

intonation of Paris, Brussels, Geneva, or Strasbourg—but, all the same, they have got the language.)

There was a leper in one of the villages near Rarai; we went to see him. He and many other sick people are regularly visited and cared for by the Mission. The man was terribly disfigured, but did not seem to suffer much. He was kept in a little tree-house approached by a short ladder, and so boxed up that it would have been difficult for him, in his maimed state, to get out. The Mekeo people seem to have some idea of the danger of leprosy, and do not allow the lepers to mingle freely with the rest of the population.

At Inawaia, where I went a day or two later, there was a very interesting sorcerer. When we chanced on him, walking through the village, he was not only feathered and painted, but all caked over with a mixture of mud and oil. This last adornment, it seemed, signified that he wanted to kill someone; probably some inhabitant of the village, who had been unlucky enough to annoy him. He had a deadly snake in his house, the Sister told me; it was kept in a saucepan, and trained to various tricks by its owner. Deaths by snakebite occurring in the village were generally put down to the sorcerer's pet, especially if they happened at night. When he went away he carried it about with him in a bamboo.

Nearly all the sorcerers have these snakes, I was told. You have probably met them often enough in the bush, but you would not know; you would only think that the man was carrying a stick in his hand.

It occurred to me that I would look narrowly at any walking-sticks carried by any innocent-looking native whom I happened to meet in the forest after that. A tiger snake, black snake, or death-adder, carefully trained, and carried about by a gentleman who was likely to take violent offence over comparatively small causes, seemed to be the sort of thing one would want to avoid.*

There was an interesting alligator, too. He lived at the crossing point of the St. Joseph River, a deep, wide stream of a beautiful grey-green-blue, within a few minutes' walk of Inawaia station. He had killed four grown-up people and one baby in two years; the baby was snatched from its mother's arms as she was bending down to take some water. . . . The canoe we crossed in was low and heavily loaded. I took care not to cool my hands in the stream, though the heat of the day made it tempting. The Father at Inawaia had tried to get this alligator more than once, but it is a cunning brute, and seems to know by instinct when danger is about. Like all man-eaters who haunt crossings and fords, it is very big and old, and full of craft.

Mekeo Was Finished.

I had seen all the stations, crossed all the famous fords (with an extraordinary luck in the matter of low water and absent alligators), ridden most of the horses, and, remembering that they were gift-horses, kept silent about their mouths, also about their heels, their backs and their tempers. I had stayed at all the Sisters' little houses, seen and talked to all the Fathers, heard Mass in all the poor tin churches, and watched the brown naked scholars at work in the sheds that passed for schools. I had been shown the little, fenced-in heaps of sand beneath the swinging palms, where those who had fallen by the way. (Only too many of these there are in fever-smitten Mekeo, and some of them are but a few months old.) I had eaten, worn, occupied,

* Every sorcerer is, in fact, in possession of a snake (generally a black snake or a death-adder) charmed according to the Indian fashion, and trained to bite the designed victim. The way, very simple, in which the snake is skilled to do its deadly business has been recently discovered by one of the Fathers. In a raid made by a Government officer on a sorcerer's premises, a black snake was detected in an earthen kettle, carefully hidden in a corner of the house. And on several occasions the snake was found in the bamboo stick carried by the sorcerer, and once, under the turban of the man, coiled up into the tangles of his bushy hair.—A. B.

and used the lion's share of everything in the way of worldly goods that the Fathers and the Sisters possessed. I had seen the wedge of the Catholic Mission work driving slowly home through the dense mass of heathendom, splitting, penetrating, changing, making a decent, peaceful land of what had been a very hell upon earth. And now I was to see the new, pioneering work among the mountains of the interior, where you were surrounded by tribes still in the true savage state, and where even the Mission people allowed that 'it was a little difficult.' Before leaving these plains, I made out a list of the gifts that might be

Useful to the Different Stations,

if anyone possessing more than they require of such things cares to send them.

First.—Money: copper, silver, gold, notes, cheques; any amount at any time.

Secondly.—Calico and print, cotton singlets in gay colors, belts, sheath knives, tomahawks, clearing knives, axes. As there are no stores in Mekeo, it is necessary to use these things in buying food for the natives, or paying them for small pieces of work. I might add here that the Mission pays every native a fair price for all work done for the Mission, even in building churches and making roads that will be as much use to the natives as to anyone. They ask nothing whatever from the Papuans; no money, goods, or labor, or lands. The collecting plate is unknown. The Mission comes to Papua to give, not to take.

There are many things to be found in superfluity in most well-furnished houses which would be invaluable to the hard-working Fathers and Sisters, and never missed by those who sent them away.

Every drawing-room has more vases and ornaments than it really wants. The churches of the Mission have only jam tins and cut-down bottles, disguised with paper, to serve for altar vases.

No housewife would allow that she has not a few knives and forks and spoons, a dozen or so of cups and plates, above her actual needs—a store of table napkins and tablecloths, sheets and pillow-slips, put by on tidy shelves. . . . Half a dozen matrons, consulting together, could fill a box with household goods that they would never miss. And the stations would rejoice. Nuns are women and ladies still, and holy poverty does not extinguish a desire to have things clean. I ask the tidy matron, is it easy to be dainty when you have hardly anything of anything at all?

The most accomplished cook among the Sisters has much trouble with a worn-out stove, and other stoves are giving out, after years of wear. There are stoves in many basements and lumber sheds quite good, only superseded by something newer that has been recently put in. These, if wood-burning, would be very greatly valued.

What has become of the side-saddles given up by 'the girls,' now that they are taking to cross-saddle? There are Sisters who cannot ride on anything else, and who would be very glad of a saddle or two.

Ordinary men's saddles often lie about a house for years, unused. The Mission could use fifty, if it had them; its saddlery is falling to bits, and I did not see a single decent bridle.

That bicycle, drop-frame or diamond, that the boys and girls once used for riding to school—now that the children have ridden away for ever, why not take it out of the back kitchen, and send it up to Papua for the Fathers and Sisters to ride about Mekeo in the dry season.

Eggs, and an occasional fowl, are the only fresh food obtainable on most of the Mission stations. The breed of fowls is mixed—very—and would not please the eye of a fancier. One need not be an experienced hen-wife to see that a crate or two of fowls from the country house where they are proud of their poultry yard would mean more eggs and better chickens. And it is fresh food that keeps off fever in New Guinea.

There is a colt running about in the paddocks—a colt with a good family tree—but there are plenty of others, also with good family trees, on the station. The 'Brother who looks after the small stud farm would