

The Island of Muyu or Woodlark in Oceania

by

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When you, honorable colleagues, confided to this commission, of which you elected me to form part and for which I had to be a spokesman, the happy burden of visiting the museum of the seminary of the Foreign Missions of our city, you did not know by any chance that that was equivalent to writing for yourselves a new page in the history of civilization; for this beginning of a collection of objects carried here among us by the reverend priests of the Foreign Missions has been the subject of inquiries and studies, which have involved the history of the places from which these objects came, their territorial conditions, so much worthy of being more deeply studied in as much as they refer, for the most part, to a locality discovered so little time ago, but not yet sufficiently known.

I will soon make known to you, my colleagues, with the greatest candour, how more than from books and from printed statements, of which outside of some short letters, how I have hoarded the oral statements of the missionary Don Carlo Salerio, to whom is owed the greater part of the objects which compose the museum today, gathered in the time in which he himself went spreading, in the islands of Melanesia, the seed of the Gospel of Christ, in the confidence that with the Christian religion there ought to sprout at the same time the tree of civilization. And to me it is precious to have pronounced the name of the zealous priest and apostle, to render to him the most honorable testimony, not only for his great learning and culture but even more for the not easily found courtesy and modesty with which to me and to the other members of the commission, he has replied to our questions, and has put at our disposal the multitudinous stores of knowledge which include information concerning all these objects of the museum, which information he presented to us and concerning which he gave us the most detailed account.

Once we had completed our observations at the museum, and obtained all the explanations which we had to, we limited ourselves, seeing that, to best satisfy the mandate we had received, it would be a convenient thing to divide the work among ourselves, each one elaborating his own commentary on that material, in which he felt himself most competent, all of us agreeing on this that we ought not dilate very much the description of those objects and products belonging entirely to lands fully explored and to people well enough known, because we would have been able to say nothing new and of interest to science, we insist on the contrary on all that which was little or not at all known through the commentaries of travellers and of geographers.

Therefore we inferred that we ought to treat minutely all that touched particularly the island in Oceania called Woodlark, discovered in these most recent times, of which neither Bougainville, nor De Rienzi, nor Dumont D'Urville, nor Graberg, nor Balbi, nor Marmocchi, nor Dally, nor Vahlen, nor any others, travellers, geographers or writers, whom I know outside of these, outside of certain missionary letters as I have already said, none of these have informed us of Woodlark up to now.

And it seemed to me that I ought to treat of this island especially, as the objects which we have examined and which have forced us to pay attention

to them; for the most part come from that island and I was of the opinion that all that had been the occasion of my studying the possible historical events of that island, of studying the conditions promoting civilization in that untamed land would be not only for that island, but for all Oceania, investigating the habits and customs and all that was connected to them; for a cold presentation of the objects of the museum of Saint Calocero would have succeeded in arousing little enough interest, and in being of no practical use.

I

The last part of the earth to be discovered and unknown even to the ancients, was, as everyone knows, Oceania; but for this reason it is not at all to be regarded as less great and less important; on the contrary, while yet little known and little studied, all the same it is known to extend in itself over more than the rest of the globe and to be bigger than Europe, if we wish to calculate the total of the surface of the oceanic lands, valuing this total at 3,100,000 sq. miles; and it is rich in such natural products which can one day be of value to Europeans, who will know how to exploit them in such a way as to lead to very lively trade.

Positioned between Asia, Africa, South America and the Antarctic Ocean, more precisely latitude 35 North and 56 South and between longitude 91 East and 105 West that is of the meridian through Paris, Oceania has been by travelers and geographers considered and divided more or less according to their own wishes in various ways: however generally it has been distributed into four great parts, which are Malaysia, Micronesia, Polynesia and Melanesia.(X)

(X) Malaysia, which Malte Brun had called the Western Ocean has its name from the geographer Lesson, because the shores of these great islands are populated by peoples of the Malay race: Micronesia from the two Greek words small, and island: Polynesia from many , islands: Melanesia, island, black, because almost all the lands in Melanesia are inhabited by black people.

This latter is by chance the largest, comprising an area of 381,000 square leagues, and although it is the most savage has all the same important cities, such as Dori, the Bay of Wood of sandalwood in the island of Viti Levu, Hobart-Town, Sydney, a port frequented by Europeans, populated by more than 45,000 inhabitants and already endowed with blossoming institutions which will be the reservoir of civilization for these regions yet still barbarous.

Between the many islands of Melanesia, which are for the most part of volcanic formation, and, as all the lands of Oceania, perhaps the many ruins of a destroyed continent, in the archipelago or group of the Louisiades rises that which the natives call Muju which we designate with the name Woodlark, as it is named in the most recent geographic maps and

around which we have promised to concentrate our researches and our studies.

The Louisiades, which is a chain of islands discovered by Bougainville in 1767, and called in honor of Louis XV King of France, occupies a space of 120 leagues swinging from east-south-east to west-north-west, from the Cape of Deliverance to the island of Lusancay and to the Bay of the Orangerie, narrowest at the east but about forty leagues wide on the west, this group was little enough explored by travelers and sailors and the islands which compose it are vaguely indicated on the maps. The best maps barely trace the outlines of the islands. De Rienzi and D'Urville, which we consulted, do not know how to sight with any certainty any islands except Rossel, St. Aignan, Entrecasteaux, Bonvouloir, Trobriand, Lusancay, which they called the most notable, noticing then the Laughlan group which they wrongly declared to be uninhabited, and at nine miles to the west from the Laughlan group a small prominence called by D'Urville Cannac, or according to others Vinein, and which stands practically mid-way between Laughlan and Woodlark.

From this it does not seem of any great use to turn the discussion largely to this island of the Louisiades which calls itself Woodlark; however, beyond what we have since recorded by the most renowned descriptions of travelers and from the fact that the island is only named, as we have indicated, in the most recent geographical maps of Oceania, the island then is almost a new subject; and it is worth pouring this new light on this part of Oceania and to carry this not unwished for material on this the fifth part of the world and to wish to occupy ourselves with it, this part of the world so varied through nature, through race, through uses, through customs, always and in every regard interesting, as this very paper will prove.

II

The island of Woodlark is situated at 9 7 49 of latitude and at longitude 151 west of the Paris meridian: it is about 60 miles in length and of varying width, its greatest diameter being thirty miles, its discovery came no earlier than the year 1832.

Not that through these regions there didn't pass any other European navigator before this, since Bougainville, Admiral d'Entrecasteaux, Rossel, captain Laughlan, Saint Aignan, d'Urville, De Rienzi and many others passed not distant from it in traveling to New Guinea; but, perhaps because of the lowness of the island, although it does contain some high mountains, or perhaps through some optical reason or some other phenomenon at a distance of three miles the island was not noticed in the sea, which happened in the same way to the nearby islands of Nada, and it always escaped from the eyes of the keen travelers.

Only in 1832 an English whaling vessel called Woodlark, which in our language is: *l'allodola del bosco*, discovered the island, and although the sailors did not land there, gave it their own name; and the charts from now

on assigned this name to it, not the name of Muju, which its own inhabitants had given it up till then. (X)

The first Europeans who had to put foot on the islands eight years after, according to Montrouzier, and according to our information thirteen years afterwards, were marked by a cruel tragedy: this in itself was worthy of an opera and I tell it separately, in order to illustrate the true and wild countenance of these parts.

A ship, the Marie Sydney, also a whaler, going by the implements which were found afterwards, battered by a furious storm, came to break-up on the coral reefs which surrounded the islands of Nada or of Laughlan, so called from the name of their discoverer.

(X) Oceanie, by C.L.Domeny De Rienzi. Vol. III, p. 341. Paris, Firmin Didot, 1837. De Rienzi and other travelers affirm that the Laughlan islands were uninhabited; but the events which we refer to on this page, and several letters of missionaries, affirm the contrary.

There were thirty-three man aboard, and all saved themselves, reaching the shore, where they carried the provisions and all which the ship contained. The islands of Nada are only a little group of five miles diameter in any direction, exactly as De Rienzi makes known, which contain eight low islets, wooded, and rich in coconut trees alone, they were discovered in 1812 by Captain Laughlan of the Mary, who gave them his own name (X). Eighteen months the castaways remained in these islands undisturbed without the inhabitants molesting them in any way, and from the remains of the Mary Sydney they were able to prepare of smaller tonnage certainly, but such that it could sail again. Overcome by serious attacks of fever and by other illnesses, nineteen of them died, and were buried by the rest on the shore, their tombs were seen by the missionaries, who landed there years afterwards, easily distinguished by piles of shells which had been placed on top of them.

Thus lessened in numbers, and having almost consumed their provisions, they made use of the language which they had scarcely learned, they tried to have themselves accepted with the islanders; but when they tried to make further contacts, because they dared to carry their eyes and their desires toward the women, of which their husbands in that place are very jealous, the husbands proposed to them to take away any cause of disagreement, to give wives to them. In fact they gave to the sailors of the Marie Sydney women from Muju that is from their own families; since the islands of Nada are a possession of the Woodlark people, and are distant from Muju only 20 miles, so that the relations are the same between the two islands and the two islands have the same families.

But the Europeans were still not pleased, and there took place further immodest events; because of this the jealous islanders, raised themselves up in fury, seized their lances and clubs, and declared war against the

sailors and the first consequence of the hostility was the burning of the new ship, just completed and masted.

With harmony so destroyed, the English resolved to abandon the island and to look for a calmer refuge in the island of Woodlark, in which they were encouraged by their wives who were, as I have said, from that island. Embracing the suggestion, and also stimulated by hunger, they took themselves there in canoes, scarcely had they disembarked there, than, advised again by their women, they laid down their rifles because armed with them they did not inspire any fear in the islanders and would have been refused any hospitality; but this was wretched advice, and as you will hear, an act of sovereign cruelty.

When a stranger arrives fresh on the island, according to the old custom, he is immediately accepted under the protection of some local inhabitant or other, who with this acceptance obliges himself to feed the stranger and to defend him during all the time in which he remains. This was the custom followed on the arrival in Woodlark of the former sailors from the Marie Sydney. One of them was lucky enough to be accepted under the protection of an extremely bold and daring man, brother of the chief, or the most feared man on the island. And because of personal difference there stood between the two brothers a bitter discord. Now it happened that the elders gathered in council, according to their custom, in order to deliberate whether the new arrivals should be held in friendship, because to them were not unknown the types of sins of which the sailors had already rendered themselves culpable with the neighbouring islanders of the Laughlan islands; and so all waited until the chief, or guajac (as they call him), might scrape the root of the taro, in order to give an indication of well-wishing and peace with which they ought to receive the strangers. But the chief did not scrape the root, and his brother, as soon as this sign of enmity appeared, went off, without waiting for anything further, the stranger whom he had declared under his protection with him. This was then the signal for the rupture; because of this the others suddenly leapt up and gave a war-cry, made the funeral shell resound, which indicated a general uprising, and massacred without pity all the new arrivals, except this single one who remained unharmed.

He lived with his protector for some time, until, perhaps tired of excessive subjection, and more than that, distrusting his protector, because of the very fierce as well as generous character he had, the survivor wandered off, keeping to the woods. It is true that the friendly relationship between the two was not destroyed by this, for the sailor often took himself to his protector to procure provisions; but from that point on he had no other aspirations than to look for the chance of taking himself off from the island for always. He made himself a canoe, and watched from a point on the island if ever it might be given to him to see another ship; until, after he had spent two years on the island in the wilds, he one day saw a vessel. He got into his canoe, and rowed strongly to it, and reached it, received with great humanity and taken safely back to Sydney.

III

We cannot explain for what infernal designs this man, instead of speaking about the slaughter of his companions and the miseries of Woodlark, extolled instead its hospitality and its riches; he spoke of very fertile pastures and other natural riches, and because of this the French Marists of the missions, were greatly inspired and bought bullocks and horses and objects of practical utility for over one hundred thousand francs, they sailed at this time with monsignor Colomb, to establish there a mission.

Everything went in a most unlucky way and was lost: the imported animals died, the products did not respond to sowing and cultivation, they did not respond to the most tiring and expensive toil.

The terrain of Woodlark, as of all the islands of this part of Oceania, is entirely of white coral, and indeed a crust of this acts as a type of lid over the waters. In the islands the earth does not cover this crust except as a stratum placed on it of no more than an arms length, and so it holds as a natural consequence that vegetation with deep roots cannot grow there, and that those of our plants which in vain try to acclimatize themselves there do not find sufficient nutrition.

As regards trees, there takes the first place the coconut tree, which as well as its wood useful in many ways, as you will find it adapted in many items we will later look at, it furnishes a type of sugary milk tasty enough and fresh, and providential in these torrid areas; from whence it is with the big wood which it contains, and with the fruit of the banana, these things quench the thirst of the local inhabitants, more than drinking the water of their rivers, which fall from the mountains furrowing in many planes that island before flowing into the sea, and more than the water from their wells. The palm grows there with its luxurious leaves and is used in many ways also, the pandanus, another palm tree, gives an excellent fruit. The puarer, or bread-tree, grows there but does not enjoy too much favour, as also in very small way are suited the grapefruit and not at all the lemon, citrus fruits which the natives hold as something poisonous, whose fruit in this place is very small, but none the less the fruit is juicy and good, with a bitter sweet taste which resembles that of the orange tree, our missionaries extracted from the fruits delicious drinks of not inconsiderable restorative powers in the suffocatingly hot days.

The most cultivated vegetables are the taro, banana, potato, igname, mongol, cirau, sago and the sea-grape. Our colleague, Dr G.B. Scotti, more competent in such matters, provides a careful idea of all these in his separate report. I will follow it in great part in order to fulfill the demands of this particular document. The taro is very much like red beetroot. The bulb is cut into pieces, and buried in the earth, then it shoots through buds. The plant then dies and sends out buds again, this time four or five tiny plants appear from the inside. The taro is called sinasin in Woodlark. It is

eaten cooked and is excellent to taste. It is the usual food and the main food in Muju. Indeed, on the island there are very few other subsistence foods. The banana or paradise-banana has a stem or trunk surmounted by three or four growths in the shape of clusters. These clusters are long enough containing many pieces of fruit in a shape something like that of a water-melon. But the taste is different being something like that of a fig, a pear and a pine-apple. Also the trunk gives a sweet liquid which when sucked slakes the thirst. When the fruit is not properly ripe it is made into bread and this is eaten as food when it is seasoned. However it is not very nutritious. In neighbouring islands this bread is cooked under the ashes, chewed by the mother and then put into the mouths of the babies as the one food they receive during the first seven or eight months of life. Cut and dried the stuff is eaten like figs. The pulp of the plant is eaten as a vegetable but the people of Woodlark have little taste for it. The root, dried in the sun, is an excellent fuel. As well as all this the people can take from the leaves pens for writing for the leaves have an extremely hard end. The potato is identical with ours and is called a 'caracca' potato (or a galleon-potato). The igname or kuvis (botanical name: *dioscorea*) is rather a tuber. It can be conserved or kept for a long time. It reaches a weight of 125 small pounds equal to 45 metric pounds. The usual weight is some 30 small pounds or nine and one-half metric pounds. It requires deep soil and is planted in the holes from which dead trees have been dug. It exhausts the soil of nutritive juices to such an extent that the soil is not ready for cultivation until after another eight or ten years have passed. There are igname like our potatoes, in two colours, white and red. They are simply boiled in water or toasted. Both the igname and the taro are cooked on the coals or in pots. The people are accustomed to add to them gallas, the fruit of a shrub of similar type to our large capsicum (*capsicum annuum*), but with leaves which are lighter in colour and larger. The mongoi is a very tasty fruit and one which is easily digestible. It is about the size of a small peach. It has a very white clean pulp with a reddish skin and its seed is small enough. It is like the cherry. One can eat a large amount of it without feeling any heaviness. Indeed, one feels almost a sense of relief as if one had a sherbert in one's stomach. The cirau is like a small melon, green on the outside with a white enough flesh but having a sweetness which is almost sickening with something of the taste of butter. It contains a rather prominent acorn distinctive because one half is nut coloured and the other half is black streaked with white. The lebbi or sago is a tree whose foot is cut into pieces which are grated or reduced to a mush. When this has been boiled with a great deal of water which foams up, it leaves behind a flour which, dried in the sun, is shaped into edible loaves of bread after being cooked in coconut milk. The island abounds in lebbi in places which are singularly swampy. It acquired great popularity which can be seen from the frequent and pleasurable use made of it by our missionaries. But in reality it is not very nutritious and is rather tasteful when eaten apart from coconut milk. Now that they have plenty of iron hatchets the natives chop down many of them which they grind by rubbing vigorously with their arms and

then reduce to loaves of five or six pounds. The labbi could become a valuable product in these parts if the people knew how to conserve it (or rather if they had some way of conserving it pulverized). Since when it is well dried it does not easily spoil and it can be put to many uses as we do with the flour made from our grain, i.e. to types of pasta, to bread, to soup and so on. The sea-grape grows on the reefs. It has the taste of sorrel and is put to great use. Foodstuffs which are not widely used include, as already mentioned, the puarer or breadfruit which here is scarcely found even as a plant. Other food-sources not greatly used include the following; the coconut tree. This beneficent tree), which offers to the other Indians both food and a type of butter, and oil, and spirits, and timbers for luxury work and for ordinary work and so many other advantages. This coconut tree is almost useless to the people of Woodlark because they do not know how to extract from it the oil of Galappa for food which, while immediately digestible, soon becomes useful only as an ointment. They do not use it in these ways but they extract from it a drink. There are vegetables but neglected because in general juices made strong by the sun produce heat or flavour in cooking. The coloquintide, a type of pumpkin which for us is drastically violent is for them merely a light purge. They do not make great use of it but all the same they eat it often enough and the resulting evacuations are of the same red scarlet colour as this pumpkin produces when joined with better cooking.

They seldom have recourse to the flesh of land animals although they are very greedy for it. The wild boar which roams in the woods and eats up the fields of taro and igname and after which they give chase, presents plenty of difficulties as it roams through forests which are very dense and intricate and it does not provide more than a scarce measure of meat. It is rather small even though it is the largest animal of the island. At present the people would be able to make great use of domestic pork but they kill the boars only rarely and on the occasion of some great feast or for general banquets.

The scojattolo (cuscus), called in the language of the island koadoi, is looked for because it is very pleasing to the palate.

The goat, or rather a type of goat called Kangaroo, is small and not very tasty.

The woods are full of birds but they do not make great use of them. They keep domestic fowls and also make catches of wild ducks.

Rather than hunting with a bow they delight in fishing either by means of nets or with hooks. The fish to these islanders is a much sought after food and fortunately it teems in their waters.

There are many species of fish of which some are of enormous size.

The following deserve special mention: the gagat or tonna, the tamadao, the sea-cow, and the turtle.

The tamadao is an enormous fish, an amphibian, it whistles with a sharp whistle, it is similar to a seal and suckles its own young. The tamadao is hunted underwater however, because it has a small mouth it cannot bite, so the islander dives into the water with several other fish

holding nothing in his mouth but a snare. He struggles and twists around the fish until it shuts its respiratory system. He then drives it into the snare and suffocates it. In this type of hunting there is no danger unless one happens to become rolled up with the fish in the depths. The fresh meat of the tamadao is exquisite.

Usually the fish are cooked between heated stones, or under mud), or sometimes in water.

(Para)Turtles abound in fresh and salt water.

The salt water turtles reach a length of a meter and a width almost as great, but they have a thin shell. The river turtles have a much thicker shell.

The missionary Salerio counted in one female sea turtle around 2000 eggs, some mature and others not. The turtles are accustomed to lay their eggs on the sea-shore and cover them with sand; the eggs are not appetizing but are not bad to eat.

Also the crocodiles, which inhabit the waters and banks of the rivers, deposit many eggs of all sizes.

Returning to the turtles, I find it amusing to narrate to you how a strange prejudice prevents them from being eaten for eight months of the year. The natives fear that the turtles have to come back to life again to be then eaters of igrname.

Crustaceans are also eaten but they are eaten quickly and they say that an excess of them renders one torpid and slow to move. Perhaps it is the easy bringing on of indigestion which causes in their season a certain torpidity among the people.

Normally the people of Woodlark have two meals a day, one in the middle of the morning, the other towards evening: the people sit on their heels to eat outside their huts, and all gathered around a common pot.

Besides sucking coconut milk the people drink practically nothing else but water, from the rivers and from wells. On the shores of the sea the wells receive water from the sea but this water becomes fresh as it filters through the sand. At high tide the water in the wells goes down and at low tide it rises.

Those who admit the action of the moon on the waters of the sea will give the easiest explanation to such a phenomenon; since that which attracts or releases periodically the great mass of the waves will form a rise and fall, because the attracting influence of the moon is taken away the seas waters left to their own weight will sink down into the sea and re-enter in suspension into the porous sections of the earth and so will rise in the hollow of the wells.

On the other side is the influence of the earth, when the waters of the sea are raised this prevents their escape through the passages of the earth, instead they flow from these and from the wells sucked out to go back into the great mass of the sea which is raised in the same fashion as a globule.

However this theory is not obviously correct, as yet there still remain objections on the part of a number of physicists.

The excellent drink extracted from the cava, is not known here: It is used in the islands of central Oceania, where the missionaries taught how to

prepare it better, by grating the roots, soaking them in cold water and pressing them. The liquid is decanted off, it is used as we would use coffee during the great gatherings of people from the neighbouring islands and of the old people. Once the old people used to content themselves with chewing the root for a long time, they formed small pellets of the stuff in their mouths, the missionaries believed that their saliva did not penetrate these pellets, perhaps because of the properties of the root. These pellets were used again as they were given to the children to eat.

Another vegetable which is sucked is the tou or sugar-cane.

The coconut does not provide for the people a food which is muel, that is, of importance, however it does provide a drink when the nut has not reached its full maturity.

IV

I will now discuss the population of the island of Woodlark. To judge from existing ruins and similar indications the population must have been greater some time ago. There seem to have been several thousand more men and many more villages. But the island has been desolated for a long time by various groups ceaselessly calling one another to war. Many villages were destroyed so that over a vast area there no longer remain any. Today the population has been reduced to not much more than two thousand inhabitants.

Without counting the villages which are in the mountains we have mapped on our map of the island, which is attached to the present document, the following villages; Kudui, Topu, Uamen, Surok, Uadenai, Koadeo, Lavat, Guazup, Ovatar, Uatator; this does not include the many other small islands which stand like so many satellites around Woodlark and not far from it.

V

From this point on the history of the island is marked by the presence of the missionaries; Monsignor Colomb and his Marists arrived and were not long in realizing how shamelessly they had been tricked concerning the territory and the men of Woodlark. After, a stay, which was almost entirely fruitless, these left and were followed by the missionaries of the Seminary of the Foreign Missions of Milan. It is to these that we owe the objects which have been collected in the museum and which we have been asked to point out.

It is to be greatly regretted that the careful collection of many other objects made by the same collector, Don Carlos Salerio, had to be abandoned by him. The objects were already packed, but because of the difficulties of transport, in the vessels available, it was impossible for him to load them. However we still have very rich material concerning the

geology of the islands, their shells, their birds and the insects of these remote parts. There are many specimens and they offer to us some very marvelous things to see. They are remarkable for their rareness, size, variety of species, richness of colours. I will touch on these matters below when the occasion arises.

The Melanesian missionaries were on Woodlark for a good four years so they were able to understand the language, the ways and the customs of the people, the properties of the soil and the nature of the climate. And I, who have heard of the information in question from their own lips, will endeavour to co-ordinate it to suit the purposes we have proposed for ourselves.

VI

Before I complete my historical sketch, so to say, of this island, I must still make a brief mention to you of how the seed of the Gospel, sown here by French missionaries and by our own missionaries, did not produce an abundant or stable fruit as we have seen it sprout in the early times of Christianity. However, in those early times it fell on land already ploughed and prepared for the most part by civilization. In Woodlark it took hold in the hearts of the young and of the children. In the maxims and principles of the Gospel these perhaps found a greater independence. The older ones refused to accept it. They saw in the clearing of deep rooted prejudice from the minds of the younger ones, a gradual lessening and disappearing of their own authority, so that they would no longer be respected by the minors. I will make a final observation that if the missionaries had continued on civilization would have been able to open a road for itself together with religion though not so quickly as it could have done with the means which it seemed good to me to suggest earlier. However the insupportable expenses and the scarceness of masses dissuaded the priests of our seminary from staying longer. We do not know if after that any European foot was seen on this ungrateful island.

When on 28 August 1855 Giovanni Mazzucconi, a saintly graduate from our seminary of St. Calocero, back from the island of Rook where he had worn out his health, he anchored after sailing from Sydney on the brig "The Gazelle" with the Christian hope of rejoining his companions on Woodlark and not knowing that they had already left. When the brig came to be trapped in the coral reefs surrounding the island the inhabitants of Woodlark, instigated by Lagojumai, the head of these savages, whether solely motivated by the motive of plunder or fearful of seeing the return among them of these proclaimers of the new teaching which had overthrown their authority, approached by means of trickery and under the cloak of friendship, the wrecked ship and they barbarously slaughtered the good Mazzucconi and with him the whole crew. They plundered everything then, leaving the vessel abandoned amongst the coral banks at the mercy of the waves and the reefs.

A similar fate could have overtaken "The Favourite". This was a

schooner hired by the Melanesian missionary Timoleone Raimondi, it set out from Sydney on 14 April 1856 to travel through these seas searching for his companion Mazzucconi; they stopped for eight days in front of Woodlark and then discovered, floating among the coral, opposite the port of the missionaries, the ill-fated "Gazelle". (*The port of the missionaries was at the point of Vatatal.) They resisted the treacherous invitations and the false shows of friendship from the islanders, for Raimondi very quickly suspected them. However, they did not immediately leave this cruel shore. This is shown because a young savage, already almost converted to the faith by Salerio and his companions, climbed on board the ship and revealed the intentions of the islanders to put as many as were on the ship mercilessly to death.** (**Narrative of the death of the apostolic missionary Dom. Giovanni Mazzucconi; a letter of the missionary Timoleone Raimondi -- Milan, editor Pogliani.)

When he was informed from the "Gazelle" of the massacre the Governor of Sydney wished to take a violent revenge. He was urged to this by the relations of the Captain and was moved to it by the indignant complaints of the newspapers. He asked advice of our missionary Raimondi who certainly did not urge revenge. However, we do not know if these intentions of the Governor would ever have been put into execution. Neither do we know what would have happened on the abandoned island of Woodlark and so we are forced to bring our historical narrative to an end. Instead we must direct our observations and considerations towards the nature of the race of the inhabitants of the island so that we can speak of their theories in theogony and cosmogony, their superstitions, their climate and products and to sum up, of everything which concerns this part of Oceania, which is so little known.

VII

After the account of the vicissitudes of Woodlark, the first question which naturally comes to us is then whether the good carried out there by European missionaries both in the interests of religion and those of civilization, will be completely lost. Whether indeed these people, whose point of view is so repulsive to European eyes, will prove unreceptive to every approach of civilization.

We truly would fear this if we shared the opinion of those who hold that the half-breed Oceanic race is not capable of producing a fertile posterity. Instead, we consider that from the mixture of races, from European spouses with those of Oceania, will come a stable foundation for civilization, which will be spread throughout the whole of this huge section of the universe.

Let us devote some words to this matter which seems of so much importance.

The great number of distinct peoples which one meets in Oceania would incline one to believe that they are the scattered remains of other races, which do not constitute a particular race in themselves. Also in their

traditions very few of these races can find a cosmogony which immediately relates to the land which they now inhabit. Instead their traditions point to lands far distant and much larger, which they cannot now point to or describe.

Among all the races which present themselves to the observer's eye there are two varieties which, externally, are quite distinct because of the colour of their skins. The colour of one is between black and chestnut brown, less shiny than that of the African negro, The other, and this is more common, is of yellowish colour with a great number of shades.

Their customs do not differ greatly, so that there are relationships and affinities between their various languages. Many words are of common origin, even though it is a fact that the different language groups do not understand one another. It is not easy to work out the lines along which these people have spread throughout these many archipelagoes. Peoples of different origin and race are found everywhere sometimes in the same area, even in the same island, as on New Caledonia. The inhabitant of Viti, or Fiji, is black, that of Tonga is yellowish, and so on.

The Louisiade archipelago, and also the island of Woodlark, which is our particular subject, the archipelago of the Trobriands and all along the east coast of New Guinea and New Guinea itself towards the east, belong to the yellow variety or andamen race. New Georgia and the Solomon Islands belong to the black variety.

The Australian aborigine is certainly the one above all others who appears most degraded and deformed. One would say he is incapable of breeding with civilized races. However, there have been notable examples showing that he also is a member of the human family.

As for the Oceanic peoples of the Louisiade archipelago amongst whom are those of Woodlark, of New Guinea, of New Ireland, of the Solomons, and of almost all other localities which are little explored; they are people either abandoned by the Europeans or rarely visited by them. So they cannot provide an opportunity to form a true judgment on this matter. But we can say that their quality does not seem at all negative to such a fusion of races. However, the Catholic missionaries of France and Italy, who spent some time amongst them, advise against such a compatibility, also, we are given further sureness by the survivors of "The Mary", Sydney. These married women from Woodlark and had off-spring. These off-spring were observed rather to keep the characteristics of the maternal race rather than that of the paternal, especially in colour.

This question which we have clarified, as we have done, has awoken in others strong contrary suspicions and we wish here to touch on this as it seems to us of vital importance for many of these islands, e.g. Fiji, Tonga Tabou, the Sandwich Islands, the Islands of the Navigators, in which for some yearsof Europeans and of men of mixed race. These are already the object of greed because of their great wealth. This is because, in these islands, the prosperity of their future is almost exclusively based on this mixture of blood. Colonization and civilization do not come by means of regular and general immigration but through mating with fugitives and

vagabonds called, for this reason, Frères de la Côte.

In this matter New Zealand offers the same difficulty to be solved. Here though, there is an increase in population and civilization because of regular immigration, however, because of the particular circumstances of a population which is industrious and vigorous and used to contact with the Europeans a mixture of races is not at all rare. Because of the excellent and open character of the islanders and the level of civilization at which they have already arrived by taking full possible advantage from their European contacts, the Europeans no longer have their early aversion for the islanders and their scorn for them has disappeared. The same is seen at Tonga tabou, and the Sandwich Islands, and at Tahiti, where civilization has wrought a moral balance between the races which cannot be doubted and is of great advantage.

At this point it is perhaps opportune to add certain observations, these may justify the lack, up till now, of those facts which we would wish to apply also to the Oceanic race the conditions of our common nature.

All the peoples of the Pacific in their uncivilized state have shown in general highest disdain for Europeans. Union with these same Europeans is considered a dishonour. In this passion has an extra obstacle to overcome and it makes them careful to conceal the effects of their indulgence. This is the origin of the gravest disorders facilitated by the barbarous customs of the country which either impede birth or destroy off-spring. Given this grave and deplorable fact the argument can only be settled for countries where legitimate spouses are allowed. Now in these countries such a mixture occurs in a short time for they can lay claim to the fruits of a second or a third generation.

Thus we have the security of seeing young half-castes of about thirteen years who, already at this age, show quite something else than any unhappy disposition in the matter.

We do not know one element of the study for up until now this mixture of races in Oceania has come about exclusively from the union of European men and island women. There exist very few cases if any at all of male islanders married to European women. Perhaps it will not be useful to observe that also among individuals of the same island race even though the race is plentiful in numbers there is not however any great vigour. The proof is in the continual decline of those populations scattered in those islands which are scarcely populated even where there is no cannibalism and there exists instead a certain civilization. This has bettered their physical and moral condition without reaching in this matter of numbers any great advantage and this owed principally to the abolition of infanticide and of wars which before used to effect these people greatly.

Lastly let us submit to the judgment of intelligent men this fact: that in all the animal kingdom even also in the vegetable kingdom transplanted into these islands there is a visible loss of reproductive force. In the animal kingdom there is the most irrefutable proof given when domestic pigs and dogs were introduced. The newly born animals of the second and third generation were already almost infertile and this

not only in union with other indigenous animals of the same species or of the same race from Europe. Poultry, even such as fowls and ducks of a second brood were already considerably smaller in volume and their reproductive force was considerably less. In the animal kingdom the same phenomena are found, maize and pumpkins which replanted from the same seeds for a second and third time turned out to be almost sterile or incapable of growth and maturity.

VIII

These observations and deductions applicable to our special subject of the island of Woodlark lead us to build up confidence that the visits and stay made there by the missionaries will not indeed be lost for civilization. They have already given with their work a formidable shake to the edifice of barbarity reigning there and if the tenaciousness of the old men will support that edifice for some time still, the imagination and the minds of the young will see within themselves [<gap of two lines in text.>] meanwhile these tiny ideas which the word of the ministers of Christ have instilled in them and when the charity of other wandering apostles will make resound again in those environs the word of Christ I am of the opinion that it will be to find a more favourable echo and that will be the signal that the dominion of barbarity is about to fall.

Because, as can be imagined, the gospel teachings may not win over an absolute absence of religion in which man would equal the brutes; but surely the majesty of worship and rites may win over absurd superstitions, over ridiculous customs of the savage.

It is hardly necessary to hear the account of these ridiculous beliefs and customs of the savages in order to predict their ruin, as soon as the light of Christianity can send a ray, so far weak, into the poor minds of these men, forgotten until now.

And in order that it may be clear also to you, this conclusion of ours, we will now weave together for you the strange account of all these prejudices which were found by the European missionaries rooted in the minds of the savages of Woodlark. To know the level of civilization of the people it is not altogether inopportune to start by investigating their religious beliefs. We propose to consider this Oceanic island from every point of view therefore we will search out its theogony, its cosmogony and its superstitious customs.

IX

Here it is according to the Marist missionary Montrouzier, in whom indeed may be found all the mythology of this savage island, as he would have found it at his landing, that is in 1849. It is an account which he says he heard from one of the savages themselves, hearing which he could hardly suppress his laughter.

One day from the direction of Guagnag (to the west of Woodlark) there came a powerful man who had the power of making himself great and of making himself small again at his own wish. He was called Geren; but there existed in him two beings with different wills one calling himself Marita, the other Tudar. Like every Woodlark islander he wore above his elbow a *siasir* or a large bracelet. Arriving at Muju he found only a miserable countryside entirely formed of bare coral. Immediately he drew from his *siasir* a small wrapper which he threw into the air and all at once (suddenly) the corals were covered with plant-supporting soil and one could see come out of it, one after one, the igraine, the taro, the coconut tree and other food-giving trees. Geren wished also to push further his generosity and to bring it about that the fruits would be produced without any cultivation, but Marita opposed this painting with vivid colours the dangers which would spring from laziness.

And this was not all. The illustrious traveller gave his laws to the inhabitants, prescribed certain ...[gap]...formulae, commanded them to dress themselves in a manner conformed to decency and forbade them to eat certain foods. From there he journeyed to the islands of Naadl, or Laughlan. This also was a great land built up of coral. Armed with another wrapper he repeated the prodigious work at Muju but he did not find there either the same docility, nor the same recognition. The islanders of Naadl refused to cultivate the igraine and the taro. Indignant at their obstinacy, Geren struck with his fist this cursed land and behold suddenly the island split apart and offered to the gaze only eight or nine tiny islands where there grew luxuriantly the coconut palm which has no need of any cultivation.

In this fable, gathered by the Marist missionary, he would wish to have left there implicitly, perchance, the discovery in the theogony of these islands, of a type of Trinity, as is found in Buddhism and in other cosmic religions; but our Dr Carlo Salerio, more candid and true, and who remained in this island for a greater time, candidly confessed not to have discovered himself any trace or shadow to be glimpsed there of anything similar to be a belief in a triune being.

According to him the presence of a good mastermind offers itself only once in the person of Geren, a man like the Woodlark islanders, who is neither creator nor conserver; he came from the west to carry a little earth to cover the corals of Muju and to begin there the vegetation or cultivation of the taro, the igraine, the coconut and the banana. Passing then to the islands of Naadl or Laughlan he was fought against, expelled from there, and no longer one knows where he re-appeared or what happened to him.

The first time that the men of Muju saw draw near to their island a vessel they believed that it was him returning.

The cosmogony of Woodlark which is all related in this single fact, is ridiculous, poor, wretched and in part obscene, so that the Woodlarkers themselves are ashamed to speak of it; it would not have any merit at all if

it did not include a certain principle of just morality, that is, the insinuation into the legend of toil, demanded by that man of so much power and passed on to the Woodlark islanders, these do not work through goodwill only through extreme necessity and only as much as to be able to satisfy an urgent need.

This Geren which came from Guavak (the islands of Jovency) to Muju was called there Tudar, and in the Naadl islands Maritta; perhaps this variety of names made, it is suspected, the existence of a trinity in a unity, that is to exist in Geren the two beings called Tudar and Maritta. But meanwhile the opportunity to make the mistake, as it has been made, has been taken away for the name of Tudar is at present forbidden among the Woodlarkers, no longer one pronounces it without being punished by those with axes and with lances; it being among the customs of this people considered a very grave sin to offer the name of a dead person, and it would be indeed a reason for war and murders, as there happened to discover the missionary who was the mentor of ...[gap]...in the examination and study of this interesting museum.

He narrated, as proof how his companion Dr Timoleone Raimondi, having, during his catechizing, pronounced the name of Tudar to allude to their divinity, had to hold himself content that the audience limited itself to going away from him quite upset without taking the usual revenge. Nevertheless he found used in some of their prayers all three of these names of Geren, Tudar and Maritta, but rather for abundance to add forcefulness to their invocation and to make it sharper and more penetrating, or *kakat*, as would be said in the language of the country, rather than to express a diversity of persons.

X

An evil spirit under a thousand forms, either bodily or imaginary, which present itself always with the idea of force or magic secrets, this is what interests them but without any connection with morality, neither more nor less than the belief in witches or wizards interest us. Now it is Barum who comes down excited from the mountains of Surok, and gathers victims of his anger: now it is Rum who chases about lashing the villagers (as in the case of epidemics). Then it is good to pre-arrange for these spirits, here and there, (pitfalls/snares), to scatter boulders around, to arrange piles of wood and other similar impediments in various places in order to be able to trip up or turn aside these spirits; but cursed are those who see them for they become victims of their anger. And too they would place some *siram* at the entrance of the villages, or at the ends of the streets, for a *siram* is indeed formidable and evil. This too is a spirit of evil which, through the prayers, curses, promises and protests of some liar or imposter, has got into a small parcel of leaves from which it will strike, with sores and tumors, anyone who dares to go beyond these limits. However, according to the opinion of all, this *siram* is very much inferior in power to the grand *Barum*, but all the same it inspires respect in the grand *Barum*.

The names of these spirits are never pronounced, not through the cause of reverence, as among the Hebrews who would not speak the terrible name of Jehovah, but through fear of attracting the anger of the spirits.

Shamelessness must generate its own evil spirits, not to accuse oneself in remorse of an evil done as much as to justify something which neither reason nor morality could tolerate. The Aru, red spirits, which are indescribable and invisible, are the insolent and immoral disturbers of society. Their spirit leads them to dishonour humanity with illegitimate goings on, though to the above-mentioned dishonour, the islanders do not show themselves excessively sensible; it is through a certain hissing which is not intelligible of these supernatural beings that Muju constantly abounds with a numerous generation of children who cannot point out their real father.

XI

Such superstitious belief is not as strange and new as some could think, and it seems true that there are found serious traces of it even in the works of the Holy Fathers, in the first centuries of Christianity, and that one may see that even these men had faith in evil spirits. The idea often enough coming from the Greek thinkers and professed in Alexandria by Philo the Jew, that the air is swarming with spirits of some tenuous material, subtle, gaseous, of good and evil spirits having a regular hierarchy, distributed in angelic choirs in the upper part of the atmosphere and in diabolical choirs in the parts closer to us, such an idea was one of the more notable bases of an ontology essentially materialistic of the first theogonies. It was with the help of this mass of spirits, half spiritual and half corporeal, that the great magical epics of the middle ages were built. All the Christian doctors, when they treat of discovering the action of angelic and diabolic spirits in the world, are always fully in agreement. And there is no doubt that among the most illustrious of the Holy Fathers in this matter is St Augustine: indeed, sharing the ignorance of his times, he pushes to its very limits our credulity. Without touching other macabre things which can be read in his work *De Civitate Dei* and *De Trinitate*, it is enough to indicate how in the first of these works, treating of *incubuses* and *succubuses*, he does not doubt that male demons have intercourse with women and feminine demons with young men. In book XV he expresses himself in these words: "The accounts are so numerous on this subject and there are so many of them and their authority is so great that they cannot be called into doubt, and these affirm it to be something verified and they attest to have heard them narrated by others, that indeed demons called *incubuses* have been often lovers for women, desiring and obtaining from them their favours (*et earum appetisse et peregisse concubitum*), and that certain demons which the Gauls call *Dusj* try and indeed accomplish daily this foulness (*hanc assidue immunditiam et tentare et efficere*); there are so many and so powerful testimonies in this matter, I say, that to deny it would seem an impudence (*impudentia esse videatur*)."

For the rest the laws which we find in Exodus, in Leviticus, and in Deuteronomy, against wizards and witches, certain facts found in the Bible and the Acts of the Apostles, prove how neither the Old Testament nor the light given by the Gospel was sufficient to remove this cloud of ignorance.

XII

So many other spells and witchcraft depend on the whims of men, who can put at their own disposition spirits of their own stamp and invention, as were similar to the ones we see at the time of the fall of the Roman Empire which seemed populated by gods of the pagan Elysium, all being divinized forms of every obscenity and vice.

The Monokuaus and the Boagan are only women and men endowed with this cursed knowledge who can attach themselves to others and transmit themselves as they please. Against all these spirits, as there is an art to evoke them, also there is an art to escape them; from whence come the takuen and the takeimoa (men of prayer for the countryside, for the air and for life) who charge a price for some a foolish stratagem which is sometimes a cause of sacrifice to them themselves: and in this consists the supposed priesthood among the Woodlark islanders.

The most immodest implications, the most vile entreaties are used as most efficacious to obtain the effects which are yearned for from these.

These spirits however are not so powerful as not to be able to be overcome and defeated by mortal men. A hunt for them is carried out solemnly once every year and at the coming of great epidemics. The common hunt, which each one can have made in the case of sickness consists in the takeimoo running through the woods armed with axe, lance and club, sending out frightful cries and striking madly to right and left, staining at the end the point of the lance or the edge of the axe in the blood of some animal which he tries to catch on the way or, in the event of prey lacking, in lancing his own heel to convince afterwards the crowd of boys who follow him bawling out that he is courageous, these boys are probably full of no small alarm. These must bear witness to the happening and retell it to whoever wishes to know about it. The solemn hunt which is called *ta bins ven* (to purge the countryside), is the most noisy. It is built up of a great ceremony, which from early morning spreads over the entire sea-shore, entreating and praying to the sea. Meanwhile the women distribute great quantities of new brooms, and at the sound of the horn they proceed in the great purgation. A crowd of men, women, children, all crying out at the top of their voice, proceeded by musicians and by great ceremony, run sweeping the whole shore filling the air with an infinity of prayers and curses, At this the ships, which all have been richly painted, and on which would have been made particular prayers, advance into the sea and start

then a great general fishing. At their return there takes place a simulated battle among the canoes, which is not without risks and dangers, and little inferior to a true battle among the jousts, and it is owed only to the extreme skill with which they manage not so much to avoid but to receive the blows full on their shields, that this make-believe battle turns out to be harmless.

All this solemnity is crowned, as in almost every great feast, with a public banquet and with a general sharing in dancing.

XIII

They have also a particular spirit which is the spirit of navigation, but they do not attribute to this spirit any human shape, we see it figured in an ornament in the form of a rudder which we have in the Milanese museum, they place it indeed on their canoes and swift craft. It is a combination of lines in the manner of arabesques or designs of calligraphy which we use in elegant writing, in the designs one can see the heads of pelicans and crocodiles, feathers of birds and similar figures painted in white, red and black, these colours are derived from lime, from betel nut, of which we will say more further, and of coconut charcoal. To this rudder, divinized by them and called the spirit of navigation, they are accustomed to hang gifts, heads of victims and other ornaments, to make it propitious towards their journeys and voyages on the sea.

Equally there belong to the numerous family of their spirits certain tools shaped like bowls of ebony, at the top of which can be perceived carved as an effigy something which wishes in their poor artistic concept to be a head, they are called in the language of the island *tan-lauss* or guardians of the houses, and they are equivalent to the Laris and Penatis of the gentiles, or to our guardian angels.

There is another *tan-lauss*, a type of mallet conserved in the museum, which has been adopted by the Woodlarkes for incisions. It is a religious instrument and is applied superstitiously good for the result of the wound.

Finally to protect themselves from evil influences of this great crowd of spirits, these poor savages carry around their neck strips of aromatic herbs, of which we have in the glass showcases of the collection which we are examining certain samples, the custom is something like that used in Naples of carrying certain pieces of coral to protect oneself against the evil eye, or it is like the customs which are found among various civilized people of carrying herbs, amulets and scapulas.

It would be then an infinite task to refer to all the ridiculous customs which the ignorance and superstition of these islanders has urged them to invent.

Everything which they cannot explain in their limited mind, they attribute to witchcraft or to the internal power of things: thus they believe

in the wind, in hurricanes, in every extraordinary atmospheric phenomenon, in dryness (or drought [alt.trans.?.]) not to speak of other things, and to everything the oppose practices which are equally absurd, and which we would say are worthy of laughter if they did not first arouse in us sympathy and compassion.

The missionary Salerio narrates for us how at the time of a terrible hurricane, which had already knocked over the largest and most solid huts, tore up trees, and piled up clouds and carried in most places desolation, and which even threatened the house of the missionaries, which creaked in every part, he and his companions gathered to pray according to the ritual of the Catholic Church those prayers which are prescribed in case of tempest. There came to them freely all the few islanders who had not fled to the fields or to the open countryside and these stood looking astonished at this Christian ceremony. Luck would have it that the wind diminished in fury at that very moment and in a few hours it had altogether died down. From this point onwards Fr Salerio was believed to be the patron of the wind, and his power to be that of evoking or sending it away at will, and there were not lacking certain prayers of some who would wish him to rise up a wind favourable for sailing, so that it would carry away the strangers who were remaining among them as guests and eating their few provisions for it is an inviolable custom among the Woodlarkers to maintain whatever strangers arrive among them while-ever they remain on the island. Such a new reputation acquired by our fellow countryman, was not a little valuable in making our missionaries feared and preserving them from the fierce plans of the natives, but it stirred scorn and jealousy in Etau, the old chief, who deemed himself of the greatest authority, and to dispute this power with the European, he tried for eight continuous days to call up at least a light breeze, but all his work was in vain; from this he was tormented because a stranger had the power to nail down the wind. But finally a breeze came, and you can imagine whether the good Salerio did not willingly leave to him the whole glory of it.

XIV

Now we will treat of certain ceremonies which are used there, at which the observer ought to marvel when he brings it to mind that their nature is undoubtedly religious, but they have no foundation in any belief in a divinity.

A yearly ceremony is celebrated on the occasion of new harvest and is called Rasap (the leaf of the taro). This is similar in aim to the Christian rogation days, as these perhaps have a comparison in the pagan rite recorded by Properzio in the emistich [?] of one of his elegies: *lustramus arva quotannis*.

In Woodlark it is preceded by three days of preparations in the streets,

where triumphal arches are erected and the people prepare with fasting even though it is more forced than willing. On the third day a procession starts from the countryside to the villages and the people carry themselves with good order and regularity. The women carry baskets of the new harvest; then the boys come and the men with leaves of taro and other plants in their hands; they sing certain of their songs or refrains which we would call litanies; and as our processions are closed by priests, also that of the savages is closed by a *takneu*, which means “a man of prayer for the plantings.”

But the ceremony which more than any other offers the idea of being religious is the festival of the dead, or *Imlamara*, as it is called in the language of Muju. It happens at the time of planting the new igname, huge roots, which are equal to the taro in food value, and of which I have spoken a little before, it is preceded by five or six days of general fishing for all the villages around a bay. On the day set each family puts outside as much as it can of beautiful and rich ornaments, utensils and mats. The cooks apply themselves continually to the preparation of tit-bits, great vessels of taro, of igname and of fish, all elegantly embellished and adorned with sweet-smelling herbs. When everything is prepared the people collect themselves at the end of their hut behind a mat and they invite with tears and terms of tenderness their dead to come and taste once again the food which they were used to, which the affectionate memory of the survivors has prepared for them. Then they retire and each one sits on his *puasis*, or stool, which every hut has next to the door, and they converse about their ancestors, disclaiming their virtues, their courage and also their immortality. Meanwhile they pretend that the dead are enjoying at the bottom of the hut the banquet which has been prepared; but since appetite is a quality of the living as well as those who are in the shadow of death, almost immediately they interrupt this calm, and to dismiss the dead, they believe they can strike fear into them producing a horrible din and striking the hut in turn. Then peace is returned, with the ...[gap]... of the parsimony of their dead; and as the family does not eat of these remains which are left, but offers them to some relative or friend, who reciprocates with his food, so in every way they revel, they cry out and they dance and each evening afterwards they take care to renew the shouts to drive out the *leru* (as they call the souls of the dead) into their tombs again.

XV

This ceremony proves in a certain way that there exists among the Woodlarkers an idea of the immortality of the soul. And though it appears wretched and material, there is found its existence and from it can be deduced some element of moral education.

When one dies, his soul, the islanders say, travels to Tum, a brutish paradise, which they imagine to be a place of delight situated in an island to the west of Muju, there is no boat of Caronte, which we find in the beliefs of the ancient paganism, and so the journey is carried out on the back of the great serpent Motetutau. He who does not freely stand and falls into the sea is changed into a fish or shell; but whoever stands firmly finds at the entrance of Tum an inexorable old woman, ...[gap of 1 line]... who has the task of not allowing further anyone who does not carry two lines of tatooing on his arm, and whoever does not have this distinctive mark is rejected and thrown into the sea. Once having entered Tum, one enjoys all material pleasures and has copious supplies of everything; one lives, one dies again and one revives, as does the drunken alcoholic who extinguishes his reason in liquor and after a dream receives it back again. When the great Jenai dies, who is the most formidable and authoritative man on Muju, Tapeidok, the great king of this blessed region, having regard to the great nobility of this new arrival offers to him the hand of his own sister. This same Jenai revealed all this to his brother Etau, who was his successor and today is also dead, Etau spins cold-bloodedly fantastic yarns which among us would scarcely be heard even from the mouth of the old crones who look after the cradles of children.

XVI

Having thus treated the religious beliefs or superstitions rather, of Woodlark, which make up all its theogony and which lead one to conclude that there is no religion in this savage island, I want now to treat of its language, before making other research.

From the few letters of Montrouzier, and from the conversations I have had with our worthy helper, Fr. Salerio, I have not been able to gather precise classifications of the language which is spoken at Woodlark. This latter missionary, who busied himself there with other matters beyond his apostolic endeavours, and made there studies and investigations of every type would be inclined to believe that the relations of the Woodlark language would be rather with the language of peoples from the west, as almost no trace can be recognized of idioms spoken in the east.

In any manner it is pleasant, sweet, clear and also rich, offering the opportunity to express many abstract ideas. Understanding this Oceanic language presents the difficulties of all tongues; but these difficulties disappear indeed or diminish very much as soon as one finds the key of the rules; and as soon as this is found in the language of Muju one does not delay to experience a language which is tasteful and pleasant in its study. The pronunciation indeed for a European has no small difficulties and demands in the sound of its vowels all of the gradations of the pronunciations of the English language, as also in the ...[gap]... of certain consonants. Sometimes a monosyllable expresses an idea. To judge from the pleasure with which the Woodlarkers stand listening for entire hours to their eloquent orators in their public harangues, of which it comes to me to discourse in a little while, it can be reasonably inferred that their language lends itself to a national eloquence.

And here I warn of a curious custom which gives no little difficulty and confusion for one who attempts to study the language of Muju.

When someone dies his name is no longer pronounced, it is forbidden; and as almost all carry the names of common objects and sometimes even of verbs, thus to avoid these names or words one has recourse to substituting their equivalents and for this one interrogates the most aged and valued speakers among whom there stands the protection of the language, a type of national academy; these decide in the matter with the substitution of new words, creating as it is easy to imagine, no little difficulties for the man who is not a native and therefore not very familiar with all the minute and imperceptible customs of the language.

Although a single language is spoken in Woodlark, there are met variations from one side to the other and one can say that the language breaks into two principal dialects, which have certain relations among them. From the study of these dialects one can come to the knowledge of the double derivation of the inhabitants. The dominant dialect is the language guavak, which is that spoken at Trobriand and also on the Jovency island: the other is *massim*, spoken rather on the d'Entrecasteaux islands, in the greater part of the Louisiade and in New Guinea.

XVII

There deserve then a special attention a fact which can guide us in researching the origin of the people of Muju, and this is the conservation of family trees which are called kum, which they have in common with the people of the Trobriand islands, the Jovency islands, d'Entrecasteaux and Laughlan. The kum is properly speaking the stock of the family and denotes also its escutcheon of each person, each one taking for his own section a fish or a bird. There are distinguished eight kum. Itself it is not a simple qualifier, but it constitutes a true line of descent and of parenthood;

thus in their military ranks they are distributed by kum and not by villages.

On the contrary in marriage until now are united two of the same kum, as far as can be ascertained being from distant generations, but they are considered always in this case as brothers. This further particularity ought to be noted that the kum, or family clan, is transmitted from the woman and not from the man: thus the sons of a Tau Mauras feminine are all Tau Mauras. It is known that also in Europe among certain uncivilized nations, as in Spain and in Scotland, in certain cases, as a way of example it is the wife of the family, more famous and noble, who gives the name of her family to her husband.

XVIII

The account which I gave, in closing the discourse on the religious beliefs of Muju, the trickeries of Etao with regard to his mother Jenai, to whom I said he had succeeded, I did not intend to have it believed that Jenai had the command of the island or that there was a true and supreme hierarchy in the island; for I must tell you, gentlemen, immediately that Muju does not have a government and it does not have fixed laws: there is only savage anarchy which is curbed by the customs and traditions which take the place of laws.

However there are some principal families, which are clothed with a certain authority, and this, as is quite natural, is only the effect of the bullying of brutal force, when it is not of that ascendancy which knows how to conquer itself and which imposes itself on others through the fineness of its intelligence, or through other moral quality. For example generosity and largess in giving can earn this supremacy, and approximately it is these examples are seen verified even among uncivilized peoples, particularly at the times of political rebellions, during which power belongs to those who know how to abrogate it. These chiefs in Muju are called *gujau*, which is equivalent to a 'noble', and in this dignity son succeeds the father; thence one can see a certain succession and a perpetuity of rank, which is not however a true and real transmission of power. The women of these principal families call themselves then *gujauvin*, *vin* signifying indeed woman.

Jenai then, who just now came to mind, was only gujau as was Etao.

But also among these *guyau* [sic] there is a distinction: that is those of primary rank and those of secondary rank. I am reminded of it by the various distinctions which stand in the museum of the missionaries of St. Calocero. This necklace ornament is plaited and from it are hung boar's tusks, in the language of the country it is called *koma-kom*, it is distinctive of the first rank of the nobles; as it is for women it is formed of strings of

many small shells rounded and moulded with trinkets of mother-of-pearl and seeds from the banana tree hanging from it.

The other ornament instead similar to the first and different only in this that for true teeth of the boar whose natural scarceness makes them precious have been substituted artificial teeth formed from pieces of shells, this second is distinctive of the second rank of nobles.

To have the right to this dignity it is necessary to count many adherents, to receive and feed well many strange guests, indeed to raise up such a reputation for oneself or as they say in the phrase used in the islands to make great *butun* (hubbub). And one does it besides by exchanging many *dog*, that is teeth of boars and many *vergem* (thus is called a certain small red pearl which are also the money of the countryside), by raising many domestic pigs and by giving with great largess. If to all this one adds marrying many wives then the reputation cannot be surpassed, it is complete; this is a distinction and an expression which is often found among oriental peoples.

It belongs to the gujau the faculty of haranguing from time to time the public with certain *rinon* (or public discourses), which may concern the events of everyday, the importance of some affair or other, the convenience of some project, or the celebration of some religious or national ceremony, whether it be for the great and general fishing or for the boar hunt. It is the concern rearing of the gujau the gaigui, or family catechism for the rearing of children, a catechizing which under the authority of Jenai was too fatal for the forces which the missionaries were using to found the catholic religion, paralyzing them in every way. This gaigui is also the school of good breeding as it is understood there; there are recorded the wise ways of the country, are traced the lines of conduct to be followed, the customs, the manners to be preserved and it was in these public solemn speeches which were introduced to the Woodlarkes by the gujau there arose that system of hypocrisy which regulated from then on their contacts with the missionaries, from whence the word of these evangelical men was found almost all falling on stones, in which they would not take hold, and which did not give therefore fruit which correspond to the great efforts spent on them.

XIX

In spite of this anarchy, of this absolute lack of laws, I have however said that there is exercised there a brake and an authority through traditions and customs.

Indeed there is recognized and respected there a certain right of property. Whoever has planted once in a piece of land remains master of it

for always and though he may leave it afterwards, as happens through necessity, he not being able through the wretchedness of the land to gain more than one crop every eight or ten years, nevertheless the plants which remain there abandoned belong to him still even though another may have replaced him there as cultivator.

Equally sons are ordinarily accustomed to succeed in the inheritance of the goods of their father, I say ordinarily, because if the sons have not reached a certain age and acquired the strength to make valid their rights, they will never be able to possess the most important objects of the paternal house, as are the results of the usual exchange, axes, iron, red pearls.

The violation of the rest of the laws of property is almost inherent in the instinct of the savage: theft is almost elevated to the rank of virtue, without even the palliative of the ancient Spartans, being at Muju an indication of strength. In this matter they have ideas which are strangely curious: they hold it as shameful to steal through necessity, but familiar and usual to steal through desire, and they can in this be seen as quick and unconstrained so as to yield nothing to our most famous cur-purses (?).

Behold all the jurisprudence of Woodlark, indeed poor owing nothing to the most obvious principles of justice and equity and even in part contrary to them.

XX

Now let us see this people in the principle phases of human existence, that is in birth, marriage and death; acts which among all uncivilized people generate always new juridical relationships and are thus always marked with certain legal formalities.

No ceremony of this nature precedes the birth of a Woodlarker. Scarcely is he born, than he is confided to his mother on whom devolved the decision if he may be worthy, or not, or not her care. There is no great delay before the arrival of the men of prayer and each of these has his own speciality for the newly born. Some pray to gain for the boy strength or for the girl beauty: others pray so that the name of the newly born will become great and famous: another so that so that he will amass great riches, and another so that he will soon grow up, and lift thus from the mother all the sooner the burden.

The mother then, not through need but for legal reasons, remains shut up for some days in the house of her parents, until at the end of around eight days, the husband and his relations prepare for her the *koeus*, or the soup for restoration. Soon they give a name to the child and even more than one name this too depends on whim. Sometimes the relationship with some frivolous event is the origin of his name, another time it will be the name of a friend of a great and famous reputation. Soon the features of the

infant are deformed by wide strips of *sejac*, a type of cosmetic prepared with pieces of incense, mint, mignonette, and other aromatic herbs, and charcoal from coconut timber.

The rearing of the children is neither the most diligent nor the most delicate, and the parents are however worthily rewarded for it by the children; such that the exchange of even the most just natural affections is oppressed by corruption.

The multiplication of population at Woodlark is really extraordinary. There are few families which consist of less than eight, ten and more members and the number would be even greater if it were not for the barbarous custom of infanticide.

Perhaps there is no other country in the world in which there is found as in Muju abortion set up and legally recognized. It is practiced with peculiar public solemnity. Though the birth of the first son alone is an object of solemn ceremonies, according to the usual custom for the son, every mother, before keeping a son, has already discarded three or four at least. The strong, the only motive which they allege is that the woman ought not to be tied up so quickly by the encumbrances of motherhood since these diminish her in prestige and value in the eyes of her husband. The *lopis*, thus is called this barbarous custom, is not felt to be difficult even among their wet nurses, though it is not always the fault of these. After the abortion there must follow forty days of retirement. During such a time the woman must not leave the hut; a fast as strict as possible and a slow fire dry or thin down the flesh around her bones so that coming out at the end of forty days she may excite the sympathy of the husband and he has to come and take her with new gifts to the house of his relations and lead her again to the matrimonial hut.

As well as this type of infanticide, another no less horrible and unnatural, is the massacre of children. Although this is not systematic, not could one say greatly in vogue, all the same it happens and not infrequently. If the unfortunate creature does not have the fortune to arouse sympathy in the mother, she will leave it perish of starvation, if she does not suffocate it or kill it in some other way.

Passion (alt.transln: or anger) is sometimes the cause of it: the father or the mother herself become annoyed by the care which the tender child demands; they have an efficient means for getting rid of the luckless ones: death.

The missionary Salerio tells that one day finding himself by chance in the village neighbouring the mission station, in which had died a woman who left an unweaned child, he noticed immediately how they were treating something with great liberation, and that his presence seemed to add a certain embarrassment. He asked about it and it was given to him indeed to know how they were deliberating what they were to do with this

innocent creature , and how they had resolved to take its life. The horror which such inhumanity ought to excite in the mind of the good Salerio betrayed itself clearly in his face, when they noticed this, they tried to get rid of him. Instead he continued to remain, and because of promises and protests, a woman promised to take on herself the care of the unlucky child and to raise it. Some days afterwards the Milanese missionary betook himself to her home to visit the baby: he asked questions and no one replied; finally a little girl innocently revealed the cruel death of the child; then she was punished by the insults of the barbaric relations because they had not been able to prevent and to impede this revelation.

XXI

Now concerning marriage.

I do not know if this great act is equally, as in Muju, among considered and appreciated among all savage peoples; certainly in the island which I am treating marriage is not that sacred bond which unites two hearts in affection and makes common to them the interests of their entire existence. It asks among them neither fidelity in marriage, nor the duties which it imposes; less then of the nobility of its purposes and the dignity of its nature.

There is a strange custom which is the cause of disorders in Woodlark for certain marriages. Some marriages are contracted by relatives in the name of children, while these are not yet capable and sometimes have not even started to exist. They happen especially between families who wish to grow in influence with mutual contracts or adherences. A father, for example, will find some friend from whom he wishes protection and offering him some gift will say: *sinvoram* (relative), your daughter is my daughter-in-law. Whether a daughter exists, or whether she does not, if he accepts the gift, the marriage is taken as a fact, and in as much as the two contracting parties do not get on well afterwards, rarely will the marriage be dissolved without grave disputes and open enmity. Agreeing to it, the two children are husband and wife whenever it pleases them.

Even in adult life it is ordinarily expected of relatives to procure the giving-in-marriage of their children. When the young man consents to such a resolution, he goes to inform the woman to whom he wishes to unite himself and remains for some days with her in the house of her relatives. Only he leaves there some significant gift. If the gift is accepted the marriage is concluded. The relatives lead the bride to the husband with a great array of food. Ordinarily they banquet and afterwards all is completed. Sometimes really these ceremonies are not fulfilled, and then the great indication of a marriage having been concluded is the eating together of the two spouses and going together to the country (alt. trans. 'into the bush').

The symbol of their union is two shells united with a small necklace of even smaller shells, which are in the museum of in St Calocero and in which are the two spoons which they make use of in the days of their marriage. From the name of the shells is understood these spoons, the utensil is called *alek*.

It is not necessary to say that divorce is usually understood: there is nothing at all irrational for them about the indissolubility of marriage. It is thus an agreement which when one party is not content or pleased with the other, or finds a better party, he goes away to contract another marriage. This happens quite usually even more so among those who contracted marriages when very young.

Polygamy is not much in fashion, but is not prohibited. The chiefs and those who pretend to become such, ordinarily contract two unions. You can be sure that good harmony does not always reign between these rivals. In some of the islands surrounding Muju but not there the chiefs have a number of wives. The chief of Trobriand, has up to seventeen in actual service and a harem of women at his future disposition. His people is accustomed to fear him and obey him as a tyrant. The Woodlark islanders disapprove of this conduct; but perhaps the major reason for their disapproval stands in this that none of them can do as much.

XXII

Let us treat finally of the customs which refer to last phase of existence, to death.

In Woodlark scarcely has one reached the last breath than one's relatives and friends break out in desperate cries. In a moment the whole village gathers to swell this unusual noise, which would surprise and horrify one who heard it for the first time. The closest relative then enters in fury and robs the house of the dead one, breaks, overturns furniture, strikes down trees, tears up plants, damages ships, cries and swears, wails and curses witches, enchanters, wizards, until, overcome by the power of a grief which he knows he must show, unites his desolation to that of the crowd. Couriers scatter to all the villages, more so if the dead is a chief and every moment recommences this sad lament.

His inanimate remains are washed, anointed with oil and perfumed: then, dressed in his most beautiful ornaments, and placed in a sitting position, with his head resting on the knees of his closest relative. All then come close, caressing him, and renewing even strongly the usual groanings, each calling him tenderly by the titles of their relationship, their friendship, and that is, of their clanship. Then is intoned the *ropid*, or dirge which is akin to and agrees with the general note of grief. The *ropid* is the funeral hymn, which the wife, the sister, the husband, the daughter, the nephew, or whomsoever, has prepared for the death of his most dear one. It is a long

and measured sequence of verses with refrains which record the principle deeds of the life of the one who has died. The genius of the Woodlarkers is displayed felicitously in this type of poetry: noble and impassioned thoughts bring to notice the dignity of a feeling which is natural, but which unfortunately have a deep foundation of truth in their hearts. There do not lack sublime extracts, elevated concepts and lyric passages, which are admired even more if they were not even more often mixed with frequent trivialities.

The wailing lasts one or more days according to the dignity of the dead person. The great ones, that is the principal *gujau*, are kept exposed until corruption makes fall from their bodies pieces of flesh. Then sentiment rouses again and they wail and cry out and renew again the caresses of those fetid and the verminous cheeks. No matter how great the smell, which must naturally diffuse, this rottenness through the hut, no one entering must give sign of loathing, but display a delight as it were at a sweet perfume.

Then the relatives and friends prepare the *lagor*, a funeral banquet or rather market, in honour of the dead. When the hour of burial comes the wailing grows stronger. For the people all finishes there and the moment after most noisy joy is heard among those very people who appeared not so long ago to have a heart broken with grief. But for the great ones there is a necessity to proceed further. In certain bays of the island they have the custom to keep up constantly a small fire above the corpse which lies at some hand's breadth under the sand, and after some days, when the flesh is believed consumed, they open the grave to take from it the skull and the arm and leg bones, which well cleaned and rubbed with coconut oil, are imparted to the widow who keeps them and guards always with her, often strewing them with the tears of her memory. In certain other bays the custom is to tear the body into four pieces before burying it, to strip the flesh immediately from the bones, which are dried in the ashes, and to transmit them then, as the others, to the widow.

All these operations and functions are the work of the women exclusively, who are then generously repaid by the grievers.

At the death of a chief of a village, all the other villages have the right to pillage to punish the wizards and enchantresses who have caused this loss because a man and even more a *gujau* never dies unless it be the work of some cursed power. Nonetheless the village where the dead one was chief generally ransoms itself from this pillage by offering some pork or some other significant gift.

The Woodlarkers have a great reverence for the dead and their tombs. They surround the tombs with fences and decorate them with small plants and sweet smelling herbs, and they spend there around them constant care. An *arauag*, that is a tomb, is place which is its most inviolable: whatever object is placed in its enclosure is sacred and no one would dare to put his

hand on it. Each family has its own tomb.

They wear mourning for their dead, and if he is a chief, the whole village wears it, for some days, but his relatives or at least a year. It consists for men in shaving the head and in staining all their body with black from coconut charcoal, and for the women then for the whole time of grief wear belts (?) which are less elegant but wider and which descend even to their heels. Great modesty and reserve is demanded; they do not take part during that time in any feast, or any solemnity; every cosmetic is prohibited except for charcoal. After a year, at the occasion for putting aside grief, another great banquet is prepared as solemn as the first, and they begin again their enjoyments.

XXIII

In the midst of so much barbarity it remains somewhat surprising to find at MUJU a respect for so many courtesies(trans. conventions), and etiquette so exaggerated and excessive as to constitute in great part the character of these islanders.

It is seen as a humiliation to pronounce ones own name, a sign of contempt to state that of another in his presence; thus it happens to point out a person they indicate him with a circumlocution, such as 'the father of so and so, the uncle of so and so, etc'. The name of the most powerful is never pronounced if it does not cause with him bad feeling or a rupture of relationships. To pass in front of someone with one's forehead raised high is an act of rudeness, in front of an old person an insult; thus they bow profoundly, especially if they happen to pass in front of groups of several people or where there is a gужау. A woman will keep herself from brushing past one or more men who might be conversing before her, but will turn aside, unless the men withdraw themselves to allow her to go on. These in their turn will bow profoundly when passing before women and if they meet a woman on the road will yield the path to her and turn away from her. However among the Woodlarkers this does not signify an act of modesty, but reveals a certain gallantry of which the uncivilized people of Europe today too often forget, when this reverence and regard toward the gentle sex carry an inconvenience or even a sacrifice no matter how light.

The meeting in Muju of two relatives or friends who for some time have not seen one another would move to tears those who do not know the measured artifice of this ceremony. They fix one another in their gaze then sit squatting one near the other and after a moment of silence they break into a bitter weeping, putting out laments, they make dumb caresses, letting themselves fall on one another's breasts, and if one is a woman, it is due to her (trans. it is up to her) the most delicate part that is the tears,

because in the customs of Woodlark the woman must have often tears at her disposition, these being frequently required in ceremonies and civil customs. Equally this is carried out in the case of the departure of a relative or friend. But a moment afterwards, suddenly they make the passage from these moving demonstrations of sorrow to laughter and to joking, of which perhaps they will be the subjects, those very ones to whom a moment ago they were showing such highest sentiment. The whole thing then does not have root and origin in the sensibility of the nature of the islanders but in their civil customs; from which soon they move to hypocrisy, which as I have mentioned on another occasion, regulates very much the tenor of their conduct.

I have already marked out in them as greatly practiced hospitality. The Woodlarkers in fact place on themselves because of hospitality enormous sacrifices, and they bear the weight of it; as the exercise of this same hospitality is among them carried to the point of boastfulness. Strangers from all parts, starving vagabonds land in Muju at every season and the families contribute to feed them, and even though they themselves too often have little food they show themselves all the same happy and proud to display their prodigality, satisfying thus their national pride.

Also their relations among the different villages are maintained with a mutual urbanity and by means of trade and exchange. They have a place for markets and fairs and gather from the two extremities of the island towards the centre on the day decided upon and the place decided upon. The objects of this trade consist always of ornaments, utensils, mats and provisions.

XXIV

Now from the subject of civil customs I pass to deal with war, which in the life of the savage occupies such a great part. Immediately I must recount how before the coming of the European missionaries to Muju, it was this island, by the confession of the natives themselves, which was continually at war, and this internal war had already reduced it to a most miserable condition. The villages of the north were attacking those of the south and there were excursions and feuds leading to extermination, the last hostilities, occurring at about the time the Europeans landed on the island, placed a terrible seal on this extermination which can be argued from the immense diminution of population which up till now as I have said does not reach two thousand, [gap in text]

o
f almost fifty square leagues, and from an extension of most beautiful beaches without villages, without fruit bearing trees, or seeds, entirely devastated; while the islander tells that there has existed once a population which had planted most luxuriant palm trees.

They make use, in this barbaric trade of war, of only lances and shields: the museum of St Calocero offers models of them to us. As for lances they come in various forms and workmanship. They are for the most part ebony, but one also of *lebbi*, which is a palm tree, in the hollow of which there hides a pulp, sago, a type of farinaceous food, which is useful for making bread. These lances of *lebbi* are pointed, and have points which are also barbed, so that being dragged from the wound they tear it horribly, these points are of the same wood.

The shields are oblong and of a quite light wood called *aritau*, which is like our onyx. The Woodlarkers held them always at an oblique angle, thus directly receiving the blows of the lance, which easily would break them, but in such a way as only to deflect them.

They make use also of clubs or maces, and in our museum one may be seen of *lebbi* wood; and perhaps not only for the single purpose of cutting down trees, are worth the axes formed from ebony with an edge of serpentine stone.

Because of the nature of these weapons it is necessary that the Woodlarkers fight always face to face or at a few paces apart, and thus their frays can be deadly. From this the nature of their wars for the most cunning is one of surprise. They do not give quarter: they kill, they devastate, they destroy; thus in one day may disappear often entire villages.

This thirst for blood and extermination was finally made drowsy and satisfied by another thirst, that of interest, when there arrived on the island the European missionaries. These carried with them iron, which to the islanders was as valuable and sought after as we can appreciate gold, they no longer fed their hatred, and composed themselves in peace, so as to be able to benefit by free trade, which would enable them to concede the acquisition or exchange of this metal.

(ft. Father Salerio tells us how a savage had contracted the bad habit of coming quietly [or secretly] into the mission to steal pieces of iron, and so as to take from him this prank, one time imagining that it would not be long before the thief arrived, they put at hand a piece of red hot iron. In fact the rascal did arrive and clutching the iron burnt himself and so frightened himself that he gave himself to flight and remained for several days hidden in the bush, attributing this action to a supernatural power.)

Partial conflicts break out all the same at every smallest friction or insult. They are most susceptible to these, they threaten, easily run for weapons, and the women often throw themselves into these frays to settle the parties down; thus most often these angers disappear in words, in contests of insults, and they have no other consequence than the payment of those who have interposed as peacemakers, for these always wished to be recompensed. But if the feud assumes serious proportions, then their ferocity has no limits; as they are not contented to kill the enemy they feed their eyes on his agony, giving strength to their courage as they say, from

his agonies and final gaspings for breath. Neither does the link of friendship nor blood lessen the hostility shown, so the same cruel excesses are committed even if brother fights with brother.

The philosopher certainly would have something to feel humiliated about in seeing how man in his raw nature often is far inferior to the beast, in which there is no intellect, and how reason may not be perhaps a privilege which man has over the brutes, when it is not directed towards proper upbringing, and if reason is in this way employed only as a refinement of cruelty,

XXV

Having completed the outline of the reasons for the hatred which have frequently led to internal wars, with such a slaughter of population, let us now look at what are principal ordinary occupations of the Woodlark islanders. Above all is conversation; these islanders apply themselves to it all without distinction, men and women, old people and children. Children of seven or eight years are seen, gathered in groups, discussing among themselves the most serious things and even sharing in conversation with old people. It is indeed curious to discover how the characteristic which is most frequent in their conversations is humorous or satirical, often joking at another's expense and succeeding wonderfully in it. They enliven their accounts of the most simple adventures with an accompaniment of mimicry and with a comic tone which is well sustained. They imitate the voice, the gesture, the movement, repeating every word: nothing escapes their observation nor their memory. They do not interrupt this pleasant idleness of theirs being lulled too much by the warmth of the climate which renders them rather listless and adverse to work, except to go to work ordinarily in the fields which is the other and more profitable of their occupations.

Agriculture at Woodlark reduces itself to cultivating taro, igitame, potato, and bananas and sugar-cane, which truly do not require any other care except that of being planted and keeping the soil around them cleared at least for the first few days.

Many other products profitable for life and sufficiently and nutritious are not cultivated and grow of themselves in Muju, they are however rather neglected. Breadfruit, the red potato, sago and various other fruits, of pleasant taste and which I have commented on previously, grow in the woods, but grow wild and deteriorate through lack of cultivation. To an extent then our missionaries were forced to adapt the cultivation of certain European products which are easily grown and convenient for daily nourishment, such as beans, pumpkin, maize and the like, these would have supplied well enough for the lack of food in times of privation but the missionaries could not persuade the natives of their usefulness; these foreign products were reputed to be wild foods and therefore unworthy of being cultivated. Thus they condemned themselves always to suffer every

year eight months of poverty and privation, which often reached an insupportable level.

In this time of distress and starvation they were not ... [term blotted out] ... able to undertake fishing, for which they did not feel sufficiently strong, and so they turned to the woods to plunder their produce.

To cut down trees, to till the earth, to clear it, to plant in it taro, igraine, potato, is a work for which ordinarily they invite one another to share, for nothing bores the savage as much as the continuity of a work. Not having had previously anything but wooden axes with edges made of serpentine rock, it used take the work of two men for an entire day to chop down an ebony tree. However in general the Woodlarker is a good worker, but one has need of catching him at a good moment, and above all not to rely on a long or continuous work. With shared effort in their agricultural operations the affair proceeds speedily: in one or two days the planting is completed. There is a great flocking towards work towards the eleventh hour; for a banquet will certainly close the day and the work.

Fishing is indeed one of the principal occupations and a most advantageous one for these islanders. The whole coast from south-east and west is reefed with coral, limestone rocks which indeed help the thriving of fish, which swarm there in great number and of every type and size. Their nets are really valuable and they have some very large ones; and they use them for the *orau*, for the hunting of turtle and *tomadao*, which I mentioned above. Already I have mentioned the struggle with body to body of man with some huge fish in order to take possession of them: but there does not stop here the artifices which the Woodlarkers use to dislodge the fish and to make an abundant catch of them. They use the juice of a certain root, which is squeezed at the openings of the coral and makes the fish come out drunken and easily caught. Such a method of fishing is indeed the speediest and the easiest but it is not without danger; for there is in this the danger of being bitten by the many eels, whose bite produces sores which take a great deal of time to heal.

The nets, of which we have good examples in our museum, are made with a square mesh not unlike ours in their manufacture, and they use the same shuttles as we do in each manufacturing them. The thread, of which they are made, comes from a bush of the mallow type, the leaf acts as a substitute for mallow indeed, the stem is fibrous it is steeped in water as is hemp, and reduced in the same way as hemp. The exception is that the thread which they take has this prerogative that in fresh water it rots and in salt water it makes itself even more consistent and strong. It is all prepared on the knees and it is twisted.

Fish-hooks also are found useful for fishing as with us, they call them *baan* and they are formed from a strip of mother-of-pearl, which simulates the fish, at whose extremity there is a little hook made from tortoise shell and equipped with a float, instead of the cork which we use.

Cooking, the care of the home, and providing for it the obtaining of water and wood, are duties exclusively of the women.

The Woodlarkers are to be praised for the cleanness and the neatness of their huts and of the space surrounding them. The missionary Dom. Carlo Salerio, tells that once some husbands were complaining because none of their women had come to sweep the courtyard of the area of the mission, where they were conversing at the time: from this day for some time their women hastened to this duty and did it quite willingly, so that the missionaries did not neglect to often present them with some needle which they desired.

The woman in Muju occupies herself also in weaving mats which sell even in the country itself for the price of some small coins, in preparing her own belts or skirts which make up all her dress, in going in search of shells, and wandering through the fields and on the shores to gather *gallas*, or other herbs with which she flavours the taro, for the husband would scorn a meal only of taro, and if there is no fish, desires some form of vegetables. In general the woman works as hard as the man.

Fame and fashion have recently introduced into Muju the custom of traveling. Bands of twenty or thirty persons leave the island and in their swift canoes they go away as chance leads them, looking for other hospitable islands, or visiting families related to them. Thus the country so deserted takes on an even more desolate and sad aspect, cultivation there is more neglected through lack of man-power, and disorders of every type occur.

Without any scientific notion of sailing, all the same they know the direction of the wind, they know how to measure it, to tack and to travel the ocean from island to island: stopping always at night, at this time they will not face the sea and thus by small daily journeys long voyages are completed, taking them even to New Guinea. This custom so recently current gives to the missionaries as other causes little fruit for their efforts, through the clear lessening of population and through the supreme dissipation which is acquired by the young.

XXVI

The canoes are a graceful craft, having gunwales almost at the level of the water, and to obtain better balance they are enclosed as it were with large circles, as I have seen used on our lakes. The oars are in shape like the leaf of the sage plant, they are short not going beyond for even the largest canoes the length of two arms, so as they may skim in their journey as it were over the skin of the water.

To empty their boats of water which may enter they use small basins which they call *lacum*, of which there are two models in this museum, one small the other larger, they are of the same shape which our boatmen use; so that they can be better used one of them has a handle which protrudes horizontally as far as the middle of the hollow, the handle of the other one runs right through the hollow so that it can be used with both hands, and thus there will be less loss of water. These two *lacum* are of cedar wood.

Here and there through my manuscript, in speaking of other things, I have implicitly mentioned the industry and knowledge of these islanders; there remains to add some other particulars to complete this subject, though both the industry and the knowledge in this poor nation are rather limited. Both the one and the other are however well enough developed in relation to the means at hand. A piece of serpentine stone well sharpened served as I said not long ago, to cut down enormous trees instead of using until iron until recently, with these they construct boats of a beautiful appearance and also of a certain capability in which they undertake voyages as I have just noted, up to two hundred leagues from their shores. Also the decorations of their toilet and those which show their rank keep a certain fine-ness of taste. It is principally in the manufacture of these ornaments and in the construction of ships and of their huts that their ingenuity is displayed.

These decorations or ornaments, consist generally of necklaces or bracelets, which are called *seasir*, worked and polished with a singular patience. The material which they use for this is enormous shells and teeth of dogs. Although in the museum there are *seasir* woven from straw or from coconut leaf fibre, and with these they adorn themselves especially in time of war. The men wear a waist-band of tight plaits, these plaits are black and from the bark of palm trees and they are decorated with red and white shells. The toilet of the savage of Melanesia is never without *sejac*, pomade or cosmetic with which they draw their faces, arms and breasts. With many other sweet smelling herbs they make small bouquets to adorn themselves, placing them in the bracelets and at their waists, used also as amulets to drive away evil spirits, as in its place I have already noted. The young carry at their sides an ornament which they call *toro*, it is a type of snail shell, white, curved in shape and ovoid. _____

At Muju the dress is simple, but sufficient having in usual mind the usual warmth of the climate. The women attend to modesty and decency by covering themselves with a triple belt of a type of leather and formed from leaves of the coconut, it is completed by large thick fringes which descend usually beyond the knee. A similar waistband, when it seems opportune to them, covers also their shoulders, but they do not use it very frequently. I have said that the belt is a triple one and indeed custom is for women to wear three; but through the excessive heat and to lessen the weight they arrange that the upper one has two levels not very different from what we see our ladies practice with their clothes avolants, in which extra skirts are

only superficial coverings of festoons of the same material as the dress. In time of war the fringe of the skirt is wider the zone it covers falls almost to the heel. In such time they are accustomed to stain also their bodies black.

The women wear combs of wood called *guerio*, a type of palm which grows beside the sea, and which is easily cut so as the cut follows longitudinally and has very long teeth, for the women of Woodlark have long thick hair.

The dwellings were previously most wretched and small huts: but the Woodlarkers have adopted the example of their neighbours of the Massimms islands or Entrecasteaux, as the geographers call them, so that they build larger, higher and more commodious dwelling places.

XXVII

Earlier I passed in outline the principal foods which the Woodlarkers obtain from the vegetable and animals kingdom, from fruits and herbs, from hunting and from fishing; now it is necessary to note their frugality, not demanded from them by some principle of morality, but from necessity and custom. Since whenever they are able to eat freely they abandon themselves to it with a sort of fury of voraciousness. Ordinarily they have two meals a days: one small one in the morning, the other at the end of the day and this they consider the true meal, the one which we call dinner (Italian: *pranzo*). On rare occasions they break their fast at mid-day; more often they live with a single wretched meal in the evening.

But the Melanesian cares little about this, for he has his bettel; this is the coffee of their society; they use it at every moment, and they find in it such exquisiteness that they can hardly express; they are happy when because of it they have their mouth inflamed with a beautiful scarlet red. Its use, very common in Woodlark and in the islands of Melanesia, evidently comes from Malaya and also in the same way from the Indians.

My revered colleague Doctor Scotti, from whose work I have already quoted occupied himself in particular with the Bettel, and therefore I draw on him to discuss it.

This consists in placing in the mouth (at least so they practice it on the island of Muju), a small piece of the arek nut, which after mastication gives much saliva. After they dip the point of a *ken*, that is a piece of cane or spatula of wood in freshly ground coral lime, kept in small gourds which have designs burnt on them, and introducing it into the mouth, avoiding touching the lips.

The vessels of hard wood which are seen in our museum, were used to grind the lime and are called *aitok*. The spatulas or *ken*, which we see cracked, are so because they serve a double use, that is for music during the chewing by beating them against some hard object.

Together with this coral lime is masticated a green pepper fruit and also its leaves. The mixture which results from this in the mouth is of a reddish colour, and of a most acute and pleasant taste, which gives life and new energies in the times of prostration so easy in this climate which is so hot. The use of the bettel is universal and avidly kept up. Every *gamagar* (young man of puberty) is very boastful of his *lagum* (or gourd for the lime) and hastens to have himself supplied with all the necessary ingredients. In meetings with friends, during conversations, it is an act of politeness to offer one's bettel to be masticated and to receive some from the other person, as happens among us when we offer cigars to one another, with this difference that to refuse bettel in Woodlark would cause grave affront. All these ingredients of bettel are becoming scarce at Woodlark.

It is commonly believed by travellers that it is the use of this drug which blackens the teeth of the natives. This is not so according to Fr Salerio, who notes that the natives are keen to have black teeth by the continual providing of certain roots which have the property of staining their teeth black. These roots have a harsh taste, chewed by them, they finish up by rendering their teeth black.

For cooking they use earthen-ware pots elegantly worked. They are made at Muju, but the most graceful are brought from New Guinea. They build their stove with stones and with coral which they heat and under which they place their food. The missionaries of St. Calocero ascertained that sometimes the Woodlark cooking does not lack in refinement, especially at the time of their banquets for feasts and funerals, occasions on which they are accustomed to display all their gastronomic knowledge.

They prepare the table outside the door of their dwelling and prepare the food only in wooden plates of exquisite workmanship, or in small baskets, in which is distributed a portion for each person. Invited or no, it is enough to pass in front of the banqueters to have the right to share; through this many eke out a living who are quite lazy and. sponging types.

Cannibalism is held in horror: nevertheless it is possible if not in Muju, then on their travels and visits to neighbouring surrounding islands, where all are cannibals, they would not have resisted this barbarous urge, as in friendly banquets human flesh would have been sampled in advance. The cannibals of these areas show the highest skill in preparing tit-bits of human flesh, that is when they wait to cook it, devouring it in shreds and. sometimes without even killing the victim first, which happens the most often if the victim is of beautiful and of graceful presence. In the large islands where population abounds other animal food is lacking, therefore men hunt one another for the sole purpose of feeding themselves.

XXVIII

After that it is marvellous to see in this part of the world so barbaric and uncultivated so dominant the taste for music. In Muju they sing quite frequently: alone or in concert they sing rhapsodies not always without harmony. The exchange musical evenings which last the entire night, and there is no lack of spectators and applause, as these flowery demonstrations are not the exclusive privilege of the pits of our theatres. And. the singers earn very many gifts, which show the immense delight, which they cause and the enthusiasm of those who are so susceptible to their singing, which would be able however to be used for civilization (alt. trans: for civilizing them).

They have no musical instruments except a small flute or pipe with four separate notes, but weak, and almost unintelligible. What produces the greatest noise is the *kup*, or drum, which is used for dancing. With three *kup* of varying tones they can form an accompaniment which is truly beautiful and. which can stir up and electrify the dancers. These instruments are oblong, ordinarily of the length of two arms, and are covered at one end by a skin of *caravas*, a type of large lizard: they have however others which are larger and which are of a hollowed out wood., perhaps cedar, like those which are kept in the museum of St Calocero. In any way the sound which they produce is rather hollow or somber.

Another small instrument the Woodlarkes have made of ebony and called *ken*, and they use it very much for the cadence of the dances, they are approximately like the Basque castanets. Of these *ken* there are several examples kept in the museum but not all to the above mentioned use, as others are utensils or spatulas used to extract lime from the gourds when they eat bettel, they are of ebony of whalebone or of ostrich-bone (or, alt. trans? stork-bone).

As in singing, so in dancing they are quite charming and perhaps this is the only gymnastic amusement which they have. I will not judge its merits but will be content to note how among the men it is vibrant, alive, of great agility and precision of balance, to maintain this balance they use a certain counter-weight which they call *tasseravar*, which our museum makes known to us with this they strike out or beat a rhythm and it is painted something like the Spirit of navigation which they place at the bow of their ships and it is rather difficult not to believe that it is this Spirit of navigation. The dance of the women which is always in a circle apart is staid, monotonous, and in very short bursts. The band which would continue to accompany the feminine dancing for more than one turn would be howled down for it would lack delicateness and civility. At the time of dancing they cover themselves in abundance with ornaments which apparently aid the decorum. The Woodlarker goes crazy for the dance and to make himself more agile he fasts for several days, he uses certain drugs, and never tires out.

XXIX

Now concerning the nature and character of the islanders. The Woodlark is in colour a yellowish-chestnut, generally small and thin and of a repulsive appearance, when one is not accustomed to seeing him: the women have the lobes of their ears coming down almost to their shoulders, and long feet.

From what has been said up to now it is easy to gather the idea of the characteristics of this people, these characteristics are perhaps always the same for all people in the state of natural savagery. The distinctive good which one notes among the people of Muju is patience, not through virtue, but through habit: on the other hand they abandon themselves with every triviality, without feeling any remorse or without any brake to all the lowest passions. They are generally timid, and yet ferocious in principle, one would say even by instinct: hospitable, but through pride of dominating, flatterers by inclination and for their own interests, thieves by necessity, by desire, by habit. Insensible to every demonstration of affections, yet they have very delicate manners and the most exquisite etiquette, their ways of acting are always urbane, and even passion is shown not shamefully: but what surprises is that the woman in Muju reveals a character of unsupportable shamelessness and impudence.

All this shows clearly enough the level of morality of these people. It is not an accuracy of ideas which is lacking; neither have they lacking a certain criterion in judgment of the rightness of actions; it is their heart which is absolutely spoilt. One must leave to philosophers the exaltation of the beauties of raw nature: we are not able to feel anything but humiliated when we recognize how man abandoned to his own senses is without affection and is close to the brute, however we do not align ourselves with the paradoxical sentence of a celebrated writer of the 18th century: that whatever comes from the hand of man is bad, and not anything else is good, except that which comes from virgin nature.

XXX

Again I have recourse to my colleague Doctor Scotti for I must touch the shortness of life, the sicknesses the medicines which these savage islanders use, which are all matters in which he by far is more competent: therefore I will quote from him certain ideas as faithfully as I can.

In Woodlark for the mass of the population which I have said does not go beyond the number of two thousand, scarcely forty of them reach old age; for ordinarily the natural death comes to them in the time of their thirtieth or fortieth year.

The most frequent sicknesses are fevers, erysipelas, leprosy, ulcers and

certain different infections which are not common. From fevers strangers can never escape: the erysipelas affects especially the children, to whom it seems contagious. Doctor Scotti affirms that he doubts that it is a contagious form of erysipelas in itself, rather he believes that the quick spread of the disease is caused by a common influence of air and heat, an influence which on the skin on children naturally makes an impression more easily and with greater effect. Leprosy has two forms; one scaly and the other ulcerous; this latter is most painful. There is a simple infection through ulcers which is often incurable and eats up the bones and the flesh, so as to leave the victim distorted and deformed. The ulcers which effected our missionaries preferred the legs and were in the form of small wounds very numerous, and inflamed like lighted sparks and causing therefore most painful spasms.

A single contagious disease was observed by them which attacked also the neighbouring islands, coming to Woodlark from the west, more exactly from New Guinea. These were its characteristics: pains in the chest rather strong and then in the head accompanied by vomiting. The limbs went yellow and death followed at the end of three days putrefaction set in immediately (yellow fever).

In the care of this contagious disease which attacked also the young gathered at the mission, they used laudanum liquid of Sydenam in small doses in a cold infusion of mallow and none of those thus treated died of the sickness. This sickness lasted in the island for about a month and cut down a good sixth of the strongest of the population.

XXXI

"They do not know medicine; if they use some simple herb, it is through superstition. Sicknesses come through wizards and they are these wizards which they pretend to drive out from their bodies; they are called *takeimoo*, which means in their language 'guardians of life'. The principal source of witches in the human body is believed to be the stomach, and at the stomach are directed in a particular way the grimaces of the exorcists.

About this let us discuss.

That there are peoples in the world who do not use medicines is a most natural thing and far from being a paradox. The description and treatment of diseases whether with man or the animals is more varied, multiplied and extensive, according to their state of civilization; for as far as created beings travel from the point of simplicity from which they set out at their origin, so much they turn towards damage and ruin, and on the contrary they keep themselves better and resist better while their position and. their

own combinations (breeding among themselves; Trans) are maintained. The wild wolf, the giraffe and the wild cat; rarely become sick and are quickly cured while the dog, and the horse, and the domestic cat, suffer and die of sicknesses. The man who lives in the country resists better than the city dweller.

Therefore the savage ought to have few sicknesses and, more quickly recover than the non-savage as the former is more simple in his customs and closer to the beginnings of man than is the latter. Also in cities there is a great variation among ordinary artisans and the well to-do moneyed people, thus we say that it is the former in general who have better health and who are cured almost immediately from wounds which for the latter would require a long period of recovery or lead to sad consequences.

If the life of the inhabitants of the tropics is shorter, this is caused solely by the more rapid development of the ages of human life, for these the phases of human life run more quickly and among them our virile age is old age.

The sicknesses which we noted as common among our islanders are attributable to the cosmic causes of the region in which they live as all regions have their own. They depend on the succession of quite cool nights to burning hot days; nights which force one to go into the hut around a blazing fire; on very great humidity which reigns there when the sun does not shine its rays; this humidity which rusts iron taking away the cutting edge and also consuming the very thickness. From such causes it is easy to understand how those organisms open enough in the transpiring and moist pores of the skin would easily succumb to the drawing-back of humors destined to be eliminated from the body. If these humors which are drawn back into the body remain in the cutaneous strata, there result easily erysipelas, sores and even leprosy. If they enter more deeply they cause catarrhs, diarrhoea and dysentery. Fever in these cases would inevitably be an expression of such an internal overturning and a consequence of the irritations brought there by the malignant nature of these humors, which heterogeneous materials running around in the animal metabolism, and more than heterogeneous, we would say poisonous, as are poisonous are the excrements and secretions of the same individual within himself, and also of the same species.

Such easily observed consequences of sickness through the drawing back of sweat, we see ourselves, especially in days of extraordinary heat. Who now does not observe so many people covered with many small pustules on their arms and on their breasts if these are exposed during the day and even worse at night? Even we refer erysipelas most commonly to a rheumatic cause, and also diarrhoea and dysentery; and we know how they pass away to being cured under the better transpiration of the skin, promoted by daily bathing and by the placing of quilts on beds.

Now this simple cure can even better satisfy in the tropics, in which for

a slight improvement in transpiration the improvement in health is rapid and efficacious. It is through this means that most sicknesses are cured, the islanders doing without medicines, and their *takeimoo* are given credit for the driving out of witches from the stomachs of the savages and of curing them.

What happens to wounds to make them rotting and festering and devouring is caused by a poor regimen, and by real ignorance. This happens even among us in those who are full of sores and who take no notice of covering and keeping out the offensive causes from fresh humid air. I do not give any great importance for sicknesses in these people to food or to customs. Man was made by a cosmopolitan creator, and he knows how to keep himself healthy, he makes his what nature has distributed to his land, And his customs, far from being ridiculous, ought to be respected as given from an infallible instinct of the best conservation. The stranger who comes trying to change customs and fashion, soon realizes that his efforts have no foundation, and that he is seeking the impossible; it is better to leave it so that each one lives in his own way, and it would be better also for his own health not to act against the customs but to habituate himself to them. The customs of peoples are given by secret and to the point laws and they will not change except with the maturation of a hundred thousand other civil and political changes.

The English, who continue the abuser of alcoholic liquors in regions in which the natives will not tolerate them, find through these abuses an early grave, and, it is their own historians who proclaim this and warn us of it seriously.”

XXXII

“The savages also have a hygiene which is the very best, in the easy and frequent use of baths and in swimming and in the use of bettel. It is not to be believed that the use of bettel is an extravagance, it is a necessity; and in this matter it ought to be considered a greater extravagance and even ridiculous to these same savages, the European custom of chewing tobacco. It has good sense the tonic-invigorating mixture of the bettel, much more than the irritating narcotic of nicotine. The thought that so many individuals living in Oceania use bettel ought to take away the idea of whim and make us see it as a necessity.

Heat which weakens, which slows down the digestion; cold food from root crops which do not sufficiently excite the peristaltic motion of the intestines; the humidity which weakens the constitution, the watery liquids which depress, make rise up the need of a continual gradual excitement (trans. or invigoration), which excites the nerves and expands a vital force in the organism; and for this is the very best the mixture prepared by the

Oceanic islanders. The words which we have said above concerning its effects, that is that it gives life and new energy in the frustrations so common in that hot climate, are justified, and are the words of the very Fr Salerio who lived there for sufficient time to come to a proper decision.

As it happens with all stimulants, which are more or less normal according to individuality, thus the lovers of bettel vary the proportions, and the numbers of the various components; each one boasts about his particular mixture in the same way as our lovers of tobacco who are quite boastful about their own mixture.

Now before closing these observations, let us try to explain, how so many sicknesses effect foreigners, as particularly sweaty fevers, sores, dysentery and hepatitis. It is certain that the cause and the cure is not nearly as simple and easy as with the natives themselves; however I give to you the opinion of Archibald Robertson, a Scottish doctor, as that which was formed also by me and which seems to me best adapted, and from conversations held with the missionaries of St. Calacero, particularly with the head of our missions in fact, it seems to me constantly confirmed.

The temperature of man, he says, (as it is written in the commentary of Prof. Valeriano Brera), is for every place kept almost equal in men, in whatever circumstance, and this through a particular quality of the vital force. Having a mean temperature of the year in northern regions at approximately 50^o Fahrenheit, it is necessary that there develop in the human machine a considerable quantity of heat in the order of 47^o to maintain exactly the animal heat, without this all functions of the body would become inert, and clothes would not be of any value at maintaining the correct bodily heat which already would be causing the man to become benumbed with cold. Therefore taking oneself into that very hot climate, where the thermometer indicates around 80^o, and having a vital principle already contracted to being accustomed to produce the same quantity of heat as before, beyond the 17^o needed to raise its temperature to 97^o the person would have 30^o extra; a superfluous heat which the foreigners who live here develop entirely to their own harm.”

XXXIII

“If then in the inhabitants of south and north there must form an excess of heat when these travel to live in very hot places and especially in tropical regions, without their skin carrying sufficient freshness and removal of perspiration; why is it then that it is not seen as a basis of their physical suffering this state of increased heat, a predominance of congestion and of true inflammation? It is consequently the admission of this predominance, which is absurd to deny, or to give oneself to the opposite concept.

In the first fevers, in sores on the legs, in sicknesses of the liver and

stomach with diarrhoea and dysentery, and in mainly of the head; in all those which assault the European before has been acclimatized, I recognize and see and am certain of relations *ab adjuvantibus et ledentibus*, that there is active inflammation, and still worse with an excess of blood.

This being so, there follows a spontaneous cure and I say a sure one. The cure must be directed at diminishing the abundant fullness of blood and to taking away the inflammation.

Therefore blood-letting, leeches, and scarification ought to be the order of the day and accepted by those who make no difference between the native and the foreigner, they do not see the difference between the early sicknesses and the later, the early ones caused by the abovementioned acclimatization, and they see the sole cause as weakness.

Afterwards the patient is given restoratives and emollients , purges,

When the sickness is overcome but not completed some recognize the place of bitters and tonics. Acting in such a way one can have no doubt of expecting a healthy life, which is sanctioned by practice, which means by the most satisfactory consequences for health.”

(Translator: "The vocabulary of the last two paragraphs is extremely difficult and rather dubious.")

XXXIV

As for the climate with its inevitable heat, through being a few degrees below the equator, there often is added winds and rains according to the seasons. The highest temperature reaches, in the shade, up to 45o centigrade, and in the sun up to

125° Fahrenheit, At night it falls to 22° which is the minimum temperature.

I will give some meteorological observations in the months which are least hot to show also the variations in temperature.

22 December. Nine o'clock in the morning 30⁰ centigrade -two o'clock afternoon 26° -- wind.

23 December 7 a.m. 25° -- 2 p.m. 30° -- wind.

26 “ 9 a.m. 25° -- 7 p.m. 26° -- wind.

31 “ 6 a.m. 28° -- 1 p.m. 29⁰ -- 5 p.m. 28-i° -- wind.

the abovementioned decrees and of those two days which I have noted.¹ January

8 a.m. 28-20 -- 5 p.m. 29° -- 9 p.m. 28° - strgng winu.

8 a.m. 28° -- 11 a.m. 30° -- 4p.m. 31°

--

9 p.m. 29" 8 a.m. 29i° -- noon 31°.

&

13

16 **If**

-- 1 p.m. 30° -- rain.

17

If

10 a.m. 29° -- rain.

18

8 a.m. -- noon 30°. 1 p.m. 8° -- rain.

19

It

6 a.m. 23° -- 7 ilia: 29° rain.

20

It

8 a.m. 27° -- rain. 11 a.m. 29°.

21

It

6 a.m. 25° -- 8 a.m. 27° -- 4p.m. 31°.

9a.m. 26° -- noon 28° --

5a.m. 24° -- 7 a.m. 26° --

26

noon 30° 2 p.m. 31-2-01

4

7 a.m. 27° -- noon 31° -- 5 p.m. 31°

9 a.m. 25° -- noon 28°

8

7 a.m. 28° -- noon 31° --

1 March

11 a.m. 30° -- noon 28° -- rain.

up to noon

18 April

8 a.m. 29° -- 9 a.m. 31° -- 10 a.m. 310— 1 p.m. 31°

5 p.m. 30°.

22

8 a.m. 27-i° -- 9 a.m. 26-1° -- 11 a.m.. 28°.

And so for all this month of A.pril the thermometer wanders between the

13 noon 30° abovementioned degrees and of those days which I have noted

14 " 1 p.m. 29°.

XXXV

My task, gentlemen, is finished: this is all, which by examining the objects gathered in the glass showcases of the seminary of the Foreign Missions of San Calocero, and questioning the worthy priests, it is possible to tell you about the island of Muju, or Woodlark. There are some few other things worthy of observing but which belong to the islands of Rook, of Wallis, of the Solomons and even of New [gap] ;but these involve only slight modifications of the customs and usages which I have already written down

and narrated.

However these investigations of our are not without fruit.

Treating mainly of the island of Muju I have only shown the tiniest edge of this great and interesting part of the world which is Oceania, not sufficiently studied by Europeans, who will be able to derive from all this so many reasons for commerce and. for richness. As well as Australia, which is not commonly classed as an Oceanic island, but which is the largest of them, there are also many other considerable ones, such as those of Borneo, Papua (New Guinea), Sumatra, Celebes, Java, Luzon, and finally those of New Zealand, of van Diemen's Land, of Mindanao, of Dagoo (New Britain) and of Isobella, one of the Solomons.

The greater part of Oceania is situated in the torrid zone; because of the influence of the sea, the climate is generally most temperate, and the earth produces precious and exquisite commodities.

The aromatics and spices seem to have their place of origin. The nutmeg, clove, the most pure cinnamon, the pepper, the canfor-laurel, sugar-cane, coffee, sago, igraine, and a hundred other types of delicate and nutritious fruits are born there in great abundance. The mountains hide, in many places, metallic treasures of every sort, diamonds and precious stones. The sea feeds in its depths an infinite and most varied number of beings.

These lands present in every place aspects which would move the coldest imaginations: a hundred nations, still beginners, not only in civilization, but in barbarity, are its people. New adventurous routes open Oceania to commerce. Rich treasures, still hidden from the investigating eye of science, offer themselves for learned interpretation. And the various aspects of an infinite number of gulfs, straits, ports, hills, mountains, valleys and plains, are for the brush of the most ardent painter, the subject for most beautiful and romantic paintings.

What magnificence, what originality, what variety!

Here the coral worm, the immobile inhabitant of a sea which is never agitated by storms, builds a circle of calcareous reefs, building up his remains around the bank which saw him born. Then birds and the winds carry there some grains of seed. Soon a young palm tree shakes its luxuriant tresses above the azure blue sea of the ocean. Thus every seed becomes an island, every island a beautiful garden.

There a volcanic peak, which dominates a fertile stretch of country, made up from lava once erupted from it: vigorous vegetation displays its thousand colours above ashes which were once burning and above rough

scorie. (?)

Further, extensive lands present even vaster aspects: in some is basalt, which majestically elevates its prismatic columns and covers great (tracks/tracts) of solitary shores with its picturesque remains;[gap]..... raise their burning peaks into the midst of the clouds, while, suspended on their sides, dark pine woods sadly vary the empty aspect of these desert slopes.

Further again, low beaches covered with swamps and mangroves, gradually hiding themselves under the surface of the ocean, becoming far from the shore a labyrinth of shoals and reefs, a dangerous threat to the inexperienced steersman who remains as a victim for the roaring waves.

England knows all this and not in vain she has prepared at Sydney a proper port; and Sydney today populated by over forty-five thousand inhabitants, is endowed with buildings and academies and gives the appearance of a flourishing European city.

French and Italian missionaries moved, as I have said in this manuscript, from there to spread the teachings of Christ, but constrained by the smallness of their results and the great expenses to abandon those places, they must warn us that the work of civilization cannot, and nor ought to be, merely the work of the missionaries, but of Associations and of the governments involved.

More than colonies of missionaries there ought to be colonies for trade; as more rapidly and more lastingly one obtains thus the establishment of every factor of civilization. _____

So I turn my words to my own Italy, and to so many liberal governments which have such power on the seas, and more than all to the great Associations, so that we may not leave everything entirely to the hand of England, but found in their turn their own colonies in Oceania and establish there ports and establishments and throw there immediately the foundations of a well established civilization, and old Europe from these new reservoirs of richness will draw many reasons to re-invigorate its own commerce, to give itself new blood, to prepare for itself a new life, in exchange for having broken the fetters of barbarity, for having spread the light of truth, and taken from ignorance and abjection such a great part of humanity.

Let the reader know that the collection of Oceanic objects mentioned in this memorial now he ought to go to the Civic Museum of Milan, to which it has been recently donated by the Seminary of the

Foreign Missionaries of St Calocero.

L'A.

End.

{typing completed 19/5-74}