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ABORIGINAL—EUROPEAN RELATIONS

IN

NORTH QUEENSLAND, 1861–1897

by

NOEL ANTHONY LOOS

B.A. (Qld.), M.A. Qual. (James Cook)

Thesis submitted as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of History at the James Cook University of North Queensland in April 1976.
PART III

ABORIGINAL-EUROPEAN RELATIONS

IN THE

PACIFIED AREAS
CONTROL BY KINDNESS: THE MISSION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

TO THE ABORIGINES OF NORTH QUEENSLAND

The Prelude.

In all frontier contacts, the Europeans had attempted to assert their authority over the Aborigines, a process which often led to bloodshed and the fierce hatred that is a consequence of wars of conquest. After pacification, this authority was maintained by the social gap between the races and the use of legal and extralegal intimidation. This assertion of authority disrupted traditional Aboriginal society and, combined with exotic diseases, malnutrition, and the unhygienic living conditions associated with acculturation, had a disastrous effect on traditional Aboriginal society. The Aborigines were then accepted as cowed and inferior sojourners in the developing society dominated completely by the European colonists. Although generally regarded, with either sympathy or hostility, as parasitic nuisances, they provided a pool of menial and cheap, casual labour. As long as they didn't offend the colonists, they were largely ignored except for the casual appropriation or abduction of their women and children to meet the sexual and employment needs of pioneer society.

It was the Christian missionary, however, who aimed to assert the most complete and pervasive authority. The Christian ideology contained within it, in the example and teaching of Jesus of Nazareth, a clear acknowledgement of the brotherhood of man and a concern for his physical, psychological, and spiritual well-being. However, Christianity claimed to have a unique relationship with the one true God such that it alone offered salvation to all mankind. All its followers in theory and some in practice accepted the imperative of converting non-Christians. This involved
an acceptance of the superiority of the Christian religion. As Christianity had its strongest power base in Europe, it inevitably gained European accretions which its followers accepted as essential to Christian belief although they dropped others that the first Jewish Christians regarded as essential to their veneration of the one true God in the light of Jesus' gospel. Christian missionaries therefore were determined to change not only the religion of the Aborigines in its narrow sense but also other aspects of their culture which the missionaries found unacceptable to their cultural value system.

The imperialist expansion of Europe which began in the late fifteenth century had associated with it in colonies of conquest and colonies of settlement the spread of the Christian beliefs of the imperial power. At the height of European imperialism, during the second half of the nineteenth century and the first quarter of the twentieth, a vast number of missionary societies, groups, and organizations came into being. Inevitably local and foreign Christian groups concerned themselves with the indigenous populations whose physical and spiritual needs were almost entirely neglected by the colonists. In 1838, before separation, Lutheran missionaries had been sent to the Moreton Bay Settlement at the request of Dr. Lang, the

1. L. Gates, 'The Impact of Christianity on a Primitive Culture', *Journal of Christian Education*, VI (1963), pp. 72-81. This article discusses the difference between 'westernized' and 'Biblical' Christianity and the significance of this in the largely ineffectual attempts to convert Aborigines.

2. It is not the intention in this thesis to describe the development of each institution. This has been done to some extent by K.E. Evans, *Missionary Effort Towards the Cape York Aborigines, 1886-1910: A Study of Culture Contact* (Unpublished B.A. Hons. thesis in School of Anthropology and Sociology, Queensland University, 1969).

leader of the Presbyterian Church in New South Wales. After six years, they were unable to gain any influence with the Aborigines. In 1843, the Roman Catholic Passionist priests unsuccessfully attempted to establish a mission at Stradbroke Island. There were isolated missionary ventures after separation which failed and some proposals that never eventuated.

Indeed, statements of intentions from the Church of England and Roman Catholic authorities suggested possible major initiatives. Thus Bishop Tufnell, the first Anglican Bishop of Brisbane, on his arrival expressed his belief that the Aborigines were capable of conversion and that the Church had an obligation to help them. In 1879, at a public meeting in Sydney in connection with Anglican missions to the Aborigines and Chinese of Australia at which the Bishop of Brisbane and the first Bishop of North Queensland, Dr. Stanton, were present, the meeting pledged itself to co-operate with Stanton in missionary work.

In a letter to the Australian Churchman, Dr. Stanton perhaps revealed the reason for subsequent lack of action by the Anglican diocese of North Queensland:

A "rush" takes place, and thousands of people congregate, and a town is formed with incredible speed. Unless

4. F.O. Thiele, One Hundred Years of the Lutheran Church in Queensland (Brisbane, 1938), pp. 2-5.
6. J.B. Gribble, Black But Comely (London, 1884), p. 80. Gribble mentions Haussman's attempt at Beenleigh in 1867. Haussman had been involved in the earlier Lutheran attempt. Gribble also mentions the attempts of the Primitive Methodist, Fuller, at Frazer Island in 1873. He tried again at Finchinbrook Island with no success. The S.P.G. has been mentioned in ch. 11, pp. 624, 625. See also Rayner, op. cit., pp. 118-125.
8. P.D.T., 19 April 1879.
a clergyman is in the field the Romanists gain the first hold and never relinquish it. The cattle stations are far apart; and no clergyman can spare time to visit them ... When I have set our own churches in order I must do something for the 15,000 South Sea Islanders and the 10,000 Chinese and for the uncounted number of poor degraded aborigines. 9

The Bishop was personally concerned about the plight of the Aborigines, contributed handsomely to the Amelioration of the Aboriginals Committee at Thornborough 10 and was the chairman of the Townsville Aboriginal Protection Society. 11 However, the pioneer church's administrative, economic, and spiritual resources had to be first directed towards the white settlers. To some extent this taxonomy of spiritual objectives was justified by the Bishop's concern for the 'white heathenism' among the settlers. A little English girl had not recognized the term 'God' and Sunday in the bush signified 'perhaps more sleep and a little less work'. Plumbing, perhaps, a greater depth, the Bishop remarked: 'White savages are far worse than blacks'. 12 Yet in a tour of England to attract clergy and financial support to North Queensland, he took with him Robert Christison and a nine year old Aboriginal girl on whose behalf Christison 'pleaded that something should be done for the native blacks'. 13

White souls, however, had precedence.

Such an order of priorities was not, at first, apparent with the Roman Catholic church. Indeed the vicariate of North Queensland 'was elected with a special

10. Amelioration of Aboriginals Committee, Thornborough, to Col. Sec., 24 November 1882, Q.S.A. COL/A351, 6362 of 1882.
12. P.D.T., 27 March 1880, a letter to the Australian Churchman.
13. P.D.T., 4 December 1880, from T. Herald, presumably the Townsville Herald.
view for the Conversion of the Aboriginals'. In 1876, the Italian priests of Saints Peter and Paul in Rome, took charge of the missionary diocese of North Queensland which was centred on Cooktown. The local Catholics apparently regarded any attempts to civilize or convert the Aborigines as hopeless. The priests appointed found it difficult to communicate with the whites linguistically and with the blacks because at that time they could only be met with in remote districts. After eighteen months these 'zealous priests transferred to a more genial mission field' and replaced by Irish Augustinians who 'soon found themselves wholly engaged in attending to the spiritual wants of the white population'.

The Catholic priest, Duncan McNab tried to counter the popular pessimism of Queensland Catholics with his individual efforts in the late 1870's both as member and as critic of the Aboriginal Commission. Indeed the Reserve scheme of the 1870's typically saw the churches trying to co-operate with the government to ameliorate the condition of the Aborigines while the government was directly concerned with using the Aboriginal Commission and its church members to divert attention from its main policy of dispossessing the Aborigines with the aid of the Native Police. The 1874 Commission had included one Lutheran Pastor, known for his missionary efforts to the Aborigines, and two members of the Anglican synod. Subsequently Bishop Hale, famous for his mission to the Aborigines at Poonindie in South Australia, was appointed as well as Duncan McNab, the most vocal Roman

15. ibid., pp. 423, 424, 650.
Catholic critic of the Queensland system of dispossessing the Aborigines. 16

The failure of the Aboriginal commission was underlined by the resignation of the Roman Catholic, McNab, and the Anglican, Drew, and the belated rebuke by the Anglican Bishop, Hale, of the government's policy of dispersal. This seemed to indicate the incompatibility of the churches working with the Queensland government to ameliorate the condition of the Aborigines. Such, however, was not the case. In addition to attempting to control, or at least legitimize, the use of the Native Police on the frontier, Griffith felt the government ought to make some attempt to meet the needs of its black citizens. Predictably he saw this in terms of charity rather than as a social problem demanding as a right an unavoidable call on the colony's public revenue. Just as predictably the nineteenth century churches approached the problems posed by the Aborigines as they approached charitable institutions. They saw the needs of the Aborigines as a moral duty rather than an inescapable responsibility upon which a Christian's likelihood of salvation depended. 17

16. Hayner, op. cit., pp. 121-124. Rayner wrongly believed McNab refused to join. See ch. 11, pp. 639, 640. See also P.B.T., 8 March 1879, for McNab's activities among the Aborigines at Mackay. The Roman Catholic priest, Julian Tenison Woods had also shown an interest in establishing communication with the Aborigines but did not persevere with these. See G. O'Neill, Life of the Reverend Julian Tenison Woods (1832-1889) (Sydney, 1929).

17. Evans, Charitable Institutions, p. 301. The churches were not critical of the charitable institutions which were inadequate by contemporary standards. Evans commented that the Roman Catholics and Anglicans were mostly absorbed by organizational duties, their unresponsive laity, and the school controversy. The Lutherans were also hindered by the need to provide for the needs of their white adherents. See Thiele, op. cit., p. 102.
In 1885, Griffith included in the estimates £500 for Aboriginal relief and £1,000 for reserves. He explained the first sum as being intended to provide for emergenices like the recent drought which had necessitated feeding Aborigines at Thornborough. The explanation is supported by his action the following year in providing only £1,000 for both purposes on the ground that seasonal conditions were improved and that the sum for reserves had not been fully expended in 1885. Nevertheless this was the beginning of a conscious policy of aiding missionary societies by granting them land and limited sums of money. Griffith claimed personal responsibility for this initiative and for the simultaneous change in the functioning of Native Police:

With respect to ameliorating the condition of the blacks, the Government had been able to do something in that respect also. They had established a mission station at Cape Bedford Bay north of Cooktown, which he /Griffith/ had the pleasure of visiting the other day, and where some good work had been done for civilization. Another mission station was in the process of being established forty or so miles south of Cooktown, at Weary Bay, /on the Bloomfield River/ where a very large number of blacks had already received a certain amount of civilization. This station was not in charge of any missionary at present, but it was expected that it would be in a very short time.

Griffith explained that the 'Moravian Lutheran Church' had established the mission at Cape Bedford and he expected the Moravians to take charge of the Bloomfield River mission.

19. Q.P.D. of L.A., XLIV, 1884, p. 1563, Groom and Griffith in committee, debate on supply. See also ch. 6, pp. 268, 269.
21. ibid., p. 1024, the Premier, Griffith, in committee, debate on supply. The functioning of the Native Police was being discussed. Griffith had changed a large proportion of Native Police from troopers to trackers. See ch. 6, pp. 279-282.
where the government had already caused the erection of some buildings and the distribution of food. The Presbyterians had also expressed interest in establishing a mission in North Queensland. 22

Griffith's confusion concerning the various zealous German missionary societies expressing interest in North Queensland at this time is understandable even to-day. The early Lutheran congregations of southern Queensland desired to establish a mission station to the Aborigines in Queensland with Lutheran missionaries from Hermannsburg in Germany but the need of the white congregations for pastors prevented this. In 1885, the famous Moravian missionary to the Aborigines in Victoria, F.A. Hagenauer, came to Queensland at the request of the Moravian Mission Society of Herrnhut in Germany to investigate the possibility of establishing missions to the Aborigines. He went north to the Bloomfield River and west almost to the Gulf of Carpentaria. The report of this experienced missionary who, since 1863, was widely regarded as having established a very successful mission, encouraged Griffith to support missions at a time when he was looking for an acceptable agency to deal with the Aborigines. 23

The Moravians, however, were not Lutherans but members of a reform church founded by John Huss which predated the

22. ibid., p. 1132, the Premier, in committee, debate on supply.
23. Thiele, op. cit., pp. 102, 103. See also Periodical Accounts Relating to the Missions of the Church of the United Brethren, 33, pp. 515-522, 568-569 for extracts from Rev. F.A. Hagenauer's tour in Queensland. Periodical Accounts (as it will be called in this study or F.A.) is the journal of the Church of the United Brethren or the Moravians as they were popularly called. They can be contacted at: Moravian Church of Great Britain and Ireland, 5 Muswell Hill, London N.10, U.K. This particular extract is held at the Australian Institute for Aboriginal Studies, Ab. 6146.
Protestant Reformation. It was savagely persecuted in the religious wars that followed the Reformation, the survivors finding refuge at Herrnhut in Saxony. From this centre, the small church successfully established missions in all parts of the world, even among such difficult and normally neglected people as the Eskimos of Greenland and the Aborigines of Australia. Its reputation for missionary success, its simplicity of doctrine, its willingness to work in conjunction with other protestant churches, and its conviction that 'to be Christian, and to carry on foreign missions, are inseparable things' encouraged Protestant churches in Australia such as the Presbyterian and Lutheran to support or use its missionaries. 24

It is significant that the missions established in North Queensland after 1885 were supported by foreign missionary societies or by recently formed federations or synods of local churches. Thus at the foundation meeting of the United German and Scandinavian Lutheran Synod of Queensland it was decided to establish a mission to the Aborigines. The site eventually chosen was Mari Yamba north of Mackay on the Proserpine River. The government granted an area of over thirty square miles. A missionary named Claussen of the Herrmannsburg Mission Society who had experience among Maoris took charge in early 1887 and was accompanied by another missionary and some Danish colonists. The government provided a subsidy of £10 per month. 25

In 1885, the Lutheran Missionary, Johannes Flierl, set out to establish a mission in New Guinea. He had been at

the Bethesda Mission on Coopers Creek since 1878 and was in the service of the Lutheran Immanuel Synod of South Australia associated with the Neuendettelsau Mission Society of Germany. Flierl was delayed in Cooktown in December 1885. While there the plight of the Aborigines was pointed out to him by a German doctor resident in Cooktown, as well as the fact that a reserve for Aborigines established by the Government was available. This was at Cape Bedford only a few miles north of Cooktown and had an area of fifty square miles. Flierl declared he would only need government help to establish the mission and guaranteed the assistance of the societies in South Australia and Germany. He envisaged the mission as a staging post for German missionaries going north to New Guinea and symbolically called it Elim. This site was subsequently abandoned and the mission moved to nearby Hope Valley by which name the mission at Cape Bedford was best known. The term Hope Valley will be used to encompass the Elim-Hope Valley complex.

After inspecting Flierl’s work at Hope Valley the Queensland government suggested to Flierl that his society take charge of a government reserve established at Bloomfield River. As the Neuendettelsau missionary Society had decided to accept responsibility for the mission at Hope Valley, the Immanuel Synod of South Australia decided to accept

27. J. Flierl and J. Biar to Government of Queensland, 26 December 1885, quoted at length in Lohe, 'Missionary John Flierl', pp. 36-38. The letter was probably addressed to the Colonial Secretary or the Chief Secretary.
28. Elia was a resting place for the Jews on their journey to Canaan. See 'Exodus' 15, verse 27 and Flierl and Biar to Government of Queensland, 26 December 1885, loc. cit.
responsibility for a Lutheran mission at Bloomfield River. Carl Meyer, the first missionary, had considerable experience at Bethesda in South Australia and arrived in 1886. The reserve was one square mile but a hunting reserve of fifty square miles was gazetted in March 1889. A government manager had already employed local Aborigines clearing land, planting crops, and erecting a four roomed house and store room.

The fourth mission to take advantage of the government encouragement of the late 1880's brought the Moravians into the mission field of North Queensland. In 1886, the first Federal Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia and New Zealand resolved to establish a mission to the Aborigines in North Queensland. Negotiations were opened with respect to the Bloomfield River reserve but broke down when Griffith offered financial support for only one year. In 1890, the Foreign Mission Committee of the Presbyterian Church, requested by the Federal Assembly to proceed with the establishment of missions to Aborigines 'without delay', asked the Moravian Missions Board in Herrnhut, Germany, to supply missionaries and, with the guidance and enthusiastic support of John Douglas, chose a site at the mouth of the Batavia River in the Gulf of Carpentaria. The Moravian missionaries, Ward and Hey, arrived on 28 November 1891 to

30. Ibid., p. 41. See also Thiele, op. cit., pp. 106-107.
take charge of a one hundred square mile reserve and established themselves at a site called Mapoon.32

The establishment of an Anglican mission at Yarrabah south of Cairns differed in many ways from the establishment of the reserves at Muli Yamba, Cape Bedford, Bloomfield River, and Mapoon. The latter group were staffed by people trained in missionary societies; all had missionary experience except Key and Ward who belonged to the Moravians, probably the most mission oriented sect then in existence. In contrast, the Anglican church in Australia placed missionary work among the Aborigines low on its list of priorities.

The General Synod of the Anglican Dioceses of Australia and Tasmania was constituted in 1872 with the power to promote home and foreign missions in the Church33 but it was to New Guinea that the Australian Board of Missions turned in 1886 for its first extra-diocesan venture.34 The dioceses of Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane sponsored missions to the Chinese while the diocese of Melbourne supported the Lake Tyers Aboriginal Mission and the diocese of Ballarat, the Lake Conah Aboriginal Mission.35 When Rev. J.B. Gribble sought support from the Anglican Australian Board of Missions, for the foundation of a mission in North Queensland, that financially embarrassed body could only express its sympathy and recommend that it receive 'practical

32. ibid., pp. 8, 9.
33. Australian Board of Missions, Historical Note (Sydney, 1917) (M.L.).
34. 'Australian Board of Missions Executive Council Minutes December 1886-May 1900', p. 1, meeting 21 December 1886. The cost of the proposed New Guinea Mission was estimated at £1,500 per annum. This probably explains the initial reluctance to support J.B. Gribble.
support' from church people. Gribble had to inspect at his own expense sites recommended to him by the Victorian government botanist, von Mueller. Eighty square miles of land on the coast from Cape York south to the Russell River was granted for the Church of England mission to the Aborigines but six months elapsed before his church recognized it as a missionary enterprise. Even then Gribble was held responsible for raising all the finance.

A major blow to Gribble was the refusal of the Colonial Secretary, Tozer, to grant any assistance at all to the mission. In 1891, Gribble saw the Colonial Secretary and discussed government aid in some detail. He was led to expect an initial grant of £500, a boat, £240 a year, and a pound for pound subsidy. Encouraged by this, Gribble planned a network of three sites and requested funding for teachers, £300 for school buildings, and a mission cutter.

36. 'A.B.M. Executive Council Minutes 1886-1900', meeting 29 July 1891, p. 66. See meeting, 20 June 1891, p. 63, when the appeal for help for a mission to the Kanakas at Bundaberg had to be postponed for want of funds.

37. E.R. Gribble, Forty Years with the Aborigines (Sydney, 1930), p. 58. It was quite common for experienced missionaries to make tours describing their work and requesting support but placing the whole burden on Gribble was unusual and indicated the A.B.M.'s reluctance to take on further commitments at this time.

38. A six page letter from J.B. Gribble concerning his preparations for establishing the Bellenden Ker Yarrabah Mission commencing: 'On reaching Townsville a meeting of the Diocesan Council', A.B.M. Archives, Box 120. The letter was presumably to the Executive Council of the A.B.M. The date is obliterated. Minutes of the Executive Council of the Australian Board of Missions 1886-1900, meeting of 15 January 1892. See also Under Col. Sec. to J.B. Gribble, St. Paul's, Temora, New South Wales, 15 August 1890, encl. G.S.A. Lands Reserve 92-151, 20481 of 1891, where the Under Colonial Secretary stated the Government would gladly consider any application that did not conflict with other missions; and Rev. J.B. Gribble, Brisbane, to Chief Sec., 3 October 1891, encl. G.S.A. Lands Reserve 92-151, 20481 of 1891, Minute, H.T. Col. Sec. Tozer, 9 October 1891, where Tozer claimed that he was prepared to assist by funding Gribble to distribute rations to the Aborigines and to consider the matter again later.
The following year the Colonial Secretary refused all help on account of papers forwarded to him from Western Australia 'relating to the great agitation on the treatment of the blacks of that colony during my [Gribble's] sojourn as a Missionary therein'. There is no reason to doubt that Gribble's previous courageous attempts to expose atrocities in Western Australia was the real reason for the refusal, the only one known to have occurred after 1885. Indeed Gribble's reputation as a troublemaker preceded him and led to a cold reception from the Bishop of North Queensland. Gribble noted that Bishop Barlow gave me [Gribble] a severe warning against saying anything about the doings of the whites to the blacks going so far as to declare that he would rather the Mission should not be carried on in his Diocese than anything of exposure of wrongs should be made by me. This pained me deeply. Why are the Bishops so afraid of vindicating the cause of this long suffering race? By opinion of my Diocesan is not an exalted one.

The Bishop also warned Gribble he could expect no financial support from the diocese of North Queensland. The Bishop of this impoverished diocese could not afford to alienate his white congregation.

39. Journal of Rev. J.B. Gribble: 'Early Days of Yarrabah 1891-92', entry of 16 May 1892, A.B.M. Archives, Box III. See also Tozer's later justification for not aiding Yarrabah. Minute by Col. Sec. H. Tozer, to Lands Dept., 22 May 1893, S.A. Lands Res. 92-161, 8136 of 1893. Tozer denied he knew land had been made available for a mission in that locality: 'Mr. Gribble applied to me for help but I postponed consideration pending settlement of question of site. Since then I have not had any application and the Mission is not recognized by this Dept'. Of course, it is inconceivable that J.B. Gribble, his successor E.R. Gribble, or the Executive of the Australian Board of Missions would have failed to request aid had they not believed it had been clearly refused as J.B. Gribble had reported. J.B. Gribble had been accompanied by another Anglican churchman in his interview with Tozer.


41. ibid., entry of 2 June 1892.
It was estimated that fifty Aborigines permanently occupied the eighty square miles of the Yarrabah reserve when J.B. Gribble arrived in 1892. The founder didn't set eyes on one of these as after he had been there a few months, he contracted malaria and was invalided back to New South Wales where he subsequently died. His place was taken by his son Ernest Gribble. By the end of 1892, the Australian Board of Missions had accepted financial responsibility for Yarrabah. Thus, the five missions established during the period of this investigation were linked to missionary societies which could supply them with finance and personnel.

It is not proposed to trace the development of each one in detail. Two, Mari Yamba and Bloomfield River, were abandoned in 1901. The other three, Yarrabah, Mapoon and Cape Bedford became firmly established, the first two becoming the forerunners of further Anglican and Presbyterian mission stations. The decision of the Queensland government in 1897 to utilize Christian missionary societies as agents of their native policy depended largely on the effectiveness they had demonstrated in earlier years. It will be necessary therefore to define this effectiveness and analyse the relationship that developed between Aborigines and Europeans on the mission stations, firstly, to understand how the previously widely resented and despised missionaries won

43. E.R. Gribble, Forty Years with the Aborigines, pp. 58, 60.
44. 'Minutes of the Executive Council of the A.B.M.', meetings of 14 December 1892, p. 128; 3 February 1893, p. 127; and 7 April 1893, p. 136.
such governmental approval, and, secondly, to understand Aboriginal reactions to the missionary intrusion.

* * * * *

The Attitudes of the Missionaries.

By 1885, the necessity of establishing a village composed of Christian missionaries and those Aborigines who could be induced to abandon their nomadic life was accepted by all churches interested in converting the Aborigines. This then necessitated the development of an industrial base suitable to village life which would hopefully make the village self-supporting, or partly so, to ease the financial drain on the supportive missionary organization whose funds were always meagre in relation to the calls made upon them. The basic conflict of this aim with the traditions, life patterns, and values of Aboriginal society was complete.

The Reverend E.R. Gribble, who established Yarrabah, looking back on forty years commented: 'to instil the idea of a fixed home is the first task of the missionary'.

Johannes Flierl, the senior Lutheran Missionary, who established the Hope Valley mission at Cape Bedford and went on to spearhead the Lutheran missions to New Guinea spelt out this problem in more detail in a report to the Queensland government in 1898. He had spent the years from 1873 to 1885 at the Bethesda Lutheran Mission in north-east South Australia, paid occasional visits to Hope Valley, and inspected it for the Neuendettelsau Missionary Society. He informed

47. E.R.B. Gribble, The Problem of the Australian Aboriginal (Sydney, 1932), p. 118. See also E.R.B. Gribble, Forty Years with the Aborigines (Sydney, 1930), passim.
The aboriginals are nomads. Nothing can be done amongst them without settling them down on reserves. They are not used to hard work, and very slow in leaving their former manners and customs. The weakest persons are more likely to remain at the station. They are to be clothed, and want their food every day, and can do very little for their own support. It wants much time and patience, much outside work and spiritual labour to nurse the old and sick, and to educate and train the children of the aboriginals, and the success cannot be very quick, great and evident. 49

Pfalzer, the missionary who succeeded Flierl at Hope Valley, felt constrained to explain to the Lutherans in Germany supporting the mission that the farm work which occupied such a large proportion of their reports to the Kirchliche Mitteilungen (Church News) was only a means to an end. But the end is totally unattainable without the means. The only thing that could keep these widely roaming hordes together at all is work. But if they are to work they must be fed. And we will not have the necessary food for them unless we cultivate the land. 50

The Aborigines had long had the reputation of being the most difficult people to convert to Christianity. In 1868, J.K. Tucker, in an authoritative 'Record of Missionary Endeavour' among the Aborigines and Chinese in Australia, had noted that less success had been achieved among the Aborigines than among the Red Indians, Eskimos, Africans, and South Sea Islanders. He, like most Europeans, doubted the 'religious susceptibility' of the Aborigines. 51

50. Kirchliche Mitteilungen, 19 (1887), p. 94. Hereafter abbreviated K.M. The German editor also felt it necessary to explain that the 'practical work' was essential in case the society's supporters thought that the conversion of the heathen was being neglected. See K.M., 19 (1887), p. 76.
who had experience in both places, informed the Queensland government that mission work was far easier in New Guinea, 'where the natives ... after twelve years' hard pioneer work, are very willing to hear the Word of God, and call for more missionaries'. The lack of results had led the Neuendettelsau Mission Society to consider diverting its resources from Hope Valley to New Guinea where the settled agricultural societies would have enabled it comfortably to support two mission stations for the expenditure on its North Queensland Mission. This had cost the society about £8,600 from 1886 to 1898.

However, the economy and work pattern of Europe were so deeply ingrained in the missionaries' concept of civilization and Christianity that the need to induce the nomadic food-gathering and hunting Aborigines to accept regular agricultural employment was seen in itself as essential to conversion. There was no appreciation of the Aboriginal economy. Thus the Lutheran Missionary Poland at Hope Valley described the adult Aborigines as 'wild and vulgar; very workshy and used to absolute, unrestricted freedom. The men have neither strength nor energy. They loaf all day long. Their two or three wives have to feed them'. After three years among the Aborigines the Moravian missionaries at Mapoon displayed just as little understanding of the demands of their economy on its participants:

Thanks to the missionaries they have learned to use such instruments [as hoes] and are beginning to have some idea of earning their own livelihood. The small mission farm is a valuable teacher of thrift, diligence, kindliness and many matters belonging to a settled life.

53. ibid., p. 503.
It has daily lessons for a people who never used to do any work. 55

Gribble probably expressed this nexus most succinctly when he enunciated the aims of Yarrabah as 'The elevation and the evangelisation of the Aboriginals by preaching the Gospel, and by teaching them habits of industry'. 56

It is clear that the missionaries' attitudes indicated above towards the Aborigines reflected both concern and contempt for those they wished to convert. An analysis of their other expressed attitudes reinforces this conclusion and aids in an understanding of the subsequent relationship between the Aborigines and the missionaries. In an analysis of attitudes expressed by three different Christian sects, the Lutherans, the Moravians, and the Anglicans, one must be aware of the fact that each sect had a tendency to use its own characteristic language to express its piety, its opposition to paganism, and its zeal for converting the heathen. One must also remember that there may be a great difference between the writer's personality as indicated by his published writings from that indicated by private correspondence or personal diaries. For example, in this study, the researcher has been fortunate enough to examine

55. The Illustrated Missionary News, 15 November 1895, p. 195, 'Life at Mapoon' (M.L. MSS 1893 carton no. 4). This was apparently written by Mrs. Hey. As she handled most of Nicholas Hey's correspondence with the outside world, it can safely be assumed that she was expressing this missionary's view as well. When J.G. Ward died in 1895, Nicholas Hey was left in charge of Mapoon, staying there in all, for twenty-eight years, during which time he fathered Weipa and Aurukun missions and initiated the missionaries who later took charge there.

56. A.B.M., 'The Yarrabah Mission and the New Guinea Missions' (Sydney, 1908), (M.L.). See 'The Yarrabah Mission'. This is a four page pamphlet. See also E.R. Gribble, Forty Years with the Aborigines, p. 122 for a similar statement of aims.
the journals of E.R. Gribble. The contrast is marked between the urbane Gribble of the published works and the intensely, at times passionately, involved man revealed by the journals.

It would be safe to say that all the missionaries thought Aboriginal life was suffused with satanism. They also believed quite literally that the power of satan confronted them when they observed religious beliefs that they felt were opposed to Christian belief, and actions and behaviour patterns that did not accord with their concept of Christian behaviour. Looking back on over twenty years' experience at Mapoon and by then regarded by some as one of the great modern missionaries, Nicholas Hey, in an address to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland, described their experiences at Mapoon:

We started work with very poor material - some have said hopeless material ... Everything seemed to be against us. There was the stifling heathen atmosphere pressing heavily upon us. Besides, we could not help feeling the Satanic power arrayed against us, and we realized as never before how completely he was holding sway in the heathen world. 59

57. See for example, Journal of Rev. E.R. Gribble: 15 January 1893; 20 February 1893; 3 September 1893; 14 November 1893; 23 November 1899, A.B.M. Archives, Box 11f. These journals are in exercise books. These have various titles which are generally misleading as to dates encountered within the journal.

58. J.E. Batten, Extracts from History of Moravian Missions (Moravian Publicity Office, London, n.d.), ch. 8, p. 13. The copy used and referred to in this study was a typed copy held at Presbyterian Board of Missions, Jamison St., Sydney.

59. 'Substance of an Address Delivered by the Rev. N. Hey, on Foreign Mission Night, During the Sitting of the General Assembly of Queensland at Brisbane, on May 14th, 1912'. This very important article has been torn out of its volume which is unidentified except for the date although the format suggests strongly that the speech was published in the missionary journal of the Moravian Church of which Hey and the other missionaries at Mapoon, Weipa, and Aurukun were members i.e. F.A., December 1912, p. 443, (H.L. LESS 1898 carton no. 4).
Such an attitude was an important motivation to these and other missionaries and to their supporting societies. Thus a Lutheran missionary at Hope Valley informed his society that after seven years among the Aborigines, their increasing mastery of the Aboriginal language had revealed 'how firmly Satan has these poor creatures in his grip! Mission work is a battle against the realms of darkness; that is our experience here. Sometimes they really seem to be possessed by the devil and one simply can't get anywhere at all with them'.

The missionaries found countless specific manifestations of Satan in the behaviour of the Aborigines. After J.B. Gribble witnessed a corroboree, he noted in his journal that the 'gestures and shrieks were more satanic than human'. After a girl who had disobeyed Schwarz and Roland at Hope Valley was caned, she produced a prolonged temper tantrum which distressed the missionaries: 'We returned to our house quite sad and upset; the Evil One had yet again gained control of the heart of one of our wards'. J.G. Ward at Mepong specified, 'The surrounding heathenism manifests itself in thefts, strifes, wailings for the dead, nocturnal dances and other evils. Runaway matches are a constant source of quarrels and fightings in the native camp. Of course, the missionaries endeavour to stem the tide of evil by every means in their power, but the blacks are inclined to resent discipline'.

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60. K.H., 26 (1894), p. 60.
61. A small notebook marked: 'Important re Rev. J.B. Gribble 1891', entry for 23 August 1891. He had by then spent many years as a missionary to the Aborigines.
63. P.A., December 1894, p. 394, (M.I. MSS 1893 carton no. 4). Many of the extracts from journals in the Presbyterian Board of Mission Papers in the Mitchell Library lack some information needed for reference purpose, e.g. in this case the volume.
All the missions seem to have objected to the 'quarrels and fightings in the natives camp' by which the Aborigines settled their disputes but the Moravians reacted with an emotional intensity that was typical of their horror of pagan life. Thus at Mapoon, the missionaries would walk between the two opposing armed groups to prevent an outbreak of hostilities. 

Ernest Gribble even 'reproved ... severely' an Aboriginal who had fought in accordance with tribal custom a man who had stolen one of his wives although their meeting had been accidental.

Such opposition to important characteristics of Aboriginal life was typical. At the human level, the role of woman in Aboriginal society, as perceived by the missionaries, was probably what most offended. The middle-class nineteenth century ideal of Christian womanhood was of course, affronted at the very sight of naked Aboriginal women, comfortable in their sexuality. 

One of the missionary's fears was that 'the devil would yet greatly tempt [the girls domiciled at the mission] to lust after men'. Yet Aboriginal marriage offended them with its polygamy and reliance on female labour.

64. T.A., September 1892, p. 584. See also Illustrated Missionary News, 15 November 1895, p. 195, loc. cit. Both references can be found at M.I. MSS 1893 carton no. 4.


66. T.A., September 1892, p. 585. Mrs. Ward wrote to a former fellow teacher in England: 'I wish you could see the people as I saw them on the day of my arrival. There were about eighty women and girls sitting in a semicircle, most of them quite without clothing, others with a dirty piece of calico tied round their loins. Such a spectacle!'

67. Pastor Hoerlein, Bloomfield Mission, to Pastor Rechner, Light's Pass, South Australia, [n.d.], the letter seeming to start at page 2. It is annotated in red and is the forty-first in the file/ United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia Archives 8-883. Hereafter this source will be abbreviated U.E.L.C.A. E.883.

68. Journal of Rev. E.R. Gribble, 19 January 1894. Gribble refused to allow any girl domiciled at the mission to go to a man who already had one wife. See also K.E., 29 (1897), p. 67 for the Lutheran opposition to such polygamy.
The economic role of the man as hunter and fisherman tended to be overlooked as it was no doubt rarely observed near the mission. Poland from Hope Valley probably expressed the view of all the missionaries when he described the Aboriginal woman as a slave who would have to endure the brutality of a bad tempered husband. He was most surprised that they should lament when their husbands died or were killed and could only ask 'the Lord have mercy upon the women's hopeless condition'. From the first, Gribble would not tolerate the Aboriginal men beating their wives. When he heard that an Aboriginal in the camp near the mission was hitting one of his six wives 'in a most inhuman manner' he went down with a stockwhip and 'got one stroke home', and told him he would have to leave the mission property if it occurred again. He sought and obtained power from the Police Magistrate at Cairns to arrest Aboriginal husbands to check what he termed 'the brutality of the natives to their poor women'.

There was very little in Aboriginal life that did not offend the missionaries although their way of expressing this contempt varied. Once again the Moravians seemed to express this most intensely. After twenty years at Mapoon, Nicholas Hey still believed that traditional Aboriginal society was decadent, that 'they not in a low stage of human development ... as they not in a state of development at all; they not on the upward road but on the downward grade'. Pfalzer of Hope Valley shared this

71. *Journal of Rev. E.R. Gribble*, 22 March 1893. Gribble seems to have been granted the power of a special constable.
72. 'Substance of an Address Delivered by the Rev. N. Hey ... on May 14th, 1912', p. 442, loc. cit.
common belief. Hey counselled that the attitude of the missionary had to be sympathetic as, 'According to our western ideas most if not all of the social conditions of the Aboriginals are contemptible - hideous and disgusting to a degree'. In a report in 1901, Hey described the unconverted Aborigines as 'moral lepers', while the Lutheran Pfalzer at Hope Valley agreed that they were the 'lowest of the low'.

The missionaries objected to 'primitive' Aboriginal child rearing practices, to women fighting, to Aboriginal nakedness, to Aboriginal standards of cleanliness and to Aboriginal mortuary practices. They believed that unreclaimed Aborigines were dangerous savages bordering on the bestial amongst whom one was not surprised to find cannibalism. J.G. Ward of Mapoon agreed with the contemporary colonial opinion that Aborigines were inherently murderous and related

73. K.M., 20 (1883), p. 2. He commented with surprise that 'a spark of the Divine Revelation has remained alive' when he learnt that Aborigines believed they were born again as white people after death.
74. ibid.
75. 'Report of Mission Work done at Mapoon Station, North Queensland, Under the Supervision of the Rev. N. Hey, 1900-1901' (Brisbane, 1901), p. 5, (M.L. MSS 1893 carton no. 4). See also the opinion of the Moravian editor of P.A., that the Aborigines were 'the lowest of the low', P.A., December 1894, p. 395, (M.L. MSS 1893 carton no. 4).
80. Journal of Rev. E.R. Gribble, 23 October 1893. Gribble found these 'truly sickening and disgusting'. See also entry 8 September 1893.
81. P.A., December 1894, pp. 393, 394, loc. cit.; K.M., 21 (1889), p. 4: 'he lives like an animal, giving thought to nothing but the satisfaction of his physical needs. He is little better than a beast', wrote the Lutheran Missionary, Poland. Gribble, Forty Years with the Aborigines, pp. 164, 165 for tales of cannibalism.
to his Moravian supporters the old chestnut of the Aboriginal
who begged his white master not to walk in front of him as
'the temptation to kill ... might become too strong'.
Two missionary journals likened a picture of Hey with four
Makoon Aborigines to 'a lion-tamer amid four of his half-
tamed young lions'.
At one extreme the Moravian editor of Periodical Accounts thrilled with horror to the idea of savagery, drawing attention to 'an animal expression' on the unclaimed Aborigines' faces and noting that 'the missionary has to venture into the crowd of blood-thirsty, treacherous lions ... and dwell there in faith in the constant protection of his God. ... yet these poor blacks have human hearts'.
Gribble expressed the same idea less emotionally when he referred to the young Aborigines as 'children of nature' who were of course naturally treacherous.

All of the missionaries, believed that civilizing the Aborigines was only possible through Christianity. By civilization, of course, they meant Aboriginal conformity with European expectations which included the Western European concept of morality. As one would expect, this was espoused most fiercely by such zealous missionaries. Yet none of these

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82. The Moravian Messenger, 2 April 1892, (M.L. MSS 1893
carton no. 4).
83. The Missionblatt made this comment first which was repeated with approval by the Moravian journal, P.A.,
December 1894, p. 393, (M.L. MSS 1893 carton no. 4).
I am not sure what sect the Missionblatt represents.
84. P.A., December 1894, p. 394, loc. cit. This is an editorial comment.
85. Gribble, Forty Years with the Aborigines, p. 63.
86. Morning Post, 14 August 1903. Gribble pointed out
that white settlers were equally non-Christian and
more treacherous. See Sutton, Extracts from History of Moravian Missions, ch. 8, p. 10, loc. cit. for
J.G. Ward's belief that the Aborigines were 'children',
'picanninnies', and 'spiritual children'.

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could envisage the Aborigines reaching the heights of their civilization. Moral and physical regeneration was aimed at but with limited paternalistic expectations. In 1894, while discussing Mapoon, the editor of the Moravian journal, Periodical Accounts, pointed with pride to Hagenauer's success after over thirty years at Ramahyuck in Victoria but cautioned readers not to expect too much. What was important was the 'vast difference' between them and the present condition of the blacks in North Queensland. Gribble echoed this profound paternalism as late as 1930 when he praised an Aboriginal convert for seeking spiritual strength to overcome his quick and violent temper. As they were 'only Australian aboriginals' he mused with wonder at the power of God.

In practice there was a good deal of tolerance of Aboriginal practices. It was based mainly on the inability to enforce sudden changes but in some instances was based on the conviction that mistaken religious beliefs were preferable to no religious beliefs at all: that they served some socially useful purpose. Or as Nicholas Hey put it:

'... many evils in existence among heathen nations ... were necessary to prevent still greater evils'.

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39. 'Substance of an Address Delivered by the Rev. N. Hey ... on May 14th, 1912', p. 443, loc. cit. Gribble seems to have accepted most easily much traditional Aboriginal behaviour, possibly because he was Australian by birth. He refused to stop Aboriginal religious rituals because, he said, 'he respected all the old beliefs of the blacks, although they were all mistaken'. See Gribble, Forty Years with the Aborigines, p. 88.
tolerance sometimes increased with familiarity. Thus, when Hey paid a visit to Aurukun in 1965, the Aborigines greeted the visitors with a corroboree. 'Ten years ago', Hey remarked, 'I would have done my best to prevent them doing so, but I now look differently upon these things. They gave their best and we accepted it in that spirit'. Then he added: 'It is now for us to give them something better'. There was little if any real increase in respect for and understanding of Aboriginal religion. Consequently any approach towards toleration (the belief that tolerance is a positive good) was so qualified as to be valueless. Hey maintained he was convinced that he must allow the Aborigines to maintain their 'native character' but only 'as far as will stand the light of the Gospel'. Thus, at all times missionaries stood ready to attack the central features of Aboriginal society: its economy, its pattern of social behaviour, and most of all, its religious values.

The missionaries shared with other colonists the 'doomed race' theory. The native born Gribble commented, as late as 1930, that 'in no part are [the Aborigines] doomed to quicker or more rapid extinction than in Northern Australia', and Hey, after twenty-eight years at Mapoon, still saw the full blood Aboriginal as 'only a passing phase of Australian occupation. The best that the missionary can do is to minister some little Christian consolation in the fast closing day of his earthly existence', while the Lutheran

90. *Ministering Women*, p. 7, [n.d.]. Various torn out pages of *Ministering Women* can be found in the M.L. MSS 1893 carton no. 4. A date on a letter to *Ministering Women*, 18 August 1905, suggests that the date of the Journal was late 1905 or early 1906.

91. 'Substance of an Address Delivered by the Rev. N. Hey ... on May 14th, 1912', p. 448.

92. Gribble, *Forty Years Among the Aborigines*, p. 84.

93. 'Gulf Natives: Pioneer Missionary. Experience of 28 Years', *Newspaper Cutting Book: Album* (M.L. MSS carton no. 4). The date of the newspaper has not been retained.
Poland, at Hope Valley, who had a literary flare, wrote:

All the mission can really achieve for them is a kind of Christian burial service, a kind of promising sunset glow, which cannot be followed by any bright dawn in this life here on earth. 94

The missionaries above all felt the need 'to soothe the pillow of a dying race'. 95

As will be seen, 'the dying race' were only too happy to have their pillow soothed if that was all that was involved. But when the missionaries tried to administer moral and spiritual medicine they faced great difficulties. Missionary Claussen of Mari Yamba might urge Christians 'to have compassion on the poor unhappy heathen who lie in the deepest night of sin and shame', but the Aborigines refused to be unhappy for their 'sins' or feel any shame in Aboriginal behaviour. Nicholas Hey believed that the two greatest problems were firstly the language and secondly, the absence of this sense of sin. With all his experience Hey was still mystified that they 'could not see that there was any wrong in themselves'. 97 The missionaries without exception tried to convince the adults their way of life and beliefs were sinful even when they were tolerated. This inevitably led to a conflict among those Aborigines who seriously tried to accept the Christian concept of God and the perspective of Jesus of Nazareth as the incarnation of that God. As Hey remarked, '... their moral renovation lags behind their religious change'. 98 Hey claimed there were many instances

94. K.M., 30 (1898), p. 81. Some of Poland's 'sketches' in this journal are remarkable evocations of missionary and colonial life.
95. Gribble, op. cit., p. 119.
97. Hey, A Brief History of the Presbyterian Church's Mission Enterprise Among the Australian Aborigines, pp. 10, 11.
98. 'Substance of an Address Delivered by the Rev. N. Hey, ... on May 14th, 1912', loc. cit., p. 443.
where Aborigines accepted Christ as their saviour and experienced a new peace and hope. They had lost their fear of death and accepted Christ as the atonement for their sins but, in traditional Christian terms, kept on sinning by participating in part in the life style of their Aboriginal friends. They might attend Aboriginal burial ceremonies or not conform completely to the missionaries' sexual mores. Hey was so convinced of an inherent conflict between Aboriginal life and the nineteenth century Christian concept of sin that, as late as 1912, he made the radical suggestion that theologians should reassess Christian doctrine in the light of modern missions. However, this was not a move towards toleration for he went on to imply that, for Aborigines, the doctrine of free will might not be essential for their salvation: that they might have to be controlled to prevent 'sinning'. This was in fact a restatement of the belief that Aborigines were not capable of becoming fully Christian: that they were not fully human. 99

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Mission Strategies.

In their attempts to convert the Aborigines to Christianity, the missionaries used some well-established methods derived from earlier Australian experience and introduced others to meet special circumstances. The need to attract Aborigines to the mission so that they would be available to the influence of the missionaries ensured that food and, often, tobacco would be made available to the Aborigines in return for their labour to such an extent that the Aborigines believed

99. ibid., p. 444. To the best of my knowledge Christian theologians have not made a resolute attempt to reassess what is essential to faith for an Aboriginal living in a cohesive Aboriginal society.
Yarrabah Aborigines at Edge of Rainforest, 1890.
(A.B.M. Archives).

Yarrabah Aborigines.
This and above photograph captioned: 'As they were before the mission took charge of them 1890'.
(A.B.M. Archives).
working for the mission preferable to winning a subsistence outside the mission or that it was the only means of subsistence available at that time. This time honoured technique deliberately aimed at making the Aborigines dependent on the missionaries as prior to 1897 the missionaries had no power to compel the Aborigines to remain. Initially the food was granted for a few hours work which was enough to keep the Aborigines close to the mission but with enough free time for the Aborigines to engage in other activities so that they did not feel too inhibited by mission demands. For example at Mapoon only five hours work per day was required. There was also ample scope for some Aborigines to work while others fished or hunted or prepared for ceremonies.

The Aborigines had no interest in the work of clearing scrub or digging in the fields and there is ample evidence that most were reluctant agricultural labourers, and then for only limited periods of time. All missionaries tried to extract work from the Aborigines, firstly, because their financial resources were limited and, secondly, because they thought work was morally uplifting. As the most experienced founder of a mission in North Queensland, Pieri, remarked: 'Our basic principle in teaching and training the native to work is: He who does not work shall not eat'.

While they were willing to reduce the Aborigines to dependency, it was in total opposition to their puritan work ethic to

100. Rowley, The Destruction of Aboriginal Society, p. 58.
Yarrabah Mission, Late 19th or Early 20th Century.
(A.B.M. Archives).
produce 'a real beggar mentality'. Thus Hoerlein at Bloomfield felt it necessary to occupy the Aborigines with unproductive labour because he thought field work an inseparable part of the spiritual mission work. 104

At Yarrabah, however, Gribble had a comparatively large staff of one other European, two kanakas, and one southern Aboriginal to begin clearing land and erecting buildings, as well as a limited supply of food. 105 So when he eventually made contact with the Aborigines he was fairly lavish with flour, pipes, and tobacco and even tea and sugar for the first few visits, but thereafter directed the food to the children to induce the Aborigines to leave them at the school while the adults continued living off the land. 106 They left their children and old women at the mission thus relieving themselves of an economic burden. 107 Yet, at Bloomfield, even two years after its foundation, Meyer could induce Aborigines to remain on the reserve only by providing rations for all because abundant sources of traditional food still existed. 108

Yet the missionaries' supply of food and tobacco became important to the Aborigines when they were at the mission. At Hope Valley, by July 1887, Missionary Pfalzer wrote with confidence:

The simplest way to reduce them to compliance is not to give out food for a day. In no time at all they are willing to co-operate again.

107. ibid., 5 December 1892.
108. Meyer to Chief Sec., 3 July 1889, loc. cit. See also K.M., 29 (1897), p. 86. The Aborigines at Mari Yamba refused to work for the missionary's food and left.
But, the missionaries soon realized that they could only use this weapon negatively with regard to the adults to cause partial economic dependence and to enforce conformity to missionary demands. By 1893, the Hope Valley Missionaries had concluded:

Our hopes rest on the young people, of course. The grown ups really come only for food and tobacco, once they have that they are no longer interested in us. Tobacco is the only thing they are ready to work for, and if we feel we must impose some sort of punishment, there is only one effective method: cancel the tobacco issue. 110

The missionaries realized that they were an unsought addition to the Aborigines' environment and that they were being intelligently exploited but resented it. Thus in the wet season when traditional food was more difficult to obtain and work with the settlers more limited, the Aborigines came in large numbers to Bloomfield. 111 Hoerlein of Bloomfield commented: 'The old people are workshy and the children are schoolshy'. 112 He lamented that if they had to cancel classes the whole station was soon 'simply crawling with youngsters' but that if classes were started the numbers dropped dramatically. Similarly they often arrived in large numbers at the mission when there was no work to be done and avoided it when there was. When they found it difficult to provide for the very young, the very old, and the sick they would bring them to the mission knowing that they would be cared for. 113 Because of the Lutherans'
understanding of the Aboriginal language, one can catch glimpses of subtler responses. Thus a very intelligent young Aboriginal, Podaigo, was at first attracted to missionary life at Hope Valley but then rejected it. Yet he repeatedly returned to Hope Valley, fully aware of the hopes the missionaries had for him, when it was to his advantage to do so. When he was sought by the police, he arrived back with a display of dignified contrition that disarmed Poland: \( \ldots \) he grabbed my hand and squeezed it so long and hard, that I felt my last suspicions beginning to vanish. And when he said in a voice which betrayed his emotion: "It's me! I had to come back to you. Longing drove me back here!" I unreservedly believed him \( \ldots \) although he used exactly the same words as all his companions use, even when they are only pretending to be homesick'.\(^{114}\) Podaigo realized what offended and what pleased the missionaries, had an intelligent appreciation of wider aspects of white society, and had travelled widely throughout North Queensland.\(^{115}\)

The Mapoon missionaries utilized food and tobacco to control important aspects of Aboriginal life. Thus, Hey largely prevented the 'shouting and fighting' and 'abominable nightly dances' of the adults at the camp adjacent to the mission by withholding rations or depriving them of their usual gift of flour on Sunday if they offended. He was even able to persuade one Aboriginal to give up his promised but reluctant wife for a bag of flour, tobacco, a blanket, and some calico.\(^{116}\)

\(^{114}\) R.M., 25 (1893), pp. 46, 47.
\(^{115}\) ibid. The missionaries were able to placate the police.
\(^{116}\) H.H. Ward, Diary 1895, 22 December 1895 (M.L. MSS 1893 carton no. 4). The diary actually goes to November 1897. F.A., June 1898, p. 87 (M.L. MSS 1893 carton no.4).
\(^{117}\) ibid., 7 September 1896.
There were other material blessings the missionaries brought which the Aborigines were pleased to avail themselves of. All missionaries tended the sick with great dedication and apparently with enough success to gain the Aborigines' confidence. Meyer, at Bloomfield River, wrote: "We have been kept busy, especially as there has been a lot of illness amongst the blacks. We were overrun with patients all wanting medicine". The Aborigines were also attracted by the material gifts associated with the various Christian festivities such as Christmas, the hand-out of food on Sunday when no work was required, and various celebrations such as those occasioned by the opening of a new church or the anniversary of the founding of the mission.

118. C.A. Meyer, Bloomfield River, to the Mission Congregation, South Australia, 23 January 1893, U.E.L. MSS B.808. See also Journal of Rev. E.R. Gribble: 15 December 1892; 13 February 1893; 28 September 1893; 17 January 1899. Brisbane Courier, 7 September 1901, 'Aboriginal Mission Work: Mapoon Mission Station Report by Dr. Roth'; K.H., 24 (1892), p. 8: Heerlein of Bloomfield mentions the importance of medical knowledge to gain the Aborigines' trust and respect; P.A., December 1898, p. 218, (M.L. MSS 1893 carton no. 4). 'At Mapoon, every morning a number of patients come from the camp and receive medicines or attention to wounds and sores'.

119. J.H. Ward, Diary 1895, 25 December 1895, loc. cit. See also Journal of Rev. E.R. Gribble, 25 December 1895; K.H., 25 (1895), p. 27. Missionary Bogner of Bloomfield Mission wrote: 'The blacks on this station have been anxiously awaiting Christmas: not that they intend to celebrate the birth of our Saviour; but we have promised them gifts and they are all here full of expectation. About 186 attended the service'. See also K.H., 25 (1895), p. 28 for Christmas at Hope Valley.

120. M.H. Ward, Diary 1895, 26 December 1895, loc. cit.

121. P.A., March 1897, pp. 287 and 289, 'A Red Letter Day at Mapoon' (M.L. MSS 1893 carton no. 4). At the opening of the J.G. Ward Memorial Church on 18 October 1897, over four hundred Aborigines were attracted to the mission from the Coen (Tennefather), Pine, Bush, and Seven Rivers. This became a holy day at Yarrabah.

122. Journal of Rev. E.R. Gribble, 17 June 1896. This became
All missionaries tried to convert adult Aborigines to Christianity but, without exception, diverted most of their resources to converting the young. Acceptance of Christianity by an adult Aboriginal such as Memnuny of Yarrabah, to the extent that he gave up two of his three wives, was exceptional. Even in this case it is possibly significant that, through his conversion, his traditional authority as a tribal leader, which was being eroded by Gribble's successful assertion of mission authority over even the camp Aborigines, was reinforced by his being publicly granted temporal authority within the developing mission community. 123

Yet despite their lack of success with the adult Aborigines, all missionaries in North Queensland visited the camps when they could, preaching to and praying with the, no doubt, often bemused Aborigines. The Lutheran missionaries at Hope Valley and Bloomfield seem to have done this least in this period, except at the camps adjacent to the mission, as they tried first to cope with the problem of establishing mission communities; 124 while Gribble seems to have placed most emphasis on this aspect of mission work, prior to 1896, going regularly as far afield as Mareeba, Atherton, Thornborough, Herberton and Port Douglas and walking extensively from Yarrabah to visit local camps. 125 Gribble

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123. Gribble, Forty Years with the Aborigines, pp. 63, 73, 76-78. See also Journal of Rev. E.L. Gribble: 31 January 1893; 1 August 1896; 28 February 1899; 16 October 1899; 26 December 1899. Memnuny was given the name of John and later John Barlow when he became a Christian after the, then, Bishop Barlow. One of his sons is a church leader at Yarrabah and 'King John' is still remembered with affection and respect. Interviews with John Barlow and Richard Hyde at Yarrabah, 26 November 1972.


was especially motivated at Yarrabah, however, by the plight of the Aboriginal children in the camps near these settled areas who were frequently orphaned, starving, or diseased.\textsuperscript{126} Not infrequently were children addicted to alcohol or opium and the girls were consequently becoming prostitutes.\textsuperscript{127}

Gribble's intense passion for rescuing destitute children in such moral danger was largely responsible for the speed with which the permanent mission community grew at Yarrabah.\textsuperscript{128}

Yet all the missionaries would have agreed with Hey that a sound Christian foundation was only possible with the second generation.\textsuperscript{129}

It must be stressed that, with the possible exception of Gribble, this conclusion was based on North Queensland experience. Except for Gribble and Meyer, the founding missionaries were new to Aboriginal missions and, although they probably absorbed some preconceptions about the adult

\textsuperscript{126} See references f.n. 125. There are frequent references in his journal to visiting camps and giving medical aid to adults and children. \textit{Journal of E.R. Gribble:} 13 February 1893; 8 September 1893, 26 September 1893; 18 October 1893, 29 October 1893; 19 December 1893.

\textsuperscript{127} Gribble, \textit{Forty Years with the Aborigines}, p. 81. See also M.N., 15 October 1896, p. 98, and 17 March 1897, p. 19; 15 October 1897, p. 94, and 15 November 1897, p. 100, as well as \textit{Journal of Rev. E.R. Gribble}, 18 August 1895, and 17 September 1896.

\textsuperscript{128} M.N., 15 February 1900, p. 10. See also E.R. Gribble to the Registrar General, 15 December 1900, A.B.M. Archives Box 122, where Gribble notes that in eight years 100 Aborigines had been settled on the station, all of whom had sought permission to live at Yarrabah, as well as the Aborigines who were still nomadic.

\textsuperscript{129} 'Substance of an Address Delivered by the Rev. N. Hey on May 14th 1912', p. 442, loc. cit. See also P.A., June 1896, p. 103; G.H. Frodsham to Board of Missions, Brisbane \textsuperscript{[copy]} encl. Q.S.A. Education Various, 'Mission Schools', 14712 of 1899, commenting that little was attempted with the adults at Yarrabah. K.H., 25 (1893), p. 25: 'Our hopes rest on the young people, of course'.
Aborigines from their missionary societies, they doggedly preached to the adult Aborigines they encountered in North Queensland. They were not at first sure that the Aborigines they encountered would respond similarly to those in the south. It must be remembered that these missionaries did not have the twentieth century perspective of the similarity of traditional Aboriginal life throughout Australia and were prepared to accept different challenges and different responses. Thus, early in Hoerlein's ministry at Bloomfield he claimed, 'It is our missionary duty to let the older people hear Christ's gospel at every possible opportunity', and to this end, he like all the German missionaries, including Hey, made great efforts to learn the local Aboriginal language. Yet by 1894 he was writing: 'Our hope is centred on the young people. The older people are too set in their nomadic ways'.

As little short of complete submission to the missionary's expectations was demanded, it is not surprising that few adult Aborigines could be converted. Memmanny of Yarrabah had to surrender two of his three wives while at Mari Yamba Hansche refused to baptise an Aboriginal because he regarded him as 'very arrogant'. The Lutherans seem to have been especially cautious in admitting Aborigines to Christian rites lest they accept them unworthily without fully understanding their significance. They were also very conscious of the Christian responsibilities they were placing upon instructed and baptised Aborigines who could easily return to their 'sinful' ways, but without the ignorance of Christian religion and morals as a mitigating factor. This

130. K.M., 24 (1892), p. 7. I have not considered the great experience Flierl brought because of his brief stay in North Queensland.


was especially a problem for Aboriginal girls who could not marry Christian Aborigines.\(^{133}\) This caution was prompted at least, in part, by their society’s experiences in South Australia which Flierl had spoken of.\(^{134}\) At Hope Valley, camp Aborigines were not allowed even to attend Sunday services with the baptised Aborigines and Europeans until 1898, twelve years after the mission was founded.\(^{135}\)

The chief aim of all the missions was to induce the adult Aborigines to leave their children or the orphaned Aboriginal children of relatives at the mission. Mrs. Ward of Mapoon described the process of gaining authority over the children which, with modifications, occurred on all missions that were successfully established. 'In order to induce the children to attend school we had to provide them with food and clothing. Afterwards, when they had learnt to trust us we encouraged them to become boarders'.\(^{136}\) Then the children were housed in separate dormitories for boys and girls in which they were supervised and which they could not leave until morning. They then participated in a systematic, highly organized daily routine. Thus, at Mapoon, as soon as the dormitory doors were opened at daylight, the children did half an hour’s work before breakfast, bathed, attended morning prayer, and then school from seven till ten a.m. and from two till four p.m. After dinner there was a rest hour and after the evening meal one and a half hours’ play. During the day in the unaccounted hours, there were organized work activities such as gardening. A daily time-table was soon established at Yarrabah which was very much like that

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133. K.H., 24 (1892), pp. 57-59.
134. ibid., p. 59.
of a boarding school or a religious institution: 6 a.m. rising bell; 6.30 a.m. mattins; 7.30 a.m., breakfast; 8.15 a.m. workbell; 12 noon, cease work; 12.30 p.m., dinner for the Aborigines; 1.45 p.m., schoolbell; 5 p.m., evening bell; 5.30 p.m., tea for the Aborigines; 6.35 p.m., evensong; 9.30 p.m., the bugle for lights out. On Sunday there were church services at 7 a.m., 11 a.m., and 6.30 p.m., and religious classes at 3 p.m. During the week there were singing classes and drill classes on Tuesday at 8 p.m.; choir practice on Thursday at 4 p.m.; night school for adults on Wednesday at 8 p.m.; parade on Friday at 4 p.m. Sewing classes were held at 2 p.m. daily except Wednesday and Saturday afternoons which were free for the Aborigines to organize their own activities under the guidance of the mission staff.137 This timetable encompassed both adults and children.

There was, of course, initial conflict between the free life of a child in Aboriginal society and the restrictions the children were subjected to in such institutions. The missionaries, however, were flexible enough to introduce the routine and class room teaching gradually.138 The children, at first, were not kept against their will but generally a nucleus of relatively permanent mission children grew as, even when adults tired of the missionary's preaching, they were often willing to leave their children with them.139

The adults apparently did this from a variety of motives. Often they believed the missionaries well intentioned and

137. E.R. Gribble, Yarrabah, to Dixon, 18 October 1900, A.B.M. Archives, Box 121.


harmless. A more compelling reason was the difficulty of supporting the children in their disturbed environment by traditional means. At Bloomfield, after five years, the parents were very unwilling to part with their children, probably because the hinterland contained enough natural food to make this unnecessary. At Mapoon, it seems very likely that the missionary's success in obtaining children was linked to the high proportion of the ablest young men working in the fisheries and, at Yarrabah, to Griibbe's scouring the camps for destitute children. Certainly, at first, they did not understand that the missionaries were going to indoctrinate their children so that they would be unfitted for traditional Aboriginal life.

Once this boarding school system had been successfully established the missionaries were able to achieve encouraging results at training and indoctrinating the children. Mrs. Ward, the school teacher at Mapoon, pointed out that by 1892, they had been forced to adopt this system to combat the irregular attendance of their first year and from that date results were 'marvellous'. The adults at Mapoon were encouraged to give up their children to the mission with gifts of flour. There is no evidence that this practice did or did not occur at other North Queensland missions. On all missions it was occasionally necessary to intimidate the children into remaining on the mission or, at least, not leaving without permission by such methods.

141. M.K., 28 June 1896, p. 44. Griibbe had to overcome a great deal of hostility because they had been told his aim was to keep their children at the mission.
142. The Messenger, December 1911 (M.L. MSS 1893 carton no. 4). See in same carton, Moravian Missionary Reporter, II (Sept. 1892) p. 66 for the early difficulty of retaining the children. See also M.K., 21 (1839), pp. 54, 55.
143. The Messenger, December 1911, loc. cit.
as admonishments, corporal punishment, fetching runaways back, obtaining the support of the local police, or simply locking them up. Probably all the missionaries would have agreed with Hoerlein of Bloomfield that 'love alone' was not enough to manage the blacks. 'Law and discipline were indispensable'.

The Yarrabah journals, which reveal the most intimate details of mission life uncovered in this investigation, indicate the very firm control exercised over the children. As many of Gribble's Aboriginal children were separated often by considerable distances from their Aboriginal relations, Gribble immediately assumed the role, in loco parentis, more determinedly than any of the other missionaries. His task of creating a mission community was made somewhat easier by this separation and the destitute condition of the children he brought to Yarrabah. It is also possible that because he was native born, Gribble had least regard for the individual rights of the Aborigines once they had been entrusted to him. The multitude of rules, the discipline, and the punishment seem similar to that expected in a strict nineteenth century boarding school except that these expectations also applied

144. K.M., 21 (1889), pp. 54, 55. Schwarz brought a boy back and verbally intimidated him. On another occasion the Cocktown police inspector ordered some of his runaway girls back. K.M., 22 (1890), p. 6, Schwarz giving some truants a hiding; K.M., 27 (1895), p. 86, Hansche at Mari Yamba refusing to allow three of the young boys to leave. Journal of Rev. E.R. Gribble, 3 February 1904. At Yarrabah there was a special room where offenders could be locked up.


146. E.R. Gribble to Dixon, Secretary of A.B.M. Sydney, 20 June 1900, Yarrabah Letter Book 1900, A.B.M. Archives, Box 121: 'It must be borne in mind that there are no blacks in this reserve other than those gathered together by us'.

largely to the adult Aborigines. 147

On all missions the aim was to segregate the children as much as possible from the influence of the Aborigines in the camp which was regarded as necessarily 'evil'. 148 With his quick grasp of the language Schwarz was horrified to find the girls listening 'in rapt attention to the filthy gossip the women [Brought] back from Cooktown'. Such typically Aboriginal frankness about their sexuality was regarded as 'moral poison'. 149 At Bloomfield, the missionaries were not able to establish a dormitory for the girls because there was no suitable woman to supervise it, 150 a fact which was strongly criticised by Both. It was then claimed by the missionaries that they had deliberately chosen not to remove the girls from the camp as they had done with the boys and youths as it was 'the lesser of two evils'. 151

Presumably they thought it better to leave girls in the camps

147. Journal of Rev. E.R. Gribble: 20 February 1893; 14 November 1893; 10 January 1894; 19 January 1894; 24 November 1895; 23 August 1896; 29 October 1896. See also the Yarrabah Journal for 1904, A.B.M. Archives, Box 112, which has the misleading title on the outside cover, Matron's Log for 1908 Yarrabah Senior Girl's Home. The entries by Rev. E.S. Chase who relieved Gribble for some time are more explicit in revealing the pervasive nature of the missionaries' control. See entries from 16 January 1904 to 28 April 1904. As Chase's return to Yarrabah was 'hailed with great delight' (16 July 1904) and Gribble is still remembered at Yarrabah as a very firm disciplinarian who used corporal punishment on children and adults it is unlikely that Chase's control was firmer than Gribble's. Interviews with Mrs. Elizabeth Fulford at Palm Island, 19 and 20 December 1972, and Mrs. Grace Tiaro at Yarrabah, 26 November 1972.

148. Unsigned manuscript in folder 'Mrs. Ward and Mrs. Hey' (K.M. MSS 1893 carton no. 4), apparently two incomplete articles, the second one beginning p. 5 'At Melbourne ...', p. 18.


than to bring them into a mission which lacked the facilities necessary for their moral welfare. Yet at some missions the establishment of a girls' dormitory removed them from their only possible future spouses. This was one of the great early difficulties in establishing a Christian village at Bloomfield and Hope Valley where it was extremely difficult to retain the boys at the station. 152

The role of the dormitory system in creating a new generation of institutionalized Aborigines removed from traditional Aboriginal authority cannot be overemphasised. Its effect on the subsequent generations deserves serious psychological and sociological investigation. The strict segregation of both the generations and the sexes in itself generated a host of rules and punishments, and artificial value systems that institutionalized the whole settlement. 153

The missionaries aimed at creating an Aboriginal community in which they would have ultimate authority yet all were aware of the need to develop Aboriginal leaders within this framework. This had not developed at Hope Valley, Bloomfield River or Kari Yamba before 1900 but at Yarrabah and Mapoon there were signs of an Aboriginal leadership emerging in temporal and spiritual matters whose authority was directly dependent upon the missionaries. Thus at Yarrabah, on the 10th December 1896, six young Aboriginal men and three young women were confirmed 154 and on the 30 January one young man who had become one of Gribble's temporal aids, Alick Bybee, preached to the Aborigines

152. K.I., 21 (1889), pp. 11, 12; K.I., 22 (1890), p. 1. 'Several of our girls [at Hope Valley] are well past the age at which Papuan girls are given in marriage. But the youths and young adults are so utterly undesirable'.

153. K.I., 21 (1889), pp. 11, 12. See above, f.n. 147.

camped near the mission compound. Subsequently, this young man, at his own initiative preached to the camp Aborigines and his example was soon followed by other young Aboriginal men who witnessed to their new faith in the camps on the Yarrabah reserve. Just prior to this Gribble was surprised to discover that Willie Ambryn, the Christian South Sea Islander who had helped the elder Gribble establish the mission, had been holding a prayer meeting with willing young Aborigines.

At Mapoon, by June 1897, Hey had organized an Aboriginal police force while he had early adopted the practice of getting young Aboriginal men to preach and lead in prayer at the Sunday evening services. This missionary prepared them for this beforehand and admitted they were able to communicate more effectively with the older Aborigines. This was not only because they had a better grasp of the language. They were also able to express such concepts as repentance and salvation in terms that the Aborigines would find meaningful. Thus, to the Mapoon Aborigines who had run off with many boats and well understood the punitive power of white society, an Aboriginal evangelist had explained: 'Missionary no policeman but Policeman in Heaven Jesus and if you no sorry - by and by you be put headfirst in hell'.

However, it was probably their example rather than their

155. ibid., 30 January 1897. See also 1 August 1896. The 'camp' Aborigines lived near the mission but came and went as they liked and had not accepted the control of the missionaries as had the 'mission' Aborigines who lived in the mission compound.

156. ibid., 3 February 1897, 22 February 1897, 18 February 1897; 10 April 1897, 15 April 1897, 18 April 1897.

157. ibid., 14 September 1896. See also M.H., 15 April 1897, p. 27 and 15 October 1897 for examples of young Aborigines independently adopting Christian worship.


preaching that was most important. Hey wrote: 'I am ... convinced that a testimony ... out of the mouth of one of their own people does a great deal more good, and is followed by a greater blessing, than our words'.

It is important to note that the emerging Aboriginal leadership on these missions were, with few exceptions such as John Memmumy, young Aboriginals with little or no experience of traditional Aboriginal values; and that these men were preaching the corrosive new religion in the churches and camps and exercising substantial temporal authority over the traditional Aboriginal leaders and their followers in the neighbourhood of the mission.

The importance of taking black Christians to help establish new missions was proven in North Queensland. Hope Valley and Bloomfield had the services of Johannes Pingilina, a Dieri from South Australia, who was invaluable to the Lutherans in learning the languages and controlling the Aborigines. Gribble had Willie Ambryn, a Pacific Islander, and Pompo Katchelvan a south Queensland Aboriginal, and these were of great help to him. Hey had Harry Price,

161. F.A., March 1897, p. 239, loc. cit.
162. K.M., 19 (1887), p. 14, a letter from Johannes Pingilina translated from Dieri into German by one of the missionaries, telling of the ease with which he mastered the language at Hope Valley. Pingilina was subsequently attached to Bloomfield River. Missionary Hoerlein, Bloomfield, to Pastor Rechner, South Australia, 21 December 1891, U.E.L.C.A.A. B.808. Hoerlein claimed 'no one can handle the blacks better than Pingilina' and he is invaluable in the field of language research'.

163. Journal of Rev. E.R. Gribble: 14 September 1896; 19 December 1896; 10 September 1897. Pompo does not seem to have exercised leadership, as did Willie Ambryn, and by 1898 Aborigines like James Noble, George Christian, and Alick Bybee and John Memmumy were the Aboriginal leaders with Pompo as a subordinate. Willie Ambryn was counted as a member of the staff. See Journal of Rev. E.R. Gribble 1898: Yarrabah, page 'Memorandum for 1898' which lists leaders and led of such groups as mission brigade, plantation workers. See entries for 1899 for an indication of how Gribble used Aboriginal authority.
a Tahitian. 164 Hey's mature opinion was that the South Sea Islanders bridged the gap between the white staff and the Aborigines 165 and this, indeed, seemed the function of the black Christians.

The aim of the Christian missions in North Queensland was to create a theocracy. The members of the Aboriginal community would lead good, useful lives where they would be 'made to live by rule'. 166 Thus, at Yarrabah, the time table included inspecting the cottages of the married couples each day at 11 a.m.—'the floors having been swept and washed, and the blankets put to air immediately after breakfast'—and cleanliness and sanitation insisted upon. 167 On all missions, to accomplish the aim of creating a new society, a pervasive system of education of children and adults was necessary not only to continue the process of religious indoctrination but also to produce the skills necessary for this first missionary generation. There were thus adult education classes, classes for married women, and practical training in child care, homecraft, and simple industrial skills. 168 As Hey pointed out, the Aborigines were given a way of life. 169

The development of a settled mission community depended upon young Aboriginal Christians marrying and bringing up

165. 'Impressions of Mapoon', October 1916, Newspaper Cutting Book: Album (M.L. MSS 1896 carton no. 4).
166. M.N., 18 June 1900, p. 42. The editor was describing Gribble's method in taking over Frazer Island for the A.B.M.
169. 'Substance of an address Delivered by the Rev. N. Hey ... on May 14th 1912', p. 443.
their families on the mission. All missions seem to have Foreseen this and set out to provide for it from the outset except for Mapoon. At Yarrabah small communities of married Christian couples were developing by 1896. Gribble demanded that the future husband build a cottage before the marriage. He allowed each couple a small plot of land to cultivate for his own family. There is no indication that he thought this an innovation or a response to an immediate local challenge. At Mapoon a similar practice emerged as a consequence of two successive crises. The first came when adult Aborigines with experience on the fisheries demanded payment for work done. Hey responded by ignoring them and concentrating on the young, only to find that, after leaving the Mission compound when their education was finished, these young people were exposed to the gravest moral dangers. Even those who had accepted Christ as their Saviour were in danger of becoming, not only back-sliders, but more dangerous opponents of the Mission than the wild heathen. ... Having seen and experienced better things they felt their degradation more keenly than their heathen relations. The mission-educated Aborigines, especially the girls, had lost some of their ability to earn their living in the bush and had no opportunities to employ their alien knowledge and skills. Hey concluded: '... our coming amongst them seemed to us a great mistake'. To counter both of these crises he began providing cottages and land for married couples. By 1897, this philosophy had been accepted and by 1912 there were seventeen homesteads which

171. 'Substance of an address Delivered by the Rev. N. Hey ... on May 14th 1912', p. 446.
172. ibid., p. 447.
were then increasing at three a year. 173

It seems that the Moravians at Mapoon had believed their converts would be able to sustain themselves and resist societal pressures whereas Gribble had been influenced by colonial experience, especially that of his father, to gather in destitute Aborigines to save them from the vices and diseases associated with acculturation; while the Lutherans at Hope Valley were presumably influenced by the experiences of their missionary societies in South Australia for, despite their lack of success to 1900, they were determined their girls should marry and settle down within the mission compound and this eventually occurred. 174

At the missions not only was tight control exercised over the permanent mission residents but quite a deal of control was also maintained over the Aborigines visiting the mission. This was especially so when the visitors tried to interfere with the mission inmates in any way that conflicted with the intention of the missionaries such as consuming infant betrothals. Attempts to reclaim young female inmates who had been promised in marriage to tribal Aborigines were resisted and generally prevented. With Gribble at Yarrabah, it was entirely forbidden. 175

173. ibid. See also Austral Star, 1 September 1897, and P.A., March 1893, p. 472 (E.M. MSS 1893 carton no. 4). There were examples of couples either married by tribal law or natural inclination being attracted permanently to the mission community but these were the exception. See E.M., 32 (1900), p. 7. One couple had settled at Hope Valley by 1900 while there were 32 young Aborigines living under supervision of the missionaries, loc. cit.


girls were expected to become mission wives.

Yet authority over the visiting Aborigines was obviously more pervasive than this. Poland of Hope Valley described how the Aborigines had 'to make the bitter decision to give up their free and easy life for a while and go to the mission station and work there' when food became scarce and their tobacco supply used up. 176 In course of time visiting Aborigines stayed longer at the missions and came under the authority of the missionries to such an extent that at Yarrabah and Haapoon they asked permission before moving camp, some of the local Aborigines falling into the habit of leaving their children with the missionaries. 177 By 1897, Hey claimed there were 500 Aborigines who were influenced by the mission although the old people were out of its reach half the time and, in any one day, only about fifty would be working there. 178

At both of these missions which had well established mission communities by 1897, there was quite a deal of flexibility to meet the 'innocent' desires of the Aborigines. Thus Gribble allowed the mission inmates, including the children, to attend corroborees, and sometimes a church service in the mission was followed by a corroboree in the camp which Gribble might attend. 179 Two half-days a week were allowed for the inmates to enjoy themselves at bush

177. Gribble, Forty Years with the Aborigines, p. 69; E.A., December 1897, p. 414 (M.L. LSS 1893 carton no. 4).
178. Astral Star, 1 September 1897, 'Haapoon' (M.L. LSS 1895 carton no. 4).
pursuits although the Aborigines were sexually segregated and only the boys allowed real freedom. At magoon, by 1897, Aborigines who had settled near the mission asked permission, and were allowed, once a year to visit their clan country for from two to four weeks. Even the younger converts or pupils were allowed to leave, (presumably only the males) but none stayed away for longer than a week as their eating habits had changed and their ability to fend for themselves decreased. When, as frequently happened, young Aborigines returned before their agreed upon time, they inevitably proclaimed their dislike of 'bush food'. At Yarrabah young inmates were occasionally allowed such prolonged absences. However, it seems that at all missions the Aborigines did not simply acquiesce to mission authority. Such actions as Gribble's use of a stockwhip may have been rare but intimidation of a variety of forms was more frequent. Thus it is recorded that Gribble and Hey humiliated adult Aborigines on several occasions and old Aborigines from Yarrabah still remember Gribble's use of his fists and corporal punishment on adults who defied him. While Gribble's punishments indicate the physical extreme used to assert missionary

180. Minutes of Executive Council of A.B.M. 1900-1904, p. 51. Also note that at Yarrabah if a husband was absent, the married women had to move to the single women's dormitory 'to prevent scandal'. See also Journal of Rev. E.R. Gribble, 8 September 1896. E.M., 14 January 1899, p. 5.


182. Austral Star, 1 September 1897, loc. cit. F.A., June 1897, p. 300 (M.L. MSS 1893 carton no. 4). A mission girl Ruth went bush for her honeymoon after 3 years in the mission compound and had to return after two days.


184. Gribble, Forty Years with the Aborigines, pp. 70, 71-73, 87-88. Interviews with Mrs. Grace Tiaro at Yarrabah, 26 November 1972, and Mrs. Elizabeth Fulford at Palm Island, 19 December 1972. Mrs. Fulford had been at Yarrabah.
authority, all would have agreed with Hey of Mapoon when he wrote in 1897 that all Aborigines had to submit to the station rules. To accomplish this, Hey claimed 90% of the Aborigines could be dealt with when love was shown them but 10% had to be controlled through fear. All of the missionaries would have agreed with this although they may have varied the ratio, as might the recipient Aborigines. Until 1897, success in establishing a mission community and exerting authority over the visiting Aborigines depended ultimately upon both groups accepting that authority. Adult Aborigines could not be compelled to stay. Yet many did.

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Aboriginal Reactions.

The study of the relationship between missionaries and Aborigines provides almost unique examples of reactions of this first generation to the attempts made to change their thoughts, feelings, and actions. It is significant that the Lutherans at Cape Bedford and Bloomfield River who placed most stress on learning the local language provide the most sensitive descriptions of these reactions. They

185. P.A., March 1897, pp. 219, 236 (H.L. LSS 1893 carton no. 4). See H.L., 17 August 1899, p. 80, where it is claimed the 'co-operation' of the Aborigines was obtained by 'a wise blending of love and firmness'. H.L., 18 (1886), pp. 29, 30. Heyer fired shots in the air and sent for the police to break up two groups of Aborigines fighting.

186. E.R. Gribble, 'A Reply to "Aboriginal"', Science of Man, 16 (1908-1909), p. 89. Gribble mentions that by this time there were twelve separate settlements, all except one being run entirely by the Aborigines. As he said, the whole population could walk across the hills to Cairns which was only five miles or so away. See also Austral Star, 1 September 1897, loc. cit., for Mapoon.
also demonstrated a remarkable capacity for objective analysis of their progress which in turn depended upon an awareness of the responses of the Aborigines. It seems important even at the risk of some thematic repetition, that the most significant Aboriginal reactions be set down.

It is clear that most adult Aborigines when presented with Christian ideology and morality either refused to accept them as relevant to their way of life, regarded them with amused contempt, or rejected them with hostility. At Bloomfield, Meyer translated Luther's catechism and exegesis and the Ten Commandments into the Aborigines' own language and reported the Aborigines astonished that such rules were meant for all human beings. They found it incomprehensible that Christ should or could die for their sins.\(^{187}\) However, adult Aborigines were quite willing to modify their behaviour while visiting the mission stations in order to avoid offending the missionaries and often confused missionary behaviour and expectations with Christian concepts. Thus when the missionary tried to explain his concept of heaven, the Aborigines associated this with customary missionary activities and asked whether work was done in heaven and whether there was 'plenty of food' and 'meat'.\(^{189}\)

The missionaries' ideas and values seemed bizarre in relation to the Aborigines' experience. It is also possible that they realized that these concepts were little respected by and had little relevance to the white settlers they encountered. Even Pingilina, the Dieri evangelist, could not convince the Aborigines that their creation myth was inadequate. Pingilina reported:


\(^{188}\) P.A., December 1899, p. 199 (H.L. MSS 1898 carton no. 4).

\(^{189}\) Meyer to Missionary Congregation, Adelaide, 2 June 1888, loc. cit.
"I was telling the blacks about the creation: how everything was made and by whom. But they said: "Nonsense, the old men [presumably, their totemic ancestors] made everything". But I replied: "You are ignorant. There is One up there in Heaven, who is the Father of all, and He has created us and later on He saved us through His own son Jesus. In Heaven His children dwell for ever and will be blessed". But they only laughed and asked: "How ever would people get up there? It's so high". 190

Kwalzer of Hope Valley tried to explain to the Aborigines that 'after death the body would turn to earth, but that it would come back to life later, when it would rejoin the soul! and that the 'good people' would go to a 'good place' called heaven and the 'evil people' would be sent to a 'bad place'. Needless to say this fundamentalist explanation caused the Aborigines who laughingly replied 'it was not like that at all'. 191

Even with Kingilina's mastery of the language, the German missionaries, because of their contempt for Aboriginal beliefs, found it difficult to gain any insight into religious concepts. Moreover, the Aborigines generally refused to discuss spiritual matters with them. Yet when Schwarz accidentally learnt of their reverence for a sacred (tabul) fire they had prepared, he insisted on lighting his own fire from it and, fully knowing it was sacrilege, consuming food cooked by it. The Aborigines had with great patience and persistence explained the enormity of the offence and obviously considered ritually killing him. Because he was armed, they refrained and rationalized that such punishment did not apply to him. With some show of pride that he had defected Satan and his works, Schwarz informed his missionary society: 'Tabul obviously means something like sacred. Things can be naturally tabul or they can become tabul by

contact with a very tiny baby or with a corpse'. 192
Similarly Poland could not appreciate the honour the Aborigines were bestowing on him when after half an hour of their listening to explanations of God, the creation, Adam, and Jesus during which they had been 'indifferent, sleepy, or outright amused', the Aborigines decided to acquaint him with their understanding of the divine and their relation to it. They told him that the moon was a man with two wives 'and other silly ideas, some of them even obscene'. The two cultures had found their reason for being in the myths of a pre-scientific age which had evolved out of two very different ways of life. Yet each failed to see in the other's philosophy much that was common or even the common quest: an understanding of the nature of man and the meaning of life.

The contempt the adult Aborigines had for the missionaries manifested itself in a variety of ways. Realizing that their reasons for acting in ways that did not meet missionary approval would not be accepted, they told them whatever would placate them. When the Aborigines at Hope Valley decided to go to Cooktown to avenge the killing of one of their men, Pfalzer lectured them on the necessity of leaving vengeance to God and to forget all evil done to them. This doctrine was one which they had not had the privilege of witnessing in the white society and which would have had little appeal to them anyhow. They told Pfalzer that they would heed the word of God but that they would 'spear those enemies just this once more. And then we'll come back to you and dig for you and listen to your teaching.

Now we hunger for their blood. 194 Similarly Poland described one of his visits to the camp to preach to the adults:

"What's the matter with old Barbi? Is he ... sick?"
"Not sick, but very tired. We were out on the coral islands to catch the pigeons, and he had to tie up the wind to enable us to get back. ... Even you must have noticed that the wind is no longer blowing as hard as before."
"... But Barbi is no more responsible for that than you or I."
"Isn't he? Then we should like to know who is!"
"... God did, of course; God, the Lord of Heaven and earth, who created land and sea and man, who lets the sun and the moon shine upon us, who ..."
"Ngangamalamburla can also bring the rain."
"... oh, don't talk such rubbish. I am telling you the truth: only God can let the rain come."
"Of course he is right," says the rainmaker and looks mockingly at his friends.
"Be quiet and don't mock him!" says another one a little anxiously.
"Don't get angry!" They try to keep the missionary calm. "Don't make him angry," another one repeats. "He may not give us any tobacco otherwise."
"Now let him talk!" exclaims one man. "Haven't I been telling you all along? He talks well and we ought to stay with him."

The bored look on his face leaves me in no doubt about his insincerity. 195

Such examples of tolerant scorn occur frequently in the reports of the German missionaries. 196

The scorn of the adult Aborigines was directed with much less restraint upon the black converts. Ward of Mapoon reported how an Aboriginal was ridiculed by a relative when she was at prayer 197 and Pingilina frequently had to endure the mockery of the Aborigines at Bloomfield, especially after his Aboriginal wife deserted him to

195. K.M., 29 (1897), pp. 63, 64.
196. See K.M., 29 (1897), pp. 46, 54, 64, 65, 66.
return to her people. Indeed at Yarrabah where a mission community had been established earliest, Gribble reported fights between the mission Aborigines and those at the camp.

Although there was some initial Aboriginal hostility to the intrusion of the missionaries at Mapoon, Cape Bedford and Bloomfield River that could have resulted in violence, this phase soon passed. Yet there is ample evidence that there was hostility of a more complex kind. When the missionaries from Hope Valley visited Cooktown in 1890 with some boys from the mission, the Aborigines in the town hurled abuse at the missionaries and tried to induce the boys to leave the missionaries as if they understood the threat the missionaries posed to Aboriginal society.

This hostility to missionary intentions of Aborigines living a viable life was not isolated. It was not unexpected that an Aboriginal on the Barron River in 1892 should deliberately lead Gribble away from the Aboriginal camp and abandon him.

It is surprising, however, that, as late as May 1899, the

200. 'Gulf Natives: Pioneer Missionary Experience of 28 Years', Newspaper Cutting Book: Album (P.I.M. 1893 carton no. 4). See also K.M., 19 (1887), p. 12, Meyer at Bloomfield River was threatened with a spear but intimidated the Aboriginal by threatening him with a spear; H. Milman, P.M., Cooktown, to Col. Sec., Q.S.A. COL/A597, 1016 of 1889. The missionaries at Cape Bedford asked for police protection as the Aborigines were very troublesome. P.M., Cooktown, to Col. Sec., 2 February 1887, Q.S.A. COL/A488, 956 of 1887: Aborigines forced the people at Bloomfield River to leave to get police help. See also J.W. Bauer, Superintendent, Bloomfield Mission Station, to P.M., Cooktown, 21 February 1887, encl. Q.S.A. COL/A492, 1794 of 1887: Aborigines threatened to kill all the whites and rob the stores.
Aborigines at Hambledon station would not allow one of Gribble's Aboriginal evangelists into their camp to speak about God. In 1896 strange Aborigines were still fleeing from Gribble, frightened he would take away their children.

Such hostility to the missionaries was coaxed within the wider framework of Aboriginal hostility to the white invaders. The Germans were surprised to discover that the same word was used for both an evil spirit and a white man. Gribble was astonished at Willie Ambryn's description of heaven. The South Sea Islander's face glowed as he explained to the Aborigines at the mission 'the joys of the Redeemed. No sickness there, he said, no pain, no sorrow, and to [Gribble's] surprise and consternation, "No white people there"'. Seeing Gribble's face, he quickly added: 'Everybody will be the same there, all brothers'. And at Hope Valley, when three of the older girls refused to leave the mission, the Aboriginal women mocked them calling them 'white folk' and telling the missionaries to build them a house as they were no longer suited to Aboriginal shelters. Such complete Aboriginal contempt for the invaders' culture was seemingly widespread although rarely recorded away from the missions because elsewhere it was not considered important or was not noticed.

Those Aborigines still living a relatively independent life resisted the missionaries who were trying to assert their authority over those remaining aspects of their culture they found most important and satisfying. Where there was such a supportive culture, the conflict inevitably arose.

206. K.M., 26 May 1891, p. 56.
at the great moments of Aboriginal life such as puberty, marriage, and death. Thus Podaigo, the Aboriginal at Hope Valley who seemed most responsive to missionary teaching, reached the age where he could eat a certain kind of yam. Schwarz tried to dissuade him from accepting the privilege and he was twice offered this privilege before he accepted at the urging of his older brother and an influential elder. From this point, he progressively asserted his independence of the mission until he was ultimately able to manipulate the missionaries, playing on their affection for him and their zeal for his salvation to obtain whenever convenient, sustenance, convalescence, refuge, and even protection from the police. Eight years after Hope Valley was founded, the sound of a corroboree in the nearby camp was enough to make one lad abscond in the night. When he later visited the mission, he was a man with ochre on his naked body and spears in his hand strutting past Schwarz and casting an occasional condescending glance at him. At Hope Valley and Bloomfield the missionaries had great difficulty maintaining any authority over the older boys against the stronger more satisfying life of the camps. Even at Yarrabah, Gribble found the older Aborigines opposed to his teaching the children and keeping them in the dormitories. They tried to take a lad away, presumably, to initiate him at a big corroboree held immediately after,

211. K.M., 22 (1890), p. 6; K.M., 26 (1894), pp. 5, 6; Pastor Hoerlein, Bloomfield River, to Rechner, South Australia, r.n.d. the letter, 41 in the file, seems to start on p. 2 and was probably written in 1899 before July, U.E.L.C.A.A. B.368: Hoerlein commented that the girls were conducting themselves well but the lads went walkabout: 'that style of life is still an essential feature of their make up'.

but Gribble made them return him. 212

Yet it was the missionaries' insistence on maintaining control over their mission-educated girls that probably aroused the most intense Aboriginal resentment. Gribble realized his refusal to allow any mission girl to marry an Aboriginal who already had a wife was 'causing a stir', 213 and there were some attempts at Yarrabah by the camp Aborigines to claim the mission girls which Gribble frustrated. Even when the Aborigines left their younger girls at the mission, many apparently expected to reintroduce them to the tribe as they grew older. The mothers told Poland they could not see any point in having their older daughters there. Poland, as incapable of appreciating Aboriginal culture as they were of European culture, remarked: 'The point is that these backward people cannot grasp the purpose of a school, especially for girls. And they regard it as disgraceful to try to copy the white man'. 215 Those Aborigines living a more satisfying life away from the mission were especially alarmed when they realized that their girls were being prepared for a life style which would alienate them from their relatives and especially their future husbands. 216

212. Journal of Rev. E.R. Gribble: 24 November 1895; 10 January 1896. The Aboriginal elder was so embarrassed at some women witnessing his humiliation that he threatened to spear them.

213. ibid., 24 November 1895.

214. ibid.: 16 January 1894, 19 January 1894, 30 January 1894; 13 October 1895; 24 November 1895; 7 July 1896; 1 August 1896. It is not clear whether these attempts occurred after this, Gribble failed to record them, or whether they ceased. As the mission became more established, his comments on domestic life decreased greatly. When Chase was in charge while Gribble was at Fraser Island, he records such minutiae scrupulously and notes two attempts by the camp Aborigines to steal a girl away. See Yarrabah Journal 1900: 5 July 1900, 16 July 1900, and 17 July 1900.


216. ibid.
The missionaries' inexplicable opposition to polygamy was especially resented. 217

Where the Aborigines offered a contending life-style, it was relatively easy to exert mission authority over the girls and make them conform to mission expectations by placing them in dormitories. 218 Influenced by the missionaries' attitudes towards Aboriginal life and having no means of developing the skills necessary for it, they often became incapable of supporting themselves in the bush and loath to make the attempt. 219 When there was some consideration given to abandoning Hope Valley in 1903, Schwarz wrote: 'For most of those who have grown up on the mission station, it would amount to a death sentence to send them away from here'. He quoted instances where three young men had died after leaving the mission in the previous six months after they had found the mission regulations unbearable'. 220 It is also clear that at Hope Valley some of the girls deliberately used mission authority to avoid Aboriginal authority especially with regard to marrying. The missionaries would not and could not have prevented their departure if they and their parents insisted on it. 221 However, these young girls did not wish to leave; they stayed close to missionaries and avoided their betrothed. Mission life had made them dread the thought of marrying and returning to the camp. 222 Several of the girls were

217. ibid. See also K.M., 29 (1897), p. 67.
220. K.M., 35 (1903), p. 34. The diseases and demoralization of Aborigines outside the mission were no doubt complicating factors.
221. There were no adult Aborigines in the mission community at this time who could have followed the girls and brought them back if they were really determined to leave.
well past the age when Aborigines marry and despite the urging of their elders refused to go to their promised husbands. 223

The missionaries also aroused resentment when they tried to impose upon the Aborigines customs, which they considered an inseparable part of Christianity. Thus at Bloomfield Mission the Aborigines threatened to leave the station when Meyer pointed out that the man they speared for causing the death of an Aboriginal by witchcraft was speared unjustly as the dead man was discovered to have an old spearhead lodged in a vital organ, 224 and at Yarrabah a fight took place between the mission Aborigines and those at the camp when several men were offended because of a marriage at the mission which was 'wrong' by their standards. Gribble claimed that at corroborees such a mission-camp conflict was usual, 225 an indication that such hostility to mission influence was widely based.

However it was the missionaries' attempt to impose their mortuary rites upon the Aborigines that brought forth some of the most intense reactions. Thus, at Hope Valley, after the death of one of the baptised Aborigines, the mother wished to take the body so that she could keep the bones according to custom; but the dead girl's sister and the other mission girls were horrified at the prospect and begged the missionary to bury her as, indeed, the girl herself had wished. Schwarz stayed awake all night 'for fear the parents would snatch the corpse away'. In the morning, while Schwarz was making the coffin, the mother aggressively hurled insults at him until he sent for the father and induced him to persuade the wife to mourn at the graveside. Schwarz included

224. K.M., 23 (1891), pp. 94, 95.
the mission and camp Aborigines in the funeral procession, the mother covering herself in thick clay in deepest Aboriginal mourning. Despite a wholehearted assault on the practice at Mapoon, some Aborigines still used their own mortuary rites although members of the mission community and even some members of the camp were requesting Christian burial for their relatives. When a young man called 'Pigeon' died and they were about to begin the ritual, 'Pigeon's' father carried off the corpse to dry, keep for some months, and subsequently cremate. Such prolonged ceremonies of great psychological, religious, and social importance were strongly criticised by all the missionaries in North Queensland and no doubt this roused deep resentment among the Aborigines.

At all missions, although traditional Aboriginal society had been affected by alien intrusion, there were Aboriginal life styles competing with the one offered by the missionaries. At Mapoon, Mari Yamba, Yarrabah, and Hope Valley traditional life had already been greatly disturbed when the missions were founded, more so than at Bloomfield with its hinterland of dense scrub and mountains. At Mapoon, as indicated previously, tribal life had been greatly disturbed by the fisheries. Mari Yamba on the Proserpine River was fairly close to Bowen and had adjacent white settlers and travellers to attract the Aborigines away from the mission as well as

227. P.A., March 1897, pp. 235, 236. See also P.A., December 1899, p. 193, where Key acknowledges in his 'Annual Report' that the Aborigines were persisting with their own mortuary rites. Pigeon's remains were eventually given a Christian burial following a burst of enthusiasm for the practice later in the year. See Periodical Accounts, December 1897, p. 416, (M.L. MSS 1895), carton no. 4).
228. See K.M., 19 (1887), p. 12: Meyer (then at Hope Valley) 'has spoken out against this practice, but to no avail'.
the traditional activities associated with the offshore islands and the Clarke Range. One tribal group had been reduced to two members and there were relatively few Aborigines available from which a mission community could be developed. At Hope Valley, just across the Endeavour River from Cooktown, the Aborigines had experienced contact since 1874. Yarrabah was within a few miles of Cairns, founded in 1876, which had become the centre of a farming district, but Gribble's practice of bringing destitute children to the mission tended to minimize the problem of an alternative Aboriginal way of life.

The competing way of life consisted of the traditional Aboriginal life modified by contact. At Yari Yamba, Bloomfield, Hope Valley and Hapoon it is clear that adult Aborigines, and often the children when they became adults, were more attracted to Aboriginal life outside of the mission than to the life style being created on the mission stations. Thus at Hapoon, Ward pointed out that the Aborigines were 'only too ready to hire themselves out for a time on pearl fishing boats. ... Our blacks greatly prefer the water to working on land, and when a boat arrives they cannot resist the inclination to go to sea in her'. The clothes, the obvious availability of alcohol, and the way of life on the boats made it very difficult for the missionaries to retain their authority and control over the young men. By 1898, the missionaries could only claim that they had made the Aborigines less anxious to recruit than they were formerly and that they generally requested permission before recruiting. The hymns they learnt at the mission became incongruous folk songs, that the hard-bitten skippers had to endure. Yet aspects of the traditional life survived.

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230. K.M., March 1898, p. 472; December 1898, p. 213. See also P.L., March 1897, p. 264, for Aborigines returning from the fisheries immune from mission influence (H.L. 1688 1898 carton no. 4).
Thus, after one year at Maapoon, the missionaries had ensured that the 'nightly howling of the infamous corrobories were no longer heard . . . and various other evils had been forgotten' but, when the Pine River Aborigines visited, 'the temptation was too great for most' and only about twenty of the 230 present were not joining in. Even in October 1896, a good many of the bigger school girls stayed away from school to participate in a ceremony. Such a complex picture of a modified Aboriginal way of life could be painted in each of the areas where the missions were situated. It is also clear that, at least for most adults, the missions offered the least desirable life style except when times were difficult. The main advantage of missions was that they were a certain source of food and tobacco which could be earned for a limited amount of work. At Hope Valley and Yarrabah, the missions had to compete with nearby settlers, mining communities, and the residents of Cooktown and Cairns respectively in the matter of rewards for work done — and the missionaries did not offer opium and alcohol. Even with the conventional payments the missions' resources were often straitened. Missionary Poland reported:

... they do consider that our issues of food and tobacco are not very generous. "Does the One in Heaven tell you to give us so little?" and ... they start to sing the praises of the folk in Cooktown who are far more liberal than we are. 233

The missionaries were even compared unfavourably with the Aborigines' old enemies, the Native Police, at the Eight Mile near Cooktown where they went in groups of eight or ten to chop firewood and do other chores. Pfalzer complained

232. E.N. Ward, Diary 1895, 1 October 1896. See also E.N., 21 (1889), p. 2 for description of children slipping easily in and out of both cultures as did some adults.
that though the missionaries were referred to as 'mangal nurse', short-handed or mean, 'none of them has ever gone hungry since we have had rice growing here'.\textsuperscript{234} The hagpoon missionaries were also compared unfavourably with the fishermen and Ward had to point out that they were expected to work longer hours on the boats.\textsuperscript{235} In a series of sketches to his missionary society, Poland captured well the reluctance with which the aborigines made 'the bitter decision to give up their free and easy life for a while and go to the mission and work there' as well as the feigned desire to return and listen to and work for the missionaries. Indeed alienation from the missionary's culture and non-co-operation (while feigning dutifully to co-operate) were stock reactions.\textsuperscript{236}

Perhaps, it is once again the Lutherans who give a glimpse of the depth of the reaction of the first generation of adult Aborigines to the missionary intrusion. At Bloomfield mission, the local Aboriginal woman whom Pingilina had married, returned to her original way of living and refused to return to the mission. Meyer reported: 'She resents every reminder of the time she did domestic work and listened to the Word of God'.\textsuperscript{237}

Despite the rejection of missionary indoctrination and resentment of the missionary way of life, the missions did provide services and material benefits that Aborigines found attractive and progressively grew to depend on. At Bloomfield in 1892, Meyer claimed he was visited by two Aboriginal 'scouts' who lived about two hundred miles away. They told Meyer they would return with the other members of their group. They had previously visited the mission but had been

\textsuperscript{235} F.A., June 1893, p. 86 (K.L. MSS 1898, carton no. 4).
\textsuperscript{236} K.M., 29 (1897), pp. 46, 54, 63, 65.
\textsuperscript{237} C. Meyer, Bloomfield, to Pastor Rechner, South Australia, 6 April 1891, U.E.L.C.A.A. B.368.
driven off by the local Aborigines who did not wish to share the mission bounty. Hoerlein also reported visits to Bloomfield by Aborigines who had come over one hundred miles to the mission and some who had come from the Normanby River about fifty miles away, swelling the number of Aborigines at the mission several times to over one hundred and fifty. Hoerlein reported, 'When there were so many different tribes here, there was continuous friction ... Our own blacks grew very jealous of the others: they feared that we would run out of flour earlier than we could afford to. They therefore tried every means at their disposal to rid the station of its visitors'. This was possibly not the complete explanation as the visit of such alien groups might have been resented simply on traditional grounds. By 1889, this process had already attracted 'quite a number' of neighbouring sub-tribal groups to Wotjal Wotjal land on which the mission was situated, who, however, lived amicably with this local sub-tribal group whose numbers had already been greatly reduced. Even the Aborigines at Albatross Bay and on the Missionary River who were still leading largely a traditional life made a journey of over forty miles north to Mapoon to inspect the missionaries and the 'great house'. The Weipa mission had already been planned to serve this area. The degree to which mission expectations had been communicated to them was clearly illustrated. They attended the church service and were 'most devout' and, afterwards, through an interpreter 'urgently requested' Hey to open the new station which they had undoubtedly heard of previously. As well, they assured Hey 'that their fights with one another should cease as soon as they had a missionary

in their midst'. They realized their interest was chiefly the external advantages' not the 'Word of God'. Thus, the first generation of adult Aborigines to meet the missionaries apparently regarded them as an addition to their economy and welfare. At Napoon where the aboriginal population had been decimated by the fisheries, other groups had been attracted to it, bringing various tribal or sub-tribal groups into closer contact than would otherwise have been the case and, as at Bloomfield, friction and bloodshed had sometimes resulted.

Such dependence on the missionaries changed the Aboriginal life style. Thus Pfalzer wrote as early as January 1887 that, with 'the security of guaranteed supplies', the Aborigines were not bothering to fish; and when it was decided to close Bloomfield mission station, the Aborigines repeatedly urged Hoerlein to stay, partly because of the affection they had developed towards him, but probably, mainly because they had come to depend on the mission.

There was much about the missions that was relevant to Aboriginal life in the last decade of the nineteenth century when traditional Aboriginal society was crumbling and the Aborigines were deprived of large areas of their tribal lands and unable to subsist as they had previously. They were suffering the effects of exotic diseases often combined with poor nutrition resulting from their disturbed dietary

244. C. Hoerlein, Bloomfield River, to Pastor Kaibel, South Australia, 10 September 1901, U.E.L.C.A.A. B.283. See also Hoerlein to Rechner, Nariotpa, South Australia, 7 April 1901, U.E.L.C.A.A. B.283.
habits. They were conquered and demoralized and increasingly their religious faith was less able to provide the security and the reason for their being in a world not encompassed by the totemic ancestors of the dreamtime. Some attempt was made to bring the intruders within their conceptual framework. Thus, at Hope Valley they had equated the whites with evil spirits and even transformed the very common belief throughout Aboriginal Australia that the white intruders were the spirits of deceased Aborigines. They now believed that after death the Aborigines would all be reborn as whites and as they informed Pfalzer: '... we shall not go naked, but wear clothes like you do, we shall understand what you do and make what you make and we shall not die'. Such theology proved unsatisfactory to most Aborigines as it would have done to most Christians if unsupported by a satisfying way of life.

Some Aborigines were so shocked by aspects of their co-existence with the whites that they found security and protection at the missions. In 1897, Gribble recorded that when an Aboriginal died in Cairns from the effects of opium and alcohol, about thirty Aborigines went to Yarrabah with him and the recently confirmed Alick Bybee resolved to help Gribble save other Aborigines from opium poisoning. When Gribble visited a camp at Fort Douglas, a young Aboriginal and his wife asked him if they could go to Yarrabah to learn to read and write, apparently realizing that their old way of life was no longer tenable. Less dramatically, mission life probably meant survival for many of the very old, the

246. E.N., 17 March 1897, p. 19. See also Journal of Rev. E.R. Gribble, 26 January 1897, for Aboriginal Dick who was so horrified by Aboriginal mortuary customs that he stopped to pray for his countrymen.
very young, and the sick who drifted to the mission or were left there. 248

From the limited evidence available, it seems that, as the traditional religious values of Aboriginal society lost their sanction and traditional leaders lost their authority, some Aborigines found security in various aspects of Christianity. Thus John Henanny, a mature Aboriginal leader with three wives, and young Alick Bybee had killed two men, allegedly of their own tribe, and engaged in an act of cannibalism in 1892, yet by 1897 both had become spiritual and temporal leaders of the mission community. 249

Similarly, at Mapoon, a young initiated Aboriginal, Manus, became an ardent Christian and 'the right hand man' of Hey after strongly opposing the new influences upon his people. He had tried to revive the influence of the traditional totemic heroes to prevent tribal disintegration and through his knowledge of the customs and rituals gained great influence over the young men of his tribe. However, his much loved only sister had been one of the first inmates of the Mapoon girls' dormitory and an early convert. She was fatally burnt and, on her death bed, asked to see Manus who was unknown then at the mission. Eventually, he was contacted and in red and white ochre and emu feathers spoke with his sister who apparently convinced him that Christianity promised eternal life to believers. Her last words to him, 'Ganulabo chuna ya' (we shall meet again), her death and this element of Christian doctrine, produced a dramatic and

248. Journal of Rev. E.R. Gribble; 21 July 1895, 25 July 1895; 17 January 1896, 19 January 1896. See also K.M., 29 (1897), p. 88. 'The men die of consumption or of the effects of opium or alcohol at an age when they should be at the heights of their powers'. K.A., March 1892, p. 431, (H.L. MSS 1893 carton no. 4). John Douglas described the women and children at Mapoon as half-starved.
permanent conversion. He too was able to use his traditional authority and became the recognized leader and evangelist of his people. He also taught the missionaries so much about Aboriginal life and values that they decided to make more use of local Aboriginal evangelists. They were also able to understand better the customs and ceremonial and determine which they would tolerate. He claimed that it was hamus who 'in due course of time' made them see that it was unwise to remove even a 'bad custom' unless it was replaced by a 'good or better one'.

Indeed, the confident assertions of nineteenth century Christianity about death, heaven, and hell seem to have been one of the most influential aspects of missionary ideology. Certainly this aspect was stressed. A conversation recorded at Bloomfield just after an Aboriginal had died indicated the nature of the ideological conflict:

'I [Missionary Hoerlein] asked all those who had gathered there:
"Aren't you afraid of death?" and an old, little woman answered me:
"I am not going to die, for I am not yet old."
"But your hair is white!" I replied.
"I still have strength and agility," she said and to prove it she turned and twisted, bent and bowed in various directions. I tried again.
"Children often die too!" I remarked.
"I am not going to die," she countered. But the tremor in her voice betrayed her fear of death.

The doctrine of eternal life was accepted much more readily by those within the mission community.

250. Moravian Missions, (1939), pp. 47, 48. In an article 'Hamus of Kangoor, the Transformed', Nicholas Hey paid great tribute to the influence of Hamus.
252. K.M., 30 (1898), pp. 68, 69.
There were other aspects of Christian teaching that seemed to strike responsive chords among at least some Aborigines of the mission community such as the story of Christ's life and passion, although here too most of the older Aborigines apparently found the suggested relevance of Christ to them inexplicable.

It is clear, however, that within the framework of the mission community an alternative way of life was being created that many of the young and a few of the old grew to accept and some of the old tolerated. While the competing life styles outside the mission became less tenable and less secure, within the mission there was a highly ordered security. It was also to be expected some Aborigines would turn expectantly to the first Europeans revealing some of the mysteries of the conquerors' religion. As well, the first generation mission community appreciated the rich rewards that accompanied the conqueror's religion: security in a troubled world, food and clothing, European style accommodation, the possibility of marriage and a family life, prestige and authority.

Subsequent generations would inevitably realize the limitation of such rewards.

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256. Henry Cheema from the Barron River joined the Yarrabah mission community early in 1896, was baptised in Easter 1897, and was married to a mission girl in 1897. See K.M., 24 June 1897, p. 42. See K.M., 23 (1891), p. 93, for intentions of Lutherans at Hope Valley to arrange the marriage of their girls only to approved partners. Journal of Rev. E.R. Gribble, 7 November 1896: several applications for marriage.
European Reactions.

In their attempts to create havens for the Aborigines in North Queensland the missionaries inevitably aroused widespread opposition as other missionaries had done previously in Australia. This hostility was never complete even when the missions were first established, yet when Archibald Weston visited Hope Valley as late as 1896, as special government investigator into the state of the Aborigines, he still claimed that the missionaries were almost the only ones in North Queensland not trying to obstruct his efforts. The missionaries in the previous decade had experienced similar deep-rooted opposition. Their interest in the Aborigines was seen by a very wide cross-section of society as menacing to the colonial status quo and critical of the colony's values and activities with regard to the Aborigines. Thus Home Secretary Tozer's reversal of his promises to J.B. Gribble, when it was learned that Gribble had been involved in exposing outrages against the Aborigines in Western Australia, led to seven years' financial discrimination against the Church of England Missionary Society and a reversal of the constantly held government policy, inaugurated in 1885 by Griffith, to support missions. Possibly, there is no better indication of the expected subservience of the missions to government policy and their concomitant vulnerability; for not only was financial aid at stake but the very mission reserve itself which could be cancelled any time the government chose.

Nor would the government have to fear a hostile reaction

258. K.H., 28 (1896), p. 88. See also K.H., 18 (1886), pp. 26, 27, where Flierl mentions friends and opponents of the proposed mission.
from the electors. J.B. Gribble found 'a feeling of deep prejudice ... existing amongst the whites against the mission' to the extent that 'some' had made it their business to poison the minds of the blacks against us' until Gribble was informed it would be dangerous for him to travel in the bush. The Church of England Vicar and his assistant in Cairns temporarily dissociated themselves from the mission because of the ill feeling of townsfolk towards the mission. There was even a malicious letter in a Cairns newspaper alleging that Gribble's Pacific Islander assistants were illegally employed.

Such hostility to people wishing to devote their lives to helping the Aborigines was general. When Ward and Hey made their way north to Mapoon they found that, while Griffith gave them a cordial welcome in Brisbane, most regular church-goers regarded them as 'milksops'. Their chronicler reported:

The amount of pessimism in Queensland was enormous. The nearer the Brethren approached their destination the more critical and scornful everybody seemed. At Cooktown they were told the Aborigines were treacherous, malicious cannibals who could not be converted to Christianity and who were 'not fit to live and ought to be killed off'. Claussen at Mari Yamba received similar advice.

260. Journal of J.B. Gribble 1891-92, 9 June 1892. 261. Ibid.: 9 August 1892, 24 August 1892, 25 August 1892. 262. Ibid., 1 September 1892. 263. J.E. Hutt, Extracts from History of Moravian Missions (Moravian Publicity Office, 32 Fetter Lane, London EC4, n.d.), ch. 3, p. 2. A typescript copy held in Presbyterian Board of Missions Files, Jamison St., Sydney, was used in this research. The original was obviously compiled from reports sent back to such Moravian journals as Periodical Accounts, and the Moravian Messenger. 264. Ibid. 265. E.D.T., 31 November 1887, reprinting a letter from A.C. Claussen to E.M., 24 November 1887.
It is difficult today to understand the intensity of the opposition to the missionaries until one realizes that many of the colonists were justifying the colony's actions towards and contempt for the Aborigines. The alternative was guilt and shame. There was then a psychological imperative to attack or belittle those that expressed or implied by their actions a concern for the basic humanity of the Aborigines. The Herberton Advertiser, which had supported the campaign to pacify the Aborigines of the Atherton Tableland by the distribution of food, was vigorously critical of leading southern churchmen criticizing Queensland's treatment of its Aborigines and urging Christians to establish missions. This journal exposed the raw nerve when it decided the best defence was attack: 'It is however amusing to read the invectives of Professor Kentoul and others, who have squatted on the land filched from the aboriginals; and if there is any guilt, they share it, as they are accessories after the fact'.

Thus on or near the frontier sympathy could be expressed for feeding Aborigines and looking after their physical needs within the context that they were a lesser form of human life. However, that they were capable of becoming Christians and worthy of respect as human beings was an insult to the human worth of those colonists who had participated in, supported, or not opposed the violent dispossession of the Aborigines.

In addition to such widespread hostility all the missions experienced to a varying degree opposition based on local self-interest. With missions close to settled areas,


267. F.D.T., 2 April 1892, from Cairns Post; G.C., 10 July 1894; H.A.; 2 August 1893; 4 October 1893, 6 October 1893. See also F.D.T., 26 June 1892, and footnotes 264, 265, 266.
such as Bloomfield and Yarrabah, which had patches of valuable agricultural land and timber resources, and Mari Yamba, Bloomfield and Hope Valley whose land was valuable for grazing, determined attempts were made to allow the settlers access to or use of these resources. At Mari Yamba, Bloomsbury Station retained the legal right to graze cattle on the whole mission reserve despite the missionary's protest. On Bloomfield timber-getters were allowed access during the 1893 depression and, through association with them and their employees, Dr. Roth claimed that the Aborigines had become very seriously infected with venereal disease. Such intrusions on these two missions must have diminished the ability of the missionaries to assert


269. Claussen to Under Sec., Public Lands, 17 September 1893, loc. cit. There is too little information available about this mission to estimate the effect this had.

270. White, Lands Commissioner, Cairns, to Under Sec., Public Lands, 2 June 1899, loc. cit.
their authority over the Aborigines.

There was initial opposition to the establishment of both Yarrabah and Bloomfield on the grounds that this would limit the economic development of the district. However, both petitions indicated the fear of losing their source of Aboriginal labour to the mission and also claimed that Aborigines attracted to the missions from elsewhere would be a source of annoyance or danger to the neighbouring settlers. 271

Opposition was most intense against Cape and here the alleged influence of the mission upon the labour supply so vital to the fisheries was the dominant reason. It was again claimed that the mission would attract labour from the fisheries, 272 but much more forcefully argued was the alleged effect the mission was having on relations between the Aborigines and their employers. The Torres Straits Pilot blamed the missionaries for the 1893 increase in attacks on life and property by Aborigines employed on boats. It claimed that the presence of the mission at the favourite recruiting area inhibited punitive actions of the Thursday Island police against Aboriginal offenders. It was also alleged that the Government Resident, John Douglas, aided the missionaries and, because of his well-known 'Exeter Hall sentiments', insisted that the Aborigines be dealt with legally. 273

271. Kenny, Chairman, Cairns Divisional Board, to Minister for Lands, 18 April 1892, loc. cit.; Petition of [51 signatures] from landowners in and around the township of Ayton and others interested in the Bloomfield District to Hon. C.B. Button, Minister for Lands, [n.d., received 14 November 1885], G.S.A. Lands Res. 1886-69, 26758 of 1885.

272. C.C., 10 November 1893, 'The Native Atrocities', reprinted from Torres Straits Pilot.

Hey asked for an inquiry which, as Douglas noted, completely disposed of the charges. Indeed, Hey and Ward had adopted a policy of complete co-operation with the police and the fishermen employing them and gave information that led to the arrest of some Aborigines. The Torres Straits Pilot itself had revealed the real conflict, when it said

a Mission Station amongst the Cape York natives is injurious from a trader's point of view. It tends to provide comfort and plenty to a race who are born of idleness and who consequently are only too ready to throw off the trader's yoke which they have borne for many years with profit to themselves, for a life of comparative idleness and consequently a port of refuge.

The beche-de-mer industry also recruited from Yarrabah. Gribble accepted this at first but then opposed it on the grounds that the Aborigines were absent too long—twelve months—from their homes and that they developed drinking habits on the boats. He was not able to prevent recruiting and in 1893, allowed the young men to begin contract coffee picking at Hambledon coffee plantation on the Russell River partly to enable them to earn some money for their own use. This he hoped would discourage them from recruiting, which does not seem to have been as great a problem as at Mapoon.

The Mapoon missionaries' attempts to establish a competing way of life to that of the fisheries, which involved taking

274. Douglas to Col. Sec., 23 January 1894, loc. cit. See enclosed depositions taken at the enquiry.
276. C.C., 16 November 1893, 'The Native Atrocities', reprinted from the Torres Straits Pilot.
away most of the physically able boys and men and some of
the young women, posed a challenge to that industry which
was fully realized. The struggle of the missionaries to
control Aboriginal recruitment for the fisheries, to dis­
courage it, and eventually prevent it continued into the
twentieth century and was not really successful until
government officials like Roth and Neston, and influential
ministers like Tozer and Foxton took up this issue on
behalf of the missionaries. 278

By the end of the century, at Napoon and Yarrabah,
at least, there was a small counterswell of local opinion
sympathetic to the missions. The missionaries at Napoon
felt the future of the mission, or at least the future
of government assistance, threatened by the local hostility
until a small steamer, the Kenabooka, was wrecked in the
Gulf of Carpentaria in January 1894. Some Napoon Aborigines
were instrumental in the rescue of the survivors who spread
the story of the mission Aborigines' kindness and the mission's
hospitality far and wide. 279 Yarrabah seems to have become
gradually accepted. The younger Gribble did not attract
the hostility that his controversial father had and was,
in fact, supported by the various rectors of the Anglican
church in Cairns and received the sympathy of Bishop Barlow. 280
Gribble also seems to have been able to get the co-operation

278. Roth, Cooktown, to Under Sec., Home Dept., 13 March
1901, Q.S.A. Lands Res. no. 91-14, Part i, 7027 of 1901;
Hutton, Extracts from the History of Moravian Missions,
ch. 3, pp. 9-11, 13, 14.
279. Hutton, op. cit., ch. 8, p. 10. Ward was so buoyed
by the swell of public sympathy towards the mission
that he went south on a fund raising tour. His popular­
ity and confidence was illustrated by his manner of
appealing to the assembled Presbyterians: 'If you
love me down with the money'.
280. Journal of E.R. Gribble, 23 December 1892: Rector of
Cairns, Hill, went to Yarrabah to conduct the first
Christmas service; 17 January 1893: Bishop Barlow
was pleased at the progress. See also entries on
17 January 1893; 19 December 1893; 15 February 1897;
12 March 1897.
of the police to keep the Aborigines out of Cairns and to
disallow any Yarrabah Aboriginal under seventeen being shipped
in beche-de-mer boats. Perhaps some degree of Yarrabah's
acceptance can be measured by two events in 1897. On 22 June
1897, Yarrabah Aborigines marched in the Queen's Jubilee
procession in Cairns, took part in such amusements as foot-
racing, and then presented a corroboree for three hours
for the Cairns' whites who showed their appreciation with
presents and large quantities of beef. On the previous
night, Gribble had received his personal stamp of approval
when he joined the Masons. Even at Hari Yamba, where a
mission was never successfully established, a degree of
acceptance was indicated in 1900 when the Aboriginal cricket
team twice played the Iro-serpine team.

The approval of the locals was based on the changes
the missionaries had produced in the Aborigines. At Mapoon,
they gave succour to ship-wrecks instead of killing them
as enemies and looting their ship. At Hari Yamba, some at
least were disciplined enough to learn and participate in
a European sport while at Yarrabah mendicant and diseased
Aborigines had been drawn away from Cairns — away from the
vices of the Europeans and disapproving gaze of the townsmen
who were ceasing to see themselves as frontiersmen. In
1903, the Yarrabah Aborigines had staged a concert where
they demonstrated their physical, mental, and musical ability.
The townpeople flocked to see little Aboriginal children
singing such items as 'Mother Goose' and 'Ten Little Nigger
Boys'. Some Europeans now found mission Aborigines
worthy of descending sentiment.

281. ibid.: 9 October 1896 and 24 December 1896.
282. ibid.: 21 June 1897, 22 June 1897.
283. K.D.T.: 3 and 17 November 1900. The first match was
in May 1900. On the second occasion the Aborigines won.
284. Cairns Post, 14 August 1903.
When the first careful investigations of North Queensland missions were made after 1896, two missions, Kapan and Yarrabah, were successfully established and Hope Valley was showing promise. The Presbyterians were already considering establishing another mission south of Kapan which would also be staffed by Moravians initiated into mission work at Kapan by Hey. 285 The missionary's criterion of success was the establishment of a mission community which could be indoctrinated and controlled by the missionary and in which the Aborigines were aware of the missionary's expectations and conformed largely to them - outwards at least. As this mission community had to be self-perpetuating, it was essential adults make Christian marriages to provide children for the mission community while they themselves carried on the physical work of the mission under the supervision of the missionaries. Associated with the mission compound, were mission-camp Aborigines who lived for varying lengths of the time near the mission providing labour, additional children for the compound, and the occasional adult convert. The mission sphere of influence extended beyond the mission-camp Aborigines to others who were attracted from a distance to the mission for brief visits, initially, or were visited by the missionaries. At Yarrabah these outside visits provided children and an occasional adult for the mission compound.

Roth reported that during the first half of 1898 there were on an average 77 permanently residing at Yarrabah and another 26 Aborigines visiting the mission at any one time. 286

286. Roth, 'A Report on the Bellenden Ker Mission Station' to the Commissioner of Police, [f.d.], encl. G.S.A. COL/142. Roth to Pol. Com., 6 August 1898. The number of permanent residents was very regular: January, February, March, 75; April, 76; May, 81; June, 82. The number of visiting Aborigines varied greatly, over 160 being present on one occasion.
At Mapoon, where there was a large number of Aborigines still able to live alternative life styles, the numbers were larger and varied more. In July 1898, Hey reported that a total of four hundred Aborigines had visited the mission during the year, with an average attendance of two hundred at the mission and forty children at school. As well, over one hundred Aborigines aged between fifteen and thirty were recruited for the fisheries. It was not until 1898 that the missionaries at Hope Valley felt confident they had a viable mission. In part this stemmed from favourable reports by Flierl and Queensland government officials. There were only 25 permanently resident Aborigines, 13 of these being women, but the average number fed daily throughout the year was 70. At this time no marriage had taken place among the mission Aborigines because of the difficulty experienced in retaining control over the boys once they approached puberty. However, in 1898 four boys were receiving pre-baptismal instruction with the object of marrying mission girls which, as the missionary unhappily recorded, 'hardly constituted the right motive for entering into the communion of saints'. Roth and the missionaries believed that the 1897 protection Act would assist the missionaries as they would be able to put the Aboriginal men under agreements which would give some hold over them. In 1901, three Hope Valley Christian women married three young Aboriginal men who had still not been accepted for baptism. They had, however, become part of the mission community and, as at Yarrabah and Mapoon, vowed they would

290. K.H., 30 (1898), pp. 33, 34.
never take their wives away from Hope Valley and would continue to receive instruction in Christianity. 292

The missionaries at these three stations were also reporting 'spiritual progress' among their charges. As early as 1896, the Executive Council of the Australian Board of Missions reported cautiously but confidently:

There are not wanting signs of real spiritual and moral improvement in the people, while the efforts made to enable them to clear and cultivate the soil must tend to their material welfare, shewing them that Christianity is a religion which has the promise of the life which now is, as well as of that which is to come. 293.

Even at Hope Valley, some of the mission girls were eager to share the rites of their Christian mentors. In 1895, the only Aboriginal convert first took communion and later that year five girls were baptised. 294 Previous to this these girls had begun to lead a life style that the missionaries could approve of and made several sacrifices that showed that the missionary's influence was not superficial. Thus they had ceased using or listening to the frank sexual talk of the other Aborigines, began giving to the needy in terms of Christian charity, rather than in terms of Aboriginal kinship obligations, and even resolved to give up 'the unbecoming practice of smoking'. 295 Within five years at Koonoomoo and Yarrabah indigenous evangelists had emerged and when volunteers were requested to leave their homelands

292. K.M., 33 (1901), pp. 57, 60, 70. The older people objected to this submission to Christianity. The mother of one came to the mission 'and delivered a loud and venomous diatribe against all who lived there'.
293. K.M., 22 June 1896, p. 54.
296. ibid., p. 6.
to open new missions, these came forward. Although the power, material wealth, and status of the white conqueror was no doubt an important factor in many Aboriginal conversions, and a superstitious belief in the greater efficacy of the missionary's religion another, at least some of this first generation mission community were sincere in their acceptance of the new religion and the new way of life.

The failure of the missionaries to establish a viable mission community at either Bloomfield or Marr Yamba is only peripheral to this thesis as such failures were not regarded by either the Queensland government or the Christian mission societies as proving that missions to the Aborigines could not be established. Their abandonment was considered to arise from local problems and indeed this was correct. It may be true as Evans suggests that the possibility of living a life approximating to the traditional was greater at Bloomfield than at Hope Valley. This, however, seems to minimize the alternative life style Cooktown offered to Aborigines who could have been drawn to Hope Valley and the economic and social possibilities that the utilization of


298. Illustrated Missionary News, 15 November 1895, p. 195: 'Flash Jack is so called because of his conceit. He brags that he is "close up white man" meaning that he can do many things just like a white man'. In this communication it is also reported that two Aboriginal parents carried the body of their baby son a long distance and 'stealthily buried it close to the mission premises'.

such rural settlements as mining camps, timber-getters camps, small farms, and cattle stations offered to both. There is ample evidence that by 1901 when Bloomfield was closed, the Aborigines who visited there had experienced extensive contacts with the settlers at and near the small town of Ayton as well as with the mission community and had accepted the Bloomfield mission as forming a part of their way of life which they utilized intelligently. The successful establishment of missions at Weipa, Aurukun, Mitchell River, Edward River and hornington Island where the Aborigines had all experienced less contact than the Aborigines at Bloomfield River - very much less at Aurukun, Mitchell River, Edward River and hornington Island - suggests that the reasons for the failure of the missionaries to establish a self-perpetuating mission community at Bloomfield River stemmed more from the white intruders than the black recipients of missionary beneficence.

306. W.E. Armit, Secretary, Cooktown Chamber of Commerce, to Minister for Lands, 14 July 1891, Q.S.A. Lands Res. 1886-89, S.G.O., 9446 of 1891: '... the blacks roam at will amongst the selections obtaining employments at many of them, and depending upon this for subsistence to a far greater extent than upon their reservation'.

The Lutheran Church historian, Thiele, gave the following reasons for the closure of Mari Yamba: dissensions within the supporting Lutheran synod and its mission society; a loss of confidence in the viability of the mission; hostility of the neighbouring settlers who had expected the mission to attract and control the local Aborigines; staff changes; incompetent staff; and finally lack of financial support from the synod for a mission which was £200 in debt. In addition European settlement was moving closer to Mari Yamba raising the prospect of further problems.

The importance of both the continuity and quality of the staff in establishing mission communities is amply illustrated in North Queensland. Gribble remained at Yarrabah for sixteen years, Hey at Napoon for twenty-eight years, and Schwarz at Hope Valley for almost sixty years. This allowed these missionaries to establish communications with the Aborigines and to assert mission authority. Nor can the personalities of these remarkable men be minimized. A reading of Gribble's journals and the often detailed reports of the missionaries to their various missionary societies reveal the constant, pervasive, personal attention these men and such respected associates as Gribble's mother, Mrs. Ward at Napoon, and Poland gave to the Aborigines. Within the context of a closed community, where Aboriginal values were being attacked and mission values fostered, the influence of such trusted authority and status figures was immense. After 28 years' experience, Nicholas Hey rightly

802. Thiele, op. cit., p. 105. See also Jvans, 'Mari Yamba, Bloomfield and Hope Vale', pp. 27, 28.
stressed the importance of the personality of the individual missionary: 'No man who takes up such an important work without intending the longest sustained and most supreme work of his life can hope to succeed'. 305

It is also clear that, despite the missionary's assertion of authority and despite the fact that many Aborigines rejected and resented the Christian ideology, a great deal of mutual affection and trust was developed between them and such missionaries as Gribble, Schwarz, Hey, Mrs. Ward, Mrs. Hey, and even Koerlein. 306 In addition, the missions were becoming home for an increasing number of people. This was demonstrated even at Yarrabah where so many Aborigines were gathered from other areas. Thus, in 1898 all of the Aborigines picking coffee at Hambledon plantation were anxious to get 'home' and cheered when they sighted the mission. 307 Indeed, nowhere was the conviction stronger that the Aborigines needed to be isolated as completely as possible from the white community than on the missions. The various missionaries' hostility towards the competing influences of the towns, the fisheries, the timber-getters' or miners' camps illustrated this. Thus Gribble told the people of Cairns:

Under no circumstances would the Aborigines be allowed to go out to service. The fundamental idea of the station...
was that it should prove a real and permanent home for the blacks, and with this idea everything necessary in a community had been established. 308

Hey listed 'Complete isolation and detachment from the outside world' as one of the three essential preconditions for the success of a mission to the aborigines. 309

The ultimate success of the missions in North Queensland was not only to win the support of the Queensland government but also to encourage the Christian churches to expand their missionary efforts to the Aborigines. Thus the Presbyterians established missions based on Hapoon at Weipa in 1898, Aurukun in 1904, and Mornington Island in 1914. 310

The Anglican Board of Missions had proclaimed Yarrabah a 'success' as early as March 1895 and pointed out the 'glorious opportunity' for the church among Queensland Aborigines. 311

In 1898, on Gribble's advice the Anglicans accepted responsibility for Fraser Island from the Queensland government and, in 1903, Gribble chose a site for the Mitchell River mission. The success of Yarrabah was justification for such expansion. 312

In the first years after 1885 when the Queensland government encouraged Christian churches to establish missions to the Aborigines, it is clear that very little thought was given by the government to the aims of the missionaries or what was involved in establishing a mission.

308. Morning Post, 14 August 1903.
309. 'Substance of an address delivered by the Rev. N. Hey ... on May 14th, 1912', p. 448. The other two were a sound Christian foundation which could only be achieved with the second generation; and the bringing in of 'new blood', half-castes or Islanders to arrest the physical decay.
311. L.M., 22 June 1895, p. 50.
Initially, it was thought that the government's role was to give interested Christian societies the opportunity to perform charitable works. The government therefore offered the missionaries the usage of areas of land and initial financial aid. No thought was given to the capital and skills required to make self-supporting areas that were generally difficult to bring into agricultural or pastoral production because of poor soil, unsuitable climatic conditions, remoteness, or the use of the resources by people other than the missionaries. 313 In 1889, the Premier, Boyd Morehead, accepted the on-going nature of government assistance on the recommendation of the Cooktown Police Magistrate, Hugh Milman. 314 Hope Valley had received an annual grant of £120 from 1 March 1888 which had been increased to £200 p.a. from 1 May 1889. 315 Bloomfield had received £120 p.a. from 1 March 1888. This had been increased to £150 p.a. from 1 September 1888, and increased again to £250 p.a. on 30 June 1895. 316 Marri Yamba had been granted £240 p.a.

315. 'Register of Relief Given to Aborigines 1891-96', Q.S.A. COL/463, p. 5.
316. Ibid., pp. 5, 36.
from February 1888 'until the establishment [supported] itself'. This did not happen and the payment continued although reduced to £120 p.a. from September 1896. 317

Kapoon was granted temporary initial aid of £240 p.a. for rations which again had to be continued. 318

Griffith's role in the initiation of these missions was very great and acknowledged by the missionary societies. However, the role of local government officials was also considerable. Milman at Cooktown and John Douglas at Thursday Island were sympathetic. Thus Milman not only recommended continuing financial support but also agreed to keep the Aboriginal children out of Cooktown to help the missionaries at Hope Valley. 320 In contrast, when Chester was police magistrate at Cooktown, he successfully recommended the cancellation of the government subsidy to Hope Valley, claiming erroneously that the mission had an ample supply of fish and game for the Aborigines. Chester's recommendation was made in 1893 during a severe depression when the government was eager to make economies. The missionaries believed Chester was punishing them for refusing to allow the girls of the Hope Valley mission compound to enter domestic service in Cooktown as he had requested. This decision was a severe setback as Schwarz could not employ large numbers of adults who drifted off to Cooktown and a goldfield about

317. ibid., pp. 32, 120. See also Gosling et. al. to Col. Sec., 20 March 1888, loc. cit. and Claussen to Griffith, 31 December 1887, loc. cit.
318. 'Register of Relief Given to Aborigines 1891-1896', pp. 10, 76.
319. See references f.n. 314. See also A. Hardie and S. Robinson, Federal Assembly of Presbyterian Church, Brisbane, to Premier Griffith, 10 August 1891, Q.S.A. Lands Res. no. 91-14, Part I, 16789 of 1891.
320. Milman, P.M., Cooktown, to Col. Sec., 25 April 1889, loc. cit. See also Meyer, Bloomfield, to Rechner, South Australia, 16 June 1889, U.E.L.C.A.A. E.868 for a glowing tribute to Milman as 'a friend of the mission and ready to defend our interests'.
thirty miles away taking their children with them. Schwarz claimed Chester did not even visit the station to make an enquiry. Thus, from 1893 to 1898, Hope Valley was without any government assistance. 321

The interrelationship of local government official, Griffith, government and mission is perhaps best illustrated by the establishment of Mapoon. The Aboriginal Mission Committee of the Federated Presbyterian Churches approached Griffith in May 1891 to take up an offer of land on the Tully River for a mission plus a supply of rations for the first year. Griffith, however, in 1891 suggested a mission on the Batavia River because of the recommendation by Government Resident Douglas and the Rev. Maitland Woods of Thursday Island that the Aborigines at the Batavia River were 'inclined to civilization'. Woods had actually visited them. 322 Douglas had previously urged a mission to be established at the Batavia River to help him control recruiting for the fisheries and prevent Aboriginal attacks on the fishermen and their property. 323 The new Colonial Secretary, Tozer, and Griffith had then approved the initial financial aid and other government support. 324

In 1896, Beston recorded total government expenditure of £1,977/16/7 to the end of the financial year 1895-6, on Bloomfield (£2,982/14/1), Mari Yamba (£2,027/15/-), Hope Valley i.e. Cape Bedford (£1,522/3/6), and Mapoon (£1,504/18/10). This included the varying annual subsidies and initial establishment assistance but excluded blankets

and any valuation of the reserved land. As noted, Yarrabah had received nothing. 325 At Bloomfield, in 1894, the expense of the supporting mission society was estimated at £1,000 a year. 326 In 1893, Hope Valley was costing its mission society £500 to £600 a year 327 and Yarrabah, in 1897, £432 a year 328. No figures have been discovered for Mapoon or Mari Yamba but it is obvious that a great deal of charitable finance was largely supporting these expensive Aboriginal welfare agencies and as well producing food, making improvements on the missions, and attracting other unaccounted charitable gifts from sympathetic Christians.

Basically, Meston was opposed to the missionaries' ambitions for the Aborigines. He believed that the Aborigines should, and could, only survive if they were isolated and allowed to live

as near as desirable to their primitive condition
and retain their own language, their weapons and corrobories, and various customs. By no other method can
any section of this race be handed down to posterity.
By no other method are they worth handing down. When
an aboriginal ceases to speak his own language and
make his own weapons it is time for him to leave this
planet. He is no longer of any interest to the
philologist, ethnologist, anthropologist or the general
public. 329

He believed the aboriginal was incapable of understanding

327. Roth to Pol. Com., 13 March 1898, loc. cit.
Christianity but was being induced by the missionaries 'to pretend to believe, and act accordingly ... and becomes a sneaking hypocritical liar'.\textsuperscript{330} However, even Neston could appreciate the usefulness of the missions as cheap social welfare agencies and the dedication and ability of such men as Hey and Schwarz.\textsuperscript{331} Consistent with his other recommendations for the welfare of the Aborigines, he asserted that no permanent good would result unless the missions were completely isolated.\textsuperscript{332}

Both, Parry-Okeden, Tozer, and Fenton did not share Neston's belief that Aborigines should be left to live traditional lives. Both reported most favourably on what the missionaries at Hope Valley, Yarrabah, Lagoon, and, with some qualification, Hari Yamba were achieving.\textsuperscript{333} In fact, apart from the missionaries caring for the sick, providing a sure source of sustenance for the healthy, protecting all their Aborigines as much as possible from opium and alcohol, and the women from prostitution, the representatives of government seemed most impressed by the way the missionaries were producing village communities moulded on European-Christian values. Both related with enthusiasm the Aborigines' carpentry, agricultural, basket-making and home-craft skills. He praised the choir and the playing of the piccolo, cornets, accordion, and the organ. He was impressed with the mothers' meetings, prayer meetings, confirmation classes, and the church service. He thought

\textsuperscript{330} ibid., p. 6.
\textsuperscript{331} 1896 V. & P., Vol. IV, pp. 727, 729, 734-5.
\textsuperscript{332} ibid., p. 785.
Rev. Nicholas Hey, Mapoon, 1891.

Aboriginal Carpenters with Hey, about 1904.

Boys' Church Parade, Mapoon.
Presbyterian Board of Missions, Sydney.
the 'promotion' system by which girls and boys received
in-service training in domestic service and farm work excellent.
He thoroughly approved of the missionary arranging the marriages
so that a stable mission community was set up. He noted
the excellent health of the community and that at Yarrabah
there had only been six deaths in six years and fewer at
Hope Valley. Of Yarrabah he concluded

To attempt to describe the noble self-denying work of
these missionaries in sufficiently eulogistic terms
would be futile: the organisation, management and
discipline leaves nothing to be desired; the aims
and objects of the mission are practically Christian.
334

Yet it seems that the factor that most impressed the
authorities was expressed by the one word — control. Thus

Roth reported that the Aborigines came and went as they
pleased at Bloomfield:

... the mission people have no control over them and
herein lies the secret of what I would call their
non-success. 335

Ultimately, control involved stabilizing a mission population
and moulding it until it was acceptable to the European mind.
In fact Roth and the Home Secretary Foxton were convinced
that in North Queensland the Aborigines could be raised
to 'a higher scale of social order' only 'by the influence
and precepts of the missionaries'. 336 In 1903, Home
Secretary Foxton stated publicly that he intended to divide
Cape York Peninsula into Aboriginal reserves, apportioning
to the interested Presbyterian and Anglican denominations
geographical spheres of influence expanding as far 'as the
enthusiasm of the Church members would carry it'. He made

334. Roth to Vol. Com., 'A Report on the Bellenden Ker
Mission Station', loc. cit.
V, p. 591.
The Male Brass Band, Mapoon.

The Girls' Band, Mapoon.

Presbyterian Board of Missions, Sydney.
it clear any denomination could have an Aboriginal reserve.

Foxton believed erroneously that there were then 25,000 Aborigines in Cape York Peninsula and he was willing to deliver this number into the hands of the missionaries. As the new century opened, it seemed that a new age of a new faith was about to come to Aboriginal Queensland. After the early frustrating years, the efforts of such pioneers as Flierl, Schwarz, Hey and Gribble showed promise of rewards that none could have imagined.

* * * * *

Yet, for the first generation mission Aborigines the promise was limited. They were being offered the religion of their white conquerors to which few settlers paid more than lip service. They were being offered an eighteenth century paternalistic arcady in an industrial-scientific age. They were being admitted to one aspect of European intellectual life but their mission education denied them access to the intellectual, social, and scientific developments which European Christianity was attempting to accommodate and which were challenging and changing the role of Christianity within the total context of European culture.

This was not a valid criticism of the first wave of missionaries to come to North Queensland. They brought with their spiritual message the hope of physical survival in black enclaves protected from the diseases and some of the demoralization of culture clash. They were creating new, if institutionalized, societies for the future on land that could be claimed to be Aboriginal. They were providing future Aboriginal generations with the possibility of rejecting

Christianity as the religion of the invaders. Some few might reassess its relevance to Aboriginal Australians.