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PAPUAN NATIVES.

A STUDY IN ANTHROPOLOGY.

BY AN ADELAIDE SCIENTIST.

"The Natives of the Purari Delta" is the title of a handsome volume, published by the Government Printer of Papua. The writer is Mr. F. E. Williams, and there is an appreciative introduction by the Lieutenant-Governor of the Territory (Mr. J. H. P. Murray, C.M.G.).

This valuable contribution to the anthropology of the Territory of Papua forms one of a series of studies on the anthropology of the territory which is being published by the Government. The author, who is a son of Mr. Williams, the well-known Adelaide architect, is a graduate of Adelaide University, and he holds the diploma of anthropology of Oxford University. His official position is that of Assistant Government Anthropologist of Papua.

In his introduction the Lieutenant-Governor states that the deltas of the Purari and of the neighboring Aird River are the most interesting parts of Papua from an anthropological point of view. He expresses regret that Mr. Williams was able to spend some time there before assuming his regular duties in the northern division. Mr. Williams commenced visiting the Purari Delta was to study manifestations of hysteria which had been prevalent in the neighborhood, and concerning which he wrote an interesting and useful work entitled "The Vailala Madness." The business of Mr. Williams's visit to the Delta was to report on questions of practical administration and to assist in dovetailing existing customs into the new civilisation. Mr. Murray himself has travelled in the Purari Delta, and he was struck by the strength of the social organisation which held together such large villages as Ukiravi, Iare, and Kainare. He was also impressed by the wealth of the eternal "Ravi" of Papua as displayed in the "Ravi." Mr. Murray describes, was probably instrumental in bringing about the complete abolishing of the sacred objects it contains. The most important are the wickerwork Ravis kept and the far out of the building, and by are known as Kalemnun.

Mr. Williams during his long stay in Delta not only gathered first-hand information of all the more important customs and ceremonies, but also gives a full insight into the every-day life of the primary Purari native. One interesting point is the tribute he pays to the Mission for its unequalled charity of the people of Purari. Mr. Murray accords the Mission a high place among the many good works written about Papua.

Mr. Williams himself declares that his work is purely descriptive, and it looks at the Purari Delta dealing with religious and ceremonial life, as the most important part of it. The work is of a comprehensive character. The author begins by dealing with geographical features, and goes on to treat of daily life and food, crafts, and personal matters. Then tells of the family, the "Ravi," river and land, and relations, inheritance, property, trade, the division of labor, and of tales. His modest estimate of his work is far from adequate. It gives its fascination or the wealth of information contained in it. The section dealing with religion and ceremonial life offers an immense field of knowledge and observation, which will long form the basis of future investigations, for Mr. Williams has studied the facts while the natives are very near their primitive condition.

The marvellous amount of information which Mr. Williams has collected and so attractively set forth, speaks eloquently of his industry, his powers of observation, and his skill as a narrator. There is hardly an essential fact which he has omitted concerning the natives, their habits, their beliefs, or their environment.

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The "Ravi" is the men's house, a long building, tapering from a spacious entrance to rear compartment which is low and narrow. Corresponding with the double or central posts there is a series of posts (large and small) which represent a drying rack. The remarkable wicker monsters (Kalemnun) usually associated with the Ravis are not the religious life of the Purari people the important feature is undoubtedly the "Ravi" themselves. They are huge wickerwork figures, clumsy quadrupeds with hollow, semi-tubular bodies and extended jaws. The largest are 20 feet length and stand 7 ft. high. They are figures of mystery to the women, and held illy, and are destroyed by the "Ravi." There is an ancestral fact that the thunder is caused by demons. Amongst the natives, I have heard, "Our ancestors believed this or maybe they were right, maybe not." Mr. Murray, in a sympathetic manner, when they go hunting, and there is a close affinity between each Kalemnun and the totem of the main tribal river. Many legends are attached

Book is profusely illustrated by photo which have a direct bearing on the the Purari Delta is the tract of sup country, some 300 square miles through which flow the several rivers which are virtually the the Purari. Practically all the are level. The bush consists pig and birds, while the rivers Crocodiles are a real

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there seems little doubt that in those parts most opened up during the last 25 years, a falling-off in the population, and that sometimes considerably has taken place. This experience is common where primitive people come in contact with white civilisation, and it is causing the authorities in the territory constant concern. Various causes are assigned for the decrease in the population. One is the number of childless marriages among the natives, and the number of families which have only one or two children. Large families are apparently uncommon. Insufficient care of mothers and higher infant mortality among children are also regarded as important causes of the loss of population. Prevalent diseases and troubles incidental to civilisation, the recruiting of virile men without their wives, thus removing the men from village life, and other causes tend against the proper development of native population. Perhaps the greatest cause is found in the fact that many of the old interests and aims have been destroyed, and the new interests have not yet sufficiently seized their minds to make it seem worth while to have a family. The Papuan is not possibly lost that sufficient interest and purpose that makes it worth while to live and propagate. The Papuan need a moral and economic impulse, together with proper medical care and instruction. Judge Murray sends on Papuan conditions need likely apply here. He says—"The birth-rate was probably always small; it is said to be much smaller than it was before we came. The reason for the small birthrate is, I suppose, the fact that neither men nor women want many children. The reason why they do not want children is, partly that they find them a nuisance, and partly that, in their present state of transition from a primitive to a civilised life to another, they do not exactly see what there will be for their children to do, and they do not realise how much so high will follow is not yet clearly realised. I think that a feeling of rather hopeless uncertainty has much to do with the small birth-rate, and that when it is removed the rate will increase." Dr. Rivers remarks that "one of the chief needs of Melanesia is that the native shall be given a real interest in the economic development of his country. There is no question that it is possible, even a fair chance he would take an important part in any organisation which has as its object the economic development of his country." Such movements have proved most effective in other parts of the world. In view of the interest of the native, missionary, Administrator, and trader becomes of vital interest to the life of these subject peoples, and the medical side of the work for the natives is of first-class importance.

Medical Problems.

The problems presented to the medical profession by the natives of Papua are quite unique, and in every way different to those experienced in white communities. Amongst civilised people the treatment of sickness is readily accepted, and very much desired by patients, but among native people it is precisely the reverse. They fear the treatment more than they do the disease itself, and would often sacrifice life rather than accept curative treatment at the hands of white Europeans. They look upon medical officers with the same suspicion as witches were regarded in Europe during the dark days of the middle ages. There is in the native no idea of application of superstitious confidence, fear, and the hostility which fear engenders, and this has carefully to be overcome before any progress can be made among the natives of the territory. Sometimes, when the case is desperate, they will come to the medical officer, and should the case not be cured the medical officer is held responsible for the death. It is generally necessary to gain the confidence of the natives in any new locality, and this is the prime requisite of any successful work. The medical staff has to go to the treated—the free kanakas, living in their own villages, and the contract labourers, working on plantations, different from one to three years, chiefly on the cocoanut plantations. The law makes strict provision regarding medical treatment for the latter, and each year organised medical patrols are stretching further and further into the bush, gaining the confidence of the people, and bringing assistance to the free kanakas, the religious missions assist greatly in the work among the free natives in their respective districts. The Department of Public Health consists of the Director of Public Health, four senior medical officers, four patrol medical officers, and 40 native medical assistants, sanitary inspectors, &c. In addition, there is attached a large and increasing body of native medical students, some of whom are stationed at hospitals, and others located in native villages; and it is the policy of the staff to take them in hand. As additional auxiliary forces on the side of life and health are the excellent medical services of the Administration Board and the unpaid assistance given by the Missions throughout the Territory. The Executive Council has one medical officer (Dr. Flood) and about 8 medical assistants holding certificates from the Director of Public Health. In addition to the above, every plantation owner is required to take a first-aid course and hold a first-aid certificate, or else provide a first-aid man or woman to look after the health of his plantation. In the Government service, a many-sided and efficient medical service has been built up for the care of the people.

Adelaide Medical Officers.

The Director of Public Health (Dr. R. W. Cilento), patrol medical officer (Dr. H. C. Hosking), and Dr. Clento (Dr. Flood are all old Adelaide residents, and in Dr. Cilento the Territory has a most efficient and vigorous medical director, whose whole heart is in the service of the native through his department. Dr. Cilento is also Director of the Australian Institute of Tropical Medicine, Townsville. He has had considerable experience in other tropical countries, including Fiji, Samoa, Malaya, Straits Settlements, Java, India, Ceylon, Egypt, United States, and Central America, as well as tropical Australia and the Australian Dependencies. He is the only Australasian who has ever acquired the Duncan or Kalomeda medals at the world competition, arranged yearly by the London School for Tropical Medicine. Dr. Cilento is also the author of several medical publications. Anyone knowing the vigor and effectiveness of the medical campaign in the Mandate, is convinced that there is a very effective head, controlling and directing this important branch of Australia's responsibility in these parts. The most dreaded of the medical service in the territory of New Guinea are the treatment of the sick and the prevention of epidemics of the diseases into the country. The Territory lies on the direct route between the infected coasts of the East Indies and Malaya, and is only a few days' steam from spots where plague, cholera, smallpox, and amoebic dysentery are always prevalent. Up to the present it has been impossible, by the strictest quarantine methods, to protect the territory from contamination by the plague. They were not so fortunate or efficient in German days when there were severe epidemics of smallpox, cholera, and dysentery, and numbers of natives died off, to quote a Sydney newspaper, "like rotten sheep." Although this took place nearly 20 years ago, faces can still be seen pitted by the ravages of the disease.

The Medical Policy.

The main guiding principal of medical policy is to bring the medical service to the natives, and upon this alone all effective work must be based. The income policy was to send out medical staffs with medicines to hospitals, willy nilly, all cases needing special treatment. This policy was certainly a regrettable one, as natives who saw their friends carried to hospitals never visited the medical officer, for that by force, sometimes to die, they grew to dread the medical patrols, and hide their approach in the jungle. The methods made the patrols useless, and tends away all the necessary feeling of confidence. The system at present adopted is guided by utilitarian principles rather than by idealistic considerations. When a patrol now enters a village its primary object is to win the confidence of the native. No natives are ever taken to hospital unless they volunteer to go. Wherever possible to do so spectacular cures are performed, as these necessarily appeal to the imagination of the native. For example, the disease of Framboesia is so hideously disgusting and deforming disease, with fearful suffering, that natives are the most readily yields to curative treatment, and spectacular cures of this disease by injection of a powerful drug are the medical department's best means of penetration into hostile or suspicious communities. Immediately after the injection is made and cured as if by magic, and the results are most impressive, and a fine piece of propaganda. The effect of this outcome is this is that the natives begin to ask for medicine and treatment, and it is precisely the attitude which medical staffs desire to develop. Last year 16,312 cases of Framboesia were cured. As a general principle the diseases of Papua which are readily curable, such as Framboesia are touched, and the consequence is that the natives begin to realise that European medicine as infallible in its curative powers. It is to be regretted that all cases cannot be treated in hospital, but year and full would be an unwise policy in the present state of the native mind, and its consequences would be that the work now being done. The doctor would get no further forward in the estimation of the natives, and the medical staffs would be treated by hands of cases in the future, which the present medical will bring within reach of the health officers. Natives are doubtful cases ask for medicine, and are willing to go to hospital, they are gladly taken, and if possible cured.

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SUCCESS OF ST. MARK'S COLLEGE STUDENTS.

Those who helped to found St. Mark's College at the beginning of the year will be interested to know that the recent University examinations have proved very satisfactory to the members of the school. Of eleven candidates, resident at St. Mark's, three gained first-class honors or credits, six passed in all their subjects, and two passed in all subjects but one. Amongst those who distinguished themselves particularly were Mr. L. F. Gasson, first-class honors in English literature, and B.A. Degree; Mr. R. Grill, LL.B. Degree; Mr. W. D. Walker, B.Sc. Degree, M.B., B.S.; Mr. A. Walkley, three credits, one in pure science and mathematics; Mr. L. A. G. Symons, two credits and two passes in science and mathematics.

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AUSTRALIA'S MANDATE.

THE MEDICAL CAMPAIGN.

By Rev. F. W. BRASHER.

No. VIII.

The greatest problem facing the Administration in the Territory is the appareal decrease in the native population—very definite in some parts, but in other parts not so certain. Two facts must be remembered. The first is the imperfect information as to the population in the early days, and the second the false impressions given, quite unintentionally by early observers, who from one cause or another, commonly over-estimated the population in the areas which they visited. When it is remembered that only a small portion of the country is under complete Government control, and that the calculations regarding the rest are based on estimates and often pure guesswork, it is easily understood how uncertain figures may be. From details gathered, however,

Reg. 1.12.25

RHODES SCHOLARS.

South Australia's List.

Twenty-three Rhodes scholars have gone to Oxford University from South Australia since the inception of the magnanimous scheme founded by the late Cecil Rhodes. Only two nominations were received for this year's scholarship, and no award has been made. A list of the previous Rhodes scholars for this State is as follows:—

1906, Norman Ly. Jolly, B.Sc., recently appointed Director of the Federal School of Forestry.

1905, Roy L. Robinson, B.Sc., engaged in scientific work in America.

1900, Walter R. Reynell, a medical practitioner in England.

1907, William Ray, M.B., B.S., a medical practitioner in Adelaide.

1908, Reginald J. Rudall, M.B., a member of the legal firm of Messrs. Rudall and Rudall, of Gawler.

1909, H. Kenneth Fry, B.Sc., M.B., B.S., a medical practitioner in Adelaide.

1910, Harry Thomson, LL.B., a member of the legal firm of Messrs. Varley, Thomson, & Evan, Adelaide.

1911, Cecil T. Madigan, B.Sc., Lecturer in Geology, in the Adelaide University.

1912, E. Britten Jones, M.B., B.S., a medical practitioner in Adelaide.

1913, Henry A. L. Rose, B.Sc., remained in England.

1914, Alan W. Morey, died serving his King and Country.

1915, Francis E. Williams, B.A., Assistant Government Anthropologist in Papua.

1916, Howard L. Rayner, in England.

1917, Hugh W. B. Cairns, B.B., B.S., at Oxford.

1918, Leonard C. E. Lindon, B.B., B.S., a medical practitioner in Adelaide.

1919, Ernest Howard, in England.

1920, Herbert I. Coombs, in England.

1921, Howard W. Florey, M.B., B.S., in England.

1922, Thomas Ashhurst, in England.

1923, Donald J. R. Sumner, M.B., B.S., in England.

1924, F. Lewis Thyer, M.B., B.S., in England.

1925, Myles L. Formby, M.B., B.S., in England.

1926, no award.

Reg. 1.12.25

ELDER CONSERVATORIUM.

An exceptionally interesting programme has been arranged for the final concert of the 1925 season, to be held in the Elder Hall, on Monday evening next. It will consist of a large number by the Russian composer, Michael Glinka. Prizes will be rendered by the student orchestra, under the baton of Mr. H. Foote. Immediately following this item, the director of the Conservatorium (Professor E. Harold Davies) will return to the vice-chancellor of the University (Professor J. Mitchell) the associates in music for 1925, and also the scholars who have been recommended for 1926.

A portion of the programme will be devoted to the selected number of vocal and instrumental items, which will be given by students of the Conservatorium. The keepsakes and tickets are available at A. Marshall & Son's, Gawler place.