

sugar and 2,000 acres for cotton-planting, the remainder being poor and swampy soil. But there is a drawback to the cultivation of sugar which is most serious, and that is, that the rainfall on the south coast does not exceed 35 inches, whilst my experience has taught me that even 50 inches is too low an average for sugar-planting; and again, the rainfall in New Guinea is not sufficiently distributed throughout the year. To purchase these 12,000 acres cost me over £500, without reckoning the loss of time (which in my case would, at the very least, be another £500), and the risk of health, if not life. As to what the natives received for their land, I have no hesitation in avowing that, having taken every precaution to make the natives fully and unquestionably understand the transaction, I bought it as cheap as I could. The amount actually received by the natives (exclusive of presents, which valued over £50) was £140, which is comparatively more than I ever paid for land in Fiji for sugar- or cotton-growing. I took the following precautions to make the purchases of land binding on the vendors: The natives at Port Moresby are called Motu and their language the same, and which language is understood for forty miles east and sixty miles west of Port Moresby. The land I purchased is situated thirty miles west of Port Moresby and seven miles inland, and here the natives are called Kabadians and their language Kabadi, but 10 per cent. of them understand Motu, and all the natives I dealt with understood Motu. Before leaving Thursday Island for New Guinea I met Mr. Goldie, the well-known naturalist, who had been exploring the New Guinea coast from the Papuan Gulf to the extreme east for the last eight years, and he told me that the only land he knew of fit for sugar or cotton-growing was between the Ipsi and Aroa Rivers, about thirty miles west of Port Moresby, and he informed me that he had applied to the Home Government for a grant of such land, in consideration of his services in exploring, and the good he had done the natives of New Guinea. When Mr. Goldie understood my capabilities as a surveyor, and that I had had experience in Fiji in purchasing land from natives, he proposed to join me, and to go and endeavour to purchase the land he referred to from the natives. I accordingly accompanied Mr. Goldie, in his schooner the "Alice Meade," to Port Moresby. Here Mr. Lawes, the missionary, kindly translated the portion of a deed which I had prepared, and which referred to the actual conveyance of land, into the Motu language. There is no written Motu language, but the mission have taught some of the natives to write and read their language in the Roman characters, and these natives are called teachers. As the interpreters who were to accompany me could not read, I caused Ruatoka, a teacher at Port Moresby, to explain the clause translated by Mr. Lawes to my interpreters, which he did until they knew the clause by heart. When I arrived at Boera, which is about ten miles west of Port Moresby, I took another interpreter, named Daru, chief of Boera, who was a Motu, but also spoke Kabadi language perfectly, and I caused the teacher at Boera, named Piri, to read Mr. Lawes' written translation to him, which he did several times. I then proceeded to Ivio, a village in the country of the Kabadi, in the neighbourhood of which the land referred to by Mr. Goldie was situated. I should here state that I found that, as in Fiji, the land did not necessarily belong to the chiefs, but to certain individuals who may be described as the landowners. I do not know how they acquire their rights, but they are recognized by the natives as the owners of the land. My interpreters explained to the landowners that the object of my visit was to purchase land, and they promised to have a talk over it amongst themselves, and which talk, as far as I could see, consisted of addresses from the verandahs to the whole of the inhabitants of the village. I would mention that, on the occasion of public speeches, the speaker has a prompter, who kindly does the needful when the speaker is at a loss for a word. On the occasion I now refer to a man named Vagi was the prompter; but often the speaker's wife is the prompter. These palavers lasted for a week, and at last the landowners agreed to sell us land, provided we did not bring more than six white men on to the land. I found that one inducement for selling the land was that the owners thought we should assist to protect them against a neighbouring tribe, named Koitapians, with whom there was a feud. The owners all made their mark to the deed of sale, and it was witnessed by the interpreters and the chiefs. I marked out the land by triangulation, and I took every precaution that all parties concerned, and the natives generally, should understand that they had parted with their land for ever, and that such land would be used for the purpose of growing sugar and cotton. But even if I was duped by the vendors, I do not see that it can be a matter of any public interest, and therefore I leave the subject. But I do most emphatically say that the purchase was made, as far as my experience goes, in the most fair and legitimate way possible.

There is one incident occurred on my visit to New Guinea which I regret to have to mention, but which I do not think I ought to suppress. After completing the purchase of the land as above mentioned, I went east; and I heard from Mr. Chalmers, the missionary, that the natives repudiated my purchase, as I had not purchased of the right owners. I therefore determined to return to Kabadi. I sailed up the Ipsi as far as I could, and then rowed up in the dingy. I arrived at dark, and went up to the village, with four other white men. As soon as the villagers saw us I discovered they meant mischief; but eventually they were pacified, and I had a talk with them, and then the natives informed me that Mr. Chalmers (or Tamasi, as the natives call him), the missionary, had told them that they must return the trade—[for the information of the uninitiated I may here state that all barter, such as tomahawks, beads, cloth, tobacco, knives, &c., is called "trade" in the South Sea Islands—and must not sell their land, as the white men would steal their women and take them away in vessels, and that, if the men interfered, they would be shot and driven back into the mountains; and, in fact, these natives gave me to understand that I and my companions had been made out to them to be the advance guard to the lowest type of villains. Mr. Chalmers may possibly say that all this was the invention of the natives, but I will venture to say that the natives have not the necessary genius to invent such a tale, and, what is more, that they had no motive in doing so. Mr. John Exton, Mr. Charles Hunstein, and Mr. Edward Snow were with me, and will confirm what I have above recited. However, after some talk, the sale of land was confirmed by Urevadu and his people. I will next speak of the question of annexation. As far as my individual interests are concerned, if I were assured that no other nation would annex, I should be indifferent whether the British Government did or did not do so. As a colonial, I should be glad to see New