to these unavoidable delays the rainy season was due in New Guinea before a start could be made, and many of Mr. Bevan's well-wishers consequently advised him to defer the expedition. This, however, it was impossible, under the circumstances, to do, for much of the small sum subscribed had already been laid out in stores and outfit and a delay would have meant the absorption of the balance, if only in payment of men already engaged. Yet another incentive to immediate action existed, viz., that the authenticity of Mr. Bevan's discoveries had been questioned in certain quarters; and he himself—like all other explorers from time immemorial—had not escaped the shafts of cowardly attack. Thus, though wearied and unrested from the fatigues of former expeditions and the hard work and anxiety attendant upon promoting the one now described, he set out again with the primary object of resurveying and authenticating his previous surveys and doing what new work he could with the means available.

GETTING THE LAUNCH ACROSS TO NEW GUINEA.

The steam launch "Mabel" left Thursday Island, November 1, 1887, at 3 p.m., in tow of the Queensland Government steamer "Albatross." Some foretold that she would never reach the New Guinea shore safely; but this was accomplished on Saturday, November 5, on which day the two vessels anchored in Bell Sound, Deception Bay (between the Aird and Jubilee Rivers). The launch could never have got across by herself, laden with stores and fuel, and Mr. Bevan consequently feels grateful to Sir Samuel Griffith for the assistance rendered. As the "Mabel" held his fortunes, and for its safety he was personally responsible to the New South Wales Government and people, Mr. Bevan remained on board her at the wheel when under weigh, though invited to share the comfort and comparative safety of the "Albatross." The night of Friday, November 4, was a peculiarly trying one. Bramble Cay, in Torres Straits, was left in the evening, and 110 miles of open sea had to be crossed ere the New Guinea coast could be reached.

A starlit evening set in fair and serene, but before midnight clouds of inky blackness gathered overhead, under the ragged edges of which an arch of pale yellowish nimbus drooped to the horizon. Massive rollers that had washed the base of palm-clad islands far off in the South Pacific swept by in serried ranks like troops of "wild white horses with flowing manes," little dreaming that their power would be broken and their squadrons shattered on the reefs and sandbanks fringing the shores of the Coral Sea on the near Papuan Coast.

Through it all the launch bobbed up and down like a cork, now on the lofty crest and the next minute deep down in the trough, as she followed in the phosphorescent trail—sparkling like diamonds—of the “Albatross.” The steamer’s speed varied from 6 to 9 knots, so, as the strain on the tow-rope came not always at the right time, the “Mabel” would occasionally be forcefully dragged at a fearful speed sheer through the comb of a wave. The rail of the little craft was but 3 feet out of the sea, and as she was undecked some heavy seas were shipped. Steam was kept up, and by its instrumentality the bilge water was forced out of the ejector pipe almost as fast as it came in, and thus she was kept afloat.

When at last the gray dawn broke the yellowish hue of the sea and the soundings denoted the proximity of land. What was taken to be Cape Blackwood was sighted at 7 a.m., but as the morning was dull and hazy and the land low-lying a stoppage was made to allow Mr. Bevan’s boarding the “Albatross” to assist in picking up the landmarks. While about to effect this transition the launch gave a frightful pitch in the broken sea and Mr. Bevan was thrown bodily overboard. A little Manilla man immediately dived in to the rescue, and though his services were not required yet his ready action afforded a pleasant earnest of pluck and devotion.

MORITURI SALUTAMUS!

After having transhipped all the expedition’s stores and gear into the overladen “Mabel,” at 2 p.m. on Monday, November 7, a British cheer rang out, startling the numerous natives on the nearest bank, as the “Albatross” steamed away on a south-westerly course, with Thursday Island for her destination. The hearty response from the “Mabel” must have sounded like the old Roman gladiatorial cry of *Morituri salutamus* to some of the departing ones as they considered the perils of the way. Here was a handful of men, with an *open* boat that could be put into a decent-sized drawing-room (48 feet long by 8 feet beam and drawing 6 feet of water) voluntarily left in a country from which Captain Blackwood, of H.M.S. surveying ship “Fly,” after penetrating 30 miles inland up the Aird River in 1845, had to turn downstream after much bloodshed, owing to the savage hordes of natives threatening his rear. Since then no white men had ventured inland in these parts save Mr. Bevan and his former party, who, on March 19, 1887, were unprovokedly attacked in open daylight by nude and hirsute Papuans, who fired numerous volleys of formidable arrows from 6-feet bows of bamboo. The native inhabitants of the countries bordering on Deception Bay have long been described by other coast tribes as cannibals of huge stature, armed with bows and poisoned arrows, dwelling in big temples and worshipping wooden or wickerwork gods.

Even on the coasts of the semi-civilized parts of New Guinea Commissioners have oftentimes deemed themselves unsafe unless environed by body guards, Gatling guns, and medical advisers; but in the bight of the Great Papuan Gulf, the most formidable and least known part of New Guinea (and for that reason selected by Mr. Bevan as the field of his *later* labours), no Commissioner or administrator has ever yet ventured. This is the country in which the small party were left with a great inland journey to perform, and without any chance of succour in case of a breakdown, or a single white face to see within hundreds of miles in any direction. Granted even the explorations were successfully accomplished, there would then be, before a European settlement could be reached, a stretch of 300 miles of unsurveyed coast, and often tempestuous open sea to be crossed in a boat that was intended solely for harbour work, and for which wood fuel had to be cut day by day. Those who signed ship's articles under Mr. Bevan as master, at the Shipping Office in Thursday Island, for this expedition were four whites, viz.:—Mr. H. J. Hemmy, licensed surveyor (whose services were provided free by the Queensland Government); Martin Langdon, engineer; Richard Sadleir; and H. O. Fastre, seamen, and four coloured men. This comprised the whole party. Under these circumstances, therefore, it is not surprising that the news of the safe return of the expedition the other day occasioned a feeling of widespread relief.

BELL SOUND.

Simultaneously with the departure of the "Albatross" the "Mabel" got underweigh and steamed up the opening 2 miles wide. The character of the country passed through, as it invariably is on the south-western slope of the Papuan Gulf, was alluvial and swampy. A network of saltwater creeks, forming an archipelago of islands, intersects the land in all directions, while the river banks, partially submerged at top of flood tide, are densely clothed with giant Nipa palms. Four miles up the previously unexplored Bell Sound, a creek was found branching off to the westward into Langford Sound. A few miles further north, at a large junction, other arms turned off eastward into Port Romilly and westward into Langford Sound. At this point a middle or northerly arm was taken, Mr. Bevan's object being not to leave a single main channel in all this vast area unexploited. Twenty miles from the coast a change came over the character of the country, the river banks becoming firmer and forest trees alternating with the usual swampy growths. Evening now came on, so an anchorage was effected abreast of a few small, gabled, and apparently deserted huts, built on piles on the banks of the river, which had here narrowed down from two miles to 50 yards.



Aird Hills.

Heavy rain fell till morning, and a first trial was made of the patience of the men in bearing the discomforts of having to find sleeping room in an open boat of small dimensions, packed up to the rail with food supplies and stores for a three months' expedition. The canvas awning spread afforded but little shelter from the torrential storm.

At 7 a.m. (November 8, 1887), the "Mabel" got underweigh, but after 2 miles of nothing had been made the creek narrowed so that further progress was stopped. In swinging the launch it was necessary to back into the bank, and in doing this the gig's painter fouled the propeller, thereby bringing the engines to a standstill. Simultaneously some canoesful of natives, who must have been dodging the party, were sighted creeping up under the shadows of trees on the opposite bank. By working the engine's lever quickly backwards and forwards the rope was unwound, and the "Mabel" was soon ploughing her way through the brackish waters down stream. The "binghis," who had the advantage of position, followed suit, but finding that they were being quickly overhauled took to the bush. So great was their excitement at seeing such an unexpected apparition that their hands became unnerved, and the few arrows which they fired at the passing launch fell short.

THE AIRD RIVER SYSTEM.

With the previous night's forewarning of the imminence of the rainy season, it became advisable to commence the resurvey work without loss of time. A course was accordingly steered across Deception Bay up Port Bevan and an anchorage come to at 6 p.m. right under Aird-hills. Up to this point it is deep enough to permit the passage of the s.s. "Great Eastern," and the water there is quite fresh. The rain again fell heavily that night and glad enough all were to stretch their cramped limbs and air their damp rugs on the following morning. Then the spears of the sun dispersed the fogs and mists, the miseries of the night were forgotten and all nature rejoiced in the freshness and warmth of the day. Lakelike expanses of water winding through noble forest scenery scintillated under a clean-washed sky; while, like the shotty green and gold of its own riflebirds (*Craspedophora intercedens*) shimmered the feathery palms and tropical foliage growing to the very summits of the neighbouring pinnacles.

On Wednesday, November 9, 1887, after four hours' steaming since morning, the "Mabel" anchored under the lee of a little island at Barnett Junction, the head of the delta of the Aird River system. Here the first test was made of the suitability of New Guinea timbers and the capacity of the launch for steaming on wood fuel. With the exception of six bags of

veritable "black diamonds" needed for the return trip the supply of coals was exhausted. While the wooding party was at work a few natives were noticed under the low picturesque hills on the opposite bank. These children of the forest were, doubtless, attracted by the unwonted sound of the reverberating echoes that rapidly followed each crash as tree after tree fell before the sturdy strokes of the axemen. The afternoon was dull and showery, followed by rain at night. The river was here a good half-mile broad of pure, fresh water, running steadily seawards at the rate of two knots, so an anchorage for the "Mabel" had been picked well out of the force of the current. Nevertheless, shortly after midnight all hands were brought to their feet by a sudden shock that made the "Mabel" tremble in every timber. On running forward with a lantern it was found that a big snag, fully her own length, had drifted broadside on to her bows, but the full force of the blow had providentially been broken by the anchor chain. Some ascribed this little episode to the handiwork of the natives seen a few hours earlier.

It was noon of the next day (November 10, 1887) before steam could be raised to 40 lb. pressure, the wood being both soft and wet, burning, as the engineer said, like "cabbage stalks." On getting under weigh, steam fell down to nothing and anchor had to be again dropped. Late in the afternoon, as the "Mabel" steamed past the village of Tumu, numerous natives sprang up from either bank shouting Narmo! a word of good omen, previously taught them by Mr. Bevan. Half-a-mile back from the western bank stands a volcanic cone, 300 ft. in height. Perched on its very summit is as extraordinary an erection as the hand of man ever built. From its ridge pole to the ground is a drop of 100 ft. In shape it resembles a whale's jaw upended, open in front and overlooking the river. This structure is supported—20 ft. above the dome of the hill—by massive upright piles, 6 ft. apart, driven firmly into the bed rock. As seen on this particular afternoon, house, hill and palms were silhouetted against the skyline; while visible through the interstices of the piles, between the crown of the hill and the house proper, the red ball of the westering sun appeared to bathe the surrounding scenery in liquid fire. One envied the Tumuan the view of unsurpassable beauty to be obtained from the aerial perch of their "Castle Lookout." Down in the valley beneath, the ever-flowing stream—more like a lake than a river in its noble breadth—coursing steadily, ever seaward, though low-lying forest lands. Away towards the interior, the country rising in wrinkles and folds, and tier above tier of serrated forest-clad peaks. Then a hiatus—say a great valley or depression, though no one exactly knows what, because the mystery of this vast gap alluded to has never yet been solved. But beyond it again, athwart the horizon, is the crowning beauty—for *there* are visible the pale blue heaven-scaling peaks of the

18,000 ft. mountains of the Bismarck Range. There was no time now to be lost, so the "Mabel," heading towards the interior, steamed away from Tumu, catching sight en route of such another house as the one described on such another hill, only some mile or so to the south. Seen at a different angle, these native buildings prove to be several hundred feet in length, and would appear to serve the purpose of watch-towers, fortresses, and, perhaps dwellings, though, semi-detached from them and dwarfed by comparison, were a few small huts.

On arrival at Bowden Junction, the eastern tributary or Philp River was taken, and for the whole of the next day and till noon of the day following the "Mabel" sped on with undiminished vigour, winding round the base of palm-clad ridges, or through fertile valleys, and so on, and on, till the highest point reached by the "Victory" was left miles astern; and then when nearly a hundred miles inland, a catastrophe befel.

NO. II.

AGROUND.

IN the first paper we have seen how, after making at last a highly favourable start and penetrating in the steam-launch Mabel higher up the Aird River system than the "Victory" had been able to do in March, 1887, the expedition—when not far short of a hundred miles inland—met with a sudden check.

On the morning of Saturday (November 12), at 11 a.m., at a point where the river entered a ravine, soundings suddenly shallowed. The course was at once altered towards deeper-looking water. But although "full speed ahead" was the order, yet steam was allowed to fail. As a result, the three to four knot current caught the unfortunate launch and swept her on to a bank of smooth, round, waterworn pebbles of hard, dense basalt mid-stream. After grounding, the "Mabel's" head swung round, pointing down stream and she heeled over on to her port bilge at an angle of 45 degrees hard and fast aground in a rapidly falling river.

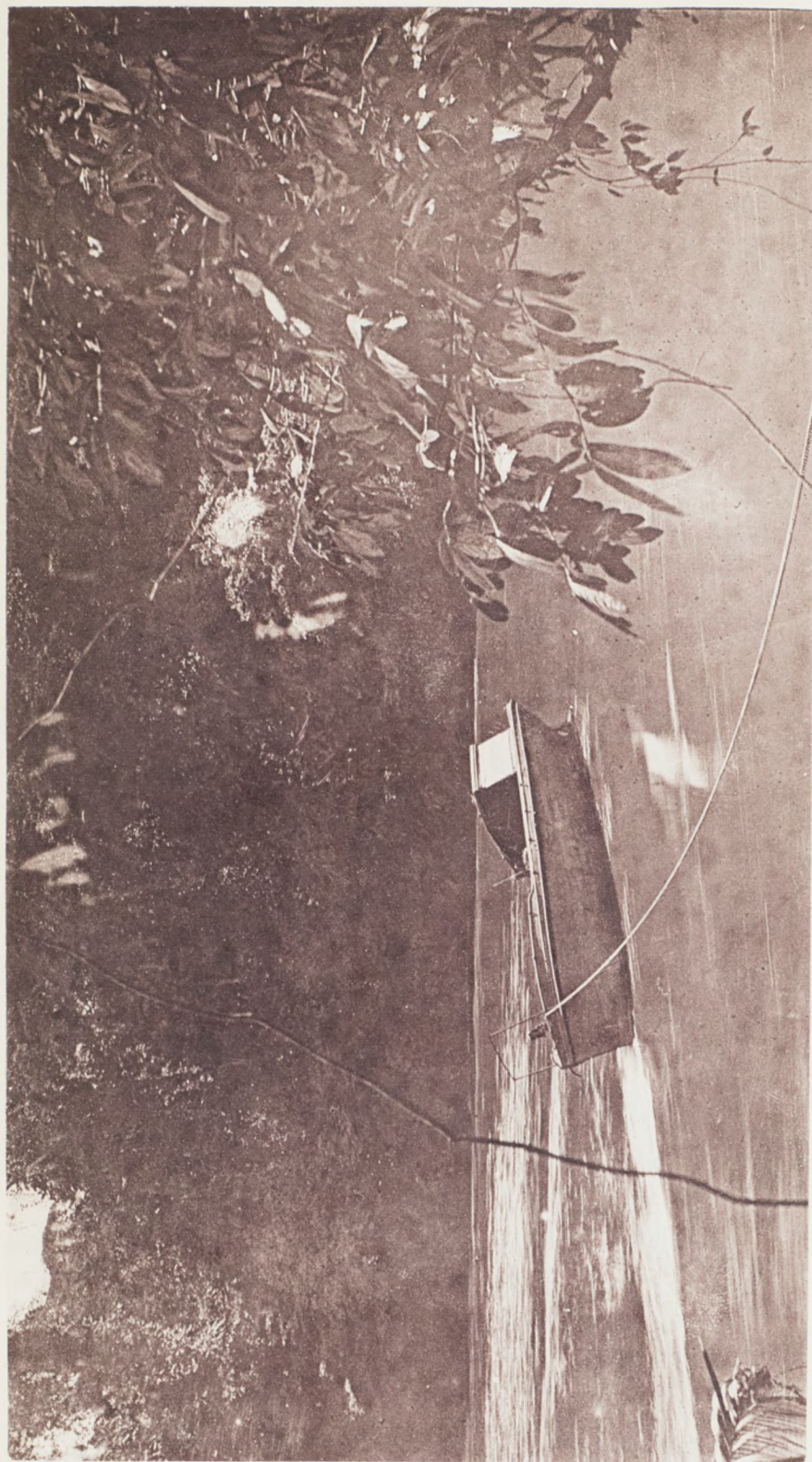
Although this accident took but a few minutes to come about, and but a few lines to relate, yet no simile or comparison can aptly illustrate the full force or meaning of its crushing blow! One remembered how the "Bonito" party, with a large staff of men, several months' stores and manifold gear and appliances, were forcibly detained from a similar cause for three weeks at a stretch up the Strickland River in 1885. One knew that high up the Murray and other Australian rivers vessels have been detained from years'

end to years' end. But in the case of a "forlorn hope" expedition, like that of the "Mabel's," what in other instances might not be so serious a matter meant positive disaster and threatened loss of property if not of life. However, the leader of the party and most of his men had been in similar or worse "pinches" before, and instead of giving way to melancholy "girded up their loins" with a cheerful intention of leaving no stone unturned towards finding a remedy.

All hands immediately set to work to lighten the launch. An *ex tempore* camp was formed 150 yards down stream; and thither stores, provisions, loose machinery were removed in the gig. Even the funnel was disconnected, and the awning, together with its iron stauncheons, unshipped. That afternoon preparations for a strenuous effort to shift the launch were made. No blocks or tackle were aboard, so gear for hauling her off the bank had to be improvised. Abreast of the "Mabel" and 40 yards distant on the nearest bank—studded with small timber—rose a little bluff, under the precipitous banks of which, in a five fathom channel, the water coursed as through a sluiceway. On this knoll two fairly upright trees, growing 5 ft. apart were selected. Across these at a height of about 4 ft. from the ground, a 7-foot barrel was laid horizontally in slots cut for the purpose. Next four short levers were cut from stout saplings. All that was then wanted was a hawser connecting the launch with the barrel, and the "Spanish windlass" would be complete. A return was then made to the "Mabel," the anchor disconnected, and its chain—a 30-fathom piece—got on board the gig and a start again made for the shore. Rattle! rattle! went the chain as it paid out, ever faster and faster with its own increasing weight, till its last link flew overboard, and the boat was swept far away down stream in the whirling eddies. The next attempt with light ratlin line proved more successful, and by its instrumentality the hawser was hauled hand-over-hand up the slippery bank, transferred to the barrel of the windlass and the levers brought into action. Inch by inch the cable came home, until it was as taut as cat-gut; and then, hurrah! just before darkness came on, a perceptible displacement of the launch was self-evident, and before the order to "knock off" was given her bows were hauled round to the direction of the "windlass," and a clear "lead" obtained.

So much accomplished, a return was made to the camp, and after an impromptu meal all hands housed in as well as they could for the night, and doubtless ruminated over the trying events of the day.

Probably but few believers in presentiment are left. Coincidence, however, is even stranger. Among the hands was a superstitious and misanthropical-looking, though by no means bad-hearted Irishman. On the



Launch aground on a Bank of Pebbles,
80 miles inland up Philip River. (Aird River System.)

evening prior to the accident, when the "Mabel" swung to her anchor with 30 ft. of water under her, the lad in question, for the first and last time during the voyage, essayed to tell the fortune of some of his mates with the cards. Shuffled and reshuffled were the pack, but up came the nine of spades and the ten of clubs time after time. This turn-up the Hibernian designated as a very bad cross, signifying "misfortune on a water journey." The inevitable "silver-lining," however, was not wanting, and other cards denoted that the victim of misfortune would eventually "put his trouble behind his back."

Further efforts were made on the following morning, though the river level was lower by at least 2 ft. Owing to increased strain one of the links of the chain snapped, and the work had to be begun all over again. By this time a new barrel was wanted, and when felling for that purpose a tree of about 30 ft. in height, and with a smooth, round butt, about 3 ft. in circumference, an agreeable spicy odour excited the attention of the explorers.*

On Monday, November 14, the river bed was so denuded that banks of pebbles showed up mid-stream, and as it was impracticable to shift the launch now that she was high and dry, a boat excursion for a further river ascent was projected. Neither on the "Victory" trip nor on the present one had natives been seen above Tumu; nor was there any permanent village known above that point. Consequently, in leaving the launch with two or three men in charge, there seemed but little fear of intrusion from natives. Providentially, however, before a start had been made, distant sounds, not unlike the calls of birds, were heard that finally grew into a well-defined "Narmo!"

VISITED BY NATIVES.

Ten minutes later a small body of natives was seen approaching from the direction of Tumu, whence they had doubtless been attracted by drift cap-sized from the launch at the time she grounded. Cautiously and slowly the Papuans approached; now paddling up a few yards at a time against the strong current, and then every few minutes climbing trees ashore to reconnoitre the camp of the strangers. As they were partly concealed behind the bend, Mr. Bevan put off with a crew in the gig and crossed to the opposite bank, whence a better view of the numbers and comportment of the aboriginals could be obtained. The idea occurred to the leader to avail of their services in tearing down great cables of "lawyer" vines, extending from the ground to the tops of trees 100 ft. to 150 ft. above—whence additional and

* This tree is the *Massoi aromatica*, largely used in the Malay Archipelago as a medicine.

much-needed hawsers could be made. So much confidence gained, they might go further and aid in a combined effort to right the launch and place her on an even keel. The work of tearing down the vines was commenced, and by semaphore signs, or, more strictly speaking, terpsichorean movements of the legs and arms, after their own fashion, also by encouraging shouts, these natives were coaxed nearer and nearer and a present was floated down to them when within 30 yards distance. But, mark you! an order was now shouted across the river to the cook to boil some potatoes for the probably hungry visitors. That functionary, however, a stiff-necked deaf little Manilla man, did not understand, so the order had to be repeated more peremptorily, and the Papuans fled in abject terror! (at the expense of their stomachs, if they had only known it). They came up again by and by, and in half an hour's time one canoe was within a few feet of the launch, and the whites, who were more careful in modulating their voices, explained what was wanted by dumb show. A more romantic spot for so dramatic a scene could not have been chosen. Deep down under a lofty range, picture the river winding through a fertile and well-wooded valley. Glistening in the sun are banks of polished pebbles, round which steely blue sheets of smooth deep water alternate with eddies and rapids. High and dry mid-stream lies exposed to view the fine lines and coppered hull of the "Mabel." Looking to the south, or downstream, the river-banks are composed of hunks of the richest black alluvium to be found anywhere in the world, and fringed by lofty forest trees and giant palmate growths. Enlivening the greenness of the vegetation are many-hued plants and shrubs, conspicuous amongst which may be noticed the salmon-pink floral leaves of the beautiful *Manilloa grandiflora* of Scheffer. Partly hidden by intervening vegetation, the white folds of the tent are visible in this direction, while a scarlet rug and a coloured shirt hung out to dry on the bushes, also the thin spiral column of smoke rising from the camp fire, around which one or two men are moving, lend colouring and animation to the scene. With their shoulders under the "Mabel's" port bilge are the rest of the party, while not 15 paces distant, paddles in hand, in their frail canoe, stand fifteen naked Papuans. Though they roll their eyes over launch, hawser, foreigners, windlass, and all, and their well-oiled mahogany visages fairly beam with intelligence as to what it all means, yet they will not stir hand nor foot to assist in righting the launch.

After landing abreast of the camp and thereby disturbing the equanimity of the cook, whose teeth rattled like castanets, the Tumuans paddled off to their homes 30 miles down stream to report these strange goings-on to their fellow-indigènes.

HARD TIMES.

The trials that were now made on the patience and fortitude of the party were immense. Here in the ostensible rainy season was a week of blue skies, hot sun, and almost rainless weather at the very time wet was most needed. The heavy labour attaching to efforts to move the launch told, too, on the strong constitutions of the men working under the glare of the sun, with the glass registering as high as 90 degrees and within 400 miles south of the Equator. To make up for this loss of strength and vitality there was merely a low diet of preserved provisions and such stores as could be carried from the colonies, together with an occasional parrot or pigeon, though the woods were not well stocked with game at that season of the year. The ubiquitous little red insect called scrubitch irritated the men; while the swarms of flies that visited the camp disputed the right to every morsel of food and were swept away and destroyed in hundreds. At night mosquitoes (not previously found up this river) and midges drove away sleep, and there was often just sufficient of a shower to soak through the thin awnings, though not enough to cause a longed-for freshet in the river. Little wonder, then, that fever medicine began to be inquired for. The suspense, too, was great because there was no certainty as to when the river would rise, or that the launch ever could be got off safely, or when, or in what force, or for what purpose, the Tumuans might again visit the camp. Still the main anxiety was about the launch. Although the best and indeed only boat available was selected, the "Mabel," was—to use a nautical term—"too long in the heel," and drawing 6 ft. of water her depth exceeded her beam. Her lee rail was therefore little more than 4 ft. above the bank on which she rested, and being undecked there was every reason to fear that the water when it did rise would come in over the rail before she righted herself, in which case she might never be got off. Machinery, hull and fixtures made a combined deadweight of at least 15 tons and resisted the efforts of half-a-dozen men to place the launch on an even keel. So, after scooping away the pebbles and inserting a dozen rollers under her, the dubious fate of the "Mabel" had to be left in the hands of Jupiter Pluvius.

EXCELSIOR.

On Wednesday, November 16, as the result of several hours' hard rowing in the gig, less than 2 miles of progress was made. Early on the following morning the leader made another attempt, and although the boat was often swept away in rapids, yet by returning to the charge, and by determined efforts—rowing, poling, warping, as opportunity offered—several miles were added. First the island where the "Victory's" boat party obtained a few faint colours of scaly gold in April, 1887, was reached,

and some hours later an island—never before visited—several miles higher up stream was attained. At this point, except for the tropical vegetation and the numerous alligator tracks on the river banks, one was reminded of such rivers as the Waimakariri, of Canterbury Plains, New Zealand, the bed of the stream still 100 yards wide, being a waste of shingle, sand and pebbles, save where under either bank was a deep channel of cold, steely-hued fresh water. Here, so many miles nearer to its source, one might have expected the auriferous indications to improve. Disappointment, awaited the party, and though several prospects were panned out nothing better than a few “float” colours were obtained. This island, too, is the “Ultima Thule” of navigation. Human muscles could drag the boat no further against the five or six knot current. Neither was there any utility in prospecting the adjoining river banks, where the rock formation of hard, dense basalt precluded the possibility of a successful quest.

Late that afternoon a very heavy thunderstorm came down, as the precursor of torrential rain, and a return was decided upon. Like an arrow shot from a bow flew the boat on its downward course in the now muddy-coloured channels of the rapidly rising river, that had changed from a sober stream into a mountain torrent in the short space of half-an-hour. The way rapids were shot was exhilarating indeed; all that was wanted was a firm hand at the tiller and quick discernment of sunken rocks, snags, and other hidden dangers indicated by broken water, ripples and signs that made the reading of it like an open book to a quick and experienced eye.

By the time the launch was reached, however, the heavy downpour had ceased and the sky overhead had momentarily cleared. As though with an expiring effort, the fiery arrows of the dying sun drove back the legions of the Storm God to the caps of the neighbouring mountains and then behind the western ridge, in a departing blaze of glory, sank the great orb of day.

A few hours after dark the heavens again became overcast; thunder rumbled in the ranges; vivid lightning threw its “search-lights” over the scene of the “Mabel’s” disaster; and as the night wore on the preliminary deluge settled into steady soaking rain.

THE RESCUE.

Inch by inch rose the river, covering first the pebbly bank, then creeping up to the level of the belting of the launch, threatening if it rose another foot or so to come in over the “Mabel’s” rail. The little craft, still heeling over on to her port bilge, began somehow to feel more buoyant; so the leader, who had camped aboard her waiting for this to happen, hailed the

camp, and the poor fellows, who had been getting what rest they could after the toils and exhaustion of the day, had to turn out into the wet dark night for another precarious struggle with the elements.

Owing to a sudden rise and fall on a previous night a similar chance had been lost through the men not turning out smartly enough, and they had in consequence been threatened with having to sleep alongside in the open gig should similar negligence be shown in the future.

Accordingly the hands rolled-up to time, brought the gig smartly up to the launch against the sluicing current, and were immediately sent ashore. In a few minutes the rays of the lantern gleaming through the forest trees showed that the knoll had been safely attained. Twice was the light extinguished by the puffs and gusts of the tempest that again stormed up the cañon and drowned the creaking and groaning of the windlass and the "Yo, heave ho!" of the men. Presently the launch gave a tremor as the hawser tautened. Shortly thereafter, in response to a call for increased exertion on the part of the levermen, a grating sound was heard, and perceptible movement felt by those on board—Messrs. Bevan and Hemmy. Hurrah! The "Mabel" was actually travelling! There yet remained, however, a stretch of shoal water equal to her own length; and only a few inches of progress could be made at a time, as levers snapped and fresh ones had to be continually cut in the dark. Then the chain jammed on the barrel, and worse accidents, such as the parting of the hawser, might at any moment occur, leaving the now anchorless launch, with its two solitary passengers, to be hurried away by the torrent towards the open sea. Without a moment's hesitation or relaxation of stern dogged effort each man stood at his post, though the thunder crashed overhead in deafening outbursts, and the vivid lightning stabbed through and through the blackness of the middle watches of this terrible night. Hour followed hour while the chain, dragging the launch with it, was hauled home inch by inch, until between 3 and 4 on the morning of Friday the emancipated "Mabel" gave not even a violent plunge as her stern took to the deep water; and as the first intimation that the launch was *afloat*, the leader of the party received a scratch across the face from a spray of "lawyer" vines as she swung into a smooth basin and was brought up by her chain, well out of the force of the current and right alongside the nearest bank.

After a short congratulatory address of thanks and a good stiff nip of "medicine" all round to ward off the effects of recent exhaustion and over exposure, the men were sent back to the camp, while the leader and his

engineer kept a solitary anchor watch for the remainder of the night. When day dawned a diver was sent under and reported that the launch had sustained scarcely a scratch, while even the copper sheathing was intact. Now, indeed, was the load of the last six days alleviated, and mountains of crushing care and anxiety removed! For, instead of lying like a rock or huge log midstream, the "Mabel" once again rode to her anchor on an even keel on the broad bosom of the Philp River. It would take hours, however, to get up steam and start the engines again, so in the meantime a descent of the river was made in the boat, and the deepest channels discovered with lead and line.

On Saturday, November 19, the camp having been disbanded and all goods shifted into the launch, a start was made down stream with the gig out piloting ahead. In this way devious reaches and treacherous stony channels hidden by the freshet in the river on the previous Saturday were safely threaded, until at last the leadsman reported "mud bottom." Then all anxiety ceased and "full speed ahead" was again the order of the day. The "Mabel," too, seemed to rejoice at her emancipation and fairly excelled herself as she glided at 10-knot speed over fathomless depths beneath the lofty ranges. Under white walls of limestone rock, painted with green mosses, pink petalled begonias and graceful tree-ferns, past the entrances of caves thickly incrustated with stalactites and stalagmites (in and out of which *Collocalia nidifica*, *Dicaeum hirundinaceum* and other lovely little birds continually flitted) beneath overhanging crags—poised hundreds of feet in the air—on which palms, ferns and orchids had taken root, *here* had the river carved out for itself a channel deep down under the eternal hills. Then, indeed, could the rainbow that overarched the stream be taken as an emblem of better times, and the toil and travail in the interior wilds of Papua of the past six days be forgotten in the rapid passage of the launch through romantic glens and ravines such as the one above described.

An anchorage was found that evening under a projecting bank that broke the force of the current, and here the party rested till the following Monday morning (November 21). Then soon after daybreak the launch got under way and presently steamed past the extinct but tenanted craters of Tumu. Half-a-mile beyond this village, drawn up in Indian file, with their forces equally divided under either bank, and as though in readiness for the "Mabel's" approach, the launch—almost before natives had been sighted—ran into a large flotilla of war canoes!



The Chief of Omai—Queen's Jubilee River.

No. III.

For whatever purpose that formidable flotilla of canoes, manned by hundreds of natives, was drawn up south of Tumu, the "Mabel" did not stop to inquire. A rapid descent was made of the Aird River system, Deception Bay crossed, Port Romilly entered at Bald Head, and the Jubilee River ascended for a distance of 20 miles.

QUEEN'S JUBILEE RIVER.

In Mr. Bevan's previous expedition in the "Victory" (March-April, 1887), when the westerly main stream was discovered, although a few deserted huts or "miamias" were occasionally met with, no natives were seen much above Evorra, the only permanent village, 16 miles inland from Bald Head. This day, however (Wednesday, November 23), new huts were being erected and dwelt in, canoes were passed, and the presence of man in many ways made manifest.

After daybreak (Thursday, November 24) a canoe appeared round the bend, and the occupants, after some little persuasion, were coaxed alongside. In it were thirteen males, who came respectively from the following villages:—Arekee, Omai, Qwíbee, Birrika, Evorra, Quíbee, Orbi, Evorra, Arrea, Arvi, Orbi, Kíveela, and Marma. The Chief of Omai was a short, plump, little black man, with twinkling black eyes, and regular, pleasant features. In a few minutes mutual confidence was established, and a sight of a photographic album, containing pictures of river and mountain scenery and New Guinea natives, elicited loud expressions of astonishment and delight. On getting under weigh, at his own desire he remained on board, while his followers, paddling never so hard, could not keep pace with the "Mabel," greatly to their chief's amusement.

On arriving at his village, Mr. Bevan landed and took a few photos. of the temporary domiciles and their inhabitants. En route to the main river similar little riverside colonies were passed, and it became evident that the object of the natives was the procuring of commodities of one kind or other to take back to their homes, either on the coast or in the bush, prior to the setting in of the wet season. Thus one community would be preparing food supplies from the sago palm, another obtaining cloth from the fibrous bark of a *sterculiaceous* tree, while under the banks of a third encampment the huge logs floating alongside were being shaped into canoes.

Over the painful history of the next three days it would be better to draw a veil, for it was one continuous record of stoppages. At last it became so bad that to make 4 or 5 miles headway required five or six hours' wooding.

The exertion required was more than flesh or blood could stand, while the inability to regulate the steam at this particular juncture became a source of downright danger, as the river current ran seaward at a rate of over 4 knots, and the stony bottom rendered safe anchorages few and far between. At this, the highest point attainable by the launch up the Jubilee (over 80 miles inland), the river was still 400 yards wide, while in many spots bottom could not be reached with a 10-fathom line, giving, in other words, a depth of over 60 feet of fresh water.

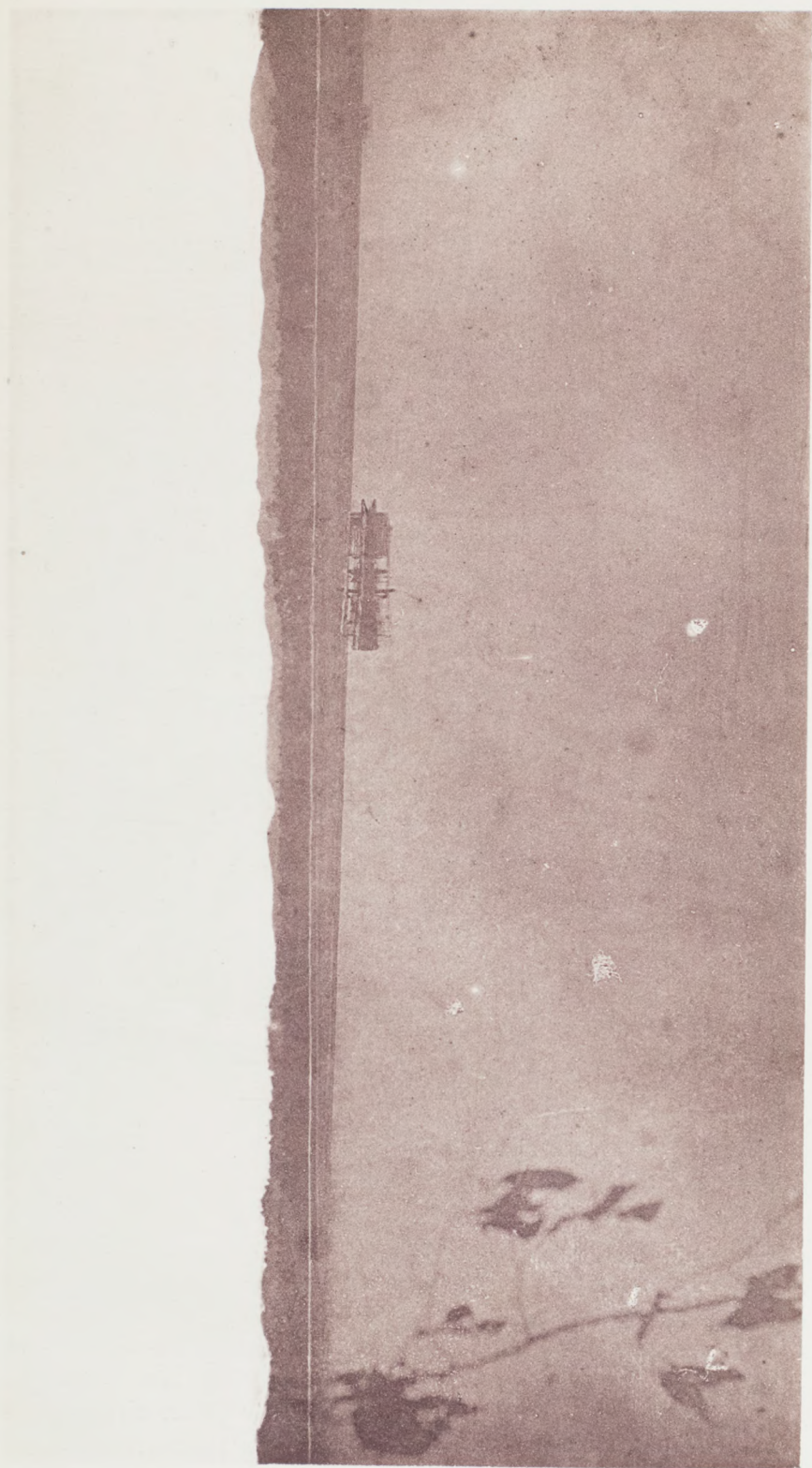
When returning down stream on the afternoon of November 27 it must have been blowing very freshly out in the gulf; for, at a distance of 60 miles inland, in a broad reach where the river was half a mile wide—as the launch steamed through a choppy freshwater sea, spray was splashed right over the man at the wheel. An anchorage was come to at 6 p.m., just inside the first affluent at Woodhouse Junction, the head of the delta.

The following day was eventful in more ways than one. To begin with, when the party were ashore wooding, a falling tree toppled over the high bank on to where, in the gig, sat a solitary occupant examining a new plant; and had he not been forewarned by the crackling of intervening branches, and thus permitted to save himself by jumping into the river, the leader of the party would have been crushed into a jelly. The fruit of this unwelcome tree, when examined, proved to belong to the *Myristacæ* family, and the oblong wild nutmegs (contained in its plum-shaped pods) have—when of mature size—some small commercial value. Shortly thereafter one of the men who had been wading through ooze and pandanus scrub on the opposite bank returned somewhat scared and reported that he had almost jumped astride of a 20-foot alligator. He did not know which was the more surprised at the *contretemps*, as both the saurian and himself made off with equal despatch in opposite directions.

In the character of the country on this river there is but little change. After the swampy jungle-clad coast is left behind—say 20 miles in from the sea—the banks rise higher and higher, excepting breaks here and there, until the mountains are reached. No variation occurs either in the quality of the soil. Everywhere is the same rich, *bottomless* black or chocolate loam, studded by fine timber in all directions. As illustrating the ingenuity and patience of the natives, it may be mentioned that one occasionally finds still standing in the scrubs the stump of a tree surrounded—to a height of from 10 ft. to 20 ft. from the ground—by a scaffolding. Working on this platform (to avoid the huge flanges) the aborigines have, with their frail stone adzes, cut sheer through butts of trees 4 ft. or 5 ft. in thickness. And the work, too, has been done almost as neatly as if a crosscut saw had been used. Then along a track, sometimes extending quite a mile from the river banks, the massive log has been skidded lengthwise on rollers to the nearest water.



The Launch between Parkes and Griffiths Islands.



Queen's Jubilee River,
About 60 miles inland—Reach, 1½ miles wide—Water, fresh.

On Friday, December 2, the descent of the extreme westerly affluent of the Jubilee River, from Woodhouse Junction to Port Romilly, was made. En route some of the "mia-mias" inhabited a week previously were now found to be deserted. At several others still occupied a strict watch was kept. Long before the "Mabel's" approach a canoe, manned in each case by one full-grown adult, accompanied by a lad, darted out from cover, and taking the most conspicuous bank, its occupants would splash fountains of water high into the air with their paddles. This mirror-like sign was passed on by the village sentry, and the timid inhabitants, ever on the alert and fearful of attack from more powerful tribes, would suspend their busy avocations and rush for weapons of defence. They could not make up their minds in every case how to act until the little launch had passed at full speed. Then the women and children executed an exalted dance of relief, and the men paddled after the "Mabel," yelling out for "kyri (hoop-iron) oh!" Others carried their fears and subsequent revulsion of feeling to a still absurder pitch. The occupants of some canoes, on sighting the launch, cleared in abject terror into the bush, but after she had passed—such was their regret at losing a chance of obtaining hoop-iron that might never recur again—that all together sprang into one canoe, which immediately capsized under their combined weight. Nothing daunted and still bawling out "Kyri-oh! kyri-oh!" they then swam after the "Mabel," regardless of alligators. Although time was an object such entreaties could not be entirely ignored, and several stoppages were made to allow 6 in. by 3 in. lengths of hoop-iron, on which an edge had been well bevelled by means of a file, being distributed to these harmless aborigines. As for the bark waistbelts and other curios eagerly offered in exchange—such things could not be carried—even if of any value, as the "Mabel" was still lumbered up in a way that precluded all comfort whatsoever. With the hoop-iron good stout adzes might be made, and the work of clearing the scrub and hollowing out logs for canoes would be greatly facilitated. All the remaining potatoes, which had commenced to sprout, were distributed amongst these people. The natives above alluded to are of a much lighter build and complexion than the hirsute prognathous-visaged inhabitants at the mouth of the Aivei and elsewhere in this district; and, living in constant fear of attack, would probably be glad of the protection that the white man can afford, and in exchange for which they would be ready to help him with their labour.

Taking advantage of the deep water channels to be found in Port Romilly, the "Mabel" continued full-speed ahead till long after dark, and anchored near Bald Head with a record of over 40 miles for the day in spite of stoppages, and some hours spent in cutting wood for fuel.



Queen's Jubilee River—temporary dwelling.

LANGFORD SOUND.

On the coast line between the Jubilee and Aird River system there still remained unexplored several large estuaries. Of these Langford Sound was next ascended, and found to run northerly, wide and deep, for several miles, when it took a westerly bend towards Lennon Sound. Here a perfect maze of waterways intersects the land in all directions in which the ebb and flow of 2 to 3 knot tides, and tidal rise and fall of 10 feet to 12 feet, necessitates great caution in navigation. In many places the boat had to first go on ahead sounding. About 4 p.m. (Saturday, December 3) the "Mabel" entered a half-mile wide river coming down from a northerly direction.

Shortly afterwards the lofty brown peak of a native house was seen peeping out through a grove of cocoanut palms about a mile ahead and close to a westerly bend. Along both banks stretched avenues of nipa palms in unbroken lines, save where, near to the village, a broad road had been cut in from the river bank. As the bend was rounded it became evident that an unusually large settlement of natives inhabited this region. As far as the eye could reach the river banks were lined with houses, many of which were of the hugest dimensions—300 feet to 400 feet in length—built on piles, and towering to a height over 100 feet from the ground. Then, as the "Mabel" steamed on was there a scene of excitement enacted that baffles all description, and into the spirit of which even the very pigs and dogs seemed to enter. Women, children, and reserves lined the high banks and indulged in the maddest of terpsichorean exercises, while the men—who in the space of a few minutes had decorated their persons with feathers, paints, shell ornaments, and grotesque masks—rushed about almost tumbling over one another in their haste, and getting bows and arrows, spears and paddles between their legs, preparatory to launching big war canoes. Wherever the eye rested, either before or behind, canoes—holding twenty to thirty men apiece—were soon seen emerging from every creek and reach till the river, which had here narrowed to little over 300 yards, was black with one immense flotilla!

In more than one case the bow paddler was painted a whitey grey all over, hair included, and all, being of splendid physique, with rare muscular development, presented a most grotesque appearance, as though robed in skin tights. All that pigment could do had been done to make them hideous, and never before has any tribe been seen in such diversity or numbers. Some were marked like skeletons, and all more resembled fiends incarnate than human beings.

In their overwhelming force they held the "Mabel" and its handful of men in derision and commenced to mob the party, even getting into the gig

and passing oars, rowlocks and rudder into their canoe. This was noticed just in time and steam put on the whistle. The shriek that followed however, was all but deadened by the delirious clamour of thousands of natives!

Two miles of continuous villages had now been passed, evening was approaching, and but a few sticks of firewood remained. To have proposed to land with axes among these savages to cut fresh fuel would have been downright madness and have caused a mutiny amongst the crew. Ahead the narrowing creek was a veritable *cul-de-sac*. But now an incident occurred that brought matters to a crisis. The natives, whom the steamer's whistle and one or two shots fired straight up into the air had caused to sheer off a few yards, returned to the charge. While one load of 40 stalwart Papuans made as though they would board the launch on her starboard rail—thereby capsizing her for a certainty—others crowded into the gig that was being towed astern, and one native already had the unshipped rudder in his hand. To the leader at the wheel Sadleir sang out from aft that he would have to fire, as the natives were preparing for a rush. Wishing above all things to avoid bloodshed, Mr. Bevan then gave the order "Full speed astern." The effect was instantaneous. While neither whistle nor the roar of guns—of whose destroying properties they were entirely ignorant—had any terror for these aboriginals, yet the *magic* by which this little paddleless boat, smaller than one of their own canoes, was moved backwards and forwards at will caused their retirement to a respectful distance. And before they had recovered from their surprise the "Mabel" had completed her evolution and was ploughing her way down stream in the gathering dusk at a speed of 10 knots.

THE CENTENARY RIVER.

On the following morning (December 4, 1887) the "Mabel" steamed inland again up a northerly arm, navigating in the course of the day a similar labyrinth of salt water creeks to that previously described, and passed another native village.

A line of hills crossed from west to east, and in all the country south of it no main river running northerly was to be found. About midday, after steaming down several creeks in a southerly direction, the "Mabel" emerged on to a sheet of water fully half-a-mile broad. This arm turned north-westerly, until about 4 p.m., overlying the land at a distance of four to five miles, Aird Hills were seen bearing due west.

On Monday (December 5) this channel was followed up till it bifurcated; the northerly branch then taken shallowing out in two or three miles, while the westerly one was found to lead into a freshwater river 400 yards wide.

This was steamed up for 20 miles into limestone ridges until progress was stopped by a rocky bar, giving shallow soundings at a point where the river too had narrowed materially.

On Tuesday (December 6) a start was made for Aird Hills, where the leader intended to give the hands a day or two's spell. (N.B.—Owing to the absence of fresh water and the inhospitable nature of the country, it had been impracticable to rest on the preceding Sunday.) The cones of these hills afforded a good mark to steer for, and it was with no small satisfaction an anabranch was found that brought the launch right out into the lake-like sheets of water environing Aird Hills, at half-past 10 a.m. Now, in addition to the ascent of two rivers, for distances respectively of nearly 100 miles each inland, the borders of Mr. Bevan's discoveries had been extended east and west over a similar area, not the least interesting feature, nor the least valuable discovery, being that of the inland navigation route from Orokolo on the east to Aird Hills on the west. (See map).

AIRD HILLS.

At this point Mr. Hemmy, the surveyor, whose health had been gradually failing, succumbed completely, and one or two other members of the small party were laid on their backs by fever. During the stay here an ascent was made of one or two peaks of these hills. On Wednesday, December 7, a cone 1,000 ft. above river level was climbed, the last 50 yards being very precipitous. Ample reward, however, was made by the view from the summit, where, owing to a landslide, one or two gigantic cedars had been dislodged. Twenty miles to the south, over the lowlands, the open water of the Gulf of Papua was visible. In the valley beneath the river lay like a white ribbon till it was lost to sight where the country rose in tier above tier of serrated forest-clad peaks towards the north-east. Then followed a great valley or possibly a lake from the far side of which towered skyward the great mountains of the main range.

“There alone can we attain
To those turrets where the eye
Sees the world as one vast plain,
And one boundless reach of sky.”

The general formation of these trachyte hills is a volcanic tuff. The summit of this particular cone, however, is covered with a deposit of semi-fossilized fluviatile shells contained in an earthy mould or silty mud. Among specimens of these shells Mr. Etheridge, of the Australian Museum, has identified *Melania clavus*, *Neritina gagates*, and a species of *Cyrena*. Mr. Etheridge appends a note that it would be hazardous to suggest any theory of upheaval from the position of these shells as above described.

The term Aird Hills describes an island of probably moderately recent upheaval, on which a cluster of volcanic cones, some 10 in number, and covering an area of about five square miles, are surrounded by deep navigable channels of *fresh* water. The country for 30 miles to the south and for some 10 miles to the north is chiefly of low-lying alluvial formation, and the geographic and strategic importance of this position is so great that a few of its salient features deserve categorical enumeration.

1. For a distance of between 200 and 300 miles of coast line—from Saibai on the west to Orokolo on the east—Aird Hills, as seen over-lying the projection of Cape Blackwood, are the only sure and unmistakable landmarks to navigators.

2. It is approachable from the Gulf of Papua to ships of the greatest burthen, which could berth alongside high and firm banks in over 40 ft. of perennially fresh water.

3. While the prevailing character of the shores of the Gulf is low-lying and swampy, this cluster of cones of romantic beauty presents the range of temperature and salubrity that can be attained at various altitudes, ranging to over 1,000 ft. in gentle undulations and level ridges, as well as in precipitous inclines.

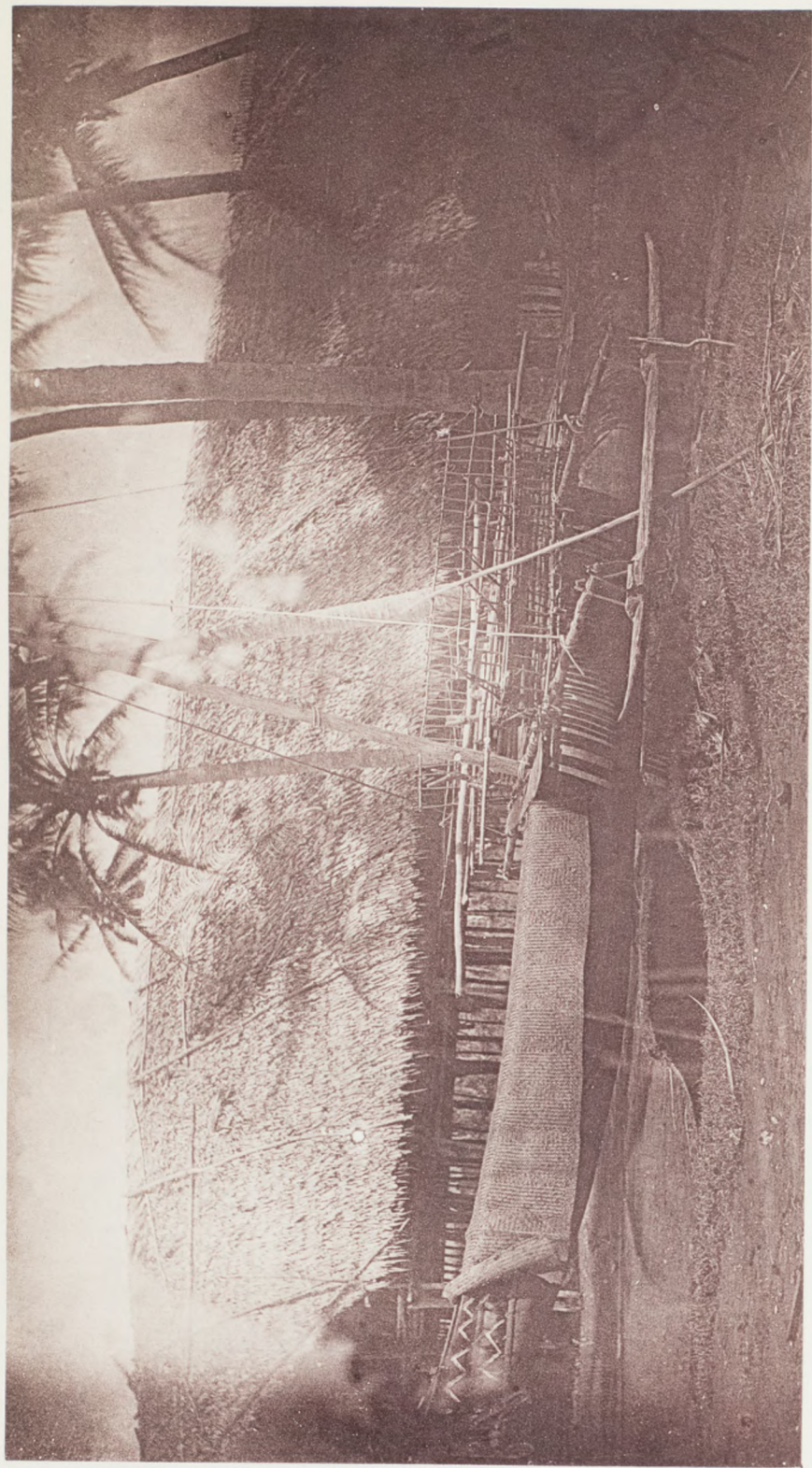
4. The services of the small and mild-tempered tribe in its vicinity could be utilized by whites, both in exchange for their protection from fiercer tribes and for useful articles of barter; while their dialect, if learnt, would serve as a key to communication with the tribes over all this great and newly-explored district, representing an area of over 20,000 square miles.

NO. IV.

AFTER two day's stoppage, a fresh start was made at 10.30 a.m. Thursday, December 8, when, by means of a channel skirting the base of their northerly slopes, Aird Hills were circumnavigated.

NEWBERY SOUND.

A descent was then made of the previously unexplored main westerly arm in the delta of the Aird River system, and the sea again sighted on Saturday, December 10, Cape Blackwood bearing south-east at a distance of about 15 miles. All this coast country, *where the bulk of the native population dwells*, is one vast bay of islands.



Sailing Canoe of Natives of the Papuan Gulf.



Model Dwellings of Great Papuan Gulf.

When the "Mabel" emerged into this estuary huge pile-built brown houses were noticed underlying groves of cocoanut palms in a dozen different directions, while the mirror-like flashes from all points of the compass indicated the swift approach of numerous canoes. The launch after trying unsuccessfully for an inshore passage put out to sea, and after rounding Bates' Island—named by Mr. Bevan after the secretary, Royal Geographical Society, London—entered Mitchell Sound (after the secretary Chamber of Commerce, Sydney), to replenish firewood.

MITCHELL SOUND.

Purposely avoiding a large village on the eastern bank a stoppage was made abreast of a creek on the opposite shore. Not until anchor was dropped was the immediate proximity of another large native community discovered. The launch was soon again mobbed by hundreds of excited natives who came flocking in hot haste from every creek and inlet, rendering the wooding problem very difficult to solve. Three out of the party were on the sick list, leaving only two effective hands to guard the launch and four to land in the boat to cut fuel in the thick mangrove scrub which lined the banks. Nor was it possible to hide the axes from the covetous glances of these inquisitive aboriginals, who quickly guessed as to the instrumentality by which tree after tree fell in rapid succession. On December 11 a native of Oroï (the village 300 yards from the launch) came off and sold some plantains for a piece of red cloth. While too weak to submit to being mobbed by large bodies of aboriginals, yet any *bona-fide* attempts on the part of a few natives at a time to barter food products were sedulously encouraged. Two of the largest villages in this neighbourhood were ascertained to be Hippoora and Orpoito respectively. About 7 a.m. the "Mabel" got under weigh, but encountering a fearfully choppy sea outside put back again past Oroï, having had a narrow escape from foundering.

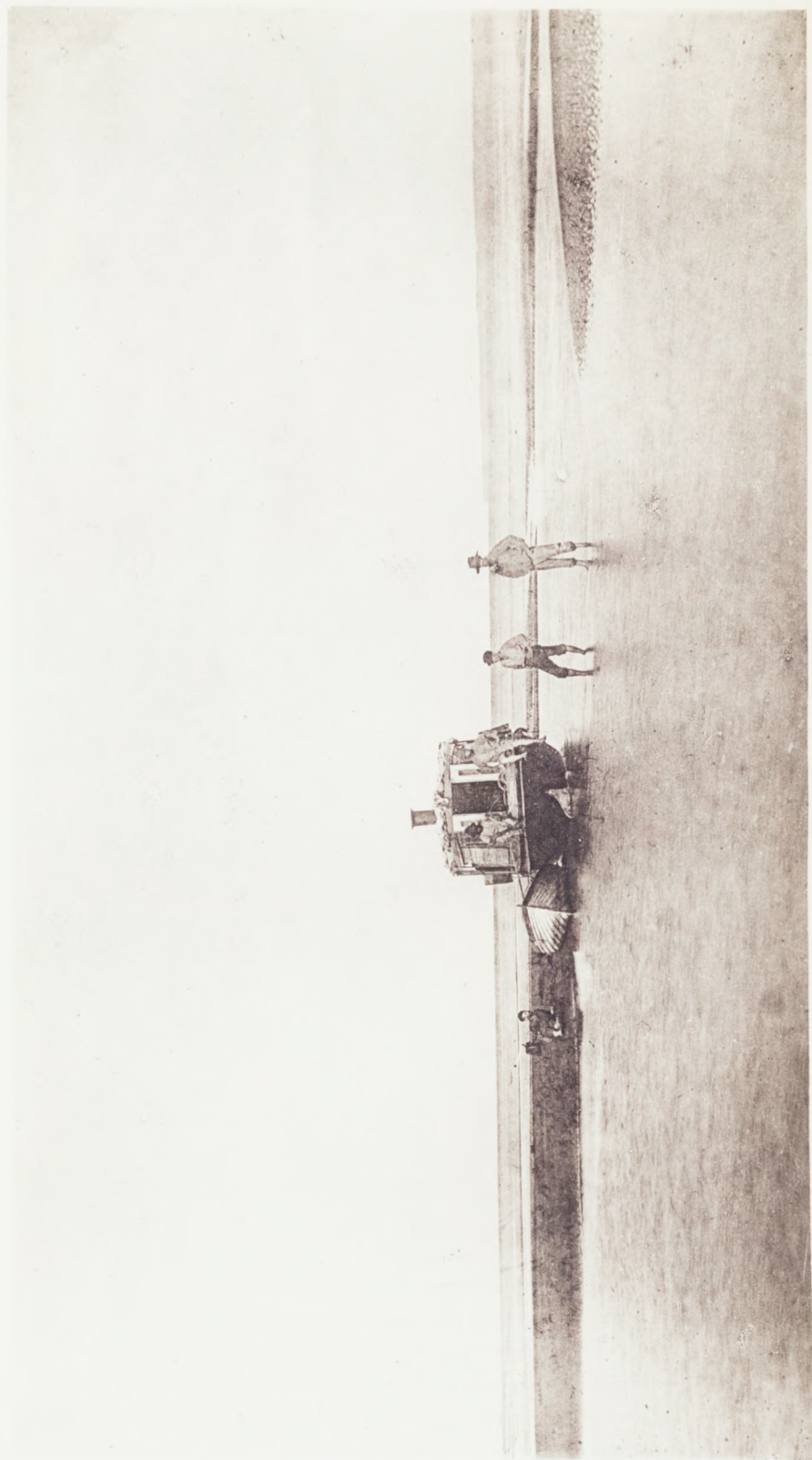
The position was now a serious one. So far the fates had been lenient, for in spite of all that human care could do it was almost a miracle that the launch—driven by the strong tides—had not grounded on hidden banks in these discoloured waters. With wet ammunition and food supplies lost, the worn out crew would have been entirely at the mercy of savages. There yet remained 150 miles of unsurveyed coast and then 100 miles of open sea to be crossed before the one or two invalids now in a half moribund condition could be conveyed to the nearest white settlement. In the hope of finding an inland route to the westward whereby the open sea might be partly avoided the launch now continued on its way up Mitchell Sound.

MEREWETHER RIVER.

Leaving behind several villages on either bank a mile-wide opening leading in a north-westerly direction was taken. About two miles up another and last village was passed, the aborigines coming off in canoes to sell cocoanuts. While a five-fathom channel was found near the coast—the river 20 miles inland—shallowed mid-channel to “and a half one” (9 ft.). A thick smoky fog overhung the river on the following morning, while the closeness of the atmosphere and sunless weather seemed to indicate the near approach of heavy and continuous rain. Instead of emerging, as expected, into homeward-bound or westerly affluents the river now took an easterly trend. For three days past Mr. Hemmy had neither slept nor scarcely tasted food. His painful illness was probably due to a “touch of the sun,” he having very imprudently taken off his helmet on several occasions when using theodolite or sextant. If his illness had eventuated fatally a third expedition to the same localities might have been necessary in order to verify and authenticate these discoveries to the satisfaction of an incredulous world. And that, in view of public apathy and indifference, would not have been at all easy of promotion. Under all these circumstances it would not have been prudent to have continued further inland especially as the three-knot tide ebbing and flowing at the highest point reached indicated a very distant watershed. This entirely new and promising river system was named after Mr. E. C. Merewether, of Sydney, a munificent patron of the expedition.

On returning to Oroï at 4 p.m., an old man came off, bringing a few prawns and whitebait (*nardi*), bananas (*dubi*) and water (*opor*)—the latter in a long bamboo tube—to exchange for cloth and hoop-iron. Another came off with a sucking pig of a pound or so in weight, for which he would take nothing less than a scrub-knife in exchange. Returning again later on accompanied by two wives, he produced another Papuan table luxury in the shape of a half-bred dingo, and seemed not a little surprised that the whites did not include such an article of diet in their regimen. A feature peculiar to these natives was the evenness and pearly whiteness of their teeth, probably due to their not chewing betel nut, like the aborigines of the south-east coast.

Tuesday, December 13, was spent in cutting fuel, after it had been decided that it would be better to risk putting out to sea in preference to the alternative of skirting a coastline along which the launch would be exposed to the perils inseparable from shoalwaters and swarms of natives. The woodman's axes, of which there was no spare set on board, were found too alluring altogether, and to the extreme vigilance displayed alone immunity from casualties was due. Twice on this one day were determined efforts made by natives lurking in the scrub to cut off the wooding party.



Launch aground between Midge Island and Fly River.

HOMEWARD BOUND.

The morning of Wednesday (December 14) dawned stormy and gusty, but nevertheless a start had to be made. The "Mabel"—very low in the water by reason of the day's fuel on board—made dirty weather of it; and the bilge ejector pipe getting foul at one time threatened to founder. As the day wore on the stiff breeze from the north-west died away and good weather was made across George and Prince's Inlets. About 3 p.m. the "Mabel" steamed over a place marked breakers on the chart, getting nothing less than 3 fathoms. An hour later the stock of fuel had run very low, and considerable anxiety was felt, as dead reckoning placed the "Mabel's" position close to Midge Islands. Never were chart or horizon more anxiously coned. About 4 p.m. land was sighted to the south-west distant some 10 or 12 miles. The wind had veered round to the south-east, and the big sea running served to retard the "Mabel's" progress, while the glare of the sun dead on the land almost blinded the helmsman in his efforts to steer a direct course. At last the storm that had been long overhanging the mainland in the north-west broke, and by obliterating the rays of the sun served to disclose a line of trees at but a few miles distance. The tide too turned, and—soon after the few remaining logs had been used—the "Mabel" anchored under the welcome lee of a little island after a capital day's run of 55 miles.

MIDGE ISLANDS.

Thursday, December 15.—Owing to the heavy sea that was running the boat was all but swamped in the surf, and fuel had to be brought out in the arms of the men through the breakers. About midday the "Mabel" steamed round to the more sheltered south-west side of the island and anchored at 4 p.m. for wooding. Land closed in on three parts of the horizon, and on one or two neighbouring islands were several great houses. A considerable area on this part of the coast near the Fly River is marked with dotted lines, indicating that it has not been surveyed. The following day was too sunless to take a meridian altitude, although it appeared—so much out was the chart—that by some curious freak of nature the geography of the country had undergone a complete change. A large and very wide estuary was now followed up in a westerly direction for several miles, but no outlet appearing a return was made seaward. About 3 p.m., when a mile distant from the nearest land, a Manilla man was at the lead. Soundings for half-an-hour past had not lessened on three fathoms. Getting over-confident, Martin relaxed his vigilance for a minute or two, with the result that the "Mabel" ran on to a hidden shoal. In two hours' time the launch was high and dry on a mudflat that extended over an area of several acres. Many very large houses indicated the proximity of natives, who however, strangely enough,

did not come off. About two hours after dark the tide crept up to the bank and at 10.30 p.m. the launch had 4 ft. of water around her. But the cushion of mud which the ebb tide had thrown up under the lee rail was now by the flood tide washed under her other quarter. Independently of the darkness of night the position was eminently hazardous; for a fresh breeze came in with the tide, causing a heavy break on this mudflat, and wave after wave made a clean breach over the hapless launch, which was thrown violently first on one side and then on the other. Many of the hands seemed almost paralysed at this rough treatment, and Sadleir gave it as his opinion that "this time it was all up with her, sir!" The leader, however, infused fresh courage into his men, and, himself setting the example, all hands were kept vigorously employed in baling out the water-logged launch. The engineer, Martin Langdon, nobly seconded his chief's efforts. For a time the contest was a doubtful one. All the while, however, the tide was rising; and, to cut a long story short, steam was raised, a way churned out through the yielding mud, not without many a bump, and midnight found the launch anchored half a mile off in 18 ft. of water.

On the following morning natives informed the wooding party that the name of their island was Ogara and that of the village Episcea. Later on the "Mabel" put out to sea—rounded a point of land—and presently a great 12-mile-wide opening came into view. This proved to be the main entrance of the

FLY RIVER.

The natives of the little village of Sarguan, at its north head proved very shy. Upon inquiry, their nervousness appeared to be due to the remembrance of the punishment inflicted upon them by the "Pearl" some nine years ago for the murder of the crew of a full-rigged ship that had lost its reckoning—been driven in shore and grounded on the large sandbank to windward. These natives were interested to hear of our visit to the country in the north-east, a land which they called *Messeday*. They had no intercourse, however, with the people of that district, being ignorant of their language and apprehensive of the sea journey.

Sunday and Monday (December 18 and 19) were spent at Kiwai, a large village about eight miles up the Fly River. Here yams, bananas, sweet potatoes, and tobacco were obtained, also a 60-lb. pig, bought for an axe.

A native woman, smeared all over with mud, was observed embarking in a small sailing canoe. On inquiry it transpired that her husband had died over night, and she, in this mourning attire (*e.g.* the *mud*) was going off to inform her relations in the neighbouring villages.



Left wing of Village of Kiwai.



Family Group—Kiwai.

When these Kiwai natives want a little amusement they indulge in the pleasures of the chase—*i.e.*, of wild pigs, or of inland tribes. For the former purpose they have a well-trained breed of dogs, which they value so highly that they do not eat them, as a rule, until after they have died a natural death. In the latter event they put on their shell ornaments (groin and breast plates), paint themselves red, yellow, and black,^f and tie on feather head-dresses. Then they depart in their canoes, and when their destination is reached take to the bush and hunt wild natives. From tree-tops they eagerly scan the horizon for signs of smoke. Their human prey is in this way betrayed by his own camp fire, hunted down, and decapitated. Jubilantly the Kiwaians return to their district, and after cooking and eating the heads, hang up the skulls as a trophy. At these cannibal feasts a kind of kava is drunk. This is prepared from an indigenous root chewed by virgins of about 13 years of age. While it does not exactly intoxicate, its effect is not unlike that of opium.

On Tuesday, December 20, the "Mabel" crossed the mouth of the Fly, and, passing inside Mibu and Bampton Islands, arrived, after much buffeting about from bad weather, at Darru, near Bristow Island on December 22. The natives on the neighbouring Tait River make enclosures of stakes, into which they decoy alligators by means of a bait, and then at low water destroy them by means of their formidable arrows. On Friday, December 23, a start was made for Mangrove Island of the chart (some 10 miles distant), under the expectation that good fuel would be obtainable there. Nothing, however, was found save a few stunted bushes, 4 ft. high, of mangrove ash. These scattered clumps were submerged at high water and worse than useless for fuel. The Katau River had accordingly to be visited for supplies.

The passage of 100 miles across Torres Straits was commenced on Christmas Day, and proved uneventful, save for one fierce squall from the north-west, which caught the launch 12 miles from shelter. The "Mabel" had to run before it, and found a refuge under the lee of Yama or Turtle-back Island.

Mr. Bevan had raised 3 feet on the "Mabel's" rail with sheets of galvanized iron for the passage across. Without this precaution, and the fact of her being, so to speak, flying light, owing to provisions having been consumed and stores nearly expended, the launch would likely have foundered in the open sea.

On the following day this hazardous expedition was brought to a close, Thursday Island being safely reached by the party intact without a single fatality.

Thus in two months, in addition to the considerable time spent on land, some 1,200 miles had been steamed over new, and for the most part previously unsurveyed, waterways in the least known regions of New Guinea. This had been accomplished solely with wood fuel, which had to be cut as required—often several times a day—through a country infested with savage native races, as regards its littoral, where murder waited on almost every footstep of the explorers.

This great undertaking had been carried through in a little launch whose previous operations had been confined to Sydney Harbour.

Her great relative draft (6 feet) necessitated the utmost caution in navigation; and it may be truly said that Mr. Bevan, the certificated master, was almost chained to the wheel the whole time she was under weigh.

A brief but comprehensive report was immediately published in the local paper, in reference to which the following significant declaration written on the ship's articles was endorsed by the hands :—

“ We hereby certify that the results of the above voyage are as described in the *Torres Straits Pilot* of January 2, 1888, and that throughout, in spite of great provocation on more than one occasion, *no collisions with natives nor bloodshed have occurred.*”

Mr. Bevan wired at once to the Colonial Governments that he was willing to ship a new crew and return at once to explore the remaining unknown waterways in New Guinea; but, beyond a conditional offer of £100 from H.M. Special Commissioner (Hon. Jno. Douglas) towards further exploration, no other aid was immediately forthcoming.

AN OFFICIAL REPORT.

THE following is the official report, dated Thursday Island, January 12, 1888, of Mr. H. J. Hemmy, L.S., commissioned by Queensland Government to accompany Mr. Bevan's fifth expedition :—

“Report on the rivers and country traversed on my trip with Mr. Theodore Bevan's exploring expedition in New Guinea during November and December, 1887.”

“On November 6, we parted company with the Q.G.S.S. “Albatross” at the mouth of Bell Sound, and made, in the launch “Mabel” up that river, which keeps a northerly direction, passing through low, swampy country, covered with mangroves and nipa palms, large channels coming from the east and west into the river, the country along which remained the same for about 12 miles up, when, the banks being higher, it gradually changed to loamy soil, covered with dense undergrowth scrub, with patches of sago and coco-nut palms growing near the banks of the river. The river narrowed very much as we advanced, until when we turned back at a distance of about 18 miles up it was less than 50 yards wide, the banks being about 4 ft. above tidal marks. The water was quite salt and useless for cooking, &c. The channel was deep all the way, 3 fathoms being the last sounding. Returning to the mouth we shaped our course for the Douglas River, entering through Port Bevan.

“Port Bevan is a large wide inlet of about 3 to 4 miles in width, having a deep channel passing between sandbanks dry at low water all the way up to the mouth of the Douglas. A short distance up the Douglas we passed Aird Hills, about 30 miles from Cape Blackwood. These hills, which rise abruptly from the surrounding country, have a channel of water all round them; the highest peak is about 1,300 ft. high; they are covered with dense scrub, the soil is a rich, black loam. Both at and after passing Aird Hills the water of the river was quite *fresh*. There is a good deep channel up this river, but there are numerous mud banks that make the navigation of it difficult to a stranger. The river widens out as soon as the hills are passed and there are a great number of small islands in it; it also bears to the west for about 6 miles, where it diverges. One channel runs south, called by Mr. Bevan the Newbery River; it is the most direct outlet. The Douglas continues wide for about 6 miles further, when it passes some low hills and narrows down to about 600 yards. Continuing up some distance the hills come in on both sides and are of a peculiar formation, being a succession of peaks. About 15 miles from the Newbery there is a scattered village called Tumu, with the houses built on the peaks of the hills, and looks very remarkable when seen from a distance. A few miles farther on there

is a branch called the Philp, entering which we went up. It is a deep, narrow river running between high-peaked hills, in some places the sides coming down perpendicular to the river.

"There is some very pretty scenery to be seen here, looking up the river through the gorges in the range and just catching a glimpse of the distant ranges.

"The ridges are of a limestone formation, the soil is of a light brown colour. The scrub on the ridges is not quite so dense as in the lower country, there being less undergrowth. After proceeding up about 20 miles further we came to a succession of rapids. Passing one safely in the launch, we grounded on the second; the current catching the launch swept her into shallow water; the river was falling fast, so we were unable to pull her off. During the time we were aground we went for one day up the river in a boat; after a deal of trouble we managed to get above four or five more rapids. The country was all of the same formation with ridges on both sides a short distance from the river. On trying a few dishes of gravel from the bed of the river a few colours of gold were found but very light, probably washed down from the ridges at the head of the river; high ranges could be seen about 15 miles off. We had now travelled by the river from Cape Blackwood a distance of 87 miles.

"After a delay of a week through the launch grounding, the river rose sufficient for us to pull the launch off; we then returned to Port Bevan, from thence to Port Romilly, which is also a nice large inlet, well sheltered, with a good, deep channel into it. The Stanhope, and also the Queen's Jubilee Rivers make their exit into this inlet. We went up the latter (which may justly be called a splendid river), winding through rich alluvial country. About 15 miles up there is a large native village called Evorra, where the natives cultivate gardens and fence them in. Tobacco, bananas, and sugar-cane were most noticeably grown. Bread-fruit and coco-nut-trees grew in abundance all about. The red hybiscus and variegated crotons were planted before the houses. Proceeding up the river we passed numerous small villages, evidently only temporary ones, erected for the purpose of getting timber for making canoes with, as there were numbers of logs in front of most of them. The banks of the river are from 12 ft. to 15 ft. above high water, and are of a rich chocolate soil. There are native gardens cleared and planted at different places along the banks which they appear to leave for future use.

"Five large channels diverge from this river, each having a direct channel to the sea, the junction of the most easterly called Woodhouse by Mr. Bevan. North of the head of the delta the river, confined to a single channel, widens to over half-a-mile in places.

“When about 10 miles above Woodhouse junction one morning, the weather clearing for an hour, we got a good view of the mountain ranges, one peak, estimated by me to be 60 miles distant, I found by theodolite to be 13,200 feet high. There are a succession of ranges, one behind the other, to be seen to the north and north-east. We ran this river up into the ridges for 80 miles from the coast. The country on this river can be very favourably compared with the Johnstone country in Queensland, both in soil and scrub; there being a greater quantity of land available in New Guinea between the sea and the ranges. The Johnstone River timbers are larger and more plentiful than on the Jubilee, from what one could judge from the river. This country should grow sugar-cane or other farm products well.

“The cost of clearing the scrub would probably be cheaper than in Queensland, viz., £5 to £10 per acre, if native labour were used.

“Returning as far as Woodhouse junction, we ran down the previously unexplored eastern channel to within sight of the sea, passing through good country for about 10 miles, when we got into low, swampy country and—near the coast—thick mangroves and nipa palms. The river near the mouth forms into two channels, the one to the east, called Aivei Movi, has another large channel entering it from the north called Kalayle; the water in channels is very shallow, but deep passages may be found by survey. Following the river back and out through Port Romilly we entered Langford Sound, formed by numerous salt-water channels, which, by following, brought us out again at Aird Hills. *En route* we ran three large branches up towards the hills which we could see no great distance away. The first channel taken, a large, wide one, led by some very large villages, with big, long houses, the natives being very numerous. These villages continue for over two miles. The only high country seen was what the villages were on, and a view of hills about five miles distant, and that seemed to extend no distance inland. The water was too salt to drink. The second branch followed also took us among native villages, but they were not so numerous as in the first—all in low nipa palm country. The third channel followed bore westerly, passing between low ranges of hills. There were some rocky bars across it, making it very shallow at times; the banks were high and covered with dense scrub, mangroves growing all the way along the edge of the water near the coast. After arriving at Aird Hills, we took the northern channel and came out into the Douglas, which we followed up to the Newbery, running that river down to its mouth. The country passed through for the first six miles was high, in places ridges coming from the west. After that we passed through low swampy country, meeting high banks occasionally where the natives had planted coco-nuts. There are a great number of channels at the mouth, making a lot of large islands, on which there are a number of large villages.

"I have noticed during the whole trip that the natives are mostly on the coast, only one permanent village having been found on the *fresh-water* systems—namely, Tumu, on the Douglas River. *The interior rangey country appears to be quite uninhabited.*

"After leaving the Newbery we followed the coast round to another large inlet, which being followed up led into a large wide river, a channel from which connects it with the Newbery. There are a lot of large villages at the mouth of this river. We ran it up for about 20 miles. There was a very strong tide running in and out of this channel, about three knots. It is very wide and shallow, varying in depth from one to three fathoms. It narrowed down to about 300 yards, the water being of uniform depth at our turning point.

"The weather during the month of November was very mild, the temperature not being above 90° Fahrenheit and below 78°. The sky was clouded over nearly every day, but generally cleared off for some time. We had some very heavy thunderstorms, coming on mostly during the night. In December it was much the same as in November, the rain coming down more steadily. The barometer varied from 29·75 to 30·10. Sometimes the fall and rise were sudden, but generally gradual. Returning to the mouth of the river in December, we followed the coast of New Guinea westward as far as the Katau River, when we made direct for Thursday Island, reaching there on December 24, 1887.

"The rivers traversed over are navigable for vessels drawing up to 12 ft. of water for *great distances inland*, the only difficulty being the finding the right channel at the mouths, as there are sandbanks in different directions. Good channels for deeper draught vessels will probably be found into most of these rivers by making a survey at their mouths.

"The rising and hilly country to the east of the Aivei runs apparently to within a distance of probably only 10 miles from the coast, but to the westward, or say between the Aivei and George Rivers (100 miles along the coast to the west), the ranges are at a greater distance inland, say about 40 miles. The ranges run in a north-west and south-east direction.

"From the Aivei on the East to the George River on the west navigable channels lead from one opening and river into another over an area of 100 miles, by means of which necessity for going to the open sea is avoided.

"I do not consider there is any more danger from fever in New Guinea than in the north of Queensland."

(Sgd.) H. J. HEMMY, L.S.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE JUBILEE RIVER, NEW GUINEA.

To the Editor of the *Daily Telegraph*.

Sir,—The name of a river in New Guinea is not likely to interest many of your readers, but it is undesirable that any should have two names, and it is a universally accepted law that new discoveries should bear the name given by the discoverer.

The river which Mr. Bevan has named the “Queen’s Jubilee” was named in 1883 the “Wickham.” I reported the discovery of it by my colleague to the Royal Geographical Society at the time, and my letter was duly published in the proceedings of that Society.

The report of Mr. Bevan’s last voyage settles the identity of the river beyond the possibility of question. The Aivei is one mouth of the Wickham and it was by it that Mr. Chalmers entered the large river. Mr. Bevan describes the Aivei as an affluent of the Jubilee, and by it he came down from the river to the sea.

Mr. Bevan is wrong in supposing the Aivei to have been previously unexplored. Mr. Chalmers was on it on the above occasion, and in your contemporary, the *Sydney Morning Herald* of December 21 last, is an account of a voyage to that delta region in which the Aivei, Alele and Panaroa Rivers were revisited.

I do not wish to detract from the value of Mr. Bevan’s discoveries, but it will be found that the above river and some mountains renamed by Mr. Bevan were long ago recorded by the Royal and other Geographical Societies of Europe.

Yours, &c.,

81, Queen-street, Woollahra, February 14, 1888. W. G. LAWES.

To the Editor of the *Daily Telegraph*.

Sir,—Under the above heading the Rev. W. G. Lawes, in a letter published in your columns on Saturday last, says: “The river which Mr. Bevan has named the Queen’s Jubilee was named in 1883 the ‘Wickham’” (by Mr. Chalmers).

In proceedings Royal Geographical Society, published London, February, 1887, will be found a paper by Mr. Chalmers descriptive of his travels in New Guinea, illustrated by a map. Delineated on this map are several large river openings, one of which thus named—“Alele” (Wickham)—is shown extending inland for something *less than ten miles*.

Neither do the rivers described and charted by Mr. Bevan (and now authenticated by Government survey) appear in the map attached to Mr. Chalmers’s work, “Pioneering in New Guinea,” published London, 1887, nor on the Admiralty charts. (See map in *Daily Telegraph*, February 1, 1888.)

The characteristic of the Jubilee River, as ascertained by Mr. Bevan, is that, coming down in a single noble flood of fresh water from the mountains, it first bifurcates at Woodhouse Junction—*e.g.*, at the head of the delta, a point some thirty miles as the crow flies from the coast. Thence it eventually disembogues itself by means of at least seven large main rivers—*viz.*, the

opening at Bald Head, the Mawau, Arai, Unta, Panaroa, Aivei, Alele; also by half-a-hundred minor channels into several estuaries or sounds on the littoral of the great Papuan Gulf.

It is the Alele, followed up for, at the very outside, a distance of 10 or a dozen miles, that Mr. Chalmers named the "Wickham," according to his own maps above referred to, while it is the main westerly arm and the great parent river from the head of its delta northwards into the mountains that Mr. Bevan, the *discoverer*, has named the "Queen's Jubilee" River.

As well might Captain Blackwood, of H.M.S. "Fly," who ascended the Aird River for some 20 miles in 1845, claim to have discovered the Jubilee River on the ground that Mr. Bevan has now linked one river with another by means of deltaic channels or in virtue of the nomenclature of Bald Head.

Now, let us see what position is taken up in the matter by those very Royal and other Geographical Societies of Europe to which Mr. Lawes so confidently refers. In "Proceedings R.G.S.," published London, October, 1887, the place of honor is assigned to an account of the "Discovery of Two New Rivers in British New Guinea by Theodore F. Bevan," accompanied by a map showing at a glance the respective positions occupied by the Queen's Jubilee River and the Alele ("Wickham"). While the former is charted for nearly 100 miles of its course running in a general north-westerly direction from Bald Head, the latter is shown as a comparatively insignificant creek situated on the coast 30 miles distant from the nearest point.

Yet another illustration:—One of the chiefest continental geographers, Herr H. Wichmann, co-editor of *Peterman's Mitteilungen*—writing officially from Gotha, under date September 6, 1887, alludes to Mr. Bevan's discoveries as in his opinion the most important since the discovery of the Fly River, "as they cover a great portion of New Guinea until now a *white* place on the map."

It follows as an indisputable corollary that Mr. Chalmers either suppressed information on the geography of New Guinea of great importance to the scientific world or that Mr. Lawes now claims for his colleague discoveries never made by him, and which appear in no reliable map or report published before the discoveries made by Mr. Bevan.

Mr. Lawes presumes to make assertions regarding the discoveries of Mr. Bevan which are regrettable as being utterly incorrect and which evince a spirit little in keeping with charity or fairplay.

Mr. Lawes is further evidently in melancholy ignorance of the geography of the country which he ventures to discuss, hopelessly mixing up the Aivei, Alele and Wickham; and then states that Mr. Bevan is "wrong," as if it were possible that he (Mr. Lawes), who has never been on the spot, could know better than the gallant explorer, Mr. Bevan, the only geographer who has ever reached the river in question.

Maps and plans can be seen at the society's rooms in Phillip-street.

As president of the Royal Geographical Society, Sydney, the parent society at home not unnaturally looks to me, not only to furnish correct information on matters geographical, but also to settle as far as I am able any differences that may arise locally between competitive explorers.

Yours, &c.,

SIR EDWARD STRICKLAND,
President Royal Geographical Society
(New South Wales Branch).

February 20, 1888.

THE Rev. W. G. Lawes, in reply, wrote a long letter published in the *Sydney Daily Telegraph*, of 10th March, 1888, in which he refers to "a map published in 1885, on which the *supposed* position and course of the 'Wickham' is marked."

Mr. Lawes continued:—"Let it be the Jubilee, the Centenary, the Wickham, or anything else, but that it is a very large river discovered in 1883 and explored by Mr. Bevan in 1887 no one who reads the published accounts will for a moment doubt."

To which the following was an answer:—

QUEEN'S JUBILEE v. WICKHAM RIVER, NEW GUINEA.

To the Editor of the *Daily Telegraph*.

Sir,—Your issue of the 10th inst. contains a long, rambling rejoinder to my reply to Rev. W. G. Lawes' first letter.

Mr. Lawes, in support of his absurd contention, refers to Mr. Chalmers' account of explorations in South-eastern New Guinea, published in "R.G.S. Proceedings, London, February, 1887." That work is in my possession, and I am also quite acquainted with all that either of them have at any time written.

Mr. Chalmers' accounts of his travels are characterised by a vagueness that greatly detracts from their geographic value—traverses, astronomical observations, and even estimated distances being conspicuous by their absence.

This very deplorable looseness is now made the very peg upon which they stoop to hang their claims.

All that Mr. Chalmers claims to have done in his account read before the R.G.S., also in his other voluminous writings, is "to have started from Orokolo after breakfast, paddled up various creeks, seen where the Alele branched off, and then to have turned back, not having gone prepared to make a further ascent."

Careful survey has since shown that where the Alele ("Wickham") does branch off is some six miles only from the coast. In "Work and Adventure in New Guinea, 1877 to 1885," by James Chalmers and W. W. Gill, five river openings are mentioned as being reported by natives as separate mouths of one river, and on an accompanying sketch plan imaginary connecting lines show the way in which they were reported to join.

If any evidence were needed that native reports possess no scientific value, all that is needed is to compare the fictitious map based merely on native reports referred to with the reliable surveys since made by the explorer, Mr. Bevan, authenticated by a licensed surveyor holding the commission of the Queensland Government.

In further proof that native reports *do not constitute discovery*, and of their utter unreliability and misleading character, I have only to quote the following from Mr. Chalmers' "Work and Adventure" above referred to, page 147:—"At Bald Head is the Maivau. They (the natives) say it is a *distinct* river. All the way up the Maivau River is deep and wide. The people are black cannibals, build large temples, &c."

The absurdity of this is shown by the fact that the Maivau has since been proved to be but an insignificant creek, some 10 miles only in length, in the delta of the *same* river system as the Alele.

Yours, &c.,

SIR EDWARD STRICKLAND,

President Royal Geographical Society
(New South Wales Branch).

Sydney, March 15, 1888.

To the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies,
Downing-street, London.

Sir,—

Sydney, 16 February, 1888.

I first visited New Guinea in November, 1884. In the spring of 1885, I returned to New Guinea and made an exhaustive investigation into the resources of the south-east peninsula (*vide* reports published in the English and Colonial press).*

In the same year (1885) the late Special Commissioner, Sir Peter Scratchley, induced me to embark in trading operations in British New Guinea by the provisional promise of concessions that would assist me in forming a company to bring more capital into the undertaking than I was personally able to command.

I accordingly spent considerable private means in commercially exploiting the south-east coast with very favourable results, but owing to the death of Sir Peter Scratchley negotiations were never completed, and the undertaking fell through, owing to the *uncertain tenure* of sites allotted to—and occupied by—me, and the unsettled state of the country.

Enclosure A is a copy of my application to Sir Peter Scratchley, under date 7th December, 1885.

My case is referred to in the following terms in "Report on British New Guinea, from data and notes by the late Sir Peter Scratchley, by Mr. G. Seymour Fort (Private Secretary)," published Melbourne, 1886.

Page 9. "The following applications for concessions of land were recorded":

- (1.)
- (2.)

Page 10. (3.) "From a New Guinea trader, in order to enable him to start a company for the development of native industries. The correspondence in reference to this application was never completed."

Page 10, however, also states: "Permission was granted to Mr. H. O. Forbes, who has a station at Sogere, about 50 miles inland from Port Moresby, to buy land from the natives in that district."

Although my claim ranked foremost, and Sir Peter Scratchley wrote under date 19th September, 1885:—"As Mr. Bevan is aware *I am anxious to assist him in his enterprise*;" yet his death upset all my arrangements, and his promise was never fulfilled.

* * * * *

The negotiations were (after nearly a year's delay, due to the non-arrival in New Guinea of the new Commissioner) continued with Sir Peter Scratchley's successor, the Hon. John Douglas. Mr. Douglas' Private Secretary (Mr. Hely) then wrote, by direction of His Excellency the Special Commissioner, as follows:—

Extract from letter to Mr. Bevan, dated 1st July, 1886:

2. "He" (the Special Commissioner) "does not anticipate that there will be any difficulty in authorizing such a Company when the proper time comes."

* H.M. Special Commissioner (the late Sir Peter Scratchley) granted Mr. Bevan a license to *explore* and *trade* in British New Guinea, under date 12 August, 1885, which was ratified and renewed by Hon. John Douglas, 4 February, 1887.

3. "He will, in the meantime, issue either a general or a special permit to the agent or manager of such company, as such agent or manager resident in the Protected Territory, if such a company is incorporated."

I could not of course consider so indefinite a reply as sufficient warranty for inviting the co-operation of capitalists; and was again after two years of unremitting labour and considerable expenditure—solely of my own private means—baffled in my efforts to develop the legitimate natural resources of the country.

* * * * *

It had been a desire of the late Sir Peter Scratchley that the unknown territory in the bight of the great Papuan Gulf should be explored. Bearing this in mind, I started in the spring of 1886 to explore that country, with the result that discoveries were made to which Sir Henry Parkes (Premier of New South Wales) publicly alluded in the following terms:—"It was clear," he said, "that more *practical* results would follow Mr. Bevan's expedition than any that had before been carried out in New Guinea, and it was of great importance that the knowledge gained should be followed up with further research."—(Sydney *Daily Telegraph*, 14th July, 1887.)

Two great rivers discovered—and named by me the Douglas and Queen's Jubilee respectively—I traced up in each case for a distance of nearly 100 miles inland.

The native inhabitants (confined almost exclusively in this vast area to the coast regions where their principal food products, fish and coco-nuts, are abundant) were found to be amenable to humane influences; while the rich tropical flats through which these two magnificent rivers flow in their middle courses, also the mountains forming their watershed, appeared to be *uninhabited*. The fertility of the soil, suitability of climate, and facilities for navigation are such that—given a tenure—I could command the investment of capital both for purposes of tropical agriculture and exportation of indigenous sago, nutmegs, and spices.*

Enclosure B—(Report published by *The Royal Geographical Society* in their Proceedings, London, October, 1887) gives in a condensed form some results of my, at present, unrequited labours.

* * * * *

Receiving the loan of a steam launch from the New South Wales Government, through the Premier (Sir Henry Parkes), and the use of the services of a competent surveyor from the Queensland Government, through the Premier (Sir Samuel Griffith), I returned to New Guinea, for the *fifth* time, in November, 1887.

Enclosure C contains map and account showing results of this my last expedition, now being published in the Sydney "*Daily Telegraph*."

[A large scale map is in course of preparation, and a further paper recording my latest discoveries is being prepared by me for the Royal Geographical Society, London.]

* In this way whole tribes at present addicted to head-hunting and such-like savage practices may be won over to agricultural and other peaceful pursuits, as in British North Borneo.

To briefly sum up:—

(1) I have now explored and accurately surveyed the main features of a territory equal in area to about *one-sixth* of the whole of New Guinea.

(2) have proved the existence of *deep* channels into these new rivers from the Papuan Gulf.

(3) that the interior is for the most part,—possibly entirely—*uninhabited*.

(4) and have throughout not spilt—nor allowed to be spilt—*one drop of native blood*; but, on the contrary, have proved that the aborigines of the coast regions are amenable to humane influences, and can be raised to a higher standard of civilization and comfort; while the few timorous tribes dwelling back from the sea are glad of *protection* from the skull-hunting raids of their more powerful coast neighbours. These latter would readily assist in the cultivation of products such as:—Rice, maize, sago, arrowroot, high-class tobacco, vanilla, and spices, both for their own consumption and profit as well as for export. They could also be trained to collect and barter such indigenous commodities as caoutchouc, gutta-percha, massoi-bark, edible birds' nests, camphor, beeswax, copal, resin, Gambier nutmegs, pepper, hemp, and ratans.

Although my work has been done in accordance with the wishes of the late Sir Peter Scratchley, and has received the warmest expressions of approval from the Hon. John Douglas, yet no assistance, direct or indirect, *nor pecuniary aid of any kind* have been rendered me by the Administration. Apart from the disinterested aid of a few friends, my explorations have been conducted at *my own expense*.

The time, I think, has therefore come for me to revive—in an altered form—my former application for concessions to enable me to *revert* to industrial pursuits for the development of the new territory.

The following views, as published in the *Townsville Herald* under date 21 Jan., 1888, will explain my wishes:

“With reference to future exploration, Mr. Bevan says that he believes all that steam can do has been done, and he would establish a *depôt* at Aird Hills with outlying stations at one or two pacific villages where the dialects might be learnt. Having won the further confidence of the natives, he would use their canoes for reaching the interior far above navigable limits, as he has already had experience of what they can do in the way of paddling against strong currents and in making portages at rapids. This could only be done by operating on a *large* scale, over a *large* area, and with a *large* outlay.*

“Mr. Bevan considers that having spent five years in pioneering and exploration in New Guinea *with unprecedented results*, against all the rigours of the climate and attendant risks, and also at a great drain upon his personal means, he is entitled to substantial recognition from the Imperial Government.

* Unless conducted on a *large* scale the cost of communications and transport of produce would eat up all the profits.

"This recognition he would like in the form of a grant of uninhabited land on the rivers which he has discovered. *With this as security he would offer inducements to capitalists to start planting operations and exploitation of the interior on an extensive scale on the lines before mentioned.*"†

* * * * *

I have now therefore the honor to apply for a grant on conditions of use, of the uninhabited blocks (aggregating 254,080 acres) as marked on map and schedule, forming enclosure D. My claim being based on the equity of the plea of the early assurances of Her Majesty's Special Commissioners for British New Guinea, in addition to long and great services since rendered by me—*free of all cost to the State*—by the success of my original explorations and the extent and value of my discoveries.

* * * * *

I may add in conclusion that I have received overtures to explore the German New Guinea Territory, and have also been offered land on favourable terms in the German portion of the island, *where settlement is now invited.*

As a British subject, I sincerely trust that such a course will be unnecessary, seeing that what I ask is to be allowed to establish my plantations in the heart of my discoveries *as some small reward for the perils, toils, and personal expenditure connected with their original exploration.*

Such an undertaking will go to prove how the country can be made self-supporting. And, if as successful as my late explorations, will tend to reduce the period during which the *cost* of administration of British New Guinea will remain an annual charge upon the Imperial and Colonial revenues.

* * * * *

Permit me, in conclusion, to point out the very grave disability from which I have suffered, viz., of having had to deal—*not* with one permanent officer throughout, but with three or four Administrators (succeeding each other, sometimes at long intervals, and but seldom resident in British New Guinea).

In this way, the undertakings of one Commissioner may be entirely overlooked by his eventual successor, who perhaps fails to thoroughly acquaint himself with the transactions of his predecessors, thereby incalculable injury may be, *and has been*, wrought, not only to private individuals but also to the *public service.*

I have, &c.,

THEODORE BEVAN.

† The practical operations of such an association would provide the essentials of work, and prepare the way for future colonization of the *high and likely salubrious main ranges* referred to by the premier Australian scientist, Baron Sir Ferd. Von Mueller. (See Preface.)

Enclosure A referred to in foregoing letter of application.

Port Moresby, New Guinea, 7 December, 1885.

Your Excellency,

I now have the honor to give returns from my following (native-managed) Beche-de-mer stations for the month—

Village.	Station when established.	Yield now in store at Port Moresby.	Estimated quantity on station at date.
	1885.		
Tupuselei	12 November	13 bags
Kaile	13 "	10 "
Kapakapa	18 "	7 "
Hula	23 "	4 bags
Aroma	30 "	6 "
		30 bags	10 bags

or a return of 2 tons Beche-de-mer for the month from grounds that have been fished over for years.*

Proposed British New Guinea Land Produce and Mercantile Agency Company.

I had the honor of writing your Excellency on the above subject under date Hula, 16th November, 1885, and now beg to add the following particulars.

The proposed Association, if floated, would be sufficiently strong to operate anywhere and everywhere, and, as hitherto disaffected natives would thus be brought into mutually beneficial relationship with the Company, it would become, under your Excellency's sway, one of the most powerful civilizing agencies ever brought into play in British New Guinea.

My ambition would be that not a single spot whence payable returns could be secured should be neglected, and I have no hesitation in saying that the volume of its trade would soon become enormous. For many years to come I am (humanly speaking) certain that the export of valuable Beche-de-mer alone would exceed 100 tons per annum.

All mercantile and mercantile agency business would also come within the scope of the Company's operations, and I venture to express the opinion that a powerful Association, of the kind intended, devoting itself to the development and promotion of trade in New Guinea would be a public boon.

This Company being the pioneer and premier association of the kind, with attendant difficulties to overcome, and being likely to contribute largely to the revenue, would consequently ask for specially liberal treatment at your Excellency's hands in the matter of land grant. Also for certain exclusive rights and privileges, such for instance, as exemption from import dues on tobacco, trade, stores, &c., and that only a moderate impost might be placed on the Company's export (say) 5 per cent. on beche-de-mer, copra, &c.

* The schedule of returns of beche-de-mer, printed above, is also quoted in report on British New Guinea, from data and notes by the late Sir Peter Scratchley, published Melbourne, 1886.

As your Excellency is aware, trading prospects in New Guinea are not thought highly of in Colonial commercial circles, reasons in part probably being—

1. That owing to several causes, nearly all who have heretofore traded in New Guinea have failed pecuniarily, none indeed having made a marked success.
2. The impossibility of getting marine insurance cover, except perhaps to one or two well-known points only, and then at high premiums.
3. Liability to loss of life and property at the hands of the natives.
4. The bad name attaching to the climate and country, and alleged poverty of resources.

The above and other causes have no doubt operated in the past against the formation of an association similar to the one now proposed which, in addition, will now have a further drain on its resources in having to contribute its quota towards cost of government.

Under all these circumstances, though I am sanguine of the ultimate success of the Company, if worked upon the lines which I should wish to see followed, I am not so certain of success in getting the necessary capital subscribed unless, in addition to the rights and privileges before mentioned in this and in my former letter (dated Hula, 16th October last), shareholders were given the security of landed property: (say) of a grant of 100 square miles of pastoral country (for breeding cattle, mules, horses, &c.), and preferably bordering on Beagle and Hood Bays and district; also of 16,000 acres for plantation purposes cut up into four lots of 4,000 acres apiece, and either on different river frontages or in part contiguous as might be arranged. I would also ask for the Company a small grant of land at each place where it established a station which yielded a satisfactory contribution towards the revenue of the country.

The idea which recommends itself for putting such a Company on a broad colonial basis would be to apportion shares for simultaneous subscription in Melbourne, Sydney, and Brisbane, Townsville and Cooktown, reserving one-half at least of the nominal share capital with the option of placing same at a future date on the London market if deemed advisable and rendered necessary by the magnitude of the Company's operations.

Failing your Excellency's approval to all or any of the above proposals, the writer solicits information as to the most favourable terms on which an association of the kind could acquire *Real Estate* for the purposes intended, and the concessions that would be granted.

I have, &c.,

THEODORE BEVAN.

To His Excellency Sir Peter Scratchley,

H.M. Special Commissioner for British New Guinea.

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF PROGRESS IN GERMAN NEW GUINEA, AND RETROGRESSION IN BRITISH NEW GUINEA UNDER THE PROTECTORATE.

GERMANS IN NEW GUINEA.—The German New Guinea Company has spent already about £250,000 in starting the colonization of New Guinea and adjacent islands. They have erected a great many stations along the coast, started a local government, and surveyed all the harbours; besides, they have been having trials in agriculture, and now, after this experience, have started large plantations in New Guinea. This scheme, we believe, will be the success of the country, owing to the cheapness and abundance of native labour. Already they have 500 natives from the adjacent islands and 200 Malays. They are employed in growing cotton, coffee, and tobacco. The company has forbidden home emigration, and has thrown the country open now, wishing the emigration to come from Australia.—*Sydney Daily Telegraph*, March 17, 1888.

* * * * *

Please compare the above extract—relating to the progress of German New Guinea—with the following, culled from among hundreds of similar animadversions in the Australian press, on the stagnation, and even *retrogression*, in British New Guinea under the protectorate:—

* * * * *

“The Government has already subscribed large sums towards the expenses of a Protectorate, which, to use the words of the Commissioner—freely quoted—has caused the trade which existed in New Guinea at the time of his taking office to dwindle to *NIL*.”—*Melbourne Daily Telegraph*, July 22, 1887.

* * * * *

“All that the Rev. Mr. Chalmers gave the Administration of British New Guinea credit for possessing, as the result of an expenditure of £50,000, was a *qaol* and a *bungalow* at Port Moresby.”—*Sydney Morning Herald*, September 6, 1887.

* * * * *

“British New Guinea is the rankest commercial failure south of the line. The steamers that now run there from Thursday Island are to be discontinued, as it is utterly useless catering for a place where trading is practically *prohibited*.”—*Sydney paper*, March 10, 1888.

A FEW WORDS IN REFERENCE TO THE *TRUE* CHARACTER OF THE INTRUSIVE MALAYS, POLYNESIANS, AND PAPUANS COMPOSING THE NATIVE POPULATIONS OF BRITISH NEW GUINEA.

WHILE there can be but little doubt that the mixed native population can be raised in course of time to a higher standard of civilization and comfort, there is overwhelming evidence to prove that the Papuans are by nature both treacherous and bloodthirsty. Their character will be best ameliorated by the operations of associations on the lines of the British North Borneo Company, or German New Guinea Company, in both of whose territories whole tribes once addicted to *head-hunting* and such like savage practices have now been won over to *agricultural* and *other peaceful pursuits*.

* * * * *

The coast tribes of the Gulf of Papua, New Guinea.—Extracts from paper by Rev. J. Chalmers, published in Proceedings Royal Geographical Society, London, February, 1887.

"The flooring of the aisle received its high polish from the *blood of victims* dragged along to the end where the most sacred place was. . . .

. . . . A feast would soon be on, and the *heaps of skulls* would disappear, because all would find their places on the skullery pins. . . .

. . . . That *headgear* once belonged to *inland* natives who were killed, brought into the dubu, presented to the gods, then cooked and eaten."

* * * * *

British New Guinea.—Reports on native affairs by A. Musgrave, junior, Assistant Deputy-Commissioner, published by Government Printer, Brisbane, 1887.

Mr. Musgrave appends to this report an "Approximate return of outrages and massacres *by natives* within the protectorate of British New Guinea" (from dates of first visit of H.M. ships to June 30, 1886).

Eighty-one distinct outrages and massacres of whites and others are recorded—many unprovoked—resulting in the destruction of *hundreds* of lives and thousands of pounds worth of property.

The Assistant Deputy-Commissioner states :—"When a foreigner settles in a village the *murderous propensities of the natives* at once receive a check. He discourages murder on the part of the villagers with whom he dwells, and outsiders have a wholesome fear of his firearms, which they naturally expect him to use on behalf of his friends."

* * * * *

Mr. Musgrave in the same report quotes the following atrocity :—

"October 4.—It was reported to me by Mr. Geo. Hunter, that the brother of the native destroyed by an alligator last month had murdered one of the widows of the latter. This most revolting crime was perpetrated under circumstances of peculiar atrocity. The native taken by the alligator was named Odemobonner, and belonged to the village or district of Merkara, on the Goldie River. He and his brother Vabouri, however, had been dwelling with the natives of a small village, called Kurimune, on the bank of the Laloki River, some 10 miles from Port Moresby. The former had two wives, one from the village of Baroné, about 2 miles north of Granville ; and the second, named Merbatta, from the village of Badili, about 3 miles to the south of the settlement. The natives of Kurimune village, knowing that some of their lives would be demanded by Merkara for the loss of Odemobonner, fled from the village, and scattered in the adjoining bush. Vabouri, equally impressed with the necessity for taking a life for his dead brother, decided to kill one of his sisters-in-law.

"By this course he avoided wounding the feelings of the Kurimune people, with whom he was on friendly terms. He probably also reflected that the villages to which the women belonged were less likely to retaliate, as they are under the influence of the mission teachers. The villagers of Kurimune used formerly to live higher up the course of the river, and I believe a teacher once resided amongst them. Their nomadic habits, however, made it necessary to withdraw him. The Merkara native was seized by the alligator on the 6th of September ; on the 25th the murderer, Vabouri, enticed a little boy, the son of Merbatta, to go with him to the Laloki River. The wretched mother, apparently unable to control her anxiety, followed after the boy. On reaching the river Vabouri seized an opportunity and speared her, and from the accounts I received, he then deliberately hacked her to pieces while still living. He cut off her hands at the wrists and threw them into the river, doing the same with the arms above the elbows. He severed her feet at the ankles, and the legs above the knees. The breasts and head were treated similarly. The body was ripped open and the viscera thrown separately into the river. Finally the trunk was cast to the alligators—less sanguinary monsters than this incarnate devil. I should not have described this case so circumstantially, but it is desirable to realize the characters of these savages as revealed by their conduct to each other. After some experience of South African natives and North American Indians, I do not remember ever hearing of any such act of barbarity. *Is it to be supposed, in the case of white men—where New Guinea natives can gratify this spirit of superstition and bloodthirst, gaining fame and plunder besides—they will stay their hands if they can kill with impunity ?* Certainly I do not entertain confident views on the point."

[One map.]

[N.B.—This letter is in reply to one couched in very similar terms to that addressed to the Rt. Hon. The Secretary of State for the Colonies, see p.p. 36-39, save that Mr. Bevan added :—

“ Your Excellency, in response to my application for aid for my Fifth Expedition, refusing on the ground of the slowness of incoming contributions, although Mr. H. O. Forbes (who came to New Guinea after me), a recipient of many favours, and of considerable moneys for many years, from the New Guinea Administration, was State-aided about the same time that my application was refused.”

Sir,

Thursday Island, 17th March, 1888.

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 18th February with enclosures, namely,—

- (a) Copy of your letter to Sir Peter Scratchley, of the 7th December, 1885.
- (b) Report published in the Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society of London for October, 1887.
- (c) Map, and account setting forth result of your last Expedition.
- (d) Schedule and plan of lands applied for by you.

In reference to these papers, and to your accompanying letters, I have to remark—

1. That in the expedition (Mr. Bevan's *fourth* expedition) which was fitted out by Messrs. Burns, Philp, & Co., under your *leadership*, and which left Thursday Island on the 17th of March of last year, a large amount of information appears to have been obtained in reference to the rivers running into the Papuan Gulf, between the Aird and Bald Head.—*A great deal of credit is due, I think, to all who were concerned in this expedition.—To yourself as the originator of it*, to Messrs. Burns, Philp, & Co., who so generously enabled you to carry it into effect, to Captain Boore, who navigated the “Victory,” and to the various scientific gentlemen who assisted you as photographers and collectors.

I was myself cognizant of this expedition, and the only regret I have in connection with it is that you did not direct your attention to that portion of the coast between the mouth of the Fly and the Aird, which has never been explored, and which is still entirely unknown to us. You will doubtless remember that I directed your attention to this portion of the coast line, which I was most anxious should be examined, and I have frequently adverted to it as a most interesting area of undiscovered territory. On your return from your second expedition, I observe that, after descending the Newbery, which is one of the mouths of the Aird, you appear to have touched on the verge of this undescribed portion of the coast. This in no way detracts from your merits as the *original discoverer* of the upper waters of the Aird and the Wickham, together with the extensive deltaic regions which you have explored and described.

2. With regard to your second expedition, I can only say that I was not informed of your intentions in reference to it, and if any special sanction had been required from me I think I should probably have *refused* to give it, on the grounds that it was a most hazardous thing to navigate the waters and rivers of the Papuan Gulf in such a steam launch as the “Mabel.” *Nevertheless you justified the risks incurred*, and returned to Thursday Island after a second *successful* expedition in which your previous discoveries were verified. I congratulate you, and those who accompanied you, on having survived the perils of a *most hazardous voyage*. You deserve all the credit

due to those who run such risks in the cause of geographical discovery. I congratulate you further on the *peaceful* relations which, throughout, you maintained with the native inhabitants of the country you explored.

3. On referring to your charts, namely, to those published in the proceedings of the Geographical Society and in the *Daily Telegraph* newspaper, I observe that you have availed yourself largely of the privileges which attach to a discoverer of naming the prominent natural features of the country you describe. There was, no doubt, ample scope for the exercise of your discretion in this respect, and I observe that you propose to honor me by designating one of the principal rivers the Douglas. I think, however, that the main branch of the river which you thus refer to, from its source to its mouth, should still be called the Aird. Captain Blackwood entered one of the mouths of this river. It has been known to geographers as the Aird for the last forty years. It is perfectly true that you made much more extensive discoveries than he did in connection with the inland course of the river. It will in no way detract from the merits of your investigations that this river should still be known as the Aird. You might as well rechristen the Fly, and call it the D'Albertis or the M'Farlane.* There are scores of explorers who have had much more to do with the navigation of the Fly than the original discoverers, but that is no reason why they should claim the right to rechristen it. It is the same with the Aird. I hope that the Aird will remain the Aird, just as Cape Blackwood should remain Cape Blackwood, though I observe that this designation is entirely omitted in your chart published in the proceedings of the Geographical Society. "Lord Salisbury Island" is all very well, but Cape Blackwood is the right thing and the old thing, and I hope that in your next chart such a well known land mark will not be suppressed in favour of a new-fangled designation which nobody recognizes. Then, as regards the Arthur Gordon Range, I observe that you have rechristened it the Musgrave Range. I believe it is, at least, ten years ago since the Arthur Gordon Range was seen and named by Mr. Chalmers and Captain Dubbins. Why should it not remain the Arthur Gordon Range. What is the use of confusing our maps with a lot of rival names?

With regard to the river which you call the Queen's Jubilee, I think also that there can be very little doubt that it is identical with the Wickham. On this I feel a little less confident, but if it is not, we are bound, I think, to find out where the Wickham is. This in no way detracts from the merits of your discoveries. You were the first to navigate the inland waters of the Wickham, and you ascertained that it was a noble, navigable river, of which we had known very little. Still, if I am not much mistaken, the Queen's Jubilee River is identical with the river which had been previously known as the Wickham, and, until it is proved to the contrary, it should, I think, remain the Wickham. I hope you will quite understand that I have no wish to question your privileges of nomenclature where there can be no doubt that natural features have not been named before, though much may be said for the retention of the native names. I observe, for instance, that the Arthur Gordon Range, or, as you term it, the Musgrave Range, is known to the natives as WARHARAGEREE. If this range is to have a new name, why should it not receive the name under which it is known to the natives?

4. I now come to that portion of your letter in which you ask for some recognition of your services as an explorer, and for certain grants of land which you propose to occupy for industrial purposes. You ask for these on two grounds:—1st, on account of the assurances of the late Special

* I cannot admit the analogy between the Aird and the Fly Rivers. The original discoverers of the Fly, also D'Albertis, M'Farlane, and Everill, all entered and left by *one and the same* main channel.—T.B.

Commissioner, Sir Peter Scratchley; 2nd, on account of the value of your discoveries. On these grounds you ask me to grant you four blocks of land on the Aird and the Queen's Jubilee Rivers, estimated to contain 254,080 acres.*

I have no authority to make any such grants.

I cannot recommend that any such grants should be made.

No land policy has yet been decided on.

Until it is, and until the new Administration, which is about to be formed, has decided upon the principles to be recognized, I cannot undertake to say that your application will be seriously considered.

If, however, the claims of the numerous benefactors and discoverers of New Guinea are to be recognized on a scale commensurate with their merits, and on an estimate approaching to that which you lay down, there will be very little of New Guinea left for the natives or for the general public, who doubtless, long to share in the distribution of its unappropriated lands.

I observe that you put forward as an alternative that you should be allowed to buy land from the natives, and you quote as a precedent, some authority given by Sir Peter Scratchley to Mr. H. O. Forbes to buy land from the natives. I know nothing of such authority having been given. Mr. Forbes was employed by me, but he has left for England, and I have not the means of referring to him. I think it highly improbable that he was authorized to buy any land except for the Government.† All purchases not made on account of the Government have been disallowed, and I cannot concede to you what I have refused to others.

I have, &c.,

JOHN DOUGLAS

Special Commissioner for British New Guinea.

Theodore Bevan, Esq., F.R.G.S.

Sir,

Dinner Island, 29 November, 1885.

In reference to your letter to his Excellency Sir Peter Scratchley, on the subject of forming a company in New Guinea, I am directed to state that his Excellency is unable at present to give you a final answer, but that he does not think he will be able to grant any concessions for the formation of a company such as you describe.

I am, &c.,

G. SEYMOUR FORT,

Private Secretary.

T. Bevan, Esq.,

Hula, New Guinea.

Care of Montefiore, Joseph, & Co.,

4, O'Connell-street, Sydney, 7th April, 1888.

Your Excellency,

I received to-day your reply dated Thursday Island, 17th March, 1888, to my letter covering application for grants of land, dated Sydney, 18th February, 1888.

You now express a regret that I did not turn my attention to that portion of the coast lying between the mouth of the Fly and the Aird Rivers.

To this I can only reply that I have never seen as yet any reason to condemn my original judgment, so far as selecting the site for my explorations was concerned.

For, with an economical outlay, and no assistance from your Administration, results have been obtained by me which have elicited world-wide astonishment and approval.

* As to General Scratchley, I must be guided by the terms of his last letter to you, a copy of which I enclose herewith.—J.D.

† Nevertheless that authority was actually given to Mr. Forbes. (See p. 36.)—T.B.

To quote one encomium amongst many, the President of this branch of the Royal Geographical Society, in a letter to the New South Wales Government recently said:—

“Mr. Bevan has largely contributed to the unfolding of the hidden secrets of New Guinea to an extent which never has been equalled.”—See Preface.

You yourself remarked in a letter to me dated Sydney, 4th February, 1887, as follows:—

“The portion of the coast you propose to explore is one about which very little is known, and it is full of danger both from the natives and from the shoals which abound, as you are doubtless well aware, in that vicinity.”

You further stated that you regarded the objects I had in view with great interest and hoped that I would be able to carry out my explorations to a successful issue, and have since, on more than one occasion, congratulated me on having done so.

* * * * *

You state in the letter under reply that you were not informed of my intentions in reference to my fifth expedition (second expedition to the Papuan Gulf).

Further, in a letter to me, dated Cooktown, 12th March, 1888, you also say that you were not supplied by me with any information with reference to it, *and knew nothing about it.*

All this fills me with surprise. For I not only went to trouble and expense to keep you duly informed and posted up in reference to it, and to ask your assistance for it, but I received a letter from you dated Granville (Port Moresby), 14th October, 1887, acknowledging and thanking me for having informed you of my intended second expedition to the Papuan Gulf, as follows:—

“I have to thank you for your letter of 4th instant, from Cooktown, and for the maps, newspaper reports, &c., &c., which at various times you have sent me. This may reach you before you leave Thursday Island for the Papuan Gulf. If it does, let me assure you that I shall look with great interest to your *further* explorations in confirmation of those already made.

“It is a great advantage for you that you have secured the services of a surveyor, so much depends upon the accurate definition of the leading landmarks.

“I cannot promise you any material assistance from the funds of the Protectorate at the present time. The contributions are so uncertain and irregular that I never know what I may have to operate on. Indeed, at any time, if the Queensland New Guinea Bill passes, I may have to transfer everything to the future designated Commissioner, Dr. M^rGregor, of Fiji.”

“(Sgd.) JOHN DOUGLAS.”

* * * * *

Nomenclature of Discoveries.—In reference to your criticisms under this head, I may say that I made the distinctions, to some of which you take exception, solely with the view to geographical succinctness.

The complicated structure of these great deltaic rivers of the Papuan Gulf—discovered by me—is not only liable to puzzle clear-headed men, but also to embarrass intelligent geographers.

Aird River.

The estuary to the west of Cape Blackwood ascended by Captain Blackwood, of H.M.S. “Fly,” for a distance of 20 miles in 1845, retains its name and place on all my maps *as the Aird River*. Blackwood’s Aird River is more properly a small sound of the sea. It is not even a main subdivision

in the delta of the fine river named by me the Douglas as a compliment to Her Majesty's then Special Commissioner, and to the high office which you held. *The Douglas I have both entered and left many times by far larger and deeper channels both east and west of the Aird.* It would be incorrect to call the larger river the Aird, although I have myself alluded to it as the Aird-river-system.

Cape Blackwood

bears, as a matter of course, a most prominent place on all *my* maps ever published and supplied to you. I was surprised to find that it had been, doubtless inadvertently, omitted on the R.G.S. map which you quote. I state most emphatically that it was my wish Cape Blackwood should appear in its proper place on that map; and was so placed in the material supplied by me and from which that map was compiled.

Arthur Gordon Range.

At the time I named the Musgrave range I was unaware that the ranges at the back of the Papuan Gulf, and forming part of the backbone of mountains running for 1,500 miles from the far north-west to the extreme south-east of New Guinea, had in that portion of the country—and as seen from the sea—been named the Arthur Gordon Range.

It is true that from the sea on a clear day—off (say) Cape Blackwood or Bald Head—one can see, at distances varying from 60 miles to more than 100 miles inland, a wall of massive mountains.

I named the range when my foot was on its lower spurs. It has, however, been left unnamed on the map enclosed herewith; and published before your letter was received.

Queen's Jubilee River.

With regard to the Queen's Jubilee River being identical with the Wickham you observe you "feel a little less confident." Although in one place you call it by the latter name, against which misuse of terms I formally protest.

The correspondence enclosed herewith between the Rev. W. G. Lawes and the President of the N.S.W. Branch of the Royal Geographical Society (Sir Edward Strickland, K.C.B.), unanswerably proves that "native reports do not constitute discovery." (See pp. 33-5.)

* * * * *

In reference to my application in recognition of my services as an explorer for a grant of 254,000 acres on the Aird-river-system and the Queen's Jubilee Rivers, you state as follows:—

1. "I cannot recommend that any such grants be made.
2. "No land policy has yet been decided on.
3. "Until it is, and until the new Administration, which is about to be formed, has decided upon the principles to be recognized, I cannot undertake to say that your application will be seriously considered."

You also state that I apply for this recognition on two grounds, 1st. On account of the assurances of the late Special Commissioner, Sir Peter Scratchley; and that in reference to it, you (Hon. John Douglas) must be guided by the terms of *his* last letter to me (Mr. Bevan) dated Dinner Island, New Guinea, 29th November, 1885. In that letter General Scratchley stated that he was unable at present to give a final answer, but did not think he would be able to grant the concessions required.

That letter was written at a time when General Scratchley was ill with fever, and, as you know, within but a very few days of his death.

On the other hand it does not alter the verbal assurances made by him to me before reliable witnesses in the Colonial Secretary's office, Sydney, on the 12th August, 1885, that he *would* grant me valuable concessions; neither does it do away with his memorandum to Mr. Assistant Deputy-Commissioner Musgrave, dated 19th September, 1885 (copy of which was sent to me by Mr. Musgrave), which, among other things, stated as follows:—"As Mr. Bevan is aware, I am anxious to assist him in his enterprise."

General Scratchley's forecast that *he* would be unable to grant such concessions proved prophetic, for a few days thereafter, early in December, 1885, he expired.

It should also, in common fairness, be remembered that General Scratchley's letter, which you quote, was written in 1885, and not in 1888; years before the President of the Royal Geographical Society of this Colony could write to the Government and say:—"Mr. Bevan has *unfolded the hidden secrets of New Guinea to an extent which never has been equalled.*"

Can I feel sure that, had General Scratchley lived—even though environed by influences inimical to me, as he undoubtedly was, and as you since have been—that 'ere this he would not have accorded to my work both a manly recognition and a generous recommendation for reward?

* * * * *

But there are other important matters in connection with this issue. If you will be so good as to refer to my letter of 18th February, 1888, you will find that you have overlooked part of what I really did say, viz., that "I based my claim on the equity of the plea of the early assurances of Her Majesty's Special Commissioners (not Special Commissioner) for British New Guinea, in addition to long and great services *since* rendered by me to the State—free of all cost—by the success of my original explorations and the extent and value of my discoveries."

You must excuse me for reminding you that I included your own assurances in your letter to me, dated Port Moresby, 1st July, 1886, wherein you were good enough to remark:—

"I do not anticipate that there will be any difficulty in authorizing such a company when the proper time comes."

* * * * *

You also omit to notice that I do not apply for lands which belong to the natives, or are in use by them; or on terms which will permit of absenteeism or of their lying idle; but the rather for *uninhabited* and unoccupied lands, and—what is of no less importance—*on conditions of use.*

* * * * *

You observe that "If the claims of the numerous benefactors and discoverers of New Guinea are to be recognized on a scale commensurate with their merits, and on an estimate approaching to that which you lay down, there will be very little of New Guinea left for the natives or for the general public."

So confident am I that such a generalization will not bear the test of analytical examination that could it be proved to be correct, *I should be prepared to withdraw my claim.*

Although not wishing to trespass too much on your time, I venture to submit to you that the practical work of explorers in British New Guinea may justly be classified as follows, viz. :—That effected by

1. The various officers of Her Majesty's ships who from time to time have explored the *coasts* in the ordinary or special course of their professional duties.
2. The Missionaries who have travelled in New Guinea as the paid emissaries of the London Missionary Society; also, in a recent and lesser degree, the Fathers of the Roman Catholic Mission at Yule Island.
3. Mr. Goldie, who explored in his own interests as a collector, and whose work has not altogether, I believe, been without practical recognition from your Administration.
4. D'Albertis, who ascended the Fly River for a great distance as a naturalist and made collections (nearly everything from New Guinea then being new), the sales of which benefited himself to the extent of many thousands of pounds. (The same applies to Mr. Goldie.)
5. Myself, who have alone worked without any reward.

The map enclosed herewith, if you will be good enough to put it alongside a map of the whole of New Guinea, will speak for itself as to what my work as an explorer and discoverer has been.

In the right-hand bottom corner of my map you will see there is a reduction from the present Admiralty chart illustrating what was known of this part of New Guinea prior to my discoveries.

To be scrupulously exact three addenda should be made :—

- (a) The outline of a range of mountains shown far inland as previously seen from the sea.
- (b) Aird Hill, seen and named by Captain Blackwood in 1845. According to his naturalist's (Mr. Jukes) account, Captain Blackwood approached to within 8 miles of it only, and then turned back.
- (c) A note that five of the seven main river openings—from Bald Head to Orokolo—were reported by natives to Mr. Chalmers and Captain Dubbins as leading into one very large inland river.

That statement I have since proved correct; and *that very large inland river* I have been the first to discover.

The mere fact of hearing the native report did not constitute discovery. Indeed Mr. Chalmers shows us that native reports are scientifically valueless, for in the same work he adds :—“They (the natives) say that the Maivau, near Bald Head, is a *distinct* river, very wide and deep, flowing through a great extent of country, &c.”

Now I have since proved, beyond the reach of controversy, by explorations, which you grant have been “*verified*,” that the Maivau, instead of being a *distinct* river, is an insignificant creek in the delta of the *same* river-system, to which indeed all the seven openings above referred to belong.

Both Captain Blackwood and Mr. Chalmers *lost their opportunities* by *turning back* when nearly upon the threshold of important discovery. They both deserve the credit of unintentionally pointing out to me a possible field of discovery. In the case of the last named gentleman, such an unconscious and unwilling reparation was not undue to me, and affords a singular instance of the irony of fate.

One thing is certain, viz., that my inland explorations and discoveries far outweigh individually—and there are not wanting some who add vie with those of other explorers collectively—in extent, verification, and practical utility.

It is none the less sure that the two great fresh-water river-systems discovered and explored by myself are at the present time the only known rivers in British New Guinea, *navigable and navigated right into the mountains of the far interior*, or indeed for the matter of that into the ranges at all. Until you have seen these rivers I cannot expect you to do either them or their discoverer full credit; but an Associate of the Royal Geographical Society wrote me lately that my work was considered of so important a character that it was not impossible that the gold medal of the parent society might be awarded me.

* * * * *

In addition to those explorers to whom individually or collectively I have referred there have of course also been many minor lights. For the most part these latter have made—with varying success or the reverse—short journeys in special directions as the paid emissaries of science, of the Administration, or otherwise. To one and all I give full credit, being well aware of the dangers they have encountered and the risk they have run.

In my humble opinion, the records of the work of all such explorers will form in the aggregate one of the noblest pages of contemporary history.

* * * * *

Enclosure C gives in a condensed form a few, among many, unsolicited opinions from eminent personages as to the value of my work in particular. (See preface).

* * * * *

You are well aware that I have throughout followed a consistent policy, and must be also not unacquainted with many of the difficulties with which I have had to contend, difficulties that perhaps would have daunted and defeated many abler and stronger men.

You are not unaware that I have been above using the opportunities of these exploratory expeditions for purposes of immediate aggrandisement, and will believe me when I say that I have lost, and have been contented to lose, money by them.

When—in addition to my actual outlay at the time—cost of maintenance meanwhile, and loss of time and opportunities, is taken into account, it will be seen that my pecuniary loss during the last few years amounts to a very large total.

* * * * *

I went to New Guinea four years ago as a practical business man. My permits were to trade and explore. I left the trading to take to exploration with a view—distinctly encouraged both by the late Sir Peter Scratchley and yourself—of eventually opening up *large commercial relations*, and with results that have elicited world-wide attention and approval.

You give me credit for having, though contrary to your own expectations, “justified the risks incurred”: for the “verification of my discoveries,” and also for that which is far more important to me, for maintaining *peaceful* relations with the native races. In recognition, therefore, of these services rendered to the State at great risk and personal expense, I apply for a large area of uninhabited and at present useless land on condition that I turn it to practical use and productiveness.

Yet you say that you "cannot recommend that any such grants" (of *uninhabited land on conditions of use* as applied for by me) "should be made."

My application cannot be considered as emanating from either an adventurer or land grabber.

I apply for a *large* area because operations in this new part of the country must necessarily be conducted on a *large* scale, otherwise—as you can well understand from what you have seen at Port Moresby and elsewhere—the *expenses of keeping up communication and cost of transport would eat up all the profits.*

To be brief, I claim these concessions for the following among other cogent reasons :—

1. Because the result of granting such concessions would benefit the Protectorate, or, as it is about to become, the Sovereignty.

i.e. (a) Such trading operations would have the effect of bringing in revenue to the Administration.

(b) Render adjacent State lands at present uninhabited and valueless both occupied and of value.

(c) Tend or help to reduce the period during which the cost of the maintenance of the Administration remains an annual charge on the Imperial and Colonial revenues.

2. On behalf of the native inhabitants (steeped to the core in degrading superstitions and revolting savagery).

(a) By diverting the energies of tribes at present addicted to head-hunting and other inhuman practices to agricultural and other peaceful pursuits, as in German New Guinea and in British North Borneo.

(b) By raising the native races both in the scale of civilization and comfort: subject of course to the wise regulations in vogue under the "Western Pacific Orders in Council."

3. On behalf of my fellow men.

(a) Because the conditions appertaining to British New Guinea will prevent it from becoming what is known as a "working-man's country," at all events for some little time to come.

(b) Owing to the severe restrictions imposed by nature, the *initial* work of clearing the scrubs and turning over the soil must be effected by coloured labour necessarily in the employ of capitalists.

(c) By my initiative and operations, the *essentials* of *work* and *communication* will be provided which will eventually facilitate colonization, should such at a future date be deemed advisable by the Imperial or Colonial Governments.

4. On behalf of myself for the reasons mentioned in the preceding pages; also because

(a) I have the assurance that the large capital required will be forthcoming from my friends who are prepared to undertake the great risks incidental to all pioneering associations, with a view to the furtherance of exploration on a sound and solid basis, combined with the elevation of the native races by the only true means, and in the hope of receiving fair interest for their money.

* * * * *

To your Excellency, as interested in the amelioration of the condition of the native races, I may submit that commerce has ever been the *forerunner* of civilization.

Having commenced my adventurous work in the interests of science and commerce, and at my own risk and expense, I should be very willing to have continued my explorations had I received the slightest encouragement from the State, but I am constrained to think that my services have not met with even ordinary appreciation, and certainly with no tangible recognition.

Although I find that I can now easily obtain the necessary support to enable me to continue my explorations in British New Guinea I am unwilling—looking at the unfairness and neglect with which I have throughout been largely treated—to do another stroke in that direction until I receive the assurance of a *just* measure of recognition and reward.

In the meantime I prefer that novices should bear the incidental expenses, risks, and hardships in order that they may take the chances of speedy death or ignominy if unsuccessful; or on the other hand—if it can be said of them by responsible and disinterested persons that “they have unfolded the hidden secrets of New Guinea to an extent which never has been equalled”—*in lieu of receiving tangible recognition*—become the butt of hostile criticism, jealousy, and attack.

I have, &c.,

THEODORE BEVAN.

Hon. John Douglas,

Special Commissioner for British New Guinea,

Thursday Island, Queensland.



SS.
ci

MAP

SHEWING THE DISCOVERIES MADE IN BRITISH NEW GUINEA
 BY MR. THEODORE F. BEVAN, F.R.G.S.

Authenticated and re-surveyed by Mr. H. J. Hemmy, L.S., whose services were placed at Mr. Bevan's disposal by the Queensland Government.

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