

tions to be given from time to time by the late Special Commissioner. No discretionary legal or administrative authority was thus allowed, and the only instructions furnished to me were to stay at Port Moresby and make a local collection for the Indian and Colonial Exhibition.

These facts I did not think it expedient to make generally known, as I was the only British official representing to a certain extent Her Majesty's authority in the Protectorate.

Without embarking on any important or questionable step, however, I guided myself by the spirit and intention of the General Instructions from Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies to the late Special Commissioner himself. They were similar to those of a later date received by your Excellency, and served in some measure to direct my relations with the Natives. Certain previous experience of barbarous tribes in Canada and South Africa, likewise, I felt would enable me to begin the introduction of a native policy after acquiring proper local knowledge.

Two and a half months of this position passed, and then Sir Peter Scratchley arrived at the end of August. He expressed himself fully satisfied and pleased with what little had been done, and agreed in some suggestions for future measures. These were comparatively few and merely verbal on my part, as I did not then feel assured on several points under my observation.

In addition to seeing what I could for myself, I gathered all the information obtainable from persons of any local experience, such as *bêche-de-mer* fishers, collectors, &c.; and I must express my obligation to all classes alike for the ready and courteous way in which numerous inquiries were met with, the access also kindly afforded to printed and other matter accumulated for more than ten years at the Mission, and similar facilities from Mr. A. Goldie, collector, explorer, resident, and trader of ten years' experience, who placed his notes, extracts, and time, &c., freely at my disposal. I gained a great deal of useful material for framing a future policy.

With the Rev. Mr. Lawes, the representative of this branch of the London Missionary Society, I was in close communication, as I have stated, for four and a half months, and learnt much of his local experience and views with regard to the natives. For his considerate help on many points of interest and value I owe him sincere acknowledgments.

In September, a few days after the arrival of the "Governor Blackall," a further commission was handed to me by Sir Peter Scratchley, creating me a Deputy-Commissioner for the portion of the Western Pacific included in the Protectorate and the Solomon Islands. This commission was subsequently recalled, owing to a presumable informality in its preparation. That sent in substitution only takes effect in this Protectorate, the Solomon Islands being excluded.

As your Excellency is aware, these commissions are limited to British subjects, and give no authority for dealing with cases in which foreigners—*i.e.*, Germans, Chinese, French, escapees, &c., and alien natives, Malays, Polynesians, &c.—are included; yet all these are found on this coast.

Had I adhered, therefore, strictly to my increased but still utterly inadequate legal powers under the Western Pacific commission much valuable time would have been lost in creating proper impressions of discipline and control in the minds of the natives and those most intimately associated with them by marriage, *bêche-de-mer* fishing, &c.

According to John Stuart Mill, the "true criteria of good government are order and progress." To effect these objects will doubtless take some little time and trouble in this territory, but they are not impossible with firm and consistent management, and could not possibly be promoted by a policy of "masterly inactivity." Confusion would have arisen in the native mind also, since they were led to expect at the date of the protectorate (two years ago) a more decided influence over their conduct and affairs.

After several conversations with him, I received an assurance privately from the late Special Commissioner that I could count upon his support in the case of action I considered it desirable to take. Where I could do so conveniently, therefore, I encouraged the so-called chiefs to appeal to Government authority, and to regard the Resident here as the proper adviser and arbitrator in all difficulties and disputes.

On the departure of the late Special Commissioner from these waters on the 29th November last year, I received a special warrant or supplementary commission from him, empowering me "to administer the affairs of British New Guinea" during his absence. I regarded this as conferring the fullest authority which he could delegate to act for the maintenance of law and order and the promotion of civilisation and improvement in respect of all classes. This warrant is dated only four days before Sir P. H. Scratchley's death, after I had been for six months in the local service under his supervision, and I held it conveyed increased confidence in my conduct and views.

Such were the powers with which I was intrusted. I will now state as briefly as I can the chief events in which natives were concerned since my association with the Protectorate.

4. One of the first most valuable steps towards adjusting Government relations with our natives was the return by the Queensland Government of more than four hundred obtained from the Eastern Archipelago and mainland in 1883 and 1884 for the labour trade in that colony.

At the time it was decided to return these men Mr. Deputy Commissioner Romilly suffered from ill-health, and it seemed doubtful whether he could superintend, as an officer of the Protectorate, their return, and the compensation provided for relatives who had died in Queensland. It was held important that such an officer should be identified with the duty in order to increase confidence in local authority and its influence amongst the natives. Sir Peter Scratchley therefore proposed to send me in the s.s. "Victoria" to represent the Protectorate. Your Excellency has seen the late Special Commissioner's despatch and instructions to me on this subject, and, as they were subsequently overruled, I do not annex copies.

Mr. Romilly, having improved in health by the date of the departure of the "Victoria," undertook to accompany her, and reported upon her cruise on his return to Queensland in July. All papers relative to this voyage were printed, and, I believe, are in your possession.

I have already had the honour to draw your Excellency's attention to the fact that there are