

## APPENDICES.

## APPENDIX "A."

## THE BAIGONA CULT.

SOME GENERAL REMARKS BY THE REVEREND COPLAND KING, A.M., M.D.

The first we heard of it was shortly after the death of Mr. Hogan, Patrol Officer, who had called at Ambasi, and afterwards went up the Opi River in canoes. He took sick at Kurereda, on the Mamba River, and reached Ioma and died, being attended by Mr. Hennelly. One man, Aede, gave out that he was responsible for Hogan's death. We tried to find out about Aede. He was sometimes at Katuna, near the Kumusi mouth, and sometimes at Pongani Dyke, Aeland Bay. Then we heard that he had been invested with power by a man named Gaiaribari, a Cape Nelson resident.

Other men also began to apply to Gaiaribari for similar powers. I wrote to Dr. Strong, the Resident Magistrate at Tufi, to make inquiries. Soon we heard that orders had come from Gaiaribari that natives were not to kill snakes, sharks, crocodiles, or monitor lizards—they were protected by Baigona. The news of this prohibition spread. Then certain men in a village would be initiated into the system or cult and become Baigonas. One or two men in the village would take this office and go through a period of instruction, then when they got back, they would initiate the rest of the village not into the positions which they held, but into the faith of it. This was done by a ceremony in which the people were smeared over with some stuff from the bush—they could not tell what it was—and then the Baigona would give each one a smack and send him to wash in the sea. This "washing" gave its name to the secondary initiations. Mr. Oelrichs got from his police and a woman, the wife of one of them, some story of the origin of this cult. Some man or spirit had taken a man from Okena up into the bush on the slopes of Mount Victory, and had there taken his belly out of him, and put it into a basket and given it back to him. He was instructed to take this to his house, and was also told that he would have power to kill or cure. He was to be under the protection of the snake, the Baigona, and to gain his power from him. In return he was to protect snakes and similar animals from injury.

The first Baigona apparently found that he could increase his influence and wealth by selling his secrets to others, and so the cult spread northwards. Some time, late last year, Mr. Oelrichs had his police firing with rifles at a crocodile out at sea. At night some of these men had a dream or vision. The Baigona (spirit) came and said, "Why were you shooting at my friend? You can't be friends with me if you do that." Three of the police were laid up the next morning in consequence of this vision.

The first Baigona man in my district was an old man named Erero, of Ombeia. He was a very attentive listener at my Sunday preachings—a very courtly old gentleman of his kind. I had heard of his curing people, but did not know the particulars. One day I found that he was on the premises doctoring one of our S.S.I.'s, who was dying from consumption. When I went to the house he was going to stop. But I knew that if he did stop then, it would merely mean his waiting until I was out of the way. I said, "Go on, let me see what you do." He gave the patient various herbs to take in different ways. One thing was eaten. Frank, the S.S.I., said to me, "That was very cold." Another thing (herb) was soaked in water, and the water drunk. Of another was made a lotion, in which he washed. Then Erero chewed betel-nut (with possibly other ingredients), and the red matter was plastered all over the sick man's body. Then, while an assistant stood behind him chewing ginger and spluttering it all over the place and yelling out in sympathy, Erero knelt in front and snatched at the man's body with finger and thumb, pulling the red mess off, and calling "Baigona, come out! Baigona, come out!" at the top of his voice. This naturally exhausted the patient. Some leaves were given to him to stuff up his nose, and the treatment ended. Some of the onlookers were at pains to explain to me that this was not the wicked sorcery that I was so constantly preaching against, it was "another kind," and nothing but good. Erero visited Frank every day to see what effect the treatment had. When he found it had done no good he brought back the pay which had been given, and said that it was a sickness that Frank had brought from the white man's country, and his charms were of no avail. He replaced all but the tobacco, which had been already smoked, and gave necklaces to make up the value.

I have seen Baigonas use massage on a patient. They massaged the arms, for instance, down to the fingers, and then, as they said, pulled Baigona out from the finger-tips. The young men of the village sing a song standing round the patient. It seemed to be the usual string of unmeaning words. A patient who was treated for fever this way about 5 p.m. took bad again during the night, and the young men were awakened and collected together to sing while the Baigona again massaged the patient. I said to him, "You are curing her, are you?" "Yes," he said, "you cure people's legs, we cure their bodies."

Afterwards, when I talked it over with Erero, I found out some of the herbs he used. But he said, "I had to pay Gaiaribari a big price for this knowledge. I can't tell you all the secrets unless you promise to keep them secret."

Some time ago Kaipa, of Oure village, Opi River, left his situation in the police and returned to his village. He also was a Baigona, together with another young man named Sinemi, of the same village. Harry, the S.S.I. teacher in that village, told me that, seeing a snake in a tree, he was going to kill it. The natives told him not to, as it was a Baigona. Nevertheless, he did so. Kaipa thereupon got the snake, coiled it up, and placed its head on a coconut, and began a kind of divination—"Will Harry die in a few days for killing you?" The snake's head moved in answer. Afterwards Kaipa got a canoe, and put the snake upon it with some food and some necklaces—valuable native trade—and spoke to it as follows:

"We did not kill you. It was the missionary. We are sorry, and are paying you these necklaces. Now go away up the Mamba, and kill some one up there." And with this the canoe was sent adrift.

On another occasion, Harry told me that he and Mr. Nevitt, Patrol Officer, were going up the Opi River in a Government whaleboat. They saw a crocodile on the bank; but the police would not stir to get a rifle to shoot it.

I know a good many people who claim to have been cured by Erero. I met a man who looked wretched, and who applied to me for medicine. I did not know what was the matter with him, so I said, "Go to Erero." He said "I have been, but he has done me no good." A month after I met the man, and he was quite well. He said Erero had cured him. I reminded him of what he had said before. "Yes," he answered, "but I give him a bigger fee next time and he cured me."

Erero was accused by the village constable of bewitching men to death. He appealed to me. He showed me his lime-pot—an extra big one, of spherical shape. "See that," he said, "since I got that from Gaiaribari never a death has come out of it." The constable changed his ground. "Why don't you go up the Mamba and amass your wealth instead of impoverishing your neighbours?" Erero retorted, "Why don't you go to Heaven and get your pigs from there, instead of getting your friends to supply you?"

Recently, Erero was accused by the Koena village constable of levying blackmail. Mr. Keelan sent village Constable Barigi to arrest him, as Barigi made out a tally of twenty odd pigs and two dogs which had been given to Erero. Erero admitted about five of them, and in each case said he had exercised his powers to cure the people, and received them as fees. One of his patients had died, but he explained this by saying that the Koena sorcery was too strong for him. Mr. Keelan remanded the accused to Buna (Erero is a Kumusi Division man), and Mr. Oelrichs dismissed the case. But, while Erero and the constable were travelling together, the latter was quite won round. "Really," he said to me, "so far as I can see Erero has done nothing but good. I accused him, but I should be very sorry to see him punished." However, Barigi's influence made Erero decide to give it up, and he threw his lime-pot into the river. Barigi also talked it over with the Ambasi people, and four more Baigonas said they would have nothing more to do with it. They put down their decision to their fear of being imprisoned.

The Baigona does not work in his garden, nor drink plain water. He pays more attention to dressing his head and decorating his face with red paint than other people. He has not much else to occupy his time. Either for payment or through fear his village companions will do his garden work for him. So when these men told me of their decision they put it in this form—"Yes, I drink water now, and do garden work. I have given up Baigona."

Barigi's position is interesting. People on the river claim that he is a Baigona. But he says "No," and advises people against it. "How could I keep my position in the Government if I were a Baigona?" he said to me. But he admits to some dealings with snakes. He doctored a girl at Ioma once. I asked her father what had been done, and he came close up to me and whispered, "it was the snake business." The girl, who was very far gone, got better. She told me "they gave me a hot bath." Barigi admits that he learnt how to do this when he was stationed at Tufi. He told me that the sickness was caused by bad smoke in the body, and his treatment got it out. Possibly the treatment was known then, but the profession of Baigona has only recently been grafted on to it.

The word Baigona in the Mukuan language, Cape Vogel, means beloved or sweetheart, and is used in dance songs as far as Taupoto, and in the technical sense of sweetheart in Goodenough Bay.

The two herbs that I identified were *Euphorbia E.* and *Drummondii E.* One of them is known in Queensland as the asthma herb. The other is also used medically by Australian settlers who use herbal remedies. The police told Mr. Oelrichs when I showed these weeds to him that one was used medically, and the other was burnt, and the ashes mixed with the lime in the official lime-pot.

Very often of an evening in the village the Baigona goes into a fit, passing into a trance. It begins with a violent shivering, the man falls to the ground, and becomes insensible, uttering spasmodic bursts of rapid talk. His people cover him with a mat, and sit around listening and applauding, while he wallows foaming. I have not been able to make sense of what he says on such occasions, and I do not know whether his people understand it either.

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## APPENDIX "B."

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### PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE JOURNEY TO NEW GUINEA—JUNE TO AUGUST, 1912.

*By Dr. Anton Breinl, Director Australian Institute of Tropical Medicine.*

I left Townsville on 20th June, 1912, and reached Port Moresby on the 23rd of the same month. Fortunately, circumstances permitted me to start work without delay.

I have to express my indebtedness to His Excellency the Governor, Judge J. H. P. Murray, who, during my comparatively short stay, did everything in his power to further the object of the expedition. It was due to His Excellency's efforts that no time was lost, and that facilities for travelling were provided at the shortest notice.

Furthermore, I have to express my indebtedness to the Government Secretary, Mr. A. M. Campbell, who furthered the object of the expedition in every respect.

All the Government officials I came in contact with showed the keenest interest in the work, and did all in their power