

AUSTRALIA IN OCCUPATION.

ADMINISTRATION AT RABAU.

THE "GOVERNMENT GAZETTE."

MORE RED ON THE MAP!

Interesting information regarding the administration by Australia of German possessions in the Pacific is embodied in the first issue of the "Government Gazette," a copy of which is to hand. Published on the 1st and 15th of each month, the "Gazette" is saleable at 6d, is "transmitted through the post as an ordinary newspaper, and obtainable at all post offices throughout the colony."

Launceston people will be much interested in the administration of this newly acquired territory, if only from the fact that two sons of Mr. G. E. Heritage, Inspector in the Education Department, hold important offices at Rabaul. Major F. B. Heritage, who accompanied the expeditionary force from Sydney as brigade major, is acting also as military secretary; and Lieutenant Keith Heritage has been appointed supply officer to the Administration, and Government storekeeper. The Administrator has directed, according to the "Government Gazette," that the existing tax levied on the gross turnover of business throughout the late German possessions in the Pacific be slightly increased—a course necessitated by the large decrease in revenue receipts. The tax is on business turnover, and not on income only.

The following is the interesting official report, dated October 25, made by Major Heritage as the officer commanding a special expedition to Kawieang:—

"I have the honour to report that I took command of the armed ship Nusa on Friday, 16th instant, and placed on board her a detail of 15 soldiers, and one machine gun. Captain Strasburg, master mariner, was navigating officer.

"In accordance with your instructions.

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"In accordance with your instructions, I proceeded to Kawieang with the object of hoisting the union flag proclaiming British military occupation over New Ireland, to release the British Consul (Mr. Jolley), who had been detained there as a prisoner, and to deport the German Commissioner. In addition, my instructions were to search for and capture the steamer Siar, which had been engaged in smuggling cargo into New Britain, etc.

"The expedition reached Kawieang on the afternoon of Saturday, 17th instant; the flag was hoisted and saluted, the proclamation published, and steps taken to release Mr. Jolley, and get the German Commissioner in.

"I could obtain but little information regarding the Siar, but had the impression confirmed that she was in hiding at Garden Island, some 70 miles south-east of Kawieang. Accordingly, I put to sea, at 9 o'clock the same night, leaving Lieutenant Basil Holmes with 10 men for a garrison at Kawieang, and steamed for Garden Island. This place was reached in a thick haze at about 11 o'clock on Sunday morning, 18th instant. From a knowledge of island customs I anticipated that, if in harbour, the officers of the vessel would be breakfasting at the trading station. This surmise proved to be correct, as on coming abreast of the station white

men were noticed hurrying from the verandah. Proceeding at full speed, the Nusa was headed for the little harbour of Tekeriki, where the steamer Siar, the large motor schooner Matupi, and smaller motor schooner Senta were found anchored. Before the officers could reach their ships, prize crews were placed on board, and all the arms seized and ships' papers taken into custody. P.O. Clark was put in charge of the Siar, together with A.B. Courtman as engineer; the engines of this vessel were found to have been temporarily dismantled. At

have been temporarily dismantled. At daylight on Monday, the 19th instant, the Nusa, towing the Siar and motor schooners, under their own power, weighed anchor for Kawieang, reaching that place the following morning at 8 o'clock, where the Siar's engines were placed in working order, and fuel taken on board. Mr. Jolley had in the meantime been released, and the German Commissioner came in at noon and surrendered himself, at the same time formally handing over New Ireland to the British Government.

"I arranged for Lieutenant Basil Holmes to remain at Kawieang in temporary charge of the Administration, with a detail of six soldiers, it being understood that a permanent garrison would be despatched within a week from Rabaul.

"On Wednesday, 21st instant, the flotilla put to sea, Siar being under her own steam, the German Commissioner, also the German Treasurer and one reservist, as prisoners of war on board, and Mr. Jolley as a passenger. It was found necessary for the Nusa to tow the motor schooner Matupi; Senta under her own power.

"The expedition came to anchorage at Rabaul early on Friday morning, 23rd inst.

"The services rendered by Captain Strasburg were very valuable, and it was his local knowledge which enabled the captured ships to be found so quickly. I would further desire to bring under your Excellency's notice the good work done by P.O. Clark, placed in charge of the Siar, and A.B. Courtman, in charge of the engine-room of that ship. It is submitted that the captured ships are legal prizes."

The "Gazette" contains the following interesting local news:—

British Vice-Consul.—It is a matter for congratulation that the British Vice-Consul (Mr. Jolley) has been restored to his home at Rabaul. At the outbreak of the war Mr. Jolley refused

break of the war Mr. Jolley refused to give his parole, and was therefore arrested and secretly removed to another part of the possessions. The sympathy of all has been with him and his family. The expedition despatched to Kawieang on the 16th October effected his release, and Mr. Jolley returned to Rabaul on the 23rd October. It is hoped that he is little or none the worse for his experience.

The Garrison Bakery.—A garrison bakery has recently been opened in connection with the store in Rabaul, and the troops are now supplied with fresh bread daily. This is a new proof of the comfort and welfare of the troops being continually studied. The bakery was designed and erected by Lance-Corporal W. T. Field, of "A" Company, and is in charge of Sergeant C. W. Taylor, ably assisted by Privates J. Conroy, J. Szablowski, and J. Read, all of "C" Company. Baking goes on continually, and 1000lb. of bread is produced daily.

Shipping.—The permanent garrison for New Ireland, under command of Captain Grant Thorold, was despatched by the s. Meklong on the 28th instant, and on the same date the s. Messina conveyed the troops to occupy Nauru. The Administrator and staff captain accompanied this expedition. During his Excellency's absence Major F. B. Heritagt will act as Deputy Administrator.

Trade.—It is anticipated that normal conditions of trade will shortly be established. Messrs. Burns, Philp, and Co.'s steamers Moresby and Matunga have already arrived at Rabaul with Government stores and merchants' supplies. The Meklong has been utilised for inter-island commerce with New Britain by the Government, and the Matunga has made her first trip to Frederic Wilhelmshafen carrying passengers and supplies. These ships are bringing back large cargoes of copra, which will be despatched to Sydney by the Burns-Philp vessels.

Burns-Philp vessels.

Right and Left Halves at Soccer.—Representative teams from the Right and Left Halves of the battalion met on Saturday afternoon, October 24. The match resulted in an easy victory for the Left Half. The scores were:—Left Half, 4; Right Half, 1.

Capture of the Samoa.—On the 24th inst. the Madang, which was commissioned by the Administrator, and put in charge of Lieutenant-Commander R. S. Lambton, V.D., R.A.N.R., left Rabaul in search of the Samoa. Steaming along the western coast of New Ireland for about 50 miles, the Samoa was discovered on the morning of the 25th in Kalibi Bay. On firing a shot, the German flag was hoisted. The Samoa surrendered without resistance; a prize crew was put on board, and she arrived under her own power in Rabaul later on in the day. The captain, being ashore at the time, escaped. The captured ship is a three-masted schooner of 260 tons, with a 110-h.p. Standard motor engine, and was owned by Deutsche Handels und Pflanzung Gessellschaft.

The Weather.—The spell of dry weather continues, and water-carting for domestic purposes has been resorted to.