

it, either in or out of the Possession. It leaves traces which may be unanswerable for anything. Still, there is no great reason why the climate should not improve in the future, as the place becomes more civilized and opened up, and better means exist to enable one to contend with it. At present, fresh food of any kind is unknown; nearly everything in the way of provisions has to be imported in tins. It can, therefore, be readily understood that this fact in itself is sufficient to render one less able to fight against other elements.

Missionary efforts in British New Guinea were first commenced on the Woodlark Islands by the Roman Catholics, about the year 1847, but the mission was a failure, some of the members being murdered, others dying of fever. In 1871 the Revs. A. W. Murray and S. McFarlane placed Polynesian teachers in certain places on the southeast coast, on behalf of the London Missionary Society. In 1874 the Rev. W. G. Lawes went and took charge of the mission, establishing the headquarters at Port Moresby. In 1877 the Rev. James Chalmers arrived from Raratonga. To those who have been in British New Guinea, and seen by personal experience what has to be endured in the way of hardships and dangers now, it is possible to form some small idea of what must have been gone through by those men who have devoted the best portions of their lives to the cause of missionary work. If ever men were entitled to the admiration and respect of their fellow men, it is these pioneers of mission work in New Guinea. In connection with the London Missionary Society there are now six gentlemen (including Mr. Lawes and Mr. Chalmers) over a large number of teachers actively employed carrying on the work so nobly started. Mainly due to the efforts of the Rev. W. G. Lawes, the whole of the New Testament has been translated into the Motu dialect (the one most known), while many hymns have also been translated by the Rev. James Chalmers. In 1885, the Roman Catholics started a mission at Yule Island, in Hull Sound, in connection with the order of the Sacred Heart. This mission has been doing much useful work, but I deeply regret to say that since my arrival in England I have heard of the death of the Right Rev. Bishop Verjus, who was the most active member of the mission. He was a young, broad-minded, energetic father of the Roman Catholic Church, and one of whom that Church had every reason to be proud. His death is not only a loss to them, but a serious one to the Possession. In 1891 the Wesleyans, who did such wonderful work in Fiji, commenced operations under the lead of the Rev. W. E. Bromilow at the east end of British New Guinea, and their progress since starting has been marvellous. Later in the same year the Anglican Church started a mission on the northeast coast. This body, however, received a great blow in December of that year, through the death of the Rev. A. A. McLaren, who was in charge. He succumbed to malarial fever on board the Government steamer when on his way to Cooktown to obtain change. He, too, was a man whose death has caused a great blank. He possessed one of the finest and noblest characters, and his heart was thoroughly in his work. It is in the death of such men as these that the progress of work in new countries is so often retarded, and the efforts of institutions so terribly lightened. The Rev. Copeland King is now in charge of the Anglican Mission.

That the missions have done good there can be no doubt. From a statistical point of view the results may not be very large, but all mission work is a question of time, and the slowest part is at the commencement. Still, the progress in British New Guinea has been steady, and much good has been done by that civilizing influence which accompanies the teacher of religion. The aims of the various missionary bodies are almost identical with many of those of the Government, and thus they work hand-in-hand, each helping each, unity giving greater speed to progress, till we may reasonably look

forward to no very distant date when the Papuan will have advanced to a far higher state of civilization.

The native population of British New Guinea is, up to the present, quite a question of conjecture. Sir William McGregor, who has had the best opportunities of forming an idea on the subject, by reason of his extensive travels in the Possession, has put it down at certainly not less than 300,000, while he thinks that 350,000 would be a nearer estimate. The non-native population in April, 1891, was 272, made up as follows.—British, 115, German, 4, Italian, 2, French, 20; other Europeans, 13; Americans, 2, West Indians, 6, Chinese, 3, Malays and Javanese, 18; Polynesians, 89—total, 272. I do not think this has increased much, if at all, since that time.

The value of the exports from British New Guinea for the year ending June 30 last was £11,289 10s., being an increase of £2,855 9s. 8d. over any of the three previous years. Among the principal articles of export, *beche de mer*, copra, gold, pearl shell, curiosities, sandalwood and turtle-shell may be mentioned. Gold, however, which was found some little time ago in fair quantities on some of the islands (principally Sudest and St. Aignan) is falling off, as will be seen by the following comparative table:—

	1888-89	1889-90	1890-91	1891-92
Ounces...	3,850	3,470	2,426	1,235
Value....	£11,389	£12,440	£8,371	£4,322

As the export of only a small portion of this gold was reported in the Possession the total value of exports is short by the value of the quantity of gold not reported, but entered inwards in Australia, and of which information was afterwards obtained to enable the above table (which I have taken from the last annual report) to be prepared. The imports to the Possession consist chiefly of food stuffs, drapery, building materials, and 'trade' goods, which term includes a great variety of things. The total value of imports for the year ending June 30 last was £23,756 6s. 11d., or an increase over any of the three previous years of £7,632 3s 11d.

The revenue derived from the Possession for the same year was £4,783 16s. 5d., showing an excess of £1,768 3s. 1d. over the best of the three previous years. This increase was most satisfactory, as it was due to quiet, genuine progress, and without any exceptional fact occurring during the year to cause it. I see no reason why this state of affairs should not only continue, but still more improve. The progress was well maintained up to the time of my departure. The principal item of revenue is due to the customs collections, which amounted to £4,428 14s 11d in the last year of which I have been speaking. The greatest trade is with the east end of the Possession, and from Samarai we derive the largest portion of revenue.

In Australia, our nearest ports for trading purposes and mails are Cooktown and Thursday Island, but the former is the one most used. Albeit mail communication with British New Guinea is very irregular. To be without a mail for two months is no uncommon occurrence, while I have known one instance in which we were twelve weeks without one. Since I left, however, I have heard that a contract has been entered into by the Government for an eight-weekly sailing service. The vessel, which must not be less than one hundred tons, is to leave Cooktown go to Samarai in the east end, and then proceed to Mabudauan in the west end of the Possession, calling at Port Moresby and other places in between, and then return to Queensland. In British New Guinea the only ports of entry are Port Moresby and Samarai.

For the land speculator British New Guinea has no opening, but there is absolutely no reason why the Possession should not receive its share of attention as a likely place for settlement, though in considering this question certain facts must be borne in mind. Contrasting it with other countries, British New Guinea almost stands alone. The wealth

of any country without commercial prosperity must depend upon the conditions on which its lands are occupied. In the greater portion of Australia, for instance, the future welfare will depend on the use that is made of the soil, and of which nearly every foot is available. In British New Guinea, on the other hand, a great deal of the land is already occupied, well tenanted, and industriously tilled by a highly intelligent race of people. It is, moreover, the policy of the Government that the title of the present occupants shall be respected. Allow me to give you a passing illustration. If the Government becomes desirous to acquire land for any purpose of its own, it will be requisite to purchase the land from the natives and have it formally transferred to the Crown. The only exception to this is in favor of waste and vacant lands. In this way our hold is strengthened by the fact that we respect the title of previous occupation. At the same time, there is a great variety of land available for agricultural settlement, and, as far as the Government is able, every inducement and encouragement is given to the *bona fide* settler. All that legislation can do has been done, but so far the attention directed to the country is disappointing. Land may be found for almost every tropical product, but not in the same large areas that are dealt with in Australia, for instance. To the man, however, with experience and a little capital, who chooses a moderate quantity of land with care and prudence after personal inspection, good results should issue. He would find two great things in his favor. First, the country is never visited by cyclones, which so frequently in other parts of the world lay waste lands cultivated at great expense, and thus very often destroy the results which should, and would otherwise, accrue to the labor of years. Secondly, with care and tact on his part he should always be able to obtain a plentiful supply of good labor at an extremely moderate rate. But the man who goes to New Guinea must be prepared to rough it in the truest sense of the word, to be ready to put his hand to anything, and wait patiently for the fruit of his labors.

About the chief difficulty to be encountered is the one of climate, but beyond this there is really nothing else that could not be overcome; while, as far as the climate is concerned, I have already said, I think, this may improve in time as the Possession is opened up and it becomes more possible to use the more hilly portion of the country for purposes of change. Of course, the primary care in a country like the one we are considering, and which is, as I have said before, so exceptional in its conditions, is to get on well with the natives. In British New Guinea this would, to a great extent, depend upon the settler. The people must be treated fairly and honorably and with consideration, not as a race supposed to have less feeling or intellect than ourselves, simply because they are of a darker color, but regarded as fellow-creatures possessing senses and feelings quite as fine and sensitive as our own. First impressions are everything; and whether it be the passing traveller, or the intending settler, let him bear in mind that the smallest thing is remembered. The pioneer may succeed in his journey, and escape its perils, but others may suffer years after for any indiscreet act or want of judgment on his part. There is a civilization which exists for the dark man which is wholly distinct from our own, and this might also be usefully remembered by those who visit strange people in the far off isles of the sea. It is the clear realization of little, but such important points like these, that so many of the difficulties experienced in a new country may be minimized, if not overcome, and untold assistance rendered to those who follow hereafter.

Let me, in conclusion, commend British New Guinea to your close and careful attention, for there is no reason why it should not, in years to come, take a prominent and important position amongst the vast possessions of Her Majesty."