Gospel and other portions of Scripture to Sydney with an earnest request that it be printed as speedily as possible. Up to the present time no printed copies have been received by us, nor even an intimation of when we may expect them. If those responsible for this delay were only aware of how our work is being retarded by it they would surely give a little more attention to our requirements.

2. In our Report for last year we called the attention of the Board to our vacant stations and the openings which existed on every hand and expressed a hope that the number of our native helpers would be increased. Up to the present, so far as we are aware, our request has met with no response. It is scarcely necessary for us to remind the Board of the need for extending operations in a Group like this where we are surrounded by masses of heathenism, and when reports of bloodshed, murder and cannibalism reach us almost daily:

3. of the impossibility of extending our work unless some plan be devised for increasing the number of our native agents. The plan proposed by us last year viz—a central Training Institution is, in our opinion, the most effective and least expensive. As this proposal however has not met with the approval of the Board we can only express a hope that some other, equally effective, may be speedily carried into execution so that the necessities of our work may be met without delay.

None but those who have been in a similar position can imagine the disheartening effect which it has on a missionary to see around him Islands innumerable, beautiful as Eden and fertile as the garden of God, inhabited by people daily guilty of the most revolting barbarities, upon whom superstition has cast its withering blight and whom custom enthralls with a chain more galling than that of the slavedriver—whose very misery, and whose every crime is a mute appeal for help, and yet to we not only unable to stretch out a helping hand—but to see no prospect in the immediate future of being able to do so; 'tis torture which no true-souled missionary can endure. If you send us to the heathen

with the Gospel of peace and love, at least place it within our power to fulfill our Commission. We may sow in tears, but if we see that we are bringing life and joy to those who have long dwelt in darkness and in the shadow of death, the tears will be forgotten in the joy of success, we shall see of the travail of our souls and be satisfied.

In carrying on mission work in a country like this native helpers are an absolute necessity. They are the hands and feet of the missionary. Multiply the native agents and you multiply in proportion the missionary influence and his power to reach the people—you multiply the channels by which 'the waters of life' are conveyed to the arid wastes of heathenism, and you cause 'the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose.'

These people sorely need the Gospel. We have undertaken the duty of supplying that need. Are we doing our Duty: I hesitate not in saying that we are not doing as much as we might do, and as such as we ought to do. If however, the Board, for financial reasons, cannot undertake more than it is doing at present—then I would respectfully urge upon it the advisability of inviting cooperation of some German Mission Society, to take up, say the Northern part of New Ireland or a part of New Britain.

The German Missionary Societies will not send their agents to this Group unless invited by us, but I think if invited they would be found willing to accept. On the Northern Coast of New Ireland there is a large native population and a few German traders. According to our present rate of progress it will be many years before we reach that part of the Group—probably not this side of the Millenium. Are these people in the meantime to be left without the Gospel? Surely every Christian heart will say No! If we cannot take them the Gospel ourselves then let us ask others to do it.

SOURCE Methodist Church of Australasia: Department of Overseas Missions Papers, Mission District Minutes, 1884-87, Mitchell Library, MS. Meth. Ch.O. M. 21; report of New Britain District, October, 1886, signed I. Rooney

OTHER CHRISTIAN MISSIONS AND INTER-MISSION RELATIONSHIPS: DOCUMENTS C71 to C78

By the end of 1886 there were five separate Christian mission organisations at work in New Guinea. Of these, the one with the longest continuous existence was the least effective. The Dutch missionaries of the Utrecht Mission Society had commenced work at Dorei Bay in Dutch New Guinea in 1855.³ Thirty years later they were still confined to their original sphere of influence and observers considered their effectiveness limited. (C71)

³G. Souter New Guinea. The Last Unknown, Sydney, 1963, p. 23

Besides this mission and the three dealt with above, the L.M.S., the Sacred Heart and the Wesleyan Methodist, a fifth mission, the Lutheran, Neuendetelsau (Bavaria), established a station at Simbang near Finschhafen in 1886. (C72 to C74)

In geographical extent Christian evangelization covered the following areas in 1886: about half the Gazelle Peninsula in New Britain, The Duke of Yorks and the south-west coast of New Ireland along St. George's Channel (Plate 56); the south coast of Papua in the west from the Purari delta to the China Straits in the east (Plate 50); and the isolated places, Dorei
Bay in Dutch New Guinea and Finschhafen on the Huon Peninsula. All mission stations in these areas were on or near the coast. No penetration of the interior had occurred. Nothing resembling Julien's 'la guerre des missions' took place in the New Guinea field in the period under discussion. In comparison with the rivalry of different mission organisations in Tonga, the Loyalty Islands, Samoa, Tahiti and the other places, the missions in New Guinea had relations of fair amity. As early as 1876 in New Guinea the L.M.S. and the Wesleyans, having engaged in bitter rivalry in Samoa, exchanged hopes for cooperation.

The arrival of the Sacred Heart missionaries in already established Protestant areas, in New Britain in 1882 (C75; C76) and the south coast of Papua in 1885 (C78) seemed likely to lead to the repetition of the situation in other Pacific Islands where something less than Christian brotherhood had been displayed between Protestant and Roman Catholic missions competing for pagan souls. The entry of the Sacred Heart mission into New Guinea seemed to reconstitute the pattern that had been recognised in Polynesia, that the Roman Catholics saw the need to combat heresy as being of equal importance with the need to win the heathen to Christ.

The Wesleyan Methodist missionaries in New Britain recorded their fears at the entry of 'popery'. (C75) In their turn the Sacred Heart missionaries deplored the fact that the 'ministers of error' (C77) had arrived before them. Some redeployment of forces was carried out by the Protestants but otherwise the two missions worked peacefully side by side.

In Papua the position at the time of the entry of the Sacred Heart mission in 1885 was more complex than that in New Britain in 1882. The L.M.S. was of ten years standing in the region of Yule Island and the government of the Protectorate was to some extent dependent on the L.M.S. for help in making its first contact with the indigenous people. The influence of the L.M.S. is apparent in the temporary expulsion of S.C.M. Verjus from Yule Island in 1885, the denial of Port Moresby to the Sacred Heart and Sir Peter Scratchley's determination to separate the missions by having the Sacred Heart accept S. E. New Guinea and the Louisiades as its field for evangelization. This allocation of 'spheres of influence' did not eventuate. The Sacred Heart mission re-established itself at Yule Island in 1886 and relations between the missions settled down to one of mutual tolerance. See also A. Dupeyrat, *Papouasie; Histoire de la Mission*, 1885-1935, Paris, n.d., Chap. 4; A. Prendergast, *A History of the London Missionary Society in British New Guinea 1871-1901*, pp. 348-65; G. D. Rowley, *The New Guinea Villager*, Melbourne, 1965, Chap. 6.

C71 Indifferent Success of Dutch Mission Work at Dorei Bay, 1883

Dr F. H. H. Guillemand was the leader of a naturalist expedition which visited New Guinea in 1883 on board the schooner yacht 'Marchesa'.

Dorei Bay, well known as the settlement of the Dutch missionaries and the residence of Mr Wallace in 1858, is protected in the east by the islands of Manaswari and Meosmapi. The latter is uninhabited, but on Manaswari are the three villages Menuhabor, Mansinam, and Saraundera, and the house of Mr Van Hasselt, the oldest missionary. Dorei itself includes the villages of Ambobrindo, Kwawe, and Rasamberi, and is placed on the northern shore of the harbour about two miles distant from the island. Here Mr Jens and Mr Van Balen are settled, and a mile beyond —close to the head of the bay—is Mr Bink's house, behind the villages of Rodoe and Monokware. The whole native population numbers, or is supposed to number, over three thousand persons.

We were soon surrounded by native praus and boarded by Messrs Jens and Van Balen. We had brought a mail for them, which had been waiting for weeks at Ternate before it got into our hands. When they had received the last one we did not inquire, but it was quite touching to see the poor fellows rush at their letters excitedly exclaiming, 'This is from my mother!!' Here is a book from my sister!!' and so on as they held them up. All these missionaries have been chosen from the working-class, as being more fitted to instruct the natives in the useful arts, and can speak little but their own and the Nufoer language. Mr Van Hasselt, however, having married a German Lady, spoke that language fluently, and could also manage a little French and English. He had lived no less than twenty years at Dorei, but the terrible effects of the climate were only too plainly apparent. Bent nearly double, and so enfeebled by repeated attacks of fever and other tropical disorders as to be incapable of exertion, he appeared to us to be over seventy years of age, and we were astonished to learn that
he was only forty-seven. The continued heat and excessive rainfall of this part of New Guinea, especially when combined with poor diet, make it almost as unhealthy as West Africa, and the list of names of the missionaries who have died here is a long one. I am, of course, speaking only of the pestilential mangrove-clad coasts. Inland, on the slopes of the great mountains, the climate is no doubt very much healthier, although the rainfall at certain seasons must be enormous.

Mr Van Hasselt's house on Manaswari is the sole bit of civilization in Dutch New Guinea. Built a few yards only above a pleasant coral-beach in the middle of a grove of coco palms, the neatness and order prevailing ought at least to have had some effect as an example to the natives. Flowers are planted round the house, and ferns and orchids hang in the verandah. In front is a small lawn and a flagged staff, and at the back a good vegetable garden and a cattle kraal. At a little distance stands the small building which acts as church and schoolroom, erected by Mr Bink and Mr Van Hasselt with their own hands. A few children were brought out for our inspection. They sang hymns remarkably well, and could read and write, but it seemed to us a pity that the lesson of our Saviour's life on earth was less taught than the dry details of Old Testament history.

Judging merely from the inside of the schoolroom, the Dorei mission would appear to be a success, but in reality it is to be feared that it is not so. The entire result of twenty-eight years of mission-work and the sacrifice of many lives is but sixteen adult and twenty-six child converts. Children are bought by the missionaries wherever possible, and brought up as Christians from their earliest infancy, and it is in this way alone that any real success is possible. It is not easy to obtain them, however, since the natives are unwilling to sell their own, and hence orphans or the offspring of slaves alone come into the hands of the missionaries. The Papuan is bold, self-reliant, and independent, and no rapid conversion to Christianity, as has been the case in some of the Pacific Islands, is ever likely to take place in New Guinea. As far as our short experience of Dorei permitted us to form an opinion, it seemed to us that the mission had little or no influence over the natives. The latter have, of course, become quite accustomed to Europeans, and leave them unmolested, but their habits and customs remain unchanged, and at the time of our visit the Rum-slam or idol-house at Monokware, which had been accidentally destroyed by fire, was being rebuilt in all its former hideousness and indecency.


C72  The Founding of the Lutheran Mission, by Johann Flierl, Finschhafen, 1886

Johann Flierl was born in Germany in 1838. In 1875 he entered the Lutheran seminary at Neuendettelsau. He was consecrated as a missionary three years later and left for Australia shortly after. Flierl worked as a missionary to the aboriginal people at Cooper's Creek until 1885. The founding of the German colony of Kaiser Wilhelmsland turned his thoughts to New Guinea and he sought permission from his superiors at Neuendettelsau to establish a mission. Permission was granted and after some delay Flierl left for New Guinea.

Early in July, 1886, I embarked in Cooktown with the little steamer Öttilie, which had just arrived from Germany. Only a few weeks earlier the first governor, Baron von Schleinitz had come from Germany with his family and entered upon his duties as highest magistrate shortly before my arrival in Finschhafen. He was favorably disposed towards the Mission and after all I realised that it had been a kindly providence that had prevented my coming to New Guinea before his time.

After a favorable trip of four days, I beheld the beautiful emerald coastal ranges of New Guinea in all their tropical splendor and on the twelfth of July, 1886, I landed at Finschhafen as the first missionary of Kaiser-Wilhelmsland. I had finally reached New Guinea, the land of my destiny.

A number of frame houses had already been erected at Finschhafen at this time by the employees of the New Guinea Company, the first of whom had landed at Finschhafen on the fifth of October, 1885. In one of these houses, called the 'Schwedenhaus' I managed to get a room. The room had the form of an eight foot cube and was more suitable for cold Sweden than for tropical New Guinea. Nevertheless, I was thankful for having found a place to stay. I had lived for years in the dry hot climate of the interior of Australia, and for months in the tropical climate of North Queensland, but when I came to New Guinea, I noticed at once that the atmosphere there was more sultry and oppressive than at any other place where I had lived...

... I made use of a good opportunity to see other parts of Kaiser-Wilhelmsland beyond the vicinity of Finschhafen, by making a trip with the men of the New Guinea Company along the coast to the northwest, where the Company had established temporary trading stations. By that chance I saw the land and the people around Astrolabe Bay and at Hatzfeldhafen near Volcano Island, where we could see by night from the place where the steamer lay at anchor the flaming summit of the island volcano. I couldn't get around much on land during our brief trip, but travelling along the coast I got a good view of the wonderful tropical mountain scenery and at the few places where we touched land, I realised that the land, the people, and the general level of culture was of much the same character everywhere. I also realised the truth of a statement made by a newcomer in those days—New Guinea is a difficult country! That was true from the viewpoint of the missionary and also true from that of the settler and trader.

On my return to Finschhafen I found that my first fellow-laborer, the late Missionary Tremel, had meanwhile arrived from Neuendettelsau. Travelling with another ship
via Cooktown, he arrived in Finschhafen in September. For a few weeks he shared my little room with me. During this time I took him with me on visits to all the neighbouring villages, in order that we might together select the best place for our first mission station.

Finschhafen was in the early days the center and starting point for all enterprises of the New Guinea Company, and since more employees kept coming, there was soon a serious shortage of lodging room. The government in Berlin had directed the higher officials in Finschhafen to treat us missionaries with all due consideration. This order was carried out, too, in an appreciable way, especially on the part of the governor, Baron von Schleinitz. Nevertheless it was desirable for various reasons that we should live on a place of our own after I had stayed in Finschhafen for three months. We realised that if in the course of time we wished to succeed in our missionary work, we would have to have our own station right among the natives, so that these could learn the difference between the missionaries and other white people and could gradually find out what the missionaries wanted.

Of the language we knew very little as yet. At my arrival I had copied a short list of words which the men of the Company had made, but which had many errors and gave no information at all concerning the forms of words. We endeavoured to steadily increase our vocabulary and in matters of every-day life we soon had learned enough words and sentences to communicate quite freely with the natives.

Since in the neighbourhood of Finschhafen conditions were most familiar and most safe, we resolved to build our station there and not further to the northwest. It was entirely out of the question that we should go very far away from Finschhafen, least of all into the mountains, where tribes lived with a very different language from that of the coastal tribes, who spoke the Jabem. The difficulties of transportation in a country without roads like New Guinea in those days were very great and our means and our strength for such a difficult beginning were very small and the natives were still quite unreliable. We had therefore to choose a location along the shore which would be reached with the canoes of the natives and with European row and sail boats, not too far away from Finschhafen.

Source: John Flierl, *Forty Five Years in New Guinea*, trans. Prof. M. Wiederaenders, Columbus, Ohio, 1931, pp.23-7

**C73  Johann Flierl Chooses the Site for the Mission, Simbang, 1886**

After careful consideration we chose a place near the little village of Simbang as location for our first mission station in New Guinea. The village of Simbang had then and has now hardly ten houses, and there were other small villages in the immediate vicinity of Langemack Bay and the mouth of the Bubui River. It is only five miles, or a walk of an hour and a half from Finschhafen, and lies between Simbang Creek and the Bubui River. The latter is a swift mountain stream very wide at the mouth and of various depths. It cannot be crossed without a boat and bridges are almost unknown in a land like New Guinea. On account of the river it was not advisable to build our station farther south as I had first planned.

On the eighth of October, 1886, we established ourselves on our own ground. Since we wanted to take all our belongings, with our firm and famous Neunedetelsau trunks, and also some building material with us, the officials of the New Guinea Company at Finschhafen placed a good boat with native rowers and a white pilot at our disposal.

At the landing we experienced the first great disappointment. Judging by the friendly attitude of the people at former meetings and the promises they had made us, we expected a kindly reception. Now they stood about with sour faces and not one of the young men moved to help us with the unloading of our goods. We could not have done the work alone, but the rowers of the boat helped us and then rowed back to Finschhafen, leaving us two alone with the unfriendly people of Simbang. Every stick that we needed to raise our tents we had to get out of the bush ourselves. We had just time to put our things in order and make them fairly safe when night came, a dark and gloomy night, and we commended ourselves to the protection of our God. When we came forth from our tent the next morning the ground round about was dirty in an ugly manner and the villagers were gloomier than the day before. Undoubtedly they...
wanted to induce us to go away by being rude and disagreeable to us. When we didn’t go, it almost came to deeds of violence in the course of the next days. One of the most unfriendly of the men took one of our axes while I was looking on, and when I didn’t let him keep it, he, wildly gesturing, ran into the village and immediately after returned with a hand-axe with which he attacked me. I managed to wrest the axe from his hand and threw it over his head far behind him, where his little son Bolatu picked it up and ran with it into the bush. That was the first ray of light in the dark days of our beginning at Simbang. From that time on matters improved. Several of the older and more responsible men, Duke, the Chief of Simbang, and Ngau, the Chief of a neighbouring village, adjusted the matter, so that the attacker even brought a small gift to atone for his bad behavior.

After it had been expressly and solemnly confirmed that we should live at Simbang and build our house there, we had no more cause for complaint.

It is hardly to be doubted that, if Finschhafen with its many white people had not been near, we at Simbang would have met with the same fate as two missionaries, Scheidt and Boesch, of the Rhenish Mission Society, who were murdered by the natives when they attempted to found a station at Franklin Bay near Hatzfeldthäfen. Already the mere desire of the natives to possess the things of the white man could in those days have caused a murder. The hostile attitude of the people of Simbang in the beginning can be explained in yet another way. The natives at Finschhafen had after all been crowded out of their ancient homes by the coming of the white man though it had not been done by force. They had received a certain compensation for their houses and their fields in the form of much-prized tools and other goods, but a free-will sale it hadn’t been. Some of the people who had sold out in this way at Finschhafen had moved to Simbang. The natives did not yet know what the missionaries wanted among them. They naturally thought that the white people had come to Simbang too with the purpose of crowding out the native. Therefore one can hardly blame the people of Simbang that at first they tried to get us away from there again. We did not yet understand each other very well, and there is a possibility that we misunderstood them in the first place. Furthermore, according to their way of looking at things, any sort of land sale is unlawful. And another thing might be mentioned. The natives always expected return—presents from the white men in the beginning, and the fact that they had very frequently received presents had spoiled them to such an extent that they were not at all inclined to do a favor in return. In this way we can easily explain the unfriendliness of the Simbang people towards us in the beginning and need not consider them particularly malicious on that account... With zeal we now began to erect our station. For several months Brother Dobles, a Lithuanian from the Breklum Mission house, whom I have already mentioned, was our helper. He wanted to come to New Guinea by all means, and on the condition that he would live at our station I recommended him to the authorities, and he was permitted to come. He suffered very much from fever, so that at times his shivering fits were so severe that his whole tent shook. For that reason he soon went back to Queensland.

Brother Tremel and I lived for nine months in a light calico tent. Since our mission society was small and our means were limited, we wished to do everything as cheaply as possible and build our first mission station mostly of material that we found in the bush. Our first structure was forty by twenty-five feet and consisted of two rooms and a spacious school hall. We wanted to show the natives as soon as possible that we had come to instruct them. Iron, ‘ki’ was the magic word that again and again induced the villagers to bring building material from the surrounding forests. We had found the people in their stone age. But they soon realised that tools of iron served much better in felling trees and building houses and canoes than their dull stone axes. At first by giving them any little pieces of iron and later by giving them knives and axes, we could always induce them to work for us. Cotton goods, glass beads, and other truffles were also precious in their sight.

Source: John Flierl, Forty Five years in New Guinea, trans. Prof. M. Wiederaenders, Columbus, Ohio, 1931, pp. 27-31

C74 Lutheran Mission Policy, Finschhafen, 1887

NEWS FOR MISSION FRIENDS
Missionary Flierl writes: ‘I only remind you here of one thing to which the English missionary Danks drew my attention. He told me how once in their mission on Fiji the mistake out of ignorance had been made that first an unimportant dialect of the natives had been studied and only afterwards, much later, a common language was discovered which all Fiji Islanders understood. Thus we here, too, should explore as soon as possible the language situation. On a coastal strip which is about 20 miles long and only 1 mile wide the Yabim language prevails, behind the Yabim people where the country rises, the Saling live, whose language is called Saling or Kai and is also understood by the coastal inhabitants. Of course we have to begin with the study of the Yabim language, perhaps it will become for us the key to the more important Kai. We have to find out by mission journeys what the situation is. In order to be able to carry this out successfully we need the support of a permanent mission station and the introduction of systematic mission activity, so that the natives will learn to know us correctly and to distinguish us from the other whites. When we will have established a good reputation in this way then it will spread quickly and the trust of the natives in the nearer and more distant mountain hamlets of the interior will allow us to walk safely among them. But if we are to exploit the position won here fully and wholly we will have to be strong enough to be able to work on the spot uninterrupted and to visit the surroundings diligently. For this four men would constitute sufficient staff. The expected minor fevers of the one or the other would then not disturb or interrupt the progress of the mission work. So far the Lord has helped beyond that for which we prayed and believed possible. He will continue to do so, awaken people and provide the means so that we will not do His work here slug-
gishly but diligently and swiftly.' At the end missionary Fliri praises the friendly cooperation of the territorial administration of German New Guinea. 'His Excellency the Administrator', he writes, 'is so friendly towards us that we could not imagine it better, and the whole staff strove to be of service to us missionaries.' For this, too, thanks be to the Lord!

Source: Extract from Missionsblatt Neuendettelsau, March, 1887. Translated from the German by John Moses.

C75 Refugees and Agents of Popery, New Britain, 1880

These colonists gave us no little trouble. It is no easy matter to feed and clothe some 55 men. Our private stores had to be broken into for them and you may guess they soon made a great hole in them. District good also suffered and on the whole that mad scheme of the Marquis de la Ray's has cost the Mission and ourselves a trifle. The character of the men is of the lowest. They were simply the sweepings of the quays and wharves of different continental ports.

Plate 61: Missionaries of the Sacred Heart at Manila in 1881 en route for New Ireland. (Standing) Father Cramaille (Seated, L. to R.) Brother Durin, Father Durin, Father Font (a Manila priest), Father Navarre and Brother Fromm
There existed not the slightest manliness among them. No sympathy for each other in their sufferings, and no attempt was made by the strong and healthy to assist the sick and dying. Mr. Brown, myself and the teachers had to attend to all things! Each man for himself, and self only was thought of. I can never forget the sight which presented itself to me on board the Ripple the day we took them from their settlement—if houses of a worse description than natives' houses can lay claim to the name—and steamed away for Duke of York. Over 40 men lay scattered about the deck and the rain falling in torrents all the time, many without shirts, one without trousers and all more or less ill with this terrible fever and ague. I asked some strong men to give the clothes out of their knapsacks, and which they did not require, to their comrades who were naked, shivering and dying. Do you think they would do it? Not they! They, the selfish men, thought more of their clothes than of their comrades' lives. I was very angry and took hold of one man's knapsack and before he knew what I was about, the clothes, good and substantial, were distributed among the sick and the dying. I don't think he ever forgave me for this. Others followed and so by the kindness of Captain Ferguson and others on board, and a distribution of loose clothes found among them, all were clothed.

The shock was too great for some and they died and were buried in the land they had hoped to find a good 'home, peace and plenty'. I cannot help but think that the failure of this Colony to form a permanent settlement, with their tribes of priests—none have yet arrived but we hear they are coming—and all their tomfoolery ways on New Ireland was quite providential so far as our Mission is concerned and had it been accomplished without so much suffering on the part of the poor fellows I should have greatly rejoiced. Our Mission is too young to fight with such accomplished agents as Popery often sends out to these out of the way places. When we get the natives to know the difference between a show and the reality between religion and a parade then we will meet fearlessly as many priests as Popery chooses to send. Beside in this case their influence would be backed by temporal power and the musket.


C76 A French Priest at Nodup, New Britain, 1881

On Tuesday we left Kabakada and walked overland to Blanche Bay striking the Bay near Malakuna, a town where formerly we had a good cause and everything seemed promising: but the teacher died, and there was no one to fill his place, and now everything has lapsed into the old state. This is one of the places I referred to in one of my letters when I said that 'instead of making progress we are actually losing ground'. A priest belonging to the French Colony finding the coast clear stepped in and baptized a number of people, and now he claims them as Catholics, and has gone to the Colonies avowedly to bring down more priests, some of whom are to be stationed in the Bay. So there is trouble in store for us—for wherever these men set their foot in Polynesia they make trouble. Had a supply of teachers been sent down last year one would have been stationed in Malakuna, and this curse would have been averted.

The Priest has built his house at Bai, on the peninsula, near Nodup.


C77 Heresy as the Principal Adversary of the Sacred Heart Mission, New Britain, 1882

Hence, Very Rev. Father, you can infer from these statements which I am happy to submit to you, that the situation is widely different from what we feared it might prove, judging from the information gathered previously. From the time of our departure, and especially since our sojourn at Manila, it was unanimously asserted that our Mission was inaccessible, and everything was portrayed in the darkest hues. We had in a measure learned to view our prospects in this sombre light, and therefore we are all the happier for it now, and the more grateful to Divine
Providence for having converted our apprehensions to hopefulness. Evidently the hand of God is there, the rays of the Sacred Heart have beamed on these people to prepare them and Our Lady has led us towards them. However, let us not allow ourselves to be deceived, for the conquest is yet to be achieved; there must be incessant struggles with the enemy, and as I told you in my last letter, heresy is the principal adversary we must combat here far more strenuously than paganism.

Assuredly, I may conclude that the harvest is ripe and merely awaits labourers. The words of our Divine Saviour are ever present to my mind: ‘The harvest, indeed, is great, but the labourers are few. Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he send labourers into his harvest.’

... I cannot silence my grief, not to say vexation, when I realize that teachers and ministers of error have taken possession of the fruitful soil before us. Ah! if the great powers of the earth labored to propagate the Gospel as they labor to spread their influence, and develop their commercial and industrial pursuits, if they but took pride in serving the Catholic Church and extending Her dominion, how immense a field for glorious conquests and zealous achievements they would find in this vast Oceania, and the Vicariate alone that we have in charge. God grant that all Christian nations may understand their duty in this respect.


**C78 An L.M.S. Attitude to the Sacred Heart Mission, London, 1887**

I am going to tell you a little of what has been done. I do not like counting converts, but it is just as well you should know a little of what has been done, so that you may comprehend what has yet to be done. New Guinea. I suppose some of you may know, lies to the north of Australia. I have a reason why I tell you that. I have been asked several times since I came to England what part of Guinea I came from, and I at once thought, 'They are thinking about the Guinea Coast of Africa.' New Guinea is to the north of Australia, and is the largest island in the world; because we speak now of Australia as a continent. It is divided into three parts. The western part belongs to Holland, from the 141st parallel east, including all the islands of the north-east and those stretching away to the south-east. Germany has proclaimed a protectorate over the north-east part, leaving the British the south-east part. A great deal of talk was made about allowing the French to get possession of that part. Perhaps it would have been better if we had taken the whole; but Germany has taken it, and we wish them well in their work. They are sending out missionaries to do missionary work there, and I think they are going on a better plan than we are in this country. It may be the iron rule of Bismarck, who says that there must be no interference by one society with another. You go
here, the Roman Catholics there, another Society there, and so on; whereas we have undertaken the great work of opening up the south-east coast of New Guinea, and have penetrated further inland than has ever been done by any other party—as soon as we get friendly people round us, they come up and try to win our people away. There was once a time when the Roman Catholics had grand men, that could dare anything for the sake of the Cross of Christ, or for the Church, but I think that time has long since gone. In the Southern Seas, wherever we have formed small churches, they step in. In New Guinea, at the very place where I have been knocked on the ground, they have stepped in to take up our work. I cannot think that this is gentlemanly; I know it is not Christian. What I should say is this: How are those poor natives to decide which is right and which is wrong? Between the two stools they fall, and they will receive neither. What is to be done? I say, let us show by our intense anxiety that New Guinea shall be won to Christ and by pushing men right up to the front in the great fight we are determined to lead the New Guineans to the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Do it now: now is the time.


COLONIZATION SCHEMES, INDUSTRY, TRADE AND LAND DEALING:
DOCUMENTS C79 to C94

The lure of New Guinea as a source of wealth was an attractive one to Europeans even before the time of first contact. It was also persistent and certainly in the second half of the nineteenth century the idea that wealth could be won from New Guinea was the motivation behind the formation of a number of companies in the Australian colonies and in England. The prospectuses brought out by these organisations provide us with a statement of what the entrepreneurs knew or thought they knew about economic possibilities of the country. The New Guinea Company (Limited), floated in Sydney in 1867 (C79), subscribed to the enthusiasm of the Rev. John Dunmore Lang for the world of the Pacific in general and for New Guinea in particular.1 This enterprise was abortive but in 1871 Lang’s enthusiasm helped the New Guinea Prospecting Expedition on its way.2 The wreck of the Expedition ship Maria on Bramble Reef in the Coral Sea abruptly ended the enterprise. (C80; C81) In England in 1876 the opposition of the London Missionary Society and the Anti-Slavery Society put an end to the ambitions of Lieutenant R. H. Armit and the Colonising Association Limited (New Guinea) to establish a model colony in New Guinea using imported labour from Asia as a work force. The debate which went on around the Colonising Association Limited concerned the effects on the indigenous people of large-scale European colonization and such debate was common in the 70’s and 80’s. The differing views were put forward by the commercial entrepreneurs and the missionaries who had at heart what they considered were the true interests of the people.

In fact with the exception of the expeditions sent to New Ireland by the Marquis de Rays, there was no large influx of Europeans into New Guinea. No one commodity of great value which could have attracted Europeans in large numbers was ever found. The discovery of gold in 1877 on the Goldie River near Port Moresby caused a minor rush but the initial promise was not sustained. Rather there was a sustained exploitation of various commodities at varying times over the nineteenth century, whales, bêche-de-mer, trochus shell, Bird of Paradise feathers, pearl shell, cedar and copra. With the exception of the whaling industry no large-scale organisation was required. Products from New Guinea contributed to the trade pattern of the Indonesian islands, and to the extensive and profitable trade of the Pacific Ocean.3 Until the entry of the German trading firm of Godefroy and Son into the Bismarck Archipelago in 1873, economic enterprise in New Guinea was in the hands of individuals or small combinations. The pattern of economic exploitation was influenced by the pattern of recognised sea-routes and the three areas of the

1 D. C. Gordon, The Australian Frontier in New Guinea 1870-1885, N.Y. 1951, p. 81
2 G. Souter, New Guinea. The Last Unknown, Sydney, 1963, p. 32
3 J. Coulter, Adventures on the Western Coast of South America and the Interior of California: including a narrative of incidents at the Kingwill Islands, New Ireland, New Britain, New Guinea and other Islands in the Pacific Ocean, London, 1847, preface, pp. viii-xi