and railway men) to keep them clad. The habits of the Sisters are patched and darned and faded; their veils are a wonder of stitchery. Boots and shoes are freely lent from one to another, patched, re-made, worked out to the last shred of leather. A yard of cotton is a treasure that can be turned to twenty different uses; a tin of meat is stretched to cover several meals for several people, and 'to do up' afterwards.

In the pleasant evening we came to the tall green palms of Waima, and the white sandy walks near the sea, and the small brown houses of the Mission. Grey shirts and blue robes came out to meet us and welcome us with the gay hospitality so well known to guests of religious houses. A Father in the costume of a navvy (belied by his dignified beard, and refined, intellectual face) took the horses to unsaddle them. Sisters took possession of us, and swept us into their small stick house. The visiting nuns were received with delight, and given all the news. Our hostess went to fetch a bath, and carried away all my clothes to wash them herself, in spite of protests; one gave me her room and bed (she had to sleep on a sack of leaves in the schoolhouse, but she said she enjoyed it)—another went off to kill a plump young fowl that ought to have been kept to lay eggs. There was Benediction later, in the small tin church, with a surprising number of mop-haired Papuans, jingling with dogs' teeth and beads, taking reverent part in the service. There was supper on the verandah, lit by a hurricane lamp, the great green towers of the mangoes, newly-flowered, smelling sweet above our heads. None of the Sisters liked eggs; at least they did not like them that night. They insisted that I did. They insisted next day that I liked the major part of a fowl for dinner, and that they collectively preferred the scaly tips of the drumsticks and pinions of the wing—when they did not prefer a soapy piece of boiled yam to either.

(I wish I were a station-owner in Australia, with a huge yard full of prize fowls running in hundreds. I wish I were a managing director in a gigantic store, crammed with groceries to feed an army or a fleet. What savory smells there would be among the stations of Mekeo! What shelves they would have to put up in their poor little pantries and larders!)

On the next morning we went out to see the villages. There are twenty-two of them round about Waima. Needless to say, I did not visit them all. The Mission does; has made up the quarrels of their inhabitants, saved many children from death, baptised and married not a few; taught hundreds a little reading, writing, and arithmetic, a little English, and a good deal of carpentering and other useful work.

In Port Moresby, and About Samarai,

female fashion (native) prescribes the wearing of many petticoats—six or eight, at a guess—made of fine grasses neatly strung into a fringe. These petticoats extend from waist to knee, and are carried with a swinging motion that suggests the style of a Highland regiment at a quick march. At Pinupaka, the skirts were shorter and scantier; the crinoline effect was wanting. And at a village further down the coast there was a woman, a visitor who came farther inland. She wore her own tribal dress, which consisted of one fringe of grass, scarcely a hand's breadth in depth—nothing else at all. She was a handsome young woman, with flowers in her mop of hair, and a great many shells and dogs' teeth round her neck; she was quiet in her manner, and was (I understood) what the newspaper reports describe as 'a respectable married woman.' 'Wait till you get to the mountains, Mademoiselle,' said the Sister.

'Do they wear less there?' I asked.

'But, certainly, Mademoiselle; they do not wear anything at all,' replied one Sister calmly.

'They wear many things in their hair,' added the other Sister in an explanatory tone. 'But clothes—no, they do not wear them; it is not their custom.'

I thought the Sister was surely speaking after a figurative manner. But later on——.

The second day at Waima was given up to seeing Tou Ovia, two or three miles along the burning coast. Tou Ovia is a boarding-school; also a Mission station, and a cocoanut plantation. Two Sisters accompanied me, and beguiled the tedium of the beach road by teaching me to ride cross-saddle on the horse we had brought with us, which was a good deal more spirited than most of the Mekeo steeds, and by relating anecdotes about the adventures they had had on the same beach track; only they did not call them adventures. When you live in a place when strange things are happening all the time, nothing is an adventure; there are incidents, pleasing and displeasing—and always, in the Mission, a miss is as good as a mile.

'There was Sister X——, for example, who was riding a horse that bolted. It bolted one day along the beach at high tide. Now, that did not matter much, for there was plenty of room, but the horse had been brought up on Yule Island, and did not like Mekeo, and once before it had swum the strait, so it wished to do so again. And it bolted into the sea, and began to swim, with its head for Yule Island, several miles away. And the Sister, who could not swim herself, tried to slip off, but she fell head downward, and the horse dragged her through the water. Without doubt, Mademoiselle, she would have been drowned, but Father—— happened to be passing, and immediately he went into the water, and swam to her rescue, and freed her from the horse. After which, the nun dried her clothes at the nearest station, and continued on her journey as though nothing had happened.'

'Then there was that day that four of the Sisters were crossing one of the rivers in a small dug-out canoe, and the river was in flood, and the canoe upset. They hung on in the midst of the roaring torrent until the canoe drifted into the boughs of an overhanging tree, by which they were enabled to save themselves.'

'Were they frightened?' one asks.

'As to frightened, they did not have time for that, for they all were making their final Act of Contrition as quick as they could, and offering up their lives for the Mission. But this is Tou Ovia, Mademoiselle; now you will see

'A Beautiful Plantation.'

It was beautiful—two thousand trees set in symmetrical rows, tall, green, and plumy, close to the foam-laced blue of the warm Pacific breakers. About a hundred and twenty acres was the entire extent of the little place; it was wonderfully well kept, trees weeded, rubbish burned, copra drying in an iron shed on many-layered trays. There was only one thing missing—the laborers. Did the plantation work itself?

It did, very nearly; or, rather, system and close personal care worked it with a handful of labor that would not have been enough to weed a quarter of the space in any other part of Papua.

Thirteen small boys, dressed coolly in beads and a rag apiece, were studying in the tiny schoolhouse when we arrived. They were put through their paces for me—reading and writing in English and Koro; arithmetic, catechism, prayers. They also learn carpentering, the use of saucepans, soap, and common medicines; how to be kind to animals; how to look after the sick. They spend a good deal of time fishing; a good deal wandering in the forests. They are fat, and cheerful, and happy; they are being educated—as far as a Papuan native needs or can use education—and they will in time go home to their villages to act as centres of civilisation.

In the meantime, these small children work a little on the plantation, with casual help from the village, hired at the rate of one puppy a month (the Mission breed of dog is greatly valued in Mekeo). They weed, burn, gather nuts, and so far as anyone can see are not at all overworked. The Father in charge of the station, and the Brother who lives with him, work with their own hands as hard as any of the boys, which may have something to do with it.

Here, again, was the brown stick Mission house, with the bush furniture, and the tiny, sandy garden, that produced next to nothing at all, and the lean, gay, kindly, shabby Father whom one meets all over Mekeo. Here was the feast prepared with generous hands for the visitor—the feast that would send in its bill across a dozen meals to come, when the visitor was

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