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SECTION XXIX.

PAPUA (BRITISH NEW GUINEA).

§ 1. New Guinea.

1. **Geographical Situation of New Guinea.**—New Guinea, frequently described as the largest island in the world, lies to the north-east of Australia, between $0^{\circ} 25'$ and $10^{\circ} 40'$ S. latitudes, and between $130^{\circ} 50'$ and $150^{\circ} 35'$ E. longitudes. Its area is estimated as exceeding 300,000 square miles, the greatest length being 1490 miles and the greatest breadth 430 miles.

2. **Discovery.**—The island was probably sighted by Abreus in A.D. 1511. The first visit by Europeans was apparently either that by the Portuguese Don Jorge de Menesis on his way from Goa to Ternate in 1526, or that by the Spaniard Alvaro de Saavedra in 1528. In 1606 Torres, having parted company with De Quiros at The New Hebrides, sailed, on his way to the Philippines, through the strait which separates the island from Australia, and which now bears his name.

3. **Colonisation.**—Little progress was made for many years in settlement or exploration. First the Portuguese, and afterwards the Dutch, who to a great extent replaced them as the principal European traders in the East, seem to have jealously excluded other traders and adventurers, and to have kept the knowledge of their discoveries to themselves. The coasts were visited by Roda, Schouten, Lemaire, Tasman, Dampier, Torres, Bougainville, and Cook; but the difficulties of navigation, the savagery of the islanders, and the tempting fields for enterprise in the more temperate regions further south, diverted the energy of traders and voyagers. Forrest describes a voyage by himself in 1774. In 1793, New Guinea was annexed by two commanders in the East India Company's service. Since that date the Dutch have made extensive surveys of the western portion, and the British and Germans have occupied and colonised the eastern.

4. **Partition.**—These three powers have agreed to the partition of New Guinea, each having suzerainty over islands adjoining its own territory. The whole of the portion west of the 141st degree of latitude, comprising about 150,000 square miles, or nearly half the island, belongs to the Dutch. The eastern half is divided in almost equal portions between Great Britain and Germany, the area possessed by each (with adjacent islands) being about 90,000 square miles. An Anglo-German boundary commission is at present engaged in defining the boundary between the territories of the two nations. The Dutch colony forms part of the residency of Ternate in the Moluccas, and has not been extensively developed. The German protectorate, where considerable political and commercial development has taken place, includes the northern part of the eastern half of the mainland, known as Kaiser Wilhelm's Land, and the large islands of the Bismarck Archipelago and the Solomon Group, as well as nearly 200 smaller islands. The south-eastern portion of New Guinea, nearest Australia, is British, and a dependency of the Commonwealth of Australia.

2. The Australian Dependency of Papua.

1. Australian Dependency of Papua.—Surveys of the east coast of New Guinea by Stanley, Yule, Blackwood, Moresby, and others, brought home to Queensland, and to Australia generally, the danger to her commerce which would result from foreign possession of the islands and coasts opposite to Cape York, and from a hostile holding of the entrance to the splendid waterway inside the Barrier Reef. The mainland opposite the shores of Queensland east of the 141st meridian was therefore annexed by that colony in 1883; but the action was disallowed by the British Government. In 1884, however, a British protectorate was authoritatively proclaimed by Commodore Erskine over the region lying east from the 141st meridian as far as East Cape, with the adjacent islands as far as Kosman Island. In the year following an agreement with Germany fixed the boundaries between the possessions of the two countries, and to Great Britain was assigned the portion now known as Papua, lying between the extreme limits of 5° and 12° S., and 141° and 155° E. The British protectorate was subsidised by Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria, and lasted till 4th September, 1888, when it was proclaimed a possession of the Empire. Its constitution was then that of a Crown colony, in association, however, with Queensland. Administration was in the hands of a Lieutenant-Governor, aided by an executive and a legislative council, and advised by a native regulation board. Port Moresby, on the south coast, was made the headquarters of the official establishment; a supreme court was established there, and magisterial courts in the districts; and an armed native constabulary force, numbering 216 on 30th June, 1909, under a European officer, was instituted for the maintenance of order.

2. Annexation by Commonwealth.—The territory was transferred from Queensland to the Commonwealth by proclamation on 1st September, 1906, under the authority of the Papua Act (Commonwealth) 1905. It is now under the administration of the Commonwealth, but not included within it.

3. Physical Characteristics.—The British Territory of Papua lies wholly within the tropics. The northernmost point touches 5° S. latitude; its southernmost portion, comprising Sudest and Rossel Islands, lies between 11° S. and 12° S. latitude. It is separated from Australia by Torres Straits. The length of Papua from east to west is upwards of 800 miles; towards either end the breadth from north to south is about 200 miles, but about the centre it is considerably narrower. The territory comprises also the islands of the Trobriand, Woodlark, D'Entrecasteaux, and Louisiade groups. The length of coast-line is computed at 3664 miles—1728 on the mainland and 1936 on the islands. The total area is about 90,540 square miles, of which 87,786 are on the mainland and 2754 on the islands. From the eastern end of the territory rises a chain of mountains, which forms a great central ridge and attains its greatest altitude, as it extends westwards, in the Owen Stanley Range, the highest points of which are Mount Victoria (13,200 feet), Mount Scratchley, the Wharton Range, and Mount Albert Edward. The western end of the possession is for nearly 300 miles generally low and swampy for some distance along the coast. The whole territory is well watered. The great mountains and a great portion of the lower country are covered with forest. The islands are mountainous, and, with the exception of the low coral islands of the Trobriand Group, part of Murua, and a few others of small dimensions, principally of volcanic formation. The highest is Goodenough Island, 8000 feet. The largest rivers of the mainland flow into the Gulf of Papua. The Fly River, with its tributaries, drains an extensive area of the territory of the Netherlands, as well as the British. Its length in British territory is about 620 miles, and it is navigable by a steam launch for over 500 miles. Other important rivers are the Turama and the Purari. There are many excellent harbours.

§ 3. Population.

The total white population of Papua on 30th June, 1909, was 702, made up of 489 adult males and 182 adult females—adults being persons over 16 years of age, and 43 male and 38 female children. The following table gives the population of Papua for the last six years:—

WHITE POPULATION OF PAPUA, 1904 to 1909.

YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE.

1904.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.	1909.
478	542	687	690	711	702

It is not possible to make a reliable estimate of the number of natives, owing to the fact that much of the interior country is unexplored. It is generally assumed to be somewhere between 400,000 and 500,000. These speak many languages and dialects. The coloured population, other than Papuans, numbered 477 on 30th June, 1909. An Immigration Restriction Ordinance prohibits the immigration into the territory of persons who fail to pass the dictation test, or who are persons of bad character, or likely to become a charge upon the public. Exemptions may, however, be granted by the Lieutenant-Governor to persons of special skill whom it is desired to employ as overseers or foremen.

§ 4. Native Labour.

The rights of both employer and labourer are conserved by the Native Labour Ordinance. Service on the part of the native is voluntary, and he must be justly treated, and properly housed and fed. Employers may recruit personally, or obtain their natives through a licensed recruiter. Contracts of service must be in writing, entered into before a magistrate or other qualified officer, and the natives must be returned to their homes on completion of engagement. During the period of service the recruiter or employer is personally responsible for the native's welfare. Refusal to work after engagement, or desertion from service renders the labourer liable to imprisonment. On the other hand, a magistrate may terminate an engagement where unjust or harsh treatment by the employer is proved. The term of indenture must never exceed three years, and in the case of miners and carriers eighteen months is the limit, but re-engagements may be made. The magistrate must satisfy himself that the remuneration is fair, that the native is willing to undertake the service, and that there is no probability of unfair treatment or detention. Wages must be paid in the presence of an officer. A medicine chest, stocked with necessary drugs and first aid instruments, must be kept by all employers.

Just treatment, good food, and satisfactory remuneration for his labour has made the Papuan savage an excellent servant. With considerable natural aptitude and intelligence, he is able to understand readily what is required by his employer; consequently native labour is very largely engaged by the Administration for the construction of roads and public works, and by the private employer for the clearing and upkeep of plantations.

During the year ended 30th June, 1909, 4266 natives were indentured.

§ 5. Production.

1. **Papuan Products.**—The products of the territory are obtained from its agricultural, forestal, fishing, mining, and manufacturing industries.

2. **Agriculture.**—(i.) *Soil and Rainfall.* The physical features of Papua are favourable to agriculture. Rich soils at varying elevations, and heavy and evenly-distributed rainfall, have ensured success in cultivating almost every tropical product of value. The territory comprises immense areas of rich alluvial and volcanic soils along the coast, and equally fertile land at elevations up to 6000 feet. Splendid rainfalls are recorded, except over a belt of country which runs back from the coast to the hills, and which has its dry season from May to November. This “dry” area is admirably suited for the production of tobacco, fibres, cotton, etc. By anticipating and removing many of the pioneering difficulties the Government has made the task of the colonist an easy one.

(ii.) *Plantations.* On 31st March, 1909, there were 130 plantations. Agricultural settlement has been mostly in the Central and Eastern Divisions, though plantations are rapidly spreading throughout the territory. The total area planted was 7740 acres, or an average of 60 acres for each plantation. There are also large areas cleared ready for planting. The principal plantation industries entered upon up to the present are coconuts, rubber, sisal hemp, and coffee. Secondary agricultural industries are the cultivation of bowstring hemp, cotton, vanilla, kapok, cocoa, tapioca, cinnamon, tea, and tobacco. The following table shews the areas under the different cultures (exclusive of maize and vegetable products) on 31st March, 1909:—

	Acres.					
Cocoanuts	5,365
Rubber	1,702
Sisal hemp	382
Coffee	180
Other cultures	111
Total	<u>7,740</u>

(iii.) *Government and Native Plantations.* There are six Government plantations of coconuts and para rubber, with a total area of 239 acres. The natives are compelled by an ordinance to plant coconuts for food supply. It is estimated that the total area so planted amounts to 350,000 acres.

(iv.) *Government Nurseries and Experimental Stations.* Sylvicultural nurseries have been established with the object of supplying settlers with seeds and plants, which have been imported from the East and West Indies, Central America, tropical Australia, Ceylon, the Malay States, and the Solomon Islands. Attached to the nurseries are experimental stations, where the suitability of soil and climate for the different products are tested and correct methods of cultivation demonstrated. Four nurseries have been established, the total area being about 190 acres. It is proposed to appoint a tobacco expert.

(v.) *Indigenous Products.* There are many indigenous plants of great economic value. These comprise sandalwood and other timber trees, sugar-cane, cotton plants, rubber-both, vine, nutmegs, ginger, bamboos, palms, bananas, bread-fruit, edible nuts, sago-palms, fruits, and vegetables.

3. **Live Stock.**—On 30th June, 1909, the live stock in the territory consisted of 222 horses, 664 head of cattle, 42 mules, 5 donkeys, 36 sheep, and 550 goats. A Government stud farm for horse-breeding is contemplated and a site has been chosen. The introduction of rabbits, foxes, hares, and monkeys is prohibited.

4. **Forest Timbers.**—There is a large variety of useful timbers in Papua. Of 120 varieties that have been catalogued, 16 are adapted to resisting heavy strains, and are suitable for girders, railway waggons, etc.; 10 for railway carriage and coach building; 15 for joinery, lining, flooring, etc.; 14 for butter boxes; 5 for boat building; 4 for piles; and 15 for cabinet work. Sandalwood is indigenous. It is largely used for cabinet work, and santal oil is distilled from its roots. Ebony is also produced for export. Rubber is a promising industry. There are considerable areas of native rubber (*Ficus Rigo*), but the planters generally prefer the imported para rubber. Guttapercha is obtained from species of *palaquium*, which grow on the hills. Drugs, dyewoods, and spices are also obtained from indigenous plants.

5. **Fisheries.**—Pearl-shell fishing occupies an important place in the industries of Papua. A considerable number of luggers is licensed, but the returns are mostly credited to Queensland, whose boundary approaches to within a few miles of the Papuan coast. The species of tortoise which supplies the commercial tortoise-shell is also a native of the territory. Bêche-de-mer is found along the shores and reefs. There is a dugong fishery on the coast of the Western Division.

6. **Mining.**—(i.) *Variety of Minerals.* Minerals have been discovered in many places, and over an extremely wide range. Those discovered so far are—gold, copper, silver, tin, lead, zinc, cinnabar, iron, osmiridium, gypsum, manganese, sulphur, and graphite. Of precious stones, only the topaz and beryl have been obtained. Large beds of apparently good coal also exist.

(ii.) *Gold.* In 1878 gold, the existence of which in the territory had long been known, was unsuccessfully sought by a party of Australian miners. Ten years later the first field was discovered. The search has now spread over every division, and finds have been recorded wherever the explorers have gone. The quantity and value of the gold yield for six years are given below:—

GOLD YIELD, PAPUA, 1903-4 to 1903-9.

1903-4.		1904-5.		1905-6.		1906-7.		1907-8.		1908-9.	
Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value
ozs.	£	ozs.	£	ozs.	£	ozs.	£	ozs.	£	ozs.	£
23,360	84,930	22,729	82,736	24,227	87,869	16,103	58,886	14,557	51,024	14,710	51,108

Most of the rivers, with the exception of those flowing into the Gulf of Papua, have been declared open to gold-dredging, and good yields have been obtained from many of the rivers thus dredged.

The Gold-buyers Ordinance (Ordinance XVIII. of 1909) provides for the issue of licenses to buy gold, and imposes a penalty in respect to the purchase of gold by unauthorised persons.

(iii.) *Copper.* A rich and extensive copper field has been proclaimed, and about 30 square miles of it are being worked. There are indications that the mineral exists over a much wider region.

(iv.) *Other Minerals.* Some good samples of galena (sulphide of lead) have been obtained. Small quantities of cinnabar (sulphide of mercury), graphite (or plumbago), osmiridium (or iridosmine), zinc, native sulphur and other minerals are also found.

A mineral laboratory and museum has been fitted up, and is available to prospectors and others interested.

7. **Manufactures.**—The chief native manufactures are pottery, canoes, fishing nets, mats, shell ornaments, stone implements, and decorated gourds.

§ 6. Statistical Summary.

1. **Revenue and Expenditure.**—The revenue and expenditure for 1908-9, under principal heads, are given below; also a summary covering a period of six years:—

REVENUE OF PAPUA, 1908-9.				EXPENDITURE OF PAPUA, 1908-9.			
			£				£
Customs receipts			20,757	Lieutenant-Governor, Civil list			1,749
Postal receipts			1,701	Government Secretary's Dept.			2,666
Judicial fines and fees			446	Treasury & Postal Department			3,456
Land leases			347	Magistrates			5,727
Liquor licenses			307	Armed Native Constabulary			3,697
Native labour fees			648	Gaols			2,092
Sanitary fees			74	Lands Department			1,095
Timber licenses			280	Medical			1,576
Fishing licenses			58	Vessels and boats			9,867
Rubber collecting licenses			5	Survey Department			2,791
Bird collectors' licenses			15	Department of Agriculture, Mines, and Works			8,456
Sale of Government stores			306	Miscellaneous			4,341
Native hospital fees			151	Special hospitals			788
Sale of plants and seeds			178	Supplementary and unforeseen			4,691
Mining receipts			891				
Trading stations			67				
Proceeds sale of water			23				
Receipts from Curator of Intestate Estates			155				
Government slip dues, and services of carpenters			193				
<i>Merrie England</i> , refunds and earnings			240				
Printing office fees			42				
Prison receipts			64				
Pearl buyers' licenses			152				
Interest from trust funds			45				
Sale of forfeited allotments			60				
Appropriation of former years			217				
Money order commission			33				
Miscellaneous receipts			220				
Total			£27,706	Total			£52,992

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE OF PAPUA, 1903-4 to 1908-9.

Item.	1903-4.	1904-5.	1905-6.	1906-7.	1907-8.	1908-9.
	£	£	£		£	£
Revenue	22,227	19,274	20,236	21,813	26,019	27,706
Expenditure	35,492	36,534	38,350	45,335	48,525	52,992*

* Less Cr. Government Stores Expense Account, £1168.

2. **Imports and Exports.**—The value of imports and exports for six years is shown in the table below. The figures for 1907-8 and 1908-9 show considerable expansion in trade.

VALUE OF IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF PAPUA, 1903-4 to 1908-9.

Particulars.				1903-4.	1904-5.	1905-6.	1906-7.	1907-8.	1908-9.
				£	£	£	£	£	£
Imports	...	...	...	77,631	67,188	79,761	87,776	94,061	94,680
Exports	...	...	...	75,506	76,435	80,290	63,756	80,616	79,692
Total trade				...	...	...	...	...	...
				153,137	143,623	160,051	151,532	174,677	174,372

The principal articles of import are foodstuffs, which in 1908-9 reached a total value of £32,563. The chief other imports in that year were:—Drapery and clothing, £11,002; hardware and ironmongery, £9186; tobacco and cigars, £8477; wine, spirits, and beers, £3294; building material, £4089; and machinery, £2388. In each of the six years under review gold has formed considerably more than half the value of the total export. In 1908-9 the value of this metal exported reached £54,969. Other principal exports were:—Copper ore, £1340; bêche-de-mer, pearls, pearl and turtle shell, £3525; coffee beans, £325; copra, £13,376; sandalwood, £2701; rubber, £113; and natural history specimens, £626.

3. **Postal and Shipping.**—Considerable development has been shown in means of communication—the postal returns, and the tonnage of vessels cleared at Papuan ports, having lately largely increased. Particulars regarding postal matter are given hereunder:

POSTAL STATISTICS OF PAPUA, 1903-4 to 1908-9.

Year.	Letters.		Packets.		Newspapers.	
	Received.	Despatched.	Received.	Despatched.	Received.	Despatched.
1903-4	27,266	27,668	2,839	2,429	35,640	8,130
1904-5	32,653	32,675	8,678	2,369	40,885	9,798
1905-6	38,273	40,120	7,221	2,656	41,014	10,489
1906-7	49,541	41,036	7,487	2,581	38,374	12,846
1907-8	53,118	47,521	6,655	3,157	44,052	12,674
1908-9	57,055	51,269	8,606	3,997	48,070	14,320

In 1907-8 there were 1370 parcels received and 501 despatched; and 1566 received and 467 despatched in 1908-9.

The following table shows the number, tonnage, and nationality of vessels cleared at ports during the years 1903-4 to 1908-9:—

SHIPPING—FOREIGN-GOING VESSELS CLEARED AT PORTS OF PAPUA, 1903-4 to 1908-9.

Nationality.	Vessels.											
	Number.						Tonnage.					
	1903-4.	1904-5.	1905-6.	1906-7.	1907-8.	1908-9.	1903-4.	1904-5.	1905-6.	1906-7.	1907-8.	1908-9.
British	268	258	207	217	243	233	97,240	82,894	40,503	106,561	127,108	119,252
German	...	10	16	16	20	18	...	26,666	64,460	52,616	56,664	50,574
Dutch	...	...	...	...	...	18	...	...	...	...	...	54,396
Total...	263	268	223	233	63	269	97,240	109,560	104,983	159,177	183,772	224,223

§ 7. Land Tenure.

1. **Method of Obtaining Land.**—(i.) *The Land Laws.* The broad principles upon which the land laws of Papua are based are:—(a) No land can be alienated in fee simple; (b) the rental of the land leased is assessed on the unimproved value of the land, and is subject to reassessment at fixed periods.

(ii.) *Agricultural Lands (Class A).* The terms upon which the land may be leased are exceedingly easy to the settler. He can obtain a leasehold of the best class of agricultural land for any period up to ninety-nine years on the following conditions:—

- (a) Upon making application a small deposit fee, ranging from £1 for 100 acres or less, to £5 for 1000 acres, and £5 for every additional 1000 acres or portion thereof, is payable. This is returned to the applicant when, having accepted the lease, he has cultivated a portion of the land.
- (b) No survey fees are charged to the lessee, and no fee is charged for the preparation or registration of the lease.
- (c) If the lease is for not more than thirty years, rent shall be paid during the whole term at the rate of 5 per cent. per annum on the unimproved value of the land.
- (d) If the lease is for more than thirty years the rent payable is determined at 5 per cent. per annum of the unimproved value of the land, but no rent is payable for the first period of ten years.
- (e) The unimproved value of the land is to be appraised every twenty years during the currency of the lease, and the rent determined accordingly, but if on any appraisal the rent is raised by more than one-third, the lessee may disclaim the lease, and is thereupon entitled to receive compensation for his improvements.

The compulsory improvement conditions attached to agricultural leases are as follows:—

- (a) One-fifth must be properly planted with some approved plants within five years.
- (b) Two-fifths within ten years.
- (c) Three-fourths within twenty years.
- (d) During the remainder of the term three-fourths of the suitable land must be kept properly planted.

Provided always that, if at any time during the first five years of a lease it appears to the Land Board that reasonable efforts are not being made to fulfil the improvement conditions, they may recommend the Lieutenant-Governor to cancel the lease, and thereupon it shall be lawful for the Lieutenant-Governor, by notice in the *Gazette*, to cancel the lease accordingly.

All agricultural lands which have not been alienated by the Crown have been assessed under Section 13 of the Land Ordinance at an unimproved value of 5s. per acre. This appraisal definitely fixes all land rentals for agricultural lands for twenty years as follows:—First ten years, free; second ten years, 3d. per acre per annum.

The rental of agricultural leases for the whole term of ninety-nine years cannot exceed the following amounts, subject to the clause *re* voluntary forfeiture and compensation:—First twenty years—first ten years, *nil*, second ten years, 3d. per acre; second twenty years, 4d. per acre; third twenty years, 5½d.; fourth twenty years 7½d.; balance of lease, 9½d.

(iii.) *Pastoral Lands (Class B).* Pastoral land, suitable for cattle and horses, can be obtained in easily accessible positions. All these lands are well watered and clothed with blady kangaroo, crowsfoot, couch, scurvy, and other grasses. The carrying capabilities of this land are estimated at forty head of cattle to the square mile. Application, deposits, fees, etc., are similar to those for Class A.

The compulsory improvement conditions attached to pastoral leases are:—

- (a) Ten head of cattle, horses, asses, mules, or fifty head of sheep, per square mile must be on the land within five years.
- (b) Within ten years these numbers must be increased to twenty head of cattle or 100 sheep or goats to the square mile.
- (c) The land must be kept stocked to this extent for the remainder of the lease.

Provision for forfeiture of lease is the same as in the case of agricultural lands.

The rentals of pastoral leases for the whole term of ninety-nine years cannot exceed the following amounts, subject to the clause *re* voluntary forfeiture and compensation:— First twenty years—first ten years, *nil*, second ten years, 1s. per 100 acres; second twenty years, 3s. 1½d. per 100 acres; and increasing by one-third for every succeeding twenty-year period.

2. Land Tenures.—On 30th June, 1909, the lands of the territory were held as follows:—

	Acres.
Area of land held by the natives	56,580,491
Area of Crown land	1,000,864
Area of freehold land	26,442
Area of leasehold land	337,803
Area of territory	57,945,600

Since the operation of the Papua Act, there has been no private sale of land in the territory. The Government buys from the natives, and then leases to planters, who are forbidden to have direct dealings in land with Papuans.