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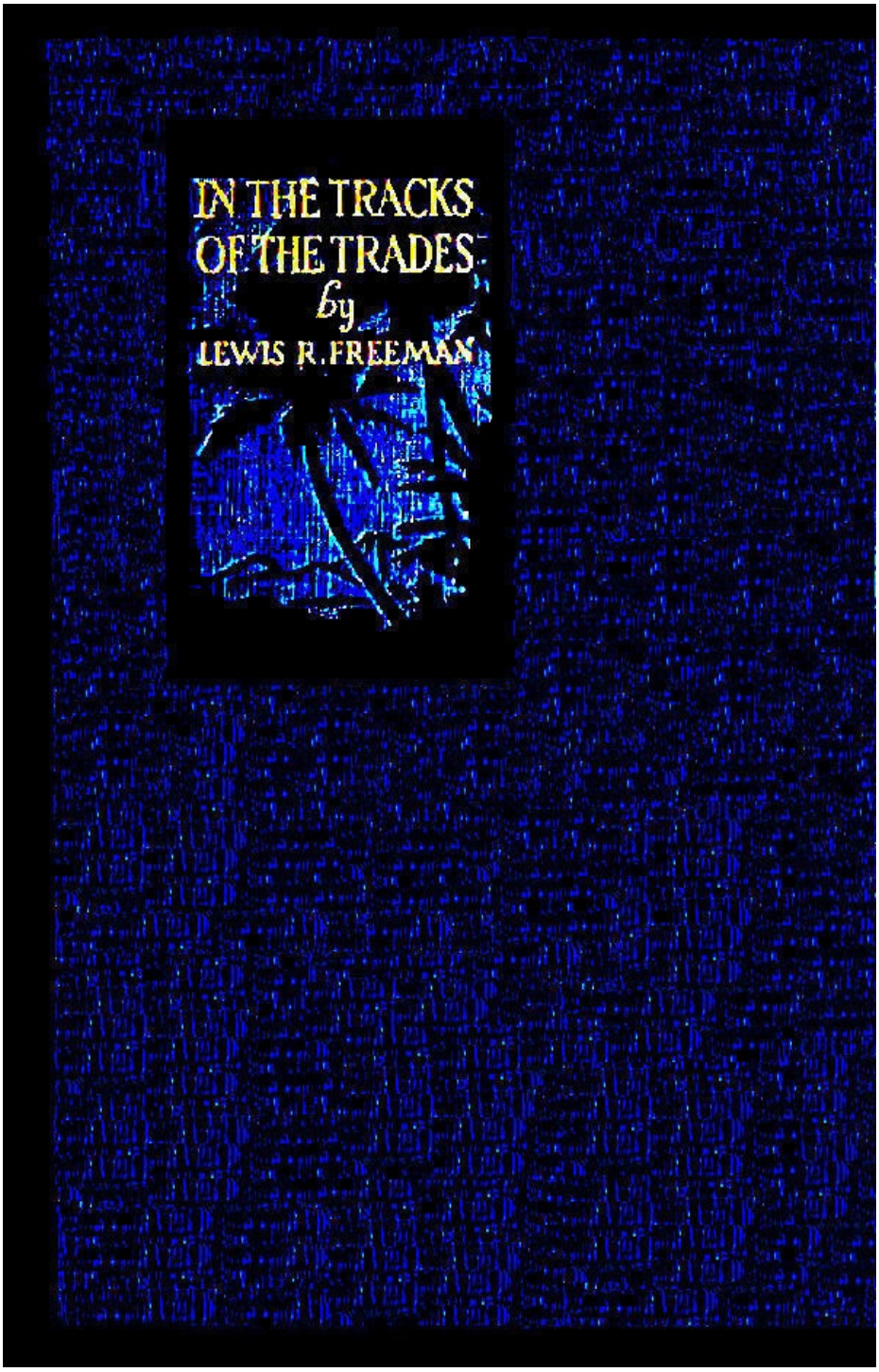
IN THE TRACKS
OF THE TRADES
by
LEWIS R. FREEMAN

A quiet inlet on the coast of Samoa

IN THE TRACKS OF THE TRADES

THE ACCOUNT OF A FOURTEEN THOUSAND MILE YACHTING CRUISE TO THE HAWAIIS, MARQUESAS, SOCIETIES, SAMOAS AND FIJIS

BY

LEWIS R. FREEMAN

Author of "Many Fronts," "Stories of the Ships," "Sea-Hounds," "To Kiel in the 'Hercules.'"

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE AUTHOR

NEW YORK
DODD, MEAD AND COMPANY
1920

VAIL-BALLOU COMPANY
BINGHAMTON AND NEW YORK

TO
THE MEMORY OF
'THE COMMODORE'
THE LATE H. H. SINCLAIR

"THE TRACKS OF THE TRADES"

Take me back, take me back to the Tracks of the Trade!
Let me wander again in the coco palms' shade,
Where the drums of the ocean, in pulsating roar,
Beat time for the waltz of the waves on the shore;
Where sunlight and starlight and moonlight conspire
To speed the gay hours on the Wings of Desire;
Let me clamber again through the orchid-bright glade—
Take me back, take me back to the Tracks of the Trade!

Oh, the hot flame of sunset, the tremulous light
When the afterglow fades to the velvet of night!
The star-stencilled headland in blank silhouette
Where the moonbeams are meshed in the flamboyant's net!
Oh, the purple of midnight, the grey mists of dawn,
And the amber flood after the darkness has gone!
The slow-heaving ocean of gold-spangled jade,
When the sun wakes the day in the Tracks of the Trade!

Let my heart thrill again as the tom-tom's dull boom
Floats out from the bush in the flower-fragrant gloom,
And the shriek of the conches, the *hi-mi-ne's* swell,
Brings word of the feast in the depths of the dell.
Lead my footsteps again to that forest crypt dim,
Where firelight throws shadows on bosom and limb
Of the billowing forms of the trim tropic maids,
When the song wakes the dance in the Tracks of the Trades!

Let my hands close again on the hard-kicking wheel,
As the schooner romps off on a rollicking reel,
To the humming of back-stay and sharp-slatting sail,
And the hiss of the comber that smothers the rail.

Oh, the cadenced lament of the chorusing shroud,
As the spindrift sweeps aft in a feathery cloud!
Oh, the storm-tumbled sea-ways traversed unafraid,
As the squalls spin the spume down the Tracks of the Trade!

Take me back, take me back to the Tracks of the Trade!
For 'tis weary I am of the city's parade,
Of the dust of the traffic, the grey cheerless skies,
And the long lines of people with spiritless eyes.
Take me back to my green sunny islands again,
Away from this treadmill of sorrow and pain,
Away from this tinsel and gilt masquerade—
Let me live, let me die in the Tracks of the Trade!

L. R. F.

Pasadena,
July, 1920.

ILLUSTRATIONS

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[1]

IN THE TRACKS OF THE TRADES

CHAPTER I

SAN PEDRO TO HILO AND HONOLULU

THE Weather Bureau, which for several weeks had been issuing bulletins of the "Possibly Showers" order, came out unequivocally with "Rain" on the morning of February 4th, and this, no less than the lead-coloured curtain that veiled the Sierra Madres and the windy shimmers in the tails of the clouds that went rushing across the zenith before the gushing east wind, made it plain that the elements, not to be outdone by our amiable friends, were getting together for a special demonstration on their own account in honour of *Lurline's* departure. The nature of this elemental diversion developed in good time.

Personal good-byes began at the Pasadena station and continued down through Los Angeles to the San Pedro quay. From there, out through the inner harbour, bon voyages became general, and from the engineer of the government dredge, who blew his whistle off with the force of his farewell toots, to the deck hand on a collier who, in lieu of a handkerchief, waved the shirt he was washing, everybody took a hand in the parting demonstration.

Rounding the jetty opposite Deadman's Island, *Lurline* was sighted lying a half mile to the westward in the backsweep of the outer bay. The crew stood at attention as [2] the Commodore, with a score or more of friends who had come off for a final farewell, stepped aboard, immediately to turn to stowing the small mountain of hand luggage which had come off with the launch. Soon visitors began arriving from the other yachts of the South Coast fleet, and these, reinforced by several press representatives and a number of shore visitors from San Pedro, swelled the farewell

party to a size that taxed the standing room capacity of quarter deck and cabin to the utmost.

Just before the sailing hour arrived presentation was made to the Commodore of a large silver loving cup, and this being filled, each visitor, ere he stepped down the gangway, proposed some appropriate toast and drank to a prosperous voyage and safe return.

Meanwhile the sail covers had been removed and the stops cast off, and as the last of the visitors stepped back aboard their waiting launches, all hands tailed on to the main throat and peak halyards and the big sail was smartly hoisted and swayed to place. Foresail, forestay-sail and jib followed. Finally the anchor, clinging tenaciously to the last California mud it was destined to hook its flukes into for many months, was broken out, and, close-hauled on the starboard tack to a light breeze, *Lurline* swung off past the breakwater and out of the harbour.

At four o'clock Point Firmin Light, distant five miles, bore N.W. by W., and at the same hour the barometer, which had risen rapidly since noon, registered 30.40, about the normal for the southern California coast. The gentle southerly breeze cleared the western sky toward evening and a warm hued sunset blazed out in [3]
defiance of the threatening signs of the morning. The yacht slipped easily through the light swell of the channel, her regular curtesies serving only to spangle her glossy sides with sparkling drops of brine and to punctuate her wake at even intervals with swelling knots of foam like the marks on a trailed sounding line.

"Fairweather sunset," said the mate; "but—" and he finished by shaking his head dubiously and proceeding to give orders for swinging the boats inboard and adding extra lashings to the spare spars and water-butts on the forward deck.

Early in the first watch, and not long after the thin wisp of a new moon had slipped down behind the jagged peaks of Catalina, the wind hauled suddenly to the southeast. Blowing with steadily increasing force, it drove a heavy pall of sooty clouds before it. This, quickly spreading out across the sky, rendered the night so dark that, beyond the ghostly reflections from the binnacle lamps, nothing was visible save the phosphorescent crests of the rapidly rising seas. With this slant of wind the best that we could do on the starboard tack was dead east, and this direction was held until the imminent loom of Point San Juan, and a not-overly-distant roar of breakers, warned us to put about and head off southwesterly between San Clemente and Catalina.

At midnight the barometer was well below 30, and the wind and sea were still rising. The mainsail and foresail were single reefed when the watch came on deck, and while sail was being shortened a heavy sea came aboard just forward of the beam and crashed through the galley skylight. The water rushed in with the roar of a [4]
miniature Niagara, but beyond washing the Japanese cook off the transom on which he had composed himself for sleep and bouncing him against the stove, no serious harm was done.

At two in the morning, with no abatement of force, the wind went back to S.S.W., and with Clemente rising darkly ahead the yacht was again put about. The barometer was down to 29.80, and the half-gale that met us as we came out from under the lee of the island quickly made it evident that further shortening of sail was imperative. The watch was called, and with no little difficulty two more reefs were tied in the mainsail, bringing it down almost to the proportions of a storm trysail. The foreboom was being hauled amidships preparatory to close-reefing the foresail, when a solid wall of green water came combing over the port bow and swept the deck like an avalanche. One of the sailors—Gus, a big Swede—who had been bracing a foot against the lee rail, lost his balance in the sudden lurch and, missing a frantic clutch at a shroud, went over the side. A rush was made for the life-buoys, but, before one could be thrown over, the lost man reappeared, coolly drawing himself in, hand over hand, on the foresheet, a bight of which he had carried with him in his fall.

"*Mein Gott*, der rain he stop not yet, *hein*!" was his only comment as he returned to the interrupted attack on the flopping foreboom. One would have thought that he had been gone ten hours instead of ten seconds.

After subduing and triple-reefing the threshing foresail the watch went below, but only to be called again almost immediately to take the bonnet out of the staysail, a measure made necessary by the fierce southwesterly squalls which kept winding into [5]
the now fully developed "sou'easter." Finally, as the storm showed no signs of abating, the forestay-sail was hauled to windward and, head-reaching, the yacht made good weather of the last hours of the night.

Day broke, cold and cloudy, and showed the bare, brown, rounded hills of Clemente ten miles distant on the starboard quarter. Towering, weighty seas, unbroken now by the islands, came charging up out of the southwest in billowing ranks, but so buoyant was the schooner under her shortened sail that the grey light of the morning showed the brine of the last wave that had swept her decks before she was put to head-reaching spangled in frost-like *repouseé* along the lee scuppers. Toward midday the wind shifted suddenly to northwest, and though still blowing a gale it was deemed

best to risk a little more sail in an endeavour to get away from the islands before night closed down again. Accordingly, the reefs were shaken out of foresail and forestay-sail, and under these and a close-reefed mainsail twenty-four miles were run off in the afternoon watch. At four o'clock, when the barometer touched its minimum of 29.60, a nasty swell from the northeast, due to another shifting of the wind, began to make itself felt, and, though nothing carried away, the vicious twist of the cross surges made so bad a seaway that we were forced to reef down again and ride out the night head-reaching in a southwesterly direction.

By morning of the 6th the gale had blown itself out, and at the change of watch all the reefs were untied and the yacht appeared under all plain lower sail for the first time since the evening of departure. Toward noon the clouds began to break up and [6] let filter through streaks of pale sunlight to dapple the olive-green hollows of the sea with vagrant patches of golden yellow. The chill of the air gradually melted away as the day advanced, and the opportunity to open skylights and portholes was warmly welcomed by the Mater and Claribel who had been kept to the cabin for nearly two days. A couple of the light sails were set at noon and carried until a heavy squall, working around from the northwest just before dark, was responsible for sending them down by the run. The runs to noon of the 5th and 6th, respectively, were sixty-three and ninety miles, in a course that approximated W.S.W.

Fair weather and light breezes were taken advantage of on the morning of the 7th to install a much-needed safety device in the form of a wire rail run all the way round the yacht at a height of eighteen inches above the main rail, a precaution the imperative necessity of which had been shown when one of the sailors had been thrown overboard during the storm. The yacht's rail, only two feet in height, while of some protection at the bows and stern, was almost useless amidships, where the deckhouse, separated from it by only a narrow passage, rose to an equal height. Three-quarter inch steel stanchions were set at intervals of eight feet along the rail, and through these a quarter-inch wire cable was run. The stanchions were fastened by a bolt on the under side of the rail in such a manner as to be easily removed, thus permitting the whole affair to be expeditiously taken down and stowed while in port. This simple and inexpensive precaution proved of incalculable value in insuring the safety of the decks on stormy nights, a usefulness which was put to the test many [7] times in the course of the months that followed.

Clearing skies and a smoothing sea on the third day out brought the Mater and Claribel—two pathetic bundles of rugs—up on deck, where the sun and fresh air began the slow task of reviving in them an interest in life. All day they drooped in hollow-eyed wretchedness with their white faces turned toward the paradise of a terra firma beyond the eastern horizon which every moment was receding farther away. Through all of the bright noontide and the sparkling afternoon they kept their ceaseless vigil, and even when twilight came, with a freshening wind and heavier seas, they still refused to go below. Day and night were all the same to them now, they said. An hour later a black-visaged squall came boring down out of the night ahead, and the raindrops and the driving spray began to drum a duet to the accompaniment of the rising blasts of the wind.

"You'll be shivering with cold before long if you stay here," admonished the Commodore gently; "best get up and go below now."

"There is no heat or cold any more," one muttered listlessly, and they both drew their rugs closer and curled the tighter into the curve of the transoms.

A high-headed maverick of a comber came crashing over the weather rail and swept the muffled figures into a vortex of spinning foam where a ton of green water washed about the cockpit. We sprang to help them, but they only shuddered resignedly back into the wash of the clearing scuppers and disdained to move.

"You're both soaking wet," protested the Commodore; "please go below now and get [8] into some dry clothes."

"There is no wet nor dry any more," bubbled the starboard bundle; "let us alone."

"A wave like that last one has been known to kill a strong man," ventured the Commodore weakly, at his wit's end for an argument that would have some effect. "Here's another coming now. Please—"

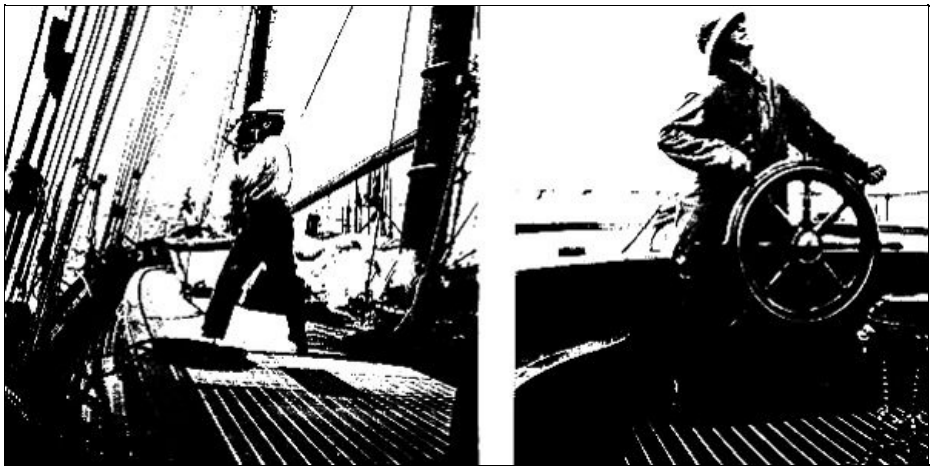
"There is no life nor death any more," broke in a sputter from the port bundle; "and even if there was we wouldn't—"

We picked up the two dripping bundles and bore them gently below just as a second comber, running wildly amuck, banged its head off against the rail and turned the cockpit into another maelstrom.

Save for shortening periods of introspective languor induced by whiffs from the galley or the clink of dishes, matters were better the next day, and the day following the sufferers were sufficiently revived to begin unpacking and—as they called it —"putting things trig and shipshape below." After that things began falling into the even routine which, save for its occasional disturbance in stormy weather, characterized our life at sea to the end of the voyage. But there never came a time

when, for the Mater and Claribel, the first three or four days out of port did not hold the menace of that chaotic state in which there was no night or day, heat or cold, wetness or dryness, and in which if there was to have been a choosing between life and death the latter would have been the less bitter portion. A Pacific yachting cruise is not all an idyllic pleasaunce to the *mal-de-mer* subject, for the ocean which has not been pacific for many hours at a time since the day it was discovered and christened does not temper its moods for the small craft. [9]

Lurline IN DRYDOCK BEFORE SAILING



"THE COMMODORE LABORIOUSLY SQUINTED OUT HIS FIRST SIGHTS"

"FULL-AND-BY"

In spite of restricted quarters, the days which followed seemed never long enough to do all we laid out for them. The Commodore was the busiest of us. To him it became evident before we were fairly out of sight of land that his pleasure cruise was going to have to be enjoyed to the accompaniment of a lot of hard work, for *Lurline's* former sailing master—whom he had shipped as mate and whom he subsequently let go in Honolulu—was absolutely incompetent as a navigator and only fairly so in the actual sailing of the yacht. This came as a very disconcerting surprise, for the man had been well recommended, and his incompetence meant that all of the work—to say nothing of the responsibility—of navigating the yacht through some of the stormiest and worst charted latitudes of the Seven Seas was to be thrown on the Commodore, whose deep-sea sailoring had been confined to a voyage around the Horn on a clipper when he was in his teens.

I have still a vivid mind picture of the Commodore when, after he had laboriously squinted out his first sights and was ready to try to figure the position of the yacht,

he disappeared into his cabin behind an armful of tables and books on navigation and slammed and locked the door. The iterated luncheon call elicited only a grunt of impatience from the depths of the sanctum, and likewise the summons to tea and dinner. The Mater's timid knocking at bedtime brought no answer at all, and we were gathered in perplexed colloquy on deck as to what the next move would be, when a booming "Got it!" thundered out from the locked cabin, and a moment later the door [10] was burst open by a pajama-clad figure, waving a slip of paper above its towel-bound head.

"Observation checks Dead-reckoning at last," cried the Commodore. "Give me some dinner."

Between mouthfuls he explained to us that the first time he worked out the sights they showed the yacht to be somewhere in Tibet. All the rest of the morning she kept turning up in various parts of Asia, Africa, Australia and Europe, the only time she was in the water being after a reckoning which gave the latitude and longitude of Victoria Nyanza. Shortly after noon the figuring in of some allowances hitherto neglected jumped the elusive craft into the Western Hemisphere, but as near as might be to a perch on the summit of Aconcagua. Tea time had her in the Klondike, and several other Canadian points were visited before Nebraska was reached at the call for dinner. An hour later she was actually in the Pacific, but floundering helplessly off the coast of Peru, from where she worked north in an encouraging fashion until a sudden jump landed her in the Colorado desert. She was perilously near being stranded on Catalina at the end of the second dog-watch, and it was the reckoning after this one—magnetic variation and a few other essentials being finally included—that checked with the Dead-reckoning and put the poor wanderer where she belonged. Day by day, navigation became simpler work after that titanic struggle, until, the morning we sighted the island of Hawaii, I saw the Commodore take and work out in ten minutes an observation which told him in which direction [11] the harbour of Hilo was located.

Besides navigating and directing the sailing of the yacht, the Commodore always stood one of the night watches and at other times held himself ready to appear on deck at any emergency. It was a stiff undertaking, having suddenly to face the prospect of eight or ten months of day and night work on a small schooner in the treacherous South Pacific; but the Commodore buckled down to it with the enthusiasm of a youngster and carried it through with flying colours, as will be seen.

My own work was confined to the nominal duties of Volunteer Weather Observer for the U. S. Hydrographic Office,—a branch of the Bureau of Equipment of the Navy—occasional tricks at the wheel, and falling into line now and then at the tail of a sheet or halyard when "all hands and the cook" failed to muster sufficient power amongst them. As Weather Observer I became for eight months a small cog in the very comprehensive system by which the Hydrographic Office is gathering data on currents, winds, clouds, waves, storms, temperatures, etc., from all of the sailed-in sea-ways of the world to assist in perfecting its monthly weather charts on which—as the result of the accumulated observations of many years—the probable meteorological conditions likely to prevail at any given point are recorded. Twice a day I took the temperature of the air and water, recorded the direction and force of the wind—the latter on a scale of 1 to 10, from a calm to a full gale—the set and height of the seas, and on a circular chart of the heavens indicated which of the various kinds of clouds—nimbus, cirrus, cumulus, etc.—prevailed at the time in each [12] of the twelve divisions into which it was divided. The difference between the position of the yacht by Dead-reckoning—that is, figured by the log and compass—and the position by Observation gave the direction and speed of the ocean current at that point. These data were set down in a little booklet, containing a page for each day of the month, which, when filled, was mailed to the San Francisco branch of the Hydrographic Office. (The monthly weather charts for the Pacific, with which we had been supplied through the courtesy of this office, proved most valuable for those latitudes which were crossed by regular trade routes, and in which, as a consequence, comprehensive observations extending over some years had been taken; but in the little-sailed latitudes of the South Pacific—many stretches of which are still unploughed by a keel for years at a time—they were, naturally, fragmentary and of little practical use.)

We often have been asked if time did not hang very heavily on our hands in the long, unbroken fifteen, twenty and even thirty day intervals between ports. Perhaps this will be as good a place as any to answer that question. For the Commodore and myself I will register an emphatic "No," while a partial list of the activities of the ladies, will, I think, answer for the balance of the passengers.

In comparison with Claribel, once those dreadful spells of post-departure indisposition had trailed away into bad memories, every one on the yacht—not excepting the cook and the Commodore—was a drone and a loafer. Her quenchless energy found expression in musical, linguistic, literary, culinary and manual activities [13] throughout the voyage. A guitar and a banjo held the boards to Hawaii, where a *eukelele* was annexed and mastered, after which, group by group and island by island, every form of native musical instrument from hollow-tree tom-toms and war

conches to coco shell rattles and shark's hide tambourines was taken up in turn and blown, beaten, shaken or twanged into yielding its full capacity of soul-stirring harmony. Most of these instruments she even rebuilt or imitated with good success. Vocally (Claribel has a really fine voice) simple ballads of the "tenderness-and-pathos, pull-at-the-heart-strings" type were favoured until our arrival at Hilo, where "Aloha-oe" and various swinging *hulas* had their turn; these giving way to plaintive Marquesan sonatas, rollicking Tahitian *himines,* lilting Samoan serenades and booming Fijian war-chants, as, one after another, these various isles of enchantment were put behind us. Her terpsichorean achievements were equally varied and multitudinous, for there were few poses in the primer postures of the *hula-hula* and the *siva-siva* that she did not imitate and embroider upon in a manner to awaken the envy of the nimble Fof-iti, the *première danseuse* of the court of King Pomare, or even of the sinuous Seuka, the peerless *taupo* who led the dance in the thatch palace of Chief Mauga at Pago-Pago.

When I mention that in addition to these things the indefatigable Claribel also set up a "native crafts" shop in the starboard lifeboat, where she produced wooden gods, shark-tooth necklaces, tortoise-shell combs (genuine shell), war clubs and axes, carved coco shells, tappa cloth and similar "tourist" curios of a character to defy detection (by us) and at a cost (figuring her time as worth nothing) effectively to defy [14]
native competition; that she read Goethe and Heine (complete) in German, and all of the 200 or more volumes in the yacht's library, including several works on navigation, ship-building and astronomy, as well; that she made herself a dozen or more tropical dresses (not native, but full-sized garments); that she mastered the technique of my typewriter and wrote a voluminous journal upon it, manifolding some scores of copies to send to friends at home; that she played the gramophone for us whenever the yacht was steady enough to allow that sensitive instrument to keep an even keel;—when I mention all of these various spheres of activity in which Claribel circulated, and then admit that I have still left the list incomplete for want of space, it will readily be seen that time had little chance to hang heavily on her nimble hands and that she had scant opportunity to learn the meaning of that hackneyed term, "the monotony of the voyage."

The Mater, when she was not being whirled in the back-wash of the comet-like wake of Claribel's multudinous activities, spent her time in quiet dignity with knitting or embroidery, reading and solitaire; but when the demon of *ennui* threatened to raise its Gorgon head in the form of an interval of idleness, the both of them would turn to and write "items of interest" for the "Ladies' Log," a diurnal record of feminine *impressions de voyage* which spared no one in the cabin, galley or fo'c'sl'—not even the editors themselves—in its trenchant columns of comment. I shall have occasion, doubtless, not infrequently to quote from its scintillant pages.

On the run from San Pedro to Hawaii our course was at first directed somewhat [15]
more southerly than the straight one to Hilo in the hope of the sooner intercepting the Northeast Trades, which, according to the government weather charts, should ordinarily be met with somewhere in the vicinity of the 27th parallel. During the morning watch of the 8th our expectations appeared to be realized. Just as the rising sun broke through a shoal of silver clouds a crackling breeze from the E.N.E. came humming over the taffrail, and, heeling the yacht over until the hissing brine curled off by her forefoot kissed the starboard rail, sent her spinning through the water at a good ten-knot gait.

"Northeast Trades!" chuckled the starboard watch to the port watch as the latter came on deck; "Northeast Trades—cheer up, the Hilo girls have got the tow-line!"

"Northeast Trades—now for a big day's run!" bellowed the mate to the Commodore, as he ordered the kites run up and the backstays set and tautened; and "Northeast Trades!" mused the cook to the bacon; and "Northeast Trades" chirped the ladies to their mirrors; and "Northeast Trades" hummed the sails to the sheets and the halyards to the shrouds. The air was vibrant with the good news, the sea was a-dance because of it, and the sun, when he awoke to a full realization of the import of what was on, broke into a smile so expansive and warm that the hovering mists of the morning took up their tents and hurried away.

This felicitous state of affairs lasted until eight o'clock, when the wind veered around through east and south, finally to settle itself comfortably so near S.S.W. that it kept the headsails flapping and the mainsails a-shiver at the mast to hold the yacht's head [16]
up to W.S.W., a good two points north of a course which, normally, we should have sailed "wing-and-wing." And that was the last we saw of the much-vaunted Northeast Trades until, five months afterwards on the run back to Hawaii from Fiji, they met us at the equator and headed us all the way to Honolulu.

For the remainder of the run the breeze, except in occasional squalls, blew steadily and with moderate force from all points between southeast and southwest. Several times, for a few hours at a stretch, it hauled around as far as W.S.W., and even west, on which occasions the booms were jibed to port and a few miles of the much-needed southing run off. A half dozen times we ran free for an hour or two when a favourable slant of wind offered, but oftener it was "full-and-by," or "by-the-wind," with the booms almost amidships in an endeavour to steal the last fraction of a point from the

obstinate turncoat of a wind. Most of the time the yacht was too close to the wind to admit of the advantageous use of the main topmast staysail, but either our large or small sail of that class, as well as the club and jib topsails, were used whenever opportunity offered.

Runs of close to 190 miles were made on the 9th, 13th and 14th, and on the 19th the best run of the passage, 198 miles, was logged. On the 16th and 21st frequent squalls and light baffling airs were responsible for the shortest runs, fifty-seven and seventy-seven miles respectively. The average for the other days was in the vicinity of 130 miles. The general direction of the currents encountered was unfavourable, the prevailing one, which had a northeasterly set of about ten miles a day, having [17] apparently hooked up with the contrary winds to cut down our southing and westing. Long before entering the torrid zone, which was done on the night of the 19th, the weather in its fitful uncertainty as well as in its mildness, savoured strongly of the tropics. There was no fog nor even the shortest periods in which the sky was completely overcast. There was only one occasion when the zenith was sufficiently obscured to make a latitude sight impossible at noonday, and no day whose morning was too cloudy for a longitude observation but which made amends with a clear afternoon.

No heavy seas were encountered after the storm of the first two days had been left astern. This was principally due to the fact that the constantly shifting wind never blew up a sea from one direction before it veered off to another and beat it down again. The resulting succession of cross swells was annoying, but never heavy enough really to be troublesome. The temperature of the water increased slowly but with almost absolute regularity as we approached the lower latitudes, while that of the air, though likewise increasing, was more variable, tending to jump up and down incessantly in the intervals of sunshine and squalls.

On the morning of the 15th a striking and unusual arrangement of clouds on the western horizon was responsible for no small excitement. A dull, dark line of stratus, hanging low above the water, was topped by a vivid, clean-lined triangle of frosty-white cirro-cumulus, producing an effect so wonderfully like a snow-capped mountain that the mate, without stopping to reflect that our position at noon of the previous day left us still almost a thousand miles from Hawaii, the nearest charted [18] point where even so much as a rock pushed above the bosom of the Pacific, burst forth with a lusty cry of "Land on the starboard bow!" The look the Commodore gave the mate when, aroused from one of his short spells of sleep, he rushed on deck to discover this nebulous "landfall," was more eloquent than vocal expression. It was my impression that nothing was said, but I find that the "Ladies' Log" records that "Some words passed between the officers, most of them going in one direction." So it is just possible that the Commodore was not able to restrain his pent-up feelings after all.

The next day Claribel set to music a verse of Henry Lawson, the New Zealand poet, which goes something like this:

> For the Southeast lands are dread lands
> To the sailor in the shrouds,
> When the low clouds loom like headlands,
> And the headlands blur like clouds;

choosing the time of the mate's watch to come out upon the quarter deck and practise it. Wolfe, blushing furiously, retreated to the lee of the foresail for shelter, not to reappear until the watch was called at noon. He could never see a white cloud near the horizon after that without looking ashamed, which was very awkward in the tropics where it was cloudy all the time; yet our real landfall came in form so similar to the cloud island which had so completely deceived that functionary a week previously that every one—including the Commodore—gazed, silent and mistrustful, and waited for some one else to shout the news. Our Dead-reckoning showed us to be [19] a hundred miles off shore at daybreak, and it seemed impossible that even the mountain tops could show so clearly at so great a distance. But as the morning sun gained strength the opaque sheets of strati along the horizon began to thin, and gradually out of the dissolving mists, clear as cut alabaster against the brilliant turquoise of the tropic sky, the funicular cone of a great snow-capped volcano took unmistakable shape, and we knew it for the mighty Mauna Kea, famous as one of the loftiest island mountain peaks in the world.

"Could we make Hilo by dark?" was now the question. The mate answered in the negative and advised proceeding under half sail and standing off-and-on till daybreak. But the Commodore, noting the strengthening breeze which since midnight had been working back into the east where it belonged, deemed the effort worth making, and accordingly ordered the sheets slacked off and more sail set. Up fluttered the big main topmast staysail, up the jib topsail and the flying jib, and up the main and fore gaff-topsails, every one of them drawing beautifully in the steady breeze that came gushing over the starboard quarter, and each after the other, as it was hoisted and filled, doing its full measure of work in forcing the yacht's lee rail deeper into the yeasty run of foam churned up by her lunging bows and driving her

faster toward her goal.

When the great turtle-backed Mauna Loa, lying to the south of and beyond Mauna Kea, was sighted at noon we had been bowling along for three hours at a gait that had brought the black lava belts under the snowline above the horizon, and below these, still dim and indistinct as the figures on ancient tapestry, the perspectives of the gently undulating lower reaches of the windward slope of the largest of the Hawaiian Islands. [20]

All through the afternoon watch the wind freshened until, from an average of ten knots in the morning, we increased to eleven in each of the hours from twelve to two, ran just over twelve knots from two to three, and but slightly under thirteen from three to four. Fortunately such sea as was running was with us, and though there was a constant smoke of spray about the bows, and though the sails, filled hard as sand bags, strained on the masts till the backstays sang like over-strung fiddles, no green water came aboard and nothing carried away.

At four-thirty the masts of ships were sighted a couple of points off the port bow, and taking in the light sails we headed up for what we knew must be Hilo harbour. Ten minutes after the course was altered a black squall which had been chasing the yacht passed astern of her and broke upon the land, its course being as clearly traceable across the velvet verdance of the rippling cane fields as across the heavens. Down the coast it raced us, gradually passing inland and leaving behind it a wake of freshness that glistened like a green satin ribbon in the last rays of the sun that was setting behind a shoulder of the towering Mauna Kea. There are several experiences in life that mark with indelible impression the pages of memory, but none to compare with the sensations that throng upon one at his first close-in sight of a tropical island.

WAIOHAE BEACH, ISLAND OF HAWAII

HULA DANCER WITH EUKALELE

As the yacht stood into the entrance of Hilo harbour, which is little more than an open roadstead partially protected by the submerged Broom Reef, the wind hauled to the south and several short tacks were necessary to make a favourable anchorage that offered a couple of cables' length to the landward of a big 12,000-ton steamer of the American-Hawaiian fleet which was loading sugar. The anchor was let go in seven fathoms of water at a few minutes before six o'clock, the log, which had been taken in at the entrance of the harbour, registering 2,430 miles from San Pedro breakwater. [21]

The praises of Hilo itself, of its kind and hospitable people, its unique and picturesque Japanese quarter, its avenues of palms and mangoes and its streams and waterfalls, have been sung so often and so well that I reluctantly forego more than the briefest mention here. Further along on the cruise there were occasions when we met with more sumptuous entertainment, saw harbours more picturesque and better protected, and mountains clothed in an even more reckless riot of tropical vegetation; but we found no place that ever seriously rivalled Hilo for first place in our hearts. It was our first love; our first tropical experience; the gateway to those mystical latitudes of enchantment, the South Pacific. During the ten days which *Lurline* lay in Hilo Bay visits were made to Kilauea, the largest active volcano in the world, to the peerless Onomea Gulch and to several interesting sugar mills and plantations. Our stay was a continuous round of *luaus* or native feasts, luncheons, dinners, teas and drives. On the yacht we entertained with several small dinners, an evening of fireworks and music, and an afternoon sail, the latter event being recorded in the irreverent "Ladies' Log" as a "Mal de Mer Party." [22]

Early in the afternoon of the 26th two of the sailors, pulling ashore to bring off some visitors, ran into a nasty combination of surf and tide rip at the bar of the Wiluki River and upset. One of the men was caught under the boat, and but for the timely assistance of a Japanese who had been fishing from his sampan nearby, would undoubtedly have been drowned. While the plucky Jap was endeavouring to secure the painter of the overturned boat, his sampan drifted inside the breakers and was on the verge of being itself upset when rescued by a tug sent out from the landing stage.

At four A. M. of March 2nd anchor was tripped and sail made for the run to Honolulu. The wind at first was light and baffling, as a result of which but twenty-one miles up the coast of the island were run off by noon. After passing Alea Point, however, the change of course made it possible to slack off the sheets, and under all plain lower sail the yacht bowled along at a nine-knot gait until well after dark. For the next three or four hours heavy squalls were encountered, but midnight showed a clear sky, with the opaque mass of Maui, looming darkly, abeam to starboard. This big island, the second in size of the Hawaiian group, is famous for its extinct volcano of Haleakala, the crater of which, ten miles in diameter and with rims that rise in places to an altitude of 10,000 feet, is believed to be the largest that has existed in any era of the world's geological history.

Morning of the 3rd showed the gaunt, forbidding cliffs of Molokai on the port beam, [23] and our glasses readily located the spot where, shut in by unscalable rock walls behind and cut off by cordons of breakers in front, the unfortunate inhabitants of the leper settlement of Kalaupapa drag out their sad existences.

The island of Oahu was sighted at nine, and shortly afterward we headed into Molokai Channel, said to be one of the deepest places in the Pacific Ocean, and, in the matter of baffling winds and waves and currents, undoubtedly one of the most treacherous and uncertain, as we were to learn on the return voyage. A strong breeze increased to a half gale by noon, and under double-reefed main and foresails the yacht made not any too good weather of it in the vicious cross tumble of waters that assailed her. About noon the smooth, round summit of Coco Head began to peer above the foam-tipped crests of the in-racing seas, and an hour later the sharp, incisive outline of Diamond Head showed clear against the northeastern skyline. As we brought its tall lighthouse abeam the beach and reef of Waikiki, with rows of white hotels and bungalows, and the odd looking crater of the Punchbowl tilted above Honolulu in the background, began to open up beyond. The Jack at the fore brought the pilot boat, rowed by a crew of stalwart, bare-chested Kanakas, out from the Head through a tortuous passage in the Reef, and, watching his chance, the pilot leapt to a footing on the ladder and clambered aboard without absorbing so much as a drop of the swinging comber which at the same instant swept and half swamped his plunging cutter.

Our next three miles to the entrance of Honolulu Harbour was over the regular track of the transpacific liners, and the unfolding panorama, like the unrolling of an ever- [24] changing piece of rich Oriental brocade, has furnished the inspiration for descriptions,—good, bad and indifferent,—by every traveller not abashed by its beauty and grandeur who has sailed that way since the time of Cook. I throw up my hands and admit the futility of adequate description at the outset; but none the less eagerly love to turn back the pages of memory to a picture—blurred and impressionistic in detail, but unfading in the brilliancy of its colours—of that leeward stretch of Oahu between Diamond Head and Honolulu as it appeared on that gusty afternoon of our first arrival, a harmony in blues and greens—the sombre indigo of the cloud-shadowed sea, the lapis-lazuli above the coils of the hidden reefs, the sheeny verdancy of the palms and bananas along the foreshore, the *verte emaraude* of the slope up to where Tantalus and the Pali were lost in their crowns of cumulus and nimbus; and above all the transparent azure of the tropic sky.

The pilot took *Lurline* in through the narrow reef which constitutes the entrance to Honolulu Harbour under foresail and jib, handling her with consummate skill in the maze of cross currents and eddies which make the passage a dangerous one even for steamers. Immediately on gaining still water we were boarded by the harbour-master, who moored us neatly and expeditiously in a natural slip in the reef called "Rotten Row," scarce a cable's length from the docks of the Pacific Mail and the Australian liners. Here the yacht lay for three weeks, provisioning and refitting for the arduous months ahead in some of the almost unsailed corners of the South Pacific, while we—the Mater, Claribel, the Commodore and myself—lived ashore, [25] enjoying to our utmost the hospitality of the gayest, richest, loveliest and most fascinating of all the Pacific island capitals.

CHAPTER II [26]

HONOLULU TO TAIO-HAIE

With 2,000 miles of salt water stretching between its windward shores and the western coast of North America, with twice that distance separating it from Asia, and with more or less open water rolling limitlessly away to the Arctic and the Antarctic, it is only natural that Hawaii should harbour a race of sea-loving people. A hundred years ago the Hawaiians, bred true to their Samoan progenitors, fearlessly embarked in their sliver-like, cinnet-sewed canoes on voyages that today would be deemed hazardous for hundred-ton schooners; and a half century or more back they were hailed throughout the Seven Seas as the most daring whalers that ever drove lances

or hurled harpoons. So in assuming at the beginning of this century the title of "The Yachting Centre of the Pacific," Hawaii is not attaining to a new distinction, but merely claiming in a modernized form a heritage of ancient days.

Honolulu, judged by the "timber and lines" of the men behind the sport there, is the peer of any yachting centre in the world, and the Royal Hawaiian Yacht Club is composed of as clean-cut, whole-souled a lot of gentlemen and sportsmen as one will meet east or west, north or south, in whatever country or under whatever burgee.

Kaleakaua, last king of the Hawaiians, was the first commodore of the yacht club, and at the time of our visit the late Prince Cupid, the Territory's representative in [27]
Washington and once in line of succession to the throne, was an active member. And only in the Yacht Club, of all Hawaiian organizations, have royalist and reactionary met on terms of frank and open friendship. The memories of the stirring days of the revolution are dimmed by the mists of more than a score of years, but still clear and distinct in island society is drawn the line of demarcation between the ever-loyal one-time adherents of Kaleakaua and those who were active in, or in sympathy with, his overthrow. Yet with the yachtsmen, even in the days of the by-no-means bloodless revolution, animosities, political, social and personal, were ever left ashore, and one saw leaders of the rival factions bending their backs and chorusing together as they broke out the same anchor, or, shoulder to shoulder and foot to foot, swayed up the same mainsail.

One of the stock stories they tell you at the yacht club is of an incident which occurred back in the days immediately preceding the revolution, a time when rumours of plots flew thick and fast and royalist and republican passed each other in highway and byway with distrustful sidelong glances, each with the fingers of his left hand raised to his hat in courteous salutation and the fingers of his right hand twitching on the butt of the stubby "forty-four" in his hip pocket. It chanced at this time that Sanford B. Dole, prominent from boyhood in island affairs and then at the head of the conspiracy to overthrow the monarchy, and Clarence McFarlane, brother of the King's Master of Ceremonies and a staunch upholder of the throne, were sailing mates on the old *Aloha*, a trim forty-foot sloop designed and built by Fife and brought out to the Islands on the deck of a sailing ship by way of the Horn. On the [28]
occasion in question *Aloha* had just cleared the passage and sheets were being slacked away for the run before the blustering Northeast Trade down to Maui. A sudden lurch of the boat caused Dole to lose his hitch on the bit, the sheet was jerked from his hand, and in lunging forward to regain his hold his patriarchal beard—nearly two feet in length and then, as now, his most distinguishing feature—whisked into the block and started to wind upon the whirling sheave. Slammed to the deck and in imminent danger of serious injury the moment his chin met the block, Dole's most frantic efforts had hardly more than checked the run of the sheet, when McFarlane leaped forward, jammed his limp fingers in above the sheave, and at the expense of a badly lacerated hand stopped its deadly rotation until Lorrin Thurston, at the wheel, brought the yacht's head to the wind and put an end to the danger. Two days later the revolution began which made Dole President, Thurston Minister to Washington, and left McFarlane and the rest of the royalists, politically, in obscurity. Yet these three still sail together now and then, and during our stay in Honolulu we of *Lurline*, both ashore and afloat, enjoyed their joint yachting reminiscences on many memorable occasions.

To read over a membership list of the Royal Hawaiian Yacht Club from its early days is to con a roster of the men who have made Hawaii what it is; and not a man who has held the tiller of the Insular ship of state and guided it through the storms that have threatened to engulf it so often during the last three decades but has owed something of the steadiness of his head and hand to the training of his yachting days. [29]

Gentlemen of the Royal Hawaiian Yacht Club, I salute you! Here's to your summer seas, and your summer winds, and your summer skies, and the summer in your hearts. May you always have—I was going to say fair weather and other things to match, but I pause in time. Yours are the natures that make fair weather out of any storm that blows. So—*here's to a sail above you, a plank beneath you, the blue-green Pacific about you, and the boisterous Trade wind blowing you on*.

Honolulu hospitality is of so wide a fame that I will not lay myself open to the charge of trying to "gild refined gold or paint the rainbow" by telling here of the details of our sojourn in what is so happily called the "Pearl of the Pacific"; and yet—there was one incident that is so characteristic of the innate courtesy and gentility of the Hawaiian host that I may be pardoned for setting it down.

It was but a few days after our arrival in Honolulu that we were invited to attend a *luau* or native feast at the home of Col. Sam Parker, a prominent planter of the Islands and a relative of the late King Kaleakaua. The affair was to be informal, we were told, and the feast was to be spread on the *lanai* or open veranda. On the strength of these assurances, and because the night was a hot and sultry one, the Commodore and I thought that our duck yachting uniforms would fulfil all the

requirements of the occasion, and proceeded to attend thus accoutred. Imagine our feelings, then, on finding the genial Colonel Parker waiting to receive us in full evening dress, and observing that every one of the hundred and fifty other guests [30] were likewise impeccably garbed. Two white doves in a flock of ravens could not have been more conspicuous or out of place, and our discomfiture was no whit lessened on being led to the head of the long table and placed in the seats of honour beside Colonel Parker's step-daughters, the lovely Princess Kawanakoa and the no less beautiful Alice Campbell. Not till we were seated did I notice that our host's place was vacant.

For ten minutes the Commodore and I munched shamedly at our *poi* and boiled seaweed and avoided the I-told-you-so glances of the Mater and Claribel who, resplendent in "full racing rig," seemed palpably endeavouring to impress the assembled company with the fact that they had no connection whatever with the two ill-at-ease nautical-looking gentlemen in the duck jackets. The Princess and her sister were the souls of wit, tact and amiability, but we continued droopy and unresponsive even under the stimuli of their spirited sallies. There was only one thing that could happen to restore our shattered equanimity, and that—thanks to the inspiration which had doubtless seized upon our genial host the moment our mis-garbed figures had hove above his horizon—was the very thing that did happen. We were just passing from *poi* in calabashes to mullet boiled in *ti* leaves, when in breezed the Colonel, with only a quickened heaving of his ample chest indicating the lightning change he had been making, garbed in the undress uniform of a Commodore of the Royal Hawaiian Yacht Club, a position which he had held during the reign of the late King Kaleakaua. It was a most gracious act of kindly courtesy, and I was not in the [31] least surprised to hear the Commodore spent most of the rest of the evening trying to persuade all the Parkers, root and branch, to get their things together and join us for our cruise in the South Pacific. In my own thankfulness, I distinctly remember offering several times to make a present of the yacht to both the Princess Kawanakoa and her sister before I pulled myself together sufficiently to realize that it was not mine to give.

The only unpleasant feature about letting go anchor in Honolulu Harbour is having to break it out again. After our week of scheduled stop had stretched out to two weeks, and finally to three, the realization that our reluctance to leave was but growing with every day that the inevitable moment was deferred brought us at length to the arbitrary setting of a sailing hour. Toward this we inflexibly directed the current of our resolutions, with the result that we really did get away in the end.

On the morning of sailing we were pleasantly surprised to receive word from the Spreckels Company—John D. Spreckels was the original owner of *Lurline*—that it was sending its big tug, *Fearless*, to tow us out of the passage and beyond the lee of the island to the breeze-swept channel. A little later a note came out from Governor Carter informing us that he was sending the Royal Hawaiian Band on the *Fearless* to pipe paeans of farewell.

We were not sailing until three o'clock on the afternoon of the 24th of March, but soon after daybreak boats commenced coming off laden with boxes and bags and parcels, remembrances from our kindly Island friends, and toward noon the tide of [32] flowers set in—these mostly in the form of *leis* or garlands to be worn about the neck. By two o'clock the cabin was like the shipping room of a department store at the climax of the Christmas rush, and the deck a cross between a fruitstand and a conservatory. Nor was the forecastle unremembered. The sailors, too, appeared to have formed attachments. As the bluff bow of the *Fearless* came nosing out into the stream from under the stern of the big *Siberia* and all hands turned to on the anchor, we were treated to the spectacle of four brawny seamen, garlanded and festooned in trailing *leis* from head to heel, bending and swaying in unison and heaving up the chain to a chantey that was nothing more or less than an improvisation from a rollicking native *hula*.

The line from *Fearless* was passed aboard and made fast, and as the anchor was broken out the white-coated band, grouped picturesquely on the forward deck of the tug, struck up the opening bars of a familiar air, and Puilani Molina, the sweetest singer in all of the Hawaiias, advanced to the rail, tossed a bright-hued *lei* upon the water and began singing that most plaintive and tenderly sweet of all the world's songs of farewell, "Aloha-oe."

"Ha-a-heo ka-u-a-ina pa—li—."

Liquid silver, the full, clear notes floated out to us across the unrippling water, and from reef to shore the whole bay fell silent as she sang through the first verse. At the opening words of the chorus a score or more of friends clustered on the hurricane deck of the tug joined in. Instantly the air was taken up by the deep-voiced [33] bandsmen; then by the deckhands and grimy stokers gathered at the door of the engine room, and then by the boatmen as they lay on their oars in the offing, until

finally it reached the shore, to come back to us in broken snatches from the throats of the crowd that lined the quays and landings.

"Aloha-oe, Aloha-oe,
  E-ke o-na-o-na no-ho i-ka li—po,
A fond embrace—A ho-i a-e-au,
  Until we meet again."

Then the screw of the *Fearless* began revolving, her tautening hawser swung *Lurline* into line astern, and out through the narrow passage in the reef we were trailed in the bubbling wake of the tug. An hour later, with Coco Head abeam and Diamond Head bearing N.E. by N., five miles distant, sail was hoisted, the tow-line cast off, and *Lurline*, wing-and-wing to a light northwest breeze, curtesied gracefully to the rising swells of the channel and took her first mincing steps in the long dance to the Marquesas.

As we filled away, dipping our flag in a farewell salute, we saw the band, which since leaving the harbour had been doing its bravest to lift the sodden pall of parting with rollicking Kanaka airs and stirring patriotic selections, again stiffen to attention, and down the wind, despairingly, appealingly, soothingly by turns, as though wafted by the tug's broadside of fluttering handkerchiefs, came for the last time the strains of "Aloha-oe." There are many forms and fashions of the sweet sorrow of parting of which the poet sings, but for a long, long pull, with a yo-heave-ho, at the heart [34]
strings, nothing like that which steals over you as you listen to "Aloha-oe" with the tow-line in the water, the odor of *Ilima leis* heavy in the nostrils, and the skyline of fair Hawaii blurring dim through a mist of tears.

The course from Honolulu to the Marquesan island of Nukahiva is about S.E. by E., but in order to run as little chance as possible of being headed by the Southeast Trades after crossing the Line, it was deemed best to lay our course a couple of points to the east of this until the latitudes of this southern wind were reached and its prevailing direction at that season more accurately determined. This course we found we had managed to approximate at the end of two weeks' sailing, but only at the expense of being constantly on the wind; then to discover that the Trades in the South Pacific blow steadily between E.S.E. and east for nearly all of the year. This meant that we had put ourselves to a good deal of unnecessary trouble and made but a moderately good run where we might have made a very speedy one by heading directly for our destination. That from Hawaii to the Marquesas is one of the few long traverses in the Pacific where the most direct course is also the fastest.

The bleak rock of Lanaii loomed abeam to windward for several hours on the night of the 24th, and morning showed the dim blur of Maui's great crater, Haleakala, blotting out the eastern sky. At noon the snowy peaks of Mauna Kea and Mauna Loa detached themselves from the fleecy cloud-racks down to E.S.E., and steadily loomed higher as the sun declined. In the first watch the wind began falling lighter, by midnight it was only coming in fluky puffs, and at daybreak *Lurline* found herself in [35]
the most windlessly somnolent patch of salt water in all the length and breadth of the Pacific, the lee of the two great 13,000-foot volcanoes that form the backbone of the island of Hawaii.

Probably no other place in the world presents such striking contrasts of meteorological conditions between almost contiguous points as those furnished by the windward and leeward sides of Hawaii. The lofty summits of its volcanoes tower so far above the raincloud line that practically no moisture whatever is able to pass to a large belt of country on the southwest side of the island, and where the annual precipitation in the vicinity of Hilo is occasionally in excess of two, and even three hundred inches, that of the Kona or leeward coast ranges from absolutely nothing to five or six. The rank tropical verdure of the windward slopes is unknown in this windless and rainless belt, and save in places where streams from the perpetual snows form thread-like oases, this leeward region is largely desert.

The windless area behind the volcanic barrier of Hawaii may be roughly defined as a triangle, sixty miles wide at its base, tapering off to an apex a hundred miles or more to leeward. It was well down toward the base of this triangle that we were trying to cross in an ill-advised effort to avoid the alternative of sailing the longer course to the windward of the island.

Morning of the 26th found us in a clear, mirror-like, unrippling sea, the surface of which, in its absence of motion, might have passed for that of a great freshwater lake. Scarcely a suggestion of a swell underran the satiny sheen of the level sea, and for all the motion of her decks the yacht might have been chocked up in a dry dock [36]
for repairs. The booms, hauled in amidship, lay as though spiked to the deck; and even the drowsy slatting of the lazy-lines and the brisk tattoo of the reef points—twin lullabies of the so-called calms of livelier seas—were unheard. The log, as though in emulation of a sounding lead, hung perpendicularly from the taffrail, its brass blades showing no less clearly in the lucent, unwinking depths than the feathery weed that fringed the motionless rudder.

Toward noon a few faint leakings of wind came edging in around the north shoulder

of Mauna Kea, and for some time we had steerage way enough to allow the yacht to drift along at a mile or so an hour, the booms out now on one side and now on the other in an effort to intercept the elusive airs. At six o'clock even these vagrant puffs had ceased, and as twilight followed the sinking of the sun behind a ruled-line horizon calm succeeded to calmer, until the sails were finally taken in and we floated, lazily waiting, on the heavily breathing bosom of the deep; for now the shadow of a swell was running and imparting just enough motion to the yacht to set her decks rocking drowsily to and fro in accord with the somnolent peacefulness of the tropic night.

The afterglow kindled and faded in pale tints of amber and amethyst and dusky olive, and almost up to the zenith a filmy mass of cirrus cloud, torn by conflicting air currents too high to make themselves at sea level, flamed up in the reflected light for an instant and then broke and scattered into bits, like paper rose-leaves showered into a shaft of red calcium. Across the still expanse of the sea east nodded to west, north nodded to south, the sky stars blinked at the sea stars, and the sea stars [37] blinked crookedly back; and under all ran the indolent ebony swells, gently rolling the yacht till she rocked like a sleepy old beldame, drowsing and catching herself and drowsing again.

Early in the middle watch a light breeze stole out again from landward—this time apparently coming from the Mauna Loa slope of the island—and by daylight we were twenty miles nearer the southerly deadline of the windless triangle. Then the puffs began falling light again, and for an hour or two we drifted without steerage way ten or a dozen miles off the entrance of the beautiful little bay of Kealakekua. With eyes straining through our glasses some of us fancied that we discerned the outlines of a tall shaft of white shining through the brown boles of the coconut palms, and told each other that we were gazing on the monument that marked the spot where Captain Cook, after innumerable hair-breadth escapes in every important island group of the Pacific, fell under the clubs of the warlike Hawaiians, fighting no less desperately to save the lives of his comrades than for his own.

One would have to cruise the Pacific for a lifetime to begin to come to an adequate appreciation of what the Great Navigator did, for the more one sees the more stupendous seems the sum of his achievement. From where the sub-Arctic waters wash the shores of Cook's Inlet, Alaska, to Cooktown in the lap of the Antipodean tropics, and Mount Cook raising its glacier-seamed sides above the bleak bluffs of New Zealand, there is hardly an important island whose strand his tireless foot did not press, and scarce a lump of coral rearing its head above the restless Pacific surges that his keen eye did not sweep. Nasty sailing, you think it, in these days of [38] charts and steamers, when the lifeboats are swept from the hurricane deck off Cook's Inlet on your run to Nome; and "A frightful hole!" you say, when your "N.Y.K." steamer anchors every night as she feels her way along down the Great Barrier Reef; and every minute is your last, perhaps you think, when your "A and A" steamer is hove to in a Fijian hurricane, or you're locked in the cabin of your "A.U.S.N." packet in a spell of "southeast" weather between Dunedin and Sydney. Distinctly bad, you think all this; you on your 6,000-ton steamer that is equipped with every precautionary and emergency device known to science, with a powerful beacon on every headland and the bottom of the sea mapped out like a block of lower Broadway. Just try and imagine, then, if you please, what these same places must have been to Cook, who spent years among them in crazy old wooden ships, scarcely a one of which but ended by piling up on some rocky shore or coral beach. Columbus, Vespucci, and the rest of the deep-water navigators, simply turned the noses of their ships west and sailed till they got to somewhere—and then sailed back again. Cook spent years with a man at the masthead looking for hidden reefs, and with the sounding lead going every hour of the twenty-four.

In my own mind there are grave doubts as to whether any of us really saw the Cook monument during that long forenoon in which we lay becalmed off the leeward coast of Hawaii—in fact, I have since been told that it is not visible from the sea at all; but the sight of Kealakekua—yes, even at a distance of a dozen miles or more—is ample excuse for this slight tribute to one to whom no man that has ever sailed the Pacific [39] will deny the title of "The Greatest Navigator of History."

Captain James Cook, sailor, diplomat and gentlemen:—Here's long and unbroken rest for your watch below in that quiet haven where you let go Life's anchor in the shadow of the towering Mauna Loa and within sound of the lap of the waves of that Pacific, so many of whose tracks you were the first to sail. Sleep sound, Master Mariner, for your work is done; and may your dreams bring you the messages of gratitude that arise from the hearts of those whose ways have been made easier and safer because of the dangers you braved and the sacrifices you made. Accept this acknowledgment of the obligation of one of those to whom you showed the way, James Cook.

A fluky three to five-knot breeze drew in from the E.S.E. about mid-day, every puff of

which was taken advantage of to struggle on out of the lee of the blanketing island. Freshening slightly after nightfall, it carried us along at a little better than a four-mile gait during each hour of the first watch, near the end of which it hauled ahead and forced the yacht off to southwest until enough southing had been run to allow her to be put about on the other tack without danger of butting her nose into the volcanic bluffs of Hawaii.

Shortly after midnight the mate awakened the Commodore to report a reflection on the sky off to the northeast, an announcement which brought every one tumbling out on deck in short order. There was the reflection, surely enough; a dull red glare on our port quarter that shone and dulled and shone again like a blowed-on ember. The [40] light was on a line with the point where the opaque mass of Hawaii blotted out the tail of the Great Bear, and because there was no sign of fire on the water we had about arrived at the conclusion that the glare might come from a ship or sugar mill burning on the windward side of the island, when the reflection suddenly flared from a dull cherry to a vivid flame-red, immediately to be quenched in tumbling masses of smoke or steam which went shooting into the air as though driven by the force of a mighty explosion.

"She's a steamer!" yelled the mate. "Them's her boilers a-bustin'!" Whereupon we all fell to speculating as to what particular steamer it might be. And it was not until six or seven minutes later when a great, deep-toned reverberation reached us—a sound so mighty that all of the steamers in the Pacific blowing up together would have passed unnoticed beside it—that light finally burst in upon us and we broke out in chorus with "Kilauea! in eruption again."

The actuality of this eruption—only a slight one as it chanced—we verified six weeks later when our file of San Francisco papers was received in Tahiti. In referring since to this most spectacular piece of volcanic pyrotechnics, we have always done so in the words of Claribel, then a recently emancipated prisoner from the grip of *mal de mer*. In the sentiently suffusing light the sea rolled a dark pit of ox-blood and the heavens arched a vault of purple-black studded with pale emeralds, the stars. The half-filled sails were hangings of amethyst silk, and the masts lances of fire grounded in patches of living flame where the polished brass work threw back the rosy glow of the Northeast. [41]

"Look! look!" cried the sufferer, clapping her hands with excitement as the twisting pillar on the eastern flank of Mauna Loa took the momentary seeming of a colossal figure in the throes of a serpentine. "Isn't it worth being sea-sick all the way around the world to see? There's Madame Pelée dancing a *hula*! It's Kilauea's 'Aloha' to the *Lurline*!"

And "Kilauea's 'Aloha' to the *Lurline*" it has always been to us since.

Light and baffling southerly breezes made progress slow for the first two days after clearing the calm patch in the lee of Hawaii, and when on the 29th these suddenly straightened out into a blustering easterly blow the immediate necessity of proceeding under shortened canvas offset the advantage of the long-desired wind. For two days the yacht was close-hauled on a course which approximated southeast, bobbing up and down to the seas and making only moderately good weather under double-reefed mainsail and foresail.

Sea and wind were still heavy at noon of the 31st, but the latter had by then come up to northeast, allowing us to sail a point or two free on a course of S.E. by E. Under all plain lower sail we pounded into the hard-heaving seas all afternoon and through the night of the 31st, the decks constantly smothered in volleys of spray and more than a little green water finding its way aboard in some of the heavier plunges, yet averaging close to eight miles an hour all the time. Day broke on a sea of wind-tossed pampas plumes, the onslaughts of waves beneath which were responsible for a substantial shortening of sail when the morning watch was called. At ten o'clock, [42] with the glass down to 29.70 and the wind increased to half a gale, the canvas was still further reduced, leaving the yacht doing a comfortable six knots under double-reefed mainsail and foresail, and with the jib taken in and the bonnet out of the foresail.

For two days, with the glass hovering about 29.60 and the wind blowing fiercely but steadily from E.N.E., we jolted along, full-and-by, at from five to seven knots an hour, logging 129 miles on the 2nd of April and 159 miles on the 3rd. By this time the torn, fussy seas of the first day of the gale had lengthened out to viciously-running combers, with a resistless power under their swinging upheaves and a decided sting in the blows of their hissing crests. The big third reef was tied into the mainsail at dawn of the 4th, after a top-heavy wall of reeling water had bumped its head on the starboard boat in an apparent endeavour to salute the rising sun, leaving that indispensable adjunct to our life-saving service wallowing in its slackened lashing with a started plank. This, with a stove-in galley sky-light, made up about the sum total of the damage inflicted by what would have been a really troublesome storm if there had been any land about to look out for. In the open waters of the Pacific the hardest kind of a straight blow is of little moment to a staunch schooner, even though —like the *Lurline*—it may have been built as much for racing as cruising. Where the

real danger lurks for any kind of a craft is in the twisting hurricanes and the sudden and terrific squalls which attack unexpectedly among the islands. At sea, as on land, most of the menace is in the unforeseen, striking instances of which truth we had ample opportunity to observe before the voyage was over. [43]

The wind began abating in strength shortly after daybreak of the 4th, and during the day the yacht was gradually restored to all plain sail. We must have passed under the sun at about 6° N. late in the forenoon of this day, for it inclined to the north when the noon sight showed our latitude to be 5° 57'. The air and water which had been showing a diurnal increase of temperature of about half a degree, Fahrenheit, registered 81° and 79°, respectively. There was no suggestion of oppressiveness in the air and a windsail was not necessary to keep the cabin fresh and cool.

In the early morning of the 5th the wind began to fall light and fluky, finally resolving itself into a tumultuous series of squalls, the last of which, though it drove the yacht off to the west of south at a terrific pace, fortunately abated before anything carried away. When it had passed the wind settled itself contentedly into E.S.E., from which point it continued amiably to purr—except on three notable occasions—through most of the four months which we spent south of the Line. We had literally run from the Northeast to the Southeast Trades in a single squall.

As we neared the Line the only indication of equatorial weather was in the ever-livelier butterfly chases of the sunshine and showers. The winds, except for increasingly fierce squalls which we began experiencing regularly in the early watches, were fresh and steady from E.S.E., and so far as any signs of being in the hated "horse-latitudes" were concerned, we might have been sailing through a week-long September afternoon off the Golden Gate. Considering the freshness of the [44] wind, the sea was very light indeed, and we were able to carry most of the kites to good advantage as long as there was sufficient daylight to permit watching the approach of the ever-imminent squalls.

On the 7th, at three o'clock, in longitude 139° 50', we crossed the equator, just two weeks to an hour after weighing anchor in Honolulu. Air and water were slightly cooler than for some days—each registering 79°, Fahrenheit—and so fresh was the steady breeze from the southeast that we stood uncovered in the sun at noonday and in the shade of the sails felt no discomfort in a rug.

By this time we had made easting sufficient to place us well to the windward of our destination in any probable shift of wind. Sheets were slacked off, therefore, and freed from the griping luff under which she had chafed almost incessantly for the last fortnight, *Lurline* slipped away on a course of due south at a gait which ran up close to 190 miles on the log for the day ending at noon of the 9th. At this time, with 240 miles—part of it down a narrow island channel beset with swift currents and variable winds—remaining to be covered before we would begin to open up the bay of Taiohaie, Nukahiva, all practicable canvas was crowded on in an endeavour to make port the following day. Eight and nine knots we made all afternoon; good speed considering the force of the wind, yet hardly what might have been desired under the circumstances. But the breeze was stiffening as twilight came on, and realizing that failure to make anchorage before another evening would mean a night of standing off-and-on in a scant sea-way and uncertain winds, the Commodore, for the first time [45] since entering those capricious latitudes, allowed the light sails to be carried into the darkness.

Sailing like a witch in the freshening breeze, *Lurline* reeled off a shade under twenty miles in the second dog watch, and 10.6, 10.8, 11.3 and 11.8 were successively run up on the log as the hours of the first watch slipped away. The night was balmy soft, the breeze a stream of warm milk, and in the air was discernible that faint, indefinable odour of something which heralds the presence of land to nostrils grown sensitive from inhaling for weeks the untainted atmosphere of the open sea. The heavens, save for a few hurriedly marching squads of the ever-shifting cirro-cumulus, were clear and unobscured, and the easy-running swells were as gentle as the night itself.

The yacht continued to reel off the miles like a liner during the early hours of the middle watch, but toward morning the appearance of several menacing turrets of cloud up to windward was the signal for the hurried taking in of the light sails and an easing off of the sheets. For a while it appeared that all of the three rapidly advancing squalls were going to pass astern of us, and so, in fact, two of them did. The third one took an unexpected spin at the last moment and came charging up after the yacht like a mad bull. There was just time hastily to furl the jib and station men at the fore and mainsail halyards before it broke upon the yacht with the explosive roar of a bursting bomb, and the timely letting go of those halyards as she hove down before the terrific force of the wind undoubtedly saved some canvas if nothing more.

The mainsail was checked half way in its run and the very considerable portion of it [46] that fell overside went hopping and skipping along on the water like a great wounded bird as the yacht smoked away before the squall. For ten minutes, perhaps, we ran thus, half smothered in air and water; then the rain began falling, the wind fell

lighter, and the squall, so far as we were concerned, had spent itself. Five minutes later the main boom had been hauled inboard, the sail hoisted, and *Lurline* was gliding off down to south'ard no whit worse for her rough raking. The main topmast staysail was run up when the morning watch was called, and dawn found her doing a comfortable nine knots an hour with the situation well in hand.

As the sun rose the somewhat vague land smell which we had noted during the night increased to a delicate but unmistakable odour of flowers, a perfume which we later learned is due to the presence in the air of the blown pollen of the *cassi*, a low bush-like plant which carpets the islands of the Marquesas and blooms perennially. So pungent and far-reaching is this odour that it has become a common saying with trading captains who sail these latitudes that you can smell the Marquesas farther than you can see them, a statement which is certainly literally true anywhere to the leeward of the group.

Shortly after eight o'clock the shattered peaks of the island of Uahuka were sighted dead ahead, and at nine the course was altered to S.W. by W. After an hour or so the dim outline of Nukahiva began taking shape in the dissolving mist, and when the scarped and buttressed summit of Cape Maartens came edging out from behind the abrupt heads to north'ard, we had something definite to go by, and promptly [47] trimmed in sheets and headed up to clear a forbidding point of black basalt which our Directions told us jutted out into the sea to cut off the surges from the inner loop of the bay of Taio-haie.

Along the rugged coast we slipped, now close in to a sinister dirk-like point which reached out to divide and scatter the onrushing seas, and again standing across the opening of a bay or inlet which receded to a snowy beach backed by a lucent lagoon and a chasm full of unfathomable verdure. Beyond the furrowed brow of Cape Maartens a narrow bay, well protected and smooth as a mirror, ran inland beyond eye-scope, piercing the island like a sliver of silver. From where it disappeared in a dense mass of palms and pandanus a high-walled valley wound back among the serried ribs of the mountains, apparently to end abruptly against a lofty cliff, the sheer side of the towering backbone range of the island.

Here and there up the valley patches of dancing light, shining through the sombre green of the riot of trees and creepers, told of a swiftly-running stream, and down the face of the great cliff, literally leaping from the clouds to the earth in a single bound, was a waterfall. Lucent, glittering green it must have been up where it began its dizzy plunge in the heart of the murky mass of drifting nimbus which veiled its source, but white—snow-white—it gleamed where it appeared under the dark cloud line to fall in a brocade of shimmering satin into the misty depth below. We did not learn about it until the next day; but this fall was Typee Fall, the stream was Typee River, and the valley was Typee Valley, the scene of that most idyllic of all South Sea [48] idylls, Herman Melville's "Typee."

We never attained nearer than five miles to the great fall during our stay in the Marquesas, and accurate figures regarding its height were not obtainable. Findlay's Directory gives it at 2,165 feet, which is probably too much; but the fact remains that it is one of the highest waterfalls in the world, and without a rival on any island whatever.

At four in the afternoon we doubled the gaunt black point toward which we had been steering for some hours, suddenly to find the panorama of the beautiful bay of Taio-haie unfolding before us. Pursuant to the instructions in the Sailing Directory, we ran up the Jack to the fore and stood off across the entrance waiting for the pilot, without whom, so we read, there was a heavy penalty for endeavouring to enter. Then we went about and ran back past the little island at the end of the point, all without awakening a sign of life along the drowsy shore where nestled the village. After repeating this manœuvre twice more, the Commodore ordered the sheets slacked off and gave the man at the wheel his bearing for the first leg of the run in.

"Perhaps the pilot has overslept on his *siesta* today," he remarked dryly; "and if that's the case our anchor gun may wake him up."

We went in neatly and expeditiously. "Keep the eastern outer bluff on the starboard," read the Directions, "rounding the island off it within a cable's length. All the eastern shores of the bay are steep-to and free from danger, and the wind will always lead off." And that was about all there was to it. We let go the anchor a few minutes after [49] five, a quarter mile off the rickety wharf, in seven fathoms. Our time from Honolulu was just over seventeen days, the quickest passage of which there was any record. Had we sailed a course to avoid the windless area in the lee of Hawaii, and then headed directly for Nukahiva it is probable that the run would have been made in the vicinity of twelve or thirteen days.

The firing of our little signal cannon might have been the setting off of a mine under the village, so electric was the effect. Dark forms sprang up from nowhere and began darting hither and thither and yon, and following the appearance of a corpulent figure in pajamas at the door of what seemed to be the official residence, the tri-colour of France went jerking up to its flag-pole. Down the front street shortly came lumbering a ponderous figure in a brass-bound helmet and white uniform, followed

by a trailing sword and a half dozen natives carrying oars on their shoulders. Two other white men, also white-clad and sun-helmeted, joined the procession as it passed what appeared to be a trading store, and the three proceeded together down to the wharf and put off in a big whaleboat.

Driven by the erratic but powerful strokes of the big natives, the boat was quickly alongside the yacht, and the official-looking gentleman came puffing up the ladder which had been hastily lowered for him. He was Brigadier Bouillard, the Harbour Master, Warden of the Prison and Chief of Police, he announced between gasps in broken English, and the other gentlemen following him over the rail were, respectively, Mr. Cramer, a German trader, and Mr. McGrath, a Canadian trader. Of [50]
the latter, one of the most interesting characters we met in the course of our whole cruise, we were destined to see much during our stay in Nukahiva.

"By the way," Monsieur le Capitaine, "where's your pilot?" asked the Commodore after the large official had examined our papers and admitted the yacht to practique. "Hasn't he overslept this afternoon?"

"Zee pilate! *Mon Dieu*, he ees no"—And at this point, with wild rollings of the eyes and swift gestures of uncertain import, the Brigadier relapsed into French so voluble and excited as to prove quite unintelligible to our untrained ears.

"The Brigadier," explained the blond Cramer in his exact Teutonic English, as the excited Frenchman paused for breath, "is trying to tell you, in effect, that the last pilot but one was killed and eaten by relatives of a trading schooner's crew who were drowned when that boat was piled up on the beach because the pilot had taken too much absinthe and mistook a firefly on the bowsprit for the light on the wharf. A similar fate also overtook his successor, apparently for no other reason than that the office had become an unpopular one with the natives. Since then," he added, "the government has been unable to find any one willing to accept the position under any inducements."

"Hardly to be wondered at," mused the Commodore. "But, I say, can any of you gentlemen tell me if this—er—antipathy of the Marquesan natives toward pilots extends to skippers who bring in their own ships? It's a little late for working out of the harbour before dark but the wind's fair most of the way and, anyhow, I'd rather [51]
be drowned than eaten."

The natives had always respected visiting yachts, they asseverated earnestly, and—as we learned later—truthfully. The Commodore took courage on hearing this and decided to chance it for a day or two. It was not until our arrival in Tahiti, a fortnight later, that we learned that perhaps the forbearance of the natives in the matter of visiting yachts may have been partly due to the fact that, previously to *Lurline's* coming, only three craft of that class had ever been to the Marquesas.

In the "Ladies Log" of this date I find the following entry:

"We sailed in ourselves and fired off our signal gun to wake up the pilot. Found out shortly that nothing of less calibre than Gabriel's Trumpet would have been equal to that task."

CHAPTER III [52]

THE MARQUESAS TODAY

It is a strange anomaly that the Marquesan, by long odds the fastest disappearing of the Polynesian races, is made up of individuals of incomparably finer physique than those of any other of the islands of the South Pacific. Of a dozen natives picked at random from the beach of Taio-haie, there would probably be not over three or four who would not show more or less of his dark head above the end of a six-foot tape, and the breadth and muscling of each would be in proportion. The women are likewise of good size and figure, and, when undisfigured with tattooing, of considerable beauty as well. Both sexes accomplish prodigious feats of walking, swimming and rowing, and both invariably bear up remarkably under hardship and privation such as that incident to being cast away to sea for weeks in an open boat.

As a matter of fact, the startling decrease in the population of the Marquesan group, except for occasional epidemics, is due to scarcity of births and a lack of vitality in the children rather than to an abnormal number of deaths among the adults. This condition is largely traceable to the existence of a number of more or less active forms of blood disease introduced by the whites of the Pacific whaling fleet of half a century ago, and to certain vicious practices in connection with the prevention of child-bearing prevalent in the over-populous days of the group. Cannibalism and intertribal wars have frequently been assigned as potent factors in the decimation, [53]
but it is notable that neither has had such effect in the Solomon or New Hebridean groups, where both are prevalent today.

The early explorers estimated the population of the island of Nukahiva at from

30,000 to 40,000. In 1804 there was believed to be not over 18,000 on the island, and in 1836 but 8,000. A French census in 1856 enumerated but 2,960, which number had fallen to 800 by 1880. In 1889 Stevenson found Taio-haie a lively village with a club, barracks, hotel, numerous stores and a considerable colony of French officials; Hatiheu and Anaho were villages of upwards of a hundred natives each. At the time of our visit in the *Lurline* there remained in Taio-haie but three French officials, a single German trader, three or four missionaries and a native population just short of ninety. The villages of Hatiheu and Anaho had but a few over a hundred inhabitants between them.

In the veins of the Nukahivan of today course two strains of foreign blood of widely diverse origin. During the latter part of the 16th, and for most of the 17th century, the island was a rendezvous for a large colony of buccaneers who had chosen that location for the advantages it gave them in preying upon the Spanish galleons plying between Peru and the Isthmus of Panama, as well as in raiding settlements on the intervening coast of South America. These pirates, after some years of fighting, brought the natives of the Taio-haie and Hatiheu districts into a state of complete subjection, while their relations with the tribes of the interior appeared to have been in the nature of an armed neutrality. The subject natives were employed at sea as [54] sailors and boatmen, and on land as gardeners and herdsmen. The cattle, pigs and goats brought to the island by the freebooters must have been the progenitors of the wild animals of these species which abound there today. With the natives of the interior some trading for food was carried on at times when the drought on the coast made short crops of coconuts, breadfruit and bananas.

When the streams of Incan gold from Peru began to run low and buccaneering became unprofitable as a consequence, the Nukahivan pirate colonies gradually changed back to native villages. After the last of the strangers had died, their descendants, through intermarriage with pure-blooded natives, reverted little by little to the predominating type, until the evidences of the blood of white men in their veins survived only in straighter hair and features, harder eyes, a sharper and more uncertain temper and an increased arrogance. They were a handsomer people physically, and a keener one mentally than the original Marquesan, but withal a race whose morals were in rags and tatters.

For some decades in the middle of the last century Nukahiva was the main base of a large portion of the Pacific whaling fleet. Ships spent months at a time at Taio-haie, refitting and reprovisioning, and the island gained many new and undesirable inhabitants through desertions from their crews. The worst epidemic of smallpox ever recorded in the South Pacific was started in Nukahiva by a maroon from a whaler, and the present-day prevalence of blood and skin disease is directly traceable to similar sources. The women were carried off to the ends of the earth on the whalers and few indeed of them ever found their way back; for the good of future [55] generations it would have been better had none of them done so.

The moral laxity of the Marquesan of the present day is undoubtedly a legacy of these two occupations of the principal island by the lowest of the sea's riff-raff, pirates and whalers. In Nukahiva chastity is quite unknown to any class, and a century of work on the part of the French missionaries has left little mark upon the morals of the people. They are prone to throw themselves at every opportunity into the most unlicensed debauchery, and they know no law save that of the appetites. The feasts of the present generation of Nukahivans—aside from cannibalism, which is still practised whenever the chances for escaping detection are favourable—are howling orgies of two and three days' duration, their riotous excesses uninterrupted even by intervals of singing and dancing, as in Samoa, Tahiti and Fiji. The song and the dance, which represent to the Polynesian about all that religion, music and the drama combined do to us, have died out in the Marquesas even faster than the people.

The Marquesans of a century ago were the most completely and artistically tattooed people in the Pacific, and the practice is carried on among them to a certain extent even today. The really fine pieces of work, however, such as the famous right leg of the late Queen Vaekehu over which Stevenson waxed so enthusiastic, are confined entirely to the very old, and, what with wrinkles, deformities and the wear and tear of time, these have lost most of their original sharpness of colour and outline. None of the new generation appears to have the fortitude to endure the exquisite pain [56] incident to having a whole limb picked out in a network of geometric design or the face barred and circled like a coarse spider's web.

Women are rarely tattooed at all now, and most of the young men are satisfied with a broad band of solid black—not unlike a highwayman's mask in effect—which reaches across the face from ear to ear, giving to their never overly-mild countenances an expression of amazing ferocity. That the art, and a certain pride connected with it, are not yet lost to the Marquesans, however, was amusingly shown by an incident which occurred the day after *Lurline's* arrival in Taio-haie. On this occasion, in testing some newly-opened shells, we fired ten or a dozen shots in rapid succession from the yacht's brass signal cannon. At the first report a bevy of Marquesan damsels, who had come off to sell sandalwood and shark-tooth necklaces, stampeded

to their canoes and could not be induced to return until all activity in the firing line had ceased.

Then they all clambered gleefully aboard again, and one of them so far forgot herself as to sit down on the deck and lean languidly back with her plump brown shoulder against the sizzling hot breech of the signal gun. That was the last languid movement she made for some time. Came the sharp hiss of singed flesh and then, with the scream of a frightened wildcat, the girl cleared the low rail as though thrown from a catapult, swam half a hundred feet under water, to go lunging straight off for the shore the instant her head rose above the surface.

Now it chanced that across the breech of our little cannon was engraved the name "LURLINE," picked out in ornamental scrolleries, and beneath it, in rich reposé, the [57]
figure of a puffy dolphin in the act of gulping down a buxom mermaid. Such of this bas-relief as had come in contact with the fair Marquesienne's shoulder left its mark, which striking design was no sooner seen by the tribal tattooist than he needs must perpetuate what he feared, no doubt, was but an ephemeral impression.

So fishbone needles and black gum were hastily brought into play, and several days later, when the inflammation had subsided sufficiently to enable her to be about, the proud and grateful young beauty brought the decoration off for us to see. "RLINE" we read in wobbly reversed letters, and beneath, floundering desperately across a shoulder blade, a stub-tailed mermaid could be discerned in the act of disappearing into the impressionistic but unmistakable head of a dolphin. A half dozen of the now distinguished young person's girl friends accompanied her, and every one of the envious minxes persisted in embracing, leaning against and sitting upon that now cool but still ornamental signal-gun breech in anxious endeavours to get patterns of their own to take back to the village tattooist.

But the cunningest picture ever executed upon the body of any Marquesan, living or dead, pales to insignificance when compared to the amazing hieroglyphic record depicted upon the skin of a living Marqueso-American, John Hilyard. Readers of Stevenson may recall the tattooed man, who was the first resident of Taio-haie to discover the appearance of the strange schooner in the introductory chapter of "The Wreckers." A bit of the history of that strange character is also hinted at, I believe, [58]
but, according to the present-day gossip of the "beach" of Taio-haie, it is all wrong. For the real story I am indebted to our friend, McGrath, the trader of Hatiheu, who once nursed Hilyard through a spell of fever and attained to more of that queer outcast's confidence than any one else on the island. From Hilyard himself—now a man of about seventy, with his grotesquely figured body fully clothed and as much as possible of his face obscured with a bushy beard,—absolutely nothing can be learned, and I was considered to have done remarkably well in holding him during a ten-minute discussion of shark baits. I will outline here in a single paragraph a story which, measured in pangs of soul and body, would tax the compass of a modern novel adequately to depict.

Deserting from the American whaler, *Nancy Dawson*, when that ship was careened at Anaho in the 60's for calking, was a raw youth of twenty, who had run away from his home in a California mining camp and signed on in San Francisco. White men were scarce in the Marquesas, and after working for a while in a trading store in Taio-haie, he shortly became supercargo on a trading schooner, and at length the owner of a concession and boats of his own. It was at the height of his prosperity that he met and fell captive to the charms of Mariva, who was reputed beautiful and undoubtedly was coquettish, as the sequel shows. She accepted Hilyard's presents, but told him that, while she liked his personality well enough, she detested the sight of his white skin. Let the village tattooer remedy that and perhaps—The love lorn wretch was off to put himself under the needle before she had finished. Mariva dropped in [59]
occasionally upon the session of torture which followed and, now by criticism, now by approval, urged on the flagging artists to renewed effort. When geometric whorls and bands and parallelograms were exhausted, Mariva herself dipped a dainty forefinger in the black *kuki*-soot gum and began improvising designs. "That broad chest was made by nature to support a clump of bananas." "What could be daintier than some fat pigs gorging on mangoes in the hollow of that back?" She and an invited bevy of friends sang *himines* to drown Hilyard's groans while he was conscious, and when he fainted with the pain and lay in a stupor they seized spare needles and tried their own hands at tattooing. At the end of the second day, with designs two and three deep all over the body of the unconscious trader, they desisted, less from exhaustion than from a lack of further skin that would take an impression. Hilyard lay in a swoon all night, and in the morning was carried to the mission house with a raging fever. That night the faithless Mariva eloped with a half-caste missionary preacher, took possession of one of Hilyard's schooners, sailed it to the Paumotos, where they ultimately set up in trading on their own account and, as far as any one knows, lived happily ever afterwards. That Hilyard did not die from blood-poisoning was miraculous. As it was he hovered between life and death for a month, finally to pass from the kindly care of the missionaries so broken in mind and body that he was never again able to return to his trading business. The honest French Residente disposed of Hilyard's interests for a sum sufficient, when placed in

[60]

a bank at Tahiti, to give the unlucky victim of love's madness enough to live comfortably upon, and for the last forty years he has done just that and nothing more, just existed—an object of scorn to the natives and of pity to the whites—upon the "beach" of Taio-haie.

Scenically the Marquesas are incomparably more beautiful than any of the other island groups of the Pacific, Hawaii not excepted. It is usual to hear the traveller who has covered Polynesia by the steamer route speak in similar terms of the Society Islands—especially Moorea and Tahiti—Samoa and Fiji, whichever may have chanced to tickle his fancy, quite losing sight of the fact that the route of his boat has been laid out along the lines of commerce irrespective of scenery. Not one steamer—save an occasional gunboat—goes to the Marquesas in a decade, the mail of the islands being carried to and from Tahiti every three or four months in a trading schooner. In the last twenty years scarce that number of strangers have visited the group, and a dozen or more of these came on the only three yachts that have ever found their way there. How little, therefore, the average South Sea tourist really knows of these islands may readily be seen.

The rock walls and cliffs of Moorea would be lost in the shadows of the great 4,000-foot spires that tower above the bay of Hatiheu; the 600-foot fall of Faatua, in Tahiti, might be shut from sight in the spray of the 2,000-foot fall of the Typee in Nukahiva; and the great cliff of Bora-Bora, the creeper-tapestried walls of the bay of Pago-Pago and the great gorge of the upper Rewa, in Fiji, could be hidden away in corners of the stupendous Atouna valley of Hiva-oa so effectually that they would pass unnoticed. [61]

In the matter of riotous tropical growth, the Marquesas, being nearer the Line than any other of the South Sea islands that may lay claim to scenic beauty, have also all the best of the comparison. Nukahiva is an almost impenetrable jungle of lantana, burao, acacia, banana, guava and scores of other trees and bushes, nearly all of them flowering and fruit bearing. Indigenous to the island is the *cassi* plant, a thick shrub which covers patches of the lower hills in dense masses and which blossoms out in tiny yellow balls of almost solid pollen. The latter has a perfume of most penetrating sweetness, and in flowering time is blown by the Trades many leagues to the leeward of the island. This is the odour which I mentioned that we noted in the air while the yacht was still a hundred miles or more from land. Beating into the incomparable bay of Hatiheu at night with this perfumed breeze sweeping the deck, the wake a comet of golden-green light and the surf bursting in vivid spurts of phosphorescence along the silver-bright band of the beach, is to anticipate the approach to the mystical Islands of the Blest.

At a number of widely-separated points in the South Pacific—notably at Easter Island, Tahiti and Kusaie, of the Caroline group—are to be found great images of stone, the ruins of huge temples and other evidences of the existence of prehistoric races who, at least as builders, were far in advance of the Polynesian of today. French scientists had noted that in the Marquesas some of the abandoned house-foundations or *pai-pais*, contained far larger blocks of stone than any of those of later construction, but not until very recently was it known that there were works in the group not unworthy of comparison with the stone gods of Easter Island. [62]

Just previous to our visit to Nukahiva, our friend McGrath, the trader of Hatiheu, while following up a wounded boar in the Typee Valley, chanced on an ancient Marquesan "Olympus," containing nine large stone images in a comparatively good state of preservation. Though this most interesting discovery lies within 300 yards of the main trail up the Typee Valley, no native on the island, either by actual knowledge or through tradition, has been able to shed light on its origin, purpose or probable age.

McGrath conducted our party to his "Goddery," as he facetiously called it, when we were crossing the island to pay a visit to the Queen of Hatiheu, and the several films which I exposed in a driving rainstorm resulted in what are undoubtedly the first photographs of these strange Marquesan images. The ancient shrine—for such it must have been—is situated on a terrace in the steeply-sloping side hill, and though the underbrush thins out somewhat in its immediate vicinity, the overarching bows of *maupé* and *hau* trees form so dense a screen that the heavens are completely obscured. Though it was full noonday when we visited the place, the light—partly, no doubt, on account of the rain—was as dim as that of an old cathedral, and my films, which were exposed four minutes each, would have turned out much better with ten.

The images, which had been set at regular intervals around an open stone-paved court, were from six to eight feet in height and averaged about three feet in thickness. We estimated each to contain from forty to sixty cubic feet of hard basaltic stone, the weight of which must have been several tons. As raising so great a weight up the sixty or seventy per cent. incline from the valley would have been almost impossible, and as no outcroppings of stone of similar nature appeared nearby, we were forced to the conclusion that the material for the images must have been quarried out at some point higher up the mountain and laboriously lowered to the terrace prepared for them. [63]

"All of the images were covered with moss"

"A hardened old offender who preferred white man to native meat"

All of the images were covered with an inch or more of solid moss, and on one which I photographed it was necessary to scrape some of this away to bring out the features. The figures were much alike in design, and, in a general way, of a not unremote resemblance to the Buddhas of the ancient Javan temples. Eleven of them were still in their original positions; one was blocked half way in its fall by the trunk

of a *hau* tree, and one was prostrate and overgrown with moss and creepers. A search will undoubtedly reveal others now entirely covered with earth and undergrowth, as there are several unoccupied niches still remaining.

That this shrine is of considerable age is evidenced by the fact that a *hau* tree, three feet in diameter, has forced apart the heavy paving stones and is growing in the middle of the court. Trees of even greater size are growing out of the ruins of a small nearby building, which might once have been the foundation of the domicile of the attendant priests. Some of the roughly squared rocks in the foundation of the shrine are approximately three by three by ten feet in dimension, and must have taken a small army of men to move and set in place. [64]

The Marquesas are the only islands of the eastern groups of the South Pacific where cannibalism has not long since ceased. This does not mean that one is likely to be pounced on and eaten as soon as he sets foot ashore—as I must frankly admit we all feared when we first heard of the fate of the late pilots of Taio-haie—but only that under certain favourable conditions, when there is small chance of its being brought to the attention of the French authorities, this barbarity is still resorted to. The French and the missionaries have been active in suppressing cannibalism and its attendant rites, but, principally on account of certain religious significances which appear to attach to it, the practice persists in bobbing up perennially. The dead in their tribal fights are still eaten when the opportunity offers, but only one white man and a Chinaman (the two pilots were half-castes) are known to have been eaten in the last decade.

Accuse a Marquesan of being a cannibal, and he will ordinarily deny the soft impeachment much after the manner of a school girl taxed with being a flirt. Some will brazen it out, however, and of such was a hardened old offender who explained to the *Lurline* forecastle one night that, of the various classes of "long-pig," he preferred white man to native because the meat of the latter was saltier and of a more pronounced flavour. Chinaman he had never eaten, he said, but—and here he cast an appraising look to where our recently shipped cook was shuddering at the door of the galley—he was going to try one at his first opportunity. The terrified Si-ah would not even go ashore to do the marketing during the remainder of our stay in Taio-haie. [65]

The practice of cannibalism undoubtedly originated in the over-populated days of the island when, in the seasons of famine, the bodies of those killed in the intertribal raids were eaten by the survivors to escape starvation. Its survival into a period when the islands produce food a thousand-fold in excess of consumption, and in the face of the active opposition of the French, can be due only to certain superstitious attributes, such as the belief that the strength of a dead foe enters into the body of him who eats the flesh.

Human flesh is eaten in the Marquesas today only when the conditions are such that the chances of detection are the slightest, and never under any circumstances with the ceremonies which attended the rites of three or four decades ago. The "long-pig"—the polite euphemism by which man-meat is designated—may be quietly cut up and distributed among a hundred families in a half dozen different villages, each of which will partake of its precious tidbit in private and strictest secrecy. Again, the body may be buried after only a small portion has been reserved for eating. Just previous to our arrival in Nukahiva a body from which only the hands were missing was washed ashore at Anaho during a heavy southwester. Investigation showed it to be that of one Teona, a resident of Hatiheu, a native who, three days previously, had, according to the story of his companions, fallen from their canoe and been drowned. The latter, after four days' confinement in a dark cell at Taio-haie—the extremest torture to which the superstitious Marquesan may be subjected—confessed that they had killed Teona during a coconut wine debauch, and after cutting off his hands and eating them, had weighted the body with stones and dropped it out to sea. They were given the extreme penalty—two weeks' confinement in the dark, to be followed by a year of weed-cutting on the village street. One died of hysteria before the first week was out, and the other, at the end of ten days, killed himself by gashing his wrist on a jagged corner of the sheet iron wall of his prison. [66]

The Marquesan's terror of the dark is so extreme that it is not a rare thing for men, women and children to die of fright during eclipses. In view of this, there seems some ground for the contention that the French practice of confining convicted, and occasionally suspected, murderers and cannibals in windowless sheet iron cells is scarcely less barbarous than the crimes for which punishment is being meted out.

The great cannibal feast grounds of Nukahiva and Hiva-oa are not only not used at the present time, but are even so strictly *tabu* that no native can be found who will venture within their forbidden confines. Stevenson writes of visiting the Hatiheu "high-place" in company with a French priest and a native boy; but on the occasion of our visit we held out every conceivable inducement in an endeavour to secure native guides to the same feast-ground, and quite in vain. Not even among the converts of the Catholic fathers could be found one who held the *tabu* lightly enough to dare to violate it. The best we could do was to persuade several of them to accompany us to the line of the *tabu*, and there to await our return, while we went over the ruins with

McGrath. The following description is from notes taken by Claribel on this occasion, and subsequently amplified under the direction of McGrath, who, in the fifteen years he has maintained a trading store at Hatiheu, has missed no opportunity to push enquiries amongst the older natives regarding what is unquestionably the most interesting ruin of its kind in the South Pacific: [67]

"On the seaward side of a spur of the mountain a level space, oval in general shape, had been partly excavated, partly built up, so that there was a smooth floor about 300 feet long by 200 feet wide. In a semi-circle, with the chief's house in the centre, were the little 'feast-houses' of the court dignitaries and the special guests. Beneath the posts of each house excavations have disclosed a number of human bones which bear witness to the sacrifice which accompanied the setting of every pillar. In these little booths the guests remained during the feasts, some of which, when food was plenty or some especially great event was to be celebrated, lasted over a week. Each guest brought some contribution to the feast, and when it was over he was privileged to gather up and carry home any fragments that he liked.

"The 'dining-room' was the space in front of the houses, and there, spread on the huge leaves of the banana and taro, the feast was laid. Meat was handled with big four-tined forks of wood; poi and other soft dishes in calabashes of coco shell and shallow wooden platters. The drinking cups, in which were served a fiery wine made from the juice of the tender shoots of the coconut, were the hollow shells of nuts. The food, in addition to human flesh or 'long-pig,' included the meat of the wild cattle, goats and pigs, roasted, boiled, fried and salted raw, and served with *miti-hari*, a most piquant sauce still in use and which is composed of a mixture of lime juice and the pressed-out milk of grated coconuts. Bananas and plantains, cooked and uncooked, were served; also taro in balls which looked like mud and tasted like sago and brown sugar; breadfruit, avocados, seaweed, squid, prawns and shrimps and an endless variety of indigenous tropical fruits. [68]

"The general plan of the place was, roughly, as follows: Beginning at the right and running in a seaward direction, there was first the private stairway for an official who might be designated as the Captain of the Guard, a curving four-foot passage, the steps of which were cut into the earth and faced with stones. This stairway led up to the box where the Captain presided during the festivities, and was for his private use. Next came the main approach to the feast level, a stairway two paces in width, terminating between two round towers in which soldiers with clubs were stationed to welcome bona fide guests and intercept intruders. A functionary who stood at the head of the stairs greeted each guest on his arrival with a loud shout of welcome and a blast from a *pao* or conch trumpet, announcing him immediately afterwards to the company with a flowery recital of his personal career.

"Farther on was the stairway for the cooks, provision bearers and the human victims. This led to the 'kitchen,' where the firestones and chopping blocks were located. The firestones lined a circular depression in the earth, and after this had been thoroughly heated, the meat and fruit, all wrapped in *ti* leaves, were laid sociably together to cook. The blackened stones of this old cannibal oven are still in place, and a half-hour's work with an ax and cutlass would put it in shape for service. [69]

The best surviving example of Marquesan tattooing

"Back of the kitchen was the 'larder,' a round, deep hole where the 'long-pig' was kept until ready for the oven. Directly over the mouth of this hole, and about forty feet above it, was the horizontally projecting limb of the sacred banyan, the only tree, by the way, which was permitted to grow within the walls. Over this limb hung a stout rope braided of the fibrous bark of the *hau* tree. When the call for more meat came from the 'kitchen,' the noosed end of this rope was lowered over the head of the victim next in order, and he was pushed over the brink of the hole, the fall usually breaking his neck. Dismemberment, according to prescribed rules, followed, the choice bits, such as the hands and eyes and ears, being laid aside for the chiefs.

"Beyond the oven, and not far from the chief's house, was what might be called the 'bone-hole,' a rock-lined, well-like sort of an affair about nine feet in diameter and twenty feet deep. Into it were thrown the bones of the victims after the feast was over, and above these gruesome remnants the priests performed certain ceremonies calculated to protect the living from the spirits of the outraged dead. Cutting around the rim of this hole with our cutlasses, we managed, after an hour of tugging and hauling, to dislodge and remove a great mass of creepers, disclosing a huge pile of human bones. A couple of pieces of mahogany, which must have been taken from some ship, were lying near the top of the heap, and led us to wonder how many of the bones mouldering in the pile beneath were those of white men. [70]

"After the keen edges of their appetites had worn off, the feasters adjourned to the 'dance hall,' a rectangular subterranean chamber of about thirty by fifty feet. The most of this great room was a natural cave which pierced the mountain immediately under the feast ground, but to seaward a considerable extension of masonry had been added to give more space. The latter had been destroyed in a freshet and hurricane which occurred about two years previous to our visit, but the cave portion was still in a fair state of preservation. This had been roughly squared with walls of fitted boulders, and off from it opened numerous little retiring rooms which connected with private stairways with the group of guest-houses above. The floor of this chamber was covered with a cement made of coral lime and a puttylike clay, and still remains as smooth and hard as concrete.

"The hall was lighted with torches of *kukui* nuts, the sooty stains of which on the walls the seepages of years have not entirely effaced. Fantastic indeed must have been the barbaric assemblage as revealed in their flickering light: the hideously tattooed dancers in head-dresses fashioned in imitation of the forms of birds and animals and fishes; the musicians drumming on the hollow trunks of *burao* and *hau*, shaking shell and bone rattles, tooting conches and blowing shrill cane whistles; the packed ranks of the spectators, shouting and clapping encouragement and tossing off *epu* after *epu* of the fiery coconut wine. Hour after hour the dancers reeled in the delirious abandon of the Marquesan *hula*; now gliding, with a sinuous, snaky motion, their oil-glistening bodies bent almost to the floor; now leaping wildly into the air, [71] with shouts and shrill screams, lunging with their war clubs at imaginary foes; now seated on long woven mats of pandanus fibre before the dais where royalty reclined, bending and swaying their supple forms in a series of graceful, rhythmic motions, accompanied only by a song, the clappings of hands or the beating of the wooden drums. The boom of the drums, the shrilling of the whistles, the shouts of the spectators, the shrieks of the dancers and the swishings of their bare feet upon the floor—how it all must have stirred and amazed even those roistering old pirate and whaling captains when it struck upon their ears for the first time!"

CHAPTER IV [72]

HUNTING IN THE MARQUESAS

The French have never actually prohibited the carrying of arms in the Marquesas, as have the British in the Solomons; but the possession and use of guns has been so hedged about with restrictions as practically to accomplish the same purpose. This is about the way it goes: Coming to the islands with a gun, a permit must first be secured before it may be landed. This allows you to take it to your domicile but not to take it out again. If you would carry it with you on the street, a "Port des Armes" is required, which allows you, however, to fire it only in your own backyard, and when that sanctum is enclosed with a metre-high stone wall. If you desire to fire it anywhere else, a "Permit de Chasse" must be obtained. Finally, if you come to the conclusion that the possession of a gun in the Marquesas imposes too many burdens, and decide to dispose of it, a permit to sell is required; and if, later, you regret your action and want to get it back again, a permit to purchase will have to be taken out before the deal can be consummated. Each of these permits costs a good, stiff fee, and it is largely this which is responsible for the fact that the Marquesan native

hunts today much after the fashion of ancient times—with his wits and his hands. A hunt of this kind comes nearer being real sport—that is, of giving the quarry as good a chance to take the hunter's life as the latter has to take that of the quarry—than [73] any form of the chase since the days of the troglodytes, and lucky indeed may the white man esteem himself who is allowed to join one of them. I eliminated a good deal of the sporting element on both the occasions on which I went out by carrying, and using, a rifle or revolver, but as neither of these weapons—through no fault of mine, however—figured seriously in the final dénouements, I shall always tell myself that for once in my life at least, I have seen real hunting—hunting in which the hunter has a legitimate right to be proud of the game he brings to earth. But first something of a form of Marquesan hunting which—largely because the white man with his modern weapons enters into it—is as shameless as the old native "cave-man" method is admirable.

One may hunt wild cattle, wild boar and wild goats in the Marquesas, but the pursuit of the latter, however one goes at it, is not worthy of the name of sport. Unlike the mountain goat of the Cascades and the Canadian Rockies, the Marquesan animal of that name is neither hard to find nor hard to kill; so that if one goes out after him with an intelligent guide it is usually a matter of doing a lot of shooting at easy range and letting the natives gather up and bring in the meat. It is about comparable on the score of excitement to shooting seals in their rookeries or starving cariboo in the Arctic. Goat-hunting with beaters, as it is done in Nukahiva, cannot be complained of on the score of lacking excitement, but, on account of the unspeakable barbarity of its inevitable sequel, is not to be contemplated without a shudder, even when the drive is undertaken—as it often is—to exterminate animals that have been ravaging [74] the village gardens.

I had heard in Hawaii that a goat-drive, next to a cannibal feast, was the greatest attraction the Marquesas had to offer, and one of the first inquiries I made after my "battery" had run the gauntlet of French officialdom was regarding the chances for arranging one. The Residente promised at once to lend aid in the form of all the prisoners in the island jail to act as beaters, saying that the goats had become very numerous and troublesome since the last drive and that he would be glad indeed of a chance to get rid of a few of them; but when I broached the subject to the trader, McGrath, who had already become our court of first and last instance in the filling up of the program for our Marquesan stay, he frowned and shook his head dubiously.

"If you're half the sportsman I take you for you would be sorry for it," he said. "You wouldn't engage in one of your California rabbit drives for sport, would you? No. Well, a Marquesan goat drive is just about like one of those—and then some. I'll have to tell you about the first one I took part in, I think, and then if you still feel that you want to go ahead we will see what can be done."

We drew out a couple of canvas deck chairs to a breeze-swept corner of the front veranda of Cramer's trading store, where McGrath, sipping now and then at the long glass of absinthe and water which is the approved drink in that corner of the Pacific, told his story.

"Up at the top of that cliff—it's a thousand feet in the sheer"—he began, pointing to a towering basaltic buttress that reared its black bulk abruptly from the northern loop [75] of the bay, "there is a narrow but fairly level and open table-land. The opposite side drops down to Typee Inlet in the same way, and you will remember how it tapers off to a knife-edge at the outer point. The objective of every goat-drive is the open space upon that point, for from it there is no escape save across the narrow landward neck which is held by the beaters and hunters. There is another escape, if you want to call it that. Imagine an almost solid stream of white furry patches, five hundred feet wide, rushing out over the edge of that table-land there and falling down the face of the cliff like a cataract in flood; and then imagine—but I anticipate.

"The goats were particularly active when I first came to Nukahiva—I was a missionary then, and lived here in Taio-haie—and one night they brought their depredations to a climax by tramping down the thorn fence of the Residency garden and making a clean sweep of all the vegetables. How much of a luxury truck garden stuff is upon a tropical island unserved by steamers and totally lacking in cold storage facilities, only one who has lived under such conditions can appreciate. Probably you're beginning to come to some appreciation of it already. The Residente was, naturally, furious over his loss, and plans were set afoot that afternoon for a big drive to rid the immediate vicinity of as many as possible of the obnoxious animals. I didn't know what a Marquesan goat-drive was then, and readily consented to take part.

"On the morrow at daybreak, mustering between officials, soldiers, trading store employés and officers from schooners in the harbour, ten or a dozen mounted men, [76] and between the "trusties" from the prison and other natives drawn in by the opportunity of obtaining fresh meat, fifty or sixty beaters, we set out in a long line that reached from sea to sea across the landward end of the peninsula.

"All morning we scared up the frightened animals and drove them on before us until, at noon, we had a herd that must have numbered some thousands cornered upon the

open table-land at the extremity of the point. On three sides of the heaving mass of white the cliffs fell sheer to the sea for a thousand feet, while to landward escape was cut off by the hunt, its armed riders drawn up in front, and the beaters, now shoulder to shoulder, bringing up the rear in a solid double line.

"Twice the terrified band, led by a squad of patriarchal old 'billies,' charged down upon us in a wild break for freedom, only to fall back each time before the rain of bullets and the deafening roar from the hard-pumped repeaters and automatics. Even once more they massed and, blindly, desperately, madly, made their last rush to break our lines. Falling by scores, they still braved the rifle fire until the last gun was empty, broke through between the horsemen and, but for the close-packed ranks of the beaters, would have gained their freedom in thousands instead of a few scattered twos and threes.

"But the heavily-swung war clubs and the ear-splitting yells of the natives checked the force of the rush, and suddenly, as though simultaneously possessed of a common impulse, every one of the survivors turned, rushed to the edge of that great black cliff yonder, and went lunging off into space. For a few moments, rising above the dull roar of the surf against the base of the cliff, we heard the thud and splash of the [77] bodies striking rocks and water, and then, save for the bleating of the wounded at our feet, all was quiet. Not a goat had faltered; not an unhurt animal remained on the plateau.

"For several long moments no one moved or spoke, but each, with his horse reined sharply in, glanced guiltily at the man on his left and on his right, and then let his eyes fall shamedly to the ground. Even the natives were awed and silent. Finally the Residente, shaking his heavy shoulders like one who would rid himself of the effects of a bad dream, dismounted, gave his horse to a native, and picked his way out to the edge of the cliff, the rest of us following suit. And then it was that we were given to see the full enormity of the thing which we had done, for the horror that had already befallen was only the preliminary of a still grimmer tragedy, for the final act of which the curtain was just being rung up.

"Lucky indeed—as luck went that day—were the goats that had been killed on the plateau or had mercifully plunged to instant death on the rocks. Many of the animals, due to their falls having been broken by striking the yielding mass formed by the bodies of their mates, were still alive, and for the hundreds of these that were floundering in the water a worse fate was reserved. The reek of blood which welled up from below, and the piteous bleats that assailed our ears, smote also on keener senses than our own, and at even our first glance there were revealed to us the black dorsals of countless lurking tiger sharks, cutting the water from every direction and converging in a deadly focus on the spot where the helpless little wisps of white were floating at their mercy. They came and came, and still kept coming, until it seemed [78] that the whole Pacific was giving up the sharks of the ages gone by to join in the bloody carnival. The sea along the foreshore for hundreds of yards was literally alive with great brown-black forms that slashed and fought and piled upon one another in frantic fury, while the water, five minutes before us limpid as a woodland pool, was dyed to a deep crimson, and its foam-lines in the eddies frothed up a ghastly pink. I have surveyed the remains of several cannibal feasts since that sickening noontide at the brink of that great cliff, but never again have I known anything to approach the overpowering feeling of mingled horror, awe, disgust and regret that I then experienced."

McGrath straightened up with a long breath and gulped the last of his glass of absinthe and water.

"Thus my first goat-drive," he concluded; "and thus are the goat-drives of today. It's just as well you should know what they are beforehand, for, if you're anything like me, you would never forgive yourself for getting drawn into one. However, goat-driving doesn't exhaust the possibilities of Nukahiva by any means. I shall be able to arrange a pig hunt for tomorrow or next day without any trouble, I think, and, if there is any way of getting the natives keyed up to it, I will get them to take you out after a wild bull before you go. You'll see something you never saw before in either case."

It may be largely coincidence, but it is a fact at any rate, that in nearly every place in the world where the wild pig is found it is not considered quite the sporting thing to [79] hunt it with guns. There is no hard and fast rule against it, of course, but in these places shooting a wild boar, except as a *dernier ressort*, is considered about on a par with potting ducks or pheasant. Thus, in Germany, Austria and the Balkans it is customary for the keenest sportsman still to take his chance with a boar on foot, and armed only with a spear; in India the British army officers ride that animal down in the jungle and dispatch it with a short lance, and in Africa the sporting thing to do is for the hunter to endeavour to give the *coup de grace* with a native *assegai*. In North America, for some reason, this custom is honoured only in the breach, and the Texas peccary and the Mexican *javelin*—neither of which is much more than an oversized

razor-back hog—are dispatched on sight with rifle and shotgun.

Boar-hunting with a spear or *assegai*,—or even according to the Indian practice of killing from the saddle, which requires the greatest steadiness of seat, hand and nerve,—are certainly not open to criticism on the ground of being un-sporting; but the Marquesan native, in attacking the boar of his islands with a two-foot cutlass or *macheté*, which has been made for slashing underbrush and opening coconuts—for cutting, not thrusting—unquestionably goes all of them one better on the score of taking chances, for he works literally at arm's length and with his body unprotected even by the lightest of clothes.

A Marquesan boar hunt, with no other weapons than knives or cutlasses, is as exciting and hazardous an undertaking as the most adventurous can desire. The pigs are scared up in the bush by dogs and men, headed off in their flight along the [80] narrow run-ways in the guava scrub, and dispatched by a knife-thrust between the base of the neck and the shoulder. Killing a large boar in this manner is an extremely nice piece of work, as a difference of an inch to the right or the left in plunging the knife means that the thrust will be almost harmless and leaves the hunter open to the deadly sweep of one of the scimitar-like tusks of the powerful animal. The commonest scar one sees on the body of a Marquesan is a long diagonal welt of white where the flesh of calf or thigh has been laid open to the bone by the tusk of a charging boar. If, as occasionally happens when the boar is a large one, the slash is across the abdomen, the hunter rarely survives to bear the scar.

McGrath was as good as his word in the matter of arranging the pig hunt he had promised, but unfortunately, through being called to Hatiheu to look after the loading of one of his schooners, was unable to go along himself.

"Be content to remain a spectator," was his parting injunction; "and don't think because it looks easy for a native to drop a charging boar with a cutlass and a twist of the wrist that you can do it yourself. That was the way I got this limp of mine—it comes from a tendon that was cut by a side-swipe from a tusk of the first—and the last—boar I ever tried to stick. Best take your six-shooter along, but don't use it unless you have to. It might serve to turn a boar that was charging you; but it also might make one that was running away swing around and come back. There are only two or three small spots on a wild pig in which a pistol bullet—or a half dozen of them, for that matter—will prove fatal, and these you would hardly be able to locate [81] with the animal at a run."

McGrath laid special stress on my adhering to the spectator rôle, and I set out with that injunction firmly impressed on my mind. But the sticking trick looked so ridiculously easy after I had seen it performed once or twice that it was not long before I began to tell myself that it was a case of "once bitten, twice shy" with my trader friend, and that he had probably lost his nerve on account of his unpropitious initial experience. And so it chanced—but I had best tell something of the way of a Marquesan with a pig before obtruding my own troubles.

We set out from Taio-haie on foot in the first flush of a heliotrope and daffodil sunrise —a dozen or more natives, about twice that number of dogs, and myself—followed the Typee trail for a mile up the mountain through the endless ruins of the old Marquesan villages, finally to branch off by a barely discernible foot path into the veritable carpet of low scrub which belts the island at the 500-foot level. Guava and lantana it was for the most part, the former heavy with lucious yellow-red fruit and the latter bright with tiny golden flowers. As we fared farther from the main travelled trail, dim runways through the bush began to appear, and these, gradually converging as they led down toward the neck of a rolling little valley which opened up beyond a sharp ridge we had crossed, formed a narrow but well marked path.

Four of the natives and I headed for a point where two jutting walls of rock formed a natural gateway, which was scarcely a dozen feet wide between the cliffs and choked [82] with several giant trees and a maze of lianas and brush. Through this opening ran the runway we were following, the only path by which pigs going back and forth between the upper and lower valley could pass. The others, with the dogs still held in leash by strands of light liana, circled to the upper hills preliminary to swinging around and beating back down the valley. I was led, gently but firmly, up to a natural "grandstand" in the angle of the buttressed roots of a big *maupé* tree, one of the natives—a servant of McGrath's who was evidently acting under orders—stopping alongside in case I showed a disposition to "stray." My three other companions—strapping bronze giants with the muscles of gladiators—took their stands in the centre of the runway. One behind the other, at ten or twelve-foot intervals, they lined up—there was no chance in the narrow, bush-walled passage for anything in the nature of a three-abreast, Horatius-at-the-Bridge formation—each with his cutlass hand resting lightly on his hip, like a fencer standing at ease. Cool, alert, ready, they waited, three living, breathing incarnations of deadly efficiency. So had I seen a puma waiting, patiently tense, upon the limb of a tree above a path where deer were wont to come on their way to water; so have I since seen sharks lurking in quivering readiness among the coral spines where ventured the divers for pearls.

Ten minutes passed, in which occasional stifled yelps, now from this side, now from

that, told that the dogs, still in leash, were being spread out as quietly as possible across the upper valley. Only occasional sharp crashes in the scrub gave evidence of an increasing current of uneasiness among the pigs. Tebu, who stood at "Number 1," [83] broke into a low crooning chant, with a throaty kluck and a queer chesty roll to it, which my "guard" translated as an invitation to the pigs to come down and join our party. Presently the other two natives took up the air, the three of them swaying gently to the rhythm of the barbaric chant.

The dogs appeared to have been released upon a preconcerted signal, for their choruses of baying broke out all the way across the valley at the same time, accompanied by the ringing shouts of the men and the shrill ululations of a bevy of women and girls who had trailed along after us and had now joined the hunt.

Tebu hushed his singing and froze to attention as the underbrush began to crackle, and I knew by the flash of blood-lust in his eyes the instant he sighted the first pig. This animal, which was startled but not aroused, lunged back into the scrub before he reached the "gateway," and two or three other half-hearted mavericks did likewise before one arrived on the scene who really had his mind made up about going through to the lower valley. Singleness of purpose showed in every line of the flying black mass that came dashing down the runway and headed straight for the "gate." Possibly the fear of the dogs was in his heart, but he looked more mad than frightened as, without a pause or a side-glance of indecision, he hurled himself upon the motionless bronze figure that blocked the way. On he came, like a bull at a gate, and even as I gasped to myself that a regiment of soldiers couldn't block his flight, he dashed against the lone human barrier and the miracle was enacted. The impassive giant hardly seemed to move. There was sharp tensing of the powerful frame, a flash [84] of sunlight glinting across the golden muscles, a quick movement of the wrist that might almost have been a caress—and the flying mass of bone and sinew was quivering at the gladiator's feet. There was not a squeal or a kick. It was almost as though the bronze Titan had waved his hand and muttered "Alive! Dead! Presto! Change!" and that thus it had come to pass. The swift transition from life to death reminded me of the wilting of a steer under the touch of the "killer" in an Uruguayan *matadero*, where they slay by severing the spinal cord at the base of the horns with a knife thrust. But there the twinkle of the wrist snuffed the life spark in the body of a passive animal, while here the same easy, effortless movement had smothered it while it flared at full power in a quarter of a ton of flying flesh and bone that was itself a Bolt of Death.

Another and yet another charging monster was crumpled to earth while I was still lost in speculation respecting the manner of the passing of the first, and it was not until the fourth or fifth fugitive appeared that I gathered my wits together for a dispassionate study of the way the wonder was wrought. Then I quickly came to the conclusion that it was the almost absolute "evenness" of the charge that made the thing possible at all. The surface of the runway was smooth and sloped but slightly, while its narrowness and straightness at the "gate" held the pig to an undeviating course whether he wished it or not. Though he came at a great speed, the huge body advanced almost as evenly as though running on a track, making it possible for a man with a steady hand and nerve to locate to a nicety that little three-inch-wide spot between the neck and shoulder where the point of knife must enter to be effective. [85] That vulnerable point would be covered by the upward toss of the head that the boar has timed to make at the moment of impact, and the whole success of the thrust depends upon a quick forward step and a lunge that anticipates that toss by the hundredth part of a second.

While he is waiting the native receiving the charge scrapes a shallow depression in the path—something similar to a sprinter's starting holes—into which the toes of his left foot are set for a firm grip on the earth. At the psychologic moment the right foot is advanced half a pace, the left leg straightened into a brace, the right arm, with its extended cutlass, stiffened to a bar of steel—and the thing is done. The keen two-foot blade, slipping between the shoulder blade and the first rib, shores its way through heart and lungs, and its point may even penetrate to the abdominal cavity. If the stroke is true the blade and handle of the knife are buried to the wrist of the arm that drives it and the charging animal crumples up into an inert mass without uttering a sound. If the vital spot is missed, what happens depends largely upon the extent of the error. If the point of the knife meets a bone squarely—as rarely happens, however—the man behind it may be thrown backward or to one side by the impact, and escape unscathed. The usual miss, however, comes through having the point of the knife deflected by the toss of the boar's head, and the result is a glancing thrust which will probably leave the hunter still in the path of the charge and exposed to the deadly side-swipe of the great back-curving tusks.

It is not often that there is more than one wound—a charging boar rarely returns to the attack once his impetus has carried him clear of his enemies—and the [86] consequences of this depend largely upon its location. If a thigh is cut deeply enough the wounded man will bleed to death; and if the slash is across the abdomen, though he may linger, it is rarely indeed that blood-poisoning fails ultimately to claim him for a victim. Because the wild pig is so foul a feeder, there is also grave danger of blood-

poisoning from the superficial wounds on the arms and legs, but most of these, it is said, are recovered from.

Tebu dropped another pig or two with the same easy nonchalance that had marked his manner from the outset, and then, reluctantly, gave place to the man next in line. This one was called Maro, and he was reputed the champion pig-sticker of the leeward side of the island. As first "backer-up," he had been chafing under the enforced inactivity for some minutes and complaining that Tebu was taking the cream of the sport for himself. The new "Number 1" was less massive of build than his predecessor, but was muscled with the fluent undulations of swift-running water —a man compact of watchsprings, a human tiger-cat. Deftly and easily he dropped his first pig—a rangy boar—slapped a flying half-grown shote contemptuously with the flat of his cutlass as beneath his notice, and had just got well "set" on his toes again, when that bane of the Marquesan pigsticker, a "double"—two boars running close together—came charging down.

By all the rules of the game this twin terror should have been allowed to go by unmolested, for successfully to stick a "double" is a feat as rare as a triple play in baseball or the "hat trick" in cricket—a thing to be talked about for years after it has happened. But it chanced to come at the moment when the shifty Maro was just "on edge"—nicely warmed up and steadied by his first pig and yet not wearied by successive efforts—and then there was the Beretani—the white man—who had to be shown what a Marquesan could really do in a pinch. Probably the latter was the more powerful incentive. At any rate, without a gesture or a glance of hesitation, he settled the toes of his left foot firmly into their hole, poised for an instant in quivering readiness, and then, with the swiftness of a striking cobra, lurched forward in two lightning passes. [87]

The first thrust, which was delivered at the full extension of his reach, appeared barely to brush the neck of the foremost boar, but the next—driven home with a short-arm jab like a pugilist's close-in hook at an opponent's solar plexus—buried the full length of the knife in the shoulder of the second boar, and brought it down in a heap, Maro himself being tripped and half-buried under the inert body. That the first boar had been more than scratched seemed impossible; yet there he lay, almost at my feet, giving what appeared to be his dying kicks. Tebu and his mate were extricating Maro from under the body of the second boar, and it struck me that the humane thing to do would be to put the wounded beast out of his agony. Accordingly, without taking especial care to aim accurately, I directed a couple of bullets from my ".38" automatic at a spot behind one of the ears which appeared to be vulnerable.

Just where the bullets struck I never found out, for the well-meant shots awakened something besides the echoes of the rock-girt gorge. At the touch of the lead the apparently dying boar scrambled to his feet and made a dive for the lower end of the "gate." Tebu struck viciously as the animal passed him, but only landed a harmless slash, and the cutlass of the other native, flung on the chance of severing a rear tendon, went wide of its mark. The fugitive, running blind but strong, disappeared among the mazes of trails that led into the lower valley, followed by the wails of Maro, who saw the feat of a lifetime marred by the interference of a meddlesome outsider who had been too cowardly to take a hand in the dangerous part of the game himself. Shouting something in voluble Marquesan in my direction, he leapt back into the runway as a renewed crashing broke out above, and stood savagely on guard. [88]

"What did he say?" I asked McGrath's boy, Tavu, who had stuck closely to my side through all the excitement.

"He say he kill pig dead. You shoot gun, wake him up. Maro damn mad. He say now he kill three pigs, all one time. Maybe he mean 'long-pig.' Maro bad fella b'long Anaho," and he touched his eye with a finger as a sign that it would be well to be on guard.

The good fellow probably did Maro an injustice in charging him with harbouring the intention of converting my anatomy into that most recherché of Marquesan delicacies, "long-pig"; but if there was any doubt of his willingness, in his anger and disappointment, to tackle three pigs at once it was effectually dispelled by the events of the next few moments. The shouts of the beaters and the barking of the dogs had been growing louder all the time, and the crashings in the underbrush told that the pigs were now coming in increasing numbers. Three or four of them shortly came tearing into view, and then—all of a sudden—the path was packed with bristling black figures, the first few running hard and free and the rest crowding and stumbling. [89]

The rush of pigs as the beaters closed in was always to be expected in this particular *cul de sac*, and McGrath had warned me regarding it.

"Get out of the way and sit tight," he had said; "and don't worry about the boys. They'll take care of themselves."

I appeared to be sufficiently out of the way already, and Tebu and the third native, as soon as they had caught sight of the impending avalanche, came over and joined me

on the roots of the big tree. I watched them clamber up to safety and then turned to see the river of pigs sweep by—and there was that sullen, scowling tiger-cat of a Maro standing his ground in the middle of the runway. Of course, the proper thing to have done would have been for some self-sacrificing soul to leap down and snatch the would-be suicide from "under the wheels," a task for which the powerful Tebu was admirably fitted by nature. I'm not sure that the duty of indulging in this form of self-sacrifice is included in the Marquesan ethical code, but even if it had been, there was no time to put it into practice. Maro dropped his first pig and made a pass at the second even as I looked. The two animals were running almost neck-and-neck, so that the second thrust was hardly more than a slight slash upon the flying brute's shoulder. It served to turn Maro in his tracks, however, and not all of his super-feline quickness could bring him around again in time to meet the rush. The shoulder of the next pig sent him tottering sidewise as the animal passed, and in another moment he [90] had fallen fairly across the upraising head of a huge boar in the van of the ruck. For an instant the shining bronze body ceased to flash against the heaving black background, and then, as a rat is tossed by a terrier, it was flung cleanly into the air, to come slamming down against the gnarled roots of our *maupê* tree and collapse into a lifeless heap. The body seemed to have struck the tree hard enough to break half of its bones; yet the worst injury, I told myself, must have come from the terrific toss that had sent it catapulting through the air.

After the rush was over we lost no time in clambering down to "view the remains." Tebu was smiling sardonically, apparently not greatly shocked by the tragedy and perhaps secretly pleased at having the only man in the island who was held his equal in pig-sticking prowess put out of the running. The other two natives seemed a little more upset, and Tavu was muttering to himself the ancient Marquesan proverb which translates literally as "Wild pig—'long-pig.'" This has lost its meaning since cannibalism became practically extinct, but in the old days it signified that when the men went out to get the meat of the wild pig, there was likely also to be man meat to eat at the feast that was held when the hunt was over.

The body lay on its back, inert as the carcasses of the pigs that littered the sides of the runway. Tebu and I picked it up and turned it over to reveal the wound which we knew must have been inflicted when it was tossed into the air—and lo, beyond some bluing bruises, there was no wound! We could only guess how so seemingly impossible a thing as a man's being tossed ten feet by a wild boar without being [91] slashed to ribbons could have happened; but the most probable explanation seemed to be that Maro had fallen sidewise across the head of the animal, behind the tusks, so that the upward thrust of the powerful neck had only resulted in a mighty push. No bones appeared to be broken. A welt on the back of the head where it had struck the tree accounted for the senseless condition of the scrappy pig-sticker, and this, as far as we could discover, was the extent of the injuries. A dash of water from the nearby stream brought Maro back to life again, but too dazed, for the time being at least, to recall the resentment he had harboured against me on the score of the pig I had "waked up" with my pistol shots.

The natives now cleared a space of brush with their cutlasses and we prepared to rest and lunch in the shadow of the big tree. A fire was started to heat stones for roasting a young pig that had been captured, breadfruit and plantain were put to cooking, coconuts were opened and guavas, mangoes and a lucious array of other tropical fruits were laid out on the broad leaves of the *taro* plant. And then came the women to our Eden, and with them the Serpent.

McGrath had given the strictest orders that nothing in the form of toddy should be brought along on the hunt, and this injunction had apparently been heeded as far as the hunters themselves were concerned. But the dozen or more girls who had come on later to help as beaters and share in the division of the meat, claimed to have heard nothing of the prohibition. Possibly it was a "frame-up" on the part of the men, or perhaps it just happened. At any rate, when the beating brigade began to straggle [92] in, it became apparent at once that tippling had been going on, and shortly I saw the bruised and battered Maro taking a long draught from a calabash that was being held to his lips by a star-eyed minx with a red hibiscus blossom behind her ear and a rakish chaplet of fern frond tilted across her comely brow.

"Coco toddy," muttered Tavu, half in alarm, half in anticipative ecstasy. "Plenty coco toddy b'long *vahine*."

It would be churlish, I told myself, to attempt to forbid the ambrosia to any of the tired gladiators when the common herd of the beaters had already been cheering themselves with it. Then—fatal mistake—I nodded my head in acquiescence when an *epu* was held up for Tavu, my guardian, to quaff, and—but I had already taken a gulp of the liquid fire from a calabash that a bronze, flower-crowned Hebe, with arms that were symphonies of rippling loveliness and eyes that were twin wells of limpid light, had brought and hung about my neck. Another brought a wreath for my brow and a flower for my ear, and thus crowned the king of the Bacchic revel it became all the more difficult to inaugurate a temperance program among my festive subjects. There wasn't enough of the toddy to put them in a cannibalistic mood, I argued; and, anyhow, they were bound to have all they wanted, and at my expense, as soon as

they got back to Taio-haie.

At any rate, the "women did offer us of the wine to drink, and we did drink," and it was all a very merry little "hunting breakfast." It is not my purpose to write here of the imp who lurks in the depths of the coco toddy calabash to spring out upon the unwary one who uncovers him, as I shall have more to say of him later on in Tahiti. [93] On this occasion such mischief as was wrought was only indirectly traceable to him, and it is by no means impossible that it might not have occurred anyway.

This was how it came about: From time to time some of the dogs that had strayed would come straggling in, and in nearly every case driving a pig or two ahead of them. As the animals appeared, now one and now another of the natives would jump up, intercept the fugitive in the runway and bring him to earth with that easy, effortless neck-thrust that, to the beholder, was more like a caress than a stab. But because they had drunken of the insidious toddy and there were many spectators, the stickers were more than ordinarily nonchalant in their motions, and—possibly because I, also, had partaken of the toddy—the trick kept looking easier and easier every time it was done. And probably it was because Maro had been stimulating his dazed faculties with the toddy that the recollection of the "double" I had spoiled for him reawakened, and he began to tell the party how it happened. I didn't need to know Marquesan to understand the fluent gestures which pictured me resting comfortably in the tree while the killing was going on, and showed how I didn't even dare to shoot off my pistol at anything but a dead pig; and as for having the courage to stand before one with a knife—the scorn of his "let-me-forget-it" expression was positively effacive.

In my own action I have always told myself that toddy played no part; but that delectable beverage certainly *was* responsible for the fact that Tavu, who was under [94] the strictest orders from McGrath to keep me out of mischief, only nodded approbatively when I picked up Tebu's big cutlass from the grass and strode out into the runway to "make my honour white." Tebu, with a roar of delight, seized another cutlass and came out to "back up" for me, but I waved him indignantly aside, resolved to do the trick alone. The good fellow stepped aside obediently, but, unluckily for himself, "stood by" against an emergency.

Flower-crowned and sword in hand! I have called up that incongruous picture in memory many times since, and always to caption it with some classic title. Of these, "Bacchus in the Rôle of Ajax Defying the Lightning" has seemed to me rather the most appropriate.

The crowd fell silent as a crashing and the barking of dogs in the bush above told that another fugitive was approaching, for they scented trouble with the Residente in case anything happened to the Beretani who had been put into their charge. (I learned later that the natives hunting with a French official who had been killed trying to shoot a wild bull the year before had been seriously punished.) Thanks again to the toddy, however, no one made a move to interfere.

It was an uncommonly unkind trick of Fate to have held up the only really large boar that appeared in the course of that hunt until I, the greenest of green novices, had set myself so defiantly in the middle of his path that there was no graceful way of getting out of it. Also, it was harshly ordered that, whereas the other animals had come charging down as evenly as though strung on trolleys, this monster, with two dogs nipping his heels, should be plunging and reeling like a ship in a gale. [95]

I had clearly in mind everything that needed to be done, even to kicking the toe-hole for my left foot, and I kept repeating to myself the words of my old 'varsity baseball coach to his batters—"Step out and meet it." These words had been recalled to me repeatedly during the morning as Tebu or Maro delivered his deadly thrust with a quick forward step, and that, with keeping the eye on the vulnerable spot between the neck and shoulder, seemed to me to be the crucial points upon which the turning of the trick depended. I have since been told that this is quite correct. But this procedure was calculated to be followed in the case of the regulation direct-charging boar; what to do in the case of a brute that was tossing his head in spirals, as now this flank, and now that, was nipped by a pursuing dog, I didn't—and I still don't—know just what to do.

Because I felt that I knew just what to do, and just how to do it, I had myself perfectly in hand until, sudden as a lightning flash, came the realization that the spot that I must strike between the neck and the shoulder was not keeping on an even plane. I had experienced some fairly exciting close-in work with grizzly and silver tip on a couple of occasions previous to that morning, and since then I have stopped the charge of a South American jaguar with a revolver and known what it is to see a Bengal tiger clawing the howdah of an elephant I was riding; but never have I known anything to approach the "all gone" feeling which accompanied the realization that I was not going to be able to locate the spot which *had* to be located if I was to avoid a collision that would make that of Maro's a friendly jostle in comparison. [96]

The instant the message "You can't do it!" was flashed to my brain, the charging pig ceased to be a pig, so far as I was concerned, and became a Car of Juggernaut, a Bolt of Wrath, the incarnation of everything that was Swift, Terrible and Inevitable.

Before I knew it I had dropped the useless cutlass, snatched out my automatic pistol and was discharging it wildly at the approaching monster. The rattle of shots was answered by a burst of savage snarls mingled with quick yelps of pain, and then, as the hammer snapped down on unresponding steel after the last cartridge was fired, I sprang blindly to one side and plunged headlong into the brush. That I dove into the unsympathetic depths of some kind of a fishhook thorn bush, which took ample toll for the intrusion when I was dragged out by the heels a minute later, was only an incident in the light of the fact that—thanks to an instinct for preservation that not even coco toddy had drugged to sleep—I had avoided so much as a brush from the charging boar.

A roar of agony and shouts of consternation told me, even before I was released from the tentacles of the thorn bush, that some one else had got in the way of the charge that I had declined to meet; then the noise of the pursuit passed on and died out beyond the "gate." My pigskin puttees were about the only things I had on that did not remain, wholly or in part, in the embrace of the thorns, but my own scratches were quickly forgotten at the sight of the other victim of the charge. There were two other victims, in fact—one a dog that had been raked by a soft-nosed bullet from my pistol, and the other the stout-hearted old gladiator, Tebu, who, leaping to take up [97] the challenge I had side-stepped, had fallen afoul of the boar itself. His bulldog courage—or the toddy—had impelled him to undertake on short notice the job the Beretani had shirked, and, with no chance to locate the vital spot for his thrust, had lunged wildly and taken the consequences.

The dog was dead, and it looked for a while as though Tebu, with a foot-long gash across his thigh and bleeding like one of the pigs that lay beside him, would follow suit. It transpired presently, however, that no arteries were severed; so after staunching the flow as effectually as possible with a torniquet and bandages that left several members of the party nearly in a state of nature after giving up their *pareos* for the wherewithal, they rigged up a rough litter of boughs and lianas and set off, not untenderly, to bear the wounded warrior back to Taio-haie. There, thanks to the skilful and kind care of the sisters at the Mission, he was soon on his way to recovery.

A month later, in Tahiti, I received a letter from Cramer, the German trader of Taio-haie. After going on to tell how our friend McGrath had been blown away in his cutter during a hurricane and was given up for lost, he wrote:

> "I saw Tebu today. He is still very lame, and probably always will be, but he has been going out every day since he left the mission hospital to hunt the big boar that cut him up so the time he was out with you. He says he is going to keep on hunting it until he kills the boar or the boar kills him."

To this letter was added a postscript, written several days later, which read: [98]

> "Tebu brought in the big boar last night. He says he knows it by the cut he gave it on the shoulder. As we found no bullet marks on the body we have thought he is probably mistaken."

To this I replied:

> "Probably Tebu is right. I cannot swear that I was looking down the sights of my pistol when I fired those shots."

Thus pig-sticking in the Marquesas. It is bloody and cruel, as is the killing of all animals; but, because the quarry is nearly always dropped in its tracks, it is far less open to criticism on that score than most other forms of hunting. But the finest thing —I may well say, the grandest thing—about it is the fact that it is a strictly man-to-beast, give-and-take affair, with the hunter meeting his quarry more nearly on equal terms than in any other form of hunting practised since the days of the Cave Men.

Of the wild cattle hunt which McGrath, after infinite trouble, arranged for one of the final days of our stay in Nukahiva, I have written elsewhere.

CHAPTER V [99]

THE PASSION PLAY AT UAHUKA

THE decennial Passion Play at Oberammergau is, perhaps, the most written and talked about theatrical performance that has ever been staged, and even the annual pageants put on during Holy Week in certain of the Italian, Spanish and South American theatres have attained to considerable publicity in other parts of the world;

the Passion Play of the French mission at Uahuka, an island of the Marquesan group, has been witnessed by less than half a dozen non-resident white men, and as a consequence the fame of it, except such hazy versions as have found their way to France through the channels of the missionary society records, scarcely reaches beyond the coral reefs that fringe the rocky Uahukan shores.

Vague rumours of a strange Marquesan Passion Play had come to us before we sailed from Hawaii, and on the arrival of the yacht in Taio-haie, the capital of that group, we were assured that such a performance was "staged" annually. The interest of this announcement was tempered by the news that the last performance had taken place a fortnight previously and that another would not be put on until Holy Week of the following year. We did not make our projected visit to Uahuka, therefore, and I was consequently unable to secure firsthand data regarding this unique event. The somewhat fragmentary and frivolous account I am writing smacks strongly, I fear, of the sources from which my information was gathered, this or that trader and skipper [100] of the "beaches" of Taio-haie and Tahiti, and especially a fascinating renegade by the name of Bruce Manners, who came off to the yacht one night in Papeete and smoked a half dozen of the Commodore's Perfectos while spinning us yarns of his lurid career in the Marquesas and Paumotos.

All through the South Pacific missionary work follows closely the lines of nationality, with the London Missionary Society dominant in the British possessions, and French organizations, both Protestant and Catholic, monopolizing the field in the islands over which the jaunty tri-colour of France whips itself to tatters in the whistling Southeast Trades. As the United States holds only a naval station at Pago Pago, Samoa, and Germany is now out of the Pacific altogether, missionaries of American and Teutonic extraction are a negligible quantity. This alignment gives the aggressive British society most of the reclamation work west of the 180th meridian, and the French the territory to the east. The headquarters of the French missionary system is that country's capital in the South Seas, Papeete, Tahiti, in the Society group; but the active zone, the "firing line," so to speak, is in the barbaric and cannibalistic Marquesas, and centres in the big island of the north group, Uahuka.

The Passion Play at Uahuka has been presented, it is said, every Easter for the last fifty years. It was inaugurated by the Catholic mission, and in its initial presentation all the rôles were taken by French missionaries, these being gathered from various parts of the Paumotos, Societies and Marquesas and brought to the scene of the [101] performance in a specially chartered fleet of trading schooners. The following year numerous minor parts were given to natives as rewards for becoming converts to Catholicism—the competition between Romanist and Protestant was very keen at this time—and before many seasons had gone by even the leading rôles came to be filled by the savages, the missionaries contenting themselves with such positions as stage manager, musical director, mistress of the wardrobe and the like.

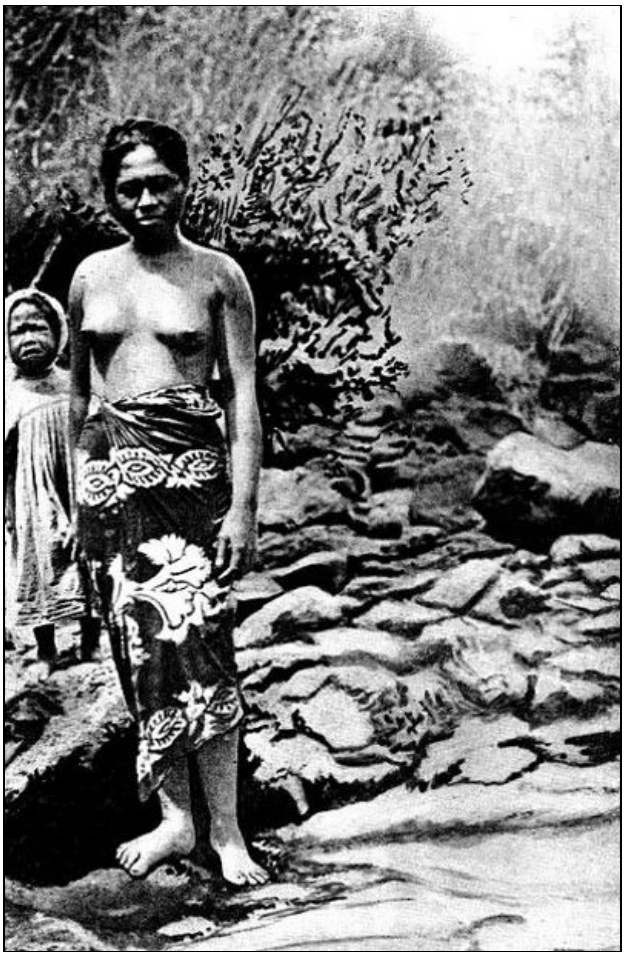
This Passion Play serves admirably the purpose for which it was originally designed, that of bringing home by tableaux to the simple natives a more graphic realization of the dramatic events surrounding the life and death of Christ than would be possible by mere words and pictures, and while its tone would scarcely be characterized as "dignified" by a dispassioned white man from the outside world, its moral effect upon the natives,—temporarily, at least—is most favourable.

The Passion Play is still presented in the same place that the first performance by the missionaries was put on, a sort of natural ampitheatre in the very heart of the Catholic reserve on the outskirts of the village of Uahuka. The mission buildings, low rambling structures of coral and galvanized iron, flank two sides of the pentagonal enclosure. Two other sides are shut in by close-set rows of banyans of such size that their roots and down-reaching branches mingle to form almost solid lines of irregular wooden terraces upon which hundreds of spectators may find seats without crowding. The stage is a hard-packed piece of ground sloping gently down to a [102] crystal clear stream of water which meanders past, sparkling in the sunbeams like a row of footlights, the position of which it approximately occupies. Behind the stage is a creeper-covered wall of rock, with a face so unbroken and sheer that the direction "exit rear" must necessarily be eliminated from all performances. To the left is spoken of as "down Ta-roo-la,"—the name of the little stream—and to the right is "up Ta-roo-la." Actors waiting in either wings are screened from the sight of the audience by the last of the rows of banyans which run down close to the stream on either side.

The music is furnished by a slightly wheezy organ, a clarionet and a lot of hollow-tree tom-toms, and to the stirring strains of the Marseillaise played by this orchestra the opening curtain is rung up upon the tableau of "Christ and the Children." Of course there is no curtain and no ringing up; Christ simply strolls in from "up Ta-roo-la," and the children troop in from "down Ta-roo-la," and they meet in the middle of the stage. Then Christ pats them all on the head, and they all file off behind Him as He exits "down Ta-roo-la." There is no stage setting, and little is attempted in the way of make-ups.

The children are simply children and the part of Christ is taken by a native called Lurau. Lurau is the greatest pearl diver and shark fisher in all the Marquesas. With his hair and beard neatly oiled and combed, and dressed in a trailing robe of snowy muslin, Lurau makes a far more acceptable-looking Christus than one sees in many of the South American presentations of the Passion Play. There is little in his [103] disposition off the stage to fit him for his exalted rôle, and before he became a fixture in the leading part of the Passion Play he was a veritable rubber ball in the way in which he bounced back and forth between the Protestants and Catholics. He owes the distinguished honour that has come to him to his beard rather than to his histrionic abilities; he is the only native in the Marquesas—and, as far as is known, in all the South Pacific as well—with a growth of hair on his face.

"The part of Christ is taken by a native called Lurau"



The simple white robe worn by Lurau is in good keeping with his part, but this can hardly be said of a very tangible halo that has apparently been cut from a square of shiny biscuit tin, a piece of literalness, however, in which the simple islanders seem to see no trace of incongruity. In fact, this item of make-up was added, it is said, at the suggestion of a native who, after one of the early performances of the Play, led the stage-manager to a coloured print in the mission chapel and pointed out that the stage Christ had no such "fire-face" as distinguished the one in the lithograph. He suggested obtaining the halo effect by having the actor wear a lot of little *kukui* nut torches in his hair, but the cautious fathers, while acknowledging the realistic possibilities of this expedient, decided on the jagged rim of bright biscuit tin as safer.

During the week of the Play, both on and off the stage, Lurau is quiet, dignified and a general paragon of virtue in every particular; afterwards—he is just like all the rest of his brothers and sisters of the Marquesas, prone to excesses. Lurau's post-Passion Play spree is listed with the hurricane season as one of the regular annual [104] disturbances in those latitudes.

The second scene of the Play is that of the "Redemption of the Magdalen." The latter, dressed in a bright red *holakau* or wrapper—the symbol of her sinfulness—comes strolling in from the upstream side and discovers Christ resting on a niche of the rock which forms the back wall. Her repentance and forgiveness follow, after which Christ presents her with a pure white *holakau* which he chances to have tucked under his arm. She receives a blessing, trips off down stream, changes *holakaus* in the wink of an eye behind the friendly trunk of a bread-fruit tree, and the "curtain" follows her disappearance upstream in the trailing robe of white.

The Magdalen has been played by a different person almost every year. The one who took that part in the last presentation was, so Bruce Manners assured us, far better in the "red *holakau*" than in the "white *holakau*" part of her rôle, her work as a repentant sinner having been decidedly marred through a persistent tendency to ogle a group of young trading schooner officers who occupied a proscenium banyan.

For the "Supper" scene, no endeavour is made to reproduce a tableau patterned on the famous painting of Leonardo da Vinci. Historic truthfulness is not attempted even to the extent of a table. A bountiful repast of bread-fruit, plantains, yams and coconuts is spread out upon a cover of banana leaves, and everybody sits down cross-legged and eats for fully ten minutes before a word is spoken. Supper over, the remnants are gathered up and thrown into the convenient Ta-roo-la, the waters of which carry them away in a jiffy. Then follows the washing of the feet of the [105] disciples. Lurau wades over into the stream, seats himself on a convenient boulder, and as each of the disciples comes out in turn, gives both of the latter's feet a vigorous scrubbing with a brush of coco husk and a piece of soap. After receiving a blessing, the disciple heads for the bank, and as each lifts the skirt of his robe to clear the stream a well-defined "high-water mark," running in graceful undulations around his lower calf, is usually disclosed to the eyes of the audience.

The scene of "Christ Healing the Lepers" as presented at Uahuka is, perhaps, the most realistic tableau, in one particular at least, that is staged in any of the Passion Plays. Real lepers appear on the stage. In the early days of the Play these parts were taken by entirely whole and healthy people, but the missionaries were never able to persuade the natives that, with so many real lepers ready to hand, any make-believe in this particular need be indulged in. Finally several of the lepers themselves—Christian converts—came to the Fathers and asked what was the use of curing a lot of well people in the Play when there were so many sick ones about that really needed curing. This was hard to answer—to the satisfaction of the questioners—and the upshot of the matter was that a half dozen of the cases least liable to spread the dread disease were allowed upon the stage at the next performance. Following the week of the Play it is said that a very marked improvement was evident for several months in the condition of every one of the unfortunates that appeared during its continuance. Since that occasion the good missionaries have not had the heart to refuse the prayers of any of those who have come to them at Eastertide, until now it [106] is necessary to divide them off into squads of a score or so each, and allow a different squad to appear each night. The government doctor at Uahuka claims that there has been a marked decrease in the leper mortality of the island since this strange practice has been inaugurated, and that no serious consequences have followed the extraordinary mixing of the sick and the well at this season. No unnecessary chances are taken, however, and the good Lurau who, in his rôle of Christ, is more exposed than any of the others, receives special attention after each performance in the shape of a formaldehyde fumigation at the hands of the doctor.

One of the most interesting characters in the Play is Judas. From the first it has been the aim of the Fathers to impress the natives as strongly as possible with the real goodness or badness of the various characters, and to this end, in the case of Judas, the natives who have played the rôle have been repeatedly taken, on a temporary reprieve, from the convict settlement. Judas has always been a bad man, actually as

well as artistically, and it is recorded that no less than half a dozen of him have endeavoured to steal the thirty pieces of silver—in this case Mexican or Chilean dollars, which pass current in the island—with which he has been bribed. Of late years the thoughtful Fathers have removed this temptation by binding the bargain with a tinkling bagful of broken crockery.

The Judas of five or six years ago—one John Bascard, the half-caste son of an Australian trader and a native wife, who was serving a term for robbing a pearler—turned out almost as badly as his notorious original, for he looted the mission on the [107]
second night of the Play, rowed off with the Magdalen to a trading cutter anchored in the bay, surprised the solitary watchman, threw him overboard, and sailed the little boat off single-handed for the Paumotos, leaving the Play to limp on to a finish with half-trained understudies in two of the leading parts.

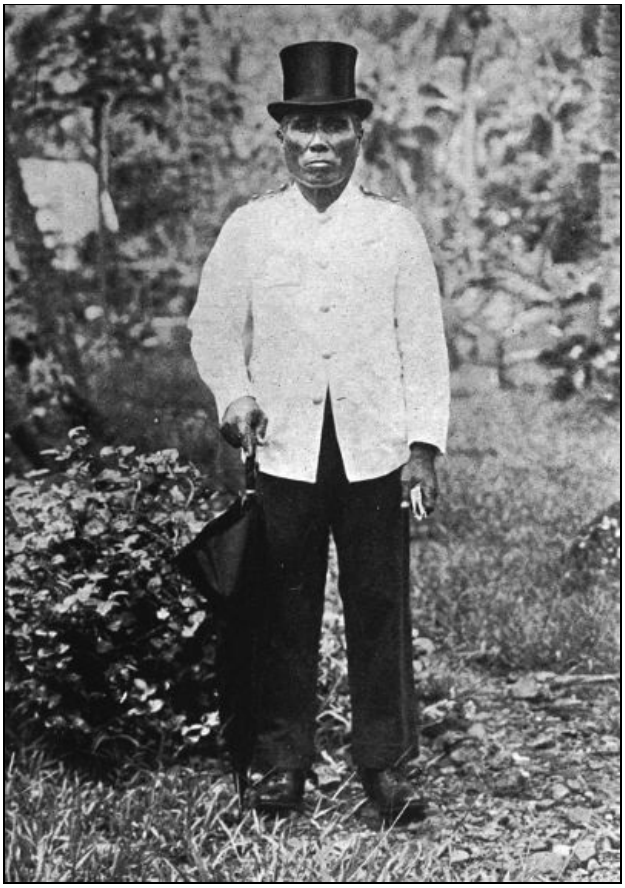
The part of Pontius Pilate has been played for nearly twenty years by an old chief—a quondam cannibal—named Rauga. His costume is a frogged military coat and a silk hat, the idea of the Fathers being to effect a combination that will make the deepest impression on the natives as symbolical of constituted power. The missionary and the French soldier are the two most august personages which their simple minds can conceive of, and the two most striking features of the costume of each, united upon one person, make an impression incomparably more profound than would a Roman toga topped off with an eagle-crowned helmet, or any of the other combinations that are worn by Pilate in the more pretentious Passion Plays. Rauga is inordinately proud of his part, and the honour of appearing in it has held him steadfastly Catholic in the face of active efforts by the Protestants to swing him, temporarily at least, over to their side.

The costume of John the Baptist is, as might be expected, that of a native novitiate—a black robe and a shovel hat. If Manners is to be believed, the unfortunate individual who was cast for that part a half dozen years back made a transient appearance in a somewhat modified garb. This was a "Brand-from-the-Burning" called Ma-woo, who had been converted a few months previously when the Fathers secured his parole [108]
from prison, where he had been serving a five-year sentence for illicit pearling. His most salient characteristic was an inordinate fondness for coco toddy, a circumstance which was taken advantage of by a couple of local traders to play a practical joke upon the missionaries, with whom their kind, in the Marquesas as elsewhere, have always been at open warfare. The present of a calabash of toddy to Ma-woo, with the promise of another later, putting him in a cheerfully obliging mood, he was rigged out in a ribbon-wide breech-clout, an old dress coat and a battered silk hat, and with a bulky volume of Sailing Directions under his arm was quietly conducted to the "stage entrance" of the banyan theatre just in time to respond to his "cue" in the John the Baptist tableau.

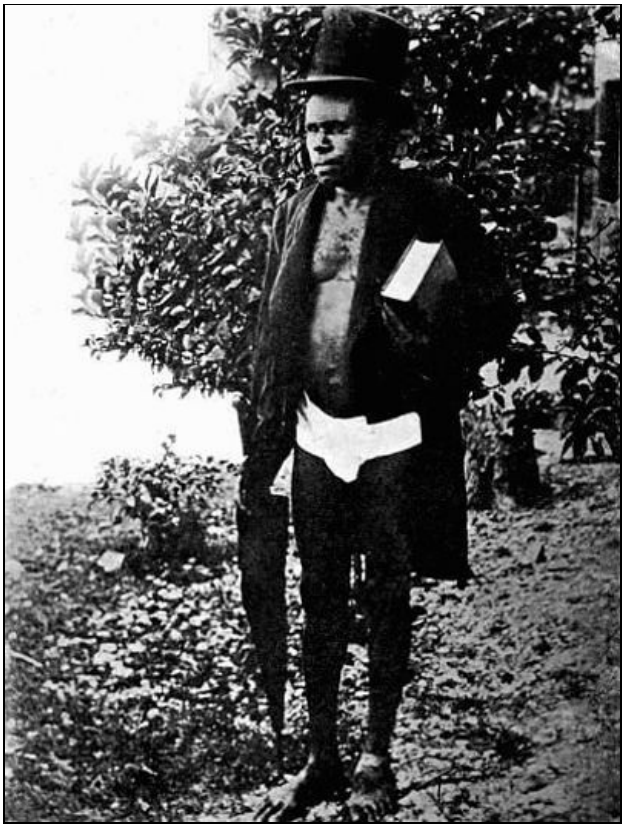
Manners gave me a photograph of unlucky Ma-woo, taken by one of the traders before they "sent him on his mission," and if it is really true, as is claimed, that John the Baptist appeared thus accoutred in his tableau in the Passion Play, one can easily believe our friend's assertion that two of the sisters fainted and that the Fathers caused the culprit to be thrown back into prison to serve the remainder of his sentence.

Ruth Ingalls, who has played the part of Mary, the Mother, for the last three years, is a half-white girl of unknown parentage. She is said to have a Junoesque figure, a face of rare beauty and a manner of real charm. She is about twenty-five years of age—fifteen years younger than Lurau, whose mother she is supposed to be in the Play—and has been directly under the care of the missionaries since the time when, a child of five, she was cast up on the beach of one of the Paumotos with the wreckage of a [109]
Tahitian trading schooner. She is supposed to be the illegitimate daughter of a French count—a fugitive from justice in Tahiti a quarter of a century ago—and the queen of the neighbouring island of Bora-Bora, a lady whose marital responsibilities appear to have rested as lightly upon her as blown foam upon the bosom of the Southeast Trade. But whatever her origin, Ruth Ingalls is, according to all accounts, a young person of unlimited balance and poise, has a good education, both as to languages and music, and is possessed of a quiet and modest disposition. She is, moreover, a good Christian in the highest sense of the name, and her work in the mission school has been of incalculable value to the Fathers. Her interpretation of the character of the Madonna is doubtless somewhat naïve, but is said, withal, to be surprisingly effective; her work in this part, indeed, being generally rated as the only thing in the Play worthy of the name of acting.

Mlle. Ingalls, it is claimed, is heart whole and fancy free, though they tell you in Papeete and Taio-haie that she has received offers of marriage from every bachelor missionary, sailor, official and trader that has ever come to Uahuka.



"Pontius Pilate has been played for twenty years by an old chief—a quondam cannibal"



"Just in time to respond to his 'cue' in the John the Baptist tableau"

CHAPTER VI

TAIO-HAIE TO PAPEETE

BEFORE leaving Nukahiva the four of us from the *Lurline*, under the guidance of our good friend McGrath, journeyed on pony-back across the island to visit Queen Mareu of Hatiheu. The road led over two 3,000-foot mountain passes and along the whole length of the incomparable Typee Valley, immortalized by Herman Melville, and though something like eight inches of rain fell during the nine hours we were in the saddle, there were ample intervals between cataclysms in which to glimpse the beauties by the way. Lovely as we had found Taio-haie and Typee, however, the glamour of their charms paled before the supreme grandeur of the bay of Hatiheu, the most sublime combination of mountain, vale, and sea that my eyes have ever rested on.

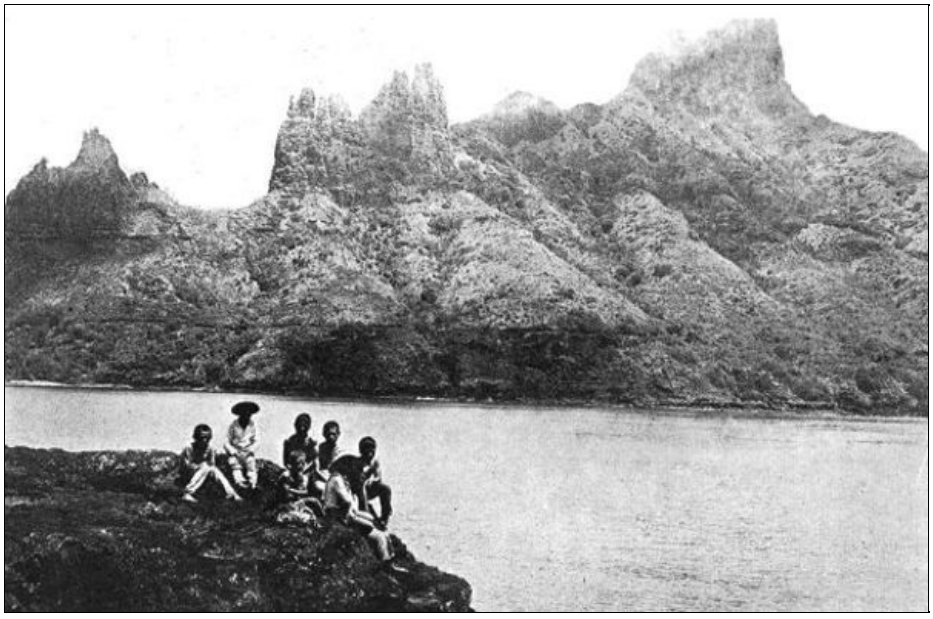
The cliff-girt bay of Hatiheu, like those others of Nature's superlatives, the Grand Cañon of the Colorado, the Victoria Falls of the Zambesi and the Himalayas from Darjeeling, is one of the kind of things that makes a man feel foolish to attempt to describe, and I pay my silent tribute in the thrill which never fails to stir my heart at the mention of the name. My photograph gives a suggestion—just a suggestion—of what a single *coup d'œil* reveals.

Hatiheu was McGrath's headquarters where, in addition to conducting a trading business with the natives, he appeared to act as a sort of "Lord Chamberlain" to the [111]
Queen. Her Highness seemed very fond of the attractive young Canadian, and told us that she never took action in important "affairs of state" without first securing his advice. His word appeared to be law in the village, and I never heard him give an order that was not instantly carried out. He told off a body servant to look after each of us during our visit to Hatiheu, the one allotted to Claribel being a grizzled old cannibal, with a black band like a highwayman's mask tattooed across his face, who gave her a stone knife which he swore he had himself used in carving "long-pig," and who wept disconsolately on her departure.

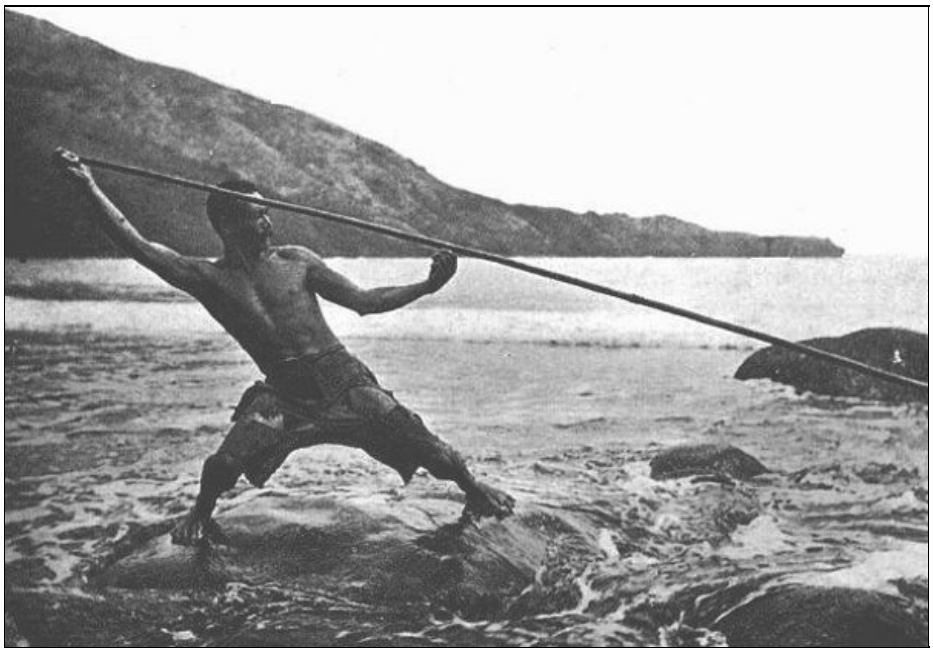
One morning McGrath took us down to the beach and showed us with justifiable pride a half-completed cutter—an open boat of about thirty feet in length designed to be rigged as a sloop—which he was building to use in picking up copra from other villages along the coast of the island. All of the wood used had been hewed from trees felled within a hundred feet of the beach, he told us, and all of the work was being done with his own hands. The Commodore discoursed learnedly on the lines and construction of the little craft, and the rest of us commended its builder for his industry and ingenuity. No one of us dreamed that we were looking at the frame of a boat which was destined shortly to make a voyage that must be rated for all time as one of the miracles of deep sea sailing.

Our intercourse with Queen Mareu was somewhat restricted as a result of having to be carried on through the medium of an interpreter. We found her a most personable young lady of about twenty-five, with a striking face and figure and a glint of sombre fire slumbering in the depths of her dark eyes that indicated temper or temperament, [112]
and probably both. She had ascended the "throne" a year previously, after her father, the late King, had slipped on a ripe mango in endeavouring to elude the charge of a wild bull he was hunting. Her manifest determination to rule her home as well as her people was responsible, it was said, for the flight to Tahiti of her husband—a young half-caste of little account—a month or two later. Since then she had ruled alone. Of what mind she was in the matter of taking a "Prince Consort," we were unable to learn; but a tender light in the sloe eyes when "Lord Chamberlain" McGrath was about might have furnished a clue to the trend of her intentions. Whatever these might have been, however, Fate, as far as the near future was concerned, had other plans incubating for the slender, blue-eyed trader to whom every one that came in contact with him seemed to become so much attached.

The print *holakau* or Mother Hubbard wrapper—which descended upon the South Seas with the missionaries—would ordinarily hardly be rated as a regal garment; but Mareu, with the sweeping lines of her Dianesque figure softly outlined by the clinging calico, carried hers as if it was a Grecian robe, and was distinctly—well, I noted that even the Commodore was keeping his weather eye lifting whenever she hove above the horizon. But she was at her best when, in a bathing suit improvised from a *pareo*, she sported with the gay abandon of a porpoise in a natural pool of pink and blue coral where the beach curved up to the base of the great cliff, or, perched cross-legged in the stern of her little out-rigger canoe, sent that slender craft, a sliver of shining silver, speeding through the surf-swept mazes of the outer [113]
reef. She was indeed a consummate canoeist—quite the best I have ever seen—and in the light of subsequent events I have often recalled the words with which McGrath once referred to her skill with the paddle.



"Hatiheu, the most sublime combination of mountain, vale and sea that my eyes have ever rested upon"



A Marquesan fisherman of Hatiheu

We watched from the thatched roofed veranda of McGrath's quarters one dewy-fresh morning when the whistling Trade had whipped up a more than usually stiff sea outside, the course of Mareu's canoe where, with Claribel as a passenger, she was shooting the breakers as they came booming in across the reef. Suddenly the even line of the horizon was blotted out by the loom of a roller of huge bulk and weight —"the Seventh Son of a Seventh Son," as the sailors call it when they don't use a stronger term.

"She'll hardly try that one," muttered McGrath decisively; "it's big enough to founder a war canoe." And then, as the helio flashes from the blade of a swiftly plied paddle told him his surmise was wrong, "Good God, there she goes!"

The canoe gathered momentum, hung for a few moments on the back of the mounting comber, and then "caught on" and commenced to race. Slowly the wave gathered itself together and, as the water shallowed above the edge of the reef, curled over and broke with a roar that rattled the glasses on the arms of our chairs. For an instant nothing was visible but foam and spray and tossing waters; then, clinging tenaciously to the comber's flying mane—as a panther, teeth in neck and safe from the animal's horns, rides the stag he has tackled—appeared the little canoe. On it darted like the flash of a sunbeam, a smoke of spray rising from its bows

and the floundering out-rigger trailing like a broken wing. Twice or thrice, as the tossing waters gave way beneath the prow and the slender craft seemed on the point of "somersaulting" over the breaker's brink, there came the flash of a steadying paddle and the equilibrium was restored. Now the roughest of the ride was over and a swift dash of a hundred yards remained before still water was reached. Claribel, game but chastened, still lay low in an instinctive endeavour to keep the centre of gravity down near the keel where it belonged; but Mareu, mad with the ecstasy of swift motion, leapt up to a hair-poised balance and, swathed in sheets of flying spray, finished the run after the fashion of that other Venus who was born of the sea-foam where the breakers travailed on the Cyprean coast.

I saw the Commodore lower his glass with a gesture of relief where he had watched with the Mater from the veranda of the Queen's "palace," but McGrath was only smiling.

"If there was a reef and a surf hedging in the jaws of hell, that girl would try and shoot the passage with never a thought for what she was going into beyond," he said evenly as he watched her beach the canoe and help Claribel to alight.

Absorbed in his thoughts, but still with his eye on the girl, McGrath poured himself another glass of absinthe. Disdaining the aid of a couple of her boat-pullers, she dumped the water from the canoe and hauled it up to its shelter of thatch above high-tide mark; then, like a spaniel that has finished its swim, she gave herself a vigorous shake, so that her wealth of glistening blue-black hair came tumbling down [115] and swathed her spray-wet body to the knees.

"And by God!—" McGrath gave vocal expression to the thoughts that were in his eyes —"with Mareu at the paddle I'd run the jaws of hell myself!"

I had no inkling at the time of the struggle that was going on in the man's heart, but later events, coupled with a recollection of those sudden passionate words, brought me to something of an understanding.

On the last day of our visit to Hatiheu the Queen gave a great feast to all of her subjects, the members of our party being the guests of honour. The food consisted of the usual run of Marquesan delicacies, but the *piece de resistance* was the great bull secured on the wild cattle hunt which McGrath finally succeeded in arranging at the last moment. It was cooked whole in a huge underground oven lined with stones, from which it was drawn in a condition to suit the taste of an epicure. Like the Mexican *barbecue*, this method of cooking results in meat that is delicious enough to counteract the dis-appetizing effects of the disgusting methods of handling it. McGrath kept a careful eye on the toddy calabashes, so that the feast, as Marquesan feasts go, was a very prim and proper affair. Claribel, who was in splendid voice, sang several English and Hawaiian songs, and finally, the Marseillaise, from the "palace" veranda. The latter, with which many of the natives appeared to be familiar, was received with tumultuous applause.

At the Queen's command a bevy of very comely misses from the mission school started a *himine* or hymn, to the tune of a couple of tom-toms and a concertina. [116] Others joined in, and by imperceptible degrees the air was changed until, almost before we knew what had happened, it had become a rollicking *hula*. The frantic protests of the Mother Superior passed unnoticed in the excitement, and not until that outraged individual had seized one of the recalcitrants (who, yielding to the delirious abandon of the seductive air, had begun to dance), and led her off by the ear was she able to re-establish her authority. The indignant Mareu, who had no love for the missionaries and who said she was just getting in a mood to dance herself, promptly declared in favour of bringing the spirited little singers back by force and letting the festivities go on; but the diplomatic McGrath, scenting "civil war" in the kingdom of Hatiheu, suggested that, as we all were to start at daybreak for the long ride back to Taio-haie, it might be well to turn in and get a few hours' sleep. The Queen continued obdurate and would probably have carried her point had not a heavy squall come roaring in from the ocean and driven the whole company to shelter.

My opportunities for studying the *hula* in Nukahiva, which was once famous as the home of the greatest dancers in the South Pacific, were so limited that it would be presumptuous of me to dogmatise. I might record the impression, however, that it is a spirited and soul-stirring performance, and has this in common with modern "ragging" and "jazzing" and "shimmy-ing," that it leaves nothing to the imagination on the points to which it is endeavouring to give expression. For this reason, if for no other, it may be worth preserving against the time when the Pampas, the Sahara and the Barbary Coast of California are incapable longer of giving a wriggle or a "writhe" [117] sufficiently suggestive to stir the jaded soul of Society. Pulses that have long refused to throb a beat faster in the tangle of the "tango," may yet have the life to quicken in the sensuous abandon of the Marquesan *hula*. And in fancy cannot one hear it all over again? "The 'Hatiheu Hug' and the 'Taio-haie Throttle'—who says they're disgusting? If one *wants* to dance them disgustingly, of course—" How long will it be, I wonder?

Queen Mareu and her retinue, Her Highness in a flowing habit of print and tapa and sitting an imported French side-saddle, accompanied us back to Taio-haie, and on the evening preceding our departure came off to the yacht for dinner and fireworks. Queen Taone of Anaho, who chanced to be visiting in Taio-haie, was another of the distinguished guests on this occasion. Besides royalty, invitations had been sent to every one of foreign blood on the island, and all, with the exception of John Hilyard, the tattooed man, had responded. French officialdom, brave in gold lace and with straggles of orders across its breasts, was out en masse; three of the genial Fathers from the Catholic mission, one of whom entertained us with several selections from "Faust," "Carmen" and "Trovatore," sung in a magnificent tenor, also honoured us with their presence, as did four officers from trading schooners in the harbour, two of whom were in pajamas and barefooted. Cramer, the German trader, was choking till his eyes bulged in the uniform of an officer of a Prussian cavalry regiment which he had worn as a slender youth, ten years before. McGrath put us all to shame by appearing in a dress suit, the fine cut of which puzzled me not a little until, later in [118]
the evening when he had thrown it aside in my cabin, I noticed a tab with "Poole" upon it on the inside of the collar.

Entertaining royalty is ordinarily a thing not lightly to be courted, but one has to get used to it in the South Pacific and after a while comes to take it quite as a matter of course. The principal accessories required are a phonograph or a music box, a cabin-ful of plate glass mirrors, plenty of cool drinks, a few cases of fireworks, unlimited bolts of print and an inexhaustible supply of barrels of salt beef and boxes of canned salmon. These items, properly used, will insure social success to the veriest tyro. In those calid latitudes, where everything else appears more or less *en deshabille*, court etiquette is also stripped of its surplus frills and, save for occasional disconcerting surprises, contains little to baffle the uninitiated.

Queen Mareu had dined with foreigners many times before and her manners were impeccable. Her Highness, Teona, had enjoyed fewer advantages than her sister sovereign of Hatiheu, but even she—except for a little bad luck in inhaling some champagne which she was endeavouring to make run down her throat and thereby inducing coughing fits which nothing but rolling on the carpet seemed to have any efficacy in checking—deported herself most creditably. She was, to be sure, irresistibly attracted by the agreeable salty taste of a long lock of her foretop which got into the soup in the opening round, so that she returned to it in all of the intervals between the courses which followed, and the careless informality of her action in emptying the contents of the bowl of lump sugar into the bosom of her [119]
holakau might have been greeted with raised eyebrows at Newport, or Cowes, or Cannes, but the quiet, unconscious dignity of it all proved that she was at least "to the manor born" in the South Pacific and quite disarmed criticism.

Dinner over, Queen Mareu retired to a reclining chair by the taffrail and sat apart, moody and distrait, all of the evening, not any too pleased, apparently, to have her handsome "Lord Chamberlain" so much monopolized by the visitors. Queen Teona, on the other hand, glad of the chance to become the centre of interest, was all smiles and animation. Seated at ease on the rail of the cockpit, with one dainty brown foot thrust through the spokes of the wheel and the other polishing the brass binnacle, she related—through Cramer as interpreter—stories which she had heard from her grandfather of the time when Nukahiva was the rendezvous of the Pacific whaling fleet, tales only less terrible than those of the days when the buccaneers held high revel in the old cannibal feast ground at Hatiheu; recitals, in fact, which I rather fancy the shrewd Teuton toned down considerably in translation.

At little tables on the quarter deck the French officers mixed cool green drinks from specially-provided bottles of absinthe, and in the cabin, bowed over a chart, the trading captains gave the Commodore careful directions for threading the passages of the treacherous Paumotos. On the forward deck Their Highnesses' retinues fraternized with the *Lurline's* crew over a case of Yankee beer, now the sailors raising their voices in a chantey, now the natives in a *himine*, and now both together [120]
in indiscriminate "chantey-himines" and "himine-chanteys."

In the whole cruise's necklace of tropical nights that one shines forth with a sparkle all its own. As the afterglow faded above the opaque mass of cliffs behind the village, the trade-wind shifted slightly and came to us across the blossom-clothed spurs to the southeast, suffusing, as with a draught of incense from the open door of an Eastern temple, the whole hollow of the bay in the drowsy perfume of the yellow *cassi*. As the purple shadows banked deeper on the ebony water and night crept out from the black valleys of the mountains lights began twinkling here and there in the bush, and presently the lines of the verandas of the official residence were picked out in rows of coloured lanterns. The surf broke uproariously along the shore in bursts of phosphorescent flame, and in its pauses the barbaric cadences of *himines* and *hulas* floated out to us across the star-paved surface of the bay. On this, though they seemed to tickle the royal fancies, the fireworks broke somewhat in the nature of an anti-climax.

To the good Teona's passion for "seeing the wheels go round" was due the fact that the fireworks tickled something besides her royal fancy. She had been permitted to pull the lanyard of the signal gun for half a dozen salutes, to put the match to several kicking rockets, and had just touched off her second fistful of Roman candles when the trouble occurred. The paper tubes were popping forth their multi-coloured contents in blazing showers when Her Highness, her face ashine with perspiration and pleasure, reversed them in an ill-advised attempt to see where the bright little balls came from. [121]

In an instant a good half dozen or more of the purple pellets had popped into the neck of the unlucky queen's voluminous *holakau*, seeking extinguishment somewhere in the oil-glistening reaches of Her Highness' plump shoulders. That the sufferer raked, as with a gatling gun, the rest of the party with her sputtering candles in the pain and consternation of the first touch of the burning balls of calcium is hardly to be wondered at under the circumstances; and it only made the more admirable the manner in which she pulled herself together and tossed the spitting fire-sticks overboard before dignifiedly retiring down the gangway to bathe her burns in salt water. Later in the evening she rose to another trying emergency with equal aplomb in seizing an erupting ginger ale bottle from one of her befuddled hand-maidens and smothering it in the latter's flowered *pareo* in order to save the dignity and the gold-laced uniform of the Residente who, being corpulent, had become temporarily wedged in his deck chair and was unable to dodge the sizzling amber jet. This, I may mention, was only the forerunner of many trying experiences that were in store for us as the result of the violent unrest that enters into the contents of a bottle of champagne or mineral water that is carried in imperfectly protected lockers on tropical seas.

At noon, on the 15th of April, the *Nukahiva*, a French schooner of about seventy tons —the "greyhound" of the Marquesan trading fleet—hove up anchor and got under weigh for the entrance with the courteously avowed intention of showing us the way to Tahiti. [122]

"*Venez nous voir en arrivant a Papeete!*" her captain shouted as she came up past us and went about; and "*Merci—avec plasir!*" we faltered back as we waved him a vigorous *au revoir* with our napkins from the companionway.

At one o'clock we were under weigh ourselves, beating out against such baffling puffs of the trade-wind as found their way to the inner bay. Sailing within four points of the wind in the smooth water of the narrow passage, by two o'clock *Lurline* had overcome the hour's lead of the *Nukahiva*, and a few minutes later passed ahead and well to the windward of her through the "Sentinels."

A number of our newly-made friends had come down to the beach to wave us bon voyage, but the one to whom our glasses turned the oftenest was a white clad figure that had stood immovable under the shade of a coco palm while the yacht was in sight and which, as the southerly "Sentinel" began to blot our tower of sail, had sunk down into a dejected heap upon the coral clinkers. The memories and the thoughts of the "Outside World" which our coming had conjured up for McGrath, the man who was trying to forget the "Outside World," had proved almost too much for him.

That pathetic little white heap on the beach of Taio-haie was the last we ever saw of the young trader who had done so much to make our visit to Nukahiva a memorable one, and whom we had all come to like so well. Some weeks later, in Tahiti, I received a letter from Cramer telling how McGrath, accompanied by a single native boy and with a pitifully small stock of provisions, had been blown off to sea during a storm in the little cutter he was building when we were at Hatiheu, and had been given up for lost. And it was as lost that we mourned our good friend during all the rest of the cruise and for many months afterward until, one day, came the following letter, written from Tahiti: (I give the essential parts of it verbatim for the especial benefit of those yachtsmen who are prone to feel themselves the victims of hard luck at having to spend a summer night out of port in a snug, decked-over forty-footer.) [123]

> "I have had a rather exciting time of it for the last six months, having been blown away from the Marquesas group in the little boat which I was building when you called at the islands. It was owing to the unshipping of the rudder, and as the boat had an overhanging stern it was impossible for us to re-ship it for four days, owing to the heavy sea. We had no oars with which to guide the boat, otherwise I might have fetched the lee of Nukahiva. We were more than two hundred miles west of the group when we finally succeeded in getting the rudder repaired, and had but a gallon of water left. As it then fell calm I decided to run for Caroline, with the breeze and strong current in our favour, and made the island O.K. within an hour of the time I calculated. To say that I had a hell of a time is putting it mildly. After trying twice to make Tahiti, and running into a southeast gale each time, I ran for Samoa, and the last five days of the run had the full

force of the hurricane which swept the whole of the South Pacific from June 12th to 18th. It was so fierce that the *Sierra*—a 6,300-ton steamer of the American-Australian Line—was blown away from the Samoas and could not effect an entrance. Several vessels were piled up in the neighbourhood of Samoa, and many dismasted; yet my boy and I lived it out in a perfectly open boat. [124]

"We were blown away on the 7th of May, and made Tutuila on the 18th of June, after having sailed more than 3,000 miles. The boat filled once, twelve miles from Pago Pago, and almost sank, but we threw everything overboard to lighten her, baled her out, and then slashed her through it with reefed foresail. She was the finest sea boat that ever split a wave, and at Samoa beat a twenty-tone schooner seventeen hours in a gale of wind from Savaii to Apia—a dead beat of sixty miles."

McGrath's letter went on to tell of how he had sold his little cutter in Samoa, journeyed to Sydney by steamer, travelled for some months in Australasia, and was finally in Tahiti en voyage to his old post in the Marquesas. Subsequent letters received by the Commodore from Tahiti were calculated to cast considerable doubt on McGrath's story of having been blown away from Nukahiva in a storm, and hinted at shortages of accounts and other things. It is quite possible these charges are true—it will make no difference with our memory of the man if they are—but if they are, the question that suggests itself is, "Why did McGrath, after successfully reaching Australia, come back again to the Marquesas?" At last accounts he was back under the shadow of the great cliffs of Hatiheu where, I sincerely hope, his high-strung spirit has ceased to be troubled by the conflicting impulses to which he was a prey during the final days of our visit to Nukahiva. The story of McGrath cannot be told yet, for the reason that one of the strangest of its drama is still unplayed; when it is written, if ever, I have gleaned just enough of what has gone before to know that the record will be one of the most remarkable that has ever been given to the world. [125]

Of McGrath's voyage in an open boat from the Marquesas to Samoa, I will comment here no more than to say that, whether he was cast away or deliberately embarked upon it, it has gone on record as one of the most remarkable achievements of its kind in marine history. The *Lurline* encountered, between Samoa and Fiji, the same hurricane which McGrath refers to in his letter, and when I describe that stupendous disturbance as it appeared to us on one of the staunchest ninety-footers ever built, I will also call attention to the fact that, five hundred miles to the northeast, a white man and a Marquesan boy, half dead from lack of food and sleep, were pointing up the prow of a pitiful little thirty-foot open cutter to the same mountainous seas and roaring winds.

Clearing the harbour of Taio-haie, sheets were slacked off and, with a strong beam wind, we bowled away on a S.W. ½ S. course at a gait which presaged a lively passage if it could be kept up. At 3:15 we took our departure with the conspicuous Cape Maartens bearing N.E. and an unnamed point on the west end of the island N. by W. At this time the *Nukahiva* was already hull down astern. [126]

Encouraged by the first prospect of a steady and favourable slant of wind since we left San Pedro, a good spread of sail was hoisted, which, as the barometer was high and the sky unthreatening, it was hoped could be carried all night. The sea was light, and in a gushingly fresh wind the yacht reeled off ten and eleven knots an hour all through the first watch. The breeze fell lighter after midnight, however, and squalls in the morning and early forenoon made it impossible to carry the light sails, considering which the run of 195 miles for the twenty-two hours ending at noon of the 16th was very creditable work.

By the afternoon of the 16th we were clear of the treacherous squall belt around the islands, and the strong, steady Trade from the E.S.E. drove the yacht along at an almost undeviating speed, the log varying scarcely two-tenths from ten knots for any hour. Toward evening the benefit of a strengthening wind was offset by a rising sea, and through the latter hours of the night we proceeded under shortened sail. At daybreak the light sails were clapped on again and for several hours of the forenoon but a shade under eleven knots was averaged. At noon the dead-reckoning showed close to 230 miles logged in the last twenty-four hours, and when the position by observation was figured it appeared that a favourable set of current had added enough to this to bring the day's run up to an even 240 miles. The temperature of the air was 86° this day—the highest recorded during the voyage—and that of the water was 82°.

At four o'clock on the afternoon of the 17th a ragtag of fringe was reported off to the S.S.W., and word went around that we were sighting the first of the dread Paumotos. [127]

This group—often down on the charts as the Tuamotu, Low or Dangerous Archipelago,—is a cluster of a hundred or more coral atolls covering several degrees of both latitude and longitude of the extreme southwest corner of Polynesia. They are noted for their treacherous currents and terrific hurricanes, and are reputed to have had more schooners piled up on their white coral beaches than any other half dozen groups in the South Pacific. The name is a byword for all that is bad with every skipper who has sailed among them, and "*Aussi sâle que dans ces maudits Paumotos*" is the last degree of superlative in describing desperate navigating conditions. Of harbours there is none save the lagoons of the atolls themselves, and the entrances to these are so narrow and so beset by currents that the passage of them is almost impossible except at the turn of the tide, and is highly dangerous even then. Once inside the lagoon, however, the protection from everything but hurricanes is perfect.

The average life of a trading or pearling schooner in the Paumotos is but four or five years, and so notoriously world-wide is their reputation as a marine graveyard that neither in Europe, Australia nor America can a ship be insured that is plying in their trade. It is even the custom to insert in the policy of a vessel running to adjacent islands a clause declaring that no insurance will be paid should the ship, by any chance, be lost in the Paumotos.

The island we had sighted turned out to be Ahii, one of the largest of the group, and by five o'clock it had grown from a colourless horizontal blur to a solid wall of white [128] and brown and green, where the snowy beach ran up to the dark boles of the coco palms, and these in turn ran out in fringes of lacquered verdancy. At a distance of half a mile our course was altered slightly to parallel that of the shore line, and in a rapidly smoothing sea, but with an unabated breeze, we began running down the low, even leeward coast of the strange island. From the deck only the coco palm barrier, a tossing mass of up-ended feather dusters, met the eye to windward, but from the shrouds, through rifts in the line, could be seen great green gashes of the smooth lagoon. Farther still, in blended brown and olive, the windward rim of the island stood out sharply against a vivid turquoise ribbon of open sea, itself defined against a dusky mass of cumulo-nimbus that was rolling in before the Trade from the southeast.

Here followed a spell of the prettiest sailing that the good *Lurline*, sapient of the seas of many latitudes, ever did, or probably ever will do. We were sufficiently close to the steep-to lee shore of the great atoll to be sailing in a sea as smooth as the land-locked lagoon itself, yet at the same time were far enough beyond the barrier of the coco palms still to enjoy the full force of a moderately strong and remarkably steady breeze. We were anxious not to get too far in among the islands during the night, and for this reason no light sails were set; yet under mainsail, foresail, forestay-sail and jib the log was shortly spinning up mile after mile with six minutes and less of interval between each bell.

The wind was on the port beam, and blowing so smoothly that the yacht, unshaken by the lift or slap of waves, held to her even heel as though chocked over in the ways. [129] Of pitch or roll or shiver there was no sign, and for all the motion but that swift, undeviating forward glide, she might have been frozen up in a fresh water lake. She simply shore her way through the water as a draper's clerk runs his unworked scissors down a length of silk.

At dinner in the cabin the unprecedented stillness was almost oppressive. The familiar creaking of the inlaying on the mainmast at the head of the table was no longer heard, nor the crash of waves and the rattle of spray to windward, nor the shrill of spinning sheaves and the rat-a-tat of the foresheet block on the deck. The only sounds were unwonted ones—the tick of the cabin clock, the rattle of pans in the galley, the not over-elegant flow of post-prandial conversation in the forecastle, and running through all, the hissing rush of the water along the sides.

The sun had set while we were at dinner, and the afterglow, in swift tropic transitions, had flamed and faded and flamed again, and was fading out for the last time as we came on deck. The sea to the west still glimmered here and there in patches of dull rose from the reflections of a few still-lighted tufts of cirrus cloud. North and south it was darkly purple, shading to a misty slatiness where water and sky merged in banks of low-hanging strati, and east to the island it lay dead and opaque, save for the spots where it was pricked into life by the images of the brightening stars. Overhead the Pleiades and Orion's Belt and Sirius, the Dog Star, were turning from pale yellow to orange, and from orange to lambent gold; to the north the Big Dipper, half submerged in the sea, was tipping up slowly to pour out its [130] nocturnal libation to its stately *vis-à-vis*, the Southern Cross. And under it all, swiftly, silently, mysteriously as the Flying Dutchman, her track marked for a mile astern by a comet-like wake of vivid gold, *Lurline* went slipping down the lee of the long atoll at an easy, even, effortless ten knots an hour.

Presently, just as twilight was giving way to full darkness, a red light was reported crossing our bows, and we shortly made out a two-masted schooner beating in toward the entrance to the lagoon, nearly opposite to which we were then sailing. Several times across the still water came the strangely mixed jumble of French and Kanaka and English orders, mingling with the creak of booms as she was put about,

and finally the voice of the skipper cursing fluently because the tide was running faster in the passage than was to his apparent taste. Then a great yellow moon got up and sat upon the farther fringe of the lagoon, and back and forth across the face of it we watched the little schooner beat in safely through the narrow passage. As she left the moon path a bonfire sprang into life somewhere upon the inner beach, and through the serried ranks of the coco palms we saw her pink sails crumple up as halyards were let go, while the sharp staccato of a chain running through a hawse pipe floating down the wind told that she had won her anchorage.

At nine o'clock it was decided to pass to the west of the island of Rangaroa, instead of to the east as had been our intention, and to this end the course was altered to W. by S. To minimize the chance of overrunning our reckoning in the treacherous currents and thereby piling up the yacht on the beach of Tikehau which lay beyond [131]
Rangaroa, foresail and jib were furled, only the mainsail and forestay-sail remaining set. Even under this greatly reduced sail seven knots an hour were averaged all night, daybreak finding us off the northwest corner of Rangaroa. Down the lee of this island—under sailing conditions only less perfect than those of the previous evening—we ran all the forenoon of the 18th, sinking its southwest corner early in the afternoon, just as we raised a peak of the combined coral and volcanic island of Makatea.

Makatea is famous as having been the rendezvous of the notorious Marquesan half-caste, Boraki, quite the most picturesque pirate who ever operated in that corner of the South Pacific. The story of the retributive justice which overtook Boraki while endeavouring to cut out and capture a missionary schooner sent to conciliate and convert him is one of the most amazing yarns ever told, and the antithetic variations of it that come from the opposite poles of "traderdom" and "missiondom" are alone worth journeying to the South Seas to listen to. I shall endeavour, later, to set down the account we heard—from the lips of one of the principal actors in the remarkable drama—on a memorable evening when the yacht lay at anchor in Suva Bay, Fiji.

As day broke on the 19th the mist-wreathed peak of Orohena, the backbone of Tahiti, took form a point or two off the port bow, and a little later the jumbled skyline of Moorea began to appear in a similar position to starboard. The sun rose gorgeously behind a flank of the larger island, the blazing southeast setting off in marvellous silhouette the matchless "Diadem," the crown jewel of all Tahiti's beauty. "The [132]
Diadem" is the name given to a row of little peaks occupying the divide between the two great volcanoes that dominate the east and west ends of the island. They are so symmetrically and evenly set that the most unimaginative cannot fail to see their resemblance to the points of a king's crown, a likeness all the more striking when each point is tipped with gold and the whole surmounted with a halo of light from the rising sun.

At seven o'clock the tall, white pillar of the Point Venus Light—so called because Captain Cook took his observations of the transit of the planet Venus from this promontory on June 3rd, 1769—could be discerned towering above the coco palms that engulfed its base, and an hour later it was abeam, with the bay of Papeete opening up beyond. This name, meaning "Basket of Water," gives a comprehensive description of Tahiti's chief harbour. The bay itself is but half land-locked by the mainland, but across what would otherwise be a comparatively open roadstead runs a partially submerged reef, which, except for the narrowest of passages, completely cuts it off from the sea. Inside is a mile of deep water and a shore so bold-to that the trading schooners tie up to the trees and load from and discharge to the bank.

At 8:30 we were off the entrance, and, as the sailing directions were plain and the marks unmistakable, the Commodore decided to go in without a pilot. The wind, which we had carried on our port quarter since daybreak, was brought up abeam as we altered our course and headed into the passage. It blew strongly and steadily, and to the nine or ten-knot gait at which it was driving us was added the four or five-knot [133]
run of a flood tide. The yacht raced through the passage, as the Port Captain shortly tried to tell us in broken English, "like ze diable try catch her," and during all of our stay in the island we were constantly called upon to deny the persistent rumour that she was equipped with power. Several who witnessed our entrance from the shore even went so far as to aver that they distinctly saw blue smoke trailing off astern, a phenomenon which never came nearer to explanation than when Gus, a big Swede of the mate's watch who was at the wheel on the occasion in question, admitted that he did "sware a leetle when she go joost lak hell" out of sheer excitement.

We anchored a couple of cable's lengths off the British Consulate, having made the 800 miles from Nukahiva in a little over three and three-quarters days, eleven hours of which were run under mainsail and forestay-sail only in the lee of Rangaroa. The best previous record was between four and five days.

CHAPTER VII [134]

CIRCLING TAHITI

THE island of Tahiti has been the best known, or rather the most talked-about, point in the South Pacific since those latitudes were added to the mapped sections of the world. From the time that the much-maundered-over mutiny of the *Bounty* furnished the theme for Byron's "Island," and later events conspired to produce Hermann Melville's charming "Omoo" and Pierre Loti's idyllic "Rarahue," down to the more numerous but less finished efforts of recent years, Tahiti has been the inspiration for more literary endeavour, good and bad, than all the rest of Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia combined. Undoubtedly it has had more than its share of publicity—latterly, largely because it is so easily and comfortably reached from both America and Australia—but the fact remains that it is uniquely—if not quite unmixedly—charming, and that it is perhaps better fitted to minister to the creature comforts of the visitor than any other of its sister islands of the South Pacific.

Civilization in the form of the galvanized iron roof, the glass window, the missionary, the *holakau* or Mother Hubbard wrapper and the whisky bottle has thrown its coldly corrective influence over the native life of Tahiti; but if it is the Kanaka in his pristine purity that one is seeking, Moorea and Bora-Bora—both in the Society Group—and the Paumotos and Marquesas are close at hand, and any of these the venturesome may reach by trading schooner, even if he is not so fortunate as to have a yacht at his disposal. [135]

Chief item in the visitor's program in Tahiti—after he has called on the Governor, appeared at the Club and spent a small sack of Chilean *pesos* to see a *hula* which has been so completely "expurgated and legalized" as to make a Maypole dance on the green in his old home appear Bacchanalian by comparison—is the hundred-mile drive around the island. The roads are bad over half the way and the vehicles all the way, but the ride unfolds such an unending panorama of sea, surf and lagoon; of beach and reef; of mountain, cliff and crag; of torrent, cascade and waterfall, and of reckless, riotous, onrushing tropical vegetation as can be found along few, if any, similar stretches of road elsewhere in the world. Our drive, in the company of the American Consul, William Doty, and his sister, on which we were entertained each day by a different district chief with specially-arranged surf-rides, feasts, dances and *himines*, was one unbroken succession of new and delightful sensations.

At Tautira, the village second in importance to Papeete, we were the guest for three days of the suave and dignified old Ori, a chief who was once the host of the Stevensons for many weeks, and who, on occasion, fairly bubbled with piquant anecdotes of the great novelist. Returning down the leeward side of the island, we spent a day and a night with the wealthy Teta-nui in a big, comfortable two-story house which might have passed for a Southern plantation home of the ante-bellum days, and also found time to accept a luncheon invitation from the scholarly Tau-te Salmon, relation of the late King Pomare, university man and, on the occasion of his visits abroad, the fêted guest of Washington, London and Paris. [136]

Tahitian driving comes pretty near to being the most reckless thing of the kind in my experience. It really isn't driving at all; "herding" is a more appropriate term. If your vehicle has more than one seat there will be three or four horses to haul it, driven "spike" in the former case, by twos in the latter. These animals are attached to the rig by traces that run to their collars, which, with the reins, constitute all there is to the harness. There is nothing in the nature of breeching for holding back, and, as the vehicle never has a brake, there is no way the wheel horses can save their heels but by beating it down the hills. A good driver will handle two horses unaided; beyond that number a boy is required upon the back of each additional one. With your driver and post boys wearing each a gaudy hibiscus or *tiaré* behind his ear, with their braided whips cracking merrily at everything from stray dogs and blossoms to the horses' ears and each other, and with all of them raising their voices in *himine* after *himine* with the indefatigability of a frog-pond chorus, your progress, on the score of picturesqueness at least, has no odds to ask of a Roman Triumph.

We decided to make the circuit by starting to windward and taking the roughest part of the road first. In a mile or two the last straggling Papeetan suburb had been left behind, the tall pillar of the Point Venus lighthouse was passed, and the road, plunging into the half-light of the jungle, became a grassy track. Here and there were breaks in the encompassing walls of verdure, and through them we had transient glimpses of the landscape—"that smiling Tahitian landscape where the weeds laugh at the idea of road boundaries; where the sea, disdaining regular shoreline, straggles aimlessly among its hundred islets; where the mountains flaunt all known laws of natural architecture and the wind disdains regular blasts; where the sun, as careless as the rest, shines one moment above the palm fronds as clear as frosted silver, and the next hides completely behind the lowering mask of a black cloud—a kingdom of *laissez-faire*." [137]

In the seventy-five miles from Papeete to Tautira by the windward route there is an average of more than one stream for every mile, and not a single bridge in the whole distance. As this side of the island has an inch or more of rain daily for most of the year, it may be understood that many of the streams are formidable torrents and by

no means easily forded. The approved way of crossing, especially if you have a spirited driver and horses and are not without spirit yourself, is to join your Jehu and the postillions in their cannibal war-whoops and endeavour to take the obstacle like a water-jump in a steeple-chase. Now and then—just often enough to keep you from becoming discouraged and adopting more conservative tactics—your outfit, smothered in flying gravel and sun-kissed spray, reaches the farther bank and goes reeling on its course; usually a wheel hits a boulder and you stop short; and here is where the synthetically constructed harnesses—bits of old straps, wire, tough strands of liana and vegetable fibre—vindicate their existence.

[138] Nothing short of a charge of dynamite will move the boulder against which the near wheel is securely jammed. With the horses going berserk at thirty miles an hour, therefore, something has to give way, and the Tahitian has wisely figured that it is easier to patch a harness than a wagon. So it happens that when the latter is brought up short in midstream, the harnesses dissolve like webs of gossamer and the horses pop out of them and go on ahead. The driver, and any one who chances to be on the front seat with him, usually follows the horses for a few yards; those upon the back seats telescope upon one another. The assistance of wayfaring natives is almost imperative at this juncture and, strange to tell, with the infallibility of St. Bernard dogs in children's Alpine stories, they always seem to turn up at the psychologic moment.

From one such predicament our party was rescued by a bevy of girls on their way to market. These, after a short spell of not unpardonable mirth had subsided, manfully tucked up their *pareos*, put their sturdy brown shoulders to the wheels and literally lifted the whole outfit through to the bank. An hour later, after a similar mishap, we were all carried ashore on the broad coconut-oiled backs of the half-intoxicated members of a party of revellers, who left a *hula* unfinished to rush to the rescue. They were all real "mitinaire boys," they said, and were "ver' glad to help Chris'yun white vis'tor." And to show that these were not idle words, they offered to carry us all across the stream and back again in pure good fellowship.

[139] One of them, in fact, a six-foot Apollo with his matted hair rakishly topped with a coronal of white *tiare*, had Claribel over his shoulder and half way down the bank before we could convince him that we were fully assured of his good will without further demonstration. The imperturbable Claribel, having been "cannibal broke" in the Marquesas, accepted the impetuous gallantry with the philosophical passivity of the sack of copra she might have been for all the Kanaka Lochinvar's care in keeping her right side up. This was our only experience of anything approaching a lack of courtesy in a Tahitian, and the victim's charitable interpretation of the act as a mistaken kindness saved the offender from even being denied participation in the division of a handful of coppers.

Hiteaea, a village situated half way down the windward side of the island from Papeete, is as lovely as a steamship company's folder description; the kind of a place you have always suspected never existed outside the imagination of a drop-curtain painter. Half of the settlement is smothered in giant bamboos, curving and feather-tipped, and the remainder in flamboyant, frangipani and *burao* trees, which carpet the ground inches deep with blossoms of scarlet, waxy cream and pale gold. Nothing less strong than the persistent southeast Trade-wind could furnish the place with air; nothing less bright than the equatorial sun could pierce the dense curtains with shafts of light. Toward the sea the jungle thins and in a palm-dotted clearing, walled in with flowering stephanosis and *tiare*, are the brown thatched houses of the Chief. A rolling natural lawn leads down to the beach of shining coral clinkers, which curves about a lagoon reflecting the blended shades of lapis lazuli, chrysoprase and pale jade. A froth-white lace collar of surf reveals the outer reef, and across the cloud-[140] mottled indigo sea loom the fantastic heights of the mountains and cliffs behind Tautira.

The squealing of chased pigs and the squawk of captured chickens welled up to our ears as we topped the last divide and saw the blue smoke of the Hiteaea flesh-pots filtering through the green curtain which still hid the village from our sight, sounds which, to the trained ears of our island friends, the Dotys, told that their messenger had carried the news of our coming and that fitting preparations were being made for our reception. The wayfarer in colder, greyer climes sings of the emotions awakened in his breast by the "watch-dog's deep-mouthed welcome" as he draws near home, or of the "lamp in the window" which is waiting for him; to the Tahitian traveller all that the dog and the lamp express, and a deal more besides, is carried in the dying wails of pigs and chickens, the inevitable signal of rushed preparations for expected visitors.

Our driver and post-boys answered the signal with a glad chorus of yells, and the jaded horses, a moment before drooping from the stiff climb to the summit of the divide, galvanized into life and dashed off down the serpentine trough of roots and tussocks which answered for a road at a rate which kept the tugs connecting them to the madly pursuing chariot straightened all the way to the beach. Some of us were shouting with excitement, some with fright, and some of the less stoical—at the buffets dealt them by the half-padded cushions and the swaying sides—even with

pain. Most of the unsecured baggage—cameras, suitcases, hand-bags, phonograph records and the like—went flying off like nebulæ in our comet-like wake; a man with a load of plantain was knocked sprawling, a litter of pigs ground under foot, a flock [141] of ducks parted down the middle and a bevy of babies just avoided, before we brought up in a shower of tinkling coral at the door of the Chief's house. It was as spectacular an entry as even our postboys could have desired, but our garrulous gratulation was checked an instant later when two grave faced young women in black *holakaus* came out to tell us that their father, the Chief, had died the night before.

The good souls, in spite of their sorrow and the endless amount of ceremony and preparation incident to the funeral of a Tahitian chief, had made all the arrangements to accommodate us for the night, and would neither permit us to take the road again for Terevao, nor to put up with anything less than the best that Hiteaea had to offer. So the evening of feasting which would ordinarily have been our portion, was dispensed with, and we spent the night quietly and comfortably in the house of mourning.

Beyond Hiteaea the road dips into the vanilla bean zone, and from there to the Taiarapu Isthmus the gushing Trade-wind smites the nostrils like a blast from a pastry cook's oven. Vanilla is one of Tahiti's budding industries, and like everything else industrial in the Societies, seems likely not to get far beyond the budding stage. The vanilla vine requires little but heat, moisture, a tree to climb upon and a little care. The natural conditions are near ideal in the jungle sections of Tahiti, but the hitch has come on the score of care.

A number of Chinamen, with plantations small enough to allow them to do their own work, are making a considerable success of vanilla, but where Kanakas have had to [142] be employed there has been nothing but failure. A native set to pollenize a lot of vines—this has to be done artificially in Tahiti on account of the absence of the insects which perform that service in other countries—is more likely than not to pick the orchidlike flowers to chew or stick behind his ear, or to weave the new tendrils into garlands for his Olympian brow. They tell you in Papeete that the vanilla industry is not flourishing because of the increasing use of artificial flavouring extracts in America; the real reason for its backwardness is the non-use of an artificial—or any other kind of—labour extractor on the Kanaka.

At the Isthmus of Terevao the girdling highway swings back down the leeward side of the island to Papeete. Tautira is reached by a spur which is, however, much better maintained than portions of the main road. The bush is not so dense in this part of the island as along the road we had just traversed, but the mountains, especially in the vicinity of Tautira, assume an even wilder aspect than any down to windward. Knife-pointed pinnacles of every conceivable shade of blue, green and purple are tossed together in an aimless jumble, showing the skyline of a battered saw. Here a mountain has been rent by some Titan to let a river through; there a mountain has refused to rend and a river closes its eyes and launches itself over a thousand-foot cliff, paling with terror as it realizes the magnitude of its leap and changing from a bar of green jade to a fluttering scarf of grey satin, finally to collapse into a rumple of white gossamer where the jungle riots in shimmering verdancy against the foot of the cliff.

Unfathomable gorges with overhanging sides tunnel into the hearts of unclimbable [143] mountains; sheer precipices drop curtains of creepers that dangle their be-tasselled skirts in the quiet river reaches hundreds of feet below; ghostly castles, scarped and buttressed and battlemented, now of mist-wreathed rock, now of rockpierced mist, fade and reappear with the shifting of the curtains of the clouds; and above is the flaming, sun-shot sky, below the wind-tossed, diamond-sprinkled ocean. Very pertinent was Claribel's observation in point.

"What does the Frenchman want of absinthe and the Chinaman of opium when they both have a place like this to look upon?" she ejaculated between jolts as we bounded along between the mountains and the sea on this last lap of the outward journey; "it is a dream that nothing but a flying Tahitian chariot brought up short by a four-foot mid-river boulder can bring you out of."

An instant later the very thing which Claribel had defined as alone being equal to waking one from his dream of the mountains had eventuated, and because the left fore wheel had been called upon to stand more than its share of such jolts, it dished up like a closed umbrella, collapsed, and precipitated every one and everything in the long-suffering old vehicle into the water. Luckily, Tautira, our destination, lay just beyond the farther bank and, salvaging a couple of bags containing changes of only slightly wet clothes, we waded out and proceeded on foot to the house which Chief Ori had prepared for us, leaving the driver to bring on the wreckage at leisure.

Tautira, though the second town of the island, is almost entirely a native settlement, the "foreign colony" consisting of but one missionary, one trader and one French [144] official. This does not mean that the town is backward or decadent, but rather to the contrary. Missionaries, as a pretty general rule, will always be found thickest on the "firing line," and where operations are in the hands of a single white or native

preacher it may be taken to indicate that the people, professedly at least, are well within the fold. There is but one trader in Tautira because the natives are shrewd enough to own their own cutters and trade directly with Papeete. The official is there to collect taxes, not because he is needed to keep order. As far as morals are concerned, Consul Doty expressed it very well when he said that "there is more mischief to the square foot—or should I say the rounded ankle?—in Papeete than in all of Tautira."

Except for its scenery, Tautira's chief claim to distinction is Ori, and Ori's chief claim to distinction is the fact that he was the host for a month or more of Robert Louis Stevenson's party on the novelist's first cruise to the South Seas in the *Casco*. Stevenson, still weak from overwork and hardly yet beginning to feel the beneficial effects of the cruise, was ill during nearly all of his stay in Tautira. No account of this visit appears in his South Sea book, but in the published letters of his mother it is written of at length, and most entertainingly.

From Mrs. Stevenson's account it would appear that the party was tendered the usual round of feasts, dances and gifts, and countered with feasts and gift-givings of its own. They tell you in Papeete that Stevenson's illness during this visit made him see their island through dark glasses, and that this was the reason that he ultimately settled in Samoa instead of Tahiti. From the standpoint of picturesque and tropical [145]
loveliness Tautira, and even Papeete, is distinctly ahead of Apia, so that it is more likely that the greater attractiveness of the incomparable Samoan native who, then as now, was much less touched by white influence than the Tahitian, turned the scale in favour of the more westerly group for the novelist's home.

Ori—a wily old hypocrite whose six-feet-four of stature, unlike that of most Tahitians, is not cumbered with an ounce of superfluous flesh—made a great point of assuring us that the whole plan of entertainment provided for our party was patterned on that which he had dispensed to the Stevensons. We were quartered in one of the houses the Stevensons had occupied; quite as many pigs and chickens were slaughtered for our "native" feasts as for those of the Stevensons; full as many singers were mustered for our *himines* as turned out for the Stevensons; he would lavish quite as rich gifts upon us as he did upon the Stevensons, and—the Stevensons had given him such and such and such things, ad infinitum. Inasmuch as we were paying for our entertainment at a rate which we knew to be about a hundred per cent. above the normal, there was little of base ingratitude in the remark of the Commodore who, when his knife blade turned on the rubberoid leg of one of Ori's broilers, asked that venerable rascal if the drumstick in question came from one of the chickens left over by the Stevensons.

For some reason chickens, like wine, refuse to age properly in the South Pacific. It may be the heat, it may be the humidity; at any rate a chicken of greater age than two months, however cooked, makes a *piece de resistance* in a most painfully literal *[146]*
sense. Luckily, the Tahitian pig, cooked in island fashion, is as much above the average porker of temperate latitudes as the Tahitian broiler falls below the standard in his class. Any kind of a cut from a six-months-old coconut-fed pig, cooked on hot stones and served with the inimitable *miti-hari* sauce, will awaken an ecstasy in the palate the memory of which cannot be eradicated by a lifetime of gastronomic experience with the most vaunted viands of other climes. The recipe for preparing this incomparable delicacy would be about as follows:

Dig a hole in the ground big enough comfortably to bury a pig in and fill it with smooth, round river-bottom stones. Collect half a cord or so of dry wood and start a fire on the stones. Leaving a boy to stoke the fire, take the eight or ten hours in which the stones are coming to a dull cherry red to find just the right sort of a pig. From three to six months is the best age, and, if possible, get an animal that has been penned and fed upon nothing but young coconuts. If there has been a few odd bread-fruits, bananas, mangoes, papayas, avocados, star-apples and the like thrown in to him occasionally it will not make much difference, but avoid the young porker that has rustled for himself about the copra shacks and along the beach.

Kill the pig and dress in the usual manner, but without cutting off the head and feet or removing the skin. Wrap the body several inches deep in banana or plantain leaves and plaster the whole thickly with sticky mud. Then, if the stones are red, remove them with a pole, throw in the wrapped pig and push them back again. Best to let a native watch the progress of the cooking, as a great deal depends upon [147]
taking out the pig at the right time, and a lifetime of experience is required to forecast the precise condition to which it is roasted from a whiff of the steam.

You might try your hand with *miti-hari* before leaving the rest of the feast for the natives to prepare. This is the sauce par excellence of the South Pacific, and, as far as my own experience goes, quite without a peer in any other part of the world. Send for a quart of grated coconut meat (most of the native houses keep it on hand), and after soaking it for a few minutes in sea water, pour out on a square of stout muslin, twist the corners of the latter together and bring all the pressure possible to bear on the contents. The result is a cupful of thick, rich milk which, on the addition of the juice of a couple of limes and a red pepper or two, becomes the marvellous and transmutative *miti-hari*.

I recall hearing in Papeete a story concerning the amazing things that tourists have eaten under the gastronomic intoxication incident to tasting the wonderful miti sauce with which they—the things—were dressed. I believe a piece of rubber blanket was on the list. I don't exactly recall what else, though I do remember hearing Claribel say that a dash of *miti-hari* on the story itself might make it easier to swallow. But Claribel, unduly proud of her own salad dressings, was somewhat prejudiced against the incomparable Tahitian sauce.

The Tahitian "native" feast does not differ in any salient particulars from the often-described Hawaiian *luau*. The guests sit on the ground and eat the various "dishes," which are spread before them on banana leaves, from their fingers. In addition to pig, chicken and the inevitable breadfruit, the menu always includes a liberal supply [148] of fish, both cooked in *ti* leaves and pickled raw in lime juice; taro, boiled and mashed; bananas and plantain of a dozen different varieties; fillet of squid, very exquisite prawns and your choice of a score of varieties of strange and delicious tropical fruits with unwritable names.

If the feast is given you by a person of wealth and importance, or if you are paying a chief like the canny Ori a sum sufficient to make it an inducement, you may get a taste of coconut sprout salad. The raw fish is far from unpalatable and the prawns are exquisite, but the coco sprout salad is the only dish of the lot worthy to be mentioned in the same breath with the *miti-hari*-ed pig. Unfortunately, as every tiny sprout in the salad means the death of a young coco palm, the dish is more often discussed than digested. A substitute made of the tender fronds of young ferns is itself pretty near a high-water mark until you have tasted that from coco sprouts. As for the coco-fed pig and the *miti-hari* dressing, if it doesn't prepare your face for a look of distant superiority whenever again you hear men extolling this or that culinary achievement as worthy of place on the top-most pinnacle of gastronomic excellence, it is because you are suffering from atrophy of the palate.

Kava, so popular in the Samoas and Fiji, was not—Byron to the contrary notwithstanding—and is not, drunk in Tahiti. Feasting with natives outside of missionary circles, you will probably have a chance to "experience" orange wine. This is a harmless-looking beverage of insinuating ways, in the lucent depths of the first [149] three or four coco shell cups of which lurks no hint of the devil who is curled up in the bottom of the fifth or sixth, and all thereafter. The proverbial ungentlemanliness of the onslaught of a "battleship" punch upon a débutante at her first dance on board is nothing to the "assault from ambush" of orange wine upon the unwary stranger who dallies overlong above its cup.

Coco wine—not the coco toddy that figured in my Marquesan pig hunt, which is a baser concoction—fermented from a juice drawn from the heart of the trunk of that palm, is expensive and hard to obtain at any cost. It is a gentleman's drink, however, and scorns to practise any of the "behind-the-back" tactics of the soft-footed orange thunderbolt. It romps down the throat like a torch-light procession and promptly starts a conflagration that spreads like wild-fire from the head to the heels. An American Indian after a couple of *epus* of coco wine would commence murdering his fellows, as he does under the influence of the fiery *mescal*; the gentle Tahitian in like instance, though quite as much uplifted, both mentally and physically, as the redskin, is content to murder sleep—his own and every one's else. He enters upon a period of song and dance which lasts as long as the supply of wine, and there is no peace within a quarter-mile radius of the centre of disturbance.

In America or Europe a man showing the same symptoms as does a Kanaka under the influence of coco wine would be gagged, strait-jacketed and thrust into a padded cell. In Tahiti the smiling policeman, if the offender becomes too boisterously obstreperous, accomplishes a similar result by pitching him into the sea. At first [150] blush this strikes one as being a somewhat drastic proceeding, but the Tahitian, being amphibious, rarely comes to harm in the water. Indeed, I have the assurance of a prominent merchant of Papeete that "you would be surprised how few of these ducked natives are really drowned!" I will return to the Tahitian in his "lighter moments" in another chapter.

Ori's resources of entertainment, by a strange coincidence, came to an end at the same time as did our big sack of Chilean *pesos*, and we returned by the smooth, well-metalled leeward road to Papeete, where we were planning two or three affairs on the yacht in an endeavour to make a small return of the hospitality we had enjoyed from the day of our arrival. We still had something to learn about "Society in the Societies," however, and we were on our way to the initiation.

CHAPTER VIII [151]

SOCIETY IN THE SOCIETIES

THE Society Islands took their name from the Royal Geographical Society, which sent an expedition there in 1868 to observe the transit of Venus, not, as might be supposed, from any predilection of the early or latter-day inhabitants to afternoon teas, dinners, dances, masques, routs and the like. There were, to be sure, functions which might freely be classed under some of these heads, but as the foreign visitor who was bidden usually finished up much after the fashion of the lady who went out to ride on the tiger, except in the literal interpretation of a social gathering as a "polite intermixing of people," they could hardly be called social from his standpoint. Yet today, socially, Papeete—at least so far as red tape and ceremony go—is the most finished capital of the South Pacific. These things are, in fact, rather overdone for so remote a tropical outpost, and the intricate system of precedence set up by French officialdom, and the constant danger incident to the inadvertent bringing together of those within and without the pale, made one long at times for the bluff informality of Apia and the whole-hearted hospitality of Suva or Honolulu.

There is no lack of kindness on Tahiti's part to the stranger within her gates; if any complaint is to be made on that score, in fact, it is that there is too much of it. The trouble lies in the fact that there are, as elsewhere in the South Pacific, two broadly defined cliques—the missionary and trader—between which there is war to the knife. [152] French officialdom constitutes a third clique which, while keeping itself pretty well aloof from the other two, still complicates their relations considerably. This alignment does not seem so impossible on the face of it, for there are cliques in all climes, and a world of unsegregated human elements would be unthinkable. You will choose your friends from the best in both camps, you may tell yourself, but how soon do you find that in the Guelph-and-Ghibelline warfare of the missionary and trader no sort of "run-with-the-hare-and-hunt-with-the-hounds" position is possible. If you are going to stay in the island you may just as well enlist under the banner of one force or the other at the outset, for there is no such thing as a recognized noncombatant and you are just as likely to go down between the contending forces in trying to keep out of the combat as in fighting in their ranks.

But under which banner will you enlist? There, indeed, comes the rub. You think it will be easy to decide, do you? Perhaps so; but suppose you take a few days to hear what the contenders have to say for themselves. You will find some very plausible chaps on both sides.

"Upon what meat has this our missionary fed?" paraphrases one of your trader acquaintances, who claims to have been a university man before his "pater" paid his debts and cut him off without a farthing. He always comes out with Shakespeare after about the fourth glass of rum, you learn shortly, and as inevitably lapses into the vernacular of the "beach" with something of the nature of "Why, blyme me, them swaller-tailed blokes would have been butchered an' eaten a hundred years ago if it [153] wasn't fer us traders an' our shootin' irons to hold down the blacks."

After an evening of this you feel that the traders are a much misunderstood lot until, in the missionary's Sunday sermon, you hear them sorrowfully referred to as "our sinful brethren whose very existence here would have been impossible had not our teachings shown the savage the error of his blood-thirsty ways." Then you realize that it is the trader who, after all, is in the wrong, until, on the following day, you drop in at a copra shack on the Broom Road for a drink of coco water, and learn that it was missionary denunciation that was responsible for the massacre of Boyle and Wells at Rangaroa in 1891, and that the captain of the missionary schooner, *Croix de Sud*, was severely censured by the governor for abandoning the trader, Wilkes, to his fate during an uprising in the Tongas in 1903.

At heart, of course, you are in sympathy with the missionaries, so that it is with a secret satisfaction that you hear the ascetic, frock-coated gentleman, whom you fall in with a couple of miles farther along, nail these last stories as "unmitigated and devil-inspired lies," and go on to cite "unimpeachable authorities" to prove that traders instigated the "cutting out" of the missionary schooner, *Morning Star*, in the Hervey Group in 1899, and that traders were guilty of having incited the natives who killed Chalmers in New Guinea a year or two later. In spite of your sympathies, however, your confidence in the missionaries is badly shaken when, in the pauses of the *hula* which has been arranged for your especial benefit, you get "the real straight of it" from "Kangaroo Pete" the same evening, but how ashamed you are of your [154] doubts when you meet the "Board of Conversion of the Affiliated Missionary Societies of the South Pacific at the Consulate" the following afternoon and hear the members "lay bare the mainspring of every action" of its representatives since the days of the "blessed John Williams."

Vacillating between the Scylla and Charybdis of "Missionarydom" and "Traderdom," and torn by the conflicting currents of doubt and belief, you end by soundly rating yourself as an invertebrate weakling incapable of forming a fixed opinion on any subject, and decide to take the advice of a sagacious Australian traveller who said that he had found the best course to pursue in the South Pacific was to "trade with the traders and 'mish' with the missionaries." But, as I have already pointed out, that

you are quite as likely to come to grief as a non-combatant as in carrying a pike, the experience of our party in endeavouring to discharge its social indebtedness in Tahiti goes to prove.

The best characterization I have heard of social Papeete was that of a visiting Englishman who applied to it what some other Englishman once said about Hammersmith—"A lot of variegated grievances, each unit of which believes himself a little tin Providence on wheels."

The truth of this astute observation will hardly be brought home to the run of visitors to Tahiti who, stopping over but the few days between boats, have more opportunity to receive than to dispense entertainment. By us of the *Lurline* it was never suspected until, in a devil-inspired moment, we decided to wipe out our accumulated obligations in a single day by giving a tea and a sail in the afternoon and a buffet [155] deck supper, with fireworks, in the evening. What an excellent idea, that of the two functions, we told ourselves—one for the "earth-earthy" set and the other for the "church-churchy" set. How lucky it was that the line of cleavage between them was so clearly demarked!

We called in the suave, diplomatic young consul, with his intricate knowledge of the most recondite of the cogs of the wheels within the wheels of the machine of Tahitian society, and started on the list for the afternoon affair, to which the "missionary set" was to be invited.

"Father Le P——," we began.

"Yes," acquiesced the Consul.

"The Reverend D—— and family."

"Ye-es."

"The Reverend B—— and wife."

"Um-well, hardly. He's Anglican, you know, and there's been some trouble with Father Le P—— over converts. Better not put them down."

"The R——'s, who had us to tea when we drove around the island. They're of the missionary set, aren't they?"

"Yes, but they're Presbyterians. They have a suit on now for some of the Catholic land which adjoins them; so they wouldn't do with Father Le P——. But they're friends of the B——'s, though. You might put the B——'s down and scratch Father Le P—— off."

The next two families mentioned were at odds with both of the sub-factions, the lines of which we were plotting, and so were not put down at all for the moment. Then came three that were friendly to Father Le P——, which resulted in his name being [156] added again, while those of the B——'s and the R——'s were scratched off. And so it went on for a couple of hours. The missionary set ultimately resolved itself into five irreconcilable factions, and to these we discharged our obligations separately with the two teas and a dinner on board and a tea and a dinner at the hotel.

The list of the trader and official set was more complicated still. His Excellency, the Governor, we started with, of course. Monsieur le Secretaire was also passed, but Captaine G—— could not be included because he had recently come to blows with the Secretary over cards at the Cercle Militaire. The dashing Major L—— was passed, but not Lieutenant P——, of the gunboat, who was in the black books of Government House because he had once violated official etiquette by bringing a jag to dinner instead of acquiring it during the evening. Le Compte de R—— it was also necessary to leave off from our Number One list because he and the truculent Secretary had recently quarrelled over the question of precedence at an official reception.

Without a "trial balance" we quickly came to the conclusion that the Anglo-Saxons and the Germans—except the Consuls—would not do with the French; so an evening of green drinks was planned for the latter by themselves. The Anglo-Saxon list was the hardest task of the lot, and before it was completed we learned that A—— had another wife living in Auckland and that the children of the two families visited back and forth; that the present Mrs. B—— was the first Mrs. C——, and before that was a barmaid in D——'s saloon; that the E——'s, F——'s, G——'s and H——'s were involved [157] in a four-cornered lawsuit and were not on speaking terms; that the Misses I—— travelled to Sydney and back unchaperoned and carried on something scandalous; that J——'s son eloped with K——'s daughter and deserted her in San Francisco for a vaudeville actress; that—but these samples will, perhaps, prove sufficient to give an idea of the nature of the tasks which confronted us.

Even under the coaching of the sympathetic and almost omniscient Consul, feuds which had smouldered unsuspected or differences which had cropped up over night supervened to cast palls of frigidity over even the gayest of our gatherings, and the most fervently thankful moment we knew in the course of the whole cruise was the one in which the last boatload of the guests from the last of our half score or more of "duty" parties cleared the gangway and we told ourselves that all was over without a

single shooting affray, fist fight or even a hair-pulling.

How much simpler entertaining had been in the Marquesas, where the common run of social feuds were along the line of that of "Chewer-of-Thumbs," who was reluctant about coming aboard with "Masticator-of-Boys'-Ears" on the ground that the latter's grandfather had eaten his—the "Chewer's"—grandmother, and afterwards was said to have complained of indigestion. "Fancy—indigestion from one of the 'Chewer-of-Thumbs' lineage!" And all we had to say was that the idea was so preposterous that it must have been meant as a joke; upon which they both swarmed gleefully aboard the yacht, where the reconciliation was completed and made permanent by "Masticator's" magnanimous action in smuggling one of our cases of canned salmon into "Chewer's" canoe and helping him get away with it. [158]

Tahitian—I mean "missionary" Tahitian—ideas of modesty were amusingly illustrated by a warning we received from a well educated and intentioned young half-caste, zealous in the enthusiasm of recent conversion, to the effect that our bathing costumes—regulation American bathing suits—were the occasion of no small amount of unfavourable comment among the "better class of Papeetans."

"But what's the matter of our bathing suits?" asked the Commodore in the amazement of perfect innocence. "Oh—perhaps the sailors have been a little informal in the costumes they have worn for their morning plunges."

"No, it isn't the sailors," was the reply. "The people are saying that the gentlemen's suits have no sleeves and legs and that—that the skirts of the ladies come only to their knees, and—"

"Of course," cut in the Commodore impatiently; "what's wrong with that? Women wear trains on ball gowns, not on bathing suits. Besides, the yacht is a good cable's length off shore, and it takes keen eyes to tell a bathing suit from pajamas at that distance."

"I know, sir," was the naïve reply; "but you would be surprised, sir, to learn how many of the better class of people living along the beach have telescopes."

"Oh!" we chorused—and again "Oh!"

Before showing our solicitous young friend to his canoe, we were at pains to enquire what was the orthodox bathing costume worn by the ladies of the "better class"—brown and white—calling his attention first to some girls from the public wash-house who, not far up the beach, were disporting themselves in the shallows in nothing but their *pareos*, short pieces of gaudy print which fell from the waist to the knees. He replied that the "real ladies," white and brown, never entered the water in public unless modestly draped from neck to heel. [159]

This turned out to be the truth. A couple of days later, in the course of a ride, I came upon some mission girls about to take a dip in one of the big pools of the Faa-tua. For ten centimes one of them allowed me to take her photograph in the "orthodox" costume before entering the water. When the bath was over it cost me two francs to get her to come out into the sunshine and stand for another snap. I paid it willingly, however, rightly judging that the second photograph would be worth double the price asked in bolstering up the faltering confidence of the Mater and Claribel in the comparative propriety of their American bathing suits. I submit the two photographs without comment.

NATIVE WOMAN WASHING ON THE BEACH, TAHITI

A MISSION BATHING SUIT. BEFORE THE BATH—AND AFTER

CHAPTER IX

[160]

THE SONG AND DANCE IN TAHITI

THE Tahitian word for song, *himine*, is a Kanakazation of the English word hymn. Before the days of the missions there must have been some other term, for singing was quite as prominent an occupation of the native then as now, but it was discarded as a superfluity long ago. The South Sea Islander does not cumber his memory with more than one name at a time for any given thing, and when new words were forced

upon him, as was inevitable with the coming of the whites, the old ones quickly disappeared through disuse.

Thus *himine* was at first applied to nothing but the hymns which the missionaries taught. Then the term expanded to include the rowing and working chanteys of the natives, and finally to the folk and dance songs. Today a Tahitian will speak of the *himine* to which a *hula* is danced. Shades of John Williams and James Chalmers! A *hula* to a *himine*! A native *danse du ventre* to a missionary hymn!

"You sinful hussies are as full of airs as a music box," said a missionary to the bevy of frolicksome *vahines* who had replied with a rollicking *himine* to his invitation to come inside of the church and listen to his Sunday sermon.

"That may be," answered one of the flower-crowned damsels, "but we can't be turned by a crank, at any rate."

They tell you this story at the club in Papeete, and you, politely, laugh—just as you did when you heard the original of that variation ten years before in America. However, the local adaptation is a good one—a Tahitian nymph is indeed as full of airs as a music box, and a vast deal easier to start up and keep going. [161]

The Tahitian is received into the world with a song, he is sped forth from it with a song, and the only time in the interval when there is not a song issuing from his lips is when he is asleep. The beat of the sea is in his blood and a sense of time and an ear for tone are instincts with him. It is as natural for him to hold a tune as it is to walk, and it would be as remarkable for him to sing flat as to fall flat. In fact, be it orange wine or coco toddy, sugar cane rum or simple fatigue that starts his senses or his body reeling, he will commence falling flat long before he starts to sing flat. As often as not he dies with a song on his lips, and even his parting gasp is pretty sure to be in the right key.

In the beginning the South Seas had no musical instruments beyond the hollow-tree drum and the conch. The *eukelele*, so often spoken of as the native Hawaiian guitar, was originally an importation from Portugal, though it is now made in the islands; the concertina, mouth-organ and jew's harp of the rest of the mid-Pacific latitudes bear their foreign marks upon them. The Kanaka makes music on any one of them the first time he takes it up; but so also does he with two sticks and a coal oil can, or a piece of rolled-up floor mat—he cannot help it.

But the Tahitian's heart is in his singing, not his playing, and in choral rather than solo expression. He sings for the same reason that the rational drinker drinks—sociability. He is, to be sure, usually singing when he is on the road or working alone, but only because there is no one else to sing with him. A native who sings alone by preference is looked upon by his fellows much as we regard a man who is known to be a solitary drinker. [162]

I have never heard the point brought up, but it has struck me on more than one occasion that much of the phenomenal success of the early missionaries in the South Pacific was due to their rare judgment in turning their first meetings into big song-fests. Even a meeting of today is three quarters *himine*, and in the short intervals of prayer and preaching the congregation is in a continual fidget in its eagerness for the opening notes of the next song. Many a one slips down from his seat, reclines at length on the floor and lights a banana-leaf cigarette. The children run about, not over quietly, and amuse themselves with pranks upon their elders. But at the first long-drawn note of the *himine* leader—the trumpet call to action—all leap to the seats, throw away their cigarettes and sit at stiff attention, and from then on to the end of the song have no eyes or ears for anything but the business in hand.

All of the missionary hymns, and especially those which have come down from the early days, are translations of old songs of the camp meeting and revival order, and every one of them has the beat and swing of a sailor's chantey. These lively new tunes tickled the natives' fancy as soon as they were introduced, and the fact that the first meetings consisted of even more singing and less preaching than those of today must have done much toward winning the missionary tolerance and even popularity, where the trader and the planter were ever suspended by hair-fine threads above the cooking pots. The natives, won and held through their love of hearing themselves sing, have thereby also been rendered more plastic for spiritual moulding. What could not have been done with them if their passion for dancing could have been similarly played upon? [163]

The two dominant sounds of island life, the boom of the breakers and the hum of the wind in the trees, may be traced through all of the native music, and, through improvisation, in much that one hears in the churches. The sonorous chesty notes of the men's lower registers echo faithfully the thunder of the sea upon the reef, and a high, closed-mouth humming of the women is admirably imitative of the rise and fall of the wind, the rubbing of branches and the lisp of split palm fronds. The resonant over-tones of the bass in a men's chorus is not unsuggestive of the dying rumble of a big hollow-log drum. "The swing and entrain of the whole performance are intoxicating," writes an English woman who made a study of the island music; "the chorus, be it ten or a thousand voices, sweeps onward as resistlessly as a cataract,

and the beat of the measure is like the pulse of Father Time himself. There are several parts as a rule, but they wander in and out of one another at will, and every now and then a single voice will break away and embroider a little improvisation of its own upon the melody that is like a sudden scatter of spray from the crest of a rolling breaker. Then the chorus takes it up and answers it, and the whole mass of the voices hurls itself upon the tune like the breaker falling and bursting upon the shore." [164]

Dancing is the natural concomitant of singing in all of the South Sea islands, and the only occasion on which one is enjoyed without the other is at church service. As for dancing, singing is a *sine qua non*. Not only can a native not dance without a singing accompaniment, but his own voice must also be a part of that accompaniment. To bind a Tahitian's dancer's mouth is equivalent to tying his feet quite as much as tying a Latin's hands is tantamount to binding his mouth.

The first Tahitian dancers of whom there is any authentic record were the members of the "Areo," a secret intertribal organization of the old days, which would undoubtedly be credited to Bacchic inspiration were there any way of tracing a possible connection. The "Areos" were a roystering lot of madcaps, hardly comparable to anything else in history, but partaking something of the character of a modern choral society, a fancy dancing class and a band of brigands, with the avowed encouragement of human sacrifice, murder, cannibalism and general immorality thrown in.

The "Areo" was made up of the elite of each tribe, and the members were carefully tutored in the fine points of singing and dancing, much after the fashion of the *geishas* of Japan and the *nautch* girls of India. They travelled from valley to valley and village to village like a college glee-club, and the fact that their shows were open to all-comers free of charge brought them unbounded popularity and made them welcome guests in the palace of the king at the capital, or in the huts of the meanest fishing hamlet on the island. What they desired they took, and so powerful and popular were they that there was none to gainsay them. What wonder that the budding youth of Tahiti centred his ambition on growing up to become an "Areo" with an intensity that the American youth, tossed on the horns of the inevitable pirate-captain-or-president dilemma, can never know? [165]

And then came the missionary ("Before the missionary came," in the mouth of an old Tahitian, is fraught with all the wildness of regret of "Before the Gringo came" on the lips of an old Spanish Don of California) and the "Areo" grew less and less and finally was no more. What of its legacies? We have seen how the missionaries adopted and turned the song to their own good ends. Has the dance also had the vitality to survive without the patronage of the real arbiters of island destiny? Hardly in its pristine purity—or impurity. The *hula* in Tahiti today is in about the same state as "The Harp that Once Through Tara's Halls"; the only evidence of its existence is when some overstrung string of *vahines* breaks (out) to show that still it lives. If the "breaking" is in public you will probably see the frayed ends of the string being chivvied down to the city bastile by a couple of motherly gendarmes.

And yet the ancient dance is not quite dead; there are a few strings that will yet give back a responsive chord if one knows how to twang them. But don't think it will be you, Mr. Tourist. I never heard of but one man who chanced to strike the "Lost Chord," and his fingers had been wandering over the worn strings for a year or more before they twanged the right combination. I will write of how this befell presently.

The usual *hula* that is arranged for those of the "personally-conducted-limited-to-fifty-all-expenses-paid" party who are in search of something deliciously naughty is about as devilish as a quadrille at a Sunday school picnic—a squad of portly *vahines* marching soberly through a half dozen simple figures to the music of a couple of accordions and an old drum. But at every one of these performances a darkly mysterious Kanaka is sure to slip quietly around among the men of the party and hint vaguely of the "real thing" that has been arranged for that very evening, and to which admission may be gained for, say, ten Chilean *pesos* apiece. Like half-starved trout to the first grasshopper of the season they rise, and, with felicitous mutterings of "A chance of a lifetime to see a *hula*—last one ever to be pulled off; fancy it occurring during our visit"—a party of a dozen or more, leaving its distractedly envious ladies behind, is steered off from the hotel into the scented twilight. [166]

The "subscriptions" are collected en route to a deserted shack on the outskirts of the town, where, by the light of a couple of battered ship side-lamps, the searchers for local colour see a dozen anaemic frailties from the "beach"—dull-eyed, sad-looking *vahines*, flotsam and jetsam from half the island groups of the South Pacific, with strong hints of elephantiasis in their heavy ankles and blotchy skin—writhe and wriggle for half an hour in action more suggestive of the popular vaudeville imitation of a portly dame trying to make the hooks of her evening gown meet than a terpsichorean performance. The girls are a shameless lot of hussies of the class—you met them what times you whiled away the tedium of your steamer stop in Singapore, Colombo and Port Said with those swift but illuminating studies of "native life"—that dextrously appropriates your scarf pin under pretence of putting a flower in your button hole, and when you discover the loss boldly challenges you to tell the police. [167]

And yet—what an indescribable lure there is in the "real thing" bait any time after you have been bitten by the "search-for-local colour" bug! It would hardly be fair for me to hold the glass on the researches of other Tahitian visitors without confessing that I, also, was once an eager follower of the "real thing" will-o'-the wisp, and under circumstances particularly aggravating. So here's for a clean breast of it.

I had noticed with increasing curiosity as our Tahitian visit wore on that the sailors from the yacht had been returning for several days from shore leave with new hats and new neckties, and with wreaths of flowers about their shoulders—sure signs that they were basking in female favour in some part of the island capital—so that when the mate came to me with a story of how he and his fellows had been adopted (a not unusual Kanaka custom) by families of an outlying Papeetan suburb, I accepted the truth of the yarn without question.

"As a special favour, sir, a lot of the *vahines* are going to give us the 'real thing' in the way of a *hula* tomorrow night," he confided to me, "and we thought that as you was saying that you didn't think much of them tourist *hulas* they get up for the steamer people that you might like to see the genuine article."

"Thanks, Victor," I said eagerly. "Write down the directions for reaching the place [168] and I will pick up W—— and be there."

It isn't the custom to go sight-seeing with the sailors of one's friend's yacht in Tahiti any more than elsewhere, but I told myself that the role of patron would excuse it in this instance. And who in his first year in "The Islands" ever failed to rise for the "real thing" bait under any circumstances? W——, who joined me for the evening, was a British ornithologist of considerable reputation, and himself an earnest searcher after the fabled native of pristine purity.

We found the place without difficulty by locating it approximately and then running down the bang of a beaten oil can and the whine of an accordion. It is quite possible that the sailors had been taken to the bosoms of some native families, as they claimed; it is even possible that there may have been a right merry breakdown of a sort going on before we came. But certain it is that it was nothing bordering on that elusive will-o'-the-wisp, the "real thing," and more certain still that our coming—perhaps through suspicions aroused by the official cut of W——'s ducks—came pretty near to putting an end to even such activity as had been in progress up to that moment.

The double line of capering *vahines* broke for the unlighted corners and in a trice had hidden their graceful flower-wreathed limbs under flowing *holakaus*. They were a likely enough looking lot of girls, but not even the dozen bottles of claret which we had brought as good-will offering served to stir them to further action. In vain the chagrined sailors implored and swore and pushed and pulled; the distrustful nymphs only hung their flower-crowned heads and shrunk deeper into the dark corners. [169] There was only one of the lot that did not seem paralysed with bashfulness, and this one, a long, rangy rack of bones with close-cropped hair—the only uncomely member of the party—started a lively whirling-dervish sort of a dance that threatened to break through the rickety floor.

"Not an orthodox *hula*, but quite the best bit of quick stepping I've seen in Tahiti," cried W—— enthusiastically. "Go it, girl! *Vite! Vite!*"

Thus encouraged, the lengthy dancer let out another link and at the same time lowered her song from a high falsetto humming to a booming of chesty bass notes.

"My word!" gasped W——, "she's a man!"

And a man "she" proved to be, a light-stepping young Kanaka, called in at the last moment to take the place of a girl who had fallen ill.

"Let's take a flash of that bunch of icebergs and get out of here," suggested W—— wearily; "I've had about enough of your 'real thing' for one evening."

So while W—— and the sailors chivvied the reluctant dancers together and grouped them in frozen poses, I set up my camera and put out the flashlight powder. A sufficient quantity of the latter was poured from a two-ounce tin box into its cover and set on a rickety table, the mate being directed to light it at the click of my opening shutter. He lit the powder at the proper moment, but confused the order to the extent of putting his match to the contents of the nearly full box instead of the small portion in its cover. There came an explosive "whish," a blinding flash, and under a dense smoke-cloud the mate, his eyelashes gone and his drooping [170] Norwegian moustache burned to a few singed stubs, was writhing on the floor and groaning with agony. An instant later the light bamboo wall behind the table was observed to be afire, and forthwith bedlam broke loose on all sides.

The sailors bellowed for water and W—— shouted for a quilt, while the natives screamed back to the effect that, as the house was deserted and isolated, neither could be had. There seemed nothing to do but to get out and let the old shack burn, and through my mind flashed pictures of an interminable series of complications incident to the red-tape of the inevitable French official investigations. W—— and a sailor, with the apparently stone-blind mate between them, were making for the door

and I was endeavouring to save the trampled fragments of my photographic apparatus, when my eye caught a flash of red in one corner, and my ear the twice or thrice repeated crash of breaking glass. In a quarter of a minute more a vigorously swished wet rag had whipped out the darting flame-tongues just before they reached the pendant frizzles of the pandanus thatch.

A resourceful *vahine*, while all the rest of us were wasting our breaths calling for water and quilts, and bewailing the absence of hand grenades and chemical engines, had calmly whisked off her *pareo*, broken all of the unopened claret bottles over it and slapped out the fire.

Wasn't it Moll Pitcher who won the day and a monument by swabbing out the cannon with some of her surplus lingerie? They don't erect monuments to heroic fire-lassies in Tahiti, so W—— and I did the best thing possible under the circumstances in [171] subscribing the price of a dozen new *pareos*.

It was a week or so after the incident just sketched had taken place that W—— and I were at luncheon at the Cercle Militaire with a distinguished German ethnologist who had spent many years in the study of the fascinating problem of a prehistoric Polynesian civilization. W——, after amusingly narrating several of the experiences incident to his own study of native life in the South Seas, made the statement that a genuine Tahitas *hula* could not be seen on the island for "love or money," an assertion in which I stoutly supported him. The learned Teuton listened indulgently.

"Dat's a priddy zweeping stadement, chentlemen," he ventured. "You haf tried money, no doubt, but haf you der oder alternative, der gindness tried?"

We were compelled to admit that nothing systematic in the way of kindness had been attempted, upon which the doctor launched into an extended dissertation on the futility of trying to do anything with South Sea natives on a "buy-and-sell" basis. Early in his sojourn in Tahiti, he said, he had come to a realization of the banality of anything not freely given by the islanders. Accordingly, he had taken up his residence in Hiteaea, the least "civilized" village of the island, and first by judicious presents, later by incessant intercourse with them in the affairs of their daily life, succeeded in winning the confidence and affection of the simple inhabitants. As a consequence many privileges which other foreigners had vainly endeavoured to win by purchase had been extended to him as a brother, among them being attendance at the village's not infrequent festivals at its semi-secret "sing-sing" grounds in an [172] extinct crater far in the interior. An evening of singing and dancing was scheduled for the following week, at the full of the moon, and to this the good doctor, conditional on the consent of his native friends, invited us to come.

The invitation was seconded in good time, and on the appointed day we pushed through on horseback to Hiteaea—twenty-five miles down the rough windward side of the island—reaching there in time for a light mid-afternoon lunch which the doctor had waiting for us. The beautiful hamlet was nearly deserted, the villagers having gone on earlier in the day to enjoy a twilight feast before the dance. Our horses carried us four or five miles back into the interior where, at an elevation of 3000 feet, the roughness and steepness of the trail and the thickness of the creepers overhead made it necessary to abandon them and do the rest of the climb through the sweat-box of the jungle on foot. We arrived at our destination in time for a plunge in a hyacinth-fringed pool of the coolest water we had known for months, a change of clothes and the enjoyment of a number of thoughtfully saved dainties from the feast. The latter had evidently been a jolly and somewhat convivial affair, but nothing of an orgy. The dancers, with laughter and snatches of song, were assisting each other with their toilets in the shelter of a wing of rustling *feis*.

The "sing-sing" ground (this is a term of the "beach" vernacular used in all parts of the South Pacific to designate a native ceremonial meeting place) had once been a tiny blow-hole of the great parent volcano, Orohena, and in its present condition it is not unlike the "Punch Bowl" at Honolulu with a ten-degree segment cut cleanly out of [173] one side. The smooth floor is half rock, half turf, and the towering sides of lava, curtained thickly with an impenetrable tangle of giant fern, lantana and guava scrub and woven together with miles of endless creepers.

By a strange chance the slice of the crater's side which, undermined by the river below, fell away to the valley, left a clean-cut chasm of great depth and scant width opening toward the east-southeast. Through this chasm the full moon, from the moment it shows its glowing disc above a saddle in the rocks to the east, throws a sharp beam across the flower-strewn sward which, in its brilliant contrast to the almost solid blackness of the unlighted sides, shines as clearly as a shaft of calcium. In this lunar spot-light, in air almost sentiently sweet with the perfumes of gardenia and fern, the magic of these Terpsichorean necromancers is practised.

Stretched at our ease on a patch of mat-carpeted greensward in the depths of the shadow, we puffed lazily at our native cigarettes, sipped tiny *epus* of fiery coco wine and waited for the dance to commence. The chatter in the depths of the plantain-screened dressing room had ceased, and only the liquid tinkle of the drip from the surrounding walls, the distant mutter of the surf along the shore and the throaty calls of waking wood pigeons broke the stillness. Overhead the stars were blurring and

blotting and twinkling again, as the disordered ranks of the Trade-clouds shuffled on in their endless flight before the scourges of the southeast wind; but to the east, where the flickering silhouettes of flying-foxes showed with increasing brightness against the moon-glow, the sky was clear. [174]

The leap of the moon to its seat in the saddle of the eastern hills was as startling in its suddenness as that of its glass bulb stage-property prototype to the gauze heaven above the Grand Canal. As the shadow-mottled shaft of light impinged upon the crater floor a single drum note boomed out suddenly on the stillness and a blur of motion was faintly distinguishable about the "green room" entrances. Presently, as the shadows dissolved in the strengthening light, scores of prone figures, motionless save for a gentle waving of the *riva-riva* plumes of the heads, could be dimly guessed, and the doctor whispered that the opening number was evidently to be the "Dance of the Coconuts."

The plumes continued to nod for a few moments and then, representing the sprouting and growth of the young trees, the prostrate dancers, to the accompaniment of a low chanting, rose inch by inch to their full heights. Now the Trade-wind was blowing through their tops, and they bowed and swayed and bent and recovered, while the muffled nasal chanting rose and fell undulatingly like the gusty southeast breeze. Now it was harvest time, and new figures wove in and out among the swaying trees gathering the ripe fruit, and chesty "boom-booms" in the bass told of the cast-down nuts striking the ground underneath.

After a few minutes of indistinguishable pantomime which had to do with the husking and drying of the nuts for copra, a change came over the spirit of the quiet mimetic dance. The hum of the wind rose to a shrill whistle, the low monotone of the surf on the reef changed to the deep-mouthed roars of crashing combers as hard-smitten [175] drum-logs sent forth throbbing peals of heavy thunder. A hurricane was bursting upon the coconut grove. No longer the trees bent to the caressing touch of the gentle Trade. Torn by conflicting gusts, they jerked now this way and now that, thrashing limbs striking each other in the pantomime of bare arms and hands banging with resounding thwacks upon bare backs and breasts. The wind and surf and thunder blend in a raucous roar as the storm grows more furious, and now the trees are snapping and falling before the terrific onslaught. Down they go, now falling alone, now striking others and going to the earth together. In a few moments all but two firmly rooted giants in the heart of the grove are tossing on the ground, and these—represented by two magnificently muscled men—lean together for support and defy the hurricane for a brief space longer. Then they, too, give way, falling to the ground interlocked, and the "Dance of the Coconuts" is over.

"My word!" gasped W——, as the roar of the storm gave way to laughter and chatter, "what wouldn't it be worth to the man who could put that on at Covent Garden or the Hippodrome?"

"*Himmel!*" snorted the doctor impatiently. "You'd haf der whole island to London to move also und der ferdamte British glimate would right away der whole thing kill."

While the dancers rested and slaked their thirsts with orange wine, our host gave us a graphic description of the "Volcano Dance," which is performed in the dark of the moon by the light of a huge bonfire. An imitation crater of long creepers is built at a point where there is a smooth grass chute of thirty or forty yards in length ending in [176] the jungle below. On the side opposite the spectators the dancers, swathed in wreaths of red hibiscus, enter the crater through a small opening, leap high in the air like erupting lava and go rolling off down the chute to the thunder of drums and the subterranean growls of the male chorus. From the lower end of the chute a back trail leads up to the "stage-entrance" of the artificial crater, so that fifty or more dancers, with a sufficiency of orange wine on tap at the crater door, have no difficulty in keeping up a continuous eruption.

W—— asked how long the red hibiscus trimmings stood the rolling down part of the eruption, but before the doctor could reply the opening drum-beat of the next dance sounded and this weighty question was never answered.

With short, sharp yells, a compact body of girls came charging out of the "green room" like a "flying wedge" in the good old days of mass play in football, and went scurrying straight across into the shadows of the opposite side of the crater. This was the "launching of the ship" for the "Pearling Schooner Dance." Directly canoefuls of stout paddlers came towing her back into the moonlight with liana hawsers, and all in an instant, as each of the dancers threw aloft a square of white *tapa*, she was under sail and off to sea. Now she threaded, in short tacks, the passage through the reef, and now, to low, sweet crooning like a lullaby, she bowed and curtesied and pitched and rolled in the swift-running ocean swells.

Presently she threaded another passage, anchored and took in her sails in a still lagoon. Here, with the barely perceptible motion of the schooner showing in the [177] rhythmic rocking of the dancers, divers went over the side and brought up pearl shell. One lusty diver lent colour to his pantomime by bringing up a huge coconut, the incalculable value of so sizable a "pearl" being told with a facility of gesture that would have put to shame a moving picture "heavy."

But the comedy hit of this dance was the hooking and landing of a shark on a strand of liana. Baited with the coconut pearl, the creeper line was thrown over the rail, to attract the instant attention of a school of glistening man-eaters, which, with crooked-elbow dorsals, went wriggling about the grass under the schooner's bows. After an amazingly clever bit of "shark-play" about the bait, one of the "monsters" rolled over on his back and "swallowed" it, the crew promptly "tailing on" to the liana to bring it aboard.

The "shark," as was explained to us afterwards, had drunk considerably more orange wine than should have fallen to his share, and the fight he put up before being landed and "cut to pieces" came pretty near to sinking the graceful pearler then and there.

Floundering and snapping his teeth in a manner that would have done credit to a monster of twice his size, and roaring as no shark of any size ever roared, the gamy leviathan was no sooner laid alongside than, with a vigorous swish of his tail (both feet planted squarely in the pit of the stomach of the trim *vahine* who chanced to be representing the adjacent piece of taffrail) he stove a gaping hole in the schooner's hull. An instant later his "triple row of barbéd teeth" had closed on the arm of the slender miss who, sitting on the shoulders of a lengthy Kanaka, was dancing the part [178] of the mainmast, and brought her crashing to the deck, squealing like a roped pig. The "cutting up" of the shark, owing to this obstreperousness, must have been a bit more realistic than usual, for he still bore marks of it when I encountered him in Papeete a week later.

After being "careened" for repairs the schooner, her hold bulging with pearls, got up sail again and started for home, only to encounter the inevitable hurricane and go to pieces on the rocks to the same unleashed fury of wind and waves and thunder that had uprooted the coconuts. For some minutes spars, planks and other bits of wreckage, imploring help at the tops of their lungs, eddied and swirled about the greensward; then a resistless current bore them relentlessly toward the wine calabashes in the "green room" and the "Pearling Schooner Dance" was over.

In the good doctor's original plan of the evening's entertainment several more dances of the nature of those just described were called for, but the carelessness of the commissariat in dealing out the orange wine too rapidly ordained otherwise. The sounds of revelry from the "green room" were keying higher every moment, and our host's apprehensiveness showed in the quick glowings and palings of his nervously puffed cigarette. When, instead of the sober *himine* which opens up the burlesque "Missionary Dance," there sounded the wail of accordions, the roll of shark-hide drums and the clear, deep-throated voices of the girls in the preliminary strains of the "Nuptial *Hula*," he sprang to his feet to explode into excited Anglo-German-Tahitian with "*Nein! Nein!* Das ist nichts was I tells them. *Hare! Hare! Go back mit* [179] *you, you teufels!*" But he might as well have tried to stem the tide of the Pacific as that swirling onrush from the "green room."

By this time the shaft of lunar calcium, broadening slightly as the moon rose, had moved across the dancing floor till its outer side was just beginning to encroach upon our mat-covered dais, so that instead of "back row, left," as at first, our seats now occupied approximately the position of "First row, Orchestra, centre." We were in the "bald-headed row" with a vengeance, and just at the right time.

Like a pack of hungry wolves charging down upon a fold of lambs, the Bacchic throng swarmed out of the shadows into the spot-light about our dais, and threw itself with the reckless abandon born of three hours of steady tippling at the wine calabashes into the sinuous writhing of a dance rarely performed in the past except at the wedding feasts of royalty, and now, as it is strictly against the French law, almost never under any circumstances.

To a spectator watching from a distance some suggestion of rhythm and unity might have been apparent in the movement of the dance; from our advanced position, as to a man in the thick of a battle, the general action was lost sight of in the wealth of local interest. There was nothing to do but to fix your attention on the nearest dancer and hope, as at a multi-ringed circus, that nothing of greater interest was going on anywhere else. Once your attention was fixed it was not likely to go wandering far afield in search of a new centre of interest.

As an exhibition of eccentric muscular action alone, this dance is worth making a [180] journey to the South Pacific to see. In the slow opening movements, to a seductive half-crooning, half-chirping air, it is as though every square inch of the oil-glistening form before you is trying to move in a different direction. There is something of the suggestion of a coiling and uncoiling snake in it; something of that of the twisting green stream of water where it shoots between two mid-stream boulders; something of that of the whirling columns of the "dust-devils" of the desert.

But what comparison can you find for the wild thing that springs into life as the music quickens and the intoxication of the sensuous dance enters into the blood of the dancers? There is still a suggestion of the former undulating sinuousity of motion, but at a trip-hammer speed which defies the eye to follow it; a double-action, reciprocating, triple-expansion shiver, beginning at the plume-tips and ending at the toes, that would make a Newfoundland dog shaking himself after a bath look like a

stuffed museum specimen in comparison.

For a minute, or two, or three—one loses count of time when elemental forces like these are loosed—this rapid-fire action continues; then they all sink into quivering heaps on the grass, with just enough breath left to raise feeble cries for the wine calabashes, a circumstance which led W—— to remark that their enthusiasm for the dance had probably been due to the fact that they were "shaking for the drinks."

That which was just finished was the first of the three climacteric "movements" of the "Nuptial *Hula*," explained the doctor in the short rest interval. He had not expected that it would be danced, but now that it was started it would be an unpardonable breach of etiquette to try to stop it. "Bezides," he added, chuckling, "you chentlemen haf bewail der decadence of der hula in Tahiti, und said der white man can not der 'real thing' see. In one leetle minute you der 'real thing' shall see, yes." [181]

And we did! But my most earnest efforts would fall so far short of doing it justice that I have thought it best not to court certain failure by attempting description.

CHAPTER X [182]

BY THE ABSINTHE ROUTE

THE French islands of the South Pacific perform satisfactorily the regulation duty of all the other of that republic's tropical colonies—that of furnishing a retreat for a governor, secretary, judge and three or four other high officials during such time as they may require to accumulate fortunes sufficient to permit them to return to Paris and ease for a good portion, if not all the rest, of their lives; also for a small army of minor officials who have no chance to accumulate enough to take them to Paris. These latter young gentlemen work—or rather sit at desks—six hours a day, drink absinthe six hours, and dream absinthe dreams the remainder of the twenty-four.

Besides a regiment of soldiers and a gunboat or two, it takes something over half a thousand officials to administer the affairs of dreamy Tahiti. Departments which in India, Java or even the Philippines would be handled by two or three men, with enough time over for morning horseback rides and tennis or cricket in the evenings, are here in the hands of a substantial mob. There are about a half dozen cases of petty larceny, and the same number of battery, a year, but the bench is occupied by close to half a score of august judges. The annual value of the shipping of all the 150 —more or less—French islands in the Southeastern Pacific—the Marquesas, Paumotos and Societies—is not equal to a season's output of a single large Hawaiian sugar mill, yet the financial and commercial officials are numbered in three figures. [183]

What do they all do? Probably no one really knows; but come into the gentlest of contacts with the government, even as a passing tourist, and you will begin to get an inkling. You are not likely soon to forget those two days in which you cooled your heels in fourteen different corners of Pomare's old palace in endeavouring to make your honour white in the matter of that box of Havanas you forgot to declare when you landed. That cost you forty francs in all, didn't it? And then there was that day and a half that you and the Consul spent in trying to find out to whom you should apologize because your boatmen tied up for ten minutes to the butt of an old cannon that was sacred to the mooring lines of that majestic gunboat, *Zelee*. You conferred with twenty-one underlings and eight overlings—most of them through interpreters—before you found that it was the Capitaine de Gendarmes you must tell you were sorry. And then there was that mess you got into the time you inadvertently strolled down the path to a leper's gardenia-wreathed doorway and asked for a drink of coconut water. You were perfectly willing to go and take a formaldehyde shower-bath, but was it really necessary to be marched about by a squad of gendarmes to eight different departments in order to have that auspicious event officially recorded?

Yes, while Tahiti continues to harbour law-breaking visitors like yourself there is going to be ample work for all of those five hundred officials. But at your worst, you are only going to be able to claim their attention during six hours of the day, leaving them eighteen hours for their own affairs. What is it occupies them in their "lighter hours"? Men are more readily judged at play than at work. You have seen them at work; now let us watch them at play. The Cercle Colonial, it is said, will show us what we want to see. [184]

The Cercle is a low, rambling structure of aching white, cooled by green trees, green blinds and green drinks. You have seen in the great republic's tropical outposts these little clubs which have not been shaded by green trees; one or two may even be recalled which have not had the green blinds; but a Cercle Colonial—or Militaire—without the green drinks—never.

"Where flaps the tri-colour, there flows the absinthe."

You are not certain who first enunciated this great truth, nor where you first heard it; sufficient that it has become a law as inflexible as that of gravity. Haul down the one, and the other will cease to flow. Stop the flow of the other, and the one will cease to flap. Certain French patriots who are strangers to the French tropics may indignantly question the truth of the latter statement; these you may respectfully request to cite you a single instance where those respective symbols of their republic are flapping and flowing independently.

Certain of the best paid Tahitian officials straggle home to France every other year or so by Suez or America, others send intermittent letters to their loved ones by the irregular post; but when all is said and done the only really well established line of communication between the island paradise and Paris is the "absinthe route."

"I'd envy these poor devils their nocturnal trips from 'hell to home,'" one of the [185] foreign consuls in Papeete is quoted as saying, "if it wasn't for the fact that they are always doomed to sail with return tickets. Coming out of any old kind of a dream is more or less of a shock; but coming out of the Mussulman paradise of an absinthe dream is staggering. Just about one a month of these young chaps decides that twelve hours is too long to wait for the inauguration of another dream, and in the pale of the dawn launches himself off on the journey for which no return ticket can be foisted onto him. The suicide rate in Noumea, the prison colony, is higher than here, and, I am told, Saigon, Martinique, Guadeloupe and Cayenne are worse still. Funny thing, too, they all do it at the same time—sunrise—probably because it's the hour when the dream shapes begin to grow thin and intangible, and day, with its galling grind of realities, looms blankly in pitiless imminence."

"A poor lot," you say. Perhaps. But before judging let us watch them for awhile at the Cercle Colonial. It is there that they are to be seen embarking, and in transit on, and returning by, "the absinthe route."

It is four o'clock of a May afternoon in Papeete, and the stream of the Southeast Trade, clogged and obstructed by the suffocating puffs of humid air that have rolled in since morning from the oily sea which stretches in unheaving indolence to the equator, has ceased to flow. The glaring coral streets throw back the blazing sunlight like rivers of molten tin; the distended blossoms of hau and hibiscus fall heavily in the puddly air, to break and scatter like glass on striking the ground. Everything of the earth glows, everything of the air gasps in the swimming waves of the clinging [186] heat.

The shaded walls of the Cercle Colonial hold still a modicum of last night's coolness, and the closely-drawn green blinds of the lounging room check the onrush of the calid flood from without. The man with the gold lace on his ripped-open collar, sitting on the corner toward the silent billiard room, is an officer from the barracks; he with the tanned face and the imperial in the opposite corner is the commander of the gunboat in the harbour; the youth with the opera bouffé moustache and the eyes of a roué at the table by the palm is the disgraced son of a rich Marseilles merchant, whose quarterly remittances are payable only in Papeete. They all know each other, but by an unspoken mutual understanding have separated as widely as possible. Men do not drink for sociability on a day like this, for he who lives in the tropics realizes what the inhabitant of cooler latitudes knows but hazily, that the mental consciousness of human propinquity, even without the effort of conversation, raises temperature.

The government offices across the way have just brought their short day of perfunctory work to a close, and such of the officials as have membership in the Cercle Colonial come hurrying—the first unlistless movement they have made since morning—up the blossom-strewn walk. They slip through the green spring doors like thieves in jealous efforts to shut out the furnace-like blast which pursues them into the tepid interior, and a low growl of disapproval from all sides greets the man who is so thoughtless as to enter leisurely. Each goes to a separate table, and when there are no unoccupied tables left the newcomer drags his chair to a window ledge or up [187] to the encircling wall-shelf at the top of the wainscoting.

The waiters work noiselessly and expeditiously. There are no orders taken. Each man is noted by the watchful *garçon*, and to him is instantly brought a large glass of cracked ice and a green bottle. After that, except for occasional replenishings of the ice, he needs no attention.

Before long a change comes over the spirit of the place, a revivification like that which comes to a field of drought-parched wild flowers at the first touch of long-awaited raindrops. Watch it working in that yellow-skinned youth by the darkened window. Plainly a "transfer" from the prison colony at Noumea, he, with the dregs of the pernicious New Caledonian fever still clogging his blood. By the ink on his forefinger you put him down as in some kind of a departmental billet. He slipped through the door but a moment ago and the *garçon* had his glass of ice and bottle ready on the window ledge almost before he was seated. He spilled the absinthe over the sides of the glass in his eagerness to fill it, and in spite of the cracked ice it still must have been far from the delectable frappé of the conoisseur when he gulped it down. A second pouring of the warm liqueur took up the remaining ice and he has

called for more.

But now note him as he waits for his glass to be replenished. Has a spirit hand passed across his brow and smoothed out those lines of weariness and ill-health? Perhaps not, but they are gone nevertheless, and a tinge of colour is creeping into the sallow cheeks. Now he gathers his relaxed muscles and pulls his slender frame [188] together. The thin shoulders are thrown back, the sunken chest expanded, and with open mouth and distended nostrils, like a man who comes from a hot, stuffy hall out into the cool air of the open street, he takes several deep, quick breaths.

You, who know the futility of drinking anything alcoholic or narcotic in endeavouring to keep cool and have, therefore, only sipped your glass of lime juice and soda, can swear that the air of the place, far from growing fresher, is getting closer and hotter every moment. But don't waste your time trying to convince the young man by the window to that effect. It's cooler air to him—yes, and to every one else in the room but yourself with your foolish lime juice and soda. See them sitting up and inhaling it all around you.

You have seen the stolid Britisher thaw out and wax sociable after his first or second brandy-and-soda, and perhaps you expect something of the kind is going to happen here. But no—the brandy-and-soda and the absinthe routes start from the same place, but their directions are diametrically opposite. The brandy-and-soda addictee expands externally, the absinthe drinker expands internally; the one drink strikes out, the other strikes in. The Britisher cannot forget himself until he has had a couple of brandy-and-sodas; with two glasses of absinthe the Frenchman only commences to realize himself. Don't look for any flow of the soul to accompany the flow of the bowl, then; these exiles are only going the absinthe route; they are off for home.

Turn your attention again to the youth by the darkened window. A fresh glass of cracked ice is before him and he is pouring himself another drink. Ah! there is your [189] real absinthe artist now. See with how steady a hand he pours that unvarying thread of a trickle; not faster than that must it go, not slower. See him turn the glass to the light to mark the progress of the green stain in the white body of the cracked ice. As it touches the bottom the pouring stops, the glass is twirled once or twice and then lifted to the lips and drained. Just as much water as a thread-sized trickle of warm absinthe will melt from the ice in finding its way to the bottom of the glass and back to the rim; offer it to him any other way, after those first mad gulps, and he would probably refuse it. Thus absinthe à la Cercle Colonial de Papeete.

At five or half past, an army officer looks at his watch, stretches himself, yawns, pours a final hasty glass and picks his reluctant way to the door and out into the still, stifling air. Two officers of the gunboat follow suit, and from then on till seven o'clock dinner-time, by occasional twos and threes, but for the most part singly, a half, perhaps, of the strange company—at the call of family, military or social duties—takes its departure. The residue—unmarried officers, departmental officials and a few unclassified—is made up of the regular voyageurs; you will find them still in their places when you look in again after dinner.

As you saunter down to the hotel in the gathering twilight, you note that the hot, humid air-body of the afternoon is cut here and there with strata of coolness which, descending from above, are creating numerous erratic little whirlwinds that dodge hither and thither at every turn. In the west hangs the remains of an ugly copper- [190] and-sulphur sunset, in the north is an unbroken line of olive-and-coal-dust clouds, and, even in your inexperience, you hardly need to note the 29.70 reading on the hotel *lanai* barometer to tell you that there is going to be wind before midnight. The air is vibrant with the thrill of "something coming," and from the waterfront, where they have known what to expect since morning, rises the rattle of winches, the growl of hurried orders and the mellow, rhythmic chanting of natives swaying on anchor chains and mooring lines as the trading schooners are "snugged up" in their berths along the sea-wall.

Nine o'clock at the Cercle Colonial. The jalousies have been opened during your absence and are now being closed again, this time to keep out the scurrying vanguards of the rising wind. The air is cooler now, and you give the waiter the recipe for an American gin fizz, to receive something in return which refuses to fizz and is built, apparently, on a bayrum base. You solace yourself with the thought that you didn't come for a drink, anyway, and turn your attention to your friends of the afternoon, the voyageurs by the absinthe route. Most of them seem to have "arrived" by this time, and if they are aware at all of the relief of the cooling atmosphere, it is only to tell themselves that it is good to breathe again the air of la belle France after those accursed tropics. Each sits solitary, as when you left two hours ago, but where they were then separated by a few scant yards at the most, they are now scattered from Paris to the Riviera, from Chamonix to Trouville.

But it is plain that it is Paris with the most of them. The youth with the yellow face is still in his chair by the window, but his eyes are now fixed admiringly on a coloured [191] lithograph of a ballet dancer—an *Illustracion* supplement—in its black frame upon the wall. Maybe he's doing the Louvre, you think, and looking at the pictures. But no—look at his eyes. That picture is flesh and blood for him. She's the headliner at the

Folies Bergere, and she's coming down to drink with him as soon as the crowd stops those accursed encores and lets her leave the stage. And don't those eyes tell you how well worth waiting for he knows she is?

That dapper young chap with the "spike" moustache and the lieutenant's epaulettes who sits so straight in his chair, where is he? The Champs Elysées, without a doubt. Riding? No, walking. Don't you see the swagger of his shoulders; and that twitching movement of the fingers is the twirling of his cane? Didn't you see him stiffen up and twist his moustaches as he looked your way just now? No, he didn't care a rap about impressing the Yankee visitor to Tahiti; you were a carriage or a motor car with the latest opera favourite in it pulled up against the curb.

That tall civilian there, with the grey hair at the temples and the dissipated but high bred face—you recognize him now as one of the highest officials on the island, who, they told you at the hotel, had been "reduced" to Tahiti as punishment for his peculations while occupying an important place in Algeria—is at Maxim's. That chair across the top of which he is gazing so intently is not as empty to him as it looks to you. There—didn't you see his lips move? You wonder who she is and what he is telling her.

That other civilian with the clear cut profile and the concentrated gaze of the professional man and thinker—ah, he is the learned Parisian doctor from whom the medical world has awaited for two years the announcement of the discovery of a cure for the dreaded *elephantiasis*. He had his goal and deathless renown in sight months ago, you have been told, when, in a spell of homesickness, he began drinking and "seeing green," and since that time, through the demoralization of his special hospital and the loss of certain cultures of incalculable value, has slipped back almost to where he began. That must be a clinic for which he is drawing those intricate sketches with his cigarette holder on the marble table top. [192]

But what of that portly old gentleman with the benevolent smile and the beaming eyes? That's a Colonel's uniform, is it not? How well he looks the part! But do you think he is with the others in the cafés chantant or on the boulevards? Look again, you world dried dog. Didn't you note the tenderness in that smile? The old Colonel has—or has had—a wife and children. A look like that for a concert hall girl! Not ever. He is in the bosom of his family. May he be the last of them all to wake from his dream.

Ah, you know that bronzed giant with the shoulders and brow of a Viking and the eyes that pierce like rapiers of steel with their eagle glance. He was shipped off to the "Islands," a "Ticket-of-Leavester," from Sydney five years ago, and since then he has gained the reputation of being the most daring "black-birder," smuggler and illicit pearler in the South Pacific. He's rolling in money and lives like a prince, with "establishments" in every group between the Marquesas and New Zealand. Last night you were inclined to scoff when he came off to the yacht and told how he had won his "Triple Blue" at Cambridge, played in Interregimental polo at Hurlingham and raced his own string at Newmarket. You had heard his type of "bounder" rattle on before, you said. But now look at him. There's more manhood and less depravity in the devil-may-care face than there was last night. And note the set of his shoulders, the tenseness of his hands. Pulling an oar? No. You don't know cricket, do you? Well, ten to one yon "Ticket-of-Leavestser" thinks he is at Lord's, and batting to save his County. What an incongruous figure he is amongst the rapt boulevardiers! [193]

But listen to the noise outside! The hurricane is sweeping in from the sea and the outer reef is roaring like an avalanche. But why no sign of excitement from the silent dreamers? Is it because they are telling themselves that it is only the roar of the traffic on the Parisian pavements? Listen to those clanging bells and the frantic choruses of yells which sound above the threshing of the trees and the grind of the surf! Only a fire—fires are common in Montmartre—they tell themselves, and go on with their dreams.

Now the batteries of the storm have got their ranges and the shot begins to fly. Snap! Bang! Hear those coco trunks cracking, and right around the club, too. Ah! this will rouse somebody.

With a heavy crash the top of a broken palm is thrown against a shuttered window and the glass and bottle of the sallow-faced youth smash to pieces upon the floor. That will fetch him surely. But still no. Pouf! Broken glass is as common as diamonds at the Folies. He beckons for the waiter to bring him more absinthe and ice and turns again his eager eyes to his picture lady, where she is still pirouetting through another interminable encore. [194]

But hark again! There is a fresh tumult outside, this time a shrill whistling and the tramp of feet on the veranda, followed by a banging at the door. A moment more and a captain of gendarmes appears and shouts something in excited, gesticulative French. You fail to catch the drift of it and ask a waiter. A half dozen schooners are pounding to pieces on the sea wall, screams the *garçon* as he is hustled off by a gendarme, and the police are impressing all the men they can lay hands on for rescue work—the "law of the beach" through all the South Pacific.

Dazed and speechless with consternation, the unlucky dreamers are hustled to their feet by the not any too gentle officers and shoved out into the night, where half a minute of rain and wind and driving spindrift punch the return portions of their round-trip tickets to Paris and leave them on the Papeete water front with an incipient hurricane ahead of them and the rough-handed gendarmes behind.

The awakening is not always so violent as this, but there is no such thing as a peaceful disembarkation at the end of the return trip by the absinthe route, whoever puts up the gangway.

CHAPTER XI

[195]

PAPEETE TO PAGO PAGO

SITUATED well around on the leeward side of the island of Tahiti, with the great 8000-foot peak of Orohena cutting off all but stray gusts of the Trade wind, Papeete harbour is ordinarily as placid a bit of looped-in water as ever mirrored in its depths the silver disc of the tropic moon. Seaward the reef intercepts the surf as completely as does the volcano the wind from the opposite direction, and with the latter blowing from the southeast, where it belongs, the inner bay is safe for even the slenderest of outrigger canoes when the state of the weather outside is such as to keep the mail steamer at its dock. The trading schooners, each with a couple of frizzled mooring lines run out to convenient *buraos* or banyans, lie right against the tottering sea-wall, and even the dock of the San Francisco and Auckland boats is hardly more than a raised platform on the bank.

No one seems to dream that there is ever going to be other than southeast weather, and no one makes provision against anything else. Then some fine day a hurricane comes boring in from the north or west, and when it is over the survivors salve pieces of ship out of the tops of the coco palms, and perhaps some of them living a quarter of a mile inland, finding a schooner lodged in their *taro* patch, prop it up on an even keel and use it in place of the house of thatch which has been resolved into its component parts by the storm. In a few weeks every one but the missionaries— [196] who, by the way, are much given to picturing hell for the natives, not as a hot place, but as an island where the lost souls are endlessly tossed by æon-long hurricanes— has forgotten all about the storm, and is as liable as ever to be caught napping when the next one comes along.

We reached Tahiti somewhat too early for hurricanes, but a very good imitation one in the form of a northwest squall was brought off for our benefit, which left very little to the imagination regarding what a real blow from that direction might mean. It is only the unexpected that is a serious menace to the careful skipper, as I have mentioned before, and it is in this respect that one of these sudden twisters, coming with a fierceness beyond description from an unlikely quarter, may work irreparable harm in spite of all precautions, where a hurricane, heralded for hours, perhaps days, by a falling barometer, may, in a large measure, be prepared for or avoided.

The thing occurred one evening shortly following our arrival in Papeete, just after three days of hard work had obliterated all traces of the internal and external wear and tear incident to the 3000 miles of sailing the yacht had done since leaving Hawaii. She had received a fresh coat of white paint, decks had been scoured, hardwood newly oiled and the brass work rubbed to the highest degree of resplendency. Sails were in covers, awnings up fore-and-aft, deck cushions out of their sea jackets, and, in short, everything made ready to receive official calls. She was lying to her port anchor with twenty-five fathoms of chain out. A kedge astern held her head to the prevailing southeast wind and kept her from swinging with the [197] tide.

So empty of threat was the evening that the crew, with the exception of the single sailor whose turn it was to stand the anchor watch, had been given shore leave. The rest of us, tired from an afternoon of the ceremonious calling exigent upon the newcomers who would break the ice of officialdom in any French colony, were lounging on the quarterdeck and in the cockpit, glad of the chance to unstiffen and be quiet.

It was a night drowsy with soporific suggestiveness. Seaward the air was pulsing to the drowsing monotone of the surf upon the reef, rising and falling at regular intervals like the heavy breathing of a tired sleeper. Landward, a league of liquid lullaby, the tiny wavelets of the bay tinkled on beach and sea-wall, and through the rondure of blue-black foliage which masked the village, lights blinked sleepily, with here and there the tracery of a palm or banana frond showing in dark outline against the warm yellow rectangle of an open doorway. The yacht, rocking gently as a cradle, set the Japanese lanterns around the awnings nodding in languorous lines, and, above and beyond, clouds and stars rubbed lazily against each other in somnolent jumble. The spirit hand of the land breeze in the rigging was sounding the "stand-by"

call for the watch of Morpheus.

The arms of the Sleep God must have enfolded with especial tenderness the hulking frame of Heinrich, the husky Teuton who was standing anchor watch, for an inky splotch of cloud had grown from a speck on the northeastern horizon to a bituminous blur that blotted out everything in that quarter from the zenith down, before he raised his head from where he had pillowed it in his arms upon the forecastle ice [198] chest and roused the ship with an explosive "*Gott in Himmel!*" Simultaneously with that of Heinrich there was another explosion, like the bursting of a Vial of Wrath, and forthwith the gathering squall came charging in across the Motu Iti Quarantine Station on the reef and began systematically scooping dry the bottom of the bay. Spreading like an inverted fan, it blotted out the stars to east and west, and, with the roar of a battery of quick-firers, swept down upon us in a solid wall of air and water, only a few short, nervous puffs of wind scurrying uneasily in advance.

The squall was swooping down to strike the yacht on her port quarter, realizing which, we hurriedly buoyed the line to the now useless kedge and cast it loose. So quiet was the water and air in the half-minute-long interval before the wind came that the yacht lay motionless, half-broadside to the squall's advance, just as she had been stretched to the kedge, and when it struck her inertia was so great that the lee rail was hove well under before she began swinging. The lines of Japanese lanterns snapped in a half dozen places and went streaming off to leeward like the tails of kites. The awnings bellied monstrously and began splitting under the terrific uplift of the wind; and here and there lashings gave way and left corners threshing desperately for freer play.

There were no waves at first; only sheets of water torn from the top of the sea and thrown on ahead. The air was fairly clogged with spray, and the yacht was deluged with water, fore and aft, as though she had no more freeboard than a plank. The boats, which were made fast to booms run out on either side amidships, worked like [199] the arms of Dutch windmills, and one of them, as the yacht reached the end of her cable, was tossed bodily over its boom, to land bottom up and fill.

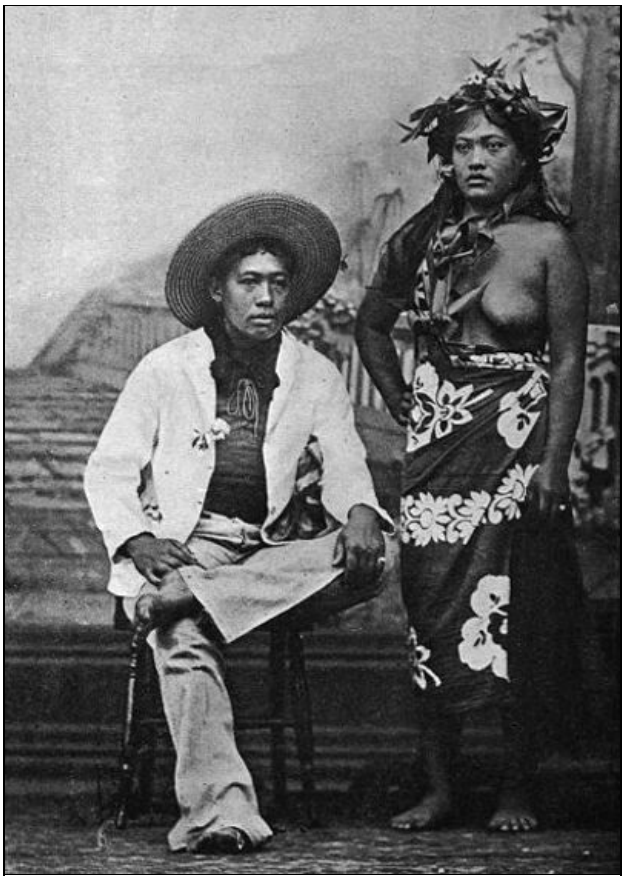
The yacht was driven across the arc of her cable-sweep as a frightened broncho rushes to the end of his picket rope, and with a somewhat similar result. The anchor fouled and began dragging. So swiftly were we carried down the bay that it seemed inconceivable that there was any anchor at all at the end of the cable, and it was not until later that we ascertained definitely that the chain had not parted. We were heading—or rather backing—at an angle toward the sea-wall, and in a direction which allowed the yacht something over a quarter of a mile to go before she would crash into the line of schooners moored beyond the American Consulate, the grinding and pounding among which became distinctly audible as the interval decreased.

The port anchor was our only hope, and on the getting over and letting go of this the Commodore and Heinrich began furiously working, while to me, with the assistance of a press-gang composed of the Mater, Claribel and the Chinese cook, was delegated the task of reducing the awnings, the great spreads of which were acting as sails in driving the yacht the quicker to an apparently inevitable doom. That there would be ample chance to get ashore in safety, no one had much doubt; but more indubitable still appeared the fact that we were scheduled to have a graphic illustration of the meaning of that commonest of South Sea expressions, "piling up on the beach."

The port anchor was let go and the awnings brought to a fashion of a furl at about the same time, and six white faces, peering anxiously shoreward for results, only [200] paled the more as the foam-white belt that marked the line of the submerged sea-wall continued to grow perceptibly nearer. Stars were appearing under the lower line of the squall along the northern horizon, but the centre of the disturbance was now overhead, and the wind had increased to a force before which the coco palms along the bank were bending to the ground and snapping with sharp, explosive detonations. A piece of steel cable, used as a "hurricane guy" to hold down a corner of the Consulate in just such an emergency as the present, had parted under the strain and was swiftly flailing the galvanized iron roof of the veranda to pieces. The clang of bells resounded through the town, summoning aid for the pounding schooners along the sea-wall, and in sheltered corners ashore could be seen black knots of men gesticulating wildly in the light of lanterns.

We were now a scant fifty feet from the wall in front of the Consulate, and perhaps twice that distance from the first of the jumble of pounding schooners, the big *Eimoo*, the largest and fastest trader that sailed from Tahiti. The seas were streaming over her as though she was a surf-beaten rock on a stretch of iron-bound coast, but in the smother on her forward deck some of her crew could be seen surging round the capstan in a frantic effort to haul her off the deadly wall. From the ships beyond came a babel of shoutings that rose above the grind and pound of keels, and presently these keyed higher into yells of excitement and dismay as one of the schooners—luckily the last in line—broke loose and began battering to pieces against the barrier of stone.

THE INEVITABLE END OF EVERY SOUTH SEA TRADING SCHOONER



A TAHITIAN COUPLE

For us on the *Lurline* there was nothing more to be done. Jewelry and other portable valuables had been tossed into a canvas sack, and the Mater and Claribel, swathed in life-preservers, hurriedly coached as to the proper manner of jumping ashore from the taffrail of a grounded yacht. White figures had appeared, clinging to the pillars of the Consulate veranda, ready—as we afterwards learned—to rush to our aid when the schooner struck. There was still some question as to whether it was the *Eimoo* we were going to bump first, or the wall; or first the former, and then, in company with her, the latter. The Commodore was just grimly opining that salvage operations would be simpler if *Lurline* and *Eimoo* struck separately, when the squall gave up its rain, the wind and sea fell sufficiently to allow the anchors to hold, and the worst was all over in a minute. [201]

The squall had blown itself out not a moment too soon, for when the anchors finally stopped dragging one could have stood in the cockpit and skimmed a biscuit over the port quarter to the veranda of the Consulate, while flung to starboard at a similar angle it would have sailed to the deck of the *Eimoo*. For the present we were safe until another squall blew up, in which event, especially if it came from anywhere to the east of north, the twenty-five fathoms of chain out to each of the anchors would be enough to allow us to swing around onto the sea-wall. Plainly it was imperative that the yacht be worked into a safer position without delay.

The sky was darkening again to the north as the Commodore sent me ashore with orders not to return without the crew, or a working equivalent. The town was in an uproar, and the impracticability of rounding up a "working equivalent" of the crew [202] was at once apparent. Two schooners and a sloop were loose and pounding to pieces upon the wall, and these had first claim to volunteer or "pressed" aid. The gendarmerie, assisted by soldiers from the barracks, were going about the streets and into the clubs and hotels requisitioning relief forces, and I was at my wit's end for half an hour dodging the minions of the law and avoiding service with one of these press gangs.

At last the crew was run to cover at the end of a fragrant tunnel of blossoming *burao* and flamboyant, where the wail of concertinas and the throb of hard-hit drum logs told me that a *hula* was in progress, even before I had pushed aside a cluster of hibiscus and peered in at a window. Bill, the light-footed Dane of the port watch, the axis of a vortex of capering *vahines*, was leaping in the maddest of hornpipes to the music of an accordion, with bugle obligato by Perkins, who had mastered that instrument while in the navy. Big, blond Gus, surrounded by another nimbus of tropic loveliness, was draining a newly-cracked coconut as he would have tossed off a *seidel* of lager, and Victor, the mate, a white *tiare* blossom behind each ear, was shifting a cat's cradle from his rack of stubby, red fingers to a frame of slender brown ones. It was a shame to put an end to their innocent fun, but the north was blackening again, and—well, a sailor must learn to take his pleasure as a patron of a railway lunch counter does his food, in hasty gulps. Besides, there would probably be other evenings ashore, and the way of a stranger in Tahiti to a session of song and dance is the turning to the first open door.

How thoroughly engrossing these little parties are may be judged from the fact that [203] the crew came along only under protest, swearing, jointly and severally, that they had heard nothing whatever of a storm which, as was afterwards estimated, did a hundred thousand francs' damage on the water front of Papeete and destroyed the season's crop of bananas and plantains!

There was a sinister tower of cloud piled up beyond the reef by the time I had brought my reluctant charges back aboard the yacht, but its east side was showing blacker than its west, and before long we had the satisfaction of seeing it bear off in the former direction and disappear, roaring mightily, behind Point Venus. The rest of the night we were left in peace to haul off out of danger.

For the last two or three hundred yards the yacht had backed in a course which lacked but a few degrees of being parallel to the sea-wall, so that the anchors were but little further from the shore than the schooner herself. "Hauling off," therefore, was a tedious and not entirely simple proceeding. We first hove short on the starboard anchor, broke it out and brought it just awash. Several lashings were then passed through its ring and round and round the port life-boat, just aft of the beam, after which a line from the yacht was made fast to the anchor and the shackle knocked off. This left it suspended in the water in a manner best calculated to trim the boat and not hamper the rowers.

While the boat pulled offshore and dropped the starboard anchor the port was broken out and catted. Then the line from the former was put on the winch and the yacht hauled offshore as far as possible. Here the port anchor was let go, following which the starboard was hove up, re-shackled and dropped again. The next morning, [204] taking advantage of a favourable slant of wind, we dropped back to within a hundred feet of the sea-wall and ran mooring lines to a couple of cannon which projected from the coral, a berth which proved both safe and convenient.

Friday, the 13th of May, was set for our day of departure for Samoa, but the unlucky coincidence of the day of the week and the month evoked such a storm of protest from the sailors that the Commodore postponed sailing for another twenty-fours and thereby lost a fair wind out of the harbour. On the morning of the 14th a fitful N.W. wind blowing directly down the passage made it impossible to get under weigh without running a strong chance of piling the yacht up on the beach. After a bootless wait of a couple of hours for a shift of wind, a line was finally carried to the mail-boat's buoy, out to which the yacht was laboriously hauled by winding in on the winches. Letting go here at noon, we sailed down the bay with a beam wind, dipping in turn to the flags of the American and British Consulates and the gunboat *Zelee*.

As we hauled up to thread the entrance the wind was brought dead ahead, and for the next fifteen minutes the yacht was put about so often in the scant working room of the narrow passage that the sails were hardly filled on one tack before, with shoaling water and an imminent surf, it was necessary to go off on the other. The trading schooners make it a rule never to attempt the passage with a head wind, but *Lurline's* superiority in pointing up, as well as the greater ease with which she [205] handled, made comparatively simple a performance that for the others would have been really hazardous. At 12.30 P. M. we were clear of the harbour, and at two o'clock took departure, Point Venus Light bearing S.E. by S., distant eight miles.

Close-hauled to a baffling N.W. wind, a course of due N. was sailed until ten o'clock, when the yacht was put about to a westerly course for the rest of the night, her speed averaging less than six miles an hour. Tahiti was still visible under a dense cloud rack at daybreak, while the northern side of Moorea presented a crazy skyline of sharp pinnacles. Toward noon Neahau was sighted, Raiatea almost immediately appearing beyond. At sunset all the leeward islands were in sight, Tahaa and Bora Bora showing up beyond Raiatea. Between the two former a sharp sail-like rock appeared, the tips of the pinnacles of Moorea were still visible to the south, while above and beyond them a heavy cloudbank betrayed the position of the veiled Orohena.

The north line of Bora Bora showed forward of the starboard beam at daylight of the 16th, our course then being due west. At eight o'clock Tubai raised a fogged outline to the south, and just across its leeward end the hazy form of Marua, the most westerly of the Societies, was dimly visible. Marua and the skyline of the great cliff of Bora Bora held places on the horizon till sunset, and with darkness we saw the last of the French islands.

The wind, which had been light for the last two days, had fallen away entirely by the morning of the 17th, the calm for the next eighteen hours being so complete that the yacht had not enough way to straighten out the log-line. From midnight of the 16th to that of the 17th but twenty-six miles were covered, most of the distance being [206] made in one watch. By morning of the 18th, however, the renegade Trade-wind again began asserting itself, to stand faithfully by nearly all the rest of the way to the Samoas.

The coming of the Trade-wind was coincident with another happening which served graphically to illustrate the dangers that little-navigated seas hold for the most careful skippers. From the observations of the 17th it appeared that Bellinghausen Island, a low uninhabited reef of considerable extent, lay directly upon our course to Tutuila, and at a distance which made it probable that we would come up to it toward the end of the night. Findlay's "Directory" gave warning of a southerly setting current of a mile an hour, allowing for which our course was so altered as to give the dangerous reef an amply wide berth. That course, we figured, would carry us from ten to twenty miles north of the island in spite of the current, but at midnight, to make assurance doubly sure, it was decided to edge still farther to the north, and the course was altered to N.W. by W. This we were to hold until daybreak and then, the danger being past, head off due west for Tutuila again. Of course we would pass out of sight and sound of the reef, we thought; but that was the safest way, and there wouldn't be much to see anyhow.

Just before daybreak, as the yacht, driven by the newfound Trade-wind, was settling contentedly down to an easy eight knots, the excited hail of "Breakers on the lee bow!" brought every one rushing on deck, and presently, out of the dissolving mist ahead, we saw long lines of surf tumbling over a submerged reef, and beyond low [207] drifts of sand scantily covered with scrubby coconuts and pandanus. There was no need of altering our course. Still heading in a direction which we had figured would carry us twenty miles to the *north* of Bellinghausen Island, we slipped quietly by, a mile off its sinister *southern* line, before hauling up again for Tutuila. Every point we had altered our course had only brought us nearer to the danger we had sought to avoid, and the chances are, if we had made assurance a bit surer, that, with the added speed of the incidental slant of wind, the yacht would have sailed into the breakers before daylight.

There was nothing wrong with our reckoning on this occasion except the allowance made for the current, and this was figured according to the only authority available. Probably not an average of one ship a year makes the voyage from the Societies to the Samoas, and only the occasional government vessel keeps a record that is likely to be reflected on the charts. The southerly set of the current past the western end of the Societies is, at least in the Fall months, certainly much greater than Findlay estimates it.

With mainsail and foresail wing-and-wing and both gaff topsails set, good speed was made all day of the 18th. Morning of the 19th found the wind dead astern, however, and this, in combination with an exasperating swell which set in from the south for no apparent reason whatever and made it impossible to run wing-and-wing, compelled us to steer a point wide of our course of due west. It was our original intention to rig up a square foresail for this run before the Trade from Tahiti to Samoa, but the baffling headwinds of the first few days made the use of such a sail [208]

impossible, and the advantage was deemed hardly worth the trouble for the few days that remained.

We learned later that the heavy seas from the south were the result of a tremendous gale which swept the Pacific beyond the Tropic of Capricorn a few days previously. Beam seas and a strong following wind make about the most uncomfortable combination a fore-and-after can encounter, and the next four days were lively ones aboard *Lurline*. A sea would come rolling up out of the south in a great sky-scraping ridge of pea green and heel the yacht to starboard until the mainboom dipped into the water and buckled under the strain like a rod before the first rush of a ten-pound salmon. Then it would pass on, leaving the yacht to tumble off its back and roll her port rail under just in time to dip a deckful out of the next wave. Much of the time the foresail was lowered with the boom hauled amidships, and the mainsail, double-reefed, carried to starboard. The jib and forestay-sail were usually set but rendered little service, most of such wind as they caught being shaken out in the roll.

Under these circumstances very creditable speed was made. The run to noon of the 19th was 195 miles, and for the three following days 193, 174 and 175 miles, respectively. The wear and tear on sails and sheets and halyards was very great, however. On the 21st the fore peak halyard chafed through at noon, and at ten P. M. of the same day the forestay-sail sheet came to similar grief. Nothing else carried away before we reached port, but the steady banging of these four days made a general overhauling of the rigging necessary before we were in shape to put to sea again from Pago Pago. [209]

The several small islands which constitute the Manua division of the Samoan group were sighted to the N.E. at daybreak of the 23rd. The peaks of Tutuila, distant forty miles, came above the horizon at four in the afternoon of the same day, but as there was no hope of reaching Pago Pago before dark in the light airs then prevailing, canvas was shortened to mainsail and forestay-sail and the night was spent in standing off and on. Morning of the 24th found us twenty miles off shore, and for several hours the yacht scarcely made steerageway in an almost dead calm. Toward noon a light easterly breeze sprang up, and taking advantage of every puff we managed to worry in through the cliff-walled entrance of the remarkable bay of Pago Pago by three o'clock.

The port doctor met us as we came abreast of the quarantine station and piloted the yacht up the bay to an anchorage, but through a faulty diagnosis of the lay of the bottom, combined with a faulty prescription when his original mistake was discovered, missed only by the narrowest of margins leaving his patient a subject for the marine hospital. A few of the details may be worth recording in their bearing on the much-mooted question of the advisability of placing surgeons in command of the government hospital ships.

The doctor boarded the yacht as she came gliding up before the gentle evening breeze, and after satisfying himself that she bore no evidences of plague or yellow fever in cabin or forecastle, kindly volunteered, in the absence of a harbour master (which functionary the port did not boast), to show us the way to the safest and most convenient anchorage available for a visiting craft. We accepted his well-meant offer without misgivings, and the quarantine boat, its gaily-turbaned *fita-fitas* leaning lazily on their oars, was soon trailing astern, while the doctor, clearing his throat, began "piloting." [210]

"Straight down the middle," was his first order; and "Straight down middl', Sir," muttered Perkins at the wheel, holding the yacht to her even course up the bay in apparently correct interpretation of the direction as meaning something akin to the regulation "Steady as she goes."

"Now in past the *Wheeling*," was the next command; and when we had swept smartly in past the U. S. S. *Wheeling*, "Now edge in a bit toward the shore," carried the yacht under the shadow of the towering southwestern harbour walls.

At this juncture the doctor went forward to reconnoiter, and while we still slipped at no mean speed through the water—quite without apprehension because of the considerable distance still intervening between the yacht and the apparently steep-to-shore—the excited order came booming back to "Keep her off! Keep her off!"

Here was a properly phrased nautical order at last, and Perkins grinned appreciatively as he spun the wheel up, mechanically muttering "Keep 'er off, Sir." An instant later the Commodore, dashing wildly aft, cleared the cockpit rail at a bound, and, knocking the surprised Perkins backward with his shoulder, began climbing up the spokes of the wheel like a monkey as he threw it hard down. The yacht wavered for an instant, as though confused by the unwonted treatment, and then, with a slatting of canvas and banging of blocks, came up into the wind and paid off on the other tack just in time to avoid the thrust of a jutting point of coral. We felt fully justified in setting aside our volunteer pilot and finding our own anchorage after that. [211]

Regarding which it might be in order to explain that the shores of Pago Pago Bay, though the volcanic walls themselves shelve off abruptly to a great depth, are fringed

with a hundred-yard-wide table of coral which rises to within three or four feet of its surface all the way around. The outer edge of the latter drops off sheer to deep water, and anywhere beyond is good anchorage. The doctor, of course, knew of this coral bank but had miscalculated its position. When its jagged brown rim suddenly leered up at him through the green water, quite correctly anticipating that if the yacht drove in upon it she might do herself harm, he very naturally shouted to "Keep her off!" which order the man at the wheel, quite as naturally, interpreted to mean "Keep her off the wind." This he did, with the result that he was heading her more directly than ever onto the reef, when the Commodore, catching the lay of things and realizing the danger of complicating an already hopelessly mixed situation by giving orders, sprang to the wheel himself, threw the yacht up into the wind and avoided by a scant dozen feet the jagged edge of the coral bank.

CHAPTER XII

[212]

IN PAGO PAGO BAY

In the settlement of the Samoan imbroglio in the late nineties by the partition of the group between Germany and the United States—Great Britain, the third party to the controversy having been granted compensatory rights in the Tongas and Solomons—America, for all practical purposes, had much the best of the bargain. Germany entered into actual possession of the two largest islands of the group, Upolou and Savaii, leaving the United States to do the same with Tutuila and the Manuas. The American government, however, contented itself with a naval station at Pago Pago, Tutuila, and the exercise of a mild protectorate over the natives of the rest of that island. Germany's rich and beautiful islands, after proving little more than a costly colonial experiment, passed out of her hands forever at the end of the late war. The establishment of a naval station at Pago Pago has placed the United States, strategically, in the strongest position in western Polynesia.

The bay of Pago Pago is unquestionably the finest harbour in the whole of the Pacific. In form it is not unlike a fat letter "L," of which the shorter line is the entrance and the longer, inclining slightly inward, the bay proper. Ages ago what is now the harbour was undoubtedly a huge crater occupying the centre of the island of Tutuila. One day the water must have broken through into the lava, causing an explosion which, in addition to settling the island a thousand feet or so, blew out a slice of the [213]
crater's rim and dropped it out of sight somewhere in the deep sea. The place where the slice blew out is the present entrance to the harbour, and it is wide and deep enough to hold the Capitol at Washington without seriously interfering with navigation.

So completely landlocked is the harbour, and so smooth are its waters in all weathers, that from anywhere in the inner bay—except for the tropical vegetation which clothes the mountain sides—it might pass for a Swiss lake. The high walls of the ancient crater cut off the rays of the morning and evening sun, and the velvety green of the wonderful tropic tapestry which covers them, reflecting scarcely any light and heat, makes the harbour several degrees cooler than any other Pacific island of similar latitude, either north or south of the equator. At noon of the warmest day of the month which the *Lurline* remained in the harbour the temperature was 79°, Fahrenheit. The coolest day was 74° at noon and 72° at midnight, while the water held around an even 80° all of the time.

The naval reservation, with its dock, coal pile, ice plant and warehouses, occupies the only extensive piece of level land on the bay. Above, on a jutting promontory which commands the entrance and every foot of the harbour line, is the residence of the commander of the station and the governor of the island, occupied at the time of our visit by Captain E. B. Underwood, U.S.N. At the end of the bay, half submerged in a forest of coconuts, bread-fruit, bananas and mangoes, is the Samoan village of Pago Pago, the most important native settlement on the island. Several other small villages form breaks in the solid colour of the verdant rondure with occasional [214]
isolated circular roofs of brown thatch dotting the grey ribbon of the trail which binds them together.

Ever a splendid physical specimen and ever possessed of the kindliest and happiest of dispositions, the Samoan has undergone less change in his contact with the white man than any other native of the South Pacific. This is particularly true of those of Tutuila, for the mailed fist of the German War Lord had rested heavily on Upolou and Savaii for over a decade at the time of our visit, and one detected traces of sullenness and discontent among their peoples which he would search for in vain among the care-free natives of the American island. In many ways, in fact, Tutuila is deserving of being called a model tropical colony. The government, except for a gently exercised judicial supervision, is practically autonomous, and the natives, left to the enjoyment of the customs and institutions of their fathers, have retained a self-respect, dignity and amiability without parallel in any of the other island groups of

Polynesia. The American protectorate over Tutuila is proving a happy medium between the paternalism of the British and the repressiveness of the Germans and French, the result being an island where intercourse with the natives is unmixedly edifying and pleasant.

The Samoan islands are rightly called the Navigator Group, for both in their achievements of the past along that line, as well as in the seamanship they display today, their natives are in a class by themselves. The superiority of line of a Samoan "out-rigger" canoe over that of those of any other South Pacific group is apparent to [215] the veriest novice, as is also the ability with which it is handled. The following description of a Samoan "out-rigger," which was written by an expert, will convey to the initiated an idea of the technical construction of this remarkable little craft.

"A NAVAL STATION AT PAGO PAGO HAS PLACED THE UNITED STATES, STRATEGICALLY, IN THE STRONGEST POSITION IN WESTERN POLYNESIA"

"Chief Tufeli in the uniform of a sergeant of *Fita-fitas*"

"Although the Samoan canoe is a 'dugout,' it is far from being the clumsy affair that the name indicates. Though the hull is indeed dug out of a single log, it is none the less moulded along lines of grace as well as utility. The hull is well sheered and tapered toward the slightly elevated prow, perpendicular and bladelike in its thinness. It is moulded with reference to fluid resistance and cut so as to minimize the drag of the water, and yet gain every advantage from a following sea. They do not spread or widen the hull amidships, even in the very small canoes, nor, on the other hand, are the lines of the out-rigger (left) side at all flattened; the hulls are all symmetrical with respect to the longitudinal axis."

One used to handling a Peterboro will find a Samoan canoe very cranky at first, owing to the fact that the outrigger causes a drag which must be overcome by dipping first on one side and then on the other. The size of the canoe is limited only by the size of the trunk from which it is hewn. Occasionally one is seen carrying seven or eight adults, but the capacity of the ordinary canoe is not over two or three.

In the old days the Samoans, like all the other South Sea islanders, made their long voyages in big double canoes or catamarans driven by huge sails of matting. This type, though still common in Fiji, has practically disappeared from Samoa, its place being taken by the *malaga*, a modified whaleboat. This stoutly-built double-ender is [216] generally acknowledged to be the most seaworthy type of open boat known, and instances are on record of its having ridden out storms in which sailing vessels, and even steamers, came to grief. The Samoan started with the orthodox whaleboat and kept building larger and larger until the limit of practical construction was reached. In fact, construction went somewhat beyond the limit of practicability, for a huge *malaga* built ten years ago in Apia—a veritable Roman galley of an affair, with seats for a hundred rowers—broke its back on its trial trip. Nothing of so colossal proportions has been tried since, though fifty-oar *malagas* are occasionally seen conveying all of the able-bodied males of a village off to a cricket match.

The *malaga* most in use is but little larger than the regulation whaleboat. It is stepped for two masts, and, with a big leg-o'-mutton sail hoisted on each, makes good speed if the wind is anywhere abaft the beam. Within eight points of the wind, if any sea is running, too much water comes aboard to make sailing practicable. At such times the canvas is taken in and the oars resorted to until a shift of wind or a change of course makes sailing again possible.

The Samoan invariably sings when he rows, and stopping his mouth would interfere quite as much with the progress of the boat as binding his arms. They pull one man

to the oar and take their stroke from the rhythm of the song of the leader. Ask your Samoan boatman how far the next point is, or how long it will take to reach it, and he will tell you "three songs," or four or five songs, as he happens to judge it. On a hot day a crew will stop oftener to rest its throats than its backs. Entering a tortuous, surf-beset passage through a reef, such as leads into all the bays of Tutuila except Pago Pago, a man takes his station on the prow of the *malaga* and, signalling with his hands, now on one side and now on the other, keeps the helmsman advised of the lay of the channel. [217]

Captain and Mrs. Underwood came off to the yacht the afternoon following our arrival at Pago Pago, their call proving most opportune in chancing to coincide with that of Seuka, the *taupo* of the village. The latter, in company with her hand-maidens, a dozen or more in all, bearing presents of *tapa* and fruit, came off in the official *malaga*, and through neglecting to bring an interpreter with her narrowly missed being taken for a curio vendor and being put off until another day. The Underwoods came to the rescue, however, and prolonged their call until everybody was acquainted.

The *taupo* or "village maiden" is a functionary as indispensable to a Samoan village as a chief, or even a missionary. She is, in fact, usually the daughter of the chief; or, if that dignitary has no girl in his family, the most attractive maiden chosen from among his near relations. Her duties are the traditional ones of making the official *kava*, leading the official dances called *siva-sivas*, and looking after the entertainment and personal comfort of distinguished visitors. Formerly she acted as a sort of *vivandiere* in time of tribal wars, encouraging her chief's forces by singing in the forefront of the battle. This latter, strange as it may seem, is not an ancient custom by any means. The still young and beautiful wife of Judge E. W. Gurr of Pago Pago, who was *taupo* of Apia at the time of the now historic war between Maletoa and Mataafa for supremacy in Samoa, went through that sanguinary struggle at the side of her adopted father, the distinguished chief, Seumana-Tafa, and her delightful accounts of her experiences in those stirring days we were privileged to enjoy on a number of occasions during our visit. [218]

The *taupo* lives in a house of her own, attended by eight or ten handmaidens and a stern—a very stern—duenna. The handmaidens are the most attractive unmarried girls in the village after the *taupo*, and are chosen for their faces and figures and their ability to dance. Beyond following the *taupo* in the mazes of the *siva-siva* and accompanying her on official calls, they have no duties to speak of, but as each one lives in hope of being chosen as a successor when their leader passes from them by marriage or for any other cause, their life is largely a schooling toward that felicitous end. The *kava* and *siva-siva* ceremonies are so numerous and intricate that nothing short of many years of instruction and practice can fit a girl properly to perform them, and in this respect the training of a *taupo* is not unlike that of the court *geishas* of Japan or certain of the temple *nautch* girls of India.

The duenna is the guardian of the *taupo's* morals. To her is delegated the important duty of seeing that the feet of that often temperamental and wilful young personage do not stray from the path of rectitude. Escort, watcher, protector, she is supposed never to let her charge stray beyond the sweep of her eye by day nor the reach of her arm at night. In the old days, in the event of a contretemps, the life of the duenna as well as that of the *taupo* was forfeit, whether she was guilty of "contributory negligence" or not. Today, although virginity is still the *sine qua non* of a *taupo*, the punishment for obliquities is somewhat less drastic, both for guard and guarded. [219]

Seuka had come off to the yacht to invite us to a *talolo* or official reception to be given in our honour the following evening by Chief Mauga of Pago Pago. After the *talolo* she and her girls would dance the *siva-siva* for us, and there would also be some dancing by the men. Of course we accepted the invitation with alacrity.

To this function we went in state, convoyed by a flotilla of canoes sent down by Mauga, the occupants of which enlivened the progress by singing swinging choruses extemporized in our praise. The tide was out when we reached our destination at the end of the bay, as a result of which our cutter grounded upon the edge of the reef. Instantly the members of our escort jumped out of their canoes and swarmed alongside to carry us in across the fifty yards of intervening shallows to the beach. The Commodore and I saw the Mater and Claribel borne unresistingly off in the arms of two bronze, flower-crowned giants, and then, judging it more compatible with our dignity, made the fatal mistake of electing to take the journey "pick-a-back." Before my "mount" had splashed a dozen yards I came to a realization of the fact that it was going to be out of the question to retain my hold on his coco-oiled shoulders while he traversed the whole distance; so, rather than prolong the agony, I dropped off into the water and trudged ashore alone. The air was warm, my ducks were soiled already, and most of the guests would be barefoot anyway, I told myself philosophically. But the Commodore, who, as the official head of the party was out in his nattiest uniform and did not, as he explained later, desire to make his first [220]

appearance before the highest chief on the island of Tutuila looking like a ship-wrecked sailor, would not give up without a struggle.

Unfortunately for the Commodore's hopes, the vigorous strangle hold with which he endeavoured to maintain himself on his precarious perch shut off the wind, and with it the song, of the man who was trying to carry him; and because a Samoan cannot perform any kind of labour—and especially a labour of love like the lift in question—without singing, this one came to a quick stop. The jolt started the Commodore slipping, and I was just congratulating myself on the probability that he was going to appear at the party more mussed up than I was, when there came a quick rush from behind and another of the canoeists scooped up the suspended bundle of white in his arms and, carrying it as a mother carries a babe—even as the Mater and Claribel had been borne off—splashed through to the beach.

"*Lelei!* Thank you! Good boy!" cried the relieved Commodore heartily as he found himself set right side up upon the coral clinkers. And again he cried "*Lelei!*" (the extent of his Samoan at that time) and "Good Boy!" when the cap which he supposed had fallen off in the water was set jauntily back upon his head by his dusky preserver. Another "Good boy!" greeted the discovery of the fact that his feet were dry, and still another boomed forth when the flickering light of the torches showed [221]
the white uniform to be still immaculate. The last one was emphasized with a ringing slap of gratitude bestowed upon the oil-glistening shoulder where his head had lately rested. There came a ripple of low-silvery laughter, and the Commodore's preserver had slipped away among the shadows of the coco trees.

The ruddy glow that suffused the sun-tanned face of the Commodore as I splashed out alongside him was not due entirely to the glare of the torches.

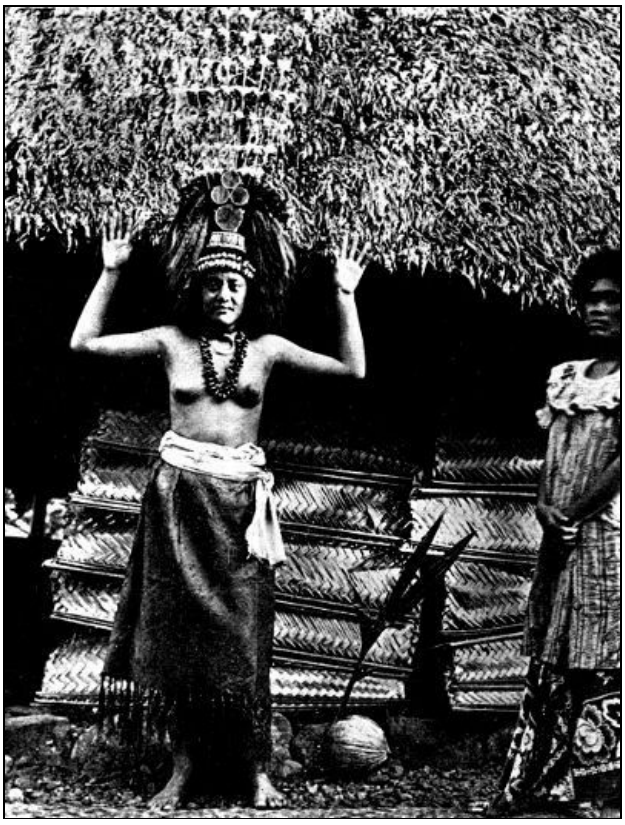
"Did you hear that? Did you see that?" he gasped excitedly, staring off into the moon-mottled shadows. "*He* was a girl! I've been carried ashore by a girl! You don't suppose that—"

"Don't worry," I said gently; "they were too busy thanking their own preservers to notice you."

Mauga, the fine old gladiator who was giving the *talolo*, met us at the door of his huge thatched-roofed "palace" and led us to the "seats" of honour—stacks of mats upon which we sat cross-legged—between himself and his handsome chiefess, Faa-oo-pea. After a speech of welcome by the *tulafale* or "talking chief," there were two or three spirited sword and club-juggling exhibitions by a dozen or so men, magnificent physical specimens who twirled and tossed ancient Samoan weapons as they reeled and lunged in the sinuous movements of the strange dances. In the interval of these Claribel was led away by one of Seuka's handmaidens to have a glimpse of the dressing of that important young personage for the *siva-siva* that was shortly to follow. When, on her return, we asked her what the *taupo* was going to wear, she appeared distinctly embarrassed and launched at once into a detailed [222]
description of Seuka's marvellous *tuiga* or headdress, which she had witnessed the assembling and adjustment of. As a matter of fact, as became apparent shortly, that was about all there was to describe. For that reason, and because it is so marvellous an affair intrinsically, I have thought it worth while to set down what the observant Claribel has to say about it in her journal.

"The *taupo's* badge of office is a three-feet-high headdress called a *tuiga*. It is a composite affair, part wig, part frontlet of nautilis shell and part a scaffolding of three flower-decked sticks. It is not an easy thing to put on, for it must be assembled piece by piece each time it is wanted. It is producive of constant pain while it is worn and is taken off with a feeling of relief, yet the custom of wearing it on official occasions is so old and rigid that the *taupo* would scarcely feel properly clad without it. The foundation is a strip of black cloth which is wound around the head at the roots of the hair, drawing all of the latter up into a bunch at the crown. Upon this one stubby lock is tied the wig of natural hair, which is set in a frame of cloth or fibre netting. When this is attached so securely that there is no chance of its becoming dislodged, the scaffolding of slender sticks and a cross piece is tied in front and made fast to the cloth covering over the forehead. The cross piece is usually ornamented with two or three round mirrors and some bright feathers, while a band consisting of several rows of the partition plates of the nautilus shell is often tied across the forehead. With these decorations the *taupo* wears a neck pendant of a curled boar's tusk and a wreath or two of *ula*, a few of the bright red fruits of the pandanus [223]
occasionally appearing among the latter."

FAA-OO-PEA, CHIEFTAINESS OF PAGO PAGO, MAKING *kava*



SEUKA, *taupo* OF PAGO PAGO, ILLUSTRATING A MOVEMENT IN THE *Siva*

Since Claribel had not seen fit to prepare us for it, the coming of Seuka wearing, besides her *tuiga*, only a cincture of bright *ti* leaves on each ankle and an almost negligible bit of ancestral *tappa* wreathed in a precarious twist about her waist,

created something of a stir in a portion of our party. Was it really the same Seuka, she of the downcast eye and the blushing cheek and the long, trailing *holakau* of the previous afternoon? we asked ourselves. There was the same liquid eye and the same rounded cheek, but now the one was flashing and the other flushing with the surging "dance passion," and as for the *holakau*, the Commodore avers that his falling out of sympathy with the missionary—the introducer of that atrocious hider-of-charms—dates from that moon-lit evening by the bay of Pago Pago when Seuka danced the *siva* to the throb of the drum-logs and the music of the ripple of the wavelets on the beach.

On the Samoan *siva-siva* and its concomitant, the *kava* ceremony, I will write in another chapter; of this particular *siva*—our first one—I note here only the high lights of the mental picture which the mention of it always conjures up—the half-lighted interior of the thatch-roofed, mat-floored *faletele*, with slices of the blue moonlight diverging to mountain and grove and bay through rifts in the woven blinds; the lap of the waves on the coral strand and the lisp of the wind in the bananas running through the boom of the tom-toms and the guttural chants of the spectators, and, in the flickering light of the candlenut torches, those glistening limbs of mahogany, rippling, swaying, flashing, in the infinitely alluring movements [224] of the native dances.

This dance was one of a dozen or more entertainments arranged by the hospitable natives during the time the yacht remained in Pago Pago Bay. One day it was a picnic and swim at a mountain waterfall; again a canoeing party, and another time an evening of Samoan singing. A ten-day-long cricket game between the teams of Pago Pago and Fuaga-sa furnished so much excitement that I am reserving the account of it for a special chapter. The chiefs of nearly every village on the island came and paid us visits of ceremony and brought presents, some of them journeying two days and more by land and water. Our most distinguished visitor was Chief—formerly King—Tufeli, of Manua, a group of small islands which is included with Tutuila in the American protectorate. Tufeli, a man of heroic stature and a most pleasing personality, came over for the express purpose of buying the yacht and sailing her back to Manua. He was not a little disappointed to learn that the Commodore would not find it convenient to turn her over to him in exchange for his season's copra output, but appeared considerably consoled by the barrel of salt beef we gave him as a compromise.

Most pleasant, too, were our relations with the officers of the Naval Station. Shortly after our arrival the *Adams* came to relieve the *Wheeling* and the fortnight during which the two American warships were in the harbour was a continual round of festivities. The Residency kept open house, as did also Judge E. W. Gurr, Chief Secretary of Naval Affairs, in his beautiful half-Samoan, half-foreign home on the mountainside.

Judge Gurr, whose wife I have mentioned as having been at one time the *taupo* of [225] Apia, was for many years Stevenson's attorney and intimate friend in Upolou, and since taking charge of native affairs in Tutuila his thorough knowledge of Samoan character and his sympathetic interest in the welfare of the people have made his services invaluable to the American government. Judge Gurr arranged a voyage around the island for the *Lurline*, with visits to the principal villages along the coast, a fascinating excursion which was finally given up on account of uncertain harbour facilities. This trip was undertaken, however, by Judge Gurr and myself in the former's whaleboat, and, thanks to my sponsor's prestige, turned out most interestingly.

In no one particular does the lightness with which the Samoan has been touched by outside influence show more clearly than in his architecture. He builds and lives in the same style of house today that was used by his ancestor of a hundred—perhaps a thousand—years ago. Unlike the Hawaiian, Tahitian and Fijian, he has not taken kindly to sawn timber, galvanized iron, nails and glass, and nowhere is his conservatism in this respect more in evidence than in the villages of Tutuila. For this reason a brief description of the construction and furnishing of a typical Pago Pago dwelling may be of interest, and for this I am indebted to Claribel, who spent a whole afternoon, with pencil and notebook, jotting down the details at first hand.

"Although not a nail or dressed board is used in the Samoan house, the finished structure is exceedingly strong and especially attractive to look at. The uprights that support the roofs are the peeled trunks of young breadfruit trees. They are about six inches in diameter, and are set something like a yard apart around a raised oval [226] floor-space that is paved with small smooth stones from the beach. Upon these posts rests the set of beams that support the rafters. The rafters run from the top of the posts to the roof-tree, which is supported by four or five uprights set in the centre of the floor-space. These beams are all laced together with braided coconut fibre, sometimes gaily coloured. The neatest joinery is in the roof, the ceiling being the under side of the thatching, which is laced between small, smoothly dressed branches. These beams are not long, curved tree-trunks as they appear, but comparatively short sections of coconut wood, fitted and dressed and lashed together with fibre so neatly that the joints are not readily discovered.

"Usually the thatch is of sugar cane leaves, though occasionally coco fronds or pandanus blades are used. The walls are made by letting down the 'Venetian blinds' of braided coco palm leaves which hang from the roof beams about four feet above the ground. Although there is no indicated door, the customary entrance is through the opening between the posts to the right of a line drawn through the house between the centre supports of the roof-tree. This is the 'front door'; the 'back door' is any opening between the posts behind a line at right angles to the one just mentioned, and dividing the house between the first two of the central posts. Before these centre posts the host and hostess sit when receiving their guests, and here the *taupo* sits when she makes the *kava*. It is the seat of honour for the inmates of the house.

A Samoan house in the course of construction

"Chief Tufeli came over for the express purpose of buying the yacht"

"The furniture of the Samoan house consists mainly of mats woven from coconut and pandanus leaves, some large chests containing the family wardrobe, dishes, arms

and trinkets. Most of the food is served on the leaves of the bread-fruit tree or the *fau*. The fine mats and tappa, which constitute the family heirlooms, are kept in rolls upon the rafters. The beds are piles of mats, six or eight deep, above which are suspended regulation mosquito nets."

An interesting feature of this description is the extent to which it shows the coconut as figuring as a building material in the Samoan house, and now that the utility of that remarkable tree has been mentioned, this will be an appropriate place to outline a few of the indispensable functions it fulfils in the life of all South Sea islanders.

There are several articles of food and general utility, both animal and vegetable, which are of almost vital importance to the peoples by whom they are used, and prominent among these may be noted the seal of the Esquimaux, the salmon of the British Columbian and Alaskan Indians, and the rice and bamboo of the Japanese, Chinese and East Indians. Yet none of these to their respective users occupies anything near so important a place as does the coconut to the South Sea islander. Copra, the dried kernel of the coconut, is the leading, and almost the only, article of commerce in every island of the South Pacific, and as such is the principal contributor to the income of the natives from which everything else they use is bought. The copra of the South Pacific islands is incomparably finer than that of the South American, West Indian or African tropics, and the plantations of Samoa, Fiji and Tahiti are the largest and most productive in the world. Practically all of the [228]
copra goes to London or San Francisco to be elaborated into a great variety of products, ranging from railroad grease to high class toilet soap and confectionery. A large and rapidly increasing trade has also sprung up in the outer husk of the coconut which is used in the manufacture of a very durable floor matting.

It is through its direct utility to the South Sea native, however, rather than for its commercial value, that the coconut attains its real importance, for it furnishes him with food, drink and shelter, and figures in some form or other as an almost indispensable adjunct to every pursuit, occupation and recreation in which he indulges. Cuts from the long, tough trunk of the tree are used for fence posts and in bridge construction, while on those islands where no other suitable trees are found a complete and adequate dwelling may be built from the coco palm alone. The trunks serve for uprights, rafters and cross-braces, while the leaves make a durable and waterproof thatch and a light but strong siding. These may also be woven into a dozen different kinds of baskets, bags and trays, and, braided end to end, make an excellent drag-net for catching fish.

The water of the half-ripe nuts is the standard drink of the islands. A good-sized nut will furnish close to a quart of liquid which, no matter how high the temperature of the air, is always cool, sweet and slightly effervescent. The milk of the nut, which is extracted from the kernel by grating and pressing, is used as a flavouring for various dishes, and with coffee makes an excellent substitute for cream. Boiled and pressed, the kernel yields an oil which is of considerable value as a lubricant, and as a [229]
stimulator of the growth of the hair is without a peer. It is to their free use of coconut oil, in fact, that the remarkable hirsute growth of the Fijians and other South Sea islanders is directly attributed. The refuse left after making oil is fed to pigs and poultry, a purpose to which it is admirably suited. On the delights of eating coconut-fattened pig, roasted on hot stones and served with *miti-hari* sauce—itself a mixture of coco milk and lime juice—I have rhapsodized in one of the Tahiti chapters.

The husk of the coconut is woven up into cinnet, lines and ropes, and as such employed in house and boat construction, for fishing, and for every other purpose in which strands of manila, sisal or cotton ordinarily serve. The flint-like shell of the coconut makes a useful grater and scraper, and when heated with the air excluded is reduced to a splendid quality of charcoal. The shells are also used for drinking cups, water-bottles, scoops, catch-alls and bailers for canoes. Tapped at its heart, the trunk yields a liquid which makes an excellent substitute for yeast, while chunks cut from the same portion of the tree forms the base of a salad which is the delight of epicures, both native and white. A still more delectable salad is made from the crisp meat of the budding nuts.

I pause with the list still incomplete, but enough uses have been enumerated, I trust, to make it comprehensible that the most drastic punishment that can be meted out to a South Sea village—one that is still resorted to in the Solomons and New Hebrides when a missionary is murdered or a labour schooner "cut out"—is to destroy its [230]
coconut trees.

Our Samoan laundryman was the source of considerable amusement during our stay in Pago Pago. Several of those indispensable functionaries came alongside on the day of the yacht's arrival, all bearing credentials of the highest order. One Maritomi, however, with a testimonial on the crested note paper of the Earl of Crawford affirming that the bearer had done the washing for his yacht, *Valhalla*, during her visit to Pago Pago, and had performed the work with neatness and dispatch, made the most favourable impression and was given a trial bundle. Among the things was a number of white duck uniforms, from the coats of which, in the hurry of arrival, the brass buttons had not been removed. The coats came back in time, neatly laundered, but unaccompanied either by the buttons or an explanation.

When Maritomi came round for the washing the following week he at first denied all knowledge of the missing buttons, asseverating that he was a "mitinary" boy and therefore could not steal even if he wanted to. This failing to make an impression, he finally admitted that he had the buttons, but claimed that buttons were his rightful perquisites, adding that he had kept the buttons of the Earl of Crawford every wash and had still been given a good character by His Lordship's steward. What was more, he said he was going to keep all of our buttons he could lay his hands on, and was going to feel very hurt if we, too, didn't give him a good character on our departure. We didn't think we were better than the Earl of Crawford, did we? That would be too absurd when the *Valhalla* was three times as big as the *Lurline* and had steam-power besides. Of course there was no upsetting a precedent established by so illustrious a [231] personage as the Earl of Crawford, and therefore it was that all that our good laundryman threatened came to pass.

On the morning of our departure when he came off with farewell presents of *tappa* and war clubs, the grateful Maritomi showed his appreciation of the testimonial we had given him by appearing in one of the Commodore's white duck uniforms, with *Lurline* buttons drawing the jacket together across his brawny chest, while the delivery boy who accompanied him perspired in the unwonted grip of a dress coat of an officer of the *Valhalla*. We forgave Maritomi much for the delicacy of feeling he displayed in putting the *Valhalla* coat on the delivery boy.

CHAPTER XIII [232]

SAMOAN CRICKET: FAUGA-SA V. PAGO PAGO

THE captain of Fauga-sa drank deep from his *epu* of *kava*, tossed the heel-taps over his shoulder as etiquette required, and sent the shining coconut cup spinning back across the mat to the feet of the *taupo*, who, in festal regalia of dancing skirt and *tuiga*, presided at the kava bowl. Then he nodded gravely to the Pago Pago captain opposite, and each leaned forward and laid a honey-hearted hibiscus blossom in the palm of his outstretched hand.

Instantly every voice within and without the council house was hushed, and in the waiting silence the buzzing of a huge blue-bottle fly sounded insistently above the lap of the wavelets on the beach and the lisp of the leaves of the palms. Suddenly the buzzing ceased, and with a great shout of triumph the Fauga-sa captain sprang to his feet and waved a hand from the doorway, on which action his shout was immediately taken up by the other eight and sixty members of his team, who fairly set the hillsides ringing with their ululating cries.

And why should they not cheer? Had not the fly alighted upon the hand of their chief and captain, Malatoba, thus giving him the "choice," and would he not send the Pago Pagos in to bat during the storm which every sign said was due for the next morning, leaving Fauga-sa the cool, dry days that always follow a storm to finish in? What matter if Pago Pago had eighty-five men to their sixty-nine?—the mud would soon wear down the opposing runners and more than make up for so slight a handicap. [233] They arrive at the decision somewhat differently on the beach of Pago Pago than at Lord's, but the winning of the toss is of no less importance in Samoan cricket than in English.

Samoan cricket is not quite so primitive as that of the Esquimau tribe in which the batsman, with a thigh bone, defends a wicket made of ribs of the animal whose skull the bowler launches at it; but it has sufficient points of divergence from its original model to make some prefatory explanation essential to an understanding of it. In the first place, then, a contest between two localities is a far more representative one in the island game than in real cricket, for a team consists of every able-bodied man in the village—every male not in his first or second childhood—and if one village chances to be larger than another it is all in the fortunes of war. The overwhelming advantage this scheme might give to a large village over a small one is, to a certain extent, minimized by the custom of having a relay of four men to do the running for all of the batsmen of each team; and if its runners are not men of great endurance as well as speed, a big team may beat itself by wearing them out by heavy scoring in the earlier stages of the contest.

The ball is "regulation," but the bat, in size and shape, is more like that used in baseball than in cricket. It is made of light-coloured native wood of medium weight, is of about three feet in length, and has its large end slightly flattened for striking the ball. The handle is bound with cinnet to insure a grip. The wicket consists of one stick instead of three, the difficulty of hitting which, even undefended, makes anything of the nature of "stone-walling" tactics quite superfluous. The batsman, [234] having no running to do, simply stands up and drives the ball about until he is out, the latter event, except for special ground rules that vary even between village and village, occurring under practically the same conditions as in the orthodox game. Bowling, both as regards "overs" and the distance from which, and the manner in

which, the ball is delivered, does not differ materially from ordinary cricket.

A game consists of but a single inning, and is never "drawn" unless the score chances to be tied. It is finished when every man playing has had his turn with the bat, a consummation which may be reached in anything from four to twelve days. Time is not of the essence of the contest, and as no one ever has any business or other engagements to call him away, the game is always fought out to the bitter end.

The visiting team proceeds in boats to the village with which it is to play, and remains there, the guest of the resident chief, during the period of the match. Play on the first day usually commences in the afternoon, but on the days following, except for short intermissions taken by the fielding team for a triumphal dance after each "out," lasts from daylight to dark. The nights are spent in *kava* drinking and *siva-sivas*, and a Samoan village after a week of cricket is over always relapses into an equal period of almost absolute somnolence while it takes the rest cure.

The exhibition cricket which is occasionally arranged for the benefit of visitors in Samoa is usually played on a comparatively smooth and level open space, bearing some slight resemblance to a regular field, but when the natives are playing for their [235] own amusement the pitch is more likely than not to be located in the midst of a coconut grove, and in the closest-built part of the village. Twelve successive hours of fielding with a grilling tropical sun on the naked back has its terrors even for a Samoan. He likes the shade of the coconuts and the overhanging eaves of thatch, and there is something in the uncertainty of handling the elusive caroms from ridge poles and palm fronds that appeals to his simple native mind.

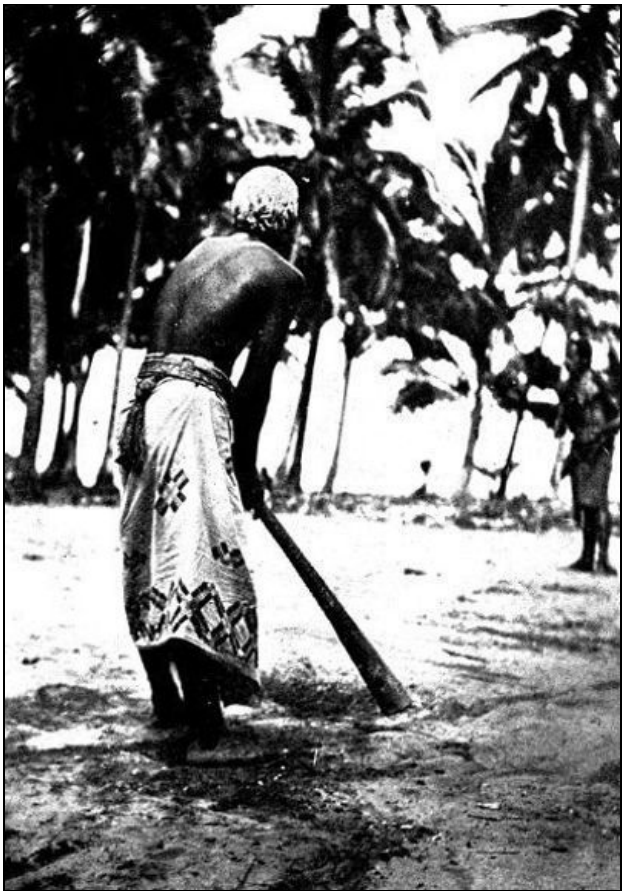
The game in question was between the teams of the villages of Fauga-sa—the Falesá of Stevenson's story, "The Beach of Falesá"—and Pago Pago, respectively the champions of the leeward and windward sides of the island of Tutuila. The winning of the "toss" by Malatoba of Fauga-sa was considered of great importance, for all the signs were for a southwest gale during the first days of the match, and as no game is ever called on account of inclement weather, it was figured that Pago Pago's runners would soon tire in the rain and wind, making heavy scoring impossible, while the batsmen could be retired just as fast in rain as in sunshine. And, to a certain degree, thus it happened; but the handicap to Pago Pago was only sufficient to cut down that team's excess of batsmen and bring the game to the most spectacular finish in the history of Samoan cricket.

The custom of having special men to do the running for the batsmen originated, it is said, in the early days of the game, when a chief who had been lamed in battle, and whose presence in the game was strictly necessary from a social standpoint, was allowed the privilege of a running substitute. The effect of the practice is the [236] centring of this work upon men specially chosen and trained for swiftness and endurance, while any man able to stand erect qualifies as a batsman. The best bat of the Apia team for many years was a grizzled old warrior with an aromatic piece of sandal wood in place of a left leg that had been snapped off by a shark in his younger days.

Pago Pago's main reliance in this game was not upon the number and prowess of its batsmen, nor upon the skill and quickness of its fielders, nor yet upon the speed and accuracy of its bowlers, but rather upon two phenomenally swift runners imported for the occasion from the crack Apia team of the island of Upolou. These men, Motu and Roboki, were reputed so speedy that they could exchange places while the ball was being passed from the wicket-keeper to the bowler, and on good clean drives into the ocean it was said that they had often piled up a dozen, and even a score, of runs. A Samoan cricket field has no "boundaries," and running is kept up until the ball is returned or declared "officially lost" by the umpire, a maximum of twenty runs being allowed in the latter event.

With a great beating of drums, tooting of conches and blowing of horns, the Fauga-sa men scattered out to their places, while Chief Mauga of Pago Pago squared away to face the bowling of Chief Malatoba. Motu and Roboki, the runners, crouched in readiness for a lightning start, the umpires waved their insignias of office, folded umbrellas, and the big game had begun!

The first ball struck a lump of coral, broke sharply to leg, and Mauga ducked just in time to save his ribs, while the spheroid, spinning off the wicket-keeper's fingers, [237] struck a coconut trunk and ricocheted into a bunch of bananas, Motu and Roboki completing four swift dashes up and down their coral path before it was returned. The second ball came straight for the wicket, and though it fell dead from Mauga's bat almost at his feet, the nimble runners, like two dark spectres, again changed ends. Eight more times they passed each other for the next three balls, only one of which was touched by the batsman, and when, on the last ball of the "over," Mauga stepped forward and laced out a screaming drive high above the council house and into the bay, the Pago Pago sympathizers fairly went wild with excitement. While a lithe-limbed Fauga-sa fielder went darting like a seal through the water after the ball, Motu and Roboki, their every nerve and muscle strained to its utmost, were piling up the runs for Pago Pago.



"Chief Mauga squared away to face the bowling of Chief Malatoba"

To-a, who made the best score for Pago Pago, facing the bowler

(Note his runner waiting, stick in hand, with foot raised)

Seven times they had passed each other and turned and passed again, and the swimmer had only reached the ball and thrown it awkwardly to a team-mate close behind him. Twice more the runners flashed by each other, and the ball was only at the shore. Motu signalled for still another effort, and with canes outstretched the game fellows went racing, each toward his goal. Half way up from the shore a Fauga-sa fielder fumbled the ball, and all looked safe for the runners, when a fragment of coco husk caused Roboki to turn his ankle just at the instant he was about to pass his partner, sending him plunging, head-on, into Motu, both of them collapsing into a

jumbled heap. The ball came on an instant later and both batsmen, through the failure of their runners, were declared out. Motu and Roboki recovered consciousness in the course of the next hour, but were of no further use to their team [238] until the following day.

Out of deference to the feelings of their opponents, the Fauga-sas omitted the dance customarily indulged in each time a batsman is put out, but when the next man to face the bowling popped up an easy ball and was caught in the slips, they made up for lost time. Whirling and yelling like dervishes, they rushed into a solid phalanx formation, and then, with rhythmic clappings of hands and stampings of feet, made a circuit of the ground, finally to end up in front of the squatting ranks of the waiting batsmen of Pago Pago. Here they continued their antics for a minute or two more, jocosely pointing out the fate of the man just disposed of as the fate which awaited the rest of his team. Then they broke up and went to playing again.

Not in the least disheartened by so unpropitious a start, the Pago Pago batsmen began slamming the ball about at this juncture, and by dark, though only fifteen wickets had fallen, a total of 240 runs had been put up, the largest half-day's score ever made in Samoa. Most of these runs were the result of long drives, which, though high in the air, were almost impossible to catch on account of the trees. Only one man was clean bowled, most of the outs being due to balls which flew up from the bat and were caught by one of the horde that clustered at point.

A local ground rule which held that a ball was fairly caught when intercepted rolling from a roof or dropping from a tree was responsible for the finish of several good batsmen. Almost in the middle of the field was a large thatch-roofed house, oval in form, temporarily occupied by the scorers, the *taupo* and her handmaidens, and the [239] distinguished visitors. A solid circle of fielders ringed this house, and several men were retired on balls smartly caught as they cannoned from the springy thatch.

Perhaps the most amusing event of the afternoon was the disgrace brought upon himself by Samau, son of Chief Malatoba, and the crack bat and fielder of the Fauga-sas. Samau was a dandified young blade with a great opinion of himself as a lady's man, who, because of his rather clever handling of a couple of long drives early in the game, had been giving himself airs and doing a deal of noisy boasting. Just as the setting sun dipped behind the towering backbone of the island and a grateful coolness came creeping down with the shadows from the bosky hillsides, Seuka, the pretty *taupo* of Pago Pago, strolled out through the coconuts, and when near Samau, threw up her lovely arms and hands in the expressive Samoan gesture signifying a complete surrender of heart and soul. Apparently no whit moved, the haughty youth only tossed his Turkish towel-beturbaned head and proceeded to knock down with one hand a sizzling hot drive that came toward him headed for the beach. Thus spurned, the artful Seuka sank down for a space upon a nearby mat in an attitude suggestive of the profoundest grief, shortly, however, to return to the attack from a perch on the veranda of the little white Mission church which stood in the middle of Samau's territory.

The proud youth tried valiantly for a while to stem the tide of his ebbing interest in the game, but the little lady seemed so palpably smitten with his charms that, out of [240] the very softness of his heart, he finally edged over and, still keeping his eye fixed on the batsman, began to talk to her. Soon Seuka was observed holding something playfully behind her back and tantalizing the scornful Samau by denying him a look. At last the unlucky fellow's curiosity got the better of him, and for one fatal moment he was seen to turn his back and begin to scuffle with the laughing coquette for the possession of the keepsake she was withholding. At the same instant the batsman smote the ball a ringing crack and sent it flying into the top of a tall coco palm above the church. From the palm the ball dropped to the roof of the mission, rolled to the veranda, and finally fell off almost upon the head of the frightened Samau, who was standing gaping foolishly at the wildly gesticulating horde of his team mates who came bearing down upon him. It would have been an easy catch had he been attending to business, and as the full enormity of the crushed dandy's offence dawned upon him, he turned tail and ran for the bush, closely followed by a dozen irate Fauga-sa men and a black and white cur. Being the fastest man on his team, Samau easily outdistanced the pursuit, but it was said that he stayed in the bush all night, and that he was only allowed to enter the game next day upon the solemn promise not to speak to another woman until his return to the home village.

The second day the expected storm came on, and on that and the two following days there was a gale of wind and almost incessant rain. Through it all the game went merrily on, and despite unfavourable conditions Pago Pago continued to add to its score until, when the last batsman was out on the fifth day, a total of 1,386 runs had [241] been chalked up to its credit. By this time fine weather had set in again, but even with this in their favour it did not seem possible for the Fauga-sas to equal the tremendous score that faced them. When twenty-three wickets went down the first day for a paltry three hundred runs the situation looked more hopeless than ever.

Things brightened up for a while on the second day when Samau, the disgraced one, batted up a rattling eighty-two, fifteen of which were put up by his speedy runners during a diversion among the fielders caused by a nest of hornets which one of the

batsman's swift drives had unexpectedly dislodged from a bread-fruit tree. After this the Fauga-sa batting slumped off again, and the day closed with something in excess of seven hundred runs to the team's credit, and thirty-nine wickets down. The third day seventeen more wickets fell for fewer than three hundred runs, so that on the morning of the fourth day—the ninth of the match—the fag end of the Fauga-sa batting faced a shortage of nearly four hundred runs.

The first man to encounter the bowling on what proved to be the final day of the match was a youth called "Johnny," a nickname which took its origin from the fact that its bearer had once been employed as a dishwasher in the galley of the American gunboat stationed in the harbour. He had been playing baseball with the Yankee marines, and that this was his first game of cricket was evident when he squared away with his bat over his shoulder as though facing pitching instead of bowling. Heedless of the ridicule heaped upon him for his lack of "form," "Johnny" [242] calmly stepped out and slammed the first ball—which chanced to be a full pitch—over the tops of the highest palms and down into a running stream in the bottom of a little gully. Down the stream it went, bobbing merrily on the way to the beach, and before it was recovered the swift-footed runners had traversed the course a dozen times. The second ball came at the batsman's feet, and the hockey-like sweep he made of it narrowly missed being caught by the bowler. The third ball struck away in front of him, and, stepping back, "Johnny" smote it hard and true, straight into the house where sat the scorers, the visitors and the members of Chief Mauga's household. All scattered as they saw it coming, and the whizzing sphere had traversed nearly the whole distance to the further side of the house before it landed, dull and heavy, in the ribs of little Oo-hee, the misshapen dwarf kept by Mauga in the capacity of mascot and jester.

Oo-hee was stretched bawling on the mat, but the question of how hard he was hit was entirely lost sight of in the excitement surrounding the momentous import attaching to the fact that he had been hit at all. A dwarf is regarded with the same superstitious awe in Samoa as in other parts of the world, and there, too, no better method is known of deflecting a current of bad luck than by touching the hump of a hunchback. But actually to bring down a hunchback with a cricket ball was a thing unprecedented. Pago Pago looked serious about it and Fauga-sa began to take heart—surely something was going to happen!

And something did happen, too, and that right speedily. "Johnny" missed his fourth ball, and the fifth, just touching the butt of his bat, went hopping and spinning off [243] along the ground like a wounded duck. Some idea of such a resemblance must have been awakened in the active mind of the little black and white village cur, who, cocked up in the shade of a palm had been conducting a punitive expedition against a particularly aggravating flea, for he pounced on the ball with a glad yelp and began shaking it like a thing alive. No whit dampened in ardour by the failure of the object of his attack to fight back, the frisky canine kept valiantly at his task, and when the onrush of fielders seemed to threaten him with total annihilation, he began to dodge and skip about among them as though proud to be the centre of so much attention. But when he saw Mauga, roaring with rage at the thought of the Fauga-sa runners adding to their team's score at the rate of a run every three or four seconds, seize a cutlass and come charging down upon him, he realized that he had made a mistake. Whereupon, therefore, he tucked his wisp of a tail between his legs and flew as the bee flies, straight for the bush, even forgetting, in his terror, to drop the ball.

When Mauga and the rest of his braves came back from a bootless chase, it was to be met with the disconcerting news that not another ball was to be found in the village. Anxiously renewed inquiry, however, met with better reward, for one of the missionary's boys was found to have an old ball, still quite hard and round and in good condition in every respect, save for the fact that one side of it, in lieu of anything better to hand, had been patched with a piece of shark's hide. Under ordinary conditions the Pago Pagos would not have thought of consenting to use such [244] a ball, for the surface of dry shark's hide has all the roughness of a rasp combined with the sharpness of the nettle; but the game seemed nearly won, and it is not in the Samoan nature to brook the postponement of a certain triumph if it can possibly be helped.

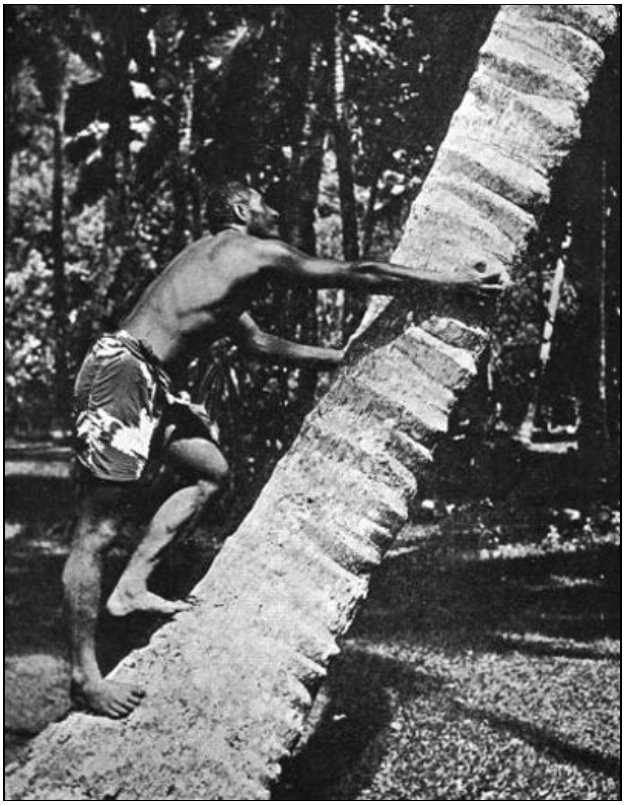
Fauga-sa was chalked up with twenty runs for the lost ball, and the game was started up again. Gingerly settling the prickly sphere back in his fingers, the bowler delivered the sixth ball of "Johnny's" over, and this the latter, swinging wildly, missed and was clean bowled.

This lucky beginning filled the Pago Pagos with great elation, from which state they were rudely jostled a moment later when the next batsman drove a hot line ball which scoured out the palm of the hand of one of the swarm of cover-points and set him howling home to bind the wound with ti leaves. After that the fielders handled the dreaded ball as if it was a live coal, and though wickets kept falling from time to time, runs came fast between until, when the last Fauga-sa man but one was out, the total of the team's runs was but four behind the aggregate of Pago Pago.

The final batsman was an old man with weak eyes, who, after missing three balls, caught the fourth on the edge of his bat and shot it high up into the top of a towering

coconut palm. Like a swarm of wolves the Pago Pago fielders, with outstretched hands, crowded beneath the preciously-freighted fronds, and like the shuttles of a madly-driven loom the runners of Fauga-sa darted back and forth. Once, twice, thrice, four times—and finally—five times they go, and then one of the umpires waves his umbrella and announces that Fauga-sa has won the game. [245]

"Whirling and yelling like dervishes they made a circuit of the ground"



"A sinewy brown figure starts clambering up the tree"

But stay! A sinewy brown figure starts clambering up the tree. Now he has reached the top, now grasped the ball with eager hand, and now he is back among his team-mates on the ground. And listen! What was that? The second umpire is speaking—he announces that Pago Pago wins the game.

And which team really won the contest is a moot question to this day; but if ever you

chance to go to the island of Tutuila and desire to start a Samoan "Donnybrook," just mention, on an occasion when one or more stalwarts from both of these villages are within hearing of your voice, the last championship game that was ever played between the Pago Pago and Fauga-sa teams.

CHAPTER XIV

[246]

A VISIT TO APIA

On the 9th of June we sailed from Pago Pago for Apia, planning to return at the end of a week in order to be present at an official flag-raising which our patriotic friend, Chief Mauga, was preparing for. We found the breeze veering and uncertain as we beat out of the harbour late in the afternoon, but ample working room and the absence of strong currents in the entrance to this splendid bay made the direction of the wind of little moment. Beyond the shelter of the harbour walls the waves, driven by an unusually heavy Trade, were running tumultuously from the southeast in frothy hummocks of cotton wool. For a couple of miles, close-hauled, we stood straight out from the land, the yacht one moment burying her nose in a malignant curl of green, and the next tossing it skyward while a ton or two of solid water went bounding back along the deck and gurgled hoarsely out through the overworked scuppers. When the offing was sufficient sheets were slacked off and we headed down the coast on a broad reach, making good speed in spite of heavy rollings in the wrench of the quartering seas.

The west blazed for a few moments as the sun went down, to be quickly quenched by a curtain of black cloud that was thrown across the heavens in a final shifting of the scenery for the most spectacular exhibition of marine pyrotechnics that is to be seen in the whole length and breadth of the Seven Seas—a June night assault by the [247]
Pacific upon the "Iron Bound Coast" of Tutuila.

The "Iron Bound Coast" opens up beyond the first point west of the entrance to Pago Pago Bay and runs up the island for a half-dozen miles or more, squarely across the path of advancing lines of seas that have been charging to the attack and gathering weight, impetus and arrogance in a thousand miles of unbroken rush before the scourges of the Southeast Trade. Their repulse is sudden, sharp and decisive, and the beetle-browed, black-ribbed cliffs accomplish it without a change of expression. The waves have been beating their heads to pieces against these same frowning, impassive barriers for a million years, more or less, and yet they are never able to overcome their surprise, never stoical enough to hide their resentment, never capable of restraining their expostulations. And what floods of supplications, what varieties of protests they pour out! If you approach near enough, following the thundering crash against the cliff, they appeal to you from where they fall with sobs of anguish and groans of pain; if you gaze from afar they beckon you with high-flung distress flags of white foam, and if you pass in the darkness they signal their despair with ghostly bonfires of glowing spume and phantom rockets of phosphorescent spray.

It was such a display that we were treated to on the night of the 9th of June, and under a fortunate combination of circumstances that made it especially impressive. The seas about the Samoas are extraordinarily prolific of the animalculæ whose presence makes sea water phosphorescent, and in May and June occur their periods of greatest activity. That this night was moonless and heavily overcast made the [248]
conditions especially favourable. Daylight and twilight had passed in swift transition, and the yacht was sailing in inky darkness as she rounded the point and opened up the Iron Bound Coast. For a moment the darkness held, and through it the imminent loom of the island was only a blur of darker opacity against the starless void above. Then a great splash of flame burst forth, and in an instant more the coast was picked out in lines of liquid fire, the reflections from which bathed the whole mountainside in fluttering waves of ghostly blue light. Here a great sea struck and erupted like a volcano set-piece, spreading out fan-wise and falling back in lines of vivid light; there a big blow-hole exploded in thunderous geysers of flame, and close by a smaller vent projected, as from the nozzle of a hose, a slender, gleaming stream of liquid fire. In places, where the rock ribs of the cliff broke evenly, the flashes burst out in regular spurts of pale flame like those from the broadside of a warship, and again, where submerged rocks and crooked elbows threw one wave back upon another, there appeared great welters of green light that churned and bubbled and swirled like liquid lava.

Like the film of a biograph the vivid panorama of flame slipped past, and by nine o'clock the ridge of Sail Rock Point had interposed and blotted out the last of it. Beyond, the island broke into hollow, smooth-beached bays, where submerged reefs clipped the claws of the breakers and dissolved them in broad patches of faint luminosity before they reached the shore. At ten o'clock, in order not to reach Apia before morning, jib and mainsail were taken in and the night run out under foresail [249]

and forestay-sail.

The smooth, green hills of Upolou were close at hand to the southwest at daybreak, and at seven o'clock, with jack hoisted for a pilot, we were off the entrance of Apia harbour. The passage to the bay is broad and straight, but, as that port was German at the time, the taking of a pilot was compulsory. That functionary came out promptly in response to our signal, and a half hour later left the yacht at anchor a quarter of a mile off the beach and a hundred yards from where, a broken-backed frame of rusting steel, the wreck of the ill-fated German warship, *Adler*, lay high up on the coral reef, just as it had been left by the waves in the great hurricane of 1889.

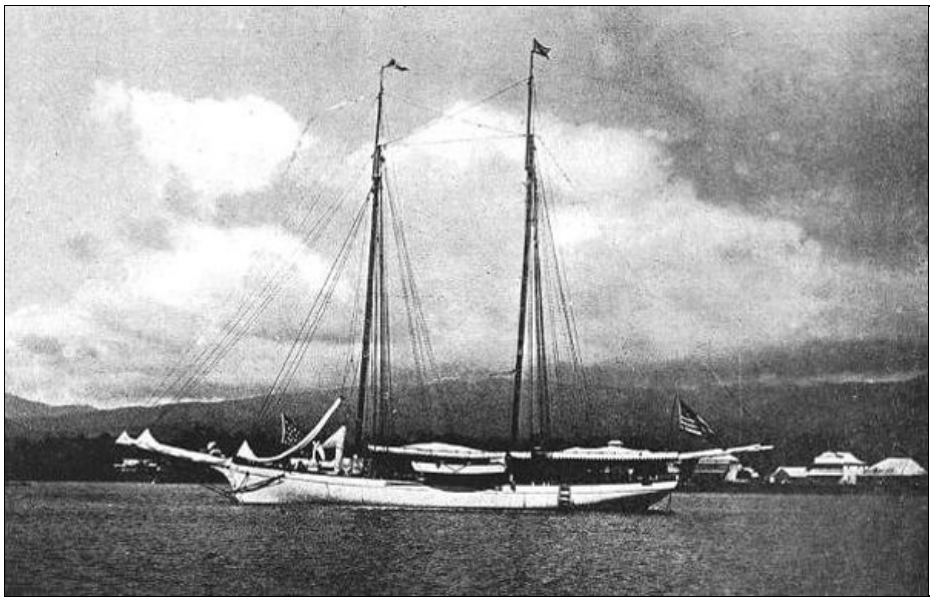
We heard from eye-witnesses the story of that hurricane when we went ashore in the afternoon; of how the powerful British *Calliope*, cheered by the doomed sailors in the shrouds of the American ships, forced her way in the teeth of the storm out through the passage to safety; of the destruction of the *Olga* and *Adler* and *Eber*, and *Trenton* and *Vandalia* and *Nipsic*; of the frightful loss of life; of the heroism of the natives in risking their lives in the mountainous surf and treacherous back-wash to save their late enemies, and a hundred other things closely or remotely bearing on that remarkable disaster. Told by men to whom the memory of the storm was still fresh and clear, with the theatre of the great tragedy opening before us, and countless souvenirs of one kind or another at hand to crystallize interest, the recitals were graphic in the extreme and made deep impression upon us of the *Lurline*, who had also had some experience of the way of the sea in its harsher moods.

At evening as we came down to the landing for our boat the Commodore's gaze [250] wandered from the great pile of riven steel on the reef to where the yacht, a slender sliver of silver, swung slowly to her anchor in the ebbing tide. At that moment the last rays of the setting sun, striking through the gaunt ribs of the *Adler's* sinister skeleton, threw a frame of black shadows across the water to rest for an instant in dark blotches on *Lurline's* snowy side and break the gleaming lines of her standing rigging into rows of detached bars floating in space. Then the sun dipped behind the mountain and the outlines of reef and wreck and schooner began dimming under a veil of purple mist.

"I don't go much on signs myself," said the Commodore musingly as he seated himself in the stern-sheets of the waiting boat and took the yoke lines, "but I suppose there are a good many sailors who would worry about a coincidence like that. Funny thing, too, that just as it happened I was trying to figure out what kind of a chance our poor little *Lurline*, without steam or power of any description, would stand in a storm that could throw a ship like the *Adler* high and dry out of the water. And—hurricane season is coming on, you know—I'm still wondering a little, that's all."

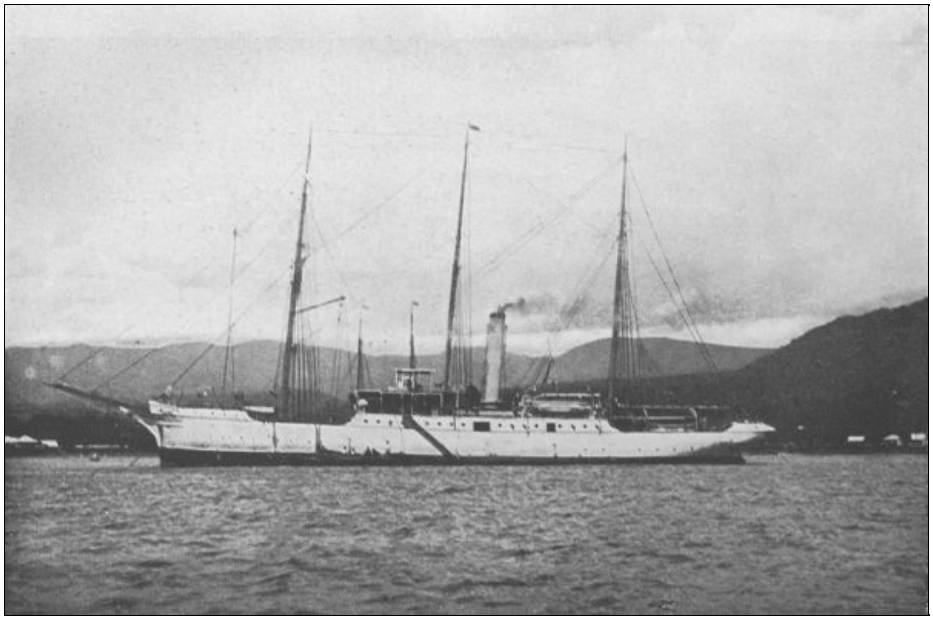
Strangely enough, it was written that the question should, in a measure, be answered within the fortnight, though the demonstration, fortunately, was not to take place in a reef-encompassed harbour.

The Bay of Apia, like that of Papeete, is a typical South Pacific harbour; an open roadstead on the leeward side of the island, with a reef cutting it off from the sea and giving good protection in ordinary weathers. The only reason that there have not been other great disasters like that of 1889 is because there has never again chanced [251] to be so many large ships in the harbour when a hurricane came along. The hurricanes still blow up every now and then, and, just as in that historic storm, all the shipping that cannot go to sea goes ashore. The bottom of Apia Bay is almost as thickly littered with trading schooner wreckage as with pink coral.



Lurline AT ANCHOR IN BAY OF APIA, SAMOA

(At the summit of the mountain in the background Robert Louis Stevenson is buried)



"THE LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY STEAMER *JOHN WILLIAMS* LAY NEAR US"

The town of Apia, though picturesque—what South Pacific village is not so?—has scarcely the fascinating charm of Papeete with its crumbling sea-wall, its avenues of giant trees and its wealth of traditions. The business section of the town consists of a half mile straggle of galvanized iron stores following the line of the beach road, with numerous copra warehouses and several stubby piers breaking the sweep of the foreshore. The houses of the natives are scattered about through the cocotrees on the flat, while the European residences, bright blocks of white, dot the lower slopes of the mountain beyond. Government House, cool, spacious, inviting, stands apart from the others in the midst of its well-kept grounds, and higher still, through rifts of the encompassing verdure, glimpses may be had of the broad porticos of Villa Vailima, the old home of Robert Louis Stevenson, the loved *Tusitala* of the Samoans.

Towering above Vailima to the north is an abrupt-sided mountain, running up the slopes of which your glass reveals the scars of a roughly-graded path. Straight up it goes, without zigzag or spiral, until it disappears in the mists about the cloud-wreathed summit. If there were poles, it might be the clearing for a telegraph line to a signal station; if it was broader, a firebreak. It is neither of these utilitarian things, however, but the pathway to a shrine. Up that precarious flood-torn and creeper- [252]
hung foot-way was borne with tender care the man who understood and loved Samoa and the Samoans as no other has understood and loved them. You have discovered the path to Stevenson's tomb, for up there where the shifting draperies of the clouds have blown back to show a dull blur of grey through the wall of green that fronts the skyline, is where the "sailor home from the sea" is lying on the spot that he chose for his final resting place.

It is fitting that the way to a shrine should be a hard one, for to the man filled with the true passion of pilgrimage the pangs of the journey are a part of the reward for making it. The one who loves his Stevenson and his South Seas, will also love every stone upon which he stumbles, every creeper that rasps his cheek, every throb of his overworked heart, every ache in his racked muscles in that soul and body-trying climb to the summit of the mountain where the Master sleeps. I had seen pilgrims of one kind or another stumbling on their way many times previous to that stormy afternoon that I climbed the heights behind Vailima, but always without comprehending what it was that urged them forward. That day knowledge came, and when, in the year that followed, I met Nepalese and Burman plodding the dusty river road to Buddh-Gaya, or Turk and Arab trudging south from Damascus on the last leg of the Mecca Hadj, it was to greet them with the sympathetic smile that said, "I, too, know why."

Of the Great Ones of the earth, only Cecil John Rhodes, looking forth

"Across the world he won— [253]
The granite of the ancient North—
Great spaces washed with sun,"

sleeps as appropriately surrounded as does Stevenson. But *Tusitala*—I have seen the tears start to the eyes of the great Chiefs, Mataafa and Seumanu, at the mention of

that name—has also the world he won at his feet, while on his tomb are words unparalleled in fitness by any epitaph ever graven, a verse as deathless as the fame of the gentle soul that sleeps beneath. Stevenson's self-composed epitaph, read from a printed page, is an unblemished jewel of verse, no more; read from the bronze tablet of the tomb by the climber of the Heights, to the requiems of the Trade-wind in the trees and the mutter of the distant surf, it is as though breathed by the spirit of the Master himself.

"Under the wide and starry sky
  Dig the grave and let me lie.
Glad did I live and glad did I die,
  And I laid me down with a will.
This be the verse you grave for me:
  'Here he lies where he longed to be—
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
  And the hunter home from the hill.'"

As a colonial experiment German Samoa—the islands of Upolou, Savaii, Manono and Apolima—was not a startling success. During the first four years of the militant Teutonic government disaffection became rife among the natives, agricultural production fell off and trade languished. Realizing that a change of policy was imperative, Emperor William sent out to Apia one of the most distinguished statesmen and scholars in the Fatherland, Dr. Solf, a former member of the Reichstag, and under his wise régime much of the lost ground was regained. As far [254]
as might be in a German colony, the new Governor endeavoured to follow the plan so successfully adopted by the Americans in Tutuila, that of exercising a gentle supervision over the natives, directing them in matters of insular importance and leaving the Chiefs supreme in village affairs. This policy—the only one that can ever be successful with the high-spirited, liberty-loving Samoans—will be good as long as it lasts, but unfortunately it will take a man of no less breadth of character, humanity and imagination than Dr. Solf to maintain it, and such a governor is hardly likely to be forthcoming.

As the administrator of actual colonies, Germany's problem in her Samoan possessions is a more difficult one than that of the United States, which only exercises a protectorate over Tutuila and Manua. With extensive copra and cacao plantations under exploitation, German subjects in Samoa will never cease to chafe under the necessity of importing practically all of their labour from the Solomons, New Hebrides and other islands to the west, when there are thirty or forty thousand Samoans close at hand who spend their days in dreaming and their nights in singing and dancing. Of course, the Samoans never have performed regular labour, and can never be brought to do so, a fact, however, which the energetic and industrious Teuton finds it hard to understand. A governor of less force and breadth of vision than Dr. Solf will find it difficult to withstand the pressure of the planting interests for the inauguration of a policy that will, in some manner, make the Samoan more productive. One does not need a lifetime of acquaintance with the Samoan to know [255]
that the first step in this direction will mark the beginning of an era of discontent that nothing but a re-establishment of the broad, human régime of Dr. Solf can bring to an end.

Dr. Solf was the Governor of German Samoa at the time of our visit to Apia, and our meetings with him were among the pleasantest features of our stay. We found him all that our naval friends in Tutuila had claimed, quite the biggest figure among South Pacific executives, and it was with no surprise and much pleasure that we heard of his subsequent elevation to the post of Colonial Secretary, next to that of Prime Minister the most important portfolio in the gift of Emperor William.[1]

Outside of his political activities, Dr. Solf had long been prominent in German yachting circles, and on one of his calls aboard *Lurline* he appeared in the uniform of [256]
an officer of the Kiel Yacht Club.

An especially pleasing coincidence of our visit to Apia was the arrival there, on the day following our own, of the auxiliary schooner yacht, *La Carabine*, of Melbourne, with her owner, Sir Rupert Clark, and his brother, Lieutenant Ralph Clark, R.N., aboard. Sir Rupert is the eldest son of the famous philanthropist, the late Sir William Clark, and in addition to being the richest man in the Commonwealth and its most prominent racing figure, is also distinguished as being one of the only two Australian baronets. His brother, Lieutenant Clark, for some years the Navigating Officer of the flagship of the British Australian Squadron, resigned his commission to sail *La Carabine* on the cruise on which she was then embarked.

La Carabine we found to be a stoutly built schooner of fifty tons' register constructed in Auckland especially for sailing in Polynesia and Micronesia. Her heavy channels and running bowsprit marked her at once as British, while her stubby foremasts and huge lifeboats suggested the trader rather than the yacht. She was equipped with gasoline engines capable of driving her five knots an hour in a smooth sea. The yacht [257]
took her name from Sir Rupert's famous racer, *La Carabine*, winner of the classic Melbourne Cup of a year or two previously.

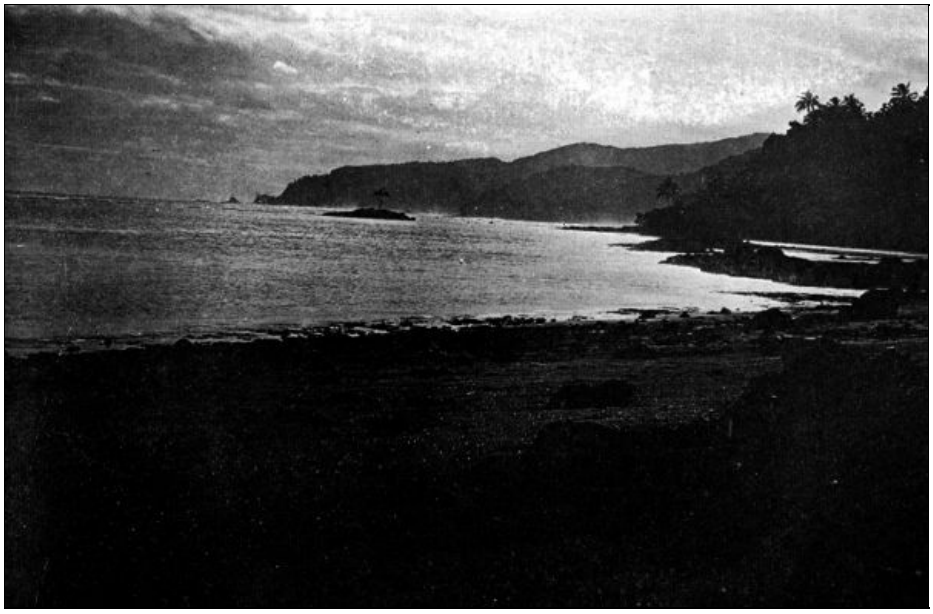
The Clarks had already visited several ports in the Tongan group, and from Samoa were planning to cruise for some months among the wild and little-known islands of the New Hebrides, Solomons and New Britain archipelagos. In many of these islands money has no value whatever, a contingency which had been provided against by stocking a barter room on *La Carabine* similar to those of the regular traders. Here were carried prints, knives, guns, jewelry, tinned meats and tobacco, which were to be exchanged for pigs, fish, fowls and curios. Nor was the matter of defence neglected. Just forward of the house a swivel had been set in the deck and the installation completed to greet the first "cutting-out" party with a hail of bullets from a vicious-looking little Maxim set thereon. The gun was served by an old man-of-war's man shipped with the crew for that purpose. We never heard whether or not occasion ever arose for its serious use. At any rate, as Clark put it, the fact that so many labour schooners had been attacked recently made its presence "a comfort if not a necessity."

A number of very pleasant affairs were arranged for the joint pleasure of the two yachting parties, especially enjoyable proving picnics at Vailima and Papa-seea, the Sliding Rock, teas on several of the large plantations and at the Consulates, a dinner at Government House, and a couple of *siva-sivas* at Chief Seamanu-Tafu's. The latter were directed by the chief's daughter, Vau, the *taupo* of Apia, a young woman of fine [258]
face and figure and of considerable quickness of wit as well, if the manner in which she put our good friend Clark to the blush one afternoon may be taken as a criterion.

Vau and her handmaidens were off to tea on *La Carabine*, preliminary to a swimming party at Papa-seea. Governor Solf, Dr. Clarence Fahnstock, of the New York Yacht Club, on his way home from the Tongas, and a couple of us from the *Lurline* were also present. The talk turned to the reforms, political, economic and industrial, lately instituted in New Zealand. Clark, in expatiating on the stringent prohibition laws in force in that colony, made the statement that a man once convicted of drunkenness in a New Zealand hotel forfeited his right to register at any other hostelry in the country. Upon hearing which Vau looked up from the fashion supplement of a Sydney illustrated weekly in which she had been engrossed and, with just enough twinkle in her dark eyes to belie the innocence of expression that sat upon the rest of her face, cooed sweetly, "So you have now to stay with frens, Sir Ruper', when you go Nu-zelan?"

And Clark, the suave, the debonair, the cool-headed; Clark, for years the endlessly-angled-for catch of two hemispheres; Clark, who took the coveted Melbourne Cup without the flicker of an eyelash, blushed and stammered like a débutante in an effort to explain. Finally, judging the temper of the company unpropitious, he gave up his ill-advised effort to save his reputation and took his revenge an hour later by pushing Vau, with all her finery, over the brink of Papa-seea.

MAID OF HONOUR TO THE *Taupo* OF APIA



A Samoan Sunset

The London Missionary Society steamer, *John Williams*, came in and lay near us for a few days before we left Apia. John Williams was the pioneer missionary of the famous London society in the South Pacific, and since his death in the early years of the last century at the hands of New Hebridean natives every ship of that organization has borne his name. For more than fifty years these were schooners, and as each was piled up on a reef in turn, its name, with the number next in line affixed, was passed on to its successor. This continued until steamers finally supplanted schooners, when the serial system of nomenclature was dropped. The present *John Williams*, the thirtieth or thereabouts, of the name, is a Clyde-built steamer of something over 3,000 tons. It has unusually graceful lines and is able to do better than sixteen knots an hour if required. Its principal duties are the provisioning of the mission stations scattered throughout the southwest Pacific and the carrying on of a most lucrative trading business which the Society—fighting the devil with fire—carries on in opposition to its arch enemies, the real traders. [259]

John Williams proved a most unsociable craft, sullenly refusing to meet any of the timidly tentative advances of either of the visiting yachts. The solemn, black-coated figures in the stern sheets of its boats would pass *La Carabine* and *Lurline* with averted eyes, evidently classifying us, with all the rest of the whites, as instruments of the world, the flesh and the devil sent to demoralize their work with the simple native.

Before leaving Apia we discharged our Chino-Malayan cook, Harrick Siah, whom we had signed on at Honolulu, shipping in his place one Andrew Clark, a Jamaican mulatto. Clark had married a Samoan girl the week previously, only to have her elope the next day with the native missionary who performed the ceremony, taking with her the accumulated savings of the unlucky cook's last year of voyaging. Being thus cast "on the beach," as they put it in the South Seas, nothing was left for him but to ship again. Now it chanced that Siah, who was but five feet two in height, had been able to walk erect in the galley's five feet three of headroom, as had also his diminutive Japanese predecessor; Clark's five feet nine required something more than six inches of reefing to swing in the clear, and even then his head ran afoul of occasional hooks and pipes and other projections. The poor fellow stuck manfully to his job, but within a fortnight the reef-points of his neck became so firmly tied that, even after he had been an hour or two ashore, we would see him on the streets or in the market with hunched shoulders, drawn-in neck and a furtive look of fear in his shifting eyes. [260]

On June 13th we received word that Chief Mauga's flag-raising at Pago Pago, a function at which we had promised to endeavour to be present, had been scheduled for one o'clock of the 15th, in order that the officers and men of the *Wheeling*, which was to sail that afternoon for Bremerton, might participate. This necessitated our leaving on the 14th, just as we were getting comfortably settled down to a full enjoyment of hospitable Apia. A whistling east wind on the starboard beam carried us out of the passage at a rattling gait, but only to come squarely ahead as we trimmed in for Tutuila. All afternoon, against a rising wind and sea, we sailed in short tacks up the coast of Upolou, and by nine P. M., with double reefs in mainsail and foresail, just managed to clear Albatross Rock, five miles east of the windward end of the island. [261]

At daybreak Tutuila showed dimly, a point forward of the port beam. Reefs were shaken out at eight o'clock, but the tiresome beating continued until we had doubled Sail Rock Point at one-thirty. From there we made fair wind of it down the coast and into the harbour. When the anchor was let go at four o'clock Mauga's "Stars and Stripes" had been flapping in the breeze for close to three hours, and the *Wheeling*, with a 300-foot "Homeward Bound" pennant streaming from her main, had just cast off her mooring lines and was backing into the stream.

CHAPTER XV

[262]

KAVA AND THE SIVA

THE principal difference between the dance in Samoa and in the other island groups of the South Pacific is that in the former it is an institution and in the latter—in recent times—an incidental. In years gone by the dance was an integral part of the life of every South Sea people, but through missionary and governmental influence it has practically been killed everywhere but in the Samoas. That the missionary alone could never have accomplished this the instance of these islands shows, for while the missionary's influence is no less potent there than in a number of other groups, the dance has survived his active opposition through the fact that the American government has not put its official bans upon it, as have the British in Fiji and the French in the Societies and Marquesas. The *siva* is as much a part of Samoan life today as it was in the time of La Perouse and the first missionaries, and as one of the few unaltered survivals of ancient times it is sincerely to be hoped that it will remain so.

As I have pointed out in writing of the dance in Tahiti, it is only on the rarest of occasions that one may see anything approaching the "real" *hula* in that island, and this is also true of the ancient dances of Hawaii, the Marquesas, Tongas, Fijis and all of the other South Sea islands. This is partly due to their having been repressed as immoral, and partly to the fact that, as the years go by, there are fewer and fewer natives who can perform the intricate movements of the old dances. In Samoa, [263] however, there is no evidence of the decadence of this traditional adjunct of native expression, though certain of the grosser features of the *siva* are no longer seen except in out-of-the-way interior villages. This is just as well, perhaps, for it is these particular features of the dance that have brought it into disrepute in other South Sea groups and ultimately resulted in governmental interference. It is these so-called indecent movements of the *siva* upon which the Samoan missionaries have based their opposition to their dance, and through their gradual elimination at a time that a gradual broadening of the missionary mind is also apparent, it is not impossible that a still beautiful and uncommercialized siva may yet exist peacefully in the islands by the side of those who have hitherto steadfastly endeavoured to extirpate it as a thing accursed.

The interesting thing about the *siva*—and this is also true of the Samoan himself—is that it is as it always was. Certain movements may not be danced in certain villages out of deference to the feelings of the missionary or because the native himself has modified his ideas respecting their propriety, but, by and large through the islands, the *siva-siva* remains as it has ever been, perhaps the most beautiful and perfect interpretative dance given to the world by any race in history. The visitor who is entertained by a chief of Tutuila, Upolou or Savaii with *kava* drinking and a *siva-siva* may know that it was not in materially different fashion that, a century and a quarter ago, the Samoans of that time received the officers of the *Astrolabe* and *Boussle* in the great round of feasting which preceded the unfortunate events leading up to the [264] tragedy of Massacre Bay. The public offering of the women to the god-like visitors on this occasion was a thing without parallel, perhaps, in modern history, but except in that one particular the Samoan *kava* and dancing ceremonies for distinguished visitors has probably undergone no change whatever.

It is impossible to write of the *siva* without mentioning *kava*, and as the drinking of this almost distinctively Samoan beverage is an invariable prelude to every dance, reception, parley or any native gathering of whatever character, it may be in order here to tell something of what it is and of how it is prepared and partaken.

The *kava* plant belongs to the pepper family. It is bushy in appearance, and the leaves, dark green and heart-shaped, are about the size of one's two hands. The stems are knotted and crooked, with joints every two or three inches. The plant is useful only between its third and fifth years, the wood being too pulpy before that time, and afterwards, too pithy and tasteless. Both stems and root are used in the preparation of the beverage, these being cut into lengths of three or four inches and split longitudinally to secure even drying in the sun. Properly prepared, it is light and pithy and of a whitish colour.

The *kava* plant grows in nearly every island of the South Pacific, and two or three generations ago the beverage from it was in universal use throughout those

latitudes. Today it is only drunk by the Samoans and here and there in Fiji. Why it should have fallen into disuse elsewhere is not entirely clear, for except in endeavouring to discourage the preparation of the root by the old method of [265] chewing, neither officials nor missionaries have actively opposed *kava* drinking. The fact that the use of *kava* has ceased most completely in those groups in which, like the Marquesas, Societies and Hawaiias, the natives have become strongly addicted to the use of alcoholic stimulants, either of their own or foreign manufacture, would point to the growing use of the latter as the probable reason for the loss of taste for the former. Although the Fijian native is far from being a teetotaler, the unusual power of the missionary in that group has undoubtedly prevented him from giving himself up to the toddy habit as completely as have his cousins of the Marquesas and Societies. The Samoan drinks less, and seems to care less for alcoholic stimulants than any other South Sea native, but whether this is due to the universal use of *kava*, or whether the universal use of *kava* is due to the fact that the toddy habit has never attained a foothold in his island, would be hard to say. The fact remains that the Samoan is a keen, clean liver, and that his *kava*, if it has not been an actual factor in developing his splendid physical powers, at least has been responsible for nothing comparable to the mental and moral havoc wrought by the insidious toddy in the other islands.

Although the Samoan drinks *kava* on any and all occasions that he can get some one to make it for him, yet the special function of that beverage is ceremonial. It figures in all formal gatherings, but is, perhaps, most indispensable to the reception of guests, on which occasions the prescribed ceremonial procedure varies no whit in the houses of the highest and the lowest. The moment the visitors to a native house are seated, the guest of highest rank, or the one whom it is desired especially to [266] honour, is presented with three or four pieces of dried kava. These he perfunctorily inspects, pronounces prime, and tosses to the *taupo*—the official virgin of the village whose duty it is to look after the entertainment of strangers—who forthwith commences the preparation of the drink. It is at this point in the original *kava* ceremony that the *taupo* proceeded to masticate the bits of root and stem to a proper consistency to be dissolved in water, but this part of the "recipe" is no longer followed amongst the enlightened natives of the coastal villages, to whom the risks of spreading infection by such a practice have been thoroughly brought home. It is customary now to grind the root to a powder between two flat stones, although on two or three occasions I have seen ordinary perforated graters used. When thoroughly reduced, the pulverized root is thrown into the *kava* bowl and covered with cold water from a calabash which is held ready by one of the handmaidens.

The *kava* bowl is an important factor in the ceremony. It is hewn from a single piece of wood, and is usually between eighteen inches and three feet in diameter and from three to five inches deep. It preserves its equilibrium with the aid of a periphery of legs running around the outside, these varying in number from four on a small bowl belonging to a person of no especial consequence to ten on the bowl of a chief. They are made on the island of Savaii, there being no trees of a suitable nature on any of the other islands of the group. Just as a pipe gathers "colour" from smoking, so does a *kava* bowl accumulate a rich layer of golden enamel through frequent use. A deeply enameled bowl, on account of the traditions associated with it, is almost priceless. [267] The true *kava* bowl is severely plain and unornamented; a carved or "beaded" border is a sure sign of manufacture for the tourist trade.

When there is sufficient water in the bowl to make enough drink for all present, the *taupo* dips in with both hands and begins squeezing the ground *kava* through her fingers in order that all of the strength will pass into solution. This operation continues until the floating particles are tasteless when dabbed on the tip of the tongue of the *taupo*, who then proceeds with the straining. This is accomplished with the aid of a sheaf of fibre from the inner bark of the hibiscus tree, called a *fau*. This contrivance, which is very similar in form to that invaluable aid-to-beauty called a "switch," though somewhat complicated to manipulate, seems to accomplish its purpose very thoroughly. The fibres are swept around the surface of the liquid in the bowl and brought down from all sides at once to a bunch at the deepest point, where it is folded over onto itself in such a manner as to gather and hold all of the root particles with which it comes in contact. After the liquid is squeezed back into the bowl, the *fau* is passed by the *taupo* to an attendant who shakes out the fibre with a single quick flirt under a raised coco-leaf curtain. Three or four repetitions of this operation clear the liquid in the bowl, and after giving the *fau* a final shake—a sinuous spiral swish above her head—the *taupo* casts it aside and informs the host that the *kava* is ready.

Upon this announcement the host passes the news on to the guests by striking the palms of his hands together with a long stiff-armed swing. This is at once taken up by [268] every one in the house, and for a few moments there is a round of dignified and somewhat perfunctory clapping. Then the *Tulafele* or "Talking Chief," who acts as a sort of toast-master, launches into a flowery speech extolling the virtues of the guests, which he concludes by calling for an *epu* of *kava* for the visitor first in rank. The *epu*, a cup made of the half of a coconut shell, is then held over the bowl by the head handmaiden, whose duty it is to act as cup-bearer. The *taupo* takes up the *fau*

with another flourish, sops it into the *kava* and squeezes out the saturated fibres over the waiting *epu*. Holding this head high, the bearer advances across the mats to the personage designated by the *tulafele* and puts it, with a scooping gesture, into his hand. As the proffered cup is accepted, she steps backward to her original station beside the *taupo*.

The guest, on receiving the *kava*, bows to the Chief and other dignitaries, and, with the word "*man'uia*,"—the equivalent of "To your health"—drinks it at a single draught. The *epu* is then returned to the bearer by spinning it across the mat to her feet. The *Tulafele* now calls the name of the guest next in rank, and the ceremony is repeated, this continuing until all have been served. There are no "second helpings."

The genealogy and rank of all Samoans are so well known that, amongst themselves, there is no question in determining the order of precedence in drinking. With foreigners present, however, the matter of rank is a complicated one. Unless a native of supreme rank, like Maatafa of Apia, who was nearer our idea of a king than any other Samoan, is to be served, it is customary to offer the first drink of *kava* to the most distinguished of the visitors, the next to the highest chief, the next to the [269]
second most important visitor, and so by alternation. When the almost sacred Mataafa was present, however, etiquette required that he be served first, and always from his own special *epu*, out of which no other was ever allowed to drink.

The hitting off of the correct order of foreign visitors, especially where several different nationalities are present, is a trying task for the *tulafale*, and, except on very formal occasions where inquiry is made beforehand, many amusing "reversals" occur. Several times, probably because I happened to bulk somewhat more largely against the sky-line—the Samoan, unless he stops to think, is almost sure to place brawn before brain—I was presented with the initial *epu* of *kava* in advance of the Commodore, and at one informal little party the both of us were passed over in favour of our gigantic bo'sun, Gus, who, with the easy, indolent assurance of the Viking from whom he was descended, was leaning against the post of the house, a passive spectator. On this, as on all other occasions, however, the Commodore and I had the consolation of being served before the Mater and Claribel. The Samoan is not exactly a Turk in the matter of women, but he takes care that they never stand in his own light.

The *tulafale* never calls a guest by his name in designating him for a drink of *kava*, but by some euphemistic appellation that is intended to be, and usually is, complimentary. The Commodore was always some variation of "The Great One Who Comes in His Own Ship." The Mater was usually something akin to "The Bright New Moon of the Great One," but once, when we brought her in to a *talolo* at Apia after a [270]
stormy passage from Tutuila, she displayed so much individuality as to inspire the observant *tulafale* to bestow a title all her own. "Take the *kava* to 'The Beautiful One Who is Sad Because of the Rocking of the Boat,'" ordered that autocrat of the *epu*, the translation of which so tickled the risibilities of the ever-resilient Mater that the look of sadness passed and the title lost its point forthwith. Claribel drew down an assorted lot of titles, among them being "The Watchful One," "The White *Taupo*" and, one day when she was wearing her *pince nez*, "The Four-Eyed One."

Whenever the Commodore was present—except on the two or three occasions when they mixed us up and served me first—I was always hailed as some kind of satellite of the "Great One." When appearing independently I was served under a number of nondescript titles, the most notable among which was one bestowed at a small village on the leeward side of Tutuila which I visited with my friend, Judge Gurr. The first cup on this occasion was presented to the Judge, the second to the village chief, and as the third was filled the single magic word, "Tusitala!" fell from the lips of the "Master of Ceremonies."

"A cup to the memory of the beloved Stevenson!" I told myself, a possible explanation of which flashed to my mind with the dawning recollection that the village, Fauga-sa, under a slightly altered name, had figured as the scene of one of the novelist's best stories. Athrill with interest, I waited expectantly, keen on missing no detail of the pretty observance, when, lo!—the brown Hebe of the *kava* cup came mincing across [271]
the mat and, with a sweep and flourish of her graceful arm, held the *epu* poised in front of my vacantly grinning face.

'"What's this for? Do they take me for a reincarnation of Stevenson?" I cried excitedly to the Judge, quite forgetting in the excitement of the moment what the etiquette of the occasion demanded.

"Drink the *kava*!" he admonished in an anxious undertone, not a little embarrassed by so flagrant a *faux pas* on the part of one for whom he was standing sponsor; "I'll explain in a moment."

I drained the coco shell of its spicy contents at a gulp, twirled it back to the *taupo*, and, as the latter began filling it for the next drink, turned inquiringly to my companion.

"No, they didn't confuse you with Stevenson," said the Judge dryly. "I merely explained to the *tulafale*, when he asked, that you were a scribbler of sorts, and

because the nearest equivalent to that in the Samoan language is a 'Teller of Tales,' he hailed you as *Tusitala* when your turn for the *kava* arrived."

Every Samoan child begins to practise some of the simpler *sivas* as soon as it is old enough to notice what is going on about it, and although only the *taupos* and their maids are schooled in the more intricate movements of the dance, the girls of almost any household can furnish a very diverting evening's entertainment on a moment's notice. For these to refuse to dance for a stranger, even a passing wayfarer who has dropped in for an hour's rest, would be as bad as refusing him a drink of *kava*, and that is unthinkable. *Kava* and the *siva* are the Samoans' symbols of hospitality, from the lowest to the highest. [272]

The beautiful symmetry of development which characterizes all Samoan girls—and especially the *taupos*—is due to the fact that their only exercises are dancing, walking, swimming and paddling, in all of which the muscles are used in long, easy, sweeping movements. In no Samoan dance is there anything comparable to the stiff-muscled toe-work and the frozen posturing of the modern French ballet, nor yet anything similar to the frenzied acrobatics of the Russian. There is abandon at times—reeling, rollicking, riotous abandon—but the motion of it flows and undulates and ripples in fluent rhythm like the current of a swift but unbroken river rapid. Who has not seen the *siva* has not realized the full meaning of the expressions "Poetry of Motion" and "Enchantment of Gesture." The grace of it is so complete, so perfect, so satisfying, that one cannot but feel that the Samoan, having failed to develop the arts of painting and sculpture, has concentrated all of his being in expressing his soul through his body.

The *siva* is natural because it expresses things that are natural. The heave of the sea, the rush of the surf, the rocking of a canoe, the swaying of the trees, the ripple of a stream, the movements of swimming and paddling and the ecstasies of love, all of which are reflected in the *siva*, are things of the dancers' daily life. The gyrations of the *première danseuse* on the tips of her toes suggests nothing of heaven or earth, but because the Samoan has taken his inspiration from himself and his surroundings, his dances are beautiful and normal. And as the dance, so the dancer. Because the movements of the *siva* are natural, the body of the *taupo* is natural. She is one fluent ripple of lithe flexibility from toe-tip to finger-tip, with no suggestions of the knotted muscles which disfigure the back and legs of a ballet dancer. [273]

On the occasion of great feasts or celebrations, where large crowds are present, it is customary to dance the *siva* out-of-doors and in the daytime. The performers at such times are usually numerous and as spectacles the dances are, perhaps, more striking than the in-door *sivas*. This does not compensate, however, for the fact that most of the seductive charm of movement is lost in the glare of the sunlight, for what in the flickering torch or lamp-light is subtle allurement, in the daytime becomes bald suggestion. To catch the spirit of the *siva*, then, one should see it by torchlight or moonlight, or in a blending of them both.

On formal occasions the *siva* is danced at the conclusion of the *kava* ceremony. At these times there is usually a battery of deep-toned wooden drums provided, and to the pulsing throb of these and the sounding slaps of open palms upon bare thighs, the *siva* begins. The opening number is almost invariably a "sitting-down" dance, which is led by the *taupo* with a flanking of three or four of her maids on either side. For the first few moments it strikes you only as queer, the odd posturing of the garlanded, cross-legged figures, with their weavings and inter-weavings of arms and the rhythmic writhings of the glistening brown bodies. But presently it is as though the pulse of your being is beginning to beat to the throb of the drumming, and there comes a feeling of having breathed the seductive atmosphere of oil-steeped gardenia blossoms since the dawn of time. Unconsciously your hands begin striking upon your not unresponsive duck-clad thighs in unison with the blows of your neighbours, instinctively you try to blend your tremulous hum with their chesty chanting, and presently you have caught the spirit of the *siva*, and begin to yield yourself to, then to delight in, and finally to exult in its subtle seductions. [274]

Then you realize that every muscle, every fibre, every nerve, every drop of blood in the gleaming red-bronze figure in the penumbra of the lamp glow is dancing. Then you know that the pirouette of that shapely chorus lady who entranced you so that last night at the Winter Garden was only a kick, a thrusting out of a snugly-stockinged, well-turned calf. But here where a member is moved it is dancing on its own account as it goes; there is motion within motion, and still more motion within that motion. Those gently swaying knees are only beating time to the throb of the drums, but in that rippling run of plastic muscles beneath the glistening skin there is a message that not the sprightliest and plumpest of Broadway favourites could kick across the foot-lights in a whole evening.

But the "sitting" *sivas* are essentially dances of the arms; and never were seen such arms as in Samoa. Plump without being fat, muscled without being muscular, all contour, softness and dimples, no fitter or fairer instruments of physical expression

were ever fashioned. The *taupo* takes the lead and her motions are followed by the others as though reflected in mirrors. Now the arms are fluttering out to one side like twin streamers whipping in the wind, now they are pressed close together along [275]
the side as though wielding a paddle, now they are upraised as in supplication, now opened in invitation, now thrown out in rebuff. The firmly-moulded breasts twinkle out and disappear again behind the swishing flower garlands and the froth of flying arms.

THE SITTING *Sivas* ARE ESSENTIALLY DANCES OF THE ARMS

"NEVER WERE SEEN SUCH ARMS AS IN SAMOA"

The lamp glow flashes on the glistening undulant bodies, high-light and shadow playing hide-and-seek in the dimples of cheek and shoulder and bosom as they bend and sway to the drone of the drums. Swift lances of light dart across thigh and shoulder, fluttering pennons of light streak down the tremulous arms, coruscant streamers of light shimmer along the lacquered leaves of the garlands. It is a poem of light and motion, the incarnation of a transcript from a volume of ancient verse.

Describe the *siva*! Not till I've proved my right to attempt it by painting the lily and gilding refinéd gold. It is a perfect thing of its kind, and that is enough to know.

So far as I know the Samoans do not attempt anything in the way of mimetic dances on the elaborate scale of those I have described as "staged" in the ancient crater in Tahiti. They do, however, have dances descriptive of harvesting coconuts, canoe races and swimming, while "duel" dances, in which the performers go through the motions of combat with native war knives, are features of nearly every *siva*. The Samoan is no less ready than the Tahitian to take advantage of the theatric effects at his disposal, and in the "standing" dances no *taupo* ever fails to make the most of the allurement of flitting in and out of patches of moonlight or torchlight and piquing the [276] interest of the audience by pretending to reveal more of her charms when sheltered by the translucent curtain of the shadows.

My one most haunting memory of South Sea dancing is of the "swimming" *siva* as performed by a tantalizing minx of a *taupo* in the ghostly half-light of a grotto on the leeward shore of Tutuila. With a single native boy to act as guide and interpreter, I was proceeding by canoe and on foot from Judge Gurr's plantation at Mala-toa to Leone, on the opposite side of the island, to witness a game of native cricket. Wet, cramped and tired from three hours of steady bailing with my camera case in a dilapidated "outrigger" which had threatened to disintegrate at every lurch, we landed late in the afternoon at a tiny hamlet near the west end of the island and sought the Chief's house for rest and refreshment. Adept in the art of reviving flagging warriors, an elderly dame—the duenna of the *taupo*—took my tired head in her motherly lap after the native custom, made a few passes along neck and shoulder muscles with her soft magnetic fingers, and I dropped off into a deep sleep which was not broken till a round of clapping announced that *kava* was ready. I had heard of the magic of *loma-loma* in Hawaii, but this was my first opportunity to verify the claim that an hour of sleep induced by it was equal to an ordinary night's rest.

Feeling refreshed and fit but still drowsy, I called to Tofa to put my things together and get ready to take the road to Leone as soon as the *kava* drinking was over, hoping by a prompt start to avoid being caught in the bush after nightfall. The boy heard, but did not move from his Buddha-like pose against the rose-violet flare of the [277] sunset.

"Fanua say that she will make swimmin' *siva-siva* on beach by'n'by if you stop tonight," he remarked inconsequentially, with his eyes fixed dreamily where the distant peaks of Upolou were thinning in the evening haze. "Fanua ver' fine gal."

"Who's Fanua?" I queried sleepily, beginning to drowse again as the magic fingers renewed their caressing pressure on my brow.

"Fanua *taupo* this villige. Ver' fine gal," Tofa replied, with the suspicion of a smile lurking at the corners of his handsome month.

My sleepy gaze wandered across to the mistress of the *kava* bowl. Surely that was not a "ver' fine gal," I told myself. I blinked and looked again. She was middle-aged and fat. Then I rubbed my eyes hard and tried to recall where I had seen that broad, good-natured face before. Ah—the duenna whose lap held my head when I dropped off to sleep! But how could that be when her lap was still under my head and her fingers stroking my temples? Perhaps she had a twin. I gave my eyes a final dig and turned them upwards. A lady's lap is not the point of vantage that a connoisseur would choose from which to get the most favourable view of her face, but—yes, Tofa undoubtedly was right. Fanua was certainly a "ver' fine gal," quite the finest I had seen in all these "Isles of Fair Women."

"We will start for Leone at sunrise," I directed Tofa, and sat up and emptied the proffered *kava* cup according to the dictates of Samoan etiquette.

It seems that the duty of *loma-loma*-ing the brows of tired wayfarers is a duty of the *taupo* which takes precedence even of *kava*-making, so that on the arrival of the [278] hastily-summoned Fanua—I being then asleep—the transfer of laps was made, the duenna substituting as drink-mixer.

We pooled the contents of my knapsack and the chiefly larder and dined sumptuously on canned salmon, breadfruit-*pate-de-foie-gras* sandwiches, boiled taro, shrimps and bananas. This over, we smoked cigarettes—mine, all of a three-day supply—and when darkness had fallen, guided by a hunchback with a torch, set out for the dancing place by the sea. We did not stop on the smooth crescent of beach, as I had anticipated, but continued along to where it joined a cliffy promontory and gave way to a jumble of crags and rocks, against which dashed the full force of a tumultuous surf.

The night was starry but moonless. By the light of the sputtering candle-nut brand in the hand of the dwarf and an occasional spurt of phosphorescence from a shattering wave, we followed the well-worn path up among the crags to where it seemed to come to an end at an opening in the rock scarcely larger than the man-hole of an underground conduit. The hollow mutter of the sea welled up from the cavernous depths, but without pausing the hunchback dropped confidently in, showering his knotted bronze shoulders with sparks in the quick descent. Just long enough for me

to clamber down beside him he held the torch, then sent it spinning, trailed by a comet-like wake of embers, over a ledge to be doused in the water which plashed below. In Stygian darkness, I was listening to the soft thuds of the feet of my companions as, one by one, they dropped down from above, when suddenly there came a crash against the seaward side of the grotto, a swirling rush of [279] phosphorescent water rushed in and, against the fluttering waves of blue-green light that played upon the rocky walls, appeared the lithe brown body of Fanua weaving in the undulating sinuosities of the "swimming" *siva*.

I had just time to note that the lovely little *taupo*, unadorned by official head-dress or garlands, was dancing only in a scant *lava-lava* of *tappa* which encircled her waist in a precarious fringe, when the light died down and the swimming *siva* became for the moment a dusky silhouette against the jagged patch of star-studded purple which marked the seaward opening of the grotto. Then a soft hand sought mine and I was led through the darkness to where a thick stack of smooth mats had been piled, upon which the members of our little party were beginning to settle at their ease. As I lounged back luxuriously upon the springy pandanus, Tofa came wriggling in on one side to "make talk" for me, as he explained, while on the other gentle fingers—the mates of the guiding ones that still held my right hand in their unrelinquishing clasp—patted my cheek to soft and iterated murmurs of "*alofa oi*," "I like you."

"Tell the young lady on my right," I began to Tofa—and then, all unheralded, the wonder befell.

Fanua was still swimming in graceful pantomime across the purple star-patch, when a crash louder than the previous one sounded against the outer wall and the mouth of the opening was blotted by the advancing wave. Again came the flutters of tremulous light upon the dark walls, quickly to be followed by a deep-mouthed gurgling growl from immediately beneath the ledge on which we reclined. Then there [280] was a quick rush of damp air in the grotto, and, with a great "whouf!" a bright fountain of phosphorescent spray was projected from a small hole in the rocky floor immediately in front of the swaying *taupo*.

Evidently this phenomenon, which occurred only with the largest waves, had been awaited by both audience and dancer. Rhythmic smiting of thighs began as the growls broke out below, and to this, and the beating of a drum improvised from a rolled mat, Fanua leapt into the jet of spouting golden mist and, for the four or five seconds during which it played, lashed out in that climacteric movement of the swimming *siva* in which the dancer is supposed to be riding the crest of a rushing comber. Flailing arms and flying hair represented the eddying foam, while quick, jerking forward movements of the shoulders gave the suggestion of impulse to a body that never moved from the heart of the floating cloud of luminous mist. One supreme flutter of tremulous movement, rippling up from the toes and running out at the finger tips as a series of waves of motion pulse down a shaken rope, told that the swimmer had slid from her wave-crest to the waters of the still lagoon. The jet died down as the pressure from below was released by the receding wave, but the swaying body, lined with glittering runlets of pale phosphorescence, continued to vibrate in silhouette across the star-gleams shot from the patch of heavens beyond the grotto's seaward mouth.

The jet of spray was due to the presence of a "blow-hole" in the grotto. Under the ledge which we occupied was another cave—a cavern within a cavern—and when the latter was filled by the wash from a wave the compressed air forced a jet of spume up [281] through the small vent opening into the main grotto. The unusual brightness of the luminous fountain was due, doubtless, partly to the darkness and partly to the fact that a heavy scum of phosphorescence had accumulated in the lower cavern.

FANUA, WHO DANCED THE SWIMMING *Siva* BY THE LIGHT OF THE PHOSPHORESCENT WAVES

DANCER WITH HEAD KNIFE

Fanua reeled on through some of the quieter movements of the swimming *siva* in the weird blue-green glow of the half-dozen waves that came before another one big

enough to start the "blow-hole" spouting arrived again. As the latter gave its premonitory growl, the shadow of a second figure appeared beside her and Tofa announced that "Fanua now dance 'Shark-he-chase-her' *siva-siva*."

Into the jet of golden mist launched "shark" and "swimmer" as the fountain began to play, weaving about each other in the movements of flight and pursuit. The "shark" darted and dashed and strove to seize, and the "swimmer" ducked and doubled and eluded, all within the circle of the drifting particles of glowing spray. Under, over and around each other they floated like frightened gold-fish in a globe, arms, legs and bodies weaving evanescent webs of shimmering brightness but never seeming to touch. Till the last luminous puff from the "blow-hole" they danced thus, and then, as the flickering jet died low, there came a ringing shriek, the lambent light streaks of the reeling bodies seemed to meet and mingle, and—whether by accident or intent I could not tell—went plunging over the ledge into the receding welter of light below.

My gasp of consternation was not echoed by the rest of the company. Most of them were laughing and chattering as though the "plunge to the depths" was the regular [282] finale, and Tofa seemed to think that his laconic comment of "He shark he take her," was all that the occasion called for. And so it proved. Before another jet had spouted there came two soft thuds on the floor of the ledge, while a ripple of silvery laughter and a shower of dewy drops from a couple of vigorously shaken heads told that "shark" and "swimmer," having circled around through the surf to the beach and dropped down to the grotto through the back entrance, were waiting for the cavernous growl from beneath to sound the cue for the next number.

As in its sister dance, the *hula*, there always comes a stage in the *siva* which is not subject to the restraining influence of the presence of dignitaries, where even impressionistic description must cease, so on this occasion I have deemed it meet that the "dead-line" should be drawn at the finale of the "Shark-he-chase-her" number. I trust I have recorded enough, however, to make it clear that Tofa's suggestion to stay over and see that "ver' fine gal," Fanua, dance the swimming *siva* was not an unwarranted one.

CHAPTER XVI [283]

PAGO PAGO TO SUVA

We sailed from Pago Pago for Fiji on the afternoon of June 18th. Just as the anchor had been catted and the yacht was filling away on her first tack a madly paddled canoe shot alongside and a letter was thrown aboard. It was addressed only to the "Yotta," no individual being specified, and ran as follows:

> "*Talofa. My love to you. Please send me one bicycle.*"

It was signed by one of the handmaidens of Seuka, the *taupo* of Pago Pago. For a simple, direct appeal this struck me as coming pretty near the record, and it is a pleasure to relate that, six months later, it met with a deserved reward. There are several ways to reach it, but no smoother road to the South Sea maiden's heart than the "bicycle path."

As we stood in past the *Adams* a crowd of our native friends on the dock began singing the plaintive half Samoan, half English farewell song, "*Tuta-pai, mai feleni*"—("Good-bye, my Friend") and the oft repeated refrain, "O Ai neppa will fa-get you," followed us till the yacht passed out of hearing around the point. The kindliest, handsomest and most amiable people in all the South Pacific, these Samoans.

It was our hope to put up a new record for the Samoa-Fiji run, as we had done for that from the Marquesas to Tahiti, but the flukiness of the wind, which became [284] apparent as soon as we were clear of the harbour, held out little promise of success. The air was abnormally clear and the sky, unusually deep and rich in colour, hardly flecked by a cloud. The sea, owing to the veering tendency of the wind, was light and even. The wind was blowing fitfully from its regular quarter, E.S.E., when we came out in the early afternoon, but shortly began coming in puffs from due east. Then it blew slightly more southerly for a half hour, before hauling up to E.N.E., and so all afternoon, as a tide creeps foot by foot up a beach, it kept chopping around to the north. By dark it had worked on to N.N.W., and was blowing, not steadily, but in jerky puffs of ominous import.

The sunset that evening was a sinister thing of red and black. The sun, glowing like a huge coal, dropped down behind the southwest end of Tutuila just as the veering wind drove up a bank of sooty clouds from the lee of the island and began blowing it to pieces. The clouds tore up into inky strips, darkly opaque, like the bars of a grate, and between the bars, sullenly, murkily, hotly red, the unobscured sky glowed like

the inside of a furnace. For the space of a minute, or two, or three, this held, with its magnified reflection upon the indolently heaving sea showing in alternate welts of glimmering purple and *sang du boeuf*; then a new flight of cloud hove up from the lee of the island and, as a closed door quenches the light of a furnace, hid the fire of the west behind its impenetrable pall. The mate characterized it politely to the ladies as an "angry sunset," and then went forward and alluded to it in mixed but forceful [285] metaphor as "bloody murder swingin' on the hinges o' hell."

An insufferably hot and stuffy night gave way to an equally unpleasant day. The sea was oily smooth, the sky overcast with a dull, translucent film of cloud, and the sun, heavily ringed, grew increasingly dimmer as the greyness thickened overhead. The run to noon from three P. M. of the 18th was an even hundred miles.

The wind, still from the northwest, increased steadily as the afternoon lengthened, the yacht, under all-plain sail, driving along at close to nine knots an hour. About four o'clock, while still making fast time, she struck a large floating log—apparently a bread-fruit trunk—which gouged a long gash on her starboard side as she sped past it. The blow was a glancing one and nothing but the paint was damaged, though the consequences might have been really serious had the point of impact been twenty feet farther forward.

The sun went out behind a horizon of dull, black mud, and through the greasy dusk that was settling over the sea the wind came pouring out of the west with constantly accelerating force. Overhead, the clouds—mostly detached blotches of cumulo-nimbus—surged about in seeming aimlessness, those of the lower air scurrying away before the northwest wind that drove the yacht along, while, a couple of thousand feet or so higher, a counter current of great force from the southwest was ripping to pieces the vaporous masses of the upper heavens and stringing them out in long lines like the wake of a fleet of ferryboats. In the intermediate levels stray mavericks of cloud were pivoting about like prairie cattle milling in a blizzard. The sea, owing to [286] the tendency of the wind to continue hauling westerly, was not running heavily as yet, but a barometer at 29.70—24 points drop in 27 hours—and the ominous aspect of the heavens gave fair warning that it was not the explosive broadside of a passing squall that was to be encountered this time, but the sustained bombardment of a real storm.

We were still a couple of months away from the so-called hurricane season, but hurricanes—like nuggets in the prospector's proverb—are where you find them, and it was on record that they had occurred in the southwest Pacific every month of the year. At any rate, the time for preparation for weather of some kind was plainly at hand, beginning with an immediate and expeditious shortening of canvas. No halfway measures to tide over a few hours' blow were resorted to. The maintopmast staysail was taken in and the lower sail reduced to double-reefed foresail, triple-reefed mainsail and reefed and unbonneted forestay-sail. Extra lashings were thrown on boats, water-butts, spars and other movables, and the skylights were closed and battened with planks to protect from waves that might break inboard.

Things were snugged up just in time, for at eight o'clock, to the accompaniment of a tenth more drop in the barometer, the storm broke fiercely in a heavy squall of rain; the next thirty-six hours were crowded full of education in the ways of a South Pacific gale. The after leach of the foresail carried away at nine o'clock and for some minutes the flogging canvas played a lively game of crack-the-whip with the sailors who were trying to smother it. Soon the effect of the wind began to show upon the [287] sea, and all through the night the increasing force of the staggering blows upon the weather bow and the Maxim-like rattle of driven spray upon the sails told of steadily mounting waves. Rain kept pouring in heavy squalls, the fierce blasts serving to beat flat for brief spaces the rising swells, but only to release them to more furious onslaughts the moment the compressed-air buffers of the wind rolled on ahead.

At midnight the barometer was down to 28.50, after reading which the mate came on deck complaining that some one had knocked the bottom out of it. The yacht was behaving splendidly, and, except for the threat in the rapid falling of the barometer, our only serious worry was on account of the uncomfortable proximity of the extensive Curacao Reef and Shoals. We were chopping along on a W.S.W. course, which, allowing for a reasonable leeway, we reckoned would carry us a good ten miles to the windward of the danger point. Nevertheless, remembering our experience with Bellinghausen Island, a sharp watch was kept to leeward until morning.

Daylight broke from the southeast through an infernal cloud-shoal of copper and sulphur and tallow and olive upon a desolation of wallowing snow-capped mountain peaks. The wind, which the previous afternoon had been blowing with a force of less than "5" in the Beaufort Scale, had held from the same quarter all night and was now hurtling down on us at near "9." Seas, confounding in height, steep and sharp-crested, with hollow green sides and black, swollen bases, came charging down from the west in broken-ranked stampede. The yacht, under the scanty canvas still on her, was wonderfully buoyant, rising and falling to the waves like an empty biscuit tin, her [288] comparatively short length giving her an advantage in recovering from a dive into the depths in time to meet the lift of the coming wave that would not have been

shared by a larger ship. The decks were repeatedly swept by the last yard or two of a sharp crest that she could not quite surmount, but not once did she put her bowsprit into green water when she had not pulled up to an angle that allowed her to shake free from the ensuing deluge in time to meet the next wave.

The leaps from hollows to crests, and from crests back to hollows, were positively appalling in the contrasts of the sudden transitions. Up out of the fog of foam in the trough the yacht would stagger, and not until she stabbed the curling crest and began teetering undecidedly on the ridge would the wind that had been shrieking in the upper rigging have a chance to strike the hull. Then it came all at once, a palpably solid block of air, and no man could stand against it on the open deck. An instant more, and it was as though the world was falling away beneath her, and down, down, down she would go until one stirred and glanced at his neighbour and set himself for the jar of the keel against the bottom of the sea.

It was those age-long moments in the hollows, with half the weather sky and all the wind cut off, with the eyes blinded and the throat choked with spume, with the ears deafened with the thunderous volleys of the flapping sails, and in the heart the vague and ever-haunting dread that the next wave would be the one to break, the one [289] against which the yacht's seaworthiness and the helmsman's cunning would alike be of no avail, that were the hardest to endure. The trough of the sea in a big storm is the nearest thing to primal chaos that can be experienced in this age of the world; only one must be in a small craft to get the full benefit of it. Apropos of which it may be of interest to note here that at this very time, 500 miles to the northeast, our friend McGrath, the trader of Nukahiva, who had been cast away from the Marquesas some weeks previously, was fighting through this same storm in a thirty-foot open boat in a desperate effort to make the harbour of Pago Pago.

The Commodore had just come on deck at seven o'clock with the disconcerting news that the barometer was down to 28.30 and still falling, when the lookout threw a bombshell on his own account into the cockpit by a half-articulate, wind-choked hail to the effect that he had sighted land abeam to lee. No one said anything as the yacht began to climb the next wave, but "Drifting on Curacao Reef" was written plain on every face; the angling slant of our quickly-quenched wake told only too plainly of the fearful leeway we were making. Each clawing the salt dust from his eyes with one hand, clutching a shroud or halyard with the other, and bracing mightily against the wind, we waited for the view to open up to leeward as the schooner reached the ridge of the soaring sea up which she struggled, to behold with untold relief, not the imminent and unending line of great breakers on a coral reef which we had expected, but a black triangle of rock, fully twenty miles distant, standing sharp and clear as [290] the Cheop's Pyramid against the grey sky.

"Boscawen Island; barren rock, 2,000 feet high," quoted the Commodore from the Directory; to add, with renewed excitement, "But if that's Boscawen Island, then where in the name of—Neptune—is the Curacao Reef and Shoals?" Then, his eyes turning to the windward horizon in a puzzled search as the yacht topped the next wave, "We must have drifted right across them if the chart is right!"

We watched for an hour for the phantom reef with no result. There was little left to worry about on the score of danger, as we were well to the lee of the points dotted out as shoal on the chart, while in our own lee the sea stretched clear and open to Boscawen and beyond; but the manner of the mystery of this piece of marine legerdemain was—or would have been at a time when there was less to think about—an absorbing problem. Certain it was that our leeway was proving greater than our headway; also that, irrespective of the correctness of our reckoning of the day before, the yacht could not have reached the position she was in without drifting squarely across some portion of either the reef or shoal as they were charted. As sailing over the reef was impossible, and over the shoal, at least unknowingly, improbable, we were left to the conclusion that, notwithstanding the fact that neither is marked "P.D.," ("Position Doubtful,") both are incorrectly located on the chart. Outside of the half-dozen archipelagoes most navigated, chart errors in the South Pacific are by no means uncommon.

At eleven o'clock in the forenoon, with the barometer at 28.20, the wind, blowing [291] more furiously than ever, hauled suddenly to S.S.W. At 11.45 the forestay-sail carried away, and, with every fresh blast threatening to strip off the remaining canvas, it did not take long to arrive at the conclusion that we were approaching, rather than getting away from, the centre of disturbance. Whether we had a fully developed hurricane to contend with, or, as was quite possible, a "southwester" of unusual violence, we could not definitely determine. The sinister sky, the low barometer, and the action of the wind up to that time all said "Hurricane"; the season, and the fact that the wind showed a tendency to continue from the Fiji quarter, indicated the "Southwester."

Assuming at the time, therefore, that we were boring into a hurricane whose centre was to the S.S.W., the Commodore made up his mind to hurry away from that centre as expeditiously as possible. Accordingly, after a new forestay-sail had, with considerable difficulty, been bent in the place of the one carried away, all the rest of the canvas was taken off the yacht and, under that sail alone, she was put on the port

tack before the wind.

All that afternoon *Lurline* ran like a frightened deer, with the waves, like hounds, coming up on her trail and snapping viciously at her flanks as they rushed by. Time and again the helmsman, grinding the wheel hard up to keep her before the wind, would glance with the tail of his eye at a foam-splotched wall of green that blotted out the sky astern, to hunch his shoulders and grip his spokes the tighter, waiting with tensed muscles and set face the blow that menaced from above; time and again, [292] yawing desperately as the tail of a galloping sea gave her nose a tweak, the yacht would seem on the point of broaching right under the hollow wall of the comber next in line; time and again—to lee on the windswept crests and to weather in the cross-gusts of the hollows—she would roll a rail deep under and dip up a deckful of solid water from which she could never quite clear herself before another came sousing aboard from the other side: and through it all nothing of serious moment happened.

Meanwhile active preparations for meeting the "worse to come" were underway. A storm trysail was dug out from the obscurity of a musty corner of the lazarette, spars were lashed up for a sea-anchor, bags of oakum were soaked with oil and the life-boats provisioned and watered. When there was nothing more to get ready some one looked at the barometer to find—this was about four in the afternoon—that it had risen twelve points since noon and was still displaying optimistic tendencies.

As it was our intention to run only until the barometer began to rise, all hands were promptly set to bending a new foresail in the place of the one carried away the night before. When this was accomplished we hove her to on the port tack under foresail, close-reefed, and the forestay-sail that was already on her. After that, though the sea continued to increase for some hours, she rode out the night with her deck unswept by anything heavier than the driving spray.

All night the barometer mounted until, at daybreak of the 21st, 28.60 was passed, a juncture at which it was deemed safe to resolve the unused sea-anchor into its [293] component parts and stow the storm trysail and oil bags against another storm. The wind blew fiercely from the southwest all day, and not until midnight, when it began chopping around toward the east, did the sea show any signs of falling. Then it began smoothing rapidly, and by daybreak the yacht very comfortably stood the addition of the close-reefed mainsail and jib.

At noon of the 22nd reefs were shaken out and all-plain sail carried for the first time in four days. The barometer was by then up to 28.78, while the wind, blowing steadily from the southeast, enabled us finally to get back on the Fiji course of S.W. by W. The unclouded sky was a dome of cobalt again, and the sea, coldly green and laced with streaks of foam, a rolling plain of furrowed jade; but in spite of fair weather, the temperature of the air was away down to 74°, and the water but four degrees warmer. The sea, under the influence of the veering wind, continued to fall rapidly all afternoon. At six o'clock the lone rock of Niuafou, the most northwesterly outpost of the Fijis, appeared on the southern horizon, almost immediately to be swallowed up in the gathering dusk.

By morning of the 23rd the wind was back in its regular quarter, E.S.E., but blowing so gently that the yacht, though carrying most of her light sails, could average no better than six or seven knots an hour. The run to noon was 158 miles.

The lookout caught the flash of the Weilangilali Light at three o'clock in the morning of the 24th, and by daylight we were well down the Naniku Passage into the Fijis. The wind was light but steady, and the scores of small, low islands to windward, [294] cutting the swell almost completely off, made splendid sailing. The flat horizon, unbroken save by the blur of an occasional island, was a welcome relief from the wave-crumpled skyline we had left behind in the open sea. The Fijian Archipelago is a veritable nest of reefs, large and small, and islands, both coral and volcanic, of every degree of magnitude. We picked up island after island during the day, and at night they still continued to push up ahead, grey banks of enchantment in the silver sea of the moonlight.

Two of the curious rocks that we passed in the course of the day, on account of their peculiar and distinctive outlines, are down on the chart as Hat and Cap Island, respectively. This circumstance was responsible for the following laconic entry in the frivolous "Ladies' Log":

> "June 24th.—Passing Hat and Cap Islands caused quite a flutter in the bonnet of the forestay-sail."

The 180th meridian was passed early in the afternoon of the 24th, upon which that day became immediately Saturday, the 25th. This made the next day Sunday, which fact poor Clark, the cook, learned so tardily that it was by only the maddest of efforts that the indispensable "duff" was prepared in time for dinner.

The Trade-wind gave way to the cool land breeze from the big island of Viti Levu in the early morning of the 26th. This, fresh with a welcome earthy smell, coaxed the yacht gingerly along for several hours, only to die out toward noon and leave her becalmed fifteen miles off Suva entrance. [295]

With every foot of sail spread to take advantage of the vagrant puffs of wind that were coming occasionally from the north, the yacht had shouldered along with the swells to within ten miles of the harbour, when the pilot, coming off in answer to our signal, boarded us to say that we might as well lower our sails and prepare to spend the night where we were. Promising, in case the wind was blowing, to come off in the morning and take us in, he bade us an officious good-bye, clambered down into his boat and set his crew of convict rowers pulling back to the land. Five minutes later the breeze freshened and the yacht, slipping swiftly through the smooth water, passed the pilot's boat and left it half a mile astern before we luffed up and waited for that thoroughly discomfited functionary to come alongside and climb aboard. An hour and a half later we had threaded the tortuous, buoy-marked passage through the reef and come to anchor a cable's length off the end of Suva pier.

CHAPTER XVII

[296]

IN SUVA AND MBAU

GENERALLY speaking, the islands, both coral and volcanic, lying east of the 180th Meridian in the Pacific are almost perfectly healthy, while those to the west of it incline to the breeding of a number of more or less virulent forms of malarial fevers, a circumstance principally due to the fact that the eastern islands, as a rule, have better natural drainage and are more exposed to the full sweep of the Trade-wind. The big island of Viti Levu, the seat of British government in Fiji, is not an exception to this rule. It is beautiful in spots, even attaining to real scenic grandeur among the high mountains of the interior; but its coast is a monotonous succession of intricate barrier reefs and mangrove swamps. Suva is, perhaps, the best location available for a capital under the circumstances, but the town in the hands of almost any other nation than the British would be a fearful pest-hole. As it is, strict attention to drainage and sanitation has made it comparatively healthy, though to no such degree as any of the capitals east of the dividing meridian.

Fiji is the meeting and mingling point—the melting-pot—of the two diverse races of the eastern and western islands of the South Pacific. While probably of the same ethnic origin, the race which inhabits the Hawaiian, Marquesan, Society, Tonga, Friendly, Samoan, and other groups of the eastern division of the South Seas—the pure Polynesian—is as different, mentally and physically, from the Melanesian or [297] Papuan type of the New Hebrides, Solomons, New Britains and New Guinea as the Mongolian is from the Ethiopian. Each race seems to reflect the physical environment in which it has been cradled. The Polynesian—especially where he has been little subject to Caucasian influence, as in Samoa—is as bright, attractive and as fair to look upon as the islands of enchantment that give him birth. The Melanesian—kinky-haired, black of skin, sullen and fierce of disposition—is the incarnation of the fever-haunted mangrove glades through which he leads his murderous forays. The Fijian, in whose veins courses the blood of the two races, has certain of the physical and mental qualities of both. Generally speaking, however, he seems to have bred truer to his sinister Papuan forbears than to the lightsome Polynesian. Magnificent physical specimen, clever builder and brave warrior that he is, there is little in the Fijian of the frank, kindly, open-heartedness which draws one so irresistibly under the spell of the pure Polynesian. The enchantment and the glamour of the South Seas—how often those words are on one's tongue in Samoa and Tahiti!—like their salubrity, are confined to the east of the "Line of Night and Day." Absorbingly interesting are the islands and the natives of the western groups, but their appeal is to the head, not to the heart.

Forty years ago the Fijis were in a completer state of savagery than are the New Hebrides and Solomons today. Every village was at war with its neighbour, the victims falling in the tribal fights invariably being eaten; war canoes were launched over human bodies as rollers, a man's skull was placed at the base of every post of a [298] new temple, while a custom—not unlike the East Indian one of *suttee*—was responsible for the strangling of all of a dead chief's widows to set their spirits free to accompany him on his journey. Every party landing from foreign ships had been attacked from the time of the early navigators. Among those thus set upon were a number of American sailors who were killed and eaten early in the last century, this incident being responsible for the visit of the first Fijian to the United States, the hardened old cannibal, Vendovi, who was brought by the corvette, *Vincennes*, to Hampton Roads to stand trial for inciting the offence.

Most of the first missionaries who ventured into Fiji also went into the cooking pots, and it was not until the early 7O's that the Wesleyans, whose nerve must have equalled their faith, became sufficiently well established to get the ear of King Thakambau. The conversion of this powerful ruler soon followed, the first and most important result of which being the ceding of the group—he had offered it to the United States in 1869—to Great Britain. As a token of his fealty Thakambau sent to Queen Victoria his favourite war club, hitherto,as he naïvely put it, "the only law in

Fiji." This club, with the monarch's great *kava* bowl, is preserved in the British Museum.

The Christianization and pacification of the Fijis went on side by side, and within two decades there was a mission and a missionary in every village of the group, while a white man's life was as safe in the wilds of Vita Levu or Taviuni as in Sydney or London. For the last twenty years the end of the missionaries' endeavour has been to bring the somewhat precariously converted natives to a fuller comprehension of the meaning of Christianity, while the government has built roads, established a large and efficient native police force and encouraged agriculture to such good effect that Fiji ranks second only to Hawaii among the Pacific islands as a sugar producer and also figures extensively as an exporter of copra and fruit. [299]

FORTY YEARS AGO THE FIJIS WERE IN A COMPLETE STATE OF SAVAGERY

A FIJIAN HEAD HUNTING CANOE

The transformation of the Fijis from cannibalism to a condition of peacefulness and prosperity has been one of the most striking achievements of its kind in the history of colonial endeavour. Just how much of the credit is due to the missionary and how much to that other quiet, unassuming bearer of the "White Man's Burden," the

British official, it would be hard to determine. Popularly, on account of the spectacular nature of his early campaigns which culminated in the conversion of the terrible Thakambau, the honours are given to the missionary, which, like most popular verdicts, is not quite fair.

To the British colonial official—to any colonial official of the right stamp—the patient coaxing of the

> "new-caught sullen peoples,
> Half-devil and half-child"

out of the darkness of their "loved Egyptian Night" is all in the day's work. His maintenance in the field, however, is not dependent upon funds raised by subscription, as in the case of the missionary, and an appeal to popular sympathy is, therefore, unnecessary. For the missionary, to whom the awakening of interest in his successes means more money to carry on his work, publicity is only good business. It is for this reason that the missionary, rather than the no less deserving official, is [300] associated in the popular mind with the reclamation of Fiji. There is honour enough, and to spare, for both workers of the wonder which has been wrought; but it is meet that the quiet, earnest, intelligent efforts of the government official should not be overlooked.

The Fijian is too much of a Polynesian to take kindly to work under the new régime, so that, with 100,000 or more of him sitting idly about in the shade of the coco palms, it has been necessary to bring the plantation labour from the New Hebrides, Solomons, New Guinea and even British India. At first the blacks of the westerly islands, recruited by more or less responsible agents who induced them to contract to work for a term of years at so much a month, were the mainstay of the plantations, but for the last twenty years the industrious Hindu coolie, indentured at a wage equivalent to from four to seven dollars a month, has been employed almost exclusively. The passing of the Melanesian black on the plantations of Fiji and Australia marks the finish of one of the most picturesque, if also one of the cruelest, traffics in the history of the South Pacific, that of "black-birding" or labour-recruiting.

Although the Insular Government makes a great point of maintaining all the ancient tribal observances in its relations with the Fijians, not many of the old customs and ceremonies have survived. Internecine wars are, of course, things of the past, and even when a fight is started up between a couple of mountain villages, it is the musket and not the war club that decides with which party the honours shall rest. The *meke-meke* or dance—especially that of the women—has not had the vitality to [301] survive the hostility of the missionaries, white and black, though on great occasions, such as the wedding of a chief or a reception to the Governor, some of the ancient war measures are trod by a squad of men. It is a good deal as I heard the captain of a British cruiser on the Australian station put it—"The Fijian has altered scarcely less than the Tahitian under his contact with the white man; only with the latter it has been a case of 'too much French official,' and with the former 'too much missionary.'"

However, the Fijian stood in need of a good deal of making over before his islands were safe for a white man to live in, and even if most of his picturesqueness departed with his deviltry, the balance is still on the right side of the ledger and in favour of the missionary.

The Fijian woman has neither the good looks, the good manners nor the good nature of her Samoan or Tahitian sister. Her lack of amenity is largely due to the fact that her lord and master, in his treatment of her, is more of a Papuan or African than a Polynesian. Such work as is done in the village—mostly fishing and a little crude cultivation—falls to the lot of the women, probably as a survival of the days when the men spent all of their waking hours engaging in or repelling forays. She is always kept in the background when visitors are present and, probably as a consequence of generations of restraint, has none of the natural graces of the woman of pure Polynesian stock.

The suppression of the Fijian woman is especially remarkable in the light of the fact that, through some caprice of Nature, males considerably outnumber females in the [302] group, a condition which, in almost every other similar instance on record, has enhanced the power and prestige of the latter sex. Why it has failed to do so in Fiji is as unexplicable as the condition itself—the predominance in numbers of men in a group of islands which has been one of the worst hot-beds of internecine warfare the world has ever known.

This excess of men in Fiji—the fact that there are not enough women to "go round"—proved one of the most troublesome factors in the pacification of the islands, and in keeping them quiet once that pacification was accomplished. A young warrior without a wife, and with no prospect of getting one save in a foray, is the equal as an inciter of trouble of a deposed Latin American president. Such a one had no wife to lose in an intertribal war, while there was always a chance that he might emerge from such a struggle in full, if transient, possession of that supreme desideratum. The enlistment of many of these restless "left-overs" in the "A. N. C.," the Armed Native Constabulary, has been the best expedient possible under the circumstances. A gun and uniform do not take the place of a wife, however (though, as has been

proven, they often are the short cuts to getting one at the expense of some one else), and the problem is going to be a troublesome one until nature equalizes the disparity of sexes by increasing the birth rate of girls, or an interval of intertribal wars supervenes to cut down the excess of men.

The Fijians are less expert in the building and handling of boats than the Samoans, The craft most favoured is of the catamaran type, consisting of two canoes joined by [303] a platform, or occasionally, a single canoe with a platform built on the outrigger. These affairs, while comparatively seaworthy, are of little use for sailing and very difficult to paddle with any speed. The whaleboat, so common in Samoa, is rarely seen in Fiji. Most of the interisland voyages are undertaken in clumsy sloops, though occasional runs with the wind are made with the primitive mat-sailed catamarans.

There is not much to please the eye about Suva harbour, but it is deep and safe, and the loss of shipping there in hurricanes rarely proves so complete as in Tahiti or Samoa. The storm through which *Lurline* passed en voyage from Samoa destroyed several houses in the town and wrought great damage on the outlying plantations, but the loss in the harbour was limited to a few carelessly-moored native sloops which were piled up on the beach. Suva, both on land and water, is far better prepared than the island ports to the east to meet these heavy blows, nearly all of the houses being strongly guyed with steel cables, while numerous securely anchored buoys in the bay give shipping a fair chance to ride out the storms in safety.

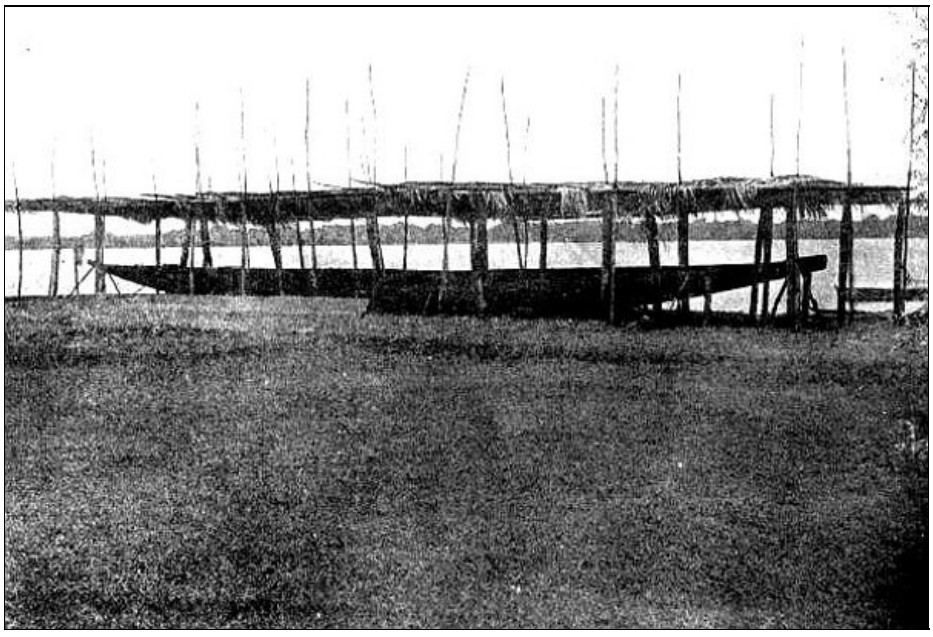
Socially, Suva is more developed than the French or other South Pacific island capitals, and one dropping in for afternoon tea at the Fiji Club or Government House might easily imagine himself in Cape Town, Hongkong, Colombo, or one of a dozen other outposts of the British Empire. The Briton's first move in colonization is to make his seat of government a bit of old England; to say that he has succeeded in Suva means much, both as to the magnitude of the work accomplished as well as to [304] the attractiveness of the life there.

Sir H. M. Jackson, K.C.M.G., the Governor of Fiji, had left for his new post in Trinidad shortly before our arrival in Suva, the place being temporarily filled by the Chief Justice, Sir Charles Major, by whom we were pleasantly entertained. Colonel Leslie Brown, the American Consular Agent, proved a most agreeable gentleman, as did also his business partner, the Honourable Arthur Joske, to both of whom we were indebted for much kindness.

H.M.S. *Clio*, Captain Wilkins, arrived in Suva during our stay and proved good company for *Lurline*. This smart little gunboat was in the South Pacific on what appeared to be a sort of roving commission, the principal object of which seemed to be the blowing up of a troublesome rock that was somewhat indefinitely located off to the northeast. At one of our dinner parties Captain Wilkins challenged us to sail a cutter from *Lurline* against that of the *Clio's*. The Commodore promptly accepted, and the race was contested on the first of July. Well handled by Victor and Gus, our boat secured a good lead on the run to the buoy at the outer reef, but in the beat home, owing to the faulty adjustment of a detachable keel borrowed from *Clio* for the occasion, made heavy leeway, lost all she had gained, and finished a poor second.

I spent most of our stay in Fiji on a visit to Mbau, the ancient native capital, a guest of the distinguished Roku Kandavu Levu. The trip by launch, horseback and canoe is a somewhat arduous one, but well worth the trouble, as this little island is one of the most picturesque and historic spots in the South Pacific. It was here that the great [305] King Thakambau, who ceded the group to the British, made his headquarters, and the beautiful village still contains many evidences of its former greatness. Thakambau's great war canoe, a huge double dugout over a hundred feet in length, its shattered sides carefully protected from the ravages of the elements by a regularly-renewed shed of palm leaves, is still religiously preserved on the leeward beach. It is this canoe which history records was, whenever possible, launched over live human bodies as rollers, one division of the king's army being kept continually on the foray to provide the wherewithal. The body of the king, who died in 1883 after enjoying an annual pension of fifteen hundred pounds for a decade or more, rests under a tall shaft of marble on the top of a hill in the centre of the little island and, not unfittingly, in the shade of the Wesleyan mission church.

"*Lurline's* CUTTER FINISHED A POOR SECOND"



"THAKAMBAU'S GREAT WAR CANOE, OVER A HUNDRED FEET IN LENGTH, FORMERLY LAUNCHED OVER HUMAN BODIES"

The Roku Kandavu Levu, a most attractive young man whom I saw more of later in Suva, left on a journey up the Rewa on the evening of my arrival, but not, however, before telling the Mbuli or headman to give me the "freedom of the city" and turning me over to a couple of young British madcaps, who had been his guests for a fortnight, with instructions to "keep the ball rolling." I could not have fallen into better hands. The Honourable Bertie W——, whom I have since learned has only one invalid brother between himself and the succession to a baronetcy, had been sent to the Antipodes by his noble father because he had allowed the charms of a young lady of the Gaiety chorus to interfere with his pursuit of knowledge at Cambridge. A [306]
month of good behaviour in Sydney was being rewarded by a tour of Fiji, on which was officiating as cicerone young Mr. Tom B——, the son of a prominent attorney of Suva, and a lad after the Honourable Bertie's own heart.

These two spirited youngsters—both were under twenty—had started out from Suva to "study native life at first hand" in the wilds of the interior of Vita Levu, but the Roku Kandavu Levu, who could not let himself miss the chance for practice with two crack cricketers go by—he had been the best bat on the University of Sydney eleven a few years previously—contrived to make his capital so pleasant for them that they had lost interest in the savages of the mountain country and settled down to pursue

their investigations at Mbau. Everybody, it appeared, had been pleased with the arrangement but the missionary, who, because a large part of his congregation had stayed away from service to watch the Honourable Bertie illustrating the principles of Ranjitsinji's famous "leg glance" for the benefit of the Roku on the village green, had closed up the church and posted a notice in Fijian upon the door that it would not be opened until the Sabbath-breakers had left the island. The Roku who, from his Australian education, is a fairly open minded cynic himself, still hardly felt it desirable politically, as the ranking chief in Fiji, to stir up trouble with the all-powerful missionaries. Accordingly, torn between the exigencies of hospitality and his duty as the chief of a Christianized people, the Roku, dodging responsibility in flight, had departed on an "urgent" mission up the river, telling his guests to continue their "studies" as long as they desired and leaving word for the villagers not [307] to let their love of sport interfere with their devotions. It was at the beginning of this "interregnum" that I arrived.

The natives of Mbau, probably as a result of the example set by their distinguished chief, are very fond of all kinds of outdoor sports, which fact inspired my young friends with the idea of holding a field day in which the white race should compete against the brown. The honour of the Caucasian was to be upheld by Bertie, Tom and myself, while that of the Polynesian would be maintained by a selection from all of the Fijians on the island. Most of the first day was spent arranging the program. The natives wanted a tug-of-war, but our captain, Bertie, realizing that we lacked the "beef" for such a contest, agreed to its inclusion only in the event that the missionary —with whom South Sea life had agreed so well that he weighed in the vicinity of 250 pounds—could be induced to pull with us for the honour of his race. Needless to say the event was not scheduled. We did the sporting thing, however, by offering to oppose an eleven made up of the island's best cricketers with a "team" composed of Bertie, Tom and myself. The other events decided upon were two swimming races, two sprints, one canoe race, shot-put, throwing the cricket ball, broad and high jumps, a "modified Marathon" and three boxing contests.

The second day we spent in practice and "elimination trials" to decide in which particular events each of us was best fitted to compete, as, except for the cricket, the finals were to be strictly "man-to-man" affairs. Luckily, our respective abilities dove-tailed perfectly. Tom was an adept at swimming and no novice in handling the [308] outrigger canoe, while his splendid endurance made him a natural if inexperienced distance runner; Bertie had given promise of developing into one of the fastest amateur sprinters in England before the Gaiety girl supervened, and had recently bested some of the speediest men in Australia at the "hundred" and "two-twenty"; my old varsity events, the shot-put and broad jump, and the remnants of a fair throwing arm, made me our logical representative in the remaining contests we had scheduled. Each of us was slated to box in his respective class—Bertie in the light-weight, Tom in middle-weight, and I—because I weighed a "good fourteen stone and looked jolly fit"—in the heavy-weight.

The elimination trials of the Fijians were not so simple a matter. They fought and wrangled from morn till dewy eve and on into the moonlight in an earnest endeavour to pick the likeliest representatives to uphold the honour of their race. The final list was not handed to Bertie till near midnight, and even then, as became apparent next day, was not quite complete.

Every soul on the island except the immediate members of the missionary's household was on the beach in the morning when the canoe race was started, and, what with beaten war drums and coal oil cans, gave an exhibition that would have made a varsity rooting section look like a Quaker meeting when their man paddled across the line an easy winner. Tom made a good fight but his opponent had too many generations of training behind him. Bertie evened up things by sprinting the length of the village green a house-length ahead of his dusky opponent, and my victory in the broad jump gave us a temporary lead. In the high jump we were weak, [309] and Bertie, who had never essayed the event before, was no match for a slender Fijian youth who had been to school in Auckland.

Tom, who was really a marvel at the Australian "crawl," had his revenge in the swimming race for his defeat in the outrigger contest, beating his man almost two to one in a dash of about a hundred yards across a bight in the sea-wall. The vanquished Fijian, who had also been picked to swim in the race of half a mile or more to the mainland and back, was so crushed by the completeness of his defeat that he refused to compete again, the event being called off.

In the shot-putting contest we used an old rust-eaten twenty-pound cannon ball which had been thrown into the village away back in the 40's by a British gunboat on a punitive mission against the natives for killing and eating a family of missionaries. My opponent made up in strength what he lacked in "form," and by dint of following the shot out of the "ring" put up a mark which I was able to beat only by resorting to the same unorthodox expedient. Bertie added to our score by romping to another easy victory in the sprint around an approximate 220-yard circle which had been marked with coconuts along the outside of the village green.

The last event of the forenoon was the "modified Marathon," to be run over a course

once around the island, across the causeway to the mainland and back, and then around the island again to a finish in front of the council house, a distance of about three miles. We had counted on Tom to win this event handily, but the Fijians sprung a "ringer" on us by entering one Lal Singh, a lanky East Indian coolie who was employed by the Roku to carry messages back and forth between Mbau and Rewa. [310] This human greyhound sprang away at the report of the pistol as though running a quarter, and had loped around the island and half way to the mainland before poor Tom, winded already, staggered out upon the leeward beach. Here Bertie and I headed him off and took him out of the race to save his strength for the trials of the afternoon. The natives, appearing to figure the importance of a race in direct proportion to its length, beat their hollow-log drums and sang chesty, sonorous war chants all through the rest hour in celebration of this victory.

While Bertie was winning the cricket ball-throwing contest—a competition in which he substituted for me who had originally qualified for it—I essayed to give the Fijians an exhibition of hammer-throwing, an event with which they were still unfamiliar. In the absence of a regulation hammer, a network of fibre was woven around the twenty-pound cannon ball, and into this mesh the end of a three-foot strand of coco-husk rope was fixed. This contrivance looked decidedly flimsy and, as presently transpired, did not belie its appearance. It held together for a couple of tentative tosses and even through the preliminary swings of a real throw; but when I whirled into the first circle of what was to have been a triple turn the fibrous mesh gave way and, while I did a double back somersault, the ponderous old missile went hurtling through the air and banged against the side of the great council house. The stout wall was not breached, but a muffled crash told of havoc among the tribal relics which adorned the interior. A few minutes later the Mbuli, who with several of the elders had hurried to investigate, emerged with a baleful look on his face to [311] announce that the great *yanggona* bowl, out of the sacred depths of which *kava* had been served even to the great Thakambau himself, was split across the middle from a fall to the floor.

The Fijians appeared rather awed at the magnitude of the catastrophe, but the unquenchable Bertie, after placing his "field" for the cricket match, called out to the Mbuli to ask if it did not seem like old times to have the walls of Mbau battered down by cannon balls.

The one-inning cricket game was a Caucasian walk-over. The dazzling work of Tom and Bertie, who alternated between bowling and wicket-keeping, retired man after man with a "goose-egg," and, in spite of the scant and inexperienced "field,"—myself —had the bewildered Fijians all out for less than two score of runs. This total the versatile pair, batting in partnership, exceeded in less than a quarter of an hour.

Acknowledging that they were outclassed in cricket, the Fijians now demanded that a game of soccer football be played upon the same terms—a full team of them to the three of us—and to this proposal the game Bertie, displaying better sportsmanship than judgment, consented. Of course, after a severe buffeting which left us all rather groggy and winded for the boxing contests, the Fijians won.

On any kind of a system of scoring we had a lead of three victories at this juncture, and should, therefore, only been liable to a tie by losing all of the three boxing contests. The natives, however, contending that the winning of the Marathon was equal to a half-dozen ordinary events, insisted that they were at least on even terms [312] with us. Again our complaisant captain, pulling on his gloves for the first bout—the lightweight—waived the point and agreed to let the three boxing contests decide the day. Five seconds later, guarding carelessly in backing away from a clinch, Bertie left a wide opening, driving into which with a well-timed short-arm jolt, his stocky opponent landed on the point of the lad's chin and stretched him limp—a clean knockout—on the turf of the village green.

Tom, who boxed almost as well as he swam, rushed his man—the shifty youth who had defeated the Honourable Bertie in the high-jump—from the beat of the war-drum which was doing service as a gong, and had him so groggy at the end of a couple of minutes that the bewildered fellow started to slug one of his own fuzzy-headed seconds. He was led off to escape further useless punishment, leaving the issue of the day up to the heavyweight bout, with me as the "White Hope."

The ponderously-limbed Goliath, whom the Fijians led out like a blue-ribbon bull at a stock show at this juncture, had been kept out of sight all day, evidently through fear of awakening a protest on our part. He was one mass of hair and rolling muscles from head to heel and needed only a knotted war-club to complete the illusion of having stepped out of the Stone Age upon the green of Mbau.

"Just such a cannibal as old Thakambau must have had for a Lord High Executioner," I told myself, and shuddered at the thought.

Of course, I knew that he could not box; but it was also equally plain that nothing less than a charge of dynamite could have any effect upon his iron-ribbed frame. I [313] stood regarding him with dismay as Tom—they were still fanning the prostrate Bertie with a taro leaf—began to tie on my gloves.

"They've put up a game on us," he said quietly, trying to knead the padding away from over the knuckles of my left hand. "That chap's a hard nut, and they've brought him over from Rewa just because Bertie was telling them that you were the champion of America. It's a dirty trick, but it'll only start a row if we try to call the turn. Go ahead as if nothing was wrong, but be sure and not try any in-fighting. Then we'll at least get a draw out of it. I'll tell you about him later. Now don't forget. *Keep clear!*"

It was with that sound injunction well in mind that I stepped out to where the glowering gorilla was waiting in the middle of the circle.

For a few seconds we stared stupidly at each other, and then, because I was too nervous to stand still, I began dancing around my stolid opponent. He followed me with his eyes, owl fashion, not moving his huge, flat feet until I was almost behind him.

"He's slower even than I thought," I told myself, and began to feel better.

After prancing in a couple of circles without making my burly antagonist do more than mark time to keep me in eye-sweep, I plucked up courage and, stepping in quickly, drove for his prognathous jaw. Without the flicker of an eyelash, he bent his great neck and took the blow in the depths of his woolly hair. Hardly did he seem to need to brace himself, so completely was the force taken up in this natural shock-absorber. To sharp hooks in the ribs and upper abdomen he replied in the same [314]
passive way, ducking his head whether I led for the face or not. With a chest like the bulge of a steam boiler and three inches of corrugated iron muscles armouring his solar plexus, there was no need of guarding anything but his face, and this he did by the simple expedient of putting out his foot-deep shock of matted hair every time I made a feint in that direction.

"The dolt is no more than a human punching-bag," I told myself; "but even a punching-bag has been known to break if hammered long enough," forthwith beginning to try the effect of persistent hammering. Scored as a sparring contest, I would have won the decision by a hundred points to nil, for the stolid monster seemed perfectly content to let me circle around him and hit almost when and where I pleased. But we were fighting under Fijian rules, which hold that the contest, undivided by rounds, shall continue until one of the parties is unwilling, or unable, to go on. Now and then, when I would hook a stiff jolt in under the fringe of his mop to the side of the neck, he would wince a bit, but most of the time he simply stood with bowed head and set muscles and let me pound away. It may be that my blows lacked steam after my long day of unwonted exertion under the tropical sun, or it may be that the hulking frame, with its armour of knotted muscles, was damage-proof as long as the jaw was protected. One thing was certain, at any rate,—the only effect of my frenzied hammering was to tire myself out without discomfiting, or even, apparently, annoying my burly opponent in the least. [315]

"Take it easy to sunset and we'll call it off for a draw," muttered Tom behind me as I stepped back to get my breath after beating a sounding tattoo of right and left hooks in a vain effort to jar the armoured solar plexus of the Cave Man.

It was sound advice and I should probably have followed it had not the Honourable Bertie—he had been brought to a few minutes previously and was just awakening to an interest in his surroundings—cut in with "Don't quit. Step in close and uppercut straight up for his face. Remember you're the 'White Hope.'"

There certainly did seem room to slip one up between the dome of the swelling chest and the fringes of the hair-mop that would do some damage, provided one only went in close enough, and, without stopping to ponder the possible consequences, I stepped forward and drove a hard right uppercut, just as Bertie had suggested. Smash! My glove landed squarely in the middle of Cave Man's face, straightening him up with a jerk and offering the very opening for the jaw that I had awaited ever since the bout began. I was just starting a left hook of which I entertained high hopes, when, closely following the roar of pain and rage which signalized the landing of my right, something swift and terrific as a Bolt of Wrath came hurtling against my jaw, an explosion like the Crack of Doom rang in my ears, and—I came to some hours later to find a sedate-looking Fijian lady in sombre black—the Mbuli's wife—massaging my bruised face with one hand and holding a Bible from which she was reading in the other. An austere-faced white woman, whom I thought I recognized as [316]
the missionary's wife, was renewing a turtle-steak poultice upon one of the Honourable Bertie's rainbow-coloured optics, while a Fijian in a long coat and black *sulu* was kneading out the cramp-knotted muscles in Tom's overworked calves. The three of us were in the little mission hospital.

"The Reverend B—— and his wife have been working over you since sundown," said Bertie thickly through a bandage. "In fact, they've been very kind to all of us in the matter of lending 'first aid.' We've apologized for stirring up all this jolly rumpus here, and Tom and I have promised to leave with you for Suva as soon as you're able to travel. It may comfort you a bit, old chap, to know that the Reverend B—— has just gone over to set the nose of your late opponent. Perhaps you don't remember that you landed a tap just before he hit you."

"Oh, that was what it was," I said with a sigh of comprehension, sinking back upon the pillows. "I thought some one had been practising with the twenty-pound hammer again."

The last thing I recall before dropping off to sleep was the sound of singing and beaten war-drums welling up from the village green. "The Fijians celebrate the triumph of the Polynesian," explained Bertie in answer to my look of inquiry. "That chant is one they used to sing on returning from a successful foray laden with the heads of many enemies. They seem to trace some similarity between the two occasions."

On the way back to Suva Tom told me about the Cave Man. "The chap is probably the strongest man in Fiji," he said, "and as stupid as he is powerful. Several years ago [317] one of the Australian overseers at the Rewa sugar plantation took him in hand and taught him that trick of protecting his face by turning down his hair-mop, and since then he has stood up against the champion heavyweight of every warship that has come to Suva without being knocked out. Several of the careless ones have fared quite as badly as you did, and one of them, who had floored him with a lucky poke, he later got hold of, threw down and started to chew to pieces. That broken nose you gave him was the worst damage he ever received, and he would probably have started a cannibal feast off your limp anatomy if the Mbuli and the rest of us hadn't crowded him off."

The Roku Kandavu Levu came to Suva shortly before our departure and paid us several visits on the yacht. We found him a most engaging and likable fellow and an especial enthusiast on yachting. He is a graduate of the University of Sydney, and in speech, manners, tastes—in everything, in fact, but colour, hair and dress—is thoroughly British. His yacht, a fine 40-footer which he sails himself, is the fastest craft in the islands. He displayed great interest in our cruise, and expressed himself as determined to build a staunch schooner and embark on a similar one as soon as opportunity offered.

The Roku's dress is a unique compromise between the native and the foreign. He wears the shirt, collar, tie and coat, and carries the inevitable stick, of the Britisher, but goes bare-footed and covers his legs with nothing but the common native *sulu*, a [318] yard and a half of print which is tucked in at the waist and falls to the knees. From the waist up he is apparelled faultlessly enough to parade Piccadilly or Broadway; from the waist down carelessly enough to suit the laziest Kanaka that ever lolled away a noonday under a coconut tree. It was the latter portion of his "combination suit" which came near to causing serious trouble on the occasion of his first visit to *Lurline*.

From the hour of our arrival in Suva harbour the sailors had been much bothered in their work by an endless succession of fruit peddlers and curio venders who made the sale of their stocks an excuse for loafing about the yacht. The Commodore was finally forced to order that there should be no more visiting by unaccredited natives except during the noon hour and early in the evening, the enforcement of which ruling was being looked after by the mate with great enthusiasm. By the free use of his glass and megaphone and his rapidly expanding vocabulary of "Beche-de-Mer" English he had, to his great pride and satisfaction, succeeded in keeping intruders at a distance for several days, so that it was with no ordinary rush of indignation that he greeted, one busy afternoon, the sight of a pair of muscular brown legs moving leisurely by a port—the mate was below at the time—as they carried their owner up the brass-railed starboard gangway, which, incidentally, was especially *tabu* for natives.

At the same moment that a deep-chested roar of "*Hare*, you dam'd Kanaka!" came booming out upon the still afternoon air, the Commodore was beaming welcome from the head of the gangway to the stately head and shoulders of the handsome and [319] dignified Roku Kandavu Levu who, escorted by several prominent British officials, had come off in the Governor's launch for his initial call. We managed to check the rush of the infuriated mate at the foot of the cabin companionway and sober him with some forceful pantomime and a peep at the Governor's launch through a convenient port, but the echo of that "*Hare, you dam'd Kanaka!*" kept ringing in our ears through the whole fifteen minutes of an unusually stiff call.

We never learned whether or not the Roku comprehended for whom the mate's forcible orders were intended, but if he failed to discern that they were aimed at his royal self it was largely due to the resourceful Claribel's cheerful chirrup of "The worthy Chief seems to be having more trouble than usual with curio venders today. Speaking of curios—won't Your Highness please tell me if this shark's tooth necklace which I bought yesterday is really genuine?"

CHAPTER XVIII

[320]

"SHARKS"

"MAN-EATERS on land, man-eaters in the water; for God's sake steer clear of the Fijis!" was the way in which trading captains of forty years ago epitomized their warnings to those who expressed a desire to visit Taviuni or Levuka.

Though man-eating on land has become a languishing if not a lost art in this neck of the tropics, that the practice by the denizens of the deep is still carried on is attested by the number of stump-armed and stump-legged natives that one meets in all parts of the Fijis. Yet in spite of the swarms of sharks that exist there—"You can throw a stuck pig over in the bay and five minutes later walk ashore dry shod on black dorsal fins," the mate of a trader at Suva told me—they are exceedingly whimsical in their appetites and keep one at his wit's end devising baits that will tempt them.

They had told us in Samoa that Suva Bay was a sharks' nest, and graphic verification was furnished on the morning following our arrival. It had been the practice of the Commodore and myself, in all the harbours we had visited up to this point, both in the North and South Pacific, to begin the day with a morning plunge over the rail, a practice which, though not recommended by the old residents, we had never deemed sufficiently hazardous to warrant denying ourselves the refreshing pleasure of. Neither of us had been threatened by a shark, and only three or four lurking black [321] fins had been seen around any of the yacht's anchorages. So it was with no misgivings that I, drowsy with sleep, pulled on my bathing suit the first morning in Suva and plunged over the rail in a deep-eye-opening dive. I will let the Commodore's journal tell what followed, my own recollections being somewhat confused.

"Three or four seconds after the Weather Observer dived, I saw him come sputtering up through the water, gain the starboard gangway in a succession of wild lunges, come clambering aboard and collapse, speechless with consternation, on a cockpit transom. Simultaneously, a great shaft of greenish white shot like a meteor under the stern, and an instant later a chorus of excited yells broke out on the deck of the *Wanaka*, the Australian mailboat which had come in during the night and anchored half a cable's length beyond us. The commotion was caused by the hooking on a line dangling from the steamer's stern of a huge 'tiger' shark, a monster so heavy that it required lines from two steam winches to land its floundering twenty feet of length upon the deck.

"The Weather Observer could never explain anything beyond the fact that, on approaching the surface, he suddenly became aware of a round, greenish blur, lighter in colour than the water, increasing in size at a prodigious rate, and forthwith, being seized with terror, got back on the yacht with the loss of as little time as possible. We have always supposed that the shark, balked in its rush for a bite of man, sought solace in bolting the hunk of salt beef on the end of the *Wanaka's* line, as not five seconds elapsed between one event and the other. A sailor on the poop of the *Wanaka*, who was about to shout a warning to us regarding the danger of [322] bathing overside, followed the course of the shark from where it shot under the stern of the yacht to the hook which brought it to grief." The rest of our bathing in Suva Bay was done with the aid of a sailor and a water bucket.

It was in a spirit of revenge for the fright given me on this occasion that I spent a good portion of our stay in Fiji on punitive expeditions against sharks, incident to which I learned a good deal regarding the ways of the "tiger of the sea" that otherwise would not have come under my observation.

De gustibus non est disputandum is a truth of wide application, holding good no less generally in the animal kingdom than in that of man, and in neither more forcibly than in sharkdom. What is one shark's meat is quite likely to be another shark's poison, and because a certain bait is sauce for the voracious "man-eater" of Suva Bay, it does not follow that it is sauce for his epicurean cousin of Pago Pago.

Regarding the tastes of sharks of any one locality, it is usually possible to speak more definitely, but still with no degree of certainty, and even the likes and dislikes of a single known individual cannot be pinned down and charted as with square and compass. This latter fact was well borne out by the action of a grizzly old fifteen-footer—identified by the rusty stump of a harpoon planted just aft his dorsal—which I chanced to observe one day while fishing on one of the reefs that hem in Suva Bay. The natives pointed him out to me as he nosed his way about among the other sharks that were nibbling gingerly at the outside corners of tempting hunks of salt beef [323] lowered for their delectation, and said that this was the seventh year that they had fished for him, using everything from "charmed" coconuts and shiny tomato cans to plucked gulls and live sucking-pigs, without ever coming near to landing him.

"No one has ever seen him so much as smell the bait," said one of my fuzzy-headed companions, "and from that we know that he must be *tabu*. Now we no longer give him notice, for we understand that he must be fed and protected by the Evil Ones."

Hardly were these words spoken before the great harpooned tail of the wily monster

in question gave a vigorous swish, a smooth, mouse-coloured body shot up through the water, and two triple rows of gleaming ivory opened and closed upon—nothing more or less than a bare hook that its owner was pulling up for rebaiting after it had been dextrously stripped by the "sleight-of-mouth" performance of some member of the ruck down among the pink coral.

Yet the general trend of the gastronomic preferences of the sharks of any single bay, or island, or even group of islands, is usually understood sufficiently well for all practical purposes, and if the natives or old European residents advise against bathing in certain localities, it is best not to take the chance. In few parts of the South Pacific are sharks more plentiful than around Mbau, the old native capital of Fiji, but in spite of the fact that the natives, whether engaged in fishing or turtle-catching, or merely swimming for pleasure, expose themselves constantly in the waters infested by these monsters, loss of life from that source is rarely heard of. [324]

It was while I was "convalescing" from the effects of the field-day with the natives of Mbau, of which I wrote in the last chapter, that I was sitting in the shade of the veranda of the Roku's bungalow, watching with no little enjoyment the antics of a big band of supremely happy youngsters who were disporting themselves in the limpid waters that lapped the sea-wall at that point. Presently a number of men came down to the wall, straightened out the coils of some heavy lines, baited up a lot of big chain-leadered hooks, and began hurling them into the sea but a few yards from where the boys were swimming.

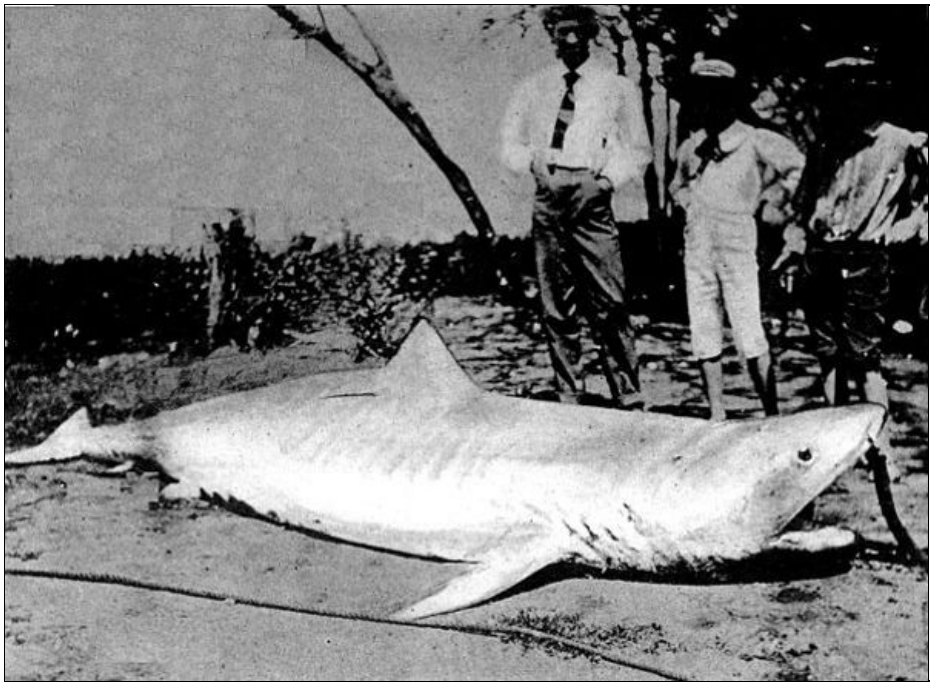
"Wake up!" I shouted to my young friend, Tom B——, giving his hammock a vigorous shake. "Isn't it rather a risky business throwing shark-hooks in where a lot of naked boys are swimming? What if they should snag one of the youngsters?"

"Boys'r' all right," came in a muffled yawn from under B——'s palm-leaf hat. "Those chaps aren't fishing for boys; only fishing for sharks."

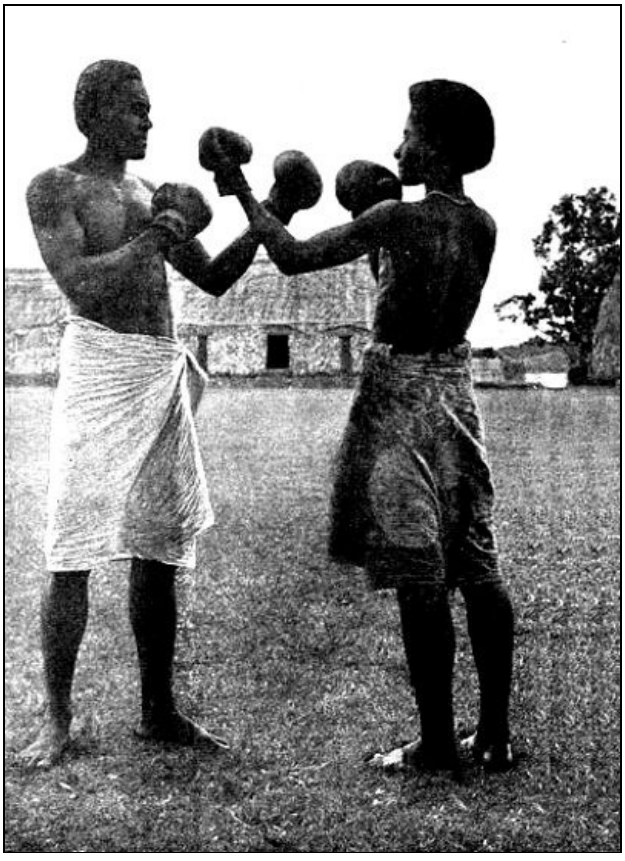
"Sharks!" I scoffed. "Sharks in there where those boys are swimming! Wake up, young man; you're talking in your sleep!"

Thus admonished, B—— sat up, yawned, stretched himself, cracked a coconut, took several long draughts of its cool contents, and finally explained that, as a rule, sharks along the windward shore of Vita Levu did not care much for boys, especially near those localities, like Mbau, where it was the custom to fish for them daily with succulent hunks of salt pork.

Sharks are fairly numerous in all of the ports visited by the ships which carry the mail from New Zealand and Australia to the islands of the Southwestern Pacific, and [325] it is rarely that one of these steamers is seen at anchor without from one to half a dozen lines dangling from its stern. Watching a shark line is a tedious business, but it is strictly necessary in order that the fisherman may know when the monster is hooked. Otherwise, its frantic rushes, if allowed to go unchecked, are pretty sure to cause some part of the line, leader, or even a portion of its own anatomy to give way, resulting in its escape. The school-boy's scheme of tying the line around the big toe and going to sleep would probably work all right as far as rousing the fisherman was concerned, but the sequel might not leave him in a condition to give undivided attention to landing his prize. To this end the sailors of the mail-boats have hit on an ingenious plan. Instead of taking in their lines when the dinner gong sounds or when, for any reason, they are on duty elsewhere, they run a stout piece of marlin twine from the shark-line up to the steam whistle, leaving it for the "man-eater" himself to announce the event of his being hooked by sounding a toot.



Shark on the beach at Mbau



Fijian boys boxing

I regret to have to tell that the inventor of this clever time-saving expedient, a purser of the steamship *Taviuni*, came near to losing his position as the result of his first experimental trial. This came about through his faulty judgment in running the main line—instead of the comparatively light twine now employed for that connection—up to the whistle. The latter gave forth a brave toot in response to the jerk of the big "tiger" at the other end of the line, but the blast was in the nature of a swan-song. An instant later, with a parting shriek of agony, the whole of the whistling mechanism [326]
was wrenched from the funnel, and, carrying a string of hammocks and the binnacle-stand along with it, vanished overboard, spinning like a taffrail log in the wake of the flying shark. The *Taviuni* did most of her whistling with a fog-horn during the

remainder of that voyage.

The natives seem to swim about in comparative safety in the shoal waters of Suva Bay, but the Europeans prefer to keep on the safe side by taking their dips in "bathing pens." An amusing story is told at the Fiji Club of a certain visiting naval officer who took a dive into one of the bathing enclosures at a time that it was occupied by a fourteen-foot "man-eater." The "pen" was a thirty-by-thirty railed-in space on the shore of the bay near where a small river came down, and was built with the ostensible purpose, not of keeping sharks in, but of keeping them out. The combination of a flood and an unusually high tide, however, covered the top rail to a depth of a couple of feet or more, and during the period of submergence the big shark in some manner nosed his way in, to be left a captive when the water subsided. The water of the pen was murky from the flood discharge of the river, but there was nothing in its dull translucence to awaken suspicion in the minds of the half-dozen officers of a visiting gunboat who, hot and tired from a ride into the interior, were preparing for a dip.

The officer in question—a man noted for his nervous haste in doing things—was well ahead of the others in stripping for his plunge, a circumstance that was entirely responsible for his having to bear alone the shock of the discovery that the pen was already occupied. With a snort of contempt for the slowness of his companions, he [327] sprang from the rocks and disappeared under the cool water in a long, deep dive. An instant later the pen was a vortex of foam, in the midst of which whirled the white shoulders of the commander, and through which cut with lightning flashes the black dorsal and tail fins of the threshing shark.

Yelling like a Fijian war-dancer, the frightened swimmer reached the outer palings at the end of half a dozen desperate overhand strokes, clambered over the barrier, tumbled into the water beyond, and, wide-eyed with terror, started lunging right off toward the open sea. When he was finally recalled to shore, he declared that the pen was literally alive with sharks, and not even after the luckless "man-eater," riddled with bullets and bristling with the wooden harpoons of some Fijian fishermen, was hauled out on the beach, could he be made to believe that the score or more of its fellows among which he imagined he had plunged had not escaped. Inasmuch as a frightened shark has never been known to touch even a piece of raw beef, the impetuous officer was hardly in real danger of anything but heart failure and a slap or two from the monster's tail.

The fact that the popular observations of the ways of sharks are largely limited to their dilly-dallyings around baited hooks is responsible for the very general belief that it is necessary for them to turn on their backs before taking food into their mouths. Eating from pieces of meat suspended on a line does not represent the normal condition under which the shark feeds, and to regard as characteristic the attitude he assumes in such circumstances is as unreasonable as similarly to class the antics of a man trying to take a bite from an apple on a string at a Hallowe'en [328] party. Even when a piece of meat is free from the hook, and the shark is satiated or suspicious, he will often roll over and let it settle down gently in his mouth, but this is not because he is physically unable to do the trick otherwise. Throw a piece of red beef between three or four hungry "tigers," and you will be pretty sure to see the quickest of them snap it out of sight with only the slightest listing of his body to one side or the other. Sharks turn slightly in feeding for exactly the same reason that people turn their head slightly in kissing—because their noses would get in the way if they didn't—but to claim that the one must turn on its back to eat is as absurd as to maintain that the other must stand on his head to kiss.

Shark skin, shark teeth, shark oil, shark meat, and several other by-products of the dead shark are articles of greater or lesser utility, but I heard an old trader in Fiji tell of where the living shark was once put to a practical use. This was when they used him as a prison guard in the old days when British convicts were transported to Australia, the monsters serving this purpose for many years at the Port Arthur settlement, ten miles south of Hobart, the present capital of Tasmania. The prisons at this point, some of which may still be seen, were situated upon a peninsula whose only connection with the mainland was by a long, narrow strip of sand called, from its configuration, the "Eaglehawk's Neck."

The convicts were allowed considerable liberty upon the peninsula, but to prevent their escape to the mainland half-starved bloodhounds were chained all the way across the narrowest portion of the "Neck." Several prisoners having avoided the [329] "bloodhound zone" by swimming, the prison authorities adopted the gruesome but effective expedient of feeding the sharks at that point several times a day. In a few weeks the place became literally alive with the voracious "man-eaters," and from that time on the only convict who ever escaped accomplished his purpose by rolling himself up in kelp and working along, inch by inch, timing his movements to correspond with those of the other heaps of seaweed that were being rolled by the surf.

Like all other leviathans of the deep, animate and inanimate, the shark occasionally suffers from barnacles and similar marine parasites which attach themselves to his hide, and during my stay in Fiji I witnessed the phenomenon of a number of these

monsters, like so many warships, going into "drydock," as it were, to have their bottoms scraped.

On one of the outer reefs of Suva Bay there is a broad, flat ledge of coral, washed at low tide by only a foot or two of water. To this place the sharks that are troubled with barnacles are wont to resort, and, after picking out a spot where their bodies are just awash, lie for hours while the gently-moving waves rock and rub them backwards and forwards against the rough coral of the reef. This "nature treatment" is said to be most efficacious, and the spectacle of a dozen or more big "man-eaters" dozing contentedly as the warm waters sway them lazily to and fro—every now and then squirming in a pleased sort of way, as a dog does when his spine is rubbed—is something calculated to awaken, for the moment, at least, a feeling almost akin to sympathy for these most universally dreaded and detested of all God's creatures. [330]

Speaking of sympathy for sharks, it may be interesting to note that there does exist one such monster that may fairly be characterized as popular. This is the famous "Pelorus Jack," who lives in one of the great southern sounds of New Zealand, and who has not failed to come out to meet a single steamer visiting that locality in the last twenty years. He invariably joins the ship at the same point in the passage, follows in its wake during the trip about the sound, taking leave of it again at the identical spot where he picked it up. His regular habits have made him the subject of no small amount of preferential treatment, not the least remarkable of which is the greeting and taking leave of him by the passengers with such hearty old British choruses as "We All Love Jack," and "When Jack Comes Home Again." Tourists always refer to him as "Good Old Pelorus," but his "goodness" is a thing which none of them ever appears to try to cultivate at closer quarters than from behind the rail of the poop.

The story of the officer who jumped into the bathing pen while it was occupied by a shark is equalled by another, which I also heard in Suva, but which occurred at Port Darwin, Northern Australia. The bathing enclosure at the latter point was supposed to be shark and alligator-proof. A tremendous spring tide, however, had raised the water for several feet above the tops of the piles of which the enclosure was constructed, and during this period two "man-eaters" and a huge alligator were carried inside. There were no witnesses to the hostilities that followed, but the next morning early bathers found several sections of shark floating about the surface of [331] their plunge, together with a slightly scared, but apparently uninjured, sixteen-foot alligator.

Mark Twain's story of the shark that swallowed a newspaper in the Thames and carried it to Australia in advance of the steamer—this was supposed to have happened in the days before the cable—there to be caught and opened by Cecil Rhodes, who promptly made his start in life as the result of an advance tip on the stock market that he culled from the journal, may be, like the newspaper itself, a little "far-fetched"; nevertheless those monsters have been known to perform gastronomic feats quite as remarkable as "swallowing" everything contained in a London daily. "Nobody knows what the knife will bring forth" is an old sailor's expression often heard when one of these explorative operations is about to be performed, for a shark's stomach is as full of surprises as a "grab-bag," and as uncertain as a lottery.

The most remarkable instance I recall in this connection is that of an enormous "man-eater" that the sailors of *Lurline* hooked the day before we sailed from Suva. Besides a very considerable assortment of other "indigestibles," they took from the stomach of this leviathan the skull, still bearing the stubs of horns several inches in length, of a full-grown steer. The grisly object had undoubtedly come from the slaughter-house dump farther up the bay, but how the act of swallowing was accomplished was more than we could figure out. The sailors even went so far as to cut away the jaws of the monster and carry them along when we sailed, and during the first week of our voyage to Honolulu they spent most of their time "off watch" in vain endeavours to force the skull between the shining rows of back-curving teeth. [332] The jaws broke and fell to pieces at the joint without the puzzle being solved, but the consensus of opinion, in the forecastle, at least, appeared to be expressed by the yacht's negro cook when he said "dat blessed head must ha' done bin swallered when it wuz a littl' ca'f, an' then growed up inside!"

In the Samoan islands the natives have a legend about a man and a maid who eloped from Savaii, fled to Tutuila, and were there turned respectively into a shark and a turtle by the god or devil into whose hands they chanced to fall. As a proof of this story, the natives claim that if you go out and sing on a moonlight night at the end of a point near the village of Leone, Tutuila, the shark and the turtle will appear to you.

When they told this story to a young American naval officer and myself, the former said that he was quite ready to believe the transformation part of it because his outrigger canoe had "turned turtle" that very morning, while a native dealer who had sold us curios was nothing if not a "shark."

In the matter of the power of music being able to call up the loving pair, however, we were both agreed that we would like a demonstration. That night, therefore, a party

of a score or more of the villagers escorted us out to the point, and started up a good lively Samoan *himine*. They had finished a swinging native rowing song, and were just getting under way with their beloved "Tuta-pai, mai Feleni," when the unmistakable dorsal of a "man-eater" began to cut backwards and forward across the glittering moon-path. Simultaneously a black hump began to show above the water immediately in front of us, and presently the natives called our attention to the fact [333] that it was slowly rising, adding that the turtle was getting ready to swim over and meet the shark. It was at this juncture that my observant companion noted that the tide was rapidly falling, and after ricochetting a round of bullets from our revolvers off the back of the quondam maiden without stirring her up to the point of keeping her tryst, we went back to the village fully convinced that the story was a fabrication, the shark a coincidence, and the turtle a black rock.

CHAPTER XIX [334]

"HIS WONDERS TO PERFORM"

We had heard of the Honourable "Slope" Carew—pearler, "black-birder," yachtsman and scion of a noble British family—at every port we had touched in the South Pacific, but it was not our fortune to meet him until after our arrival at Suva. There he was one of our first callers, and it chanced that he, with the Captain of H.M.S. *Clio* and two or three other Englishmen, was off to the yacht for dinner the night a bottle of champagne exploded prematurely in the hands of our Chinese steward and kicked him backwards down the cabin stairs.

"Makes it seem like the old days on the *Aphrodite*," said Carew, pausing in his stirring narrative of the way in which Bell, a renegade American naval officer, had saved the plague ship, *Cora Andrews*. "You heard of the *Aphrodite* in Tahiti, didn't you, and of how her cargo of 'Hum's Extra Spry' helped my old pal, the Reverend Horatio Loveworth, to convert Boraki and his nest of cut-throats on Makatea?"

We had indeed heard the story of the conversion of Boraki and his fellow pirates of Makatea, but never at better than third or fourth hand, and in versions so diametrically at variance that the chance to enjoy the account of one who had actually figured in that famous coup was too good to let slip. We begged Carew, therefore, to let the *Cora Andrews* yarn go over to another time and to give us the "champagne and missionary" story then and there. [335]

We were dining on deck, and the story, begun over *avocados*, was continued after we adjourned with coffee and liqueurs to sofa-cushions or lounging chairs in the cockpit. The tropic moon was dropping plummets of gold through the rigging, and, as he talked, Carew punctuated his well-turned sentences with frequent sips from the oft-replenished glass of cracked ice and absinthe on his chair arm. Just how much of the golden floss of the streaming moonlight and the verdant thread of the trickling absinthe were twisted into the yarn he spun, probably Carew himself could not have told.

"It is a long story if I go back to the beginning, as I shall have to if you are to understand all that happened," said Carew musingly; "for from first to last the yarn revolves, not around myself or the *Aphrodite* or Boraki, but around a special consignment of champagne to which we always referred from the moment its true character began to be revealed as 'Hum's Extra Spry.'

"It was shortly after the pater cut me off with a beggarly five hundred pounds a year at the end of a series of escapades which had culminated with my wrecking his yacht on the coast of Morocco that I found myself in San Francisco. I had sailed my own ninety-footer at Cowes on more than one occasion, so that I was only following the line of least resistance in applying for the billet of first mate when I learned that Colonel Jack Spencer, the mining magnate, had converted a smart sealing schooner into a private yacht and was preparing to sail with a party of friends for the South Pacific. Spencer was rather taken with the idea of having a sprig of British nobility [336] along, and from the first insisted on treating me more as a guest than an under officer. This was how I chanced to be included with the skipper in an invitation to a farewell dinner given by Spencer to a number of San Francisco friends on the eve of our departure. Here I met the members of the yachting party, and, what is of more importance to my story, had my first experience of the potentialities of 'Hum's Extra Spry.'

"Perhaps it will serve to make the strange things which came to pass afterwards more intelligible if I explain here what Spencer only became apprised of six months later through offering his New York wine agent a liberal reward for the information, namely, what put the power in the fancy-priced consignment of champagne he had ordered especially for the South Pacific cruise.

"It appeared that one of the chemists of the great Hum winery at Rheims, in experimenting with a newly-invented aerating powder, had used that mixture instead

of the decolourizing solution in tapering off a twelve dozen case order of California champagne that was being hurriedly prepared for re-export to America. Now normal champagne, in the making, exerts so strong a pressure upon the glass which confines it that an average of fully twenty per cent. of the bottles used are burst before the final stage is reached, while the aerating powder which was being tried out as a substitute for carbon-dioxide gas in making sparkling Burgundies and Sauternes was calculated to develop a ten-pounds-to-the-square-inch pressure on its own account. So it happened that every unit of the order in question, having in addition to its [337] normal stock of bubbles those generated as a result of the accidental aeration, was more like a hand grenade than a bottle of wine. Nine-tenths of the lot suffered total disintegration before it was ready to be shipped, and the remainder was only saved by being transferred to rubber-corked bottles of quarter-inch glass, all of the outsides of which were reinforced with a closely-woven mesh of gilded wire. Red enamel grape leaves were grilled into the gold foil of the cap, and the label, in addition to several lines of French attesting the purity of the contents, bore the English words 'Liquid Sunshine—Special,' in raised ivory letters.

"The two or three dozen surviving cases of this remarkable vintage were snapped up the moment they were clear of the customs by Spencer's New York agent, who rushed them on to San Francisco. All but two cases, which were kept out to serve at the Spencers' farewell dinner, were sent aboard the yacht and stowed.

"I saw at once that the old chap was worried when I arrived the evening of the dinner, and before we went in he took me aside to ask if I knew anything regarding the handling of 'high-power' wine, as he termed it. It appeared that in the afternoon, while several bottles of the new wine were in the refrigerator undergoing a preliminary cooling, some one had dropped an ice pick in amongst them and they had all gone off together. The frame of the box held, but the partitions gave way, wrecking, beyond possibility of salvage, two dozen ice cream models of the *Aphrodite* floating in a sea of green jelly. The *Aphrodites* were replaced by some ready-made anchors which the caterer chanced to have on hand, but the endeavour to hasten the [338] chilling of more champagne by the use of a whirligig freezer only resulted in the annihilation of that useful contrivance and the loss of another bottle of wine.

"The contents of the first two bottles which the butler opened for dinner got away to the ceiling almost as fast as did the gilt-capped corks, and that worthy was about ready to give up in despair when one of the caterer's men pointed the way to a solution of the immediate problem by setting the next bottle in a punchbowl and capping it with an inverted soup plate. The latter was smashed to smithereens at the first trial, but the aluminum stew pan which replaced it at the next attempt stood the shock and deflected the cork, cap and a considerable quantity of a restless yellow liquid to the bottom of the punchbowl. This liquid, by means of a funnel, was restored to its bottle, hastily muffling which in a napkin to restrain a persistent catarrhal tendency of its nose, the flurried butler, fifteen minutes late, dashed into the dining room with the first installment of the anxiously-awaited 'Sunshine.'

"Now it is just possible that had the butler moved with his wonted glide of easy dignity nothing very much out of the ordinary would have happened; but the stiff, broken-kneed trot with which he tried to make up for lost time aroused the dormant energies of the hard-won contents of the bottle, with the result that it gathered itself together and made a fresh break for the open just as its warder was edging in for a gingerly pour at the glass of a pearly-shouldered dowager who was sitting on Spencer's right. There was no inverted aluminum stew pan to deflect the erupting 'Sunshine' this time, and, as a consequence, it expended itself with one joyous [339] 'whouf' upon the well-kept surfaces of the stately dame's right cheek and shoulder. Some little of it, tinged with rose and pearl, caromed off to extinguish a circle of pink candles on the table, but the most of it remained behind to trickle in little rose and pearl rivulets down the lady's neck. The unfortunate victim screamed lustily several times, dabbed wildly at the parts affected with a little yellow rag which suddenly appeared from nowhere, and then ran, sobbing, from the room.

"In the meantime the butler's assistants had rounded him up another bottle of the elusive fluid, and when that functionary appeared again in the dining room he might have been planting dynamite bombs, so carefully did he pick his way about and so great was the expression of terror in his staring eyes. But he stuck gamely to his task and finally poured out the last of the 'Sunshine' that his improvised distillery was able to deliver without again interfering with the toilet of any of the guests.

"In all of this time not a soul was able to get a sip of the phantom liquid. The moment a trickle of it touched a glass it hissed like a moistened seidlitz powder, threw spray in the air and piled up a heap of bubbles which, quickly subsiding, left nothing behind but a drug-store smell and a damp circle of table cloth. The sprightly brunette in her first season whom I had taken in came nearest to getting a drink, and her experience had a dampening effect upon the enthusiasm of the others. This maid was rash and impulsive, and, partly by quickness of hand, partly by inhalation, she managed to deflect laterally a lungful of the pungent spray which was ascending [340] perpendicularly to bespangle with dewy drops what some one had just characterized in nautical parlance as her 'natty gaff topsail pompadour.' Her behaviour for the next

minute or two made the efforts of the plump dowager to staunch the flow of her complexion seem dignified in comparison. The dinner was finished up with a more manageable vintage, and next day the *Aphrodite* sailed without further requisition having been made upon her stores of 'Extra Spry.'

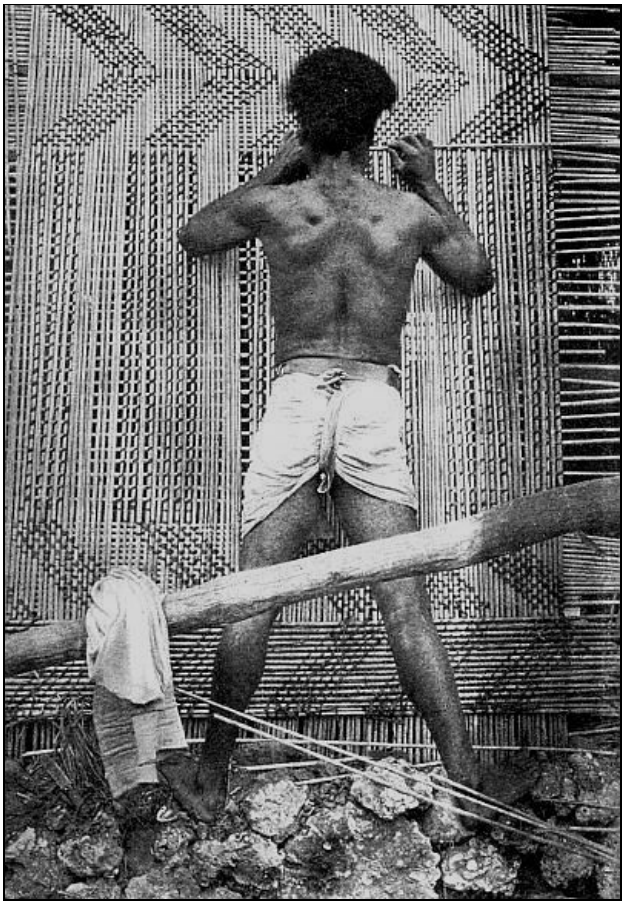
"All through the three weeks' cruise to Tahiti the restless bubbles in the thick, green bottles in the *Aphrodite's* starboard lockers elbowed each other as they swelled in the tropic heat, but it was not until the yacht was safely anchored in Papeete harbour that another opportunity came for any of them to get beyond control. A call had been made on the French governor in the morning, and that dignitary, according to official etiquette, was returning the visit in company with his stately wife the afternoon of the same day. Doubtless you had to go through the same thing. The trouble came while the hospitable Spencer was mixing a punch. Cold tea, maraschino, curacao, burnt sugar and a lot of other stuff had already gone in as a base, quite enough, so the mixer thought, to dilute a bottle of his 'Extra Spry' to an exhilarant innocuousness. All might have gone well had the diluting been done upon scientific principles, but Spencer, whose knowledge of hydraulics appeared very rudimentary for a man who had made a fortune in placer mining, directed the Japanese steward to poke the nose of the bottle into the punch as soon as he started the cork. That obedient functionary approached the bowl from the side opposite to the one on which [341] the governor and his wife were seated and did exactly as directed.

"Although the time was but five in the afternoon, His Excellency was in the full evening dress prescribed for official calls—cock-hat, claw-hammer coat and two feet of shirt front crossed with a strip of red, white and blue bunting and a row and a half of medals. A hundredth of a second after the asthmatically-wheezing nose of the bottle of 'Extra Spry' went over the edge of the bowl this regalia was absorbing a good half of Spencer's partially mixed punch, while the remainder bubbled and creamed over the expensive Parisian creation of his stately wife.

"A sailor, who had taken in the incident from the forward deck, lost control of himself and broke into a loud guffaw, in which he was promptly joined by several of his mates. This set two or three of the more irreverent of the members of Spencer's party going, and when the spasm of laughter had passed it was found that Their Excellencies, in high dudgeon, had melted over the side and departed in their waiting cutter. The Jap was found at the foot of the cabin stairs with a bruise in the pit of his stomach which bade fair to confine him to the little French hospital for a fortnight. Tropical heat and the agitation of the tossing bosom of the South Pacific were conspiring to set on hair-trigger edge the latent energies of the 'Extra Spry,' and, though none suspected it, the insistent throb of the imprisoned bubbles were the pulse beats in the Hand of Fate.

"The coldness of Tahiti officialdom after this incident, a squabble with his skipper, as well as incipient internal dissensions among the members of his too-closely-confined [342] party, all conspired to make Spencer forego the remainder of the cruise he had planned, and within the next week or so they had all left for San Francisco or Auckland, leaving the *Aphrodite* in my hands to be sold to the highest bidder. At the end of a month I sold her to the Amalgamated Missionary, Bible and Tract Society, which eagerly embraced the opportunity to replace at a bargain figure its schooner, *Morning Star*, which the last hurricane had piled up, a hopeless wreck, upon the beach of Moorea. I was retained as skipper.

"The Society had long been anxious to undertake some reclamation work in the Paumotos, and the possession of the *Aphrodite*—a vessel that, on account of the ease with which she handled, could venture with comparative safety where the ordinary type of South Sea schooner dared not go—made it possible to attempt to realize this ambition for the first time. After a week of busy preparation we made ready to sail for Makatea, and when the missionary schooner, *Southern Cross*, glided out of the narrow crack in the reef which constitutes the entrance to Papeete harbour and headed off for the north-east, there was little to differentiate her from the saucy *Aphrodite* which had come bowling in over an almost identical course a month or so previously. A new set of gold letters across her stern, a crown and anchor flag at the main truck, and a plain set of table covers and bedspreads included about all the changes in sight, and even a search of the lazarette and lockers would have disclosed little (except some bales of Bibles and hymn books and some cases of salmon and barrels of salt beef) which had not been there before.



Weaving the walls of a Fijian house

Interior of Fijian house, showing how it is bound

"Fewer still were the old things that had been dispensed with. The name and the house-flag had to be altered, of course, to suit the new character of the vessel, while embroidered silk peacocks and sun-flowers on the coverlets were rather beyond the simple tastes of the Reverend Horatio Loveworth who was in charge of the work in hand. But the punchbowl had been retained as a baptismal fount, the wines—including the 'Extra Spry'—for medicinal purposes, the fancy stores to be presented as a goodwill offering to King Boraki of Makatea, and a gramophone, fortified with a big stack of new bass drum and trombone records of popular hymns, as a music teacher to the expected converts. Loveworth's keen practicality had been the principal factor in his rapid rise to the most important position in the South Pacific missionary service. [343]

"My mate was an Australian of long experience among the Islands, and the crew a well-picked lot of half-castes and Kanakas. We worked well together, and I doubt if the little schooner, even in her sealing days, was ever better handled. After two days of admirable behaviour in baffling winds and treacherous currents, she penetrated to the very heart of the stormy Paumotan Archipelago. Ahead loomed the black mass of Makatea, the half-coral, half-volcanic island of sinister reputation which was our destination, and between stretched ten miles of submerged reefs which the chart made no pretence of outlining.

"Ordering sail to be shortened and a man sent aloft, I was just preparing to begin 'feeling' our way in toward the darker blur that marked the probable entrance to the lagoon, when the mate's keen eye descried a lone sail bearing rapidly down on us from landward. My glass revealed a large out-rigger canoe which, driven by a fair wind and urged by the flashing paddles of its dozen or more occupants, was throwing the foam over its bow so swiftly was it sliding through the water. In less than half an hour it had grated against the side of the schooner and the leader of the party, a magnificently proportioned fellow dressed only in a red *pareo* and a necklace of sharks' teeth, disdaining the ladder that was lowered for him, leapt lightly over the rail and, saluting the Reverend Horatio with a bow and a sweep of his *koui* fibre hat, announced himself to be King Boraki. [344]

"Speaking in the Marquesan dialect, he said that Makatea had learned of the great missionary's intended visit from word that had come by Rangaroa; that Makatea was transported with joy at the honour that was being done it; that preparations for a fitting reception had been in progress for a week and were now complete; and, finally, that he had come to pilot the ship of his distinguished visitor by a safe channel to the harbour and to be the first of his people to receive a Christian blessing.

"'God bless you, my brother; ask the rest of our brothers to come aboard for prayer and refreshment,' ejaculated the Reverend Horatio fervently, and no sooner was the invitation issued than fifteen more red *pareos* and shark tooth necklaces flashed over the rail, their wearers promptly ranging themselves in an orderly row behind their leader. An instant later, like puppets controlled by a single string, every man of them plumped down on his knees, crossed his arms on his breast and, with eyes devoutly raised at an angle that directed their gaze somewhere in the vicinity of the third row of reef points on the idly flapping mainsail, remained motionless. [345]

"'Rehearsed, by Gawd!' muttered the mate, whose quick eye had caught Boraki's backhand signal. 'Oh, for a Maxim on the deckhouse!'

"'Oh for words to express my thanks for all that has happened and is going to happen this day!' prayed the Reverend Horatio, heeding naught but the fact that he was on the eve of the apparent fulfilment of a lifelong ambition. His prayer was brief but full of feeling, and when it was over he asked all hands to come below and have something to eat.

"Boraki brought his men to their feet with a wave of his hand, picked two of his chiefs to accompany him to the cabin with the missionary, and sent the others forward to feed and fraternize with the crew. Carried away by Loveworth's enthusiasm and confidence—the man was, and is, a born leader—the mate and I followed him and the guest of honour below.

"*Who* this Boraki was, beyond being the greatest rascal that ever terrorized the south-eastern Pacific, nobody knew. *What* he was, everybody could tell you, but those who asked usually tried to save time by telling you what he wasn't. By process of elimination you might then learn that he was a pirate, cut-throat, murderer, cannibal, robber and other things too numerous to mention; also, that each of his four hundred men in Makatea was all of these things to a greater or lesser degree, and that few of them had ever been apprehended or punished. Boraki himself was supposed to have a good deal of European blood in his veins, but of what nationality no one was sure. The traders said that his father was a missionary, and pointed to traits in his character to prove it; the missionaries said that his father was a trader, and pointed to traits in his character to prove it; Boraki was silent on the subject, but indirectly [346]

gave both parties the lie by robbing and killing—and some said eating—traders and missionaries alike.

"All that Boraki had said in his little speech when he boarded the *Southern Cross* was quite true, but not quite the whole truth. He did not state, for example, that the preparations for entertainment he referred to were to be in the form of endurance tests of walking on red-hot stones—the walking to be done by the visitors—and that possibly the red-hot stones might serve for another purpose by the time the supper hour came around. Nor did he state that the end of his volunteer piloting was to run the nose of the schooner into a soft sand bank in the middle of the passage, where canoe-loads of his men, coming from the lagoon ostensibly as life-savers, could take advantage of the confusion that was bound to follow the accident to enter into possession with a minimum of difficulty and risk. The schooner was to be left till the shifting of the sands at the turn of the tide would release her without injury. All of which, of course, we did not learn until later.

"This plan, good enough to have succeeded against a gunboat, had been evolved by the resourceful pirate in the expectation that the *Southern Cross* was coming with nothing less than a battery of rapid-fire guns and a detachment of French marines to see her through. When Boraki saw no quick-firers on the deck, no rifles or cutlasses in the cabin, and not even a revolver or knife in the belts of the officers and crew, he perceived at once that there was no use risking the loss of the schooner by running [347] her aground. His action was characteristic.

"The swift happenings of the next hour or so, as I was witness of them only 'in spots,' I shall describe as the subsequent testimony of the participants—principally Boraki himself—showed them to have transpired.

"The distinctly mixed assemblage—Boraki, his two fellow cut-throats, Loveworth, the Australian first mate, the half-caste second mate and myself—were seated round the cabin table. The steward had finished setting out a substantial little lunch and the Reverend Horatio, having put one of his favourite records into the gramophone, was just winding it up, when Boraki, without a word even to his companions, sprang lightly to the top of the cabin stairs and shouted to his men in Marquesan—a language that was understood by every one on the boat but myself—to tie up the sailors. Regaining the cabin floor at a single bound, he swung quickly with a mineral water bottle on the heads of the first and second mates before either of those unfortunates was clear of his chair. My own head struck the cabin lamp a sharp blow as I lurched up out of my swivel seat, and I was already half dazed when Boraki's hard-swung bludgeon landed on my temple and dropped me like a log across the second mate. My last recollection was of one of the chiefs, muffled in Loveworth's long black coat-tails, trying to pinion the missionary's powerful legs, while the other brown rascal tore at the clerical stock in an effort to find an effective place to choke. I am indebted to Boraki for most of what followed.

"Giving each of our prostrate bodies a prod with his toe to assure himself that they [348] were really as limp as they looked, Boraki perched on the corner of the table and divided his time between eating chocolate wafers and giving his henchmen gratuitous tips on the way to hold down a struggling missionary. It was an even thing for a while, Boraki avers; the prettiest kind of a fight. But when the man who had stroked Oxford for three consecutive years finally threw off his assailants and made a break for the deck and fighting room, the wily pirate felt that it was time to take a hand himself. Without descending from his comfortable cross-legged perch on the snowy table-cloth, he leaned forward as the fugitive dashed by and coolly planted his water bottle just aft Loveworth's right ear, sending the stout-hearted missionary down alongside his officers in the shambles on the floor.

"Leaving his companions to tie up the prisoners, Boraki, munching at a mixed fistful of eclairs and canned salmon, sauntered forward to see all made snug in that part of the ship. Five minutes later, his head crowned with Loveworth's waste-basket—a cast iron imitation of a top hat—and puffing contentedly at a Perfecto, he had taken his station at the wheel and with the skill of a born sailor was guiding the *Southern Cross* in through the maze of shoals that surrounded his island.

"The run in was a dead beat to windward, the sun was pitilessly hot, and by the time the schooner's anchor went rattling down into the rose coral floor of Makatea lagoon Boraki's kingly head, under its sixteen-pound iron crown, was buzzing like the Trade-wind in the palm fronds. His blood seemed turned to boiling water and the words of the final orders that he tried to speak rattled together in his throat like the rustle of [349] dead banana leaves, so that he had to make his meaning clear by signs. What wonder, then, that not even a hundred-yards-square of close-packed canoes, from each of which issued shouts of acclamation, could hold him when, from the cool, dark depth of the cabin, came the ringing Marquesan equivalent of 'Rum ho!'

"Boraki crossed the cockpit in one bound, negotiated the companionway in another, and with a third hurdled the prostrate forms of the prisoners and landed between his two faithful lieutenants who, after bootlessly ransacking the schooner from stem to stern, had at last discovered the wine lockers underneath the starboard transoms in the cabin.

"Boraki was vaguely aware that each of his men was holding up a cool-looking green bottle, through the wonderful gold network of which could be seen a beautiful golden liquid that bubbled and flashed and jumped up and down and seemed quite as impatient to get out and run down his burning throat as he was to have it do so. In the lockers below stretched endless lines of similar flashing bottles, and each line, to the chief's inflamed imagination, seemed long enough to link the lagoon of Makatea to the moon with a golden chain. He wondered how long it would take him to drink them all dry.

"But why this terrible delay? Wouldn't these fools ever set the nectar free and extinguish the flames that were licking up his insides? They were letting him die while they sought for a white man's 'pull-pull' to loosen the plugs with! What need was there for a 'pull-pull' anyhow? He would show them how the thing should be done, and, suiting the action to the word, the impatient chief seized a bottle in each [350] hand and deftly opened the two at once by knocking their heads together.

"What else he opened at the same time Boraki probably never thoroughly understood, and so he was the readier to believe Loveworth when that keen opportunist told him solemnly that it was the Gate of Hell. After that point had been impressed upon him, his alarmed query as to whether or not all the devils who had come out when the Gate opened had returned was a perfectly natural one. He said that the only thing he clearly remembered was a feeling of wonder that the heads of the beautiful bottles should knock off so easily, and that his first recollection after that was of crying out because he thought some one was raking off his face with a comb made of shark-hooks. As a matter of fact the incidents alluded to were separated by more than an hour of time, and the shark-hook comb sensation was caused by the well-meant efforts of the first and second mates to remove the cast iron hat from Boraki's head with the aid of a hammer, file and cold chisel.

"When the roughly opened bottles of 'Extra Spry' kicked downward and set off the whole mine in the lockers the henchmen were only slammed across to the opposite side of the cabin and deposited, senseless, against the china closet; but the king himself, caught bending over, received the full force of the explosion upon the chest and was shot like a rocket against the ceiling. By the impact, his iron hat, while it probably saved him from a fractured skull, was driven through flesh and cartilage squarely down upon his shoulders, fitting so closely that only a rust hole in the crown saved its wearer from a speedy smothering. Surely no other king in history, so [351] securely crowned, ever furnished so graphic an illustration of the 'Uneasy lies the head' adage.

"Ten seconds after the explosion, out of all the horde that had swarmed over her, not a Makatean who could help himself remained aboard the *Southern Cross*, and in less than that many minutes not a canoe cut the waters of the lagoon and no man, woman or child was stirring in the village. Huddled in their houses, the whole population was awaiting in fear and trembling the moment when the devil ship would reopen with its invisible cannon.

"The terror of the people was increased a hundredfold when a man who, watching at the sky-light of the cabin, had been stunned by the explosion, came floundering madly ashore a half hour later and ran from house to house telling in broken speech how he had seen the white men—whom they had all beheld lying bound and lifeless on the cabin floor—rise up and begin driving spikes through King Boraki's head. Never was clay laid ready to the hand of the moulder more plastic than was the outlaw community of Makatea at this moment; nor was ever man better qualified to make the most of the situation than the Reverend Horatio Loveworth.

"Lying on the floor, as we had been, the explosion, far from doing us injury, in the stiff jolt it gave our battered frames only hastened our return to consciousness. Loveworth was the first to slip the napkins which bound his wrists. Dazed as he was, the good chap yet had the presence of mind to make the three of us who were still tied promise to refrain from murdering Boraki and his fellows before he would assist us in freeing our bonds. To hold the mates to their promises, once their hands were [352] free to rove over the swelling mounds that marked the spots where the pirate's hard-swung water bottle had fallen, was a more difficult matter. They helped me truss up the henchmen and release the sailors, but enlisting them in actual relief work was a task so well nigh hopeless that Loveworth gave it up in despair after a few minutes of entreaty and began alone. It was the muffled gurglings and convulsive wrigglings set going by his first tug at the iron plug that finally brought the belligerents into line, they scenting in the vigorous application of 'first aid' measures a possible means of accomplishing their end without bringing about an open rupture with the missionary, to whom they were greatly devoted. Considering the zeal with which they set about their errand of mercy, and their manner of wielding the tools in the delicate operation of chipping Boraki's head out of the iron hat, there was no difficulty in locating the source of the fugitive Makatean's spike-driving story.

"One of the king's first questions after he had been informed that it was the Gate of Hell that had swung on him was, not unnaturally, as to whether or not the Gate swung very often like that, and, if it did, when the next swinging was likely to occur. When he was told that this was only a special swinging directly occasioned by his

shameless treachery, and that, anyhow, the danger was one that never threatened good Christians, he was silent for a space, and then asked, with apparent irrelevance, what had become of the green bottles.

"'Gone to——' began the mate in an angry roar, the realization of an almost personal loss suddenly assailing him—'the other side of the Gate,' gently concluded the [353]
Reverend Horatio after checking the obstreperous Australian's threatened outburst of profanity with an upraised hand.

"'Then teach me and my people how to remain on this side of the Gate,' gasped Boraki hoarsely, as he sank back with a shiver among the silk sofa cushions which supported his battered frame.

"So it came to pass that when the king had rested for a while we put the Crown and Anchor banner of the Missionary Society in his hands, propped him up in the stern sheets of the starboard lifeboat with one of his faithful henchmen on either side, and sent him ashore, rowed by a volunteer crew of the least hurt of the sailors.

"'Tell your people,' shouted Loveworth as the boat gained headway under a lengthening stroke, 'that you have come back from the Gate of Hell to help me guide them out of the darkness into the light and to life everlasting. If they are ready to accept the teaching, hoist the flag in front of your council house.'

"Boraki heard and nodded vigorously with the gory cylinder that served him as a head.

"The referendum was accomplished in record time, for in less than five minutes from the moment the boat touched the beach we saw a man dart out of a side portal of Boraki's palm-leaf palace and run like mad to the foot of the lopped-off coconut tree that stood before the long turtle-backed council house. With straining eyes, we saw him clamber, monkey-like, up the lofty stump, caught the flashes of a furiously-swung hammer, and then, snapping exultantly in the whistling south-east Trade, the flag of the golden Crown and Anchor streamed out from the official flag-pole of Makatea. [354]
The people had made their choice.

"No sooner was his beloved banner out to the breeze than Loveworth, taking with him the disgusted second mate, put off for the beach in the whaleboat to catch at its flood the tide of fortune which had at last begun to set so strongly in his favour. The mate and I went below to take stock of the wreck in the cabin.

"'S'elp me Father Neptune, I'd give a month's pay to the new mission to know what it was that knocked them bloomin' pirates into the shape we woke up to find 'em in,' said the mate musingly, sinking down with a sigh of relief upon the undisturbed cushions of a port transom. 'P'raps they took liberties with a bunch o' rockets or a keg o' powder; only there ain't no fire marks nowhere. All the booze smashed up, too. Wonder who's at the bottom of it, anyhow. Eh! What? Who spoke? You, Capt'n? No. Oh, you, old Tinhorn. My word, but you gave me a turn. "*God*," you sez. That's what Pilot Loveworth sez, too, and p'raps it's true; but what gets me is how He done it. You wasn't laid out with a crack on the nut, old Tinhorn; tell us how it happened.'

"'*Brrr—in a mysterious way—brrr*,' came the droning answer, leaving us no wiser than before.

"The jolt of the mate's weary body had thrown over the half-shifted lever of the already wound-up gramophone, which had been abandoned on the transom by Loveworth when he turned to receive the first onslaught of Boraki's henchmen, and the record had commenced to spin. The sounding-box floundered like a squirrel on its wheel as the black disc, scarred and littered from the explosion, whirled beneath the [355]
needle, and it chanced that the only intelligible words that came from the horn in the first few moments were those which the astonished mate had, for an instant, taken as answers to his conjectures.

"After learning that the deed had been done in a mysterious way, all we could make out between the '*zrrrs*' and '*bzzzs*' which followed was that whoever had done the deed had performed wonders, to which the mate naïvely replied that he had perceived as much at the outset, but that now he was seeking enlightenment as to how the wonders had been performed.

"The needle steeple-chased for a couple of circuits after that without communicating anything relevant, following which, suddenly and without warning, it came out of the woods onto a stretch of smooth, undamaged going. Then, in the clear, flute-like tenor of 'Harry McMurtry, Columbophone Record,' came the words of Loveworth's favourite hymn—

'God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform.'

"The missionary, who was kneeling on the beach invoking a blessing on the heads of the terrified wretches who had come pouring from their houses to grovel at his feet, told me afterwards that the words came floating down to him across the still waters of the lagoon like a voice from the other world.

"That was all the comment that the only English-speaking witness of the miracle

wrought by 'Hum's Extra Spry' was destined ever to make, for at the beginning of the next lap the needle went into an incipient crack and split the record down the middle. The two pieces, together with the scarred fragments of a cast iron top hat, are still preserved by Loveworth in the little coral mission at Makatea." [356]

The green bottle on Carew's chair arm had been tilted with increasing frequency as his story approached its climax, and for the last fifteen or twenty minutes, save for short spells when he had rallied to explain this or that phenomenon, he had talked with a far-away expression in his eyes, as one who visualizes and describes what he sees. He roused somewhat at the ripple of applause which greeted the end of the yarn, but he made his adieux like a man in a dream, and his gaze was blank and vacant as he lurched unsteadily down the gangway to the *Clio's* launch.

That was the last we ever saw of the Honourable "Slope" Carew. He sailed next day in the *Clio* to pilot that gunboat to an unmarked rock somewhere to the north-west which was to be blown up or charted. A year later, while in Australia, I read in a Noumea dispatch to the Sydney *Morning Herald* that he had shot himself on the lawn of the Cercle Militaire in a fit of melancholia following a night of absinthe drinking.

CHAPTER XX [357]

SUVA TO HONOLULU

At five o'clock in the afternoon of the 2nd of July we weighed anchor and slipped from the quietness of Suva harbour out into a roystering east wind that was playing all manner of strange pranks with the placid sea we had come in through a week previously. For steep, short seas and uncomfortable small-schooner weather, nothing quite equals one of these reef-locked stretches of the south-west Pacific with a stiff blow on. The ever-imminent bottom, constantly dragging on the waves, retards them below and lets them keep going above, producing seas something between ocean swells and lines of surf. Sailing with seas of this description coming anywhere forward of the beam is like tobogganing on an uncleared mountainside.

Hardly was the yacht clear of the harbour before we were forced to begin shortening canvas, and by eight o'clock double reefs had been tied in the mainsail and foresail and the bonnet taken out of the forestay-sail. Even then she made bad weather of it. She would make a terrific leap skyward, almost standing on her rudder in an effort to clear an advancing wave, and then crash thunderingly down and bore her nose deep into the green water of the next sea before her bows began lifting again. There was not a great deal of weight behind the seas and they did little damage; but all night long they shook the yacht as a terrier does a rat, carried away a couple of boat-loads of fresh fruit contributed by our Suva friends, and made sleeping an impossibility. By [358] morning a falling wind and sea made it possible to shake the reefs out of the foresail and put the bonnet back into the forestay-sail, but the mainsail languished all day with the most of its length along the boom.

Early in the morning of the 4th the yacht crossed the 180th Meridian, carrying us back to West Longitude. Regarding the unusual sequence of days on this occasion the "Ladies' Log" has the following entry under date of July 3rd:

"Yesterday it was Sunday, the 3rd; today, from twelve P. M. to four A. M., it was the Fourth of July. Then we crossed the 180th Meridian, and it was again Sunday, the 3rd. Tomorrow we will have a continuation of the Fourth which we started this morning. This figures out at one and five-sixths Sundays and one and one-sixth Fourths of July, making a total of three complete and consecutive holidays on which, according to nautical custom, the cook must provide us with 'duff.'"

Levity of the "Ladies' Log" aside, the coincidence was a most remarkable one.

It was possibly the first fragment of the Fourth struggling to join forces with the unbroken one that followed which caused an hour's diversion on the morning of the latter which was quite sufficient in itself to stand for an Independence Day celebration. The wind had been light but steady from E.S.E. all day, and when darkness fell there was nothing in the smooth sea, clear sky and high barometer to point any reason for not carrying the light sails all night. An easy nine miles an hour was averaged all through the first watch, and a freshening of the breeze shortly after the sounding of midnight had ushered in the Fourth was responsible for better than [359] ten miles being run in the hour immediately following. Shortly after one o'clock the breeze, quite without warning, suddenly fell light, and all in a minute the celebration was on. What it was we managed to agree upon the next morning, and as to why it was the coming day also brought considerable enlightenment; how it was depended largely upon one's viewpoint, and no two of us appear to have seen it quite in the same way. I, sleeping on a cabin transom when the thing happened, can merely set

down my own impressions.

With the startling distinctness with which the slightest sound above makes itself heard in the quiet spaces between decks, I noted how the rustle of the seas along the sides died down as the breeze fell light, heard the banging of blocks, the flap of sails, the slatting of lines, and presently the buzz of voices in puzzled conjecture. Then a low, grinding roar, like the distant sound of a dry-snow avalanche, began filling the air, and instantly the sharp, incisive voice of the Commodore cut in, shouting an interminable string of orders. Suddenly the sound of the voices changed to gasping snarls, the boom of boots on the deck to far-away rat-a-tats, and the whole of the outside Universe seemed to resolve itself into one huge roar. Then a great, big, solid something struck the yacht and all of the staterooms lay down on their sides, the lamps swung up and lay down against the ceiling, and everything movable jumped out and lay down on the port berths and transoms. A trunk broke loose from its lashings under the cabin table and slid down to mingle with a typewriter, a phonograph, a couple of hundred of the latter's loose records, and, incidentally, [360] myself. Shortly a starboard bookcase vomited its contents into the shambles, and a big bunch of flags-of-all-nations, unrolling as it came, leaped out to lend a festal touch to the glad occasion. And over all, through open skylight and companionway, poured floods of brine to keep down the dust.

Time and again the yacht struggled to sit up, and as often settled shudderingly back on her side. Finally, the muffled snarl of orders forced from a wind-stopped throat cut down through the roar, to be followed by a scurrying on deck—tiny and distant like the scrambling of mice over paper—and the cabin leaped suddenly halfway up and hung there quivering as though balanced on its corner. Then, as some one ran forward the slide and jammed together the doors of the companionway, came the tense voice of the Commodore, gasping above the wind:

"Tumble up lively, you there below! Come a-runnin' an' len' a hand 'fore the sticks go out o' 'er!" Then, more indistinctly as his face was turned, "Le' go, there forrard; le' go!"

A moment later the cabin gave another jump back toward the normal, this time straightening up enough to give me a chance to burrow out from under a stack of phonograph records and crawl along the side of the port transom to the stairs.

I have a distinct memory of how my head was bumped twice in gaining the deck—once against the storm doors of the companionway and once against the wind. The air, which was rushing by as though all the atmosphere of the Universe was trying to crowd itself along the deck of the yacht, felt as tangible as a solid stream of water, [361] and so mixed was it with water, in fact, that there was no telling where the surface of the sea left off and the air commenced. The hard-driven drops stung like sleet, and the act of breathing with the face turned to windward was a sheer impossibility.

Still heeling heavily, and with mainsail dragging over her port side like the trailing wing of a wounded bird, the yacht scudded off before the wind. Withal she was making good weather of it, and even before the coming of the rain marked the passing of the centre of the squall we had the main-boom amidships and the troublesome mainsail hauled aboard. The deck was a fathom deep in flapping sails and up forward a water-butt and a salt beef barrel were having a lively game of tag, but neither of the boats had started its lashings and none of the skylights was smashed. Most of the damage was done to the storm-tossed contents of the cabin. By daybreak the deck was cleared and the yacht, under all-plain sail, headed again on her north-westerly course.

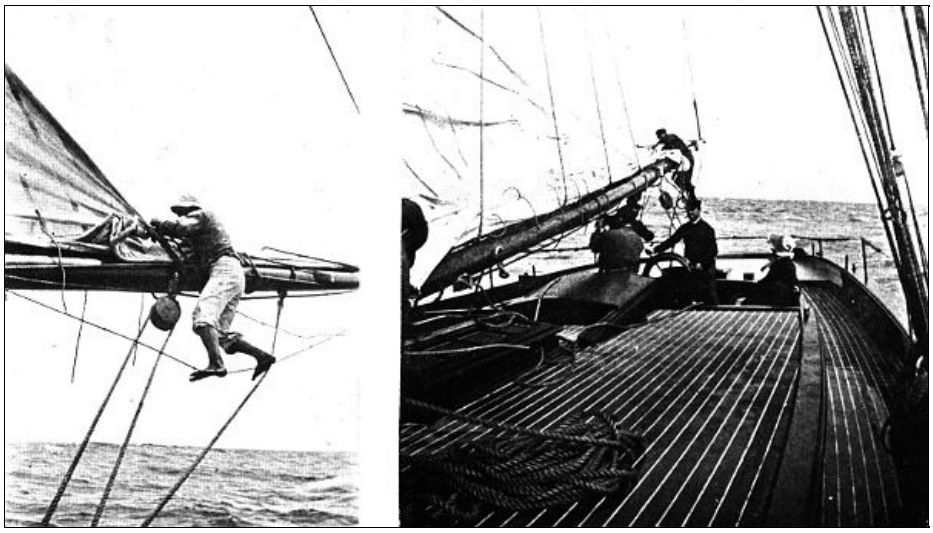
Our "Independence Day Celebration," as we afterwards had explained to us in Honolulu, was what is commonly referred to in the South Pacific as a "leeward squall." This phenomenon is met with only among volcanic islands high enough to allow the wind to draw around them and meet again in "twisters" a few miles to leeward. If the wind holds steady from one direction this ordinarily makes little trouble, but if it chances to haul two or three points ahead when a ship is passing a high island the squall which comes boring in from leeward may take her aback with disastrous results. Trading captains passing under the lee of islands of this description always go under shortened sail. Light sails of all kinds are unpopular in [362] the South Pacific—one never sees a trading schooner with a topmast on the fore, and not all carry them on the main.

It was a "leeward squall" of unusual force that *Lurline* encountered on the morning of the Fourth of July, and considering the fact that, with the exception of her foretopsail, she was carrying all the sail she had, the Commodore's work in bringing her through unharmed was creditable in the extreme. From so unexpected a quarter did the squall appear that only the briefest space was allowed for preparation; yet in these two or three minutes all hands were called, the maintopmast staysail and maingafftopsail were lowered to the deck, the jib-topsail and flying jib hauled down and furled, the ship put about on the other tack, the jib furled, and men stationed at the halyards fore and aft. All of this was accomplished before the squall struck, which then left nothing to do but let go the halyards when it became apparent that the force of the wind was too great for the yacht to stand up under. With the wind

coming as it was, it was impossible to prevent the mainsail's falling in the water.

By the afternoon of the Fourth we were out of sight of the last of the Fijis and again dependent on observations for our position. It was our intention to call in at Fanning Island on our way to Hawaii, to which end the yacht was kept headed north-east whenever possible, a course two points more easterly than the direct one to Honolulu. With a light south-east wind 119 miles were run up to noon of the 5th, soon after which a shift to N.N.E. forced us to go about and head nearly due east all afternoon. Toward dark it fell calm and but three miles were run between six o'clock and midnight. By the 6th the wind was back to south-east, but blowing with little force, the run to noon of that day being but forty-five miles. [363]

A Fijian warrior



Reefing the mainsail

Untying a reef in the mainsail

A strong westerly current began making itself felt about this time—Lat. 14° 06' South, and Long. 176° 04' West—which gradually worked more to the north as we approached the Line. On the 6th it set us eighteen miles to the west; on the 7th, twenty miles to W.N.W.; on the 8th, eighteen miles to N.W.; and on the next four

days from twenty-four to thirty miles to N.N.W. This was considerably more of a current than the Sailing Directions indicate for those latitudes.

In the forenoon of the 7th the wind hauled to the north-east, blowing strong from that direction until four in the afternoon, when, without abating in strength, it went back to east. Toward midnight a heavy squall struck the yacht, and while furling the jib a foot rope gave way under Bill, a big Dane of the mate's watch, and only a lucky grab at the bobstay saved him from being swept away. The yacht put her nose under a couple of feet of green water at the same instant Bill went down, giving him a fearful ducking, but the plucky fellow swung up to the bowsprit the moment it arose from the sea and finished his work without a murmur.

On the 8th, 9th and 10th the wind continued fresh but persisted in shifting back and forth in heavy rain-squalls between east and north-east, making it impossible to hold one course for more than an hour or two at a time. The runs for these days were 127, 125 and 126 miles, respectively. On the 9th and 10th we passed straight through the middle of the Union Group, but so far from any of the islands that their presence was [364] indicated only by the sight of an occasional land bird. This group is composed only of low atolls which are but sparsely watered and thinly inhabited. On the 11th the sky was completely overcast, making observations impossible, and the day was one long succession of baffling winds and fierce rain-squalls. This succeeded to a dead calm, the yacht lying all night with the booms hauled amidships and the sails furled.

In the middle of the forenoon of the 12th the yacht sailed under a black cornucopia-shaped cloud which we had been watching for some time as it lay in wait across our path. As we ran into the misty tail, which hung so low as to seem almost dragging in the sea, a veritable deluge of water broke upon us. The downpour was so fierce as to threaten for a while to break in the skylights and flood the cabins. The water accumulated so fast on the deck that the scuppers would not carry it off, and when the rain was falling heaviest the cockpit was flooded a foot deep. The cataclysm ceased as quickly as it had commenced, not by passing on like an ordinary squall, but simply by exhausting its fount. By the time the air was clear of water the black cloud had drawn up into itself and disappeared.

After four more days of variable winds, at four in the morning of the 16th, we crossed the Equator in Long. 163° 07'. The wind was fresh from E.N.E. and the air (82°) and the water (80°) were each a degree cooler than for several days. The evening was marked by an unusually brilliant sunset.

Neither our rate of progress to this point, nor the course we had travelled, were all that might have been desired. On the 12th we made but forty miles and on the three [365] following days an average of about 140 miles each. The course approximated N.N.E., all of two points to the leeward of the direct track to Fanning Island.

To noon of the 17th there was a run of 161 miles, which placed us due east of Fanning Island and at a distance of about 150 miles. The next twenty-four hours were spent in beating in short tacks against a wind which had settled itself contentedly to blow straight down our course. By noon of the 18th, having gained but sixty-two miles in the day's run, we gave up trying to make Fanning Island and slacked off sheets for Honolulu. Twelve hours later the wind, blowing half a gale, had hauled up to north-east, forcing us to close-reef mainsail and foresail and head off to N. by W.

Washington Island, lying in about Lat. 5° North, and Long. 160° West, the only land we sighted between Fiji and Hawaii, was on the horizon for several hours of the 19th. The wind continued as fitful as south of the Equator. By keeping the yacht close-hauled all the time we usually managed to hold her on the right side of N. by E., the course to Honolulu, but it was a rough, slap-bang, ding-dong task. Of this period the "Ladies' Log," under date of July 20th, records as follows:

"*Lurline* might have been mistaken for a coral island last night, so thick were the reefs upon her. 'The sea is going down,' cries the Commodore cheerily early in the evening. 'Ay,' answers the mate; 'most of it is going down through the galley skylight.' And sure enough it was. Contrary winds are forcing us to make [366] considerable westing and the heavy sea cuts down our speed, the main element in linear progression. Reefs were shaken out at eight this morning and tied in again at seven this evening, the constant succession of one to the other during the last few days eliciting the suggestion from the mate that the reefs had best be padlocked in and the key thrown away."

Most of the following week was spent in reefing and unreefing and tacking this way and that at the caprice of the wind. The sea was heavy most of the time and the progress slow, the best days' runs being those of the 23rd and 24th, when 147 and 142 miles, respectively, were made. On none of the other days was there a run of over 100 miles, and on the 21st only fifty-one was marked up. On the 27th, though 150 miles west of the high island of Hawaii, we cut into the tip of the windless triangle which lies under the lee of its 13,000-foot peaks and for several hours floated without steerageway. When we got the wind again in the afternoon it was noticed at once that the log was acting in an eccentric manner, and on investigation its blades were found to be bent and twisted and heavily scarred, apparently by the teeth of some large fish.

At four o'clock in the afternoon of the 28th the green peaks of Oahu were sighted on the weather bow, distant sixty-five miles. With a light east wind the yacht averaged between four and five knots during the night and at four A. M. was six miles off the Barber Point Light, which bore N. by W. This was some miles to the leeward of Honolulu, and four hours of beating were necessary to bring us opposite the entrance. Here we were boarded by the pilot at eight o'clock, and a few minutes later [367] the tug, *Fearless*, dispatched through the courtesy of the Spreckels Company, passed a line to the yacht and towed her in. We anchored in Rotten Row, with mooring lines made fast to the identical old man-of-war boilers from which they had been cast loose on our departure for the Marquesas, four months previously.

From the sailing standpoint this run was the most unsatisfactory of the voyage. Twenty-seven days were required to cover 3000 miles, an average of but little over a hundred miles a day. Practically all of this time the yacht was close-hauled, and a total of at least three days was spent in tiresome beating against a wind which blew straight from our destination. It is possible that two or three days might have been saved had we made a fair wind of the south-east Trades instead of keeping close-hauled in an endeavour to make Fanning Island; but this is by no means certain, as the easting gained at this time stood us in good stead when the north-east Trades were encountered.

CHAPTER XXI [368]

HONOLULU TO SAN PEDRO

THE two weeks spent ashore during *Lurline's* return visit to Honolulu were a welcome respite from the four months of unbroken life on shipboard that had preceded them. The absence of the passengers was taken advantage of to give the yacht a thorough overhauling in preparation for the long, hard beat back to San Pedro, especial care being taken in the renewal of the running rigging. Moreover, as we were scheduled for a short stop at Hilo and confidently expected to run down with a fair wind and arrive there all ready to receive calls, unusual attention was given to brasswork and hardwood. Thus our plans; how they worked out will appear presently.

On the evening of August 4th the Royal Hawaiian Yacht Club gave a banquet for the *Lurline* party, among other amenities of the occasion being the election of the Commodore to an honorary life membership in that organization. In his speech of acceptance the Commodore dwelt at some length on the ideal sailing conditions existent in the Trades latitudes of both North and South Pacific, and suggested as a means of bringing those waters more closely to the attention of coast yachtsmen, the inauguration of an annual race, in one direction or other, between Honolulu and a California port. The idea was not entirely a new one to Hawaiian yachtsmen, but the Commodore's assurance of the hearty co-operation of the South Coast Yacht Club of San Pedro gave the movement an impetus which resulted in the establishment of the [369] Trans-Pacific Yacht Race as a regular biennial fixture. Too much credit cannot be given to the people of Hawaii, both in and out of yachting circles, for the enthusiastic sportsmanship which has made this, the only regular deep-sea yacht race that is sailed in any part of the world, an accomplished fact.

At this banquet, also, were arranged the details for a match race between two old rivals, Tom Hobron's sloop, *Gladys*, and Clarence McFarlane's schooner, *La Paloma*. It was decided that the yachts should run down to Lahina, on the island of Maui, remain there for a day or two and then race back to Honolulu. As the date of the start, August 10th, about coincided with that on which we were planning to sail for Hilo, and as Lahina was but little off our course, the opportunity of following the race seemed too good to neglect. Accordingly a party of our friends was asked to accompany us, and preparations made to start the ball rolling with a musical send-off in Honolulu and stop it, at the disembarkation of our guests in Lahina, with fireworks. On the arrival of the racers at Lahina—of course *Lurline* would arrive first—our friends were to go ashore and await the steamer, while we proceeded on to Hilo. Never was a schedule more carefully elaborated—even the gastronomical preferences of each individual guest were consulted—and never did a party of pleasure-seekers board a yacht with such firm intentions—expressed and implied—of enjoying, unmixedly and uninterruptedly, a really good time.

The water-front was gay with flags and black with people when, early in the afternoon of the 10th, we hove up anchor and filled away for the passage, following [370] in the wakes of *Gladys* and *La Paloma*. It was "*Aloha, Aloha Nui*," from every pier and dock and bulkhead, that we passed as we stood down the bay, and "*Aloha, Aloha*," from every tug and schooner. At the landing of the boat club, at the inner end of the passage, was a big crowd of friends with the band, and from there the "*Alohas*" again burst forth as we sailed smartly by, running at an easy five or six-knot gait before a light but steady breeze.

As the yacht entered the passage and made her first curtesy to the ocean swell, the

band struck up *Aloha-oe*, and the crowd, falling silent for the moment, vented its feelings in a flood of waving handkerchiefs. Simultaneously, a similar muslin broadside flashed forth in reply from the port side of the speeding yacht, and then, with friends looking in the eyes of friends and the whole affair—even to the music—going off as smoothly and dramatically as Lohengrin's Farewell in an end-of-the-season performance, the lashing of the fishing-tackle block on the forestay parted and let the anchor and thirty-five fathoms of chain slide back into the sea.

An atmosphere histrionic gave way to one profanely sulphurous, for in addition to spoiling the dramatic effect of our departure, the contretemps left the yacht in a really awkward position. The wheel was thrown hard down and mainsail and foresail sheets let go with all possible dispatch, but not in time to prevent her from rollicking on to the limit of her cable and bringing up short like a colt at the end of its tether. Then she swung round, head to the wind, and began tugging at her anchor as a colt tugs at its halter in trying to slip it over its ears. While the sailors wound away on the [371]
winch in the thin, blue smoke that still hovered forward—the mate had lost a good deal of cuticle from the inside of his hand in trying to check the run of the cable—our amiable guests brought up sofa pillows on the quarter deck and, making megaphones of their hands, held long and animated conversations with their friends on the landing of the boat club.

Getting under way in the narrow passage was by no means a simple operation, but, thanks largely to a favourable set of current, it was accomplished without accident. *Gladys* and *La Paloma* were something more than hull down to the south by the time *Lurline* was clear of the reef, but with a fair wind, which was increasing steadily as we worked from under the lee of the land, it was hoped to overcome their lead in time to give our guests a good view of the race. *Lurline* gained rapidly while daylight lasted, and by the time the banners of a brilliant sunset fluttered low in the west and Tantalus disappeared behind the dusky pall of the coming night we seemed in a fair way to accomplish our purpose.

Never was there such a night; never so jolly a yachting party. The slow-heaving sea, bathed in a flood of moonlight, was a-dazzle in dimples of liquid, lucent gold; the sky was a star-set vault of purple, and the breeze, milk-warm and redolent of the smell of some distant, flower-clothed valley, a caress from heaven. The temper of the party matched the night.

Dinner was a huge success. There were a few negligible incidentals of the soup, fish, roast and salad order, preliminary to a huge feast of preserves made of every known [372]
variety of Hawaiian fruit from mangoes to mummy-apples, sugared down in jars at all known stages of ripeness and unripeness. These, with countless boxes of candy and fresh fruit, were the contributions of our guests and their friends. And how we did eat, and drink each other's healths, and with what acclamation agree that, never since the voyage of the Argonauts, had cruise been so auspiciously begun. Banjos and *ukuleles* were a-twang and a-tinkle on the after deck, accordions and a bugle wailed and brayed from the forecastle, and through it all ran a fog-horn obligato played by a festive Hawaiian miss who had unearthed that instrument of torture from the lazarette.

About ten o'clock the wind died down and the yacht, deprived of its steadying influence, fell more and more under the disturbing sway of the swinging swells from the channel. Before long a decided current became apparent, running with the seas and setting us rapidly toward the rocks of Makapu-u Point. At midnight Diamond Head Light, which is arranged so as to change colour to the ship passing shoreward of the danger line, showed ominously in a solid beam of warning red. And still the yacht continued to drift, with the land looming higher and the threatening roar of the surf on the reef growing louder every minute.

From rolling but gently when she first dropped the wind, the yacht, in the wrench of the steeper seas nearer shore, was shortly executing a *pas seul* of singular intricacy and animation; so that our guests—frankly, openly and unfeignedly seasick, every one of them—from a half hour of fear that they were going to be cast on the reef and drowned, relapsed into an indefinite period in which they were afraid that perhaps [373]
nothing of so felicitous a nature was going to befall after all. Bundling the sufferers below as gently as the exigency permitted, the boats were cleared and swung out ready for launching. Towing off, in the face of swells and current so persistent, held scant promise of success, but we were about to try it as a last expedient when the sails began filling with vagrant puffs from an awakening Trade-wind, and we slacked off sheets and got away without putting it to the test.

The rest of the night we spent in crabbing across the lumpy channel, to come out in the grey dawn upon a windless patch of swell and current-churned water in the lee of Molokai which, of all the fiend-infested corners of the Seven Seas, is the spot most accursed. Steep, viciously-heaving humps of water, wallowing without rhythm or reason, wrangled angrily to see which could pitch or roll the yacht farthest in its own particular direction. She was like a kitten thrown to a pack of hungry hounds. They pulled her, hauled her, rolled her, dragged her, tossed her on high and trampled her underfoot. Not all the other rough-and-rowdy intervals of the whole cruise crowded into a single day could have compared with it for the sheer discomfort it imposed. All

but two of the sailors, and the cook as well, were violently seasick. Only a couple of us of the regular guard of *Lurline* were holding up our heads, and the guests were a unit of prostrate despair. Not a bed or a bunk on the yacht was tenantable in the fearful rollings; no bed or bunk less than a covered box could have been. Everything not screwed or lashed into place—and even many objects which had been thus secured—sought the lowest level, and a survey of the cabin, looking forward from the [374] foot of the companionway, suggested something between a tableau of the aftermath of Belshazzar's Feast and the Kishneff massacres staged in a secondhand store. Banjos, ukuleles, fog-horn, no longer thrilling to the touch of the revellers, complained intermittently with muffled chords of protest as they rolled drunkenly to port and starboard with the lurches of the yacht. And as for the revellers themselves —but the Hand of Charity throws the Helm of Description hard-a-lee and sends me off before the Wind of Pity on another tack.

We have since estimated that this slap-banging ten hours of "devil and the deep sea" in the lee of Molokai did more damage to the yacht's rigging than all of the four months of cruising south of the Line. Most of this became apparent in subsequent overhaulings; at the time the principal trouble arose through the repeated carrying away of the boom-tackle. This happened four times: once through the splitting of the block, a flying fragment of which narrowly missed decapitating the man at the wheel; once through the tearing loose of the cleat on the boom; twice through the breaking of the wire lashing on the boom. How the yacht escaped being racked to pieces in the crazy tug-of-war between the keel, on the one side, trying to hold her to the normal, and on the other the waves, savagely bent on throwing her on her beam's ends or standing her on bowsprit or rudder, has always remained a mystery to us.

At four in the afternoon a light breeze sprang up from the south. We were still somewhat nearer to Honolulu than Lahina, which, with the fact that the wind was [375] fair to the former port and dead ahead to the latter, quickly decided us as to what our course would be. Under all-plain lower sail we made the thirty-two miles to Diamond Head in three hours and a half, only to fail—probably on account of the hour—in our endeavour to attract a pilot. Finally we were forced to lower a boat, which, with some difficulty, got through the reef at Waikiki and landed a man to telephone for a tug. The *Waterwitch* came out in due time and towed the yacht to her old anchorage in Rotten Row. Our guests, as fast as they revived, went eagerly ashore. *Gladys* and *La Paloma*, as we subsequently learned, after nearly going on the rocks of Rabbit Island the same night that *Lurline* was threatened with similar disaster on Makapu-u Point, continued the race to Lahina, *Gladys*, as usual, winning.

On the forenoon of the 13th, after a day spent in effecting such renewals and repairs as were absolutely necessary, we again set sail for the island of Hawaii. We left with the intention of proceeding to Kawahaie, on the leeward side of the island, to pick up our friend, Eben Low, who had a ranch in that district, and carry him on to Hilo. A glance at the chart, however, revealed the fact that the course to this point would expose us to possible calms in the lees of Molokai and Maui, and the idea was promptly given up. So we sailed the windward course, and even by that met weather which dragged out to over three days a run which we had hoped to make in a little more than one. At four o'clock in the afternoon of the 16th we were off Hilo harbour, but unable to enter for lack of wind. An anchorage was finally reached at the end of a tow-line kindly passed us by the freighter, *Charles Councelman*. [376]

We remained in Hilo five days, renewing old acquaintances and allowing the crew opportunity still further to repair the ravages of that night of accursed memory in the lee of Molokai. The bay, with its mile or more of exposure to the north-east—the quarter of the prevailing wind—was as uncomfortable as ever to lie in, the yacht, without sails to steady her, rolling and pitching much of the time more violently than in the open sea. Fortunately there was no heavy weather of the kind that throws up a line of surf across the river entrance and makes it impossible to land in boats for days at a time. Hilo harbour is badly in need of extensive protective works.

Shortly before noon of the 21st of August, *Lurline* left anchorage in Hilo homeward bound for San Pedro. Close-hauled on the starboard tack to a light northeast wind, we stood out of the harbour, dipping to several steamers and sailing vessels whose crews lined up to give us good-bye cheers as we passed. Outside the wind was coming in weighty gusts, and a rumpled, squally-looking northeast seemed to give the lie to a barometer that was soaring optimistically around 30.05. The instrument had its way, however, for the squalls worked off inland in a couple of hours, leaving us with a steady E.N.E. wind and a brilliant fair-weather sky full of cottony Trade-clouds. At three o'clock, when we took departure with Alia Point bearing S.W. ¾ W., distant six miles, a course of N.N.E. was set, to be held with scarcely a quarter of a point's deviation for four days.

On the 23rd two steamers were sighted heading S.S. W., probably for Honolulu. [377] These were the first ships seen in the open sea since the sails of a bark, hull down on the horizon, were sighted a few days after leaving San Pedro, seven months previously. These three confused blurs against the skyline, all of them too distant to signal, were the nearest approach to company that *Lurline* knew during the entire cruise. Probably no other circumstance could so strikingly illustrate the utter

loneliness of the mid-Pacific. Anywhere south of Hawaii, off the tracks of the two Australian-American steamship lines, the crew of a disabled ship might float for ten years—or ten times ten years—without smoke or sail breaking the smooth line of the horizon.

Early in the morning of the 25th the watch reported a lunar rainbow, and all hands, fore and aft, tumbled out on deck to view the unusual phenomenon. The full moon was shining brightly from a clear sky to the southwest, having sunk to about thirty degrees from the horizon. Up to the northeast a fluffy bank of dove-grey clouds were heaped half-way to the zenith, and against this, an unbroken arch of mother-of-pearl, the rainbow stood clearly forth. From red to violet, all the colours of the spectrum were there just as in a solar rainbow, yet shining with a light elusive and unearthly where the spectral hands that fashioned it had woven a warp of moonshine into the woof of the blended iridesence. Twice it faded and reappeared before dissolving for the last time in the first flush of a sparkling daisy and daffodil sunrise.

For some days after leaving Hilo the wind held steadily from the northeast, forcing us several points to the north of a direct course to San Pedro. Crowded close on the [378] wind all the time, the yacht made slow headway, averaging but little better than 120 miles a day. On the 26th, however, the wind veered to southeast, and on the three days that it remained in that quarter runs of 143, 188 and 176 miles, respectively, were registered. This was followed by a spell of calm, and that by a succession of days of varying, uncertain weather and head-winds, which held all the way to San Pedro. Most of this latter period the wind was moderate and the sea light, as is evidenced by the fact that both fore and main gafftopsails were carried, day and night, from the afternoon of August 24th to the morning of September 4th, ten and a half days.

In the evening of September 3rd, at about Lat. 34° north, Long. 133° west, we encountered our first fog, and from that time on were hampered more or less by thick weather all the way to port, which we reached a week later. The brilliant tropical days of sunshine and squalls succeeded to dull temperate days of much cloudiness and little wind and rain. Some days the fog was high and troublesome only in making observations impossible; on others it settled down close to the sea in banks so dense that the main truck was not visible from the deck. On these latter occasions, though it was not likely that there was another ship within 500 miles, prudence had the call and our little hand-cranked fog-horn—the same that had figured in the revels of our guests the night that the yacht nearly went on the rocks of Oahu—was kept incessantly at work.

Between fogs and light and baffling winds, our progress for the latter half of this traverse was slower than for any other similar period of the voyage. On but three of [379] the last nine days did the yacht log over 100 miles, these being the 4th of September, 153 miles, and the 8th, 150 miles. The runs for the other five days were twenty-six, forty-six, forty-seven, eighty-seven, and sixty-seven miles, respectively. The winds, for the most part, were northeasterly, but the comparatively good run of the 8th was made with a very light but steady breeze from the west.

Several land birds came aboard on the morning of the 10th, and not long afterward the brown slopes of Santa Rosa Island took shape through the lifting fog. The heavens were overcast all day, but for a brief space in the afternoon a long strip of cloud ran back across the east like a sliding door, and through the rift we had a brief glimpse of the rugged Sierra Madres, a hundred miles distant, standing sharp and distinct in a flood of sunshine against a vivid background of California sky.

Doing the best we could with puffs of wind that came by turn from all points of the compass, we crept along at three or four miles an hour until midnight. Then it fell dead calm, and during the next eight hours the log recorded but a single mile. This was broken by a light westerly breeze and before it, wing-and-wing, we went groping in through the fog, watching for a land-fall that would give us our position. This appeared at noon, when the familiar cliffs of Point Vicente began showing in dark brown patches through the thinning mist off the port bow, distant about five miles. Three hours later the Commodore was able to close the log of *Lurline* with the following entry:

[380]

> *September 11th, three P. M.—"Anchored near our old mooring in San Pedro outer harbour, having been away seven months and seven days, travelling 13,500 miles without accident or serious trouble."*

THE END

FOOTNOTES:

[1] I have left the three preceding paragraphs as originally written. The presence of a man of Dr. Solf's outstanding ability in such comparatively unimportant possessions as the German Samoas has always been a good deal of a puzzle to me, though a possible reason for it was suggested by a remark dropped by Frederick William, the late Crown Prince, whom I met in the course of his visit to India in the

autumn of 1911.

"Perhaps Apia is not so unimportant to us as you may think," he blurted out impatiently when I told him it had always seemed strange to me that Germany had kept a man of Cabinet calibre (Solf had recently been recalled to Berlin to become Colonial Secretary) for a decade in a colony which appeared to have but the slightest of political and commercial prospects. "Or, at least, we are hopeful of developing a considerable trade there in time," he added somewhat confusedly, as though his first hasty words might have implied more than he intended.

But there is little doubt that that inadvertent implication pointed to the truth. The Samoas, at the crossroads of the Southern Seas, may well have been intended to become the seat of the German Pacific insular empire when *Deutschland Ueber Alles* had become an accomplished fact in the rest of the world. It is easy to understand how the Junkers of the Pan-German party may have deemed the blazing the way for such a consummation a task not too small for the powers of the suave and diplomatic Solf. The latter's broad humanitarianism (in which I have never ceased to believe) can have had nothing to do with his appointment. He was the only German colonial official I ever met who appeared to have anything approaching the interest in the welfare of the native population under him which one expects as a matter of course in the Briton or American occupying a similar position.

Dr. Solf's later record will be readily recalled. Holding one or another Cabinet portfolios during all of the war, he was Foreign Minister at the time of the signing of the Armistice. At the present moment he is being prominently mentioned as the first after-the-war Ambassador to Washington. I can think of no one of his countrymen so likely to fill acceptably what at best must be an incalculably trying post.

L. R. F.

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