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SECTION XXIX.

PAPUA (BRITISH NEW GUINEA).

§. 1. Situation and Settlement.

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 Dabreu in A.D. 1511. The first visit by Europeans was apparently either that by the Portuguese Don Jorge de Meneses 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 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. 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. Papuan Development.

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 to 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 between 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 185 in 1907, 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 within 11° S. and 12° S. latitude. 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 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.

4. Productions.—The chief native industries are the manufacture of pottery, canoes, fishing nets, mats, shell ornaments, stone implements, and decorated gourds, and the

growth and preparation of sago. Gold mining, bêche-de-mer and pearl-shell fisheries, and copra, are industries which engage the attention of Europeans. Extensive plantations of cocoanut palms exist. Tortoise-shell in small quantities is collected. Rubber is a promising industry, and large areas are being planted. Gutta-percha is obtained from species of *Palaquium*, which grow on the hills. There are considerable forest areas, yielding a large variety of valuable timbers. Small quantities of ebony and sandalwood are exported. Sugar-cane, sago, palms, and cotton plants also are indigenous, and of good quality. Trade is exclusively with Australia.

§ 3. Population.

The total white population of Papua on 30th June, 1908, was 711, made up of 511 adult males and 124 adult females—adults being persons over 16 years of age. In addition, there were 41 male and 35 female children. 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 souls.

§ 4. Statistical Summary.

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

REVENUE OF PAPUA, 1907-8.				EXPENDITURE OF PAPUA, 1907-8.			
£				£			
Customs receipts ...	...	18,206		Lieutenant-Governor, Civic list	...	2,185	
Judicial fines and fees ...	...	396		Government Secretary's Dept.	...	1,407	
Land sales and leases ...	...	571		Treasury & Postal Department	...	2,655	
Registration and survey of land	...	8		Magistrates ...	...	4,737	
Liquor licenses ...	...	230		Armed Native Constabulary ...	...	3,259	
Fishing licenses ...	...	82		Gaols ...	...	2,152	
Pearl buyers' licenses ...	...	300		Lands Department ...	...	2,971	
Timber licenses ...	...	74		Medical ...	...	1,350	
Mining receipts ...	...	634		Vessels and boats ...	...	8,143	
Postage receipts ...	...	2,340		Department of Agriculture, Mines, and Works ...	...	4,871	
Native labour fees ...	...	616		Miscellaneous ...	...	3,158	
Sanitary fees ...	...	74		Special hospitals ...	...	598	
Printing office fees ...	...	27		Supplementary and unforeseen	...	11,039	
Miscellaneous receipts ...	...	1,670					
S.S. <i>Merrie England</i> , refunds and earnings ...	...	541					
Insurance, loss of <i>Merrie Eng- land</i> launch ...	...	250					
Total ...	...	£26,019		Total ...	...	£48,525	

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE OF PAPUA, 1897-8 to 1907-8.

Item.	1897-8.	1898-9.	1899- 1900.	1900-1.	1901-2.	1902-3.	1903-4.	1904-5.	1905-6.	1906-7.	1907-8.
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Revenue ...	10,281	11,683	13,835	15,115	16,868	19,107	22,327	19,274	20,236	21,813	26,019
Expenditure ...	23,153	24,443	23,601	32,089	38,467	37,577	35,492	36,534	38,350	45,335	48,525

2. **Imports and Exports.**—The value of imports and exports for eight years is shewn in the table below. In 1906-7 the importation was very large, while the exports were below the average. The figures for 1907-8 shew great trade development:—

VALUE OF IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF PAPUA, 1900-1 to 1907-8.

	1900-1.	1901-2.	1902-3.	1903-4.	1904-5.	1905-6.	1906-7.	1907-8.
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Imports ...	71,618	70,817	62,367	77,631	67,188	79,761	87,776	94,061
Exports ...	49,659	68,300	62,881	75,506	76,435	80,290	63,756	80,616
Total trade	121,277	139,117	125,248	153,137	143,623	160,051	151,532	174,677

The principal articles of import are foodstuffs, which in 1907-8 reached a total value of £33,440. The chief other imports in that year were:—Drapery and clothing, £9300; hardware and ironmongery, £10,774; tobacco and cigars, £7653; wine, spirits, and beers, £2297; building material, £1902; and machinery, £1966. In each of the seven years under review gold has formed considerably more than half the value of the total export. In 1907-8 the value of this metal exported reached £52,837. Other principal exports were:—Copper ore, £2497; béche-de-mer, pearls, pearl and turtle shell, £5115; copra, £7515; sandalwood, £6346; rubber, £483; and natural history specimens, £3661.

3. **Postal and Shipping.**—Considerable development has been shewn in means of communication, the postal returns, and the tonnage of vessels cleared at Papuan ports, having lately largely increased.

POSTAL STATISTICS OF PAPUA, 1900-1 to 1907-8.

Year.	Letters.		Packets.		Newspapers.	
	Received.	Despatched.	Received.	Despatched.	Received.	Despatched.
1900-1 ...	21,372	19,558	1,020	1,503	18,191	4,723
1901-2 ...	25,471	25,980	1,507	2,002	19,558	5,089
1902-3 ...	28,251	26,863	1,735	1,366	30,711	7,878
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	41,086	7,487	2,581	38,374	12,846
1907-8 ...	53,118	47,521	6,655	3,157	44,052	12,674

In addition there were 1370 parcels received and 501 despatched in 1907-8.

SHIPPING—FOREIGN-GOING VESSELS CLEARED AT PORTS OF PAPUA, 1902-3 to 1907-8.

Nation-ality.	Vessels.											
	Number.						Tonnage.					
	1902-3.	1903-4.	1904-5.	1905-6.	1906-7.	1907-8.	1902-3.	1903-4.	1904-5.	1905-6.	1906-7.	1907-8.
British	225	268	258	207	217	243	50,890	97,240	82,894	40,503	106,561	127,108
German	...	...	10	16	16	20	...	...	26,666	64,480	52,618	56,664
Total...	225	268	268	223	233	263	50,890	97,240	109,560	104,983	159,177	183,772

§ 5. 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.* 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 to £10, according to the area, is payable. This is returned to the applicant if he accepts the lease he has applied for.
- (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 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, and no more than sixpence per annum an acre during the second period of ten years.
- (d) The unimproved value of the land is to be appraised every twenty years during the currency of the lease, and the land 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 follow:—

- (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 Act at an unimproved value of 5s. per acre.

All pastoral lands have been assessed at 1s. per acre unimproved value.

This appraisalment definitely fixes all land rentals for twenty years as follows:—

Agricultural land (Class A).—first ten years, free; second ten years, 3d. per acre per annum.

Pastoral leases (Class B).—First ten years, free; second ten years, 25s. per 1000 acres.

If during the second twenty-year period of the lease the appraisalment is increased by more than one-third of the existing rental, the lessee may disclaim the lease, and is entitled to receive compensation for his improvements.

(iii.) *Pastoral Lands.* 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, crowfoot, couch, and scurvy grasses. The carrying capabilities of this land are estimated at forty head of cattle to the square mile. Five head of cattle, horses, asses, mules, or fifty head of sheep or goats, per square mile must be on the land within five years. Within ten years these numbers must be increased to ten head of big cattle or 100 sheep or goats to the square mile, and the land must be kept stocked to this extent for the remainder of the lease.