NEWS FROM KWATO

AUGUST 1940
STAFF NOTES

Work on the Field is undergoing re-organization to meet new circumstances brought about by the war. The possibility of food shortage owing to transport difficulty is being taken into consideration. Rice planting, and the erection of temporary accommodation where our large colony of children could be housed if necessary, with access to food supplies and the least disruption of their education, is part of the plan.

We ask for your prayers for all this, and for the new problems facing the staff, which must now be reduced and re-organized as some face the call to defend the liberty of the world.

The first to leave us to join the forces are Nevil Brett Young and Robin Knight. Margot Knight and son Oliver, will accompany Robin to Australia. They are the vanguard of Kwato's representatives, and we commend them to the prayer backing of all friends of Kwato. Geoffrey Baskett, and others in due course, may have to follow.

John Smeeton left Kwato in May for medical treatment. He had been suffering increasingly with his eyes, and has taken advantage of the Australian winter time for a much needed furlough. Marjorie and the family, Jonathan and Hereward, sailed on the 22nd. of June to join him in Sydney.

In January Cecil Abel was a guest on the Government aeroplane that flew inland to the recently discovered Lake Kutubu. The Lake is 3000 feet above sea level, and has a bracing climate. Cecil made many important contacts, and returned with three men from three tribes, each speaking a language unknown to the other. These three men are spending a year with us. Two of them are already taking first steps in the new life, are having their quite times and thinking out how best they can give Christ to their people, and to whom they should go first with this message. Please pray that their stay here may be of maximum value, and that they may go home to their distant and inaccessible homes with a real power.

FOR NEW READERS

Information about Kwato may be obtained from:

Miss Grace Curtis, 184 Fernwood Avenue, Upper Montclair N. J., U. S. A

SINCE our last News from Kwato was published, the world has been plunged into war. With catastrophe at the very doors of so many today, Papua will seem a far cry.

At the fateful beginning of September, we were enjoying a happy time of fellowship at Kwato with our Papuan staff. They had come in to Kwato from plantations and outstations to settle their accounts, discuss their finances and to organize for the oncoming month. They brought reports of their work; shared their special needs and problems. Stories from all quarters were told. We prayed together as a united team, bearing each other's burdens, and realizing our common responsibility towards each other in the carrying out of the varied tasks God has assigned to each.

We planned advance. Cecil Abel arrived from his sojourn in the Kunika, like a breeze from the inland mountain ranges. He was full of reports of progress there. Rival tribes were learning the art of living in peace. Listening to God and obeying His commands, was proving the key to a system of cooperation among people, the sole object of whose former relations had been to exert themselves at each other’s expense. Was not this the answer the world needed, being put to the test in the depth of the Papuan forest?

Right into the midst of all this building and planning for the further spread in Papua of Peace on earth and Goodwill toward men, was dropped the bombshell of war in the world, the scale of which we have yet to learn. Will the fruits and victories that God has given us survive the smoke and flames? Will the truth we demonstrate as a fellowship of the races be completely obscured in the evil at large in the world today?

We put aside our planning and sat till late hours; a semi-circle intent round the radio that announced the beginnings of war: anxious white faces, puzzled brown.

JUBILEE

The year 1940 is a special one for Kwato. We celebrate this year the arrival and commencement of work in Papua, of our Founder Charles W Abel.

Then a primitive country, inhabited by mystified, and in most places still savage and quarrelsome natives, the past fifty years has seen the stone age replaced by an era of development, with an enlightened Government, and a growing white population. A once remote country is now linked to the world by Air Service, and fast steamers. Comfortable motor vessels ply the coastal routes along which early missionaries tacked laboriously in open sailing boats.

Primitive vengeance has given place to administered justice. Papuans have laid down their barbed spears to see the fortifications of modern warfare erected by the race that established peace and order in their land.

The first white man to set foot on Kwato was a Portuguese, of the early type of Pacific roamer that fiction has named "beach-comber". The natives were truculent enough, but showed keen interest in his little box of cheap trade goods. The brisk bartering that opened his business career at Kwato filled him with hope. His customers, however, conceived a better method of possessing themselves of the glamorous foreign articles. They clubbed him one night, and looted his box.

The next foreigner to attempt residence at
News from Kwato

Kwato was Chinese. With the shrewd business instincts of his race, he began with the same hopes as his predecessor, occupied the same thatched hut, and shared the same fate.

When Fred Walker and Charles Abel came to Kwato in 1890 they camped in the same ill famed hut. Their first callers came across from the neighbouring island in canoes with human skulls mounted on their prows. They listened to the talk of the missionaries, and heard some of their dreams of the centre that Kwato would one day become in the service of Papua, but refused to have any part in them. The poor deluded strangers could not be expected to know that Kwato was the home of a legendary prototype of the Loch Ness Monster. They would only have themselves to blame when their attentions to its island—swamp filling, hill levelling, road making and similar operations essential to make their dream come true—had sufficiently provoked the dragon in its swampy lair.

Today people all over Papua know that Kwato stands for a new way living, in which Christ is supreme, and in which Papuans and whites stand together in loyal fellowship for the regeneration of their country and of the world.

The varied responsibilities that have accrued in 50 years are more and more being carried by Papuan shoulders. Evangelism, schools, plantations, the stewardship of the finances of a large organization of service, are now in the hands of children and grandchildren of the dragon-worshippers.

During the past fifty years Kwato has existed for the spread of Christ's Kingdom, and has developed to help Papuan youth of succeeding generations to find their place in their swiftly changing world, and to bring about an adjustment of the upheaval caused by the impact of civilization.

We have sought to provide education designed to meet the demands of these circumstances; handicrafts and industries to insure a life both adequate to personal development, and important to their country's growth; sport to replace lost excitements.

The sons and grandsons of cannibals today are evincing skill as mechanics, carpenters, boatbuilders, printers, stone-masons, agri-culturalists, hospital orderlies; and are developing a new capacity for responsibility. Their sisters too are learning to serve, as teachers, kindergarten workers, nurses; and are pursuing the native skill of their hands in new directions. The ability of the Papuan, once disputed, is now accepted by a white population that is appreciative of the value of the labour it employs.

Whatever critics may think of education for Papuans, the demand for skilled and intelligent men and women who can be relied upon, increases. The existence of such remains a constant witness to Christ, and the training of such our obligation to Papua.

The fifty years have been years of struggle. The vision has been delayed but never dropped; frustrated but never forgotten. Papuans have caught the vision. It has turned men and women apathetic about the welfare of their own land, and unconcerned in anything beyond their own tribal limits, into real patriots who are giving their lives to bring their country, under the true dominion of God.

A primitive Kunika (bushman) recently said, "Formerly it did not matter much what happened to our children. Now that we have Christ and are seeking His will for our villages, we care very much what happens to our children. We want the best for them."

Education, civilization, and science are not enough, as the world knows today to its grief. Only the personal allegiance and loyalty of each individual to Christ, and the acceptance of the Gospel in its full implication of the New Testament way of living, is sufficient to build up a nation that will have real light to give to the now shadowed, civilized world, that in years past sent its best to serve and sacrifice for a primitive, fear-bound country.
THE PASSING OF A WARRIOR

The close of 1939 was marked by the loss of a stalwart from our ranks, Tiraka Anderea.

A vital and clear-sighted leader at Kwato, he lived a humble, disciplined life. He was always sympathetic and approachable and people flocked to him with their troubles.

He always had something positive to pass on, was always the first to move when new issues faced us, the first to raise his voice to rebuke our faithlessness or prayerlessness, or to challenge our dimmed vision. We learned to look instinctively to him for help, and to rely upon his sound judgement and thoughtful commonsense.

Many of us who lived close to him feel that this cheerful, simple and deeply spiritual man was one of the most remarkable Christians it has been our privilege to know. "The only Christian I have ever met," was the sweeping tribute of a certain local white pagan!

A tower of strength to Kwato, his passing naturally left us wondering how we were going to get on without him. We realize, however, that the power that developed and strengthened his character is available to us all. ("He that wrought effectually in Peter, the same was mighty in me." Gal. 2.8.)

Tiraka's death brought many face to face with reality, gave a new and positive direction to certain purposeless lives, and awakened some to active responsibility. It occasioned for us all a new self-searching and commitment to God's will and plan, for which Tiraka lived and gave himself unspiringly. His last conscious act was to send for someone whom he knew to be hardened and in need, appeal to him and leave him with a responsibility that threw him back on God, and has been the means of changing him. Tiraka knew the weight that his words as a dying man would have to his friends, and he used this influence. A reconsecrated home is one of the results of this warrior's death.

Tiraka's parents left him at Kwato when he was a child. In those days school standards were much lower than today. Industries were being started at Kwato, and here he showed outstanding ability, but very little sense of responsibility. Preferring popularity to responsibility, he was an easy-going lad, and very attached to Mr. and Mrs. Abel. This devotion enabled him to endure a lot. For to conquer the flaccid element in his character, Mr. Abel kept him under merciless discipline, and forced him to do things from which he shrank most, the chief of which was responsibility over others. He often spoke of his early spartan training, and was eternally grateful for it. One day Mr. Abel, recognizing his manual gifts, told him that if he could give evidence of real moral courage, and determined leadership, he would take him to Australia for further training. No more was said on the subject, but at the end of a year he had earned such unqualified praise from his instructors, not only for his workmanship but for his influence over others, that Mr. Abel told him that the coveted privilege was to be his.

Tiraka's year in Sydney was a success, and he returned in every way improved by the experience. He married Solatai Mataisa, an enlightened Samoan girl who had visited Europe, and their union promised to be one of great fruitfulness and service. Together they began to take responsibility. Their capability proved, they were once left in sole charge at Kwato while the Abels and Miss Parkin were away on furlough; the only time that Kwato has been left entirely in native hands. It was during this important time that Solatai died, after brief but severe malaria to which Samoans are so often prone.

This was a terrible blow. From this time Tiraka's spiritual life underwent ups and downs until a new experience of Christ in 1924 made a new man of him. From then onwards he was in the forefront of the fight, and his spiritual growth was sure and steady. In 1931 when revival that was more akin to revolution, swept the Kwato district, Tiraka found a greater baptism and release of power than he had ever known, though even this new power proved with the years to be a growing one. His chief work was life-changing, and the building up of Christian character and fellowship. The greatest witness of his death to many Papuans, for whom steadfastness is more
News from Kwato

often striven for than attained, was the fact that "his hands were steady until the going down of the sun;" and indeed for him the sunset of earthy life was a blaze of light.

In 1921 Tiraka returned to Sydney for a further period of training, and in 1923 married again, Luta, whose parents greeted the first white entrants to Milne Bay, Captain Moresby of the H.M.S. Basilisk. Four delightful children remain with us, for whom their father had the highest ambitions, which we feel to be a sacred trust to do our utmost to justify.

After Tiraka's death there were numerous testimonies given on the part of many Papuan men and women, to all that he had meant to them. For a long time at every service and meeting held here, there were some who wished to pay a tribute to his life, and to acknowledge the vision for their country that Tiraka had given them, and his passion for Christ that had been the means of capturing them.

On the industrial side he was a trusted foreman of unimpeachable faithfulness both in craftsmanship and in the handling of his men.

Arthur Swinfield, Tiraka's chief during nine years of close association in the Boat-building and Carpentry sheds at Kwato, wrote: "We know what it means to us individually and to Kwato and Papua in general to lose such a friend. You were always aware of my esteem for 'old' Tiraka; a man if ever there was one. Tell the boys what I feel about their loss, and now it is up to them to show Tiraka that his good stewardship was not in vain. Can't I remember lots of our jobs—'Trinity', 'Nusa', 'Kwato' all those cutters and miles more, all with the help of a man who did not let me down once, a real Christian and a perfect gentleman."

BUILDING THE MEMORIAL CHURCH
COMPLETION TO CELEBRATE JUBILEE.

This was commenced a few years ago, but for financial and other reasons was not completed. There has been a growing conviction that the unfinished building was a reproach.

This has become a widespread and sacrificial determination to see this through this jubilee year, and there is hardly a village that is not prepared to do its bit.

In the first week-end in December last, we had special gatherings everywhere for the facing of personal and national failings, seeking God's solution for them, and for finding His plan for our nation, and for the world. Several Papuans spoke in meetings of the tendency in their own lives to get tired of a project, to leave things unfinished and aims unfulfilled from year to year. A projection of this tendency was recognized in the unfinished church, and this was realized as part of a national weakness of Papua that God could cure. Their words carried conviction, and the completion of the church became an urgent necessity, and part of the demonstration of God's sovereignty over us, that they owed to their fellow Papuans.

Money was needed to carry this out. Arthur Beavis, our builder, estimated £600, besides help in the form of timber logs, and wooden shingle roofing. A Papuan youth said his guidance was "Begin right now," and suggested that the following day, Sunday, be made a special gift Sunday for which he himself would be responsible. Chief of those who pledged themselves to see this through was Tiraka, who had had this burden on his heart for a long time.

He did his utmost to pass this on to others, urging us in season and out of season, and warning us that we would get no peace as far as he was concerned, until this objective was fulfilled to the glory of God. His subsequent death has made this a solemn obligation upon us all, in grateful loyalty to his memory.

And so on that gift Sunday the people brought their shillings and their pennies, while a few, unknown except to God, scooped their
Sibodu and Ofekule, Kunika Chiefs, once noted for their success as murderers, now leading their people in adventurous Christian living.

Recently discovered Lake Kutubu, and some of the inhabitants Cecil Abel contacted on his visit by 'plane in January.
Girls' Graduation Class. Mary Abel and Doris Purcell in centre. 
(Right)—Boys' High School, with Geoffrey Basket, Margot and Robin Knight.

BUSY TIME FOR CUPID!

(Left)—Raymond and Kathleen Whale, Sydney, November 4, 1939. 
(Right)—Russell and Sheila Abel, Kwato, February 17, 1940.

Kwato stands for fellowship of races. Jonathan Smeeton and playmate Kuma.

Tiraka and Luta and youngest son Andrew.
entire savings. The following morning the astonished youth whose guidance had occasioned the gift day, counted out £137; a most unexpected result of an impromptu collection among our money-less Papuan neighbours and fellow-workers, indicating real conviction.

This good beginning fired everyone with enthusiasm. A poster was designed and hung, with a painted sketch of the church as it will appear, listed ways of helping and a thermometer, with the red rising as money comes in.

Some Buhutu friends went gold digging. A few pounds rewarded weeks of hard work shovelling loam, gravel, and rock, often waste deep in water.

Some villages have combined to fell and prepare for delivery by towing, ulabo logs (a sort of teakwood); a most valued contribution.

At Divinai in Milne Bay, Arthur Beavis was promised a certain number of logs by a certain date as a gift from that village. The trees were felled. Next came the arduous task of dragging them through the forest to the beach where floats were to be prepared. Unfortunately at this juncture all the young men were required to perform a certain obligation they owed to the Government. Rather than let us down, however, the women volunteered to try and drag the logs to the coast. The entire female population, led by one stalwart man, marched into the bush en masse and worked hard until they had three great logs reposing on the beach, ready for towing on the promised day. This is the spirit that is bringing the church to its completion.

In Sariba villages, a large island in sight of Kwato, men and boys spent hours of assiduous fishing, selling the catch to white residents. Women sent bundles of pineapples likewise to be touted round the little tropical town. £22 was handed in from this bargaining with white “Sinebadas” at many backdoors.

Some villages send in relays of voluntary workers. Kwato abounds in new faces, and work is now in full swing. No ancient cathedral was built with more reverent devotion. The work is sacred. One man came three times with his gift, each time hesitated and took it away again. He had a quarrel and some embittering words against a neighbour to put right, which he could not bring himself to do. Each Sunday he came to Kwato to service, with the purpose of leaving his contribution. During the time of quiet listening that usually finds its place in our services, this thought kept hammering: God does not want an unclean gift, He wants your obedience first.” There was no escape from this recurring conviction. Finally, thus urged by the Spirit, he pocketed his pride and made a humble apology to his neighbour. This action healed a breach in the village. And now he could not wait until the following Sunday but returned with a shining face that very day with his gift, which he had held wrapped in a rag for three weeks. Joyfully he gave his now acceptable gift to the God who blesses the peacemakers, and specially acclaims their sonship. (Matt. 5.9.)

The fitted grey stones of the church and timbered structures now rising skyward, are built upon such stories as these: stories that show us that God wants far more than our pennies. Nor is He dependent on them. And He has lessons to teach us, and new knowledge of Himself to impart, that are an immeasurable return for our paltry gifts.

When the thin red line on our poster had mounted by slow millimeters to £150, and there still remained a great height yet to achieve, a letter came from friends in U.S.A. (The Christian Stewardship Fund) who as yet knew nothing of our guidance to finish the church, enclosing a gift of £159 towards this. More than the amount we had prayerfully raised ourselves, was doubled at one stroke. We learnt that God could easily provide the necessary means of finishing the church at any time, but that we first had to move and pray and sacrifice.

This theme was repeated and enlarged upon at many a meeting. The truth learned by many inexperienced in the Christian life, was that when we are ready ourselves and have a vision we are obeying, God moves, and things happen and His kingdom advances on.

...and beyond their power they were willing of themselves...and first gave their own selves to the Lord... Therefore see that ye abound in this grace also. 2.Cor. 8.
News from Kwato

KUNIKA NEWS
Cecil C. G. Abel

Some of the pictures in this paper show you Sibodu and Ofekule planning the new village of Amau under God’s guidance. One building they have put up right in the centre of this rapidly growing community is the new Church. I was present at the opening and dedication of this building, which, by the way, is the first church in the Kunika, and I want to tell you about it.

The service was conducted entirely by the chiefs of the main clans who have come down from the hills to make this new settlement. The building, of rough-hewn forest timber and Nipa-palm thatch, was large and airy, but it was filled on this occasion to overflowing. Men had come long distances for the occasion: that is to say some of them had walked seven days from their own villages.

As Sibodu got up to speak, my mind flashed back four years to the time when I first saw him at a tremendous corroboree held for the Kunika people by the Assistant Resident Magistrate at Abau. He was then a head-hunter, who, it was said, was responsible for encouraging younger men to follow in his steps and prove their valour and prowess by killing. I did not speak with Sibodu on that occasion, but nine months later when the first team went inland, we met in his own village, Kuroudi, and that was when our friendship began. Three weeks later he listened to God for the first time, and from that time he has never turned back. His influence has been a tower of strength.

Sibodu and the other two chiefs Ofekule and Biruma spoke, not only for themselves but for their whole tribes. Each held in his hand a spear—an old fighting spear, which for four years had never been used! It was a most inspiring thing to see and hear these men. One spoke of the past and present, and reminded us of the tremendous change that made it possible for men and women of many villages and clans to sit in one place—not only without fear but in love and real oneness.

Another spoke of the miracle of the power of One who had spoken to them all and bade them leave their homes and the lands of their forefathers and build this new community. No other power could make Papuans move with one mind like that, he said. The third pointed out that this was no ordinary building, but that it was the outward sign of the change in all, and of their pledge to God that fighting and strife and barriers were broken down once and for all. Likewise it was the sign to them that God was in their midst.

Broken Spears

As each one brought his message to a close with words of personal commitment and re-surrender to God, he raised the spear in his hand and broke it across his knee! It was a most dramatic moment when one after another resolved that his broken spear would hang in the Church as a reminder to him and to all his tribe that in the Kunika, the spear had indeed been broken, and not only the spear but all those barriers and differences that lead to the spear, and to strife and disharmony in homes and villages. As Biruma put it: ‘‘The spear truly has been broken by the power of God, but we must not rest there but go on till every barrier between village and village, man and wife, father and children, has been broken down both here and in Papua.’’

Some little time later I happened to be at Amau and noticed outside the Church a row of stakes in the ground. When I asked what these were for I was told that the leaders had made their pledge, so each man and woman had subsequently done likewise and, as if to identify themselves with the Church and all it stood for, had driven his or her stake into the ground just outside the Church. Then they told me of a man and his wife who after that had quarrelled, not once but many times, until they felt that the quality of their lives was not compatible with the kind of life Christ meant them to live, and which must be the foundation of the new community. He was challenged and warned many times but continued to row with his wife. Now there is a gap where their stake used to be. ‘‘We want him to come back when he has made up his mind that you cannot play with God,’’ they said.

This month sees two landmarks made. The first Kunika team led by Tiso came East.
and camped at Buhutu and at places in Milne Bay. Four years ago we went to them for the first time, and now they are coming back to us with the new things God has been teaching them. One of the team is Gaige, whom you will remember reading about in this magazine as the lad who was speared and whose life we only just saved. Gaige has twice been back to his own tribe on teams. He is at the central school that has been going at Amau for about two years.

The other new development is the first all-Kunika team led by Ofekule, which has just returned from a long trek. On this Camp they reached the farthest point we have yet touched westwards on the main mountain range of Papua. On this journey Ofekule revisited for the first time the village of Kuru, where he made his last great head-hunting raid before being changed. In that raid five people were killed, and Ofekule went to jail for a long term. In these far-off places the thought of 'abigum' or pay-back, dies hard—as it does even in our very midst as you read elsewhere in this issue. But Ofekule could not dodge this challenge and be honest, so he took his team right into this village and by his courage and his charm, and the obvious quality of his new life, he built a bridge where mistrust and reprisal lurked before. That was a courageous thing to do, but that is Ofekule all over—still raiding villages, but doing it for God now, and getting the greatest fun out of it.

GRADUATION DAY

Mary Abel describes an important day in the Girls' School at Kwato.

The air is tense on this particular Wednesday morning. The bell in the little shingled belfry is summoning everyone to gather in the assembly hall.

The High School boys, in white shorts and shirts, file in on the left; in front of them sit the Prep. School Boys, in their uniform of green nogs; behind them are the men and boys from various departments and jobs all over the Island.

On the right come the girls, row after row, according to their different classes. Their hair is particularly neat and tidy today, and their brown skins are shining.

Right in front, seated cross-legged on the floor, is the Junior School. Mothers, with babies on their hips and toddlers tagging on to their dresses, crowd in at the back, handy to the exit should their particular offspring become obstreperous or bored with the proceedings.

On the front form are seated our Senior Class of girls. Dressed in their green and gold uniforms, they look happy but shy—it is obviously their 'day' and it is a bit of an ordeal.

In spite of the bell, which is supposed not only to summon but to silence, there is much whispering going on amongst the small fry in the front: 'Look, see that watch in a little box on the table!' 'There's a real fountain pen!' 'And a silver pencil!' And so on.

You see, it is Prize Giving and Graduation Day for our Senior Girls. Their school days are over for ever, and we have come together to thank God for them, and to commit their future days to Him. After a dedication prayer, we stand and sing:

_Fight the good fight with all thy might..._

As I face these girls I look back over the year that has gone. Doris Purcell and I, with the invaluable help of four Papuan 'tanuagas', Martha, Misepa, Vera and Gewa, have watched and prayed and planned and at times even wept over these girls, but how well worth while it has been, and how proud we are as we watch these girls singing as if they meant it:

_Run the straight race through God's good grace...._

Out of the whole class only one had to be sent away to one of our outstations for discipline, and one other was not ready to join her class until the last term.

Everyone of them knows Jesus Christ as Saviour, Master, Lord and Friend. Everyone of them is learning to put their lives under God's control. My thoughts are miles away from this Hall.... These girls are going to run schools and hospitals, our creches and out.
stated... They are going to make the homes
of the future, influence the lives of their hus-
bands, mould the minds of their children....
They are the ones to build a new Papua under
God's control....

That morning, before breakfast, the girls
had had a Quiet Time on their own to plan
their service. Three were guided to tell what
this last year had meant to them, and the vision
God had given them for the future.

Two of the three are already trained pupil-
teachers and are going to take the position of
Junior Teachers in two of our village schools:
they are leaving us tomorrow.

For the first time in their lives they stand
before everyone and, in almost perfect English,
tell of what their surrender to Christ means to
them. The third, still in her teacher-training,
tells in Suau of her praise to God for victories
won in her own personal life—but her face tells
louder than her words the joy that is in her heart.

Russell is now reminding us of the wonder-
ful adventure opening up before us, and of the
serious but exciting business of living. He
points out that God has given these girls
wonderful opportunities. Few if any Papuan
women have had the advantages that they have
had. Great advantages mean greater responsi-
bilities, and they owe a great debt to their coun-
try. "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him
shall much be required." With Christ's help
we can make a real success of our lives, without
His help we are all failures....

The climax of the morning has arrived.
Doris Purcell, in her Southern American accent
(somewhat modified by two years' contamina-
tion with Britons!) reads out the marks-
averages for the year.

Amid much clapping and cheering the
prizes are being distributed:

"First Prize — Daido — a 'Boy-proof'
watch!" And, when the "Oo's" and "Ah's",
had subsided:

"Second Prize — Dai — A fountain-pen."
"Third Prize — Bomageta — A propelling
pencil." And so on.

Soon we are standing and dedicating our
lives afresh to Him in song:

\[ \text{Just as I am, young strong and free,}
\text{To be the best that I can be;}
\text{For truth and righteousness and Thee,}
\text{Lord of my life, I come.}\]

More than three months have passed since
Graduation Day.

The watch (still whole, strange to say,
and keeping very good time!), is helping its
owner to be punctual and disciplined in the
village school of Mutuyua.

The fountain-pen has written many loving
letters down from the hill-station of Duabo.

One of the propelling pencils is used for
writing up medical notes, and its owner is not
finding the life of a probationer any too easy.

And so our Papuan youth are "fighting
the good fight of faith," and challenging the
world today to:

\[ \text{Trust, and thy trusting soul shall prove}
\text{Christ is its Life, and Christ its Love.} \]

VISITING VILLAGE SCHOOLS.

Halliday Beavis, Bisimaka, Milne Bay

We have ten village schools in the Milne
Bay district alone, with an attendance of over
eight hundred children. Five of these schools
come immediately under my care. It is great
work for it not only brings one into direct con-
tact with the village people, but allows one a
part in the building up of the Papuan village life
of the future.

The first aim of this school work is that
the youth of our district should have Life
through Christ. I have no hesitation in saying
that the greatest barrier to this are the tenac-
ious beliefs of their forefathers: faith in the
powers of darkness, witchcraft, sorcery and
superstition.

It seems almost impossible to bring these
children into the freedom there is in Christ,
when, from infancy, their parents have in-
stilled into them an absolute trust in the devil
and his powers. Everywhere we go among the
parents of our village children we plead that
this knowledge of the things of darkness may
not be passed on to the rising generation, so
that, freed from the handicaps of their parents,
they may know only Light, and the joy of
walking in Light.

I set aside one day each week for a visit
up or down the coast, and occasionally give a
weekend to visiting a school farther afield. My
small son David, not quite four, is thrilled to
be able to come with me. There is nothing
more refreshing than a couple of hours tramp-
ing along the bush tracks in the cool stillness
of a Papuan morning. One has time, too, to
pray and make plans for the day. The programme is generally first an inspection of the different classes followed by a couple of hours with the teachers preparing work for the next few weeks. About 1 o'clock a delicious Papuan lunch is served on a mat on the floor—taro, sweet potatoes, pumpkin and so on, followed by various fruits. David, who has probably spent the morning exploring the village, chasing butterflies, or splashing in the sea, appears just at the right moment, and enjoys the Papuan meal to the full. After lunch the teachers and I find a quiet spot where we can discuss the deeper side of their work. Sometimes there are major problems to face up to—then we spend time in prayer.

The responsibility of this village work seems often to work a miracle in our girls. When they are confronted with such great need, petty selfishnesses are forgotten, and with unreserved wholeheartedness they throw themselves upon God.

A couple of months ago Doris Purcell very kindly came over from Koeabule and took over the care of my two children while I took five days off to do the trip to Buhutu. The efficiency with which the Buhutu school is run never fails to impress me. The dining room, with its long tables at which over one hundred children are fed twice a day on home-grown vegetables, is an amazing sight. The village women volunteer to do the cooking week by week. Many of you have heard of Dalai, who is headmistress here. I heard many stories at this Buhutu school, of children who have turned to Christ. Four of their older girls whom I brought back with me, stood out as spiritual leaders here on our station.

My chief difficulty in visiting schools, is to secure a conveyance that will both take me and bring me back in time to put the kiddies to bed. Last term I went to Maivara, partly on foot and partly by canoe. We left Bisimaka well before daybreak, and had an exhilarating walk through the bush. Later we stepped into a waiting canoe just as the sun was rising, and arrived at Maivara as the 8 o'clock school bell was ringing.

A strong breeze blew all day, and we had to wait till sunset before leaving. In no time after we had left the sun had sunk behind the mangrove swamps of Maivara. Dusk turned to darkness, but the paddlers never seemed to deviate for a minute from the right course. One by one the fires of the homesteads along the coast burst into flames, guiding us home.

ECHO FROM INLAND

Quite an interesting bit of bridge-building was done here last week. A Keveri man who killed a number of people at Kuroudi just before we went round first, and who has kept very quiet and unobtrusive all these years, suddenly turned up here. The reaction was violent. Kuroudi’s passions were deeply roused and the hurt feelings of injured relatives were aggravated to see this cool individual at large, after all he had done. A certain section were all for giving him a taste of his own, but would not move without Sibodu, their chief’s consent. Everything hung on him, and it is strange that even he was torn between what he knew was right, and the old desire for reprisal and abigum. A lot hung in the balance that night. In the middle of a big meeting in which Sibodu was being pressed hard for a decision, he sent an SOS for Tiso and got him out of bed. He said “Come and pray with us for we are being sorely tempted by the Devil.” Tiso went and prayed, and said the matter must not end there. Next day they had a big combined meeting to which this man was asked, and there and then one after another got up and confessed their sin and I wanting to pay back. He sat through it trembling. Then he too got up and became one of them by renouncing publicly the old life. I saw him yesterday, and asked why he had not run away, and was told he had nothing to fear now that everything had been prayed over and confessed.

ABEL-PORTEOUS WEDDING

On February 17th, wedding bells rang on Kwato, and over 600 hundred Papuan and about 60 white guests gathered to wish Godspeed to Russell Abel and Sheila Porteous as they started their new life together. Sheila, who is the daughter of Dr. and Mrs. W. J. Porteous of Dunedin, N. Z., came to Kwato in December. Cecil Abel performed the ceremony, Geoffrey Baskett and Doris Purcell attended the bridal pair. John Smeeton gave away the bride, and Marjorie Smeeton received the guests at an afternoon tea reception on the Mission House verandah. There was a large native feast in the evening in honour of the occasion, at which many Papuan friends and supporters of old days were present from far and near. The couple, surrounded by good wishes, were farewelled from a crowded jetty late at night, as they set off on the Osiri for a honeymoon among the d’Entrecasteaux islands, north of Kwato.