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## THE GOVERNMENT ANTHROPOLOGIST, MR. F. E. WILLIAMS.

In the last Annual Report I mentioned that our Government Anthropologist, Mr. F. E. Williams, had been awarded a Rockefeller Fellowship and had gone to study in Europe. While he was away he competed for and won the Wellcome Medal, and took his degree of B.Sc. at Oxford.

Mr. Williams has given me the following account of his movements during the time that he was away from Papua—

"The Rockefeller Fellowships are granted to certain accredited workers in (1) the Natural Sciences, (2) Medicine, (3) Social Sciences, and (4) the Humanities. Anthropology comes under the third heading. Applicants must have a decent record and a fairly strong backing as the number of Fellowships in any country is of course limited; the Foundation has to be satisfied that the recipient is the sort of person who will, through his Fellowship, bring benefit to the branch of science which he studies. The object of the Foundation in awarding such a Fellowship as mine is to give the student opportunity to bring his knowledge and technique into line with the latest and best developments. Mine would have enabled me to study at any anthropological school or schools in England, America or Europe.

As things turned out I spent the whole of my time in England and most of it at the London School of Economics where I studied under Professor Malinowski. It was my main object to acquaint myself at first hand with the aims and methods of the Functional School, and having spent 2½ terms in Malinowski's seminar I feel I have come somewhere near achieving it. The intellectual stimulus of contact with Dr. Malinowski and his electrical seminar could not be valued too highly.

When at the London School of Economics I attend lectures by Professors Ginsberg (Psychology), Seligman (Ethnology) and Coatman (Comparative Administration), and others. The London School of Economics is as keen and busy as a nest of red ants.

It was something of a relief to get away to Oxford for the latter part of the third term. I had taken with me the notes and partly written MSS of a book on the Morehead, and soon after reaching England secured permission to submit it as a thesis for the B.Sc. degree. Completing the book took a good part of my spare time throughout the year and was rather a dead weight. But I finished it off at Oxford and was able to take a degree on 4th August. It is in the hands of Oxford press and will be published under the title *Papuans of the Trans-Fly*, with an introduction by Dr. Haddon. My old tutor, Dr. Marett, was my "Supervisor" and I had the benefit of many conversations with him—hardly once on the special subject of my book. I also saw something of my former instructors Mr. Balfour and Dr. Buxton at Oxford.

I twice visited Cambridge as the guest of Dr. Haddon (who retains his immense enthusiasm for everything Papuan) and was able to meet a good many of the leading British anthropologists in London.

An extension of leave made it possible for me to attend the International Congress of Anthropology and Ethnology at London, 4th-10th August. This Congress, organised by Professor Myers, was a very good show. It was divided in the usual way into a large number of sections. My own interest was chiefly in the Sociological Section (President, Professor Seligman) which had 'Ritual' as its main topic. I read a paper here on the Mask Ceremonies of the Papuan Gulf. I also read a paper on Papuan Sorcery in the General Ethnology Section (President, Dr. Haddon), and in the same section gave a talk on Applied Anthropology.

During the year I gave a paper on Exchange Marriage and Exogamy at the Royal Anthropological Institute. I cannot say that I was otherwise rushed with invitations to speak in public.

The Wellcome Medal essay was written late in 1933 and rather as an afterthought, indeed I was hard at it during a Christmas holiday in Dublin and had to apply for an extension of a week in order to finish it. It arose out of the report on Native Education which I had written earlier in the year and was called Education and Culture Contact. The terms of the competition require a "research essay on the application of anthropological methods to the problems of

native peoples, particularly those arising from the intercourse between native peoples, or between primitive natives and civilised races". The essays are submitted anonymously to a Medal Committee as adjudicators. I do not know who the adjudicators were nor who else entered for the competition. I was particularly pleased to get the medal as the Application of Anthropology to problems of native welfare is presumably the *raison d'être* of my job; further it gave me the chance to attack what I think to be certain extravagance of anthropological theory. If the test of applicability leads to a *reductio ad absurdum* then there must be something wrong with the theory.

The whole trip was well worth while. It has knocked off some of the accumulated rust of 12 years."

## PAPUANS ADMITTED FOR MEDICAL TRAINING AT SYDNEY UNIVERSITY.

An interesting and very successful experiment was conducted this year by Dr. W. M. Strong, Chief Medical Officer, aided by the generous courtesy of the University of Sydney, and the ungrudging assistance of the medical staff in particular.

The first I heard of any suggestion that Papuans might receive medical instruction outside the Territory was from Sir James Barrett who spoke to me in Sydney early in 1933. Sir James's idea was that the instruction might be given in Fiji but eventually the venue was changed to Sydney. Dr Strong gives an account of the experiment as follows:—

"The question of the training of natives for medical work amongst their fellow Papuans has been one I have given considerable attention to for several years. By October, 1932, much had been done in getting selected natives to travel through the villages and give out simple remedies as well as to give intramuscular and intravenous injections for yaws, a very common disease in Papua. About 1932 it appeared that the time had come when such work should be performed by natives who had been given some training in the subjects on which medical and surgical work is based. Accordingly during the period October, 1932, to March, 1933, when I was on leave in Australia, informal discussion took place with Dr. J. H. L. Cumpston, Director-General of Health, and with Professor Harvey Sutton, Director, School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, who both proved very sympathetic with the idea, and as a result arrangements were made for twelve selected Papuan natives to receive a preliminary training in the subjects of the 1st and 2nd year M.B. examinations in Papua, after which they were to receive a further course in the same subjects at the School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, where there are resources for teaching impossible at the present time in Papua.

Accordingly on my return to Papua in March, 1933, I at once began the task of selecting twelve suitable students and giving them some elementary training in the subjects of the 1st and 2nd year M.B. examinations. During this part of the training notes and lectures were all given bilingually, i.e. in English and in Motuan, a language which is more or less spoken over a very large part of Papua. This served to get the students used to technical terms, and to give them a good idea of what and how they were to learn and how to learn to understand the human body. Without this preliminary training they would have hardly been able to profit by the Sydney training, due to their general inadequate knowledge of English.

On 28th September, 1933, I left Port Moresby with twelve Papuan students and two native attendants to look after them and to keep their quarters clean. By arrangement with the Commonwealth Director-General of Health (Dr. Cumpston) and with Dr. Metcalfe (Chief Quarantine Officer for New South Wales) the students were housed on the Quarantine Station, Manly, in charge of Mr. E. H. Adams, a travelling European Medical Assistant of the Territory of Papua. Here they were kept away from too frequent and too close contact with the general public, and had comfortable and quiet quarters where they could work.

While in Sydney their routine was as follows:—Mondays to Fridays after an early breakfast they left the Quarantine Station about 7.30 a.m. and walked to Manly accompanied by Mr. Adams. There they took the ferry to Circular Quay and the tram thence to the School of Tropical Medicine in the University grounds, where they arrived about 9.30. Dr. Clements of the School of Tropical Medicine then took charge of them and kept them busy during the day lecturing and demonstrating, with an hour's break for lunch, until about 3.30 p.m. The students then left the University, and accompanied by Mr. Adams, returned to the Quarantine Station at Manly. Here they had their evening meal and went to bed at nine o'clock. I met the party on their arrival at the University and spent the day there with them.

On Saturdays they remained on the Quarantine Station, and I spent the morning with them there. This gave me an opportunity of hearing their difficulties and of explaining same with the help of the Motuan language. During the morning various questions of detail were gone into with Mr. Adams.

Saturday afternoon and Sunday they usually had to themselves. On several occasions they had cricket matches against teams at the University or at Manly. These matches were arranged either by one of the Manly church associations or by members of the School of Tropical Medicine. They did very well at cricket, beating two or three European teams of similar age. Sunday mornings they went to one of the Manly churches. Sunday afternoon was mostly spent on the Quarantine Station. At times both on Saturday afternoon and on Sunday I took parties to see Sydney, including the Zoological Gardens and the bridge.

The work done at the School of Tropical Medicine, as well as that done in Papua, was very well done indeed, especially if one remembers they were being taught and examined in a foreign language. Both Professor Harvey Sutton, Director of the School, and Dr. Clements, their tutor, expressed themselves as very pleased both with their work and conduct. In fact I have been told that their work was quite comparable to that of average 1st year M.B. students. Their conduct was excellent at the school, on the Quarantine Station, and elsewhere, and no one could justly criticise it.

The New South Wales Railways' Ambulance Brigade took an interest in the students, and a number of them under Mr. Funnell very kindly gave the students a demonstration at Glenbrook of how the injured in a railway accident would be handled. The students, also by invitation, attended a competition by ambulance brigades representing the New South Wales Railways and Tramways. During the competition a group of Papuans made a bush shelter which by general consent was highly commended.

During their course at Sydney the Papuans received instruction in elementary Physics, Chemistry, Anatomy, Physiology and Pathology. In fact they received a shortened and much abbreviated course on the lines of the 1st and 2nd year M.B. examinations. For the most part clinical medicine and surgery was not touched upon as it was felt that this could be more satisfactorily done under Papuan conditions where actual patients could be shown and examined. But advantage was taken of their tutor's special knowledge of first aid work, and he very kindly gave them detailed descriptions of how to treat fractures and dislocations both as regards first aid treatment and as regards hospital or after treatment of a kind which could be carried out when travelling in the native villages or in the bush. Having spent some months in the Mandated Territory he was conversant with village and bush conditions. The treatment of some other major injuries, always possible in the bush, as well as elsewhere, was also dealt with.

In conclusion I would like to express my thanks for the sympathetic help and assistance received, and with this I am sure the Papuan students would most heartily concur, from every one who took part in their training at the School of Tropical Medicine, from all those responsible for the accommodation at Manly, and for all those who helped them to make their stay in Sydney more enjoyable. I would more especially like to mention the following as regards their Sydney work; Dr. J. H. L. Cumpston, Director-General of Health; Professor Harvey Sutton, Director, School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine; Dr. F. W. Clements, their tutor at the school; as well as all others at the school who from time to time helped with their work. As regards their accommodation at Manly, I would like to mention again Dr. J. H. L. Cumpston, Director-General of Health; Dr. A. J. Metcalfe, Chief Quarantine Officer for New South Wales; and also Dr. G. A. Murray who was acting for him during much of the time the students were in Sydney, as well as the officers in residence on the Quarantine Station at Manly. Amongst those who helped to make the stay of the Papuans in Sydney more enjoyable I would more especially mention the Secretary (Mr. H. B. Brown) and the authorities of the Taronga Zoological Park Trust, who very kindly gave the Papuans a free pass to the Park, and the members of the Congregational Church at Manly who frequently asked them to join in with church picnics, cricket matches and other sports. Thanks are also due to the staff of the School of Tropical Medicine who took an interest in the Papuans' cricket and arranged cricket matches for them to play against other teams. Thanks are also due to Park, Davis and Co., and to the "Sun" newspaper authorities who very kindly took them over their establishments. Last but by no means least I would like to express our indebtedness to the Honorable C. W. C. Marr, D.S.O., M.C., V.D., Minister for Health and Minister for Repatriation, who at the time of our stay in Sydney was also Minister in charge of Territories, and who from the first showed a keen and friendly interest in the Papuans.

These boys, when one allows for the language difficulty, and for the extremely limited educational facilities which are open to natives in Papua, seem to have done remarkably well; better, in fact, than most of us expected. It is the fashion nowadays, I understand, to look upon all races of men as more or less equal in inherited mental capacity; for instance, a learned author tells us that "The consensus of scholarly opinion at the present time seems to be to regard the backward races, not only as not having been proved to be inferior in mental ability, but as being, in so far at least as their inherited mental capacity is concerned, substantially equal to the culture races," (E. B. Reuter *Race Mixture*, page 143). And the superiority of European culture has been accounted for by "the emergence among the Greeks of a number of eminent men who developed logic, the experimental method, and philosophic interest, and fixed in their group the habit of looking behind the incident for the general law," (W. I. Thomas, *Sex and Society*, page 288; and Reuter, page 144).

Personally I must admit that I can not swallow this theory, and I cannot think that it is, or ever has been, generally accepted\* I quite agree that Papuan and European overlap—that is that the best Papuan is superior to the worst European—but I cannot think that they are equal, and I think that most residents of Papua will agree with me. But that makes the performance of these boys all the more remarkable."

## AN AFRICAN VIEW OF MISSIONARIES AND ANTHROPOLOGISTS.

I read the other day, in the "International Review of Missions" for April, 1934, an interesting account of the native African view of the divergent opinions which are held on the preservation of native customs. It was an article by the Reverend A. G. Fraser, Principal of the Prince of Wales' College, Achimota, in the Gold Coast Colony. Mr. Fraser says, "My sixth form at Achimota once introduced for discussion the subject of the proper attitude to their old customs. They said an anthropologist had advised them to retain all their old customs, as otherwise they would lose their national character. They added that he did not retain the customs of his early British forefathers and yet believed himself true to his nation. Further he had told them that he no longer held the religious views of his parents. The missionaries, they said, on the other hand had condemned all their old customs, their dances, puberty rites and laws of inheritance. Yet when they introduced monogamy they also initiated expensive weddings with bridesmaids, brides cakes, dresses, ring, and so on. They brought in the Christmas

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\* NOTE.—See Annual Report 1923/24, pages 6-7. Dr. Westermann says that reports from Africa point in the same direction "though not yet in sufficient quantities to enable us to make conclusive comparisons." *The African of To-day*, page 319.

tree and so forth. They felt that the anthropologist was an innovator, a radical. He disliked his own customs because to him they were old. He liked theirs because to him they were new. As to the missionaries, they were conservatives who liked the old they understood and hated all that was unfamiliar. For themselves the boys could take neither one nor the other as authoritative guides. The responsibility was on them and on their people to preserve or to discard."

Shortly after I had read this my attention was drawn by the Official Secretary to an account in a London paper (*The New Statesman and Nation* of 11th August, 1934), of the recent International Congress of Anthropologists and Ethnologists. After a description of the very varied personnel of the Congress the account continues—"Some fine squabbles resulted particularly between the missionaries, who, naturally, wish to stamp out heathen customs, and the 'pure' anthropologists, who regard the break up of a culture as a vandalism worse than the demolition of a Gothic cathedral."

We are fortunate in having escaped these "squabbles" in Papua; we have a very distinguished Government anthropologist, Mr. F. E. Williams, but he has never evinced any desire to foster such practices as head hunting or cannibalism, or any other native custom which runs counter to our ordinary notions of order and decency, nor, so far as I am aware, have any of our Missionaries displayed any anxiety to suppress a native custom, however foolish it may appear, so long as it may be regarded as harmless. I do not know why we have had such exceptional luck. Perhaps the reason is that we are so far away from the centres of culture that we are less affected by the march of modern thought, or it may be that our Papuans are so primitive that their customs can rarely, if ever, compete with our own; but I venture to hope and to believe that our good fortune is due to the fact that, with us, anthropologist and Missionary have deliberately chosen to work in harmony rather than in opposition.