WILEY

Cruises in Melanesia, Micronesia, and Western Polynesia, in 1882, 1883, and 1884, and Visits to New Guinea and the Louisiades in 1884 and 1885

Author(s): Cyprian Bridge

Source: *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society and Monthly Record of Geography*, New Monthly Series, Vol. 8, No. 9 (Sep., 1886), pp. 545-567

Published by: [Wiley](#) on behalf of [The Royal Geographical Society \(with the Institute of British Geographers\)](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1800858>

Accessed: 12/06/2014 12:42

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

The Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers) and Wiley are collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society and Monthly Record of Geography.

<http://www.jstor.org>

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY
AND MONTHLY RECORD OF GEOGRAPHY.

Cruises in Melanesia, Micronesia, and Western Polynesia, in 1882, 1883, and 1884, and Visits to New Guinea and the Louisiades in 1884 and 1885.

By Captain CYPRIAN BRIDGE, R.N.

(Read at the Evening Meeting, April 12th, 1886.)

Map, p. 608.

THE cruises of which I propose to give some account were the following :—

In 1882 the New Hebrides and the Banks Islands were visited. Towards the close of the same year, during a second cruise, visits were paid to several islands of the Solomon group, to New Britain, and to the Duke of York Islands.

In 1883, in the course of a very extended cruise, I called at Rotumah, Sophia Island, the Ellice, Gilbert (or Kingsmill), and the Marshall groups, the Pelew Islands, both sections of the Great Caroline Archipelago, New Britain, the Duke of York Islands, and some of the north-western Solomons.

In 1884 my duties took me to Keppel Island, or Niu-to-bu-tàbu, to Samoa or the Navigators' Archipelago, and to the several divisions of Tonga or the Friendly Islands. Later in this year, the ship which I commanded, the *Espiègle*, accompanied Commodore Erskine during the proclamation of the British Protectorate over South-eastern New Guinea, and I touched at many places on the coast between Port Moresby and Dinner Island, and also at Basilaki (Moresby Island), and Teste Island.

In 1885, in H.M.S. *Dart*, I visited the Louisiades and Woodlark Island, the eastern part and also the north-eastern coast of New Guinea as far as Cape King William, and the little-known Rook and Long Islands.

It is not worth while to occupy your attention with the details of the several archipelagoes visited. A glance at a fair-sized chart
No. IX.—SEPT. 1886.]

of the Western Pacific will exhibit their position, extent, and composition much more clearly than even a long description in words. It may be remarked that, in the above enumeration of cruises, no mention has been made of Fiji, to which I paid several visits. It has now been for years a British colony with a settled government: among its population are nearly 4000 whites, and accounts of it have been too often published to render necessary a repetition of them here.

Of the other archipelagoes the New Hebrides has, perhaps, been the most frequently described in print; and we have, amongst others, an interesting narrative of a cruise in the waters of the group by Captain Albert Markham when in command of H.M.S. *Rosario*. The greater part of it is, however, still but little known, and very few strangers have seen anything of the interior of the larger islands. Of late years the group has been invested with a special interest as being one of the principal areas of the so-called "labour trade," and the scene of outrages on the "labour traders" and of retaliatory expeditions against the natives. The southern section of the group, composed of Aneiteum, Tanna, Erromanga, and Sandwich or Vaté, with a few smaller islands, is sufficiently remote from the equator to enjoy, during at least several weeks of the year, a far from disagreeable climate. Being in the southern hemisphere, January and February are the hottest, and July and August the coolest months. The temperature in the shade ranges from about 62° in the latter, to about 92° in the former months, as established by observations made at Futuna (or Erromang) by the Rev. J. Copeland. I experienced some very pleasant weather at Havannah Harbour in Sandwich, and at Aneiteum in August 1882; but in my journal I can find no record of a lower day temperature than 68°, and only one entry of a night temperature, at the former place, as low as 66°. In the more northern islands, Api, Ambrym, Mallicolo, Espiritu-Santo, Aurora, Pentecost, and Aoba, the climate is warmer and more generally humid. As a rule the climate is not favourable to white men, especially in the northern islands, and bad fevers are very common.

The scenery of the southern section is the more varied. The foliage is not so dense as in the northern, and especially in Erromanga and Sandwich, the step-like terraces of the hill-sides, faced with precipitous bluffs of coralline limestone, are surmounted with broad belts of open grass-covered country which has been proved to afford excellent grazing for horned cattle. On the lee sides of the northern islands coco-nut trees grow in enormous numbers; and north of Mallicolo, the grass country is rare. There are several active volcanoes. That in Tanna is the best known, but about two years ago a party of officers from H.M.S. *Dart* reached the summit of the loftier volcano of Ambrym. There are few good harbours in the New Hebrides. Havannah Harbour is spacious and sheltered from all winds, but the entrances are narrow and the water inconveniently deep; Vila has the same defects. On the lee sides

of most of the islands there are many fairly snug anchorages, but these are not secure in the hurricane season, which lasts from about the middle of December to the beginning of April.

The inhabitants of the New Hebrides are Melanesians, divided into a multitude of independent and usually hostile tribes. On several islands there are communities of Polynesians, some of whom—as shown by their complexions—have preserved, amongst their Melanesian neighbours, their purity of descent. One of the difficulties of communicating with the natives is due to the immense variety of languages, which renders it impossible to obtain the services of an interpreter likely to be of use in more than a single district. This difficulty has seriously impeded the work of the missionaries of the Presbyterian Church who labour in the islands from Ambrym southwards, and of the Anglican Melanesian Mission, who have taken spiritual charge of the northern islands, the Banks group, and the Solomons. The necessity of confronting this difficulty has been advantageous to linguistic science, for the Rev. Dr. Codrington, of the Anglican Mission, has recently published a learned work on ‘The Languages of Melanesia.’ As a rule, white men and natives communicate with each other by means of a very singular jargon, like the “pigeon English” of China, known as “sandal-wood English,” or the “*bêche de mer* lingo,” designations which explain its origin. Bearing in mind who the devisers of this dialect were, it is not surprising that a prominent characteristic should be the frequent interpolation into a sentence of exceptionally vigorous profanity. This the native linguist utters without a suspicion of its being improper. A few phrases, without the ingredient just mentioned, will convey an idea of what the jargon is. “That fellow man he no good” = “That is a bad man.” “That fellow woman Mary belong a me” = “That woman is my wife.” “Big fellow yam he stop Tanna” = “Large yams grow in Tanna.” This “pigeon” is the universal mode of communication between white men, except missionaries, and islanders throughout the South-western Pacific, and is used by both Englishmen and foreigners. I have even heard the oath administered to Melanesian witnesses in a French court of justice at Noumea in the following terms:—“Me talkee true, me no tell lie, me no gammon; me,” raising the right hand to the sky, “swear.” At many places even this imperfect method of conversing is unknown, but so intelligent and such adepts in gesture language are the natives, that they understand, and make themselves understood by, a stranger much more thoroughly than the inexperienced would expect.

At the time of my visit there were, including the wives and children of the missionaries, between eighty and a hundred white residents in the group. There are probably now fully a hundred in all. Aneiteum is completely Christian; and the natives are amongst the most devout of believers. A more attentive congregation than that attending the church at Port Inyang it would be impossible to meet with. The

members carry with them to worship small libraries of devotional works, which require bags and baskets for their conveyance. On other islands progress has been made, progress with which the missionaries themselves are dissatisfied, but which appears very surprising to a stranger who can discern the difficulties of the situation. As a rule, a missionary establishment consists of the clergyman and his wife, and perhaps children, and one or two teachers, or subordinate lay missionaries, who are generally natives of other and remote islands. A plain wooden house is brought from New Zealand and put up for the missionary and his family, usually with his own hands and those of his brethren who assemble for the purpose. A church built in the style of the native houses, of reeds and mats, occasionally at the older stations of coral masonry, and a similar edifice for a school, with the comfortable huts of the teachers and the catechumens, complete the buildings of the station.

The other white men in the group follow the occupations of planters and traders. Attempts, in one case on a large scale, were made some years ago to grow cotton, but without much success, on the island of Sandwich or Vaté. The cultivation of maize and coffee has been tried with better results on the same island. The staple vegetable product is *copra*, the dried pulp of the coco-nut. One or two settlers have planted trees for the express purpose of obtaining copra, but there has hardly as yet been sufficient time to see if it will answer. The immense groves of coco-nut trees on Ambrym and Api, for instance, render it unlikely that much deliberate planting will be undertaken for some time to come. But the climate of the northern islands is so humid, that on them the copra has to be artificially dried by fire, which is more costly, in labour and material, than the sun-drying process, and gives a less valuable article for sending to market.

The white "trader" gets permission from the chief of a tribe to settle in his district. The stranger's presence is usually very acceptable to the tribe. He must bring with him a stock of "trade"; that is, tomahawks, knives, handkerchiefs, pipes, tobacco, matches, &c., for purposes of barter. Natives with a trader near them can rely upon a pretty steady supply of those goods of the white man which they had become fond of. A rude hut, except that it contains a rough table and a chair or two differing little from those of the natives, is put up as a residence, and a larger one as a copra store. A few platforms of slender poles raised two or three feet above the ground serve as drying-places for the nuts, the shells of which are split in half, so that the pulp when it shrinks in drying can fall out. On islands where it is necessary to use fire to dry it, the shells form no inconsiderable part of the fuel. The trader is usually the agent of a mercantile firm, which supplies him with a certain quantity of "trade" goods, and receives in return his copra. He has, as a rule, three or four labourers in his employment. Owing to a singular custom or prejudice, these are rarely natives of the

island in which they work. He buys the nuts from his neighbours, and with the assistance of his labourers prepares the copra. On the more savage islands, arms and ammunition, as long as their introduction was allowed (and it is doubtful if it has yet been quite stopped), matches, pipes, and tobacco, are the things commonly given for nuts. The price varies greatly, according to locality and year, but a pipe, a small fragment of tobacco, or a box of matches, is frequently given for a dozen nuts. Every few months a small vessel visits the different stations, bringing goods and supplies of food for the traders, and taking away the copra, which on arrival in Europe is converted into oil, the refuse being used in the manufacture of cake for cattle.

The life of a trader is a hard and isolated one; and undoubtedly the profession comprises in its ranks some very despicable persons who have made the name of "beach-comber" a synonym for a vicious and lazy scoundrel. But I am bound to say that I met among them several honest, industrious, and temperate men who would have done credit to any community.

The New Hebrides natives differ greatly in physical qualities. On Mallicolo there are two distinct races, distinguished by the length and breadth of their skulls. Persons familiar with the group can readily point out an *Espiritu-Santo* man, a Sandwich man, a Pentecost man, or a Tanna man. The dress differs in nearly every island, and in some is very remarkable, more so on Tanna, on Erromango, on Api, and on Ambrym than would bear public description. The modes of dressing the hair are various. On Tanna it is dyed auburn or nearly gold colour with lime, and is gathered into small thin locks which are wound round with a slender filament like thread. On Sandwich the women shave the skull completely. On *Espiritu-Santo* they shave it, but leave a broad ridge of frizzled hair in the middle from poll to forehead, like the well-known garniture of the head of a clown. I had the good fortune to witness some Santo ladies making their toilet, which was effected by mutual assistance. The person being dressed had her head shaved with a knife of bamboo, of course without soap or any facilitating lather.

In the New Hebrides the villages are always invisible from the water. Each village as a rule consists of a set of different hamlets or collections of huts. The houses in the various islands differ greatly in architecture, but I always found them beautifully neat and clean. The dead are usually buried at the door of the hut. On Ambrym and some other islands the young unmarried men in a village always sleep in a large house specially set apart for them.

In general it may be said that all the Melanesians who have not been converted to Christianity are cannibals. It is not, however, to be supposed that human flesh is their ordinary diet. It is probable that none partake of it often, and that large numbers have only rare opportunities of doing so. They are almost invariably ashamed of canni-

balism, and will generally conceal their indulgence in it or discontinue it if a white man comes to live among them.

Wars are nearly perpetual, and the non-Christian natives invariably go armed. I have been amongst natives whose custom it was not to lay aside their weapons even to eat, but keeping them in their right hand to take their food in the left. The spear, the bow and arrow, the club, and the tomahawk are all in use in the New Hebrides, but there are many firearms in the hands of the natives. The Tanna men have a high reputation for boldness, and even in ordinary intercourse they have a more independent bearing than most of their neighbours. Native wars are not usually very sanguinary; at least, pitched battles are few. The savage art of war consists in murdering stragglers and making forays to kill women and children, burn down villages, and lay waste plantations.

Nothing struck me more than the great intelligence of the natives of Oceania in general and of the Melanesians in particular. Within the limited sphere of their acquirements whatever they do they do thoroughly. This will be generally admitted. One quality which my experience compels me to credit them with is more likely to be disputed; that is, their truthfulness. I had to conduct more than one long and intricate inquiry, and, difficulties of communication notwithstanding, each resulted in the discovery of the point sought for; whilst the straightforward manner in which the native evidence was given led me often to compare it with that in which white testimony was delivered in the multitude of cases I had had official cognisance of, and usually the comparison was not to the advantage of the latter.

The Melanesians of the Solomon Islands are less known than their neighbours of the New Hebrides. The climate of the group is less favourable to white men. Up to the time of my last visit only three or four traders resided in the whole archipelago; and the system on which the Anglican Mission is conducted does not admit of more than occasional residence on a few of the islands of Bishop Selwyn and his clergy. The enormous influence which that estimable prelate has obtained wherever he is known is convincing proof of the noble qualities which he brings to the furtherance of the cause to which he has devoted his life. It is impossible to exaggerate the high opinion of him held by the officers and men of the squadron on the station, who regard him both as a pious ecclesiastic and an excellent seaman. His zealous and self-denying companions have won the esteem of all who have visited the scene of their labours.

The cool intervals experienced in July and August at Aneiteum or Sandwich are not enjoyed in the Solomons, which, on the other hand, are not visited by hurricanes. The scenery of the islands is often grand, as the mountains are lofty; but the surface of the country is covered with the luxuriant vegetation of the tropics, usually of a deep

green hue, which, beautiful enough in itself, becomes in time somewhat monotonous. The geological structure of the group gives promise of mineral riches in at least some of the islands. In Guadalcanar there are some large rivers, which in the heavy rains pour their turbid floods into the sea, thereby greatly hampering navigation, which, as amongst all coral islands, has to be conducted largely by attention to the colour of the water.

The Solomon islanders are in general an aquatic people. Their canoes, except as New Ireland and New Britain are approached, have no outriggers. They are of graceful shape, of large size, built up of pieces, and with seams "payed" with a sort of vegetable pitch. The villages are usually near the water's edge and unconcealed by trees. The use of firearms is still not very common. But on some islands, notably Guadalcanar, they are expert bowmen. The Savo men make clubs covered with straw plaiting of singularly fine texture and tasteful pattern. Some of the spears are of prodigious length, and are tipped at the end with a human bone cut into a multitude of sharp and brittle points, which break off in a wound and are said to certainly cause death. Having succeeded with some difficulty in purchasing one of these at Tesemboko, a friendly native cautioned me against allowing any one to touch a point even with the finger, saying that if any person did, "My word! he die quick."

New Britain is one of the most beautiful countries in the world. The contours of the lofty mountains are very graceful, and the variety of tints of the rich tropical verdure is as attractive as it is unusual. The dense foliage is interspersed with patches of grass of an emerald hue. At Matupi in Blanche Bay there is an active volcano, a curious volcanic island, and a region of hot springs. I travelled by land once from Nodup to Blanche Bay, and the heat and fatigue were more than compensated by the beauty and varied character of the scenery traversed. The New Britain people go entirely naked. They are not a fine race, and want the activity and vigour of the Solomon islanders. Foreigners have introduced a good many firearms amongst the inhabitants of Blanche Bay and Kambeirah, but as a rule the spear, usually adorned with brightly coloured feathers, is their weapon. They build good houses and make excellent nets and ingenious fishing-baskets. They are the only cannibals I know who are not ashamed of their fondness for human flesh. A German settler told me that overtures were made to him to arrange the purchase of the body of a man who had been accidentally killed by a neighbouring tribe with whom the would-be buyers were not friendly. The reason given was a desire to eat what otherwise might be wasted in a commonplace interment.

The curious and little understood ceremonies of the *duk-duk* are extensively performed in New Britain and the neighbouring Duke of York group. One thing about them is certain, and that is, that those who

are initiated into the mysteries obtain considerable influence over the rest of their tribesmen. There is another very remarkable custom, about which I was given information by the Rev. Mr. Rooney of the Wesleyan Mission, which labours in this part of Melanesia. It may be described as follows:—If A injures B, B burns down C's hut, or makes a hole in his canoe, or sticks a spear in the pathway so that C is nearly sure to run against it. B lets C know that he has injured him, and the reason of it; when C is expected to settle the account with A, the first aggressor. On the whole the New Britain people are the least attractive of all Melaneseans whom I know. They are very dirty, and do not possess the skill in fashioning pottery, or carving wooden bowls, of their neighbours in the Solomons and the Admiralty Islands. Yet amongst them I had some very worthy friends. One of them I specially remarked from having been struck with the persistence with which he insisted on observance of the curious Melanesian etiquette, that a person should never be asked his name. The savage has no objection to his name being known, but politeness requires that it should be asked of some one else. The New Britons have a curious money called *dawarra*, made of small shells perforated and strung on fibres of some plant. It is counted by measure of length, and has some of the properties of the money of civilisation, as it owes its value to the rarity of its material, and it can be easily divided into small sums.

At Meoko, in the Duke of York group, there is a large German trading station of the South Sea Company, but it serves principally as a depôt for labourers who are "recruited" in the neighbouring islands for the plantations in Samoa. At Matupi, in New Britain, is the western headquarter station of the Messrs. Henssler.

Two white men, Messrs. Farrell and Parkinson, have laid out a plantation for coffee, cotton, and copra, on New Britain, with fair prospects of success, provided the difficulty of obtaining a steady supply of labour can be overcome. A Catholic mission was established a few years ago at Nodup in New Britain, but its existence did not last long. The missionaries believed themselves to have been threatened by the natives, and their principal station was burned down in 1883. In September of that year I brought away the two fathers and a lay brother, who comprised the mission. They were in a complete state of destitution, without clothes and weakened by fever. I met Father Navarre, the amiable and self-denying head of the mission, last year at Thursday Island, where he had halted preparatory to going over to New Guinea.

The Ellice, the Gilbert (or as they are usually called by the seamen, the Kingsmill), and the Marshall groups, are all composed of low, flat islands formed of coral. Some of them are nearly perfect *atolls*, Maraki in the northern Gilberts being perhaps the most perfect in the world. The usual formation is a belt of coral, often of very irregular outline, from which a series of low sand islets rise a few feet, seldom more than

twelve, above the surface of the water. The belt is generally pierced by several passages leading to the lagoon, often navigable by ships of considerable size. In some cases, as at Nukulilailai in the Ellice group, there is no navigable passage. Where this is wanting, landing has to be effected in canoes on the edge of the reef on the lee side, and the shallow interior waters of the lagoon have to be traversed by wading. The larger sandy islets on the reef are inhabited and are planted with extensive groves of coco-nut trees. The coco-nut and the pandanus are almost the only trees that grow in these archipelagoes; but in the Marshall Islands there is a kind of bread-fruit which is also found in the other groups, but in smaller quantity.

It seems absurd to speak of the fertility of soil apparently composed almost entirely of sand, nevertheless even amongst these coral archipelagoes there are differences. The Marshall Islands have the most profuse natural growth of ferns and grasses; on the Gilbert Islands there is not even a fern; whilst the Ellice Islands hold an intermediate place between the sterility of the latter and the comparative fertility of the former. It is customary to reproach the natives of Oceania with invincible indolence; and, if it be a fault, I fear they must be convicted of desultoriness and unsteadiness in their work. The amount done in a year would if spread over the whole period give, I believe, a very respectable daily average. The labour expended by the Ellice Islanders in cultivating their lands and growing the huge *taro*, which is the staple of their diet, must have been enormous. The vegetable is planted in vast trenches which look as though they had belonged to some great fortress long ago fallen into ruin. Even with the best implements the excavations would be extremely laborious, but one is lost in astonishment when one finds that many of the taro beds now in existence were excavated by generations in possession only of tools of shell or wood.

In the Gilbert and Marshall groups the fruit of the pandanus is largely used as food; and, of course, in all the groups fish is a common article of diet. The pandanus fruit is preserved for use as sea-stock by the bold canoe sailors of the two more northern archipelagoes. The drupes are separated, dried, and pounded into a dust resembling snuff. This dust is exposed to the sun till a sweet juice exudes rendering it sticky. It is then rolled into broad flat cakes which look exactly like pieces of thick blanket soaked in treacle. These are rolled up and tightly wrapped round with dried leaves and sennitt, much after the fashion in which blue-jackets make up their tobacco. Thus preserved the fruit is not injured by salt water. All the islanders are expert fishermen. Shark's fin being an article of export the shark is eagerly sought for. He is often caught without a hook; a piece of bait is put on the end of a line passed through a noose in a larger line and towed from a canoe. As the shark is seen to follow the bait, it is gradually hauled up till his head and shoulders are past the noose. The latter is then quickly tightened.

Another plan, of which I was told on good authority, is even more remarkable. The sharks are supposed to sleep in rather shoal water under projecting pieces of coral with their heads just protruding. When a Gilbert islander sees one in this position he dives down with a small stick in his hand and gives the fish a tap on the nose, repeating it until the shark, for comfort's sake, changes his position and leaves his tail where his head had been. This is the fisherman's chance, and a second dive with a noose at the end of a line soon makes him master of his game. I am bound to say that I never saw this mode of fishing.

The Ellice islanders are all Christians, having been converted by the missionaries of the London Mission Society. They are inoffensive folk and have no arms. The Nukulailai people declare that they never did have any: but the natives of other islands undoubtedly had some until comparatively recently. They are well educated, can all read, and are most persistent letter writers. No present is more acceptable to them than a few sheets of paper and some pens. In the *Espiègle* we nearly ran out of ink before we got clear of the group. The people are very much under the influence of the resident missionaries, who are all, as far as I saw, natives of Samoa. At Nukulailai we anchored on a Sunday, and the natives had been forbidden to shout "Sail-ho!" the ejaculation which they have learned from sailors, and which all Pacific islanders shout when a ship heaves in sight. At Funafuti there was a single Roman Catholic, a survivor of a former missionary epoch, who was compelled to go to the Protestant church by the intolerant majority, in spite of his protests that, "though his body went his soul did not." I am glad to be able to add that on this coming to the ears of the Rev. M. Phillips, the estimable missionary at Apia, in Samoa, he assured me that he would visit the island and have such persecution, if it really existed, put a stop to.

Some of the islands of the group were nearly depopulated twenty years ago by Peruvian kidnappers, who carried off many natives to work in Peru. As a general rule the population of each island is very small, never, as far as I am aware, exceeding a few hundreds. All are governed by a constitutional sovereign and a *kaupuli*, or parliament. The form of government, in its present state, is to a great extent the work of the missionaries. At Vaitupu I noticed in the *kaupuli* house some curious couches, carved out of single pieces of wood, with four legs and a solid block like a pillow at one end. To my inquiries it was replied that as some members of the assembly are fond of long speeches, the debates are occasionally protracted, and wearied legislators get rather sleepy, so the couches are provided to enable them to slumber in comfort. All the natives wear European clothes of some sort. The men usually put on at least a shirt: the women's dress is peculiar. They wear a long garment of coloured calico, tight round the neck, and reaching in ungirt looseness to the heels. On their heads they put a

curious high-crowned hat, cross-laced with bright ribbons, exactly resembling the head-gear of a brigand in the opera of 'Fra Diavolo.' Ladies of a certain age in the Archipelago are inclined to *embonpoint*; and a crowd of portly dames streaming out of church in their flowing calicoes and brigand hats, always many sizes too small for them, is a sight not soon to be forgotten.

The Gilbert islanders are only partially Christianised. The southern portion of the group is under the London Mission; some of the other islands are under American missionaries, who, however, do not reside in them. Like the Ellice Islands these also were once governed by kings; but in all the southern part regal government has been abolished, and a sort of federal republic has been established in several islands. The natives seem to have an innate capacity for parliamentary institutions. I have been present at several debates amongst them, some of which were so far of importance, that on their issue depended whether we should be at peace or at war with the inhabitants. Nothing could exceed the regularity and decorum of the proceedings, and some of the speakers were assuredly fluent, and apparently eloquent. The islanders are capital sailors, fearlessly visiting distant islands in canoes of large size, not dug out of single trees but built up of pieces. One very remarkable feature of the islands is their dense population. This is especially striking, as the islands are extremely barren.

The weapons of the Gilbert islanders are curious wooden swords and halberds, studded with shark's teeth. They make also complete suits of armour out of coco-nut fibre, stiff hauberks, cuisses of matting, and close-fitting helmets, like those of the crusaders. Firearms have of late to a great extent replaced the old weapons, and the armour has been generally laid aside. It is odd that the custom of the duel should be common amongst the Gilbert natives. Duels are rarely to the death, but a wooden sword bristling with shark's teeth can, to judge from the tremendous scars on many of the men's bodies, inflict very severe wounds.

The Marshall Islands are less known than the Ellice or Gilbert groups. The Archipelago is divided into two chains; the Ralick, or western, and the Radack, or eastern. It is unsafe to dogmatise in ethnological matters, except after minute and careful inquiry, but I hazard the opinion that the Samoan type, plainly to be discerned amongst the Ellice and some of the Gilbert people, becomes less and less apparent as one proceeds further north: and that consequently the Micronesian is, so to speak, purer. The Ellice Islanders use the Samoan edition of the Scriptures; and both they and the southern Gilbert islanders stand probably to pure Samoans as the bulk of the inhabitants of Hispano-America stand to pure Spaniards. Christianity has been introduced into the southern part of the Marshall Archipelago by American missionaries, but in the islands which I visited it has scarcely taken root. King David of Arnho is a baptised Christian. He is able to read and write, and is still an

industrious student of the Bible. Some years ago his desire to take an additional wife was opposed by the missionaries. The result was that the king carried out his polygamous intentions and relapsed into heathenism. The Marshall Island men are tall, the women singularly short. Some of the latter sex, who are of high birth, are very good-looking, and extremely graceful. The men are tattooed on the body and right up to the temples. Those of chiefly family cover the whole body; commoners leave an unmarked patch from the armpit nearly to the waist. The lobe of the ear is perforated, and often greatly distended with an unclosed hoop of wood. When this ornament is not carried, the vacant loop of flesh is hung over the point of the ear. The women tattoo the back of the hand and the forearm nearly to the elbow in tasteful patterns, so that they appear to have on open-worked silk mitts. The male costume is decidedly picturesque. It consists of two enormous tassels of shreds of *vau* bark joined by a plaited strap and disposed round the body so as to form a kilt. It is kept in place by a cord covered with plaiting of pretty pattern, which cord, being often over a hundred feet long, is wound round the waist till it forms a large coil. Chiefs particularly affect great length of cord, which does not improve the wearer's appearance, as it makes the kilt too bunchy. With a coil of moderate size the kilt is very becoming, and recalls the Albanian *fustanella*. The women's dress is composed of two mats worked with devices of great taste. The so-called "Greek key" is common as an ornament at the edges. These mats are bound round with a cord, similar to that of the men, above the hips, leaving a few inches of mat above, while the rest reaches nearly to the ankle. The costume is thus very like a low-necked European gown without sleeves, and though a little stiff for sitting down in, has an attractive appearance when the wearer stands.

The Marshall Island canoes are like those of the Gilbert Islands; but they are larger, and on the sloping platforms built out on each side there are frequently little houses in which three or four of the crew can sleep. The natives are great navigators. They actually make curious charts of thin strips of wood tied together with fibres. Some of these charts indicate the position of the different islands with a surprising approach to accuracy. Others give the directions of the prevailing winds and currents. These are used as instruments to determine the course to be steered, so as to take advantage of the wind and to allow for current drift rather than as charts are used by us. At Kusaie I fell in with the survivors of the crews of five canoes belonging to Milli Atoll who had been drifted from their own island. After being at sea six weeks, during which they lost five hands and had to break up one canoe for firewood to cook some rice, they were driven ashore on Kusaie, by the Christian natives of which they were well treated.

The islands of the Marshall Archipelago are much less thickly populated than the Gilberts. Arnho and Majuro atolls at the time of

my visit were distracted by wars. Wars caused by rival claimants to the chiefly throne are common in these islands. I am glad to say that we succeeded in making peace in both. At Arnho I was afraid that, until the stock of firearms in the hands of the resident traders had been bought up, eagerness to sell them to the natives after my departure would prevent any permanent peace. Later information has shown that these fears were justified. At Majuro also peace was made, and an interview arranged at a spot about midway between the headquarters of the contending armies. The scene was the most interesting and touching that I ever witnessed, and I wish that time allowed me to describe it.

The low atolls of the three groups just spoken of are called by sailors the "Line Islands," from their position with respect to the Equator. In spite of their general unproductiveness the number of coco-nut trees is so large that there is a considerable export of copra. One English and three German firms have nearly the whole business in their hands. There is one American firm also, but its transactions must be much less extensive than those of the English, and of at least two of the German houses. All are represented by resident traders. At Majuro Messrs. Henderson and MacFarlane have a very complete and extensive head-station. At Jaluit the German firms of HERNSHEIM and Co. and the South Sea Company, the latter at the time of my visit under the style of Capelle and Co., have large head-stations for this part of Oceania.

The contrast between Kusaie and Ponapi in the Carolines and the low atolls of the Marshall, Gilbert, and Ellice groups is striking and agreeable. Both of the former are called by our sailors "high islands," a designation which is soon appreciated by any one who has cruised among the groups mentioned. Kusaie is densely wooded and picturesque. Its soil is very fertile. The people, who only amount to between three and four hundred, are all Christians, having been converted by the American missionaries, who have an important station on the island. The American missionaries are fond of giving to the petty chiefs of the tribes with whom they come in contact the absurd title of king. Tokusa, the chief of Kusaie, which name includes all the islets near as well as the main island of Ualan, is accordingly called king, though his subjects are so few. He speaks English well, and is very intelligent and well-mannered. The natives are straight-haired [and rather light-coloured. They paint their canoes a dull red with a pigment made of an ochreous earth found in two caves on Ualan. Their houses are large, with high-pitched roofs and elevated gables. Most of them now wear some article of European dress, but the garb of the country is a broad sash woven of the fibre of an inedible banana, frequently dyed black except at the ends, where there are some bright coloured bars, which make it resemble the silk scarves of the Roman peasantry.

On the little island of Lelé, on which the natives live, there are some interesting ruins, which appear to be those of a fortress with cyclopean walls of large irregular blocks of basalt, 25 to 30 feet thick. There are also canals and artificial harbours. The natives can give no account of them, though King Tokusa told me that he believed they had been constructed by his ancestors. In the splendid island of Ponapi, the inhabitants of which are more barbarous than those of Kusaie, there are even more remarkable ruins. Four-sided platforms stand out of the water, and are composed of layers of hexagonal basaltic prisms, like those of the Giant's Causeway, transversely superimposed one on another, the prisms of a layer being at right angles to those of the one above or below it. These platforms are arranged to form canal streets, and the walls of edifices erected on them are built of basaltic columns in like manner. The ruins are much overgrown with the rich vegetation of the tropics, but enough is visible to disclose the remains of a city, of a second Venice, of whose builders we are ignorant.

Yap, in the Western Carolines, is singularly interesting. The natives are gook-looking and profusely tattooed. The hands and fore-arms of the women are tattooed with mits as in the Marshall Islands. The houses are large and built of mats. They stand on an extensive platform of earth revetted with stones, against which is placed the curious stone money of the islanders. This is in the form of huge discs of arragonite, quarried in the Pelew Islands, more than 200 miles away. The discs are like great grindstones, and frequently weigh three tons. People have said on hearing of this money that there was not much risk of its being stolen. Nevertheless an American trader at Yap complained to me that some which had been placed in his charge had been carried off in the night.

I visited two other islands which may be included in the Caroline group. These were Nuguor and Greenwich Island, both low atolls. At Nuguor human sacrifices are still offered; one had occurred about two years before I was there. The inhabitants are of almost gigantic size. They are ruled by two queens, and have retained the tradition of their migration from Samoa and the name of the chief, Vavé, who led it. Greenwich Island is very little known. The inhabitants make *tappa* from the bark of a bread-fruit tree, being, as far as I am aware, the only people dwelling on a low island in these seas who do. The costume of the men is a T bandage formed of a mat almost as fine in texture as muslin.

I visited the Pelew Islands exactly a century after the wreck of the *Antelope*, through which the natives were introduced to the civilised world. On the centenary of the wreck I succeeded in inducing the two principal kings to make a treaty and stop the wars which had long devastated their islands. They also promised to give up the cruel and savage custom of taking heads. The Pelew islanders are a particularly

interesting people. In each village there are large "club-houses," to which the younger men resort. A few women from neighbouring villages also frequent them. It is not considered *comme il faut* for a woman to enter one in her own village. If she did she would become an outcast; going into one a mile or two off, however, in no way affects her position. The buildings are of wood, and the gable ends are adorned with carvings and frescoes. There is also in the Pelew Islands, a curious kind of money. It is really bits of antique glass vessels and jasper beads, which the people believe came down from the gods, but which in fact came out of the ships of early navigators. The scenery of the islands is picturesque and varied. There are grassy downs, wooded hills, and precipitous coral islets crowned with verdure.

In the Polynesian archipelagoes of Samoa and Tonga we find a superior race and, especially in the latter, a comparatively advanced civilisation. The people of the two are akin. The Samoans are of a softer type than the Tongans, who live in a cooler climate. The beauty of the Samoan women has often been remarked, and it would be difficult to exaggerate it. The Tongans are of greater stature, and the women are rather handsome than pretty. The scenery of the Samoan Islands is only surpassed by that of New Britain and Eastern New Guinea. Except in the Vavau group, the Tongan scenery is at best rather poor, as the islands are, in general, low. Samoa is always hot, whilst the winter climate of Tonga-tàbu is delicious. Both archipelagoes are visited by hurricanes, but they are apparently less violent than those of the West Indies and come rarely. All the Samoans are Christians, most of them being under the missionaries of the London Society. There are also Wesleyans and Roman Catholics. In Apia there is a large stone Catholic church and some excellent schools for white, half-caste, and native children, kept by French nuns, of whose work no praise can be too high.

Of late years an attempt has been made to organise a settled government in Samoa; and Great Britain, Germany, and the United States have recognised, and have entered into treaty relations with the chief, Malietoa, who has been made king. The head of a rival family, the Tupua, is vice-king. There is a parliament of nobles and elected representatives who sit in a single assembly. The country was for a long time the scene of tribal wars, and the new government was established to ensure peace. It has, to a great extent, proved a failure, as it has no power and no one respects it. On the whole the country has been peaceful since its establishment, solely because the people are afraid that the outbreak of hostilities would lead to interference on the part of foreign men-of-war. Upolo, on which the town of Apia is, has some large plantations owned by Germans. The Germans have nearly nine-tenths of the trade in their hands, but the British share is increasing. Apia is an orderly settlement of white men, with a municipal government secured to it by treaty. The town and district are exempt from

Samoan jurisdiction, and have an extra-territorial status, something like that of a foreign "concession," at a treaty-port in China or Japan.

Tonga is trying a constitutional experiment on its own account. Mr. Baker, an ex-Wesleyan missionary, has drawn up a constitution to which the venerable king George, who was over ninety years old at the time of my visit, but was as vigorous as most men of sixty, has given his approval. There is a cabinet of which the ex-missionary is the head, a parliament, and a constitutional sovereign. There is also a regular judicial establishment. Great Britain has entered into treaty relations with Tonga, and has even accorded a limited jurisdiction over British subjects to Tongan courts. Englishmen in the South Seas are fond of laughing at the Tongan polity. But it is to the credit of the new State that its public expenditure is small, that it has been for years perfectly orderly, and that there are in the group probably five times as many miles of carriage road as there are in our colony of Fiji. There are many Tongans still living who saw the first horse brought to their own particular island, and thought that it was a large kind of pig. There are hundreds of horses in the archipelago now, and most Tongans are fearless horsemen. They are also capital cricketers, which they owe to the good sense of that very able man, the Rev. Mr. Moulton, who is, or was till lately, at the head of the Wesleyan Mission. Mr. Moulton has founded an admirable college. The scholars receive an education equal to that given in the colonies. I was present at one of the public examinations, and amongst other surprises heard the first canto of the 'Paradise Lost' recited in the native tongue. Most of the Tongans are Wesleyans, but there is also a Roman Catholic mission in the country, and a moderate number of the natives belong to that church. Till lately the trade was almost exclusively carried on by Germans, but our countrymen are getting control of great part of it.

All Pacific Islanders, even many of the Melanesian cannibals, are distinguished by a remarkable refinement of external manners. The Polynesians excel all others; and, probably, no people in the world surpass the Tongans and Samoans in grace and dignity of deportment. The latter races are highly ceremonious, and great observers of etiquette. In Tonga at a *kava* party, where an infusion of the root of the *Piper methysticum* is drunk, the order of precedence is as strictly observed as it would be at a European State banquet. In Samoa the *kava* root is chewed by young ladies before being placed in the bowl. In Tonga it is invariably pounded on a lap-stone. Connoisseurs assert that the beverage is never so good as when the root has been chewed. I never quite got over my repugnance to that method of preparing it, and only drank of it sparingly and to avoid giving offence when out of Tonga. Even in Tonga I felt little inclination to indulge in it freely, possibly because I retain my youthful dislike to rhubarb and magnesia, the flavour of which that of *kava* closely resembles.

My first visit to New Guinea was in the latter part of 1884, as the ship I commanded was in Commodore, now Admiral Erskine's squadron, when that officer proclaimed the British Protectorate. The complete success with which the Commodore carried out this delicate operation, was shown in the uninterrupted friendly relations existing between the white men and the natives in all parts visited. It is no mean testimony to the excellence of the Commodore's arrangements, and the perfection of the discipline he maintained, that though hundreds of sailors were in daily contact with natives, to many of whom white men were almost unknown, not a single unpleasantness occurred. To this satisfactory result the influence of the remarkably able and zealous missionaries, the Rev. Messrs. Lawes and Chalmers, greatly contributed. The good work that these two admirable men have done is simply astonishing in amount and in beneficial effect.

To one who has cruised much amongst the small islands of the Pacific, and who has grown familiar with the monotonous landscapes of Australia, the scenery of New Guinea appears especially grand and imposing. It differs greatly in character. Near Port Moresby the headlands are sparsely wooded, and in the dry season have an almost arid look. As South Cape is approached the vegetation becomes more luxuriant; and near China Straits are found all the varied tints of foliage and herbage which delight the eye in New Britain. As far as has been ascertained the climate is not favourable to Europeans.

The natives of the coast evidently belong to two distinct races. From a point rather to the westward of Port Moresby right on to Aroma, the people are light-coloured, of tall and graceful figure, grave in manner, taciturn, and abhorring cannibalism. The men's dress is simply a strip of bark twisted into a string. The wearers of this express great contempt for neighbouring tribes who go perfectly naked. The other race is black, of shorter and sturdier figure, nimble, cheerful, loquacious, and cannibal. The men wear a curious and decent costume of leaf. The women of both races wear the *titi* petticoat of grass, which is very like a ballet-dancer's skirt. At Port Moresby the houses are built half in the water. At Tupu-selei, Kailè, and Kappa-kappa, they stand out in the sea at a distance of a couple of hundred yards from the beach. Throughout the parts of New Guinea with which I am acquainted, the inhabitants are ingenious and industrious agriculturists, and carefully fence in their plantations. Their houses are large and well built. They make very fine fishing-nets. The canoes of Port Moresby are of enormous size, and the trees out of which they are dug are procured by barter from tribes living a long way off. The Port Moresby pottery is made in large quantities for export; as is a finer kind at Toulon Island by the dark race. This shows that both races engage in manufacturing industry for the express purpose of trading with the products, a thing of happy augury for their future progress.

No. IX.—SEPT. 1886.]

2 P

I made an excursion from South Cape to the summit of a neighbouring mountain, where our party had to pass the night almost without food or water, and drenched to the skin by a nearly continuous fall of very fine rain. The discomforts of the night were scarcely compensated by the pleasure of hoisting the Union Jack in the morning. Attempts at sleep were constantly frustrated by the necessity of expelling some particularly unpleasant intruders—slugs as thick as your forefinger and six or seven inches long, which persistently endeavoured to get inside one's shirt. Twice I was aroused from a doze by finding them coiled round my ears. We took off our wet clothes before lying down, and our native companions seized the occasion to put them on, with such cheery impudence, that we were obliged to join in their roars of laughter instead of scolding them. One gentleman converted a pair of inexpressibles into a vest with sleeves, so much to the improvement of his personal appearance that I made him a present of them: and he had the honour of being presented to the Commodore in his becoming garb, which he wore throughout our stay.

My second trip to New Guinea included visits to the Louisiades, to Woodlark Island, to Rook and Long Islands, and to the mainland near Cape King William. The Louisiade people are in physique and knowledge of the arts inferior to both races of South-eastern New Guinea. Many of them are quite unfamiliar with white men. But I found, even amongst them, some who had heard of Queen Victoria, a name which is so frequently known and so greatly respected throughout the South-western Pacific, that the stranger is fairly astonished. A native of Joannet Island intimated that he was aware that Queen Victoria was the chief of Cooktown, the little port in Northern Queensland. On Rossel Island I noticed, in the case of some of the men, the curious dentition which the eminent Russian traveller Dr. Miklukho Maclay has called "macrodontism." A continuous tooth extends over the space usually occupied by two or three teeth. The Woodlark islanders are very fierce, and at one time I thought a collision with them inevitable. They make the same curious gesture of salutation as the Basilaki (or Moresby) islanders, pinching first the nose with one hand and then the navel with the other, finishing up with a low bow.

The natives of the north-east coast of New Guinea whom I met were black, and not superior in physique to the Louisiade people. While in the south of New Guinea the natives are in the stone age, these people have not got beyond the period of shell implements. They could hardly be made to understand the use of a tomahawk, and were frightened by striking a match.

The Rook islanders seemed never to have seen a white man. Smoke coming out of the mouth of an officer with a pipe greatly surprised them. A chief on being brought up to a looking-glass was struck dumb. The exhibition of a cat caused great excitement, which was immensely

increased by showing them a sheep. They are a light-coloured, tall, good-looking race, who express great repugnance to cannibalism. They build good houses and temples, have well laid-out villages, and possess large highly painted canoes ornamented with carvings. They practice circumcision, and an incised figure of an alligator adorns the entrance to their temples. Their reception of my companions and myself was courteous and friendly in the extreme. One of the officers of *H.M.S. Dart* was a good conjuror, and the delight with which the disappearance of a coin through the bottom of a tumbler was hailed by the natives was intense.

A few observations on the condition of the South-western Pacific may not be out of place. I believe that the members of even the most savage tribes desire to be on friendly terms with white men. There are some tribes who, in pursuance of the barbarous custom of taking heads, will make unprovoked attacks on white visitors. But they are comparatively rare exceptions. I fear that most of the so-called "outrages" are to the natives what the retaliatory action of ships of war is to us. We regard the latter as the proper punishment of an offending tribe; and the islanders look upon the killing of a white man—if any white man has done them an injury—as much the same thing. Events have proved that the old practice—for years given up by us, but still followed by some European nations—of the wholesale punishment of the people of an island charged with an "outrage" does nothing to improve relations with the islanders. The plan of punishing only the really guilty has been far more successful, and when that is universally adopted the friendliness of our relations is sure to increase. During all my cruises we invariably contrived to keep on good terms with the natives, even, as at Woodlark Island, where they were at first very suspicious. But I had the immense advantage of cruising, at all events in most waters, where the humane and just actions of my predecessors had brought the names of English captains into high repute with people who, savage as they are, have a keen sense of justice. I doubt if there ever was a time when a determination to act justly and considerately failed to make friends of the Pacific islanders. Forty years ago Captain John Erskine, in command of *H.M.S. Havannah*, proved that this was possible, perhaps easy; and I advise any one likely to have anything to do with the islanders to read the charming narrative of his cruise.

The diminution of population is one of the mysteries of the Pacific. It has perhaps been arrested in Fiji. Time will show if the stoppage is permanent. On the small Wallis Island under the Catholic, and Niué or Savage Island under the Protestant missionaries, the people increase; elsewhere, whether Christian or savage, they diminish. It is common for natives to speak of the greater numbers of their tribes in former days, and there is evidence to support their assertion. Can it be that

the islands of the Pacific have been the seats of a succession of races, all of which have at a certain period in their history declined and disappeared, and that our acquaintance with the present inhabitants only began when the declining stage had been reached? The suggestion is made with timidity, but I confess that I sometimes fancy that something like it may explain the existence of the curious ruins so widely scattered throughout Oceania.

The Pacific islands cannot be mentioned without calling to mind the missionaries who labour amongst them. Their success has been very great; but, great as it is, I think its magnitude has been exaggerated. The Christianity of the Western Polynesians is not much to boast of; and their present state of civilisation is much more owing to frequent intercourse with white men who are not missionaries, than is generally admitted. Without missions they would not have advanced as far as they have done; nor with them would the advance have been what it is had no other white men ever gone among them. The same thing is true of Fiji. Some of the "pioneer" missionaries are men of whom every country might feel proud. The influence for good of such men as Mr. Moulton of Tonga, or Mr. Robertson of Erromanga, is enormous; but they are men of enlarged views and of even statesmanlike capacity, who would be powerful over their fellows anywhere. The same may be said of Messrs. Lawes and Chalmers in New Guinea, and will explain to a great extent their astonishing success. Mr. Chalmers is a born leader of men, and his ascendancy over those with whom he is brought in contact is due to a never-failing tact and a nobility of mind which have been rarely equalled.

It is hazardous to forecast the future, but it does not seem that the Pacific islands are likely, for generations yet to come, to be of use to mankind at large. Fertile as they may be, they can only be made productive with labour, of which no man can say where it is to be obtained. The Spanish colonisation of the Caribbean Islands cannot be repeated; extermination of the natives and the substitution of African slaves are, fortunately, impossible.* Though we have made what I venture to think an unwise and uncalled-for irruption into New Guinea, we are not likely to do as at least one foreign nation has done. One great State has begun its colonial history by annexing islands which cannot for many years, if ever, do more than provide moderate incomes for two or three trading houses, and the trade of which will infallibly pass into English hands if anything like fair competition is permitted. This is not a profitable return for a material increase of public expenditure, for an injudiciously wide distribution of a not too considerable naval force,

* Even should Chinese immigration repeople the island, which is possible and not very unlikely, many years must elapse before the products of Oceania will be at the disposal of the outside world in considerable quantities. The day is past when even Chinese would cultivate the island as the virtual slaves of the white planters.

and for the risk of entanglements full of menace to the tranquillity of foreign relations.

As we have chosen to go to New Guinea uninvited, we are bound in honour to do all the good we can to the races who have not resented our intrusion, but have received us as friends. If we do not take the proper steps, we shall soon find that we have a wolf by the ears. We have a noble chance, we are not likely to have another, of showing that Englishmen can rule barbarians without exterminating them or dispossessing them of their lands. I believe it possible to make New Guinea happy, prosperous, and civilised; I also believe that it may, and in no long time, be made self-supporting. But the right method must be adopted, and a system to suit politicians here and in Australia may be utterly unsuited to the conditions of the country. If the latter be adopted the natives will deserve all the pity we can give them.

Previous to the reading of the above paper,

The CHAIRMAN (Lord Aberdare) announced that Captain Bridge, the author, was prevented being present, through having been just appointed to the command of the *Colossus*, one of the largest vessels of war in Her Majesty's service. Captain Bridge was for several years Deputy Commissioner to enforce the laws as to the employment of labour in the Western Pacific. Most of those present had observed from time to time the accounts that appeared in the papers of outrages committed on the natives of many of the islands, especially the Solomon Islands, and the New Hebrides; of late years the British Government had most laudably endeavoured to enforce those laws and to prevent the inhabitants being kidnapped and taken to the Australian Colonies, especially to Queensland, which had been the principal offender in this respect. It had been the duty of the Deputy Commissioner to punish offenders against those laws. The veteran traveller, Baron Hubner, had published a book describing his visits to the British possessions. He accompanied Captain Bridge on part of his cruise in 1884, and had given a most lively description of all that he saw. He had also given what to Englishmen must be a very pleasant account of the state of things that he found on board the ship. We often found fault with our army although that army was constantly doing most heroic duties, and we were often told that our navy was nothing like the navy of the olden times, but with regard to the *Espiègle* commanded by Captain Bridge, Baron Hubner after speaking of the officers as being very intelligent and pleasant companions, said, "Most of the sailors seem to me very young, but strong, well set up, and cheerful. I am struck by the tone of good breeding that prevails on board. There is not a coarse word nor an oath. Everything goes like clockwork. What a contrast to what I have seen forty years ago on board many English and other men-of-war!" The photographs exhibited on the table were taken by the sailors themselves from instructions they received from a photographer in Australia. This would be acknowledged by all to be a wonderful advance over the Jack Tar of old. In the absence of Captain Bridge the paper would be read by Mr. Gervase Mathew who was one of the officers on board the *Espiègle*.

After the paper,

Mr. A. P. MAUDSLAY, who was called upon by the Chairman, said his experience had principally lain among the natives in Fiji, Samoa, and the Friendly Islands. Captain Bridge deserved great thanks for the information he had given with regard to the islands in the Western Pacific, because it was most difficult to obtain such

information. When he (Mr. Maudslay) was out there he used to question all the Government Agents who sailed in the vessels employed in the labour trade, but they were not always careful observers, and such as were good observers were not always able to describe what they had seen. One man to whom he spoke seemed to be very intelligent and greatly impressed with the beauty of the Solomon Islands, but when he attempted to describe the country his language altogether failed him, and he simply said, "I never saw such scenery. There is first-rate bathing, most beautiful blue water, and it is a most eligible site for villa residences." It turned out that his previous occupation had been that of a house-agent in Melbourne. The question of the migrations from island to island was a very interesting one. Captain Bridge had alluded to a light-coloured people who lived on Rook Island, and there were light-coloured people on many of the islands of the western groups, but they must certainly have migrated from the east. There had been a great distribution of races from one or more centres, but he wanted very much to know where the centres were. It was most important and interesting to trace these migrations. On one occasion he went to church in the King Country in New Zealand; it was on Thursday, but it was explained to him by the Maoris that the king had found four Sundays in a month too many, so that it had been agreed that there should only be a Sunday every ten days. The service lasted about a quarter of an hour, and at the end of it the chief turned round and said, "I suppose it is all gibberish to you, but those were the songs that our forefathers sang when they came from Hawaii." This Maori tradition of the migration from Hawaii is particularly clear, but Hawaii is a name found in many forms all over the Pacific, such as Savaii in Samoa, Haapaii in Tonga, and the Hawaki of New Zealand, and it is difficult to identify the true Hawaii of tradition.

He was at one time engaged in assisting in the establishment of the authority of a supreme chief or king in Samoa, and he was much struck by the stress laid by the natives on the legitimacy of the claim of Malietoa to this chieftainship on the grounds of descent. It appeared that the first Malietoa had risen to power as a leader of a revolt against the rule of the Tongans who had invaded and conquered the Samoa Islands. What was the date of the Tongan conquest it is not very easy to ascertain, but the expulsion of the Tongans took place probably not more than 250 years ago, as only between twenty and twenty-five Malietoas had since then succeeded to the name. In the islands of Upolu and Savaii, the Samoan natives inhabit only the sea coast, and the Tongans effected the conquest by making a road along the central mountain ridge and thence making descents on the villages on either side of the island. Traces of these roads called *Ala i Tonga* (Tongan roads) can still be seen.

A number of Samoan chiefs and elders once met him to discuss some matter of business in the house of Dr. Turner the missionary at Apia. Just before the meeting, Dr. Turner (who had recently returned from a missionary voyage to the Gilbert and Ellice group), had been showing him a staff which had been given him by some natives in one of the Ellice Islands who held to the tradition that their forefathers had come from Faleuli in * Samoa, and had brought this staff with them. The staff, which was old and worm-eaten, held together with a lashing of sinnet, did not appear to differ in any way from the tall staff which a Samoan orator always holds in his hand and leans on when making a speech. After the business of the meeting was over, this staff was shown to the native chiefs,

* Mr. Maudslay, who was speaking from memory, said that he was not certain of the name of the district.

without however any remark being made as to its history, and it was passed from hand to hand. The first remark made was, that the sinnet with which it was bound was foreign, as the strands were not plaited in the Samoan manner. Then, when it passed to the hands of one of the "talking chiefs," after examining it carefully, he stood up as if about to commence a speech, placing his hands on the top of the staff and then attempting to rest his chin on his hands. He then sat down with the remark that the staff must have come from Faleuli. When asked why, he replied, "Did not you see that when my hands were on the top of it I could not pass it under my chin, and no orator would have the bad manners to talk over a staff that he could not rest against his chest; but the men of Faleuli are so tall that they could use a staff of that height without offence." Subsequently, inquiries at Faleuli resulted in showing that the story was well known that several generations before, a number of large canoes had put to sea on some expedition from which they never returned, and that they were never heard of again.

He would like to hear more about the ruins in the Caroline Islands which Captain Bridge had alluded to. It was important that they should be carefully described and surveyed. The traditions and customs of the Samoans had been preserved to us in Dr. Turner's admirable book, and those of Tonga in that best of all books on native affairs—Mariner's 'Tonga Islands,' which had apparently become Professor Huxley's favorite theological reading; but it is to the efforts of naval officers and deputy commissioners that we must look to obtaining some knowledge of the natives of the Western Pacific, before they become influenced by foreign ideas and customs.

The CHAIRMAN called upon the meeting to join him in a hearty vote of thanks to Captain Bridge for his interesting paper, which was brimful of information, graphically conveyed by a man of unusual powers of observation. It was most satisfactory to Englishmen to know that their maritime supremacy was maintained by men of such intelligence and humanity. If all officers were like Captain Bridge many of the difficult problems as to the proper relations between semi-barbarous and civilised people would be satisfactorily solved. He was pleased to learn from the paper, as he had previously done from Mr. Romilly's account of the same regions, that the practice of wholesale vengeance for an act of cruelty had been abandoned by the English, though he was sorry to say it had not been by some other nations as civilised as ourselves. Mr. Romilly had described the great astonishment of the natives at finding that when an Englishman had been maltreated or murdered, the vessel that arrived subsequently did not take indiscriminate vengeance on the people, but only tried to discover the real offenders and punish them. The effect of that action had been most advantageous in every way, teaching the natives that the real offence lay in the perpetrators of the act and not in the tribe of which they were members, and enlisting their feelings on the side of justice, instead of leading them to place every possible obstacle in the way of inquiry. During the three years and a half of his cruise in those regions no act of hostility took place between Captain Bridge and even the most barbarous tribes. He was happy to hear that acts of brigandage on the part of the colonists had greatly diminished, and believed that in a few years there would be an end to a practice which had brought disgrace upon our brethren in the Australian Colonies.

H.A. Milne. R.G.S. del.

Published for the Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society 1880