APPENDIX F.

DESPATCH REPORTING VISIT OF INSPECTION TO THE NORTH-EAST COAST.

No. 19.] Baili, 30th April, 1894.

Sir,—I have the honour to report that I left Samarai on the 24th February on a visit to the North-East Coast of the Possession. The same day we reached Wedau, the headquarters of the Anglican Mission, and found all well and quiet there.

A dozen men were engaged at Taupota and two volunteered at Wedau to act as carriers for inland travelling. The Taupota people had acted in the same capacity before, when Mr. Moreton and Mr. Maitland went towards the main range from Collingwood Bay, and were on this last occasion all engaged and shipped in a few minutes.

2. On the 25th I landed at Paiwa, and invited Rabuna, the chief and rural constable of that district, to be of the party. He came readily, with his son, and was of much use as a willing worker and conciliatory interpreter.

With the launch and whaleboat I made on the 26th and 27th a traverse of the coast from Ipote (Cape Vogel) to Dako (Fir-tree Point). On this part of the coast there is a fringe of mangrove, with irregular shore reefs. In the mangrove bights there are a great many small coral islands that cannot be seen from a vessel passing two or three miles from the coast. These afford numerous places of shelter for small trading craft in all weathers. There are no villages near the beach. Behind the mangrove frontage there are twenty or thirty miles of low rolling hills before the main range is reached. On these, many of which are grass covered, there are numbers of food gardens, giving evidence of the presence of a very considerable population. Small fresh-water creeks are of frequent occurrence, but none of any importance open there.

3. A party, consisting of Mr. Guise and Mr. Armit, with carriers, had been prepared to examine some portion of the main range in this direction. They were landed at Dako Creek on the 26th and were proceeding to work their way from that point towards the mountains. On the 27th, however, I came on the Mobiri Creek, which I went up sufficiently far to see that the country there was well populated, and that the creek went within half a dozen miles of the foot of the nearest mountain, Maneáo. On the 27th arrangements were made to land the party on the Mobiri Creek, and they left for that on the 28th. In the afternoon I received a note from Mr. Guise saying that the natives were numerous and unfriendly, and objected to the presence or passage of the party. A friendly chief, however, came to the steamer and I went with him to the camp on Mobiri, at a place called Pibubu. As soon as we arrived there this chief was sent with friendly messages to others, accompanied by Rabuna and by the sergeant of constabulary. Soon after this some natives arrived at Pibubu with food for sale, and professed to leave us on friendly terms, and to be willing to bring us food next day. On the following morning I went ahead with some local natives, Rabuna, and the sergeant. We soon met a large number of natives on the way to our camp at Pibubu, with two or three pigs and other food. They helped to carry the baggage.

After a march of about three miles we reached the village of Mapama, consisting of some seven or eight houses. The men of this place that had not already joined us were there; but the women and children were absent. The men were unarmed. They asked us to pass a village some half a mile beyond Mapama without entering it, and this was done accordingly. About a mile further on we came to the Kwagira River, a mountain stream, two feet deep, and about sixty yards wide, but with a bed some 150 to 200 yards across. It is evidently subject to heavy floods. It opens into the sea about a mile and a-half south of Dako Point. This was about four and a-half miles from Pibubu Camp. A headquarter camp was placed on the left side of this river on a convenient ridge. There I was visited by a large number of natives, all of whom appeared to be very friendly, and willing to assist the party with food and transport. I had not met anywhere less suspicious natives, or more willing carriers.

4. All the land we crossed between Pibubu and the Kwagira was deep alluvial forest land, but more or less wet or swampy at several places. The men are decidedly smaller than Gulf men, but larger than eastern island men as a rule. They are of a brown colour. They wear the hair in tags or ringlets, but a part over the forehead is cut short or shaved off; they have whiskers round the cheek and under the chin, but all hair except the eyelashes is removed from the face. They do not tattoo, but have raised cicatricial marks over the deltoid. The legs are very scraggy. They wear a perineal band of mulberry cloth painted black, brown, and yellow, and girdles of matwork about an inch and a-half broad, plaited without an end. They are made to fit so tightly that it is difficult to get them over the hips. Some have shell necklaces and pendants, but the most common ornament is an armlet consisting of a complete section cut out of the shell of the cocoanut. They complained of the hostile disposition of the Maisina tribe, and showed me the remains of a small village on the Mobiri burned by that sept in one of their incursions a year or two ago.

In the bed of the Kwagira no quartz was noticed, but there are curious gray striped blue and white stones that seem, some of them at least, to be carried from the jade deposits. All the adzes of these people are of jade; they call it sapáru. The occurrence of this article among the Cloudy Bay natives was noticed three or four years ago. It now appears that it is brought across the main range from the Maneáo district.

5. The natives on and near Dako were friendly, some of them going on board the steamer. They brought food for sale, but they are not free from suspicion of Europeans.

6. On the 5th March we reached the anchorage at the mouth of the first river north of the Clyde of the charts. In my despatch, No. 58, of 24th October, 1893, it was stated that observations taken under circumstances that were not quite favourable, had shown the mouth of this river to be in latitude 7 degrees 58 minutes 30 seconds, and thus inside German territory. Renewed observations now give from ten pairs of meridian stars the latitude of 7 degrees 58 minutes 27 seconds. It must, therefore, be accepted, until a mixed commission lays down the boundary, that the lower portion of this river is beyond British jurisdiction. Captain Jones went up it some seven or eight miles, where it was forty or fifty yards wide, and found that it takes a south-west course, which after three or four miles would take it into British territory. There are not a few scattered houses or small groups of houses on it; but there is no large village as far as it was examined. The natives are naked, of a dark bronze colour. They wear the hair in ringlets and remove it from the face. They have ornaments of Job's tears, earrings of turtle shell, and head ruffs of cassowary feathers; while spears of palmwood, gothic-shaped shields nearly

three feet long and covered by cane matwork, and stone clubs constitute their arms. Their canoes are of one piece, well shaped with graceful lines, and are carefully made and well finished, and painted a reddish brown. They have a small outrigger at a large distance from the hull, and are very fast.

When we anchored at the mouth of this river, which they seemed to call Ikore, I was still under the impression that it might be wholly in this Possession, but seeing that the lower three or four miles was not so, it was decided to not examine any further portion of it, as the upper portion could only be reached by travelling overland from the Clyde mouth.

7. On the 7th I went to the mouth of the Mambare River, of which the Clyde is one opening, to land coal for the steam launch and to select a headquarters camp. On returning to the steamer it became known that the Ikore natives, who had in the morning visited our camp in a friendly manner to sell food, had, after the Europeans left, stolen a rifle, a pouch, two blankets, &c., and that several canoes were drawn up at the first bend of the river, apparently with hostile intentions. As that part of the river was beyond our jurisdiction I ordered the immediate withdrawal of those of our party that remained camped on the beach, and the avoidance of any collision with the natives. Next morning we landed at the mouth of the Mambare, some two miles inside our boundary, and began the examination of that river.

The north-west opening of the Mambare, called "The Clyde" on the Admiralty charts, is about a mile and a-half from the principle mouth of that river. After a winding course of about two and a-half miles "The Clyde" brought us into the main channel. The Mambare is about 150 yards wide with a current of from one to two knots in the lower reaches. The first three or four miles lies through low land covered by sago trees, pandanus, breadfruit trees, palms, mangrove, and forest trees. Gardens were met with at less than four miles up; and at about five miles a group of three small villages was reached. The gardens are well cleared and weeded; the cultivation good. They plant taro, sugar-cane, edible hibiscus, yams, and bananas, but they have no tobacco, papaya, nor pumpkin. All those that had been down the river at work in their gardens fled up stream before us, paddling with all their might, some standing others sitting. On reaching the first village they seized spears, shields, and other property, and assembled at the most distant of the three. We landed at the first, about half a mile from the furthest, and put on a pole a piece of turkey red and a plane-iron, making the usual overtures of peace. Several of the men got three or four dry cocoanuts each to offer us, but as we approached all fled except one man, who was accompanied by a youth, apparently his son.

The elder man put his fingers in his ears and performed on the bank a high "pas seul," consisting of three hops to the right and three to the left, to the music of his own voice. This welcome he continued industriously until we passed, breaking off only sufficiently long to pick up a small knife I threw him, while the younger one put some cocoanuts into the water for us. We did not land there. Several recent clearings were passed a few miles above these villages, but the people at work concealed themselves until we passed them, and then came to the bank and shouted to us.

About four miles above the villages there is a ledge of rocks runs half-way across the stream, which might be dangerous to navigation if one did not know of its existence, as its top is below the surface of the water. In the afternoon we were overtaking two or three canoes that were proceeding up the river, apparently on a trading or visiting excursion. Those in the nearest one threw overboard a pig in a cage, shields, claypots, pandanus leaf mats, &c., and paddled for bare life until they found a suitable place into which to draw the canoe.

During the day we passed many fine fields of sago trees, and some good alluvial land, but the banks were not more than three or four feet above the river, which was then considerably flooded.

We pitched camp about a score of miles from the sea, with two or three large clearings in view in front of us. Soon afterwards a number of natives appeared on the bend of the river, about a mile and a-half distant from us, and they were gradually encouraged down to nearly opposite us, when they were visited by the boat, and some mild trading was started. They left on friendly terms, and said they would return in the morning with food for us.

Next day we received an early visit from the owner of the place on which we were encamped, and from the chief of the tribe of the district. Both became very friendly and hospitable, and were very well treated by us. The chief was greatly delighted with a present of a tomahawk. They sold us more food, chiefly taro. We reached their village in the forenoon, but the men we had met down the river had not reached home, so that all those in the village fled as we landed.

At the lower portion of the village they had put a taboo to prevent us from landing. This consisted of long poles stuck into the edge of the bank supporting a string some four or five feet from the ground, with tufts of green grass suspended on it at intervals of three or four yards. This they had not done at the upper portion of the village, where we landed.

There was a considerable grove of cocoanut and betel palms about the village, which contained about thirty houses. The houses are rounded at each end, apparently each large enough for one family. They are covered in down to the ground, so that there is a ground floor, and then a platform on which the people live, about five feet from the ground. In ornamental shrubs they have only crotons, some of which are remarkably fine. On one tree in the village were three human skulls and parts of their skeletons, all of very small size for adult bones; and on a tree close to them were a certain number of pigs' skulls. They had a great many canoes, each able to carry from four to six men. Three or four miles further up we reached another village of a dozen houses. The string and grass taboo had been put up there to prevent us from landing. There was no person in the village, but we saw three men about half a mile up the river. On the right side, opposite the village, there was a piece of shingle beach, on which were some canoes in process of construction, being made under a roof to protect the workers from the sun. We did not enter the village, but tied a small bit of red cloth and a plane-iron to one of the taboo poles. When we had got a quarter of a mile from the village a race was started by the three men we had seen, down the river for the red cloth. A man appeared from near the canoes, who seemed almost certain to beat them, when another stepped out of the "bush" from behind the houses and carried off the prize.

A man followed us up the river, overtaking us by cutting off the bends, and expressed his feelings by alternately dancing and perorating, executing his dance with much grace, holding his lime bottle in one hand and his bag net with pocket gear in the other. A few miles further up we came to a group of small villages, the largest of which had about a dozen houses in a small grove of cocoanut trees. The people had all fled, but we landed and left the usual small present.

The country passed through on the second day was very little higher or drier, and at night we had to camp in a small taro garden, through which water was running in all directions. There were no permanent native settlements. At one point we seemed to pass only four or five miles from the nearest peaks of Mount Victory. There does not appear to be any existing crater there. It has three principal summits, the south-western one of which is at present quiescent. On the other two there are ashy-looking deposits among the rocks, with numerous large fumeroles giving out little spiral clouds of smoke. It seems to closely resemble the little hills described in my despatch, No. 58, of 24th October, 1893, as met with in Seymour Bay. There has not long ago been a thin forest of fair-sized trees on the tops of the mountain, but they are now all dead, and reduced chiefly to dry trunks and stumps. It could be ascended from the west side.

On the 5th three or four native canoes appeared at the bend of the river above us; each contained some four or five men got up for battle. They hesitated on seeing our demonstrations of peace, and a woman who was in one canoe made a man take a pandanus mat and wave it to us in reply to our red flag. On rounding the corner we found a new unfinished village of seven houses. They were built on posts about five feet high, with low side walls and good sago-leaf roofs. Their gardens were young, and the settlement was evidently a recent one. The land all round it was very low, and water ran over the bank from the river and through, below, and between the houses. The most conspicuous objects were two shelter platforms on a tree, at about fifty and sixty feet respectively from the ground. These were reached by an excellent and ingeniously constructed ladder. It consisted of six long canes, each about an inch in diameter. They are arranged in pairs eighteen inches apart. They are attached to tree stumps below, and to branches of the platform tree above, halfway between the two platforms. The canes of each pair cross each other, and a stick about two inches in diameter and four feet long is laid into the three angles formed by the crossing canes; this forms the step. The canes then cross in the opposite direction over the step to form angles for the next step, and so on. It is therefore really a woven ladder, and one of great strength and very neat, without tyings of any kind save at the ends. The platforms are apparently only a retreat for the spearmen, whence they could with safety to themselves throw their missiles on an enemy sacking the houses.

Most of the people fled up the river in canoes, but a few remained to receive us in the village. They have the small gothic shield covered by woven cane, common to this part of the country, palmwood spears, stone clubs, and adzes of jade. Men and women wear a native cloth. The men have the hair long and hanging down the back. They are of good physique, but many suffer severely from ringworm. They use claypots for cooking, and like all the north-east coast tribes, eat lime and betelnut. "Ena" is the word for peace on this river. Some of them went up stream before us and brought us a few unripe bananas. Food did not seem to be abundant with them. We saw no other village that day, and camped at night in a small taro garden, which was, when we landed, very nearly above water.

On the forenoon of the 6th we met two or three small canoes, but the occupants fled. At noon we reached a small house on the left bank, on dry land, about a foot above water, in a cocoanut grove, and only half a mile from a village of half a score of houses on the right bank. Before lunch was finished about a score of natives were induced to come to us on friendly terms. They brought us cocoanuts, taro, and sugar-cane. They called the river Musa—sometimes Mutscha or Musa Tabota. It is not improbable that "Musa" means "the river." They were fairly strong men, but many suffered from ringworm and hydrocele. When we landed at the village one of them brought us a present of pig skulls. This village has a tree platform, and a palisade at the side of easiest access. A mile further up there is another small village at which we were kindly received in a heavy downpour of rain. They bury their dead in the village and cover the grave with a neatly thatched cage. They wished to sell us jade adzes, claypots, and sago for beads and plane-irons. We had again to camp in a wet taro garden.

Sunday, 8th April, we spent camped in a small taro garden, barely above water. There were clear indications of a native population in the district, but the permanent abodes are no doubt on the dry land near and on the spurs of Mount Victory. This place was in latitude south 9 degrees 16 minutes 9 seconds, and longitude east 148 degrees 52 minutes approximate.

On the 9th some native canoes came up the river after us and seemed very friendly but were shy, probably frightened by the boys shooting the white-crested Goura pigeon, which is very plentiful on the Musa. We could not find any dry land on which to lunch, and had to build a platform to get out of the water. At night we reached our highest camp, about thirty-five miles from the sea. The river was there three fathoms deep and had fallen about three feet below the top of the bank before it was measured. It was about eighty to 100 yards wide, and had a current of from two to three knots. The banks were there beginning to rise, and the channel of the river was only then becoming sufficient to contain all its water. The forest consisted of very large trees. The position of this highest point was latitude south 9 degrees 19 minutes 10 seconds, and longitude east 148 degrees 53 minutes approximate. Our camp was in a large garden, and we were evidently on the margin of the settled country, when we had to turn back. The natives were all friendly as we descended the river, and were anxious to trade with us. On the Musa the people excel in making native cloth, many specimens of which were obtained for the public collection, some with very tasteful designs.

Their pottery is often bowl-shaped, and ornamented by etchings with the edge of a shell. The people were desirous of being on friendly terms with us, but each village seems to be on the alert against a native surprise. Nothing can be said at present as to the value of the upper Musa, but the lower portion seems to be practically worthless.

19. On the 11th I left the mouth of the Musa in the whaleboat, towed by the "Merrie England." Near Porlock Bay we picked up Mr. Moreton and his party. His report of their examination of Mount Victory is annexed hereto. At night we camped on the beach opposite Hardy Island. Here we were visited by probably 200 or 300 friendly natives, the large population occupying the spurs of Mount Trafalgar being now accustomed to our visits. They brought us food and were very keen on trading.

It had been arranged that we should meet the party of Mr. Guise and Mr. Armit at Dako, or in that vicinity, on the 12th April.

I landed at Dako at 2 p.m. of that day and found there three young men from the Maibira district, who had arrived about an hour before me with a note from Mr. Guise to indicate where they were. There could be no better proof than this of the beneficial influence of the party on the natives of that part of the country, for these three young men had come alone, halfway nearly to Maisina, their hereditary enemies, to meet me at Dako, having had no communication with me for nearly six weeks.

Next day the party arrived at Dako, accompanied by a considerable number of natives and two important chiefs. Not only had these natives learned to respect and trust the white man, but they had also been taught the accomplishment of smoking tobacco, formerly unknown to them. The position of the Dako Point was found to be latitude south 9 degrees 33 minutes 10 seconds, and longitude east 149 degrees 25 minutes 56 seconds.

On the 14th the steamer towed the boats to Phillips Harbour, and a party was sent to visit Maisina and to warn them to not interfere with their neighbours in future. It appears that they repudiated the idea of making war on others, but the warning does not seem to have made a deep impression on some of them, as one man stole something from the boat and shook his spear at a constable that went after him. The men of the constabulary have been so frequently admonished to not use their weapons except in case of urgent necessity that this bravo thief was suffered to escape, which very probably would not have been the case had I been there myself. It would have been profitable to Maisina to witness the example then that will surely have to be put before them sooner or later. We were visited at Phillips Harbour by the chief and people of probably all the villages of that neighbourhood. Some very remarkable pottery was obtained at Maisina for the public collection. The pieces are bowl-shaped and have on the outside raised designs, as if a small cord had been half inserted into the clay and left there. This raised form of design is the only example I have seen of relief ornamentation in Papuan pottery.

20. As there had been no dangue fever on the steamer after the 1st April the vessel was well cleansed and fumigated on the 13th and 14th, and was admitted to pratique on the 15th.

Next day we, after touching at Ipote (Cape Vogel), landed Rabuna at his own Paiwa village. People began to assemble at the landing-place as soon as he left the ship for the shore. Before he landed the women began to cry, one of them exclaiming "My son, my son." When he reached the men they cried, and finally Rabuna and his son, who had accompanied him, cried. At first one might have thought they had lost some beloved relative during his absence, but all these tears were expressive of joy and not of sorrow. No doubt this will add greatly to his prestige in the district, but any ascendancy he may have earned will be safe in his hands, for he seems to have become a very respectable and trustworthy man. The Taupota men, who were spoken of very favourably by Mr. Guise, were all landed at home in good health and spirits. A call was made at Wedau to give the Rev. Mr. King some information respecting the recent examination of parts of the Anglican mission field, and to press on him the urgent necessity for expansion in their establishments if they intend to really occupy the north-east coast.

On the following day we reached Samarai and found all well there.

I have, &c.,

To His Excellency Sir Henry Wylie Norman, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., &c., Brisbane.

WM. MACGREGOR.

[*Enclosure to Despatch No.* 19.]

British New Guinea,
Dedele, 30th April, 1894.

Sir,—I have the honour to report that, on leaving you at the mouth of the Musa River on the 3rd April, I proceeded, according to instructions, with the whaleboat and a crew of eight boys to Porlock Bay, to have a look at what appeared to us from the steamer a mud river, coming down from between Mount Trafalgar and Mount Victory, and also to see what probability there was of reaching the top of Mount Victory from that side, and to do so if possible. I arrived at Porlock Bay that afternoon, and left the camp on the beach next morning with six of the crew, heading inland about south-east. The country at first passed over is perfectly flat for some two or three miles and covered with sand. A thick growth of long reedy grass covers this flat, intersected with open spaces and with dead trees here and there. At one spot there had been a cocoanut grove, but the trees were all killed. We followed up a shallow stream, the water just covering the sand for some yards wide—very heavy work from the number of quicksands. We then tried the grass ridges, hoping to make a short cut across a bend of the stream, but were glad to get back to the bed of the stream. The soil on these ridges was good and wallabies numerous. Next day we followed up the stream, which rapidly assumed the aspect of a torrent averaging some ten yards wide. This had to be crossed and recrossed numerous times, and that with great difficulty. This day the dry bed of the stream, I should say, averaged over 300 yards wide, and was composed of sand, shingle, and boulders. Specimens of these I have forwarded to Mr. Jack, Government Geologist. About one mile above our camp was an island of one and a-half miles long. We camped in the evening some six miles in a straight line from the boat. During the night we had heavy rain, so that in the morning the torrent was so swollen, and what with a touch of fever, I remained in camp. On the following day we continued up the bed for something over a mile; here the bed narrowed considerably. A branch coming in on our right from Mount Victory we followed, intending to get on to the spur further on, but we were soon blocked by a waterfall. We tried to climb on to the ridge here, but it was so steep that we only got part of the way up and had to return. We then got on to the spur from nearer the junction previously mentioned, but after going some distance were again blocked in same manner. I then tried the main branch, which soon narrowed into a gorge terminating in a waterfall some forty feet high bringing down nearly as much gravel and sand as water. I sent a boy up a shelving rock to see what prospect there was of tackling Mount Victory in that direction, but he reported "No good." Some hundred yards below this there was a hot-water stream coming out of the bank on the Mount Victory side, in which was a black fungus with a yellow covering; some of this I have also sent down. Finding the impossibility of getting up in this direction, we retraced our steps to the old camp intending to try the spur at the back, and up which we started next morning. This spur we could see was practicable for a good distance up, but impracticable further on, and therefore instead of wasting time and energy on an impossibility, I returned to camp, and started back for the boat, having really done nothing except picking up a few geological specimens and satisfying myself that to attempt the ascent of Mount Victory in future I should try the western side, although there is a spur leading down to the creek some miles below our camp which might possibly be of use.

We had wet weather throughout, and only saw the tops on the morning of the 8th, when there appeared to be more steam coming out, and from more places than I had previously seen from a distance. I washed several dishes of dirt from different gullies, but could not raise a colour of gold.

I have, &c.,

His Honour Sir Wm. Macgregor, M.D., K.C.M.G., Port Moresby.

M. H. MORETON.