

APPENDIX C.

DESPATCH REPORTING CONTINUATION OF VISIT OF INSPECTION TO EASTERN
AND SOUTH-EASTERN DIVISIONS OF THE POSSESSION

Government House, British New Guinea,

No. 1.]

12th January, 1900.

SIR,—In continuation of my Despatch No. 98, of 19th December, 1899, reporting my visit of inspection to the Eastern and South-eastern Divisions, I have the honour to report that I arrived in the "Merrie England" at the Amphlett Group on my way from the Trobriands to the north-east coast on Tuesday, the 19th December.

EASTERN DISTRICT.

Amphlett
Group.

2. We stopped at Urasi, a high pretty island rising straight out of very deep soundings, to get fresh water, not having been able to get a sufficient or good supply at the Trobriands. There is a good water supply close to the village on the eastern side of the island, but the anchorage is not a good one, and unsafe. We, however, anchored there as the weather was fine. Accompanied by Captain Barton and Captain Feilden, A.D.C. to Lord Lamington, who is paying a visit to us while His Excellency is in England, I went across to Wamea Island, and visited a village picturesquely built about 500 or 600 feet high, the ascent to which is very steep up the stony bed of a dry watercourse. The village is built on a narrow rocky saddle, sloping steeply upwards to the south. The people at first showed signs of fear, and the chief, Tauretani, was not to be found in his house; but confidence was soon restored. The houses are small and built on the rocks, the living accommodation being a small "attic." The people looked well and strong. The village is called Dromo-Dromo. We then went to shoot pigeons at a small conical-shaped island, situated between the two larger islands, but nearer to Wamea. It appears to be the roosting-place of flocks of pigeons from all the neighbouring islands.

3. An accident to the machinery of the steamer delayed us at Urasi the next day, during which we completed watering, and, with the rest of our party, revisited Pigeon Island. The pigeons are the black and white Torres Straits birds and the blue pigeon. Captain Barton shot a beautiful nicobar pigeon with the blue-green-bronze plumage, white tail, and long neck feathers. My friend the late Mr. H. Romilly, formerly Commissioner for British New Guinea in the days of the Protectorate, gives a good description of this island pigeon shooting in his book, "From my Verandah in New Guinea." We secured a large number, but must have lost many others in the thick scrub with which the little islet is densely covered, and also in the sea, though we picked up several which fell there. Captain Harvey brought the steamer over from Urasi that evening, as the anchorage there is unsafe at night. There is a good one under Wamea.

4. We sailed the next morning, Thursday, 21st December, leaving Fergusson Island with the magnificent double cone of Mount Kilkerran on our left. Unfortunately the clouds covered the tops of the mountains over both Fergusson and Goodenough Islands, so that we did not see the wonderfully beautiful view we had the last time we passed through Moresby Straits. Mr. Rothwell, the chief officer, who has had much experience in these waters, conned us through a passage between the two islets in the Straits where it is marked on the chart "Dangerous." The best channel, however, is the one between the westernmost islet and Goodenough Island.

Goodenough
Island.

As we were so close to the new Wesleyan Mission Station at Bwoidosa in Mud Bay, I decided to call there and let Dr. Vaughan give the Rev. Mr. Fletcher encouraging news of his wife, who had left there very ill and whom he had been attending in Samarai. We accordingly put into the bay, and Mr. Fletcher came off to us. He was glad on other accounts to see Dr. Vaughan, as he had two of his party down with sickness—Mr. Glew, a layman, who is putting up the new Mission House, and Jemesa, a half-caste teacher from Fiji. He had another Fijian teacher there—Isaia, of Bau—and a third had died (Tevita, a native of Moala, in Lau). Jemesa's wife, a Fijian, and their young daughter were with him. They had recently come from Fiji with some others for New Britain. I also saw the village constable, who reported everything quiet.

After Dr. Vaughan had finished with his patients we re-embarked and left for Cape Vogel, sighting the brigantine "Ivanhoe" working out of Seymour Bay, where she had been for a load of sulphur from the sulphur field which was recently leased to Messrs. Burns, Philp, and Co., as reported in my Despatch No. 34, of 14th June, 1899, paragraph 5.

Cape Vogel.

5. We arrived in the evening at Mukawa, the Anglican Mission Station on Cape Vogel. Dr. Vaughan and I landed, and were met by Mr. Tomlinson, the layman in charge, and went up to the Mission House, which is now completed. It was in course of erection when I was last there with the Bishop. It is a large, very comfortable wooden house, built on high piles; part of it is a chapel. There is a most lovely view from it. The place is healthy, but very much exposed to wind. I was glad to see Mrs. Tomlinson looking quite as well as if she were in her own home in England. There are several small groups of native huts, forming separate village communities, in the immediate vicinity of the Mission House, and the natives, though they have begun to make new gardens on the shore below, prefer to remain there; although they no longer fear the recurrence of the raids from Maisena, in the upper part of Collingwood Bay. Their houses are very small and neatly built—quite unlike any others on the coast. They remind one of the Indo-Malay huts with their little sharp gables and one end covered in, but open at the side, with the long, pile-supported eaves forming a miniature veranda. Owing to the effects of the severe blow in December, 1898, they were very short of food, living on the root of a particular kind of plantain which they cultivate for the purpose. There were no sick cases for the doctor.

On our way down to the boat we met a large party of natives from Biri-Duma-Duma, carrying pigs alive and dead, yams, and other food. Some of the men were armed with long, narrow, sharp-edged sword-clubs, like the old two-handed sword of the Middle Ages. These we had not seen before; but there was no opportunity for getting one. They were very shy and nervous at meeting us, but Mr. Tomlinson, who had visited their villages (the home of the sorcerers of this district), met several acquaintances among them, who returned his greeting merrily.

There appears to be a large tract of grass country which Mr. Tomlinson states is uninhabited, and which would be suitable for cattle, lying inland from the Cape. Mr. Russell, who has to come here later to survey some blocks of land for the Mission and others, will, if possible, examine it.

6. His Honour Judge Winter tried a case of child murder that evening. The facts were, Mr. Tomlinson told me, as follows:—An unmarried girl had given birth to a child in one of the villages close by the Mission House, and Mr. Tomlinson heard that it had disappeared. He found the grandmother and insisted on seeing it or its body. At last, after assuring him several times that it was dead, she took him to a garden in which a basket was hanging on a tree, and while they were there he heard the child cry. There was a second and older basket hanging there too, but it was silent now. Taking down the one from which the cry proceeded he found the child unhurt, and took it back to its mother, as he had no means of nurturing so young a one at the station, but he regrets now not having kept it from her. He told her he would come to see it in the morning. Returning late that night he found the woman suckling it, but in the morning she and the child had disappeared, and she was not seen again for a considerable time, when she was found in one of the gardens and without the child. A woman informed him that she had seen the mother and grandmother kill it. The mother, who was committed by Mr. Moreton for its murder, was unable to articulate from some physical defect, and apparently did not understand the situation. The trial resulted in her being discharged. I was informed that this was the second child of hers which has been made away with. The older basket on the tree is sadly significant.

7. Lying at anchor in the bay that night we saw the first lighthouse in New Guinea shining from the top of the "dog's hill" above us. It has a large reflecting lantern erected by the Bishop on a wooden stand 223 feet above the sea, and is reported to have been seen at a distance of fourteen miles. Mr. Russell fixed it—from the ship by traverse connection from Observation Island (Yasi Yasi)—in latitude $9^{\circ} 37' 40''$ South; longitude $149^{\circ} 59' 15''$ East. It no doubt will prove very useful to vessels on the coast.

NORTHERN DISTRICT.

8. We left early next morning for Porlock Harbour, and went ashore that afternoon for shooting. Porlock In addition to our usual bag here, duck, pigeon, and wallaby, Captain Barton got a snipe, of which we saw a few. It appears to be the same as the English "full snipe"; they are found here at this time of the year when migrating, but from whence or whither bound we cannot say.

9. We left Porlock Harbour at 4 a.m. on 23rd for the Mambare. We grounded suddenly on a large patch about twenty-five miles E.S.E. of Gumboro Hill (Opi River). The light was very bad at the time, and the patch did not show up before we were on it. It appeared to be flat and composed of soft or dead coral, and the ship soon came off it without apparent injury. We met the peculiar dark water of the Opi River a considerable distance from shore.

10. We arrived at the mouth of the Mambare the same afternoon. Mr. Savory, who runs Messrs. Whitten's petroleum launch on the river, interviewed me with respect to obtaining a drawback of duty on kerosene lost out of the original tins by leakage in transit or in store, amounting to a considerable quantity and causing serious loss. Mr. Whitten had already applied for a remission of duty on kerosene used for the launch on the ground that the service was of public benefit, but the Executive Council, to whom I submitted his request, did not accede to it, and, indeed, I gave him no hope that it would. I informed Mr. Savory that if on importation into Samarai the original cases were found to be empty the fact should be brought under the notice of the Sub-Collector, and in such case duty would only be paid on the quantity actually landed, but that I could not advise any remission of duty on what might be lost in store after landing, and that one way to prevent it was to keep it in locked tanks—as we kept the kerosene for the lighthouses in Barbados—and not in the original tins, which are very apt to get perforated by injury or rust. The Government experiences the same loss and inconvenience in this article.

11. The following day, Christmas Day, we proceeded up the river with the steam launch and three boats with stores, &c., and reached Tamata station the following evening, stopping at Apochi and Umi villages, at the latter of which we found the Rev. Mr. Hines, of the Anglican Mission, in a very enfeebled state of health from fever and weakness, and by Dr. Vaughan's advice I arranged to pick him up on the way down and take him in the "Merrie England" to Wedau. The mission have opened this station since my last visit. Pending the decision of the Executive Council in their application for the site (which has since been granted to them), Mr. Hines and Mr. Foote—a lay member who is with him—were living in small canvas tents erected on platforms near the bank of the river. I consider this to be a very unsuitable way of living for a European just come to this country in such a climate, in the wet season especially. Mr. Hines had evidently suffered severely, and was quite unfit for any work. Mr. Foote, who is younger and acclimatised, and whom we saw at Tamata, looked in good health. If the mission is to do useful practical work amongst these natives they must see that their agents live substantially—I do not mean luxuriously—and be housed well. The tax on the ordinary constitution precludes the same conditions of self-abnegation which a colder climate will support, and the most valuable and successful mission work is done by practical application of the ordinary rules of life.

12. We found that most of the villagers had gone to Tamata station for Christmas sports and merry-making, and we passed several canoes returning, their occupants in many cases adorned with their dancing masks and costumes, and huge feather head-dresses with tiaras or frontlets of the great beaks of the hornbill. The people are rebuilding on the river and planting large taro gardens for the supply of native food to the storekeepers and other employers of native labour, and many of them are now carrying to the goldfields—a three days' task, for which they receive 9s. cash. The wages on the river are now 1s. a day, and the people are getting to understand the use of English gold and silver coins. It was rather unfortunate that the Anglican Mission should have introduced new copper coins at this moment, for the natives misconstrued their value, and, when they discovered it, misconstrued the motives of the Mission. They are also puzzled to know why the storekeepers give them a much higher price for their labour or their produce than the Mission. I mention this because these matters, trivial though they are in our eyes, assume much larger proportions in the eyes of the natives, and lend a correspondingly increased importance to their dealings with others in everyday life. I was very much struck with the evident change of feeling on the river towards the Europeans and the Government. One saw no sign of fear or even shyness where but a couple of years ago murder, punishment, and flight were the common incidents of life. The cry of "Orokaiva" (peace) which succeeded the war-cry, and the silence of deserted solitude, has equally disappeared; it has become meaningless.

13. We found Mr. Armit, the Resident Magistrate, and his assistant, Mr. Elliott, at the station, both in good health. A great deal of clearing and planting has been done since last year, and there are more than 30 acres under cultivation in the Government Reserve, providing an abundance of excellent sweet potatoes, and materially lessening the cost of the keep of the station. Heavy rain fell after our arrival, and the stream came down in considerable force, causing us some anxiety for the safety of the launch and boats.

14. The next day His Honour the Judge held a Circuit Court for the trial of some civil appeal and criminal cases, and I had an interview with several of the diggers on the subject of the restarting of the hospital under medical supervision of the Government Medical Officer and a managing committee of themselves and one Government member. Dr. Vaughan has a scheme for establishing a central hospital at Samarai, and two smaller branch hospitals at the Woodlark Gold Field and here, which I think will work well. The miners are quite willing, they say, to support it, and the Government will contribute an amount equivalent to their subscriptions received. They informed me that the health of both Europeans and native labourers was much improved; the chief difficulty is the means of reaching the new places where parties have found fresh prospects. Many of the diggers had already gone there, and a number were waiting at the old Gira field for carriers to enable them to get on. There are two places, both on the tributaries to the Gira River, running from the spurs or off-sets of the Albert Edward Range. One of these, known as "Finegan's" or "Campion's," is miles beyond the Gira old store (twenty-four miles from Tamata). The other, twenty-five miles higher up the Gira, is twenty miles from the old store, or forty-four from Tamata. Mr. Armit had done what he could to improve the road to the old store, but the flood had washed away the logs and handrails by which the gullies and streams were bridged. I promised them to do what was possible to improve the road and carry it on towards the new finds, but explained that I could not spend any large sum on a road to a distant alluvial find until it was known if it was of a permanent character. The private reports I saw stated that there was nothing at present to warrant a number of men going there, although one or two had made rich finds. In the evening a number of men from Apochi village came with their chief. They danced, and the western policemen had one in return.

15. The following day, 27th December, I held an executive committee for the consideration of applications for land, and discussed further the question of dredging the Mambare and Tamata rivers for gold, for which numerous applications have been made. As soon as the new Regulations are finally passed and brought into effect, the river will be open for dredging, but fresh applications will have to be lodged under them, and a reasonable interval will be given before bringing them into force, so that those who are not in the Possession, and who are awaiting the decision of the Government, may have equal opportunity for lodging applications and taking up areas. In the afternoon some of us walked over to the Mambare, the road to which is about a mile and comes out on a pretty upper bend of the river. In the evening very heavy rain brought the Tamata Creek down again with great force, and the whaleboats had to be hauled inland. The stream flowed over its banks and flooded the gully underneath the magistrate's house. It will be necessary to rebuild this house next year, and an item will be placed on the next Estimates.

16. We left at 9 a.m. on 28th for our return down the river; picked up the Rev. Mr. Hines at Umi, and arrived at the ship at 5 p.m.; the river was high during the last part of the journey. Mr. Armit and Mr. Elliott came down, the former to take back the balance of the stores we brought for the station, and the latter to proceed on leave of absence for three months, his duties being in the meanwhile performed by Mr. T. H. Rohu, who was in charge of the hospital when I was last at the station. I left the new whaleboat, which was recently built at Brisbane, for the district with Mr. Armit. She seems to be a very good boat for the work, pulls and sails well, and carries a great deal without drawing much water. Both she and my new whaleboat, also built there, are a great improvement in these points on the former style of boat supplied to the Government.

17. I regret to report that Corporal Iawa, in charge of the detachment of armed native constabulary stationed at Mambare Bay, died on the night of our arrival there—the 23rd. Captain Barton found him suffering from fever and weakness, and decided to take him back in the steamer. He had turned out on parade when the detachment was inspected, but died that night, probably from the excitement caused by the visit of the contingent of constabulary from the "Merrie England," who camped ashore with his detachment. He was buried next morning in the little cemetery adjoining, where Mr. Shanahan, a former magistrate here, and another member of the force lie. He was a Western man from Turi-Turi and leaves a young widow (from Hula) and a child, whom we will take with us. It was a very sad case, for had he not succumbed to the sudden overstrain he would in all probability have soon recovered and continued his good service in the Government.

18. Mr. Russell and Mr. Armit were occupied the next morning with Busimaiwa on the subject of the purchase of land at the back for the purposes of a township, should, as is very probable, dredging the rivers for gold lead to a considerable development of the Mambare and Gira districts. There is a pretty ridge of hill about half a mile inland from the beach which would make a good situation for a township, and Mr. Russell intends to return here shortly and survey it. On their return Mr. Armit informed me that Busimaiwa had said that he and his people intended to move from the present village, Duira, which was very low-lying and wet, and resettle higher up the river, and that the Government could have whatever land it desired.

19. We sailed at noon that day, 30th December, and anchored that evening off the Opi, and went ashore to see our friend the chief, Tabe, whom we found at his village, Koila, where we were gladly welcomed. Tabe complained very much of the threats of a neighbour at Momonga, a village a little distance up the river, and requested that we would send and arrest him. I told him that I would inform Mr. Armit, the magistrate of the district, who would visit him and see into it, and it was arranged that Tabe should come back with us in our boat to the steamer, and I would give him the letter there, which he would send round by a canoe to the Mambare. He seemed somewhat apprehensive of what might happen to his messengers, as the Opi and Mambare people were enemies, but he was assured, now that Government was established there, they would be safe. I may mention that among some of the recruits

for the constabulary whom Captain Barton got at the Mambare was a son of [Businaiwa, whose name is Poruta, a very fair and nice-looking youth whom we took with us to Koila. He was an object of considerable interest to the female portion of that community. Dressed in his uniform, they no doubt regarded him much in the same light as the French girls did the handsome Prussian uhlan when they first entered the villages of Alsace and Lorraine.

CAPE NELSON.

20. We proceeded next day, Sunday, the 31st, to Cape Nelson, where I intended to select a site for the new Government Station. As I wished if possible to obtain the assistance of the Rev. Mr. Abbot, of the Anglican Mission, who could obtain interpreters for me, we went first to the southern part of the cape and anchored in one of the deep fjords or inlets which, like the intervals between the fingers of the human hand, divide the cape into long, high, and gradually narrowing promontories running up to the spurs of Mount Trafalgar.

21. The following morning, New Year's Day, 1900, I despatched Dr. Vaughan and Captain Barton in the steam launch to Wanigela, Mr. Abbot's station in Collingwood Bay, and they returned that evening with him and the village constable of the district as interpreter. When we were all together again our little distant band of the Queen of England's servants did not omit to do what honour we could to the New Year and to Our Sovereign, whose great reign has spanned the day and evening of one and the morning of another century.

22. We spent the next two days exploring the several large inlets of the Cape. Captain Harvey was able to take the steamer to their very heads, affording us a unique opportunity of most lovely and interesting scenery, and a very useful object lesson to the natives, who might well have imagined that they were secure in the fastnesses of their fjords, which might alone appear accessible to their canoes. The beauty of these "sounds," as they would be called in New Zealand (and to most of which Captain Feilden said they were superior) would take too long—and a better pen than mine—to describe. The deep blue of the unruffled water reflecting the high overhanging vegetation, the pretty, conical points or islets crowned with cocoanut palms and half-hidden huts, the high, sharp ridges of the mountain spurs beyond, and behind all, half-veiled in mist, the dark volcanic peaks of Mount Trafalgar and Mount Victory, which from here are nearly in a line, form a picture of which only an artist's brush could give a true conception.

23. We found a large population, wild and shy, but quickly amenable to pacific demonstrations. We got on friendly relations with all, and we visited some of the villages. At one I was informed that a man had twice raised a spear behind our backs, but one of the police with us signed to him to put it down, which he obeyed, and joined the others in tobacco-encouraged conversation with us. I was very glad to see and make friends with the three principal chiefs of the central and southern inlets, Tevari, of Iboru and Tainabuna inlets; Bubu, a very old man, and his eldest son, of the same name, of Tufi, and Jari-Jari, of Kofure Inlet. All these portions of the Cape belong to the large Kairi Kairi tribe, the northern portion to the Mokoru tribe, amongst whom Jaga appears to be the leading chief. Port Hennessey, or Koroto, on the north-west side, is part of his district. Further on, towards Porlock Harbour and the country behind it, are the Okein, of whom the Cape Nelson people seem somewhat afraid.

24. I finally decided on the promontory lying between Tufi and Kofure inlets; it faces due east, and has a small partially-wooded islet immediately opposite to it to seaward, which appears to have originally formed part of the point. A low shallow reef connects the two, and the point shows signs of attrition from the action of the sea. We found it impossible to identify the places on the charts, which vary considerably in nomenclature and detail. The fixed and relative positions of Cape Nelson Promontory, Hardy Island, MacLaren's Harbour, are totally different on two different charts we have. I do not venture to express an opinion, but I will have the place resurveyed as soon as an opportunity offers. We found a capital site, with a good freshwater supply and safe anchorage for vessels, and a good landing place for boats. Before leaving the Cape I went back there and informed the chiefs that I required the promontory for the Government, and would pay the owners for it, and that I should return in about three months, and establish a European magistrate and police there. They at first expressed anything but a desire for this, and urged several reasons against it, but I explained to them that what the Government had decided it meant to do, and that if they became good friends of the Government they would find it a very good friend to them, and *vice versa*, and they finally appeared to accept the inevitable, and make the best of it. I shall not be in the least surprised if they turn out to be perfectly friendly, and give us no trouble; or if they are quite the opposite and bring severe punishment on themselves. I have no intention of having any half-measures with them either way, or to leave them in doubt as to the power of the Government to befriend and protect them or to put them down if they resist it. I hope and believe that they will become as peaceable and friendly as any of the others now under its influence.

25. I had beforehand decided not to reopen the matter of Dr. Vaughan's recent affray with them. They had begun the hostilities, but had paid for it by the loss of the life of the man Dr. Vaughan first shot. I was glad to find from Mr. Moreton's inquiry and the information Mr. Abbot obtained that it was only one, not several as Dr. Vaughan reported. I found that Dr. Vaughan's and the natives' version differed very materially as to the scene of the affair; he places it considerably to the south, they to the immediate vicinity of the site I selected for the station. They were evidently relieved when I informed them that I considered the incident closed.

26. My meeting with the Chief Jari Jari was very peculiar. While the ship was going from Tufi Inlet to Kefori I took the steam launch and a boat, and, with Mr. Russell and Mr. Abbot and his interpreter, went to investigate some of the smaller inlets between, and while going up the offset of Kefori Fjord we saw a solitary man in a canoe who was sending far-penetrating cries of evident warning and alarm to those on shore. The interpreter said he was telling them that we were coming to fight them, and directing them to send their women and children away. He paddled on without appearing to be the least afraid of us. I decided to go alongside him and explain his mistake to him, and as we steamed near I heard cries from the hills from those who no doubt thought we were going to take him. On coming alongside I found him a pleasant-looking man, with an evident air of courage and

authority, and we all admired his pluck in his efforts to save his people without thought of himself. To my great satisfaction I found that he was the chief Jari Jari. We soon explained the position to him and made friends. I told him I should send a white officer among them, to whom he promised to be friendly. Captain Barton subsequently informed me that he had seen him alongside the ship at Tufa. He came aboard her later in Kefori, and I made him a special present.

27. We saw only one apparently hostile demonstration against us at Teneure Inlet, immediately to the east of Port Hennessy. Steaming up it we saw a single canoe with a man and woman in it paddling fast ahead of us. As we drew near the man landed his mate, who disappeared into the bush. We signed and called to him to come alongside, and that we were on a peaceful, not punitive, quest. He finally came off to us. Meanwhile, on the tops of the high grass ridges and rocks above us, we saw men with their long spears watching us intently. We got a little too near the mangrove-fringed bight of the inlet and grounded on the soft mud. We sent the steam launch, with a couple of armed police in case of accident with a warp ashore, and the ship came off directly, and we steamed out. Before we had gone far I saw a canoe coming after us, and stopped for them to come up, whereupon we made friends with them. We went into Port Hennessy for the night, and they came across the intervening ridges to us there, when they traded freely their native food for tobacco.

28. Leaving Cape Nelson on Monday, 3rd January, we dropped Mr. Abbot into his canoe, which just then turned up from Wangela. I am very much indebted to him for his assistance to us in every way. I have arranged with him to get the Wangela people to build three good native houses on the new site by the end of February, so that when I bring the new magistrate and his police they will have comfortable quarters to go into while preparing for the erection of the permanent buildings. The Cape Nelson people are evidently very poor house-builders, and Mr. Abbot has taught his people how to build good ones. They are, moreover, of the same large tribe as the Cape Nelson natives, and are friendly with them.

EASTERN DISTRICT.

Cape Vogel. 29. We anchored at Cape Vogel that evening. The Rev. Mr. Newton, from Wedau, and Mr. Tomlinson came off. Mr. Tomlinson reported that since my visit there, on 21st December, he had heard that the inland Biri-duma-duma people (whom I reported, in paragraph 5 above, having met on our way from the Mission House to the boat) had just then killed three persons of a neighbouring tribe who had seduced two of their women. He will send the particulars to Mr. Moreton, who will be instructed to visit the place and make inquiry. Two cases of rape and a stealing raid had also occurred in the neighbourhood since our visit.

Goodenough Bay. 30. The next day we followed the contour of Goodenough Bay, a long, deep bay running in from Cape Vogel, then turning at a sharp angle down to Bartle Bay. The total length of the two sides of the triangle which it forms is about 55 miles. The contrast between them could not be greater. On the north side the country is wooded, undulating, and park-like, sloping gently to the sea. On the other, high, bare, grassy mountains rise precipitously from a great depth, their sides furrowed with innumerable steep ridges, and the crests broken into a confusion of sharp peaks and precipices of most fantastic shapes. Behind them runs the great main range. The grass allows the bare rock to show. One sees a mass of water-worn pebbles and large stones cemented into conglomerate, and on opposite sides of some huge crater-like chasms the strata are obliquely inclined from each other, showing that some great convulsion has torn them apart. Mr. Winter thinks—and probably, as usual, correctly—that this formation is the upheaved bed of the sea, and that the softer part being gradually washed away by the action of rain has left the harder portions to form these scarred and broken ridges. We took soundings in one or two places where we thought we might find safe anchorages in the south-east season, and succeeded in getting two good ones. There are abundance of streams with broad boulder-strewn courses, which show how great must be the volume of water discharged by them in heavy rains.

31. We stopped at Boiana in the bay, where the Anglican Mission have a station under the charge of Mr. Buchanan, a layman recently come to the Possession. We landed, and visited the station and the villages around it. The houses are built on the black sea-worn gravel, the sides coming close down to the ground all round, “to keep out the devils” Dr. Vaughan informed me. They are clean, but they bury their dead amongst the houses, which the magistrate must see to. Probably when a cemetery is marked out by him there will be little trouble in getting them to make use of it. A murder which occurred here last April will require his attention also. I shall instruct Mr. Moreton to visit the coast all along to beyond Cape Vogel and settle these various matters before I return in March, when, if necessary, I shall be able to render him assistance. The people are suffering greatly here from scarcity of food consequent on severe drought. Mr. Buchanan informed me that the old men say they recollect two such occurrences before, but on those occasions they were able to eke out a scanty subsistence by eating their neighbours, whereas now they feel the pinch with increased severity.

Bartle Bay. 32. We arrived that evening at Wedau, and Dr. Vaughan and I went up to the Mission Station. We found Mr. Sage, a layman, in charge in the absence of the Rev. Mr. King, who was on his way back from Samarai, and the Rev. Mr. Newton, who, as before stated, we had left at Cape Vogel. We left the Rev. Mr. Hinds here in good hands, already looking much the better since his rescue from the Mambare fever and his stay on board. The ship went round to anchor at Wamira, whither Dr. Vaughan and I followed in the boat, and visited Miss Murray, in charge of the Mission Station there. Her brother, the Rev. Mr. Murray, is still in Australia. Amongst the ladies at Wedau I met Mrs. Ivens, the wife of one of the Melanesian mission clergy in the Solomons, whose acquaintance I had the pleasure of recently making at Port Moresby when they were on their way through in the s.s. “Moresby.”

33. We left the next morning, the 3rd January, and stopped off Mr. Kennedy's plantation, where Mr. Russell landed to see him about some land matters. We proceeded to Taupota, where we found the Rev. Mr. King and Mr. Dakers, the layman in charge. I visited the school, and was glad to see how well the scholars looked, though they, with the whole district, are suffering from short supplies of food. Captain Barton got several recruits for the constabulary here.

34. From Taupota we crossed Goschen Straits to Sewa Bay, a little to the north of Cape Prevost Normanby Island. It is a magnificent sheet of land-locked water, about four miles at its longest and three miles at its broadest parts. Its mouth is almost closed by an island, at each end of which is a narrow entrance facing south and west approximately. We entered by the former, getting twenty fathoms in the passage, which is not more than 200 yards wide. The approach from seawards to it is marked by some outlying rocks, which show well above water. The bay is free from dangerous obstructions. We steamed round it, finding secure anchorages in ten fathoms at either end, and anchored at the northern one. The land to the south-east is high, completely sheltering the bay. The hills around are heavily timbered to the water's edge. There were a few huts in groups of two dotted about here and there. A few natives came off in canoes, and appeared quite friendly. From the number and extent of clearings for gardens there is apparently a considerable population located somewhere in the vicinity. It is possible that this might be a practicable site for the principal eastern township. If the harbour were on the mainland near Samarai, which is already too small for its population, it would be invaluable.

35. We left the next morning, 6th January, for Samarai, arriving there at noon. Finding a Samarai schooner on the point of leaving for Cooktown, I sent a telegram by her to Your Excellency reporting my arrival from the east and Mambare, the settlement of the Trobriand affair by Mr. Moreton, and my selection of a position at Cape Nelson for the new Government station.

36. Captain Harvey procured a diving dress and sent the ship's carpenter down to examine the copper on the ship's bottom, and replace any that might have been damaged by contact with the coral patch I have reported. I am glad to say that the carpenter reported that none was torn off or injured. It was important to ascertain this at once as it will be some months before the ship could go to Brisbane to be docked, and copper must be replaced or renewed at once in order to prevent damage to the hull by the sea-worm. The carpenter is allowed the usual diver's pay of £1 a day (or part of a day), which Captain Harvey informed me is the rate in Australia, exclusive of the hire of the dress.

I inspected the Government ketch "Siai." Captain Harvey informed me that she will require to be overhauled for repairs as soon as possible, and advised that she be sent to Port Moresby to be put on the slip there and repaired by the Government carpenter instead of at Samarai.

37. I received a numerously signed petition from persons who had lodged applications for dredging areas with the district wardens, asking that their applications might have priority over others. I replied that until there was a law sanctioning and legalising dredging here the Government could not entertain any applications, and that to do so would, as I have before said, be most unfair to those who have been told by the Government to wait till the Regulations are passed before making application under it. The petitioners were evidently placing dredging claims, on which several thousands of pounds must be expended before a dredge can be worked on them, in the same category as alluvial claims, on which anyone with a miner's right, a pick, and a tin dish can set to work. I have no doubt that they thought they had acted rightly in lodging applications, and that they looked forward to a fair gain when the real dredging men came on the scene. But I declined, in my reply, to go beyond the legal and equitable position of the case. Two of the petitioners called on me as a deputation—Mr Arbouin (manager of Messrs. Burns, Philp, and Co., at Samarai, who is largely interested in all mining developments) and Mr. Webster (manager of a gold-mining company)—to ask me to reconsider my decision. At the conclusion of our interview, Mr. Arbouin frankly told me that, having heard the other side of the question, he was satisfied that the view taken by the Government was a right one, and that he should tell the others so. Although a contrary expression of opinion would not have altered my view, I am glad of this incident, as there was a very strong feeling that the Government had acted hardly—some said unfairly—in the matter. But of this my mind was quite clear: it would have acted most unfairly and wrongly to have taken any other course.

38. Mr. Russell remained at Samarai to carry out some survey work, and we left for Port Moresby on the evening of the 9th, landing some returned carriers we had brought from the Mambare at their home in Baxter Bay, and arrived here on the 11th instant, having been exactly forty days on the whole cruise to the east and north.

39. As I informed Your Excellency by telegram from Samarai, I intend to despatch the "Merrie England" to Cooktown for stores after the arrival of the "Moresby," which is expected about 20th instant. On her return, I shall proceed to the west and visit some of the villages in the Gulf district.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

G. RUTHVEN LE HUNTE.

His Excellency The Honourable Sir S. W. Griffith, G.C.M.G.,
Lieutenant-Governor of Queensland.

APPENDIX D.

DESPATCH REPORTING VISIT OF INSPECTION TO THE NORTH-EASTERN DISTRICT OF THE POSSESSION, AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A GOVERNMENT STATION AT CAPE NELSON.

No. 28.]

Government House, British New Guinea,

14th April, 1900.

SIR,—I have the honour to report that I left Port Moresby in the s.s. "Merrie England" on the 30th March, for Cape Nelson, in order to place Mr. A. R. Monkton, the Resident Magistrate of the new North Eastern District, at the station to be established on the site I selected in January last, as reported in my Despatch, No. 1 of 16th January, 1900.

1. I was accompanied by His Lordship Bishop Stone-Wigg, who had returned from Australia in the s.s. "Moresby," on 28th March, Captain Barton, Mr. Monkton, and a detachment of fifteen constabulary for the new station.