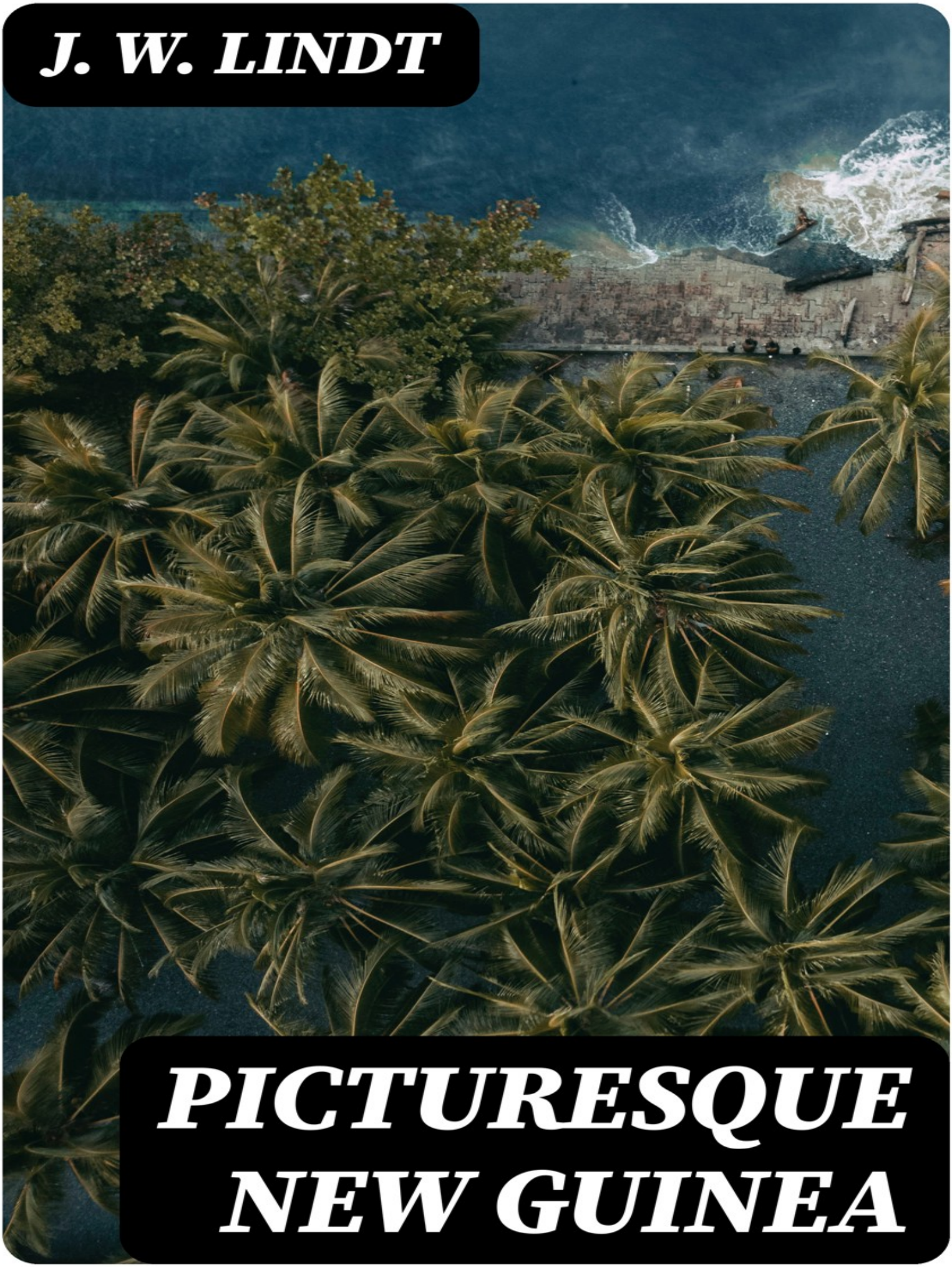
J. W. LINDT



PICTURESQUE NEW GUINEA

J. W. Lindt

Picturesque New Guinea

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(Brisbane Daily Observer, September 17th, 1886.)

THE END

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PREFACE

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For years past, when perusing the account of exploring expeditions setting out for some country comparatively unknown, I always noticed with a pang of disappointment that, however carefully the scientific staff was chosen, it was, as a rule, considered sufficient to supply one of the members with a mahogany camera, lens, and chemicals to take pictures, the dealer furnishing these articles generally initiating the purchaser for a couple or three hours' time into the secrets and tricks of the "dark art," or when funds were too limited to purchase instruments, it was taken for granted that enough talent existed among the members to make rough sketches, which would afterwards be "worked up" for the purpose of illustrating perhaps a very important report.

Sir Samuel Baker remarks, in the Appendix to one of his Works, that a photographer should accompany every exploring expedition. The only one I ever heard of being furnished with that commodity was H.M.S. "Challenger," on her scientific cruise round the world, but I remember reading in the "Photographic News" the complaint of a gentleman, that so many years had already passed, and still there was no sign of the "Challenger" photographs ever becoming accessible to the public.

How this is, or why it should be so, is difficult to tell, but as yet no book of travel, entirely illustrated by artistic views and portraits taken direct from nature, has come under my

notice. According to my belief, there can be but one reason for it, and that is the difficulties encountered to find a competent artist photographer willing to join an expedition are greater than those necessary to secure the services of someone who can sketch, and hence artistic photography, the legitimate and proper means to show friends at home what these foreign lands and their inhabitants really look like, is set aside for drawings, either partly or purely imaginary.[*]

[* Though this book was written and the pictures taken under this impression, I found, on arrival in England, that several works of travel illustrated by photography have been published. I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. John Thomson, F.R.G.S., of Grosvenor Street, who showed me his magnificent and interesting work on "China and its Peoples." I examined also Sir Lepel Griffin's clever work, "Famous Monuments of Central India," and a little book on Tahita, by Lady Brassey, ably illustrated by Col. H. Stuart-Wortley. The illustrations in these Works consist without exception of photographs printed in autotype, and the inspection of these books and their pictures at once put me face to face with the countries described and their inhabitants, far more vividly than could works illustrated by wood engravings, where, for truth, the reader depends firstly on the individual conception of the artist, and secondly on the skill of the engraver.]

Ever since I first passed through Torres Straits in September, 1868, I conceived an ardent desire to become personally acquainted with those mysterious shores of Papua and their savage inhabitants. I travelled this route on board a Dutch sailing vessel, and weird indeed were the

tales that circulated among the crew concerning the land whose towering mountain ranges were dimly visible on our northern horizon. But years passed by, and time had almost effaced the impression, until I made the acquaintance of Signor L. M. D'Albertis, the intrepid Italian, who explored the Fly River higher up than anyone has ventured since. This occurred in 1873. Signor D'Albertis visited the Clarence River, in New South Wales, where I lived for many years, by way of recruiting his health after his voyages to N. W. New Guinea. How I fretted that circumstances prevented me from accompanying him on his first trip in the "Newa," and how I envied young Wilcox (the son of a well known Naturalist residing on the Clarence) being engaged as assistant collector, no one knows but myself. Again some years elapsed, and when next I met D'Albertis it was at Melbourne, in 1878. His personal reminiscences, and subsequently the reading of his interesting work, powerfully awakened my desire again for a trip to New Guinea. But circumstances were still adverse, and it was only when rumours of annexation became rife, and the Rev. Mr. Lawes visited Melbourne early in 1885, that the prospect of visiting the land of my dreams began to assume a more tangible form.

Mr. Lawes, hearing me speak so enthusiastically about my long cherished desire, assured me of his readiness to assist, and of hospitality, should I come to Port Moresby. The reverend gentleman's kindness and goodwill were amply proved, as my narrative will show, but be it here recorded, with due deference, I believe he doubted at that time the likelihood of ever seeing me sit at his table in the broad

verandah of the mission house, listening to Mr. H. C. Forbes' reminiscences of the interior of Sumatra (the exhumation and ultimate fate of "that Kubu woman" to wit).

A month or so after Mr. Lawes' departure from Australia, the papers reported the intelligence that Sir Peter Scratchley had been appointed High Commissioner for the Protectorate of New Guinea, and that a properly equipped expedition was to be sent to investigate the newly acquired territory. Now or never was my chance. Colonel F. T. Sargood kindly introduced me to Sir Peter, I offered to accompany the expedition as a volunteer, finding myself in every requisite, and giving copies of the pictures I should succeed in taking in return for my passage and the necessary facilities to develop and finish my negatives on board.

My offer was accepted by Sir Peter, and on July 15th, 1885, I received notice to join the "Governor Blackall," the vessel selected for the expedition, then lying in Sydney Harbour.

The command of the "Governor Blackall" was entrusted to Captain T. A. Lake, the senior captain of the A. S. N. Company's fleet, who, throughout the voyage, sustained his high character as a skilful navigator among coral reels, and proved himself a man of tact and decision, qualities that were more than once put to the test during our cruise. Before launching into the description of the expedition, I wish to record here my deep sense obligation to the gentlemen who kindly aided in the production of this Work by contributing chapters of valuable information. In the first place my thanks are due to the Rev. James Chalmers, who kindly continued the thread of the narrative, and brought it

to a conclusion, when I was obliged to leave the expedition at Samarai (Dinner Island) about a month before the lamented death of Sir Peter Scratchley. I am also greatly indebted for his interesting paper on "The Manners and customs of the Papuans." On that subject no better source of information than him could be found. To Mr. G. S. Fort I offer my best thanks for presenting me with his Official Report of the Expedition. The same recognition is due to Sir Edward Strickland, the President of the Royal Geographical Society of Australasia, for the permission to embody in my journal the interesting account of the "Bonito" Expedition, undertaken under the auspices of the Royal Geographical Society almost simultaneously with ours. My appeal to Mr. Edelfeld, now exploring in Motu Motu, met with a ready response from that gentleman in the shape of travelling experiences in the neighbourhood of Mount Yule.

Last, but not least, I have to thank my learned countryman and friend. Sir Ferdinand Baron Von Müller, the eminent Botanist, for the promise of a valuable essay from his pen, although, unhappily, the pressure of departmental work on his hands is at present so severe that his contribution cannot be ready for this, the first edition of my book; and I cannot conclude without acknowledging my indebtedness to Commander H. Field, of H. M. Surveying Schooner "Dart," and to his able officers, Lieutenants Messum and Dawson, not forgetting Dr. Luther, who, with their uniform kindness and courtesy, made my return journey on board that vessel a perfect pleasure trip.

J. W. LINDT.

Melbourne, 1887.

P.S.--With regard to the publication of this Work much credit is due to Mr. Bird, of the Autotype Company. Arriving as I did, a stranger in London, this gentleman materially lightened my labours by introducing me to Messrs. Longmans, the publishers, and contributing his experience freely. My thanks are also due to Mr. Sawyer and his clever staff, for the masterly reproduction of my pictures, upon which the success of the book mainly depends.

02. Portrait of Author, J. W. Lindt, F.R.G.S.

CHAPTER I. HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF NEW GUINEA.

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Geographical Positions—First Discoveries—First Explorers—The Missionaries—Dutch Settlement—English Surveys of the Coast—Attempts of Australian Settlement—Annexation by Queensland—Refusal of Imperial Sanction—Australian Colonists Remonstrate—Proposal of a British Protectorate—Annexation by Great Britain—Dissatisfaction of the Colonists—Announcement of German Occupation—Arrival of Sir Peter Scratchley—His first Proceedings and Premature Death—Appointment of a Successor—The German Settlement

Geographical Position.

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New Guinea, the latest addition to the magnificent Colonial empire now owned by Great Britain, is the largest island on our globe, counting Australia as a sixth continent. It lies to the north of Australia, from which it is separated by a narrow strait named after Torres, a Spanish navigator, who, in 1606, sailed through it on his way from the New Hebrides to the Philippine Islands.

First Discoverers.—It is doubtful whether anything relating to this large island was known to the European world before the time of Columbus. No mention of it is found in the works of any of the ancient geographers. The earliest reference to it that can be traced is given in the narrative of their voyages and adventures left by two Portuguese

navigators, Francisco Sorrani and Antonio d'Abreu, who in 1511 saw and described a portion of the south-west coast. In the absence of any fuller information on the subject, the honour of discovering New Guinea falls to these two adventurers. Fifteen years later another Portuguese navigator, Don Jorges Menenes, was voyaging Malacca to the Moluccas, and encountering a storm, was driven out of his course to the eastward, and came upon the great island, where, finding a safe and convenient harbour, he remained for a month to refit his shattered vessel. He named the island Papua, a Malayan expression for black or curly hair, which is a very marked feature of the native population. Under that name New Guinea is shown on a chart published in Venice in 1554. Another Portuguese mariner visited the island in 1528, and gave it the high sounding title of the Isla del Oro, or Island of Gold, from a belief that it abounded in the precious metals. But the honour of giving the island the name it will bear permanently falls to Inigo de Retez, a Spanish sailor, who in 1545 sailed 250 miles along the northern coasts, and, thinking that he saw in the appearance of the country a resemblance to the Guinea coast on the west of Africa, called it Nueva Guinea. The next we hear of the place is an account given by Torres of the southern portion and its inhabitants, whom he describes as being "dark in colour, naked except having some clothing round the middle, and armed with clubs and darts ornamented with tufts of feathers." Schouten, a Dutch navigator, discovered some volcanoes in the island in 1616. Twenty-seven years later Abel Janez Tasman, the greatest of the Dutch navigators and the discoverer of Tasmania (which

he named Van Dieman's Land) and of New Zealand, visited and minutely examined a portion of the west coast. On the New Year's Day of the year 1700, William Dampier, the prince of English maritime adventurers, voyaging in quest of new lands, sighted New Guinea, and never left it until he had sailed completely round it, although his vessel (named the "Roebuck") was both old and leaky. His account of the place and people is very racily written, and was probably read by De Foe before he wrote "Robinson Crusoe." "The natives," he says, "are very black; their short hair is dyed of various colours—red, white, and yellow: they have broad, round faces with great bottle-noses, yet agreeable enough, except that they disfigure themselves by painting and wearing great things through their noses, as big as a man's thumb and about four inches long. They have also great holes in their ears, wherein they stuff such ornaments as in their noses." The illustrious navigator, Cook, rediscovered Torres Strait in 1772, and added much to the previous knowledge of the island and its inhabitants. In 1828 the Dutch took possession of the western portion and attempted to make a settlement there, but failed. In 1843 Captain Blackwood, in H.M.S. "Fly," discovered the river, which he named after his ship. Subsequently, Captain Owen Stanley, in the "Rattlesnake," made a rough survey of a great portion of the coast, and in 1873 Captain Moresby, in the "Basilisk," completed our knowledge of the external form and dimensions of New Guinea.

First Explorers.—Up till very recently the only information possessed by the civilised world respecting the island and its inhabitants amounted to little more than that the people

were negroes, and that beautiful birds of paradise were to be found there. Alfred Wallace, the distinguished naturalist, was the first European that gave the world a larger knowledge of the native population and the natural productions. After him came Dr. Mickluoho Maclay, in 1871. He lived with the natives for fifteen months, enduring the severest privations and risking his life in the cause of science. But amongst the explorers of New Guinea pre-eminence must be given to Signor D'Albertis, who, in 1872, in company with his fellow-countryman. Dr. Beccari, penetrated into the interior in many directions, and made himself intimately acquainted with the names and habits of the natives. At various subsequent times Signor D'Albertis continued his explorations and observations, the results of which he has given to the world in two handsome volumes beautifully illustrated. This distinguished Italian is a born explorer. He is possessed with the true spirit of martyrdom in the cause of science. His pluck, perseverance and patience, seem only to grow with the difficulties he has to encounter, and the obstacles he has to overthrow. His personal privations and sufferings wring from him no complaints; and he merely records them in his simple matter-of-fact manner as among the facts and incidents of the time, and as affording an insight into the ideas and ways of the natives in view of such circumstances. A German explorer, Dr. A. J. Meyer, made some important additions to our knowledge of the country by explorations, vigorously prosecuted in 1873. Dr. Beccari, alone, went on an expedition into the interior in 1875, and returned with a

large and valuable collection of specimens of the flora and fauna of the island.

The Missionaries.—Those active pioneers of civilisation, the English missionaries, have not neglected New Guinea; but their work amongst the natives has been seriously hindered by the unhealthiness of the country and climate. The Rev. S. McFarlane was appointed by the Directors of the London Missionary Society to establish a mission in the island in 1870. With him was associated the Rev. Mr. Murray; and subsequently the Rev. W. G. Lawes and the Rev. James Chalmers joined the mission. The labours of these gentlemen amongst the native population have been of a quite heroic kind; and to them is mainly due the merit of taking possession of the country for the British people. At the hourly risk of their lives they have carried on their apostolic labours, facing a thousand dangers, overcoming a thousand difficulties, unwearied in their high purpose of civilising and Christianising this savage people. They have established primary school training institutions, for native teachers, schools for teaching the industrial arts, mission stations at many points along the coast, and churches with regular congregations and enrolled members. A real triumph of missionary achievement was witnessed at the mission station on Murray Island on the 14th May, 1885, when the 15-ton mission yacht, Mary, was launched from the yard of the Papuan industrial school, amid great feasting and rejoicing. The wood for the little vessel had been cut, and the building of it was executed by the hands of the pupils of the school under the supervision of the Rev. Mr. McFarlane.

The yacht is intended for missionary work in and about the Fly River.

03. Portraits of the Revs. S. McFarlane, G. W. Lawes, and James Chambers

Dutch Settlement.—So far as is known, the Dutch, as already stated, were the first European nation to attempt settlement in New Guinea. In 1828 Captain Steenboom, in the ship "Triton," landed on the island and took possession in the name of the Dutch Government of the territory extending from the 141st parallel of E. longitude westward to the sea. He built a fort at a place he called Triton Bay, on the N.W. coast, the scenery around which was very beautiful. But (as a Dutch gentleman at Macassar told Wallace) the officer left in charge of the settlement, finding the life there insufferably monotonous, killed the cattle and other live stock, and reported that they had perished through the unhealthiness of the place, and that, besides, the natives were very fierce and intractable. The settlement at Triton Bay was on this account abandoned. Seven years

later another Dutch commander surveyed what was then called the Dourga River, and found it to be a strait, ninety miles long, dividing Frederic Henry Island from the mainland. The Dutch still hold nominal possession of the territory proclaimed by Captain Steenboom, but practically the acquisition is of no value to them.

English Surveys of the Coast.—The southern shores of New Guinea have been mostly surveyed by British ships. Captain Blackwood, in H.M.S. "Fly," discovered in 1843 the river which he named after his ship. The next English commander that surveyed part of New Guinea was Captain Owen Stanley, who, in 1847, in H.M.S. "Rattlesnake," sketched a large extent of the coast and marked off a number of mountains, one of which, called after him, is over 13,000 feet high. In 1873 Captain Moresby, in the "Basilisk" discovered and named Port Moresby, and determined the form of the south-eastern extremity of the island. Hoisting the Queen's flag he took possession in her Majesty's name, by right of discovery, of Moresby Island and the surrounding archipelago.

Attempts at Australian Settlement.—The Australian colonists have not been wholly indifferent to the probable advantages to be gained from effecting a settlement in New Guinea. During the past twenty years several expeditions have been either planned or partially executed with that object, and the Imperial Government has been again and again asked to take action for the establishment of a British occupation of the territory. To these requests unfavourable answers were given, although it was known at the Colonial Office that so long back as 1793 the island had been

formally annexed to Great Britain. In that year, two commanders in the service of the East India Company, William Bampton, Master of the "Hormuzeer," and Matthew B. Alt, Master of the "Chesterfield," were exploring in these waters; and on the 10th July an armed party of forty-four men from the two vessels, under the command of Dell, chief mate of the "Hormuzeer," landed on Darnley Island in Torres Strait, and took possession of that island and the neighbouring island of New Guinea in the name of His Majesty King George the Third. All the formalities customary on such occasions—hoisting the union jack, reading the proclamation, and firing a volley—were duly observed on this occasion. Nevertheless, it was not until nearly a century had elapsed that the imperial authorities at Downing Street condescended to take notice of the fact that there was such a place as New Guinea in existence.

Annexation by Queensland.—The fact was forced upon their attention by the spirited action of the Premier of Queensland, Sir Thomas McIlwraith, who, weary of the rebuffs repeatedly inflicted on the Australian colonists by the colonial office in regard to this matter, patriotically resolved upon annexing New Guinea on his own authority. Accordingly he instructed Mr. H. M. Chester, at that time police-magistrate at Thursday Island, to proceed to the great island, and take possession in the name of Her Majesty the Queen, of all that portion of it which was not claimed by the Netherlands Government. In obedience to these instructions Mr. Chester sailed for New Guinea; and, on the 4th April, 1883, he performed the ceremony of formal annexation of all that part of the territory lying between the

141st and the 155th meridians of east longitude. These facts were duly reported to the Imperial authorities, and strong representations were made to them by the Governments of the United Colonies to induce them to endorse with their approval the action of the Queensland Premier.

Refusal of Imperial Sanction.—But Lord Derby, who then held rule in the Colonial Office, was adverse. He addressed a despatch to the officer administering the Government of Queensland, Sir A. H. Palmer, formally refusing to sanction the act of annexation. At this time it was well known that Germany was meditating the project of taking possession of a part, or the whole of New Guinea; and yet Lord Derby affirmed that there appeared to be no reason for supposing that any Foreign Power harboured such a design. His lordship objected, moreover, to the unnecessarily vast extent, as he deemed it, of the territory annexed by Mr. Chester. The utmost that his lordship would concede was that possibly a protectorate might be established over the coast tribes, under the direction of the High Commission for the Western Pacific, but absolute annexation was quite out of the question.

Australian Colonists remonstrate.—This fresh rebuff, instead of paralysing the Australian colonists, only roused them to greater activity. Mr. Service, Premier of Victoria, was the first to move in the matter. He asked the Governments of the other Colonies to send delegates to an Intercolonial Convention, at which this and other questions would be considered. The request met with immediate and general compliance. Accordingly, the Convention assembled in

Sydney in November, 1883; all the Australasian Colonies were represented, and the Governor of Fiji, Sir G. W. Des Voeux, was present, but did not vote. Resolutions affirming the desirability of promptly and effectually securing the incorporation with the British Empire of such parts of New Guinea as were not claimed by the Netherlands Government, were unanimously adopted.

Proposal of a British Protectorate.—To such an emphatic expression of the wishes of the Australian Colonists, Lord Derby could not be indifferent. In May of the following year his lordship addressed a despatch to the Governor of Queensland, intimating that the Imperial authorities were inclined to sanction the appointment of a High Commissioner for New Guinea, provided that the Australian Colonies would agree to pay a subsidy of £15,000 per annum towards the expense of a protectorate. At once the two Colonies of Queensland and Victoria offered to guarantee, between them, payment of the whole amount, and the other Colonies subsequently consented to pay each its quota of contribution, but upon condition that annexation was really intended by the Imperial Government.

Annexation by Great Britain.—In October, 1884, several vessels of war on on the Australian station left Sydney Harbour one by one, bound northwards, and on the 6th November, five British war-ships were lying at anchor in Port Moresby. Commodore Erskine then formally proclaimed the British Protectorate, and the British flag was hoisted with great ceremony, in the presence of about 250 officers and men of the squadron, the missionaries, and as many of the natives and representative chiefs as could be collected for

the occasion. All acquisition of land from the natives was forbidden, and regulations prohibiting the introduction of alcohol and firearms were drawn up. A representative chief, Boi Vagi, of Port Moresby, was chosen, and Mr. H. Romilly was left as Acting Commissioner, to enforce the regulations, and to act with authority until the arrival of the High Commissioner. Shortly afterwards the appointment was conferred on Sir Peter Scratchley, who at once proceeded to enter upon his duties.

Announcement of German Occupation.—So far the Imperial Authorities had complied with the wishes of the Australian Colonists, at least in appearance. But the favour shown them was materially lessened in value by the limitation of the area of territory taken under the British protection. They, very naturally, desired that the whole of the island not claimed by the Dutch should be annexed to the British Empire; but Lord Derby drew a line across the map, bisecting the eastern half into two nearly equal parts, and made this line the boundary of the protectorate, leaving the northern section free to be snapped up by any Foreign Power that might choose to take it. With reason the Colonists complained that good faith had not been kept with them, and that their agreement to pay the subsidy of £15,000 a year was invalidated by Lord Derby's act. But his lordship refused to alter his decision, and, unfortunately for the cause of the Colonists, New South AVales, which had formerly been in hearty accord with all its sister Colonies in this matter, drew off now, and stood aloof. It seemed as if the Secretary of State for the Colonies, secretly abetted by the New South Wales Government, was bent upon tacitly

inviting some Foreign Power to take possession of the unannexed portion of the island. Before the close of the year —as any person gifted with the least degree of sagacity might have foreseen—the expected claimant made his appearance on the scene. The news flashed along the electric wires in all directions that the German flag was floating over several points along the north-east coast of New Guinea, and on many of the adjacent islands. Fuller information showed that the German Government had formally annexed the whole of the territory marked off by Lord Derby as lying outside the area of the British protectorate, together with the islands of New Britain, New Ireland, and many others in that extensive archipelago. It must be recorded, to vindicate the truth of history, that this intelligence caused a movement of strong indignation in the minds of the Australian Colonists, and vigorous protests against the action of the German Government were addressed by the Australian Agents General to the Imperial Authorities. The feeling of resentment was all the more keen, because the guarantee to pay £15,000 a year towards the expense of the protectorate had been given under a distinct understanding that the whole of New Guinea, excepting the part claimed by the Dutch, should be annexed. Lord Derby, moreover, up till the very hour of the declaration of the German occupation, had denied all knowledge of any such intention on the part of any Foreign Power. With reluctance the Australian Colonists accepted the limitation of area imposed by his lordship; but it was only their fervent loyalty to the British connexion that prevented them from marking in a very emphatic manner their sense

of what they held to be a most unjustifiable surrender of the Imperial rights on the part of the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Arrival of Sir Peter Scratchley.—Sir Peter Scratchley arrived in Australia at the beginning of 1885. His first task was to secure the consent of the several Colonial Governments to share in the payment of the stipulated subsidy for the maintenance of the protectorate. He visited each of the Colonies in succession, and after some demurs on the part of one or two of the governments had been overcome, succeeded in his object. He next chartered a fine steamer, the "Governor Blackall," from the Australian Steam Navigation Company, and on the 20th August sailed for the seat of Government.

His First Proceedings and Premature Death.—He selected Port Moresby as his first station, living on board the "Governor Blackall," and taking a general inspection of the surrounding locality, with a view to selecting a fitting site for the proposed capital of the new protectorate. His intention was to make himself thoroughly acquainted with the country before framing any regulations for the settlement of whites within the territory. It was with this purpose that he joined the expedition, the history of which is narrated in the present volume, and which ended, for him, in his untimely death from the malarial fever incident to the climate. The loss thus caused, both to the Australian Colonies and to the Imperial Interests, was deeply felt and universally mourned.

Appointment of a Successor.—Mr. John Douglas, ex-Premier of Queensland, was appointed by the Imperial Authorities to succeed Sir Peter Scratchley. The new High

Commissioner has set himself with characteristic energy to carry out the purposes of his predecessor.

The German Settlement.—The German government has granted a charter to a company to promote settlement in its newly acquired possessions, and very liberal inducements are held out to enterprising adventurers to become the pioneers of the German Colony.

CHAPTER II. FROM SYDNEY TO NEW GUINEA.

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Colonists Demand Annexation of New Guinea—Lord Derby's Vacillation—Appointment of Sir Peter Scratchley as High Commissioner—His Arrival and first Proceedings—Departure from Sydney—Pathetic Parting of the Commissioner and his Family—A Sabbath Day on Board—Northwards to Brisbane—Description of the "Governor Blackall"—Music hath Charms to soothe the hardy Seaman's breast—An Eminent Naturalist—Gentle Savages—Departure from Brisbane—A New Patent Log—The Tragedy of Percy Island—A Strange Ocean Product—An Island Paradise—An Apron Signal—Townsville—Meeting with a "Vagabond"—Cooktown—The Tragedy of Lizard Island—New Guinea in Sight

The repeated demands of the Australasian Colonists for the annexation of New Guinea failed, for a long period, to move the Imperial Government. The policy of Lord Derby, when Secretary of State for the Colonies in Mr. Gladstone's Administration, seemed to be of the Fabian order. His lordship (as Mr. Froude told the Colonists), was in the habit of looking at both sides of a question, and taking time to make up his mind. But somehow the march of events outstripped Lord Derby's calm deliberation. Rumours came abroad that some great Foreign Power was meditating the annexation of the northern island. Stimulated to action by these reports, the patriotic Premier of Queensland, Sir Thomas McIlwraith, resolved upon taking the matter into his own hands, and he despatched an agent to New Guinea

with orders to take possession of the territory in the name of Her Majesty Queen Victoria. These orders were promptly obeyed, but the patriotic act did not meet with Lord Derby's approval.

The annexation was disavowed in Downing Street, and the Colonial Minister continued his tranquil meditations on both sides of the New Guinea Question. At length Germany stepped in, and forestalled the fixed purpose of the Australian Colonist. The larger half of the coveted territory was added to the German possessions in the Pacific. Then Lord Derby—doubtless with a feeling of thankfulness to Prince Bismarck for his considerateness in leaving a fragment of the prize unappropriated—bethought him of the propriety of taking steps to secure the interests of his own nation in the matter. His lordship appointed an Imperial Special Commissioner, and despatched him to Australia to obtain the funds requisite for establishing and maintaining a British Protectorate over Southern New Guinea and the adjacent Archipelago.

Sir Peter Scratchley, the newly-appointed Commissioner, set forth upon his mission, and arrived in Melbourne at the close of the year 1884. His first task was to procure a vessel to convey him to his destination, and also suitable for a floating vice-regal residence, pending the erection of a palace on shore. His next business was to obtain from the several Australian Governments contributions towards the salary and expenses of the Special Commissioner. This object was gained without any difficulty, although there was a good deal of grumbling at Lord Derby's remissness in allowing Germany to steal a march upon him. But, as

matters could not now be remedied, the Colonial Premiers, one and all, agreed to share jointly the expenses of the Protectorate, and the Premier of New South Wales, in addition, offered the use of H.M.C.S. "Wolverene," then stationed in Sydney Harbour, for a six months' service on the New Guinea coast. This offer the Commissioner gladly accepted; but just then, as it happened, reports were raised of an impending rupture of friendly relations between Great Britain and Russia, and the "Wolverene" would, in case of that event occurring, be required for purposes of local defence. Instead of continuing his efforts to procure another vessel, Sir Peter Scratchley devoted his attention to the condition of the colonial defences, most of which had been constructed under his own supervision. Happily, the Russian scare speedily subsided, and tenders were called for from shipowners possessing a vessel suitable for the New Guinea service. The tender of the Australasian Steam Navigation Company, for the use of the S.S. "Governor Blackall," was accepted, this vessel lying then in Sydney Harbour, undergoing repairs and refitting.

04. "The Start." Sir Peter Scratchley, his Staff and Party of Friends, S.S. "Governor Blackall"

By the end of July, 1885, everything was in readiness for a start; but another fortnight's delay occurred through the sudden illness of the Commissioner. His health restored, Sir Peter Scratchley gave orders to Captain Lake to have steam up and all ready for the voyage by half-past eight on the morning of Saturday, 15th August. It was with no little joy and pride that I shipped my personal baggage and apparatus, and enrolled myself as a member of the Expedition. It seemed to me that a goal I had long been striving to reach was now in sight, and that I was fortunate enough not only to obtain exceptional facilities for seeing a country whose physical peculiarities, and the manners and customs of whose inhabitants had hitherto been little known

and imperfectly described, but to be the humble means of communicating truthful information to others. A large party of friends came on board to take a farewell breakfast, and to accompany us down the beautiful harbour. We rounded H.M.S. "Nelson," and the band on board that vessel struck up "Auld Lang Syne" by way of parting salute. A number of small steamers were conveying the men garrisoned in the various forts and batterie to a grand review that was to come off that day, and the men, as they passed our vessel, greeted us with hearty cheers. A little past Bradley's Head our Captain slackened speed to allow Lady Scratchley and her children to be taken on board the launch "Gladys." I could not help noticing that the parting between the Commissioner and his wife and eldest daughter was touched with pathos and solemnity, as if they all felt deeply that the enterprise in which the husband and father was engaged was not wholly free from serious risks and dangers. Alas! it was their final parting on earth. The younger members of the Commissioner's family, however, entertained no misgivings. With the happy carelessness of childhood, they evidently regarded the occasion as only a pleasant holiday, too soon brought to a close. At length the moment for the final leave-takings came; the last affectionate adieux were exchanged, the last tearful embraces were given and taken, the last good wishes were spoken; the visitors were conducted on board the "Gladys;" and, with waving of white handkerchiefs and many unspoken prayers for a prosperous voyage and a safe return for the adventurers, they reluctantly turned their faces in the direction of Sydney.

The North Head was passed at 10.40, and, steering her course North by East, our gallant little vessel fairly entered on her mission, with a fair westerly wind, a smooth sea, and weather of the true Australian mildness and brilliancy. Broken Bay was speedily left behind us, and next Newcastle, famed for its coal mines. As the sun was sinking below the horizon we found ourselves abreast of the Port Stephens Lighthouse. The wind had freshened considerably during the afternoon, so as to spoil the appetites of some of our party, who had not yet found their sea-legs; the carpenter was battening down the hatches, evidently in anticipation of a squally night, and the company generally betook themselves to the horizontal position in their berths at an early hour of the evening. Happily, the fears of a coming storm were not realised. About midnight the wind fell, and the adventurers slept as calmly in their bunks as if they had been in a palatial hotel on shore.

Sunday morning dawned with Sabbath stillness and brightness. After breakfast the Commissioner issued orders for a general muster at half-past ten. The hour appointed found every man not actually engaged on duty ranged on the quarter-deck; the roll was called, and the Captain announced that Divine Service would be held at eleven, that attendance was not compulsory, but that the Commissioner would be pleased to see every man in attendance. Punctually at eleven the bell tolled for prayers; the crew, to a man, came up on deck, the ship then going at half-speed; prayer books and hymn books were handed round, and then the Commissioner read with great solemnity the beautiful service of the Church of England for those at sea, Mr. Fort