

ISLANDS FAR AWAY

AGNES GARDNER KING





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ISLANDS FAR AWAY.



"ONE SPECIALLY ATTRACTIVE LITTLE MITE."

(See p. 51).

ISLANDS FAR AWAY

Fijian Pictures with Pen and Brush

BY

AGNES GARDNER KING

WITH AN

INTRODUCTION BY SIR EVERARD IM THURN,

K.C.M.G., K.B.E., C.B.

*Governor of Fiji and High Commissioner of the Western Pacific,
1904-1910.*

ILLUSTRATED

*with eighty reproductions of Drawings by the Author
and two maps.*

SECOND EDITION.

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1921

DEDICATED
TO MY DEAR BROTHER,
TO WHOM THE ORIGINAL LETTERS WERE WRITTEN
UPON WHICH THE BOOK IS FOUNDED.

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1921

PREFACE.

My visit to Fiji worked such wonders for me, in filling my mind with interest and giving me a new outlook on life, that I long to bestow a little of the benefit of my trip upon others, who may be circumstanced much as I was but who cannot have the same advantages. It is in this spirit that the book has been written, and if it brings a little brightness, and mental rest and refreshment to even a few, I shall feel richly rewarded.

I should like to take this opportunity of offering my sincere thanks to Sir Everard im Thurn, without whose kind encouragement I should never have ventured to launch my little craft, and whose sympathetic assistance all through has been invaluable. I have particular cause to be grateful to him for the generous way in which he put his unique Pacific library at my disposal, and for supplying the very interesting introduction and glossary.

My especial thanks are also due to all the kind residents in Fiji who made a stranger so welcome, and who patiently answered my many questions, furnishing me with an immense amount of interesting information ; and who grudged neither time nor trouble to make my stay pleasant and help me on my way.

AGNES GARDNER KING.

HARTWELL, WROXHAM.

August, 1920.

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PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

It is a great pleasure to me to bring out a second edition of "Islands Far Away," and I hope it may meet with as kind a reception as did the first.

I am very glad to find that the book has been appreciated by those for whom it was more especially written, and that it has brought a little refreshment to many who were sick or sad, letting a ray of light in through closed doors and drawn blinds; and I am perhaps equally pleased to learn of the delight young people and children have taken in it.

In the new edition there are a few more pictures; and great care has been taken to select paper better adapted to the drawings, both pen and wash, and not less suitable for the letterpress, than that on which the first edition was printed. The paper for this edition has been specially manufactured, and I am indebted to my publisher for the great trouble he has taken in the matter.

All who have been interested in the book will be sorry to hear of the death of Ratu Joni Mandraiwiwi on the 13th of last December. To me the news came as a shock, and I felt that I had lost a real personal friend. Never have I met a more lovable man, and certainly he was, as the *Fiji Times* said of him, at the time of his death, "a great Fijian and a noble gentleman." To quote further from the same paper:—"Ratu Joni Mandraiwiwi, in his official career, equally in his private life, furnished a splendid example of the inherent high

qualities of the Fijian race. Highly educated, and animated by the highest principles of right and honour, he always performed his duties, especially those associated with the administration of his provinces, to the entire satisfaction of the Government. He was held in the highest esteem by all classes of the European population of Fiji. His name throughout Fiji is a synonym for rectitude of purpose and high endeavour.”

During the few years that have elapsed since I was in Fiji, death has been busy and has carried off a great many of those to whom I am indebted for the main pleasure and interest of that time—Ratu Kindavu Levu, Ratu Joni Mandraiwiwi, Ratu Saimoni Dombui, the King and Queen of Tonga, and Mr. Frank Spence have all gone. I hope that my humble narrative may serve in a measure to preserve for future generations a little of what has passed and is passing so quickly away.

AGNES GARDNER KING.

April, 1921.

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INTRODUCTION.

ANTONIO. Tell me, Panthino, what sad talk was that
Wherewith my brother held you in the cloisters ?
PANTHINO. T'was of his nephew, Proteus, your son.
ANTONIO. Why, what of him ?
PANTHINO. He wondered that your lordship,
While other men, of slender reputation,
Put forth their sons to seek preferment out :
Some to the wars, to try their fortunes there :
Some to discover islands far away

THE age of romance was not as nearly dead, even before the crash of war so thoroughly reawakened it, as some were inclined to think. In 1912, Miss Gardner King, the writer and illustrator of this book, needing rest and recreation, after a period of great bodily and mental strain, left her pleasant Norfolk home to seek refreshment, not, indeed, in discovering islands far away, but in a visit, certainly for her adventurous, to certain antipodean islands, situate where the sun sets exactly when here in England it rises and where it is winter when with us it is summer, and, above all, where western civilization has not yet repressed the natural flourish of an elaborate native culture, which, in the isolation of that then unknown sea, had developed far before Europeans first ventured into those parts, and where, not yet fifty years ago, the British had, almost reluctantly and with hesitation, taken on themselves the task of pruning, with as little disturbance as might be, the indigenous culture.

The social condition of the natives of the Fiji Islands, which were the bourne to which Miss King went, is peculiar, not only in itself but also in relation to the Europeans and others who have intruded among them.

The islands were first seen by European eyes as long ago as 1643, when Tasman and his companions one morning just discerned through the mist an islet or two, which were long

after identified as belonging to the Fiji group. Nothing further was seen of these till, in 1774, Captain Cook discovered another Fijian island, and even sent some of his crew ashore there, but there was no intercourse with the natives on that occasion; and three years later (in 1777) Captain Cook, on one of his visits to the Tongan or Friendly Islands, there met some Fijians, and heard much from his Tongan hosts of their dreaded Fijian neighbours, and of the richness of the islands from which they came. Again a few years later, Captain Bligh and his companions in misfortune, when cast adrift by the mutineers of the *Bounty*, passed through the group; and before the end of that century, two or three other ships sighted these islands, but without landing or communicating with the Fijians.* whose reputation for ferocity and inhospitality, gathered from the Tongans, was discouraging.

In the first week of the nineteenth century the small schooner *Argo* was wrecked on an outlying reef of the group.† The crew were not inhospitably received by the astonished natives of these parts, who had never before seen or heard of such white skinned animals, with such strange clothes, and such powerful and seemingly magical weapons. Some of these wrecked sailors lived for a time among those Fijians, still kindly treated as long as they behaved themselves. They wandered from island to island, or were deliberately taken by the Fijians; and some of them eventually seem to have reached Mbuā and Mbau, where the higher Chiefs lived. For the Fijians were found even by that time to have developed a social order and a culture of their own—in many ways admirable: in some ways, and these naturally the most conspicuous to the wrecked sailors, abominable, at least from an abstract moral point of view.

The consequences of this earliest intrusion of Europeans into Fiji present material for a hitherto unwritten chapter in the history of Fiji and of Australasia generally. One of the survivors from the wreck of the *Argo*, Oliver Slater by name, after wandering among the natives for some twenty-two

* See end of Introduction, p. xxxii.

† The date, 1806, hitherto given as that of the wreck of the *Argo*, from the time of Arrowsmith, in 1814, to the latest edition (1918) of our Admiralty Sailing Directions, is erroneous; the true date is as above.

months, was picked up by a passing vessel and carried to Port Jackson, whence he made his way to the Far East. In both places he spread the story of the sandalwood which he had seen in his wanderings in Fiji, and also, it would appear, spoke, from personal experience, of the better qualities of the Fijians as well as of their readiness in attack on any hostile visitors. His story interested certain Americans who were then actively trading between the New England ports and the Chinese markets of Canton, where sandalwood was an article very much in demand; and these American traders were induced to send the first ship, the *Fair American*, to Fiji for sandalwood.* Meanwhile Captain Bligh, previously of the *Bounty* but at that time Governor of the settlement at Port Jackson, was also fully alive to the importance of the discovery, wherein he foresaw the possibility of getting the then much needed valuable commodity for export from the young and as yet unproductive settlement under his charge. British and American competitors, however, alike fully appreciated the risk, as well as the possible profit, in the contemplated intercourse with a till then unknown people as fierce, bold and independent as the Fijians had hitherto been reported to be; and care was consequently taken to arm the ships with an unusual number of guns.

However, keen competition for Fijian sandalwood took place; and between 1804 and 1816, by which latter date the stock of the wood had been exhausted, a succession of sandalwood ships, English and American, was continuously at anchor in and about the one then known harbour of Fiji, that of Mbua in the island then known as Pau.†

At first the white traders were hospitably welcomed by the Chiefs whom they found in Fiji, especially by the Chief of

* Slater returned to Port Jackson in the *Fair American*, and thence reached Fiji in the Colonial vessel *Marcia*; and he was either continuously or at least frequently in the Islands till 1816, when, while taking part in the last serious attempt to get a cargo of sandalwood from these Islands, he was killed by the natives of Makongai.

† Pau, then also known as "Sandalwood Island," is that which is now called Vanua Levu, and must be carefully distinguished (as has not always been the case) from Mbau (=Bau) or Ambow as it was called by the earlier European visitors. Mbau attained its subsequent importance at a somewhat later date.

Mbua, and consequently by the native followers of these Chiefs. Before long, however, the traders became impatient at what seemed to them the dilatory ways of the Fijians. The last named were ready enough to let the white men have the wood, for which they themselves had little use except as "a toilet requisite," but did not care for the trouble of collecting it for their visitors, especially when the trees, which grew only within a limited area, became scarce; and they resented the attempts of the white men to expedite the business by use of force. Naturally the Fijians, before the superior skill and superior weapons of the white men had the worst of it, but yet succeeded in inflicting considerable loss on their new friends who had already become enemies. Had the supply of sandalwood lasted, European vessels might have continued to visit the islands; but the trees had never been abundant and were soon exhausted; and the trade passed to other islands in the Pacific, where further supplies of the wood had been discovered, and Fiji was for a good many years thereafter avoided by European ships—except for an occasional American trading for *bêche-de-mer*, also intended, as had been the sandalwood, for the Chinese market.

The temporary presence of the many sandalwooders can, of course, not have been without effect on the Fijians of those days, who, before the white men came among them, had lived, as above indicated, a social life of their own. There had been many more or less small groups, each of which, under its own Chief or Chiefs, occupied as much ground as it could, under a strict and effective—and on the whole not unwholesome—club-law. Intertribal warfare between the many small 'states' (it is difficult to know what else to call them) must have been fairly common; but as long as the contending parties had been all natives—as long—that is—as each side had the same weapons and the same means of offence and defence, it was only, as it were, a fair struggle for existence—it was only a rough, to the native not unpleasantly rough, game. But when the white men, with their guns and other weapons, and their superior cunning, came into the fight, on the one side or the other, they obviously brought to the side of their adoption a very unfair advantage, generally with the

result that the other side was annihilated—and always that the game of war became much embittered, and the manners of the natives not improved.

Before the white men came cannibalism had, no doubt, been practised, though probably only to the extent that the bodies of those killed in fair fight were eaten. But the increase, due to the white men, in the frequency and severity of the fighting naturally not only increased the number of the slain but this in turn led, under the spur of really savage emulation, to a frantic desire on the part of the Chiefs and leaders to mark their power by the number of the victims they had eaten, and, when there were no bodies of slain enemies to be eaten, to get the horrible fodder from any other available source.

The discontinuance of the visits of the sandalwood ships to Fiji did not entirely clear the islands of Europeans. A few of those who had come with the ships, generally not those of best character, remained on, at first under the protection, and more or less as the humble allies of these Chiefs, and rather strengthened than decreased the evil influence which had been introduced into this society of nature-folk.

But as long as it was only a case of a few individual white men living as refugees and under the protection of one or other of the Chiefs, the social state of the Fijians—supported by club-law—was not essentially affected. It was only when the white settler began to have interests of his own, apart from, often adverse to, those of his former native patron : only when these white men's interest began to acquire support (against the Chief) either by the Europeans uniting for mutual support or—a much more important factor in the case—when the sovereign power to which these owed allegiance supported the white settlers—'through thick and thin'—against the native Chiefs : that the power of the latter began to wane, and that, as was inevitable, the native social organisation became shaken.

By 1870 a very curious condition had arisen in Fiji. The Chiefs nominally maintained their authority and the native social system at the head of which they were supposed to be ; but in the same islands the European settlers, by that time fairly numerous, had created at least the semblance of another social system, more or less modelled on that under which they

had been born, but, still more, in accordance with whatever they thought to be their own interests. And the two systems naturally clashed.

Then followed a curious phase, in which the white man and the Native Chief joined to form a 'Kingdom of Fiji,' with Thakombau—the so-called King of Fiji, really the Chief of the comparatively small part of Fiji under the influence of the tiny island of Mbau—as crowned king, and with a Government and Parliament composed of the other great Chiefs and of the European settlers—mainly the last named.

Something similar had happened in some of the other island groups of the South Seas—for instance in the Friendly or Tongan Islands. But in Fiji only had it happened in such a way that, the several independent Chiefs not being able to agree among themselves, and no one of them being able to attain real supremacy over the others, the preponderance of power rested with the white settlers—though these also were not a united body and though they were not at all actively supported by the Power to which most of them owed allegiance, *i.e.* the British. Consequently the unfortunate Thakombau Rex and his fellow Chiefs, found the difficulties of their position insupportable; and Thakombau—as *primus inter pares* of the Chiefs—ceded the Islands not to the British Crown but, as they intended, to Queen Victoria personally, or rather to that abstraction of benevolence and almost divine power into which rumour had transformed that great but very human Lady.

Commissioners were sent to report; and after careful investigation on the spot Commodore Goodenough and Consul Layard reported, primarily on the then state of the Fijians and, incidentally, on the relations of these with the Europeans of several nationalities, but chiefly British, who had settled among them and had in more or less legitimate ways acquired quasi-titles to native land. It was an able report, and even yet deserves more consideration than it has ever received. Sir Hercules Robinson (afterwards Lord Rosmead), then Governor of New South Wales, formally accepted the cession of the islands *to the British Crown*; and in the following year (1875) Sir Arthur Gordon (afterwards Lord Stanmore) took up his appointment as first Governor of Fiji, and at once set

himself the almost impossible task of preserving a native community intact within the limits of a British Crown Colony, as it were a mechanical rather than a chemical mixture.

The conditions with which Sir Arthur had to deal were certainly difficult and peculiar. He had to think and act for two widely different classes of people, living side by side, in a few small and remote islands, then almost infinitely further removed from headquarters than they now are. It was almost inevitable that he should attach greater importance to the interests of one or other of these classes; and he made the interests and rights of the Fijians his first object rather than those of the European population which had come fortuitously together in the islands during the seventy-five years which had elapsed since the wreck of the *Argo*.

The Fijians still retained most of their own ideas and customs, though these were already much obscured under the teaching of the missionaries, and they retained intact their original social system, at the head of which were their own hereditary Chiefs. Such was the community which Sir Arthur Gordon set himself strenuously to graft on to the British Empire with as little disturbance as possible of the native system. To effect his purpose he devised a set of "Native Regulations," which were intended to codify and legalize the better part of native custom as it existed at that moment.

The creation of an enclave in which natives should live according to their own ideas, or rather according to the ideas which their folk held at one particular moment in their history, and should develop the land to something like the same fullness as would have been possible under the western system of civilisation, was a fine idea—which has attracted, and misled, other enthusiasts before Sir Arthur Gordon—but did not allow for the fact that if the islands were to be developed to the utmost possibility as a British Colony, and were to pay their way, the encouragement of Europeans was essential for the commercial development of the place.

It was not long before Gordon himself had to encourage the start of the European enterprise of sugar-growing—thereby laying the foundation of the economical prosperity of Fiji; but even this was to be done in strict subordination to the

supposed rights of the Fijians, as the supposed owners of the greater part of the new land which it was necessary to take in for this new industry. Moreover, as the Fijians abstained from taking adequately active part in this new industry, the Governor had not only to regulate the already existing practices of bringing 'Polynesian labour' (from other Pacific Island groups) but had further to introduce East Indians into Fiji as indentured labourers.

Incidentally, it may be noted that in the forty-four years which have elapsed since Sir Arthur Gordon went to Fiji as governor, these new classes of residents thus introduced have never in any way tended to amalgamate with the Fijians, who remain apart in their own, often remote, villages; and at best furnish a few temporary hands for coconut cultivation and similar congenial jobs—always of a temporary character.

However, the result of all this has been that, as Miss King saw, the Fijians live—one might almost say vegetate—apart from the other communities, with much of the more harmless part of the ideas which their forefathers held, prevented, by the 'Native Regulations,' from developing even along the lines which would have been followed by their forefathers, had they been left to their own devices, and prevented by the "privileges" secured to them by British law from sharing whatever may be the real advantages of full British citizenship.

A few Fijians, it is true, have found their way, almost by chance, into the outskirts of the European community, but most of them live lives apart in their own villages, constrained by the regulations which have been imposed on them from doing what, in our judgment, it would be distinctly wrong for them to do, but, for the rest, constrained also to do exactly as their ancestors did, even though the few more enlightened among them may see that these ways are obsolete.

These remote Fijians were the folk among whom Miss King spent most of her time, and in whom she certainly found her chief interest. She saw, it may probably safely be said, more of them in their own homes than any other entirely unprejudiced European who has been among them. She went, not to advance her own interests (unless those of her health), not even to make a book—for her present book is entirely an

afterthought. It is true that she laboured under the disadvantage of ignorance of the language; but she had with her as companion a lady who had been brought up among Fijians from early childhood and was in thorough sympathy with these folk. Miss King's own sympathy with these folk is apparent in everything which she has here written—as is also the fact that the qualifications with which she started on this the one great adventure of her life, her power of expression with pen and pencil, were quite exceptional. Even more exceptional, from both a technical and artistic point of view, is her power of drawing the scenery and people that she saw.

So truly do the illustrations as a whole show things seen in Fiji, that it would be a matter of some difficulty to select any for special notice. But to me—feeling as I do towards Fiji—I can never look at the drawing of the sea approach to Lambasa (page 189) without a longing to be back early some morning in a boat off that rocky palm-clad coast; and the 'Tropic Bird' (page 205), shown alone on the face of the waters, brings up to me a crowd of memories, of the desolate, but pleasant, quiet spaces of the Pacific at rest, and, by association, of a certain ride, on a sunny but wind-cooled midday, along the top of the cliff in which the northern face of the Island of Vavau ends, of a glance through palms and ferns and other greenery on to the sea at the base of the cliff, and of a single tropic-bird floating lightly on the haze which lay along the face of the cliff between me and the waters of the sea. Again Miss King's *mata-ni-ranua* (page 174) still actually speaks to me, as many a one of these Fijian heralds has done, and presents his ceremonial gift of a whale's-tooth; and the cup-bearer (page 133)—a drawing for which all anthropologists should be grateful—once more presents his 'yangona,'—Robert Louis Stevenson's 'kava,'—to refresh me, as no other 'pick-me-up' has ever done.

But there is another aspect of Miss King's story which should be especially noted. She was in Fiji before the war; and her account of the quiet and uneventful life of the Fijians in their own homes seems to have gained additional interest to those who know what these folk did when the European war broke over the world.

In the autumn of 1914, the Fiji islands, distant as they are from the place where the war-cloud broke, were, in common with the other Pacific Islands, in a not uninteresting position on the battlefield of the world. The German Pacific squadron was known to be cruising somewhere away from its own base (which was in German New Guinea), and was believed to have been assigned the duty of playing its part in the war by attacking one or other of the British or French possessions in those parts, most of which were practically in an undefended condition. Fiji as the richest—and as undefended as any of the others—naturally supposed itself especially liable to attack; and, despite the fact that all the white folk who could possibly get away, rushed across to Europe, every effort was made to improvise defences. The Natives were at least as eager and anxious to help as any other class of the population; it was comparatively easy to keep them in the islands for home defence, though it was by no means their own wish not to repair to the 'homeland,' as they too had come to regard England, for service there; but they poured out their money, to an astonishing extent, and helped in every other possible way. And as soon as volunteers had been called for, for a native labour corps to go 'home,' the response was so great that selection was the only difficulty. And those who were selected, distinguished themselves, according to the military authorities under whom they served at home, not only as the best workers of any body of natives that came home, but also as the best behaved, and the most amenable to discipline.

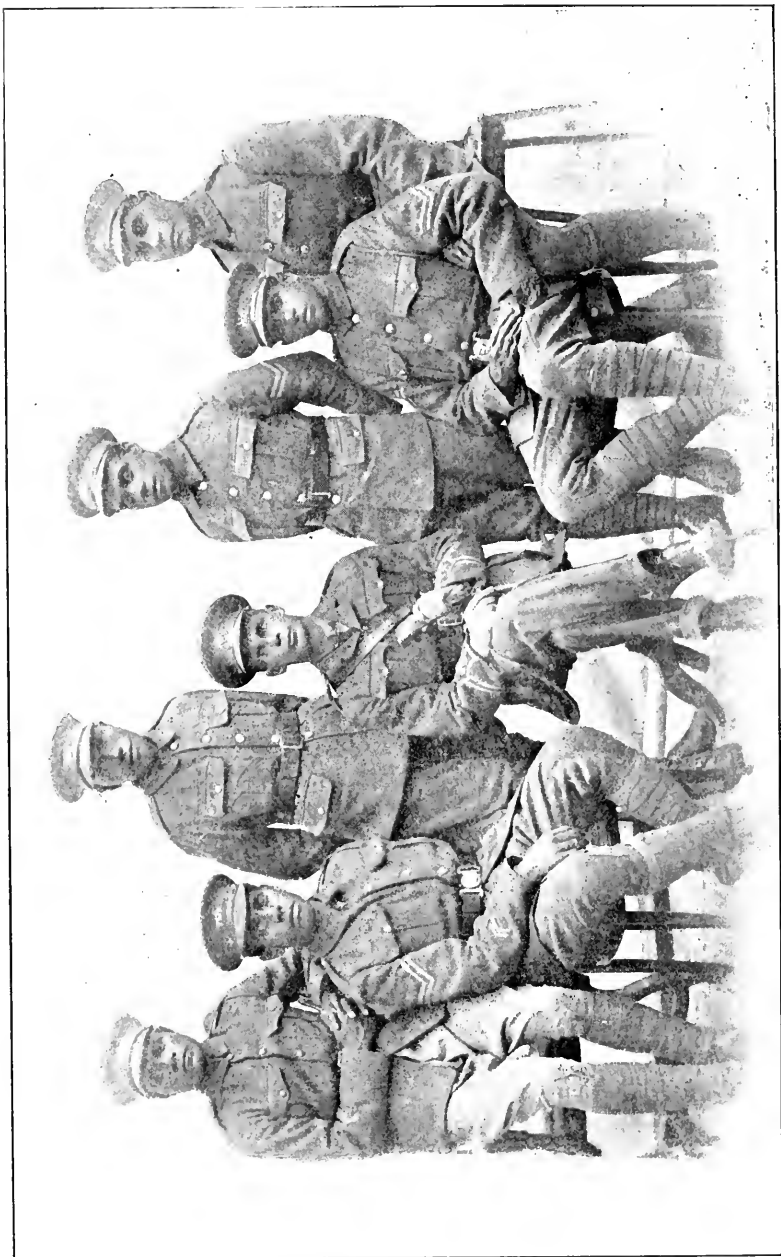
It is true that some part of the success of the Fiji Labour Corps must be attributed to the officers who came from the islands in charge of these men: to Captain Kenneth Allardyce, who, as Native Commissioner in Fiji, had learned to know and sympathize with the Fijians: to Lieutenant Frank Williams (the brother of Mrs. Hopkins, to whom Miss King makes more than one reference, and who has long since earned a just reputation as the best and most sympathetic manager of Fijian labour), and to Ratu Sukuna, to whom also Miss King makes frequent reference, and as to whom I shall have more to say presently. Had the Fijian Labour Corps been placed on arrival



Q.-M.-S. Ratu J. L. V. Sukuna. Capt. K. J. Allardyce. Pte. Saula Moku (Taulevu).
Pte. Kalamboša Naqesa (Mba). Pte. Ihiesa Lala (Mbua).
Cpl. Ratu G. W. Lala (Somosomo). Cpl. Ratu Jalé Tholata (Kandavub). Pte. Alosio Tolevu (Lomaiviti).

MEMBERS OF THE FIJI LABOUR CORPS.

(From photograph taken as they passed through Honolulu on the way to England).



Pte. Ilicsa Lala.

Pte. Mosesé Buandromo.

Cpl. Ratu Jale Tholata.

Pte. Ratu Kinivilliamé Vitukawala.

Cpl. Ratu G. W. Lala.

Capt K. J. Allardyce.

Cpl. Ratu Isereli Tawaké.

MEMBERS OF THE FIJI LABOUR CORPS.

(Photographed while on leave from service in Italy).

at home under the orders of officers not thoroughly acquainted and sympathetic with these strangers from a far land, the effectiveness of the corps would certainly not have been as great as it has been. But even making due allowance for this exceptional advantage, very great credit indeed must be given to these natives who rendered us such good service during the latter part of the war.

Two illustrations which I am able here to give are interesting as showing the difference in appearance between these Fijians as they were when they left their native islands for England and as they appeared when wearing the uniform of the King's Labour Corps. It happened that the whole of the men were photographed, with extraordinary success, as they passed through Honolulu on their way to England; it happened also that six of these Fijians, with Captain Allardyce, were photographed when they were on leave in England from France. The six men in the London photograph were picked out from the larger Honolulu group and very carefully and successfully drawn by Miss King. A comparison of the two pictures cannot fail to be interesting.

It will be noticed that in Miss King's picture a seventh Fijian is shown. The additional man is Ratu Sukuna, above mentioned. This young Fijian Chief's special war service is quite worthy of special mention. He happened to be in England, as an Oxford undergraduate, when the war broke out; and, as might have been expected, was as keen to do what he could to help as almost every other British subject wherever he might happen to have been born. Unfortunately he could not get any English regiment to accept his services. He therefore slipped over to France—without asking leave from those under whose authority he was while in England. In France he joined, and served with the French Foreign Legion. It happens that he is one of the few remaining Fijian Chiefs of high rank who are qualified to take a leading part in the administration of native affairs; and the Colonial Government, short-handed as it then was, was anxious to get him back to the islands. At the request of the War Office the French Military Authorities, somewhat reluctantly, consented to let him go—if he himself wished it.

He certainly did not wish it ; but after a time, having been seriously wounded and long ill in a Lyons hospital, he was persuaded to apply for his own discharge. He returned to Fiji ; but before very long he came over again, as one of the Officers in charge of the Fiji Labour Corps, and, as has been above mentioned, served with that body. It seems only right to add, that after returning a second time to Fiji with the Labour Corps, he came back once more, resumed his place in his Oxford College (Wadham), graduated as B.A., and at once began to read for a B.C.L. degree.

Doubtless the effect of the war has been great—more or less great—upon almost every individual who was alive when the cataclysm broke over the World ; but in few cases can it have been greater than in that of the Fijians who served in the war, and of these on none more than on the young Fijian Chief, Ratu Sukuna, whose typically Fijian external aspect is shown in the illustration opposite page xxvi, while the following extracts from two of his letters, addressed either to Miss King or myself, while serving with the Foreign Legion in France illustrate, in strangely strong contrast, the Europeanized side of his character.

Both of the letters here quoted from are of the same date (February 24th, 1915). To Miss King he writes : “ I am grateful for your kind letter and thoughts and also for your cordial offer of help. . . . It will be delightful to come to Hartwell again after this terrible affair and to battle at the more peaceful game of croquet. Many thanks for all you are doing for me. The shirt and socks will be extremely useful as it is still quite cold, though I am getting more or less used to it. On these conditions of hard work on a diet that one is totally unaccustomed to, cakes and jam are the most welcome things a man can get. . . . I have been up at the Front since 4th February—life here is fairly strenuous. They work the Legion quite hard, and the fare is not over excellent ; but still I am very glad to be in it and would not have missed it for a good deal. My first experience of being under fire was under heavy shrapnel fire. One shell burst within twenty feet of a kitchen I was cooking in, wounding two of our fellows. We had to leave the vicinity immediately, as shells

were dropping all round, and had to leave our food which was the most annoying feature of it all. Eventually, when the fire had died down, I was able to rescue our breakfast. Just at present we are having a rest here in a small village, after a spell in the trenches. Guard work in the trenches at night is somewhat tiring, but one makes up for it in the daytime by having several hours' rest. So far there has been no excitement, only continual rifle fire, and occasionally shells from the German smaller guns, which for the most part do not burst. The life seems to agree with me quite well; I have rarely felt fitter. We go back to the trenches to-morrow night. My last post there was within fifty yards of the advance German trenches, and at night one could distinctly hear them chopping wood."

To me he wrote :—" I was extremely glad to get your kind letter and enclosures. I am much distressed by the sad news of Ratu Kandavu Levu's death. He was, as you know, our highest Chief, and there were hopes, since he married, that he might yet do good work among his people. In spite of all his short-comings he still retained, I believe, more influence over the masses in Fiji than any other living Fijian. Officially his death will remove many administration difficulties in the Province of Tai Levu. I am grateful to you for the things you sent. The food and tobacco were very welcome, and the sleeping-bag—I have only been able to use it twice—is extremely comfortable and warm. The night before last there was a very cold snap and people shivered all night. I rested perfectly all night and was surprised to hear that it had been so cold. I have just been given a letter from Miss King, while yesterday Mrs. A's 'tucker box' arrived; just for the present I am living quite a luxurious life. Everything seems so strange here. As I write heavy rifle fire is taking place on our right, while away to the left French guns are roaring away at the Germans. My baptism of fire was anything but pleasant and occurred about two weeks ago. French guns had begun a violent fire early in the morning, and about 10 a.m. the Germans replied; but instead of firing on the batteries they shelled our headquarters. The very first shell struck the house in which my squad was quartered. I was

in the kitchen at the time, cooking potatoes. The shell burst about twenty feet away, wounding two men and completely wrecking the house with the exception of the kitchen, which happens to be slightly detached from the main building. The fire lasted till 3 p.m., and in the meantime our squad was ordered off to another part of the village. The General's Headquarters, which was within a few doors of our place was completely wrecked. We were again heavily bombarded next day and had several casualties. We took our turn at the trenches six days ago. The American, Farnsworth, and I were with the people who occupied the French advanced trench, fifty yards from the Germans holding a semicircular position on our left point. We were ineffectively shelled twice, but there was continuous rifle fire. After the ordeal at Headquarters one hardly notices rifle fire and I had none of the half excited, half settled feeling that seized me at the last place. Trench work is distinctly bad for the temper, and one gets so little sleep, and by the time 'the relief' comes round one is almost stiff with the cold and the crouching position one is forced to take up. But once in the rest trenches, one is apt to forget all one's troubles; enormous coal fires, which are impossible to get elsewhere, and hot tea and rum are an excellent tonic for 'trench' moods. We left the trenches two days ago for a spell at out-post duty, after four days of which we again go up into the first line. The regiment has, I believe, been fighting continuously for the last three months and it is now due for a rest and a refit, as it has been selected to take part in the bigger operations yet to come, whenever that may be. There are all sorts and conditions of men in the Regiment, and the character of some of the old Legionaries would deserve a chapter in any book. One man we had in our squad, a really excellent kind-hearted old gentleman, was an expert thief and stole for us at the expense of the other squads and companies. He had a wonderful stock of knowledge for avoiding work and escaping all punishment, and when in trouble he was really most useful. Unfortunately the old gentleman took a liking for a clothes' brush of mine and when he was transferred to the French Army Service Corps the brush also was transferred to the same corps, but

withal secretly. I get on excellently ; and Farnsworth and I have become close friends. This morning in the trenches I was telling people in my broken French the things I had lost in the trenches. Amongst them was a pipe. A Russian near me pulled out a pipe, old and not over-clean, and offered to lend it to me whenever I wanted to smoke. I hesitated and he pressed, and to avoid being brutal I accepted warmly his kind offer."

The following is a fitting complement to the above extracts from Ratu Sukuna's letters ; it is from a letter written by one of his fellow legionaries, I believe the American referred to above :—" As the stars were paling before the oncoming dawn and the wild ducks ceased their domestic squabbles in the neighbouring marshes, my companion sentinel, a Fijian Chief who is also an Oxford undergraduate, rolled his eyes poetically towards the German trenches : ' It is really time that second tuck box arrived,' he said simply. Unpoetic, but delightful thought. There would be biscuits, peppermints, jam, English tobacco, for S—— is a generous chap and never lets his fellow-sentinel go hungry."

The ' tail-piece ' hereto annexed is a copy of a Christmas card, drawn by Miss King for me, which was sent to every Fijian then serving, with their Christmas dinner for 1917. It is a most life-like representation of the ' piece de resistance ' served at every considerable Fijian feast. The legend below may be translated : " This, sir, is my little feast for you at Christmas."

E. IM T.



© GO SARA NA NODU MAGITI KALAI
VEI NEMUNI E NA SIGA NI SUCU

NOTE TO SECOND EDITION.

I should like slightly to modify my statement that the few ships which had passed through the Islands before the wreck of the *Argo* in 1800 had done so “without landing or communicating with the natives.” The writer of a review in the *Sydney Morning Herald* points out that Mrs. Marriott, in her recently published “Captain Bligh’s Second Voyage to the South Sea,” states that in 1792 Bligh had examined the Islands closely and had had dealings with the natives, and that therefore it is not quite accurate to say that “our first practical knowledge of Fiji dates from the wreck of the *Argo* in 1800.” As a matter of fact I have long been acquainted with Lieut. Tobin’s Journal of the ‘second voyage,’ and those of others of his messmates; but I had not actually seen Bligh’s own account, and I am indebted to Mrs. Marriott for a much clearer understanding of what Bligh actually did in Fiji in 1792. It is clear that neither Bligh nor any of his men set foot on any Fijian shore, and that they communicated with the natives only to the extent that on two occasions they questioned the natives who came out in their canoes to the ships (once indeed the natives got on board the ships). Neither party understood the language of the other, and there was no one present to interpret. For the rest, the only other knowledge which the visitors got of the Islanders was what they saw, from on board the ships, of the natives’ houses and plantations.

Bligh was naturally interested in the Islands, then called “Bligh’s Islands” and, as Mrs. Marriott writes, he “had now determined to explore Fiji very thoroughly”; and he did so, as far as time and the means at his disposal allowed, but only as an hydrographer who sails along unknown shores for the purpose of getting material for a draft chart.

It may be added that, according to Sir Basil Thompson (“Voyage of the *Pandora*”), the officers and crew of the *Pandora*’s launch had—whether they used it or not is still a matter of conjecture—a better opportunity, at about the same period, of real communication, on shore, with Fijian natives.

But in none of these cases—and it is now known that other ships visited Fiji at that time—did the European visitors even land, much less remain for any appreciable time among the natives—as did, unfortunately for themselves, the crew of the *Argo*.—E. M. T.

[See page xviii.]

ISLANDS FAR AWAY.

CHAPTER I.

THE START.

A GOOD deal of surprise and interest has been caused by my going to Fiji, and I have often been asked what made me think of it. It came about in this way. "A sea voyage and a complete change": these were the doctor's orders. Atlases were got out and time tables and shipping advertisements consulted, and many plans suggested, but they did not seem to me interesting. I wanted something wild and new, something that would carry not only my body but my mind far away, and fill it with thoughts and ideas upon which it could feed long after. Fiji had always had a great attraction for me from my earliest childhood, and this was increased by meeting Mrs. Hopkins who, by the winter fire, when the frosty wind was howling outside, told of the sunny islands far away, lying in a sea of blue, in whose translucent depths, myriad fishes, gayer than butterflies, played among coral flowers, and where palm trees waved in scented breezes and a strange people lived and moved and loved. This was the place for me; and moreover Mrs. Hopkins was free at the time, and I was fortunate enough to be able to engage her as guide and companion for the trip. She had lived in Fiji from the time she was four years old till the death of her husband, who was a magistrate out there. She had travelled all over the islands, had a real affection for the inhabitants, and could speak the language like a native. It was an opportunity not to be lost, so my brother at once said, "Let it be Fiji," and set about planning every bit of my trip for me, there and back, right round the world, and he took our tickets for us, across the

Atlantic, over the Rockies, *via* Vancouver and Honolulu, and back by New Zealand, Australia and the Cape; the arrangement of our wanderings in Fiji itself being left to Mrs. Hopkins.

On the 17th of May, 1912, we started from Liverpool on the *Empress of Britain*. Our farewells had been said at the railway station in London, so we had plenty of time to acquaint ourselves with our new surroundings and to observe our fellow passengers. There was a large company on board, two thousand in all, many of them emigrants. The vessel, indeed, was quite full, not a spare corner anywhere, in first, second or third class.

I stood watching the big crowd, assembled on the wharf to catch a last sight and give a last wave to dear ones going far away, some of whom they would probably never see again in this world. They looked cheerful as English crowds always do, for we do not like to betray our feelings before others; but there must have been many an aching, anxious heart, for the *Titanic* disaster had only just happened, and we were going forth to the same seas and to meet the same perils.

Suddenly the still waters were lashed into foam, and quietly, steadily, the great vessel began to move away—we had started on our course. The crowd on the wharf serried its ranks and drew closer to the water's edge; caps and handkerchiefs were waved in the air; then with a sudden impulse the people all burst into song, and as we steamed away the tones of "Britannia Rules the Waves" became fainter, and the assembled crowd vanished in the distance. We were off, fairly off, with the unknown before us, and all that was familiar left behind.

The third class passengers looked a large company, but they were very jolly, laughing and chatting. Then a good natured man began to play an accordion, and men and girls with gay scarves and blouses were soon happily dancing, while the 'wallflowers' packed themselves close together and applauded. This went on merrily till they had to turn in for the night, and one wondered how so many could be stowed away in quarters apparently so small. On Sunday they were equally bright, but hymns took the place of the dance music. All day long they sang one hymn after another, and never seemed to tire. But

we were soon to look down upon a very different scene—the wild waves lashing the deck, dashing over everything in their fury, and even sweeping the bridge seventy-two feet above, while all those lively dancers and singers were battened down in their close quarters, suffering the miseries of sea sickness. We were in the worst gale the *Empress of Britain* had encountered for more than a year. In the darkness of the night there was something very awful in the roar of the waters and the tossing of the great steamer, especially as the bitter nip in the air told us we must be near ice. The waves hurled themselves against the vessel with a tremendous roar, like huge cannon balls, and the vessel shivered as it plunged on its course. Sometimes it almost stood on end, climbing some mighty wave, and when it mounted the crest and began to descend, we could feel by the strange sound and motion that the propeller was out of water.

At last there was one terrible moment, when we and many others thought we had struck ice. There was a wild impact with something, and a great crashing sound. The vessel shivered from stem to stern and seemed to stop for some seconds. We held our breath and waited—there was no fear, but a great sense of awe, and a feeling of being in the hands of the Almighty. In such a sea boats and life-belts would have been useless. No one could have got the boats out, and the passengers into them; and they could not have lived amid the waves, so there was nothing for it but to wait and trust. We learned afterwards that the shock had been caused by a specially large wave, which struck the vessel with tremendous force, and shattered the windows of the officers' quarters on the bridge. Our cabin was just below the bridge, so that the broken glass crashing down made a great noise over our heads.

Towards morning we encountered a snowstorm, and the vessel had to go dead slow for two hours, as nothing could be seen, and we had a careful captain who would not risk the lives of the two thousand committed to his charge, simply in order to be up to time. There was need for all his care, for when the snow cleared away we found ourselves surrounded by ice-

bergs—a wonderful and beautiful sight, which with the fresh chill of the air suggested much, calling up weird pictures of the lonely frozen seas from which our visitors had come. In spite of the biting wind I got out my sketch book, and tried to catch the spirit of the floating army around us. It was working under difficulties, the icy wind, which made white crests on the waves, fluttered the leaves of my sketch book and bit my hands till they could hardly hold the brush. But it all helped to intensify the strange feeling of the scene and lend spirit to the work. At first the skies were grey, and a recollection of the snow storm pervaded the air. Then the clouds opened and the sun came out. The icebergs had been beautiful before, but now they were glorious, and one, a great castellated mass, defied description. The intense blue of the sea threw up the snowy whiteness of its crystal domes and turrets, and on its sides where it had broken away from the parent glacier the colour was radiant and rainbow hues danced over its glittering surface. It was impossible to realise that a thing so beautiful should be a source of danger to anything or anyone; it seemed more like a fairy palace, or even a glimpse into the better world.

All day long we watched the trooping of the icebergs, and I think there were not a few on board who, as Newfoundland hove in sight, were glad to realise that land was not far off and that we were no longer out on the open sea. As we neared the beautiful harbour of Quebec, the sun sank in a glory of orange and gold which I have never seen surpassed.

Late in the evening, when we glided up to the pier, we knew that we had passed through many perils and were safe and we lay down to rest that night with hearts full of thankfulness to the good captain who had guided us safely through, and to the Great God who had held us in the hollow of His hand.

CHAPTER II.

THE SANDWICH ISLANDS.

ON the 12th of June the *Makura* was to call at Victoria, British Columbia, and carry us to "Islands far Away," so we had only eighteen days to cross Canada. It gave just time to alight here and there and glance at places familiar from childhood, though seen now for the first time.

We peeped at the big cities in passing, listened to the roar of Niagara, gazed at the eternal snows of the jagged Rocky Mountains and finally we saw the pretty houses and smiling gardens of Victoria, where the late Sir Richard McBride did all in his power to make our stay pleasant. Then we were off on the mighty ocean again.

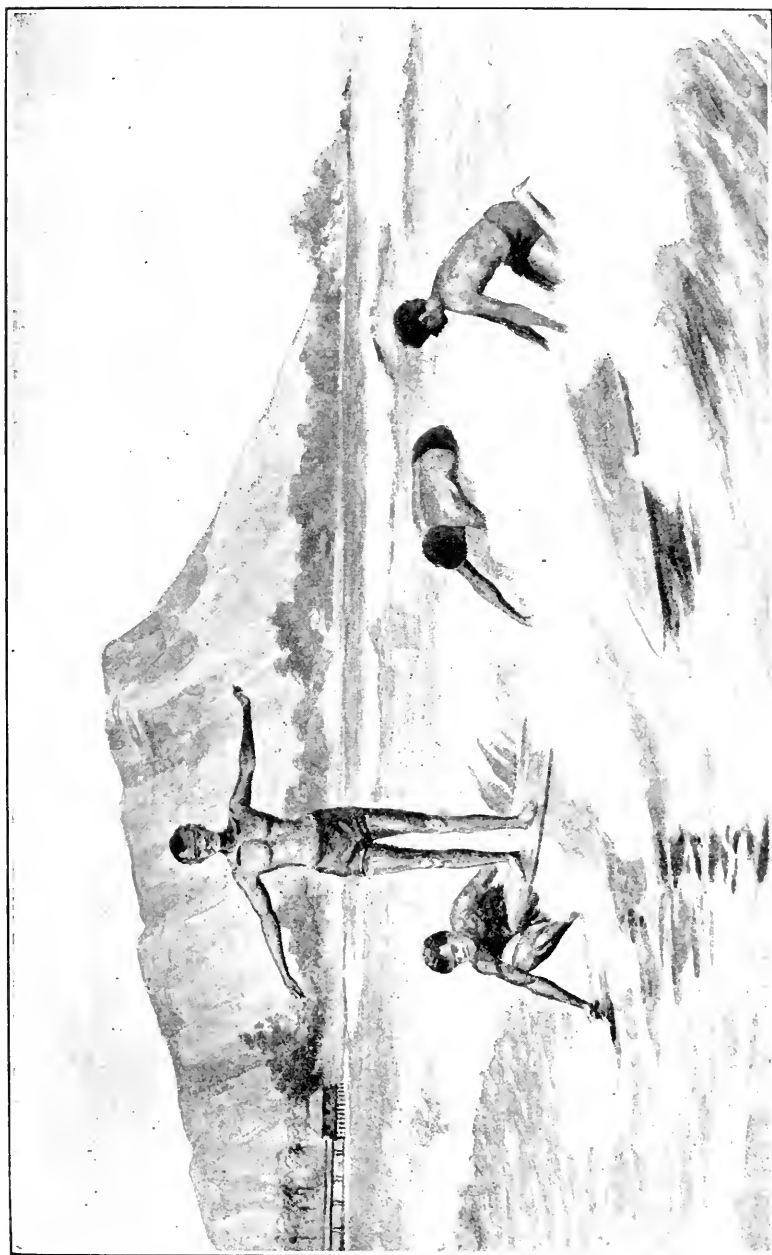
To me it was a wonderful thing, going forth to see all those Pacific Islands which had stirred my imagination from my earliest childhood. We touched first at the Sandwich Islands and the day at Honolulu was a delightful break in our eighteen days' voyage. We were timed to arrive on the 19th of June, yet it was a joyful surprise when I jumped up in the early morning and saw the group of lovely islands, half asleep under their cloud blankets, which they were gradually throwing off in the pink morning sunshine.

The Sandwich Islands naturally suggested Captain Cook and the pleasure he must have felt when he sighted them at the same season a hundred and thirty-five years before, and I realised how much more it must have meant to him and his little band of followers than to me. Travelling in comfort and luxury as we do now, over well charted seas, it requires the strongest effort of imagination to picture what these early discoverers went through, in their small sailing boats, with

unsatisfactory provisions picked up in savage islands, and with no knowledge of what was before them. As they sailed on and on, day and night, their hearts must often have failed them. When they would meet with land they could not tell. Fresh water and provisions might be finished first, and the country when they reached it might be barren and unable to supply their needs, or inhabited by inhospitable natives who would not allow them to land. I wondered if the Sandwich Islands looked as beautiful when Captain Cook first saw them as they did now? The touches of green would tell him there was fresh water and probably fruit, and it must have been a great pleasure to him, not only to find all he required, but friendly natives willing and ready to lavish it on him. They were delighted with him and everything about him, and he and his followers filled them with wonder; but pockets were the greatest surprise; having no idea of clothes, they looked upon these as folds in the skin and were amazed to see knives and beads, and other things, drawn out of them.

It is sad that here, on a later voyage, Cook ended his illustrious career, killed by these savages who both loved and venerated him. There were thefts and punishments, and a flood of excitement and misunderstanding, which he tried to stem, but a missile struck him behind and he fell. The natives, thinking he was a God and invulnerable, could not believe he was dead, and mourned over him; and they even kept some of his bones, and decking them with flowers and feathers they worshipped them as late as 1819.

On landing at Honolulu, one is at once struck by the trees. An endless variety of palms gives a delightfully tropical effect, but it is the great flowering trees that are the special feature, and they are very different from anything I had seen before. There are few ground flowers, but the trees and shrubs almost all bloom, the individual blossoms being often of enormous size and of the most searchingly brilliant colours. Even the hedges of hibiscus and alamanda were bursting into flower. It seemed unreal and gave something of the impression of stage scenery. We had hit upon the most flowery season of an ever flowery land.



SURF-RIDING AT HONOLULU.

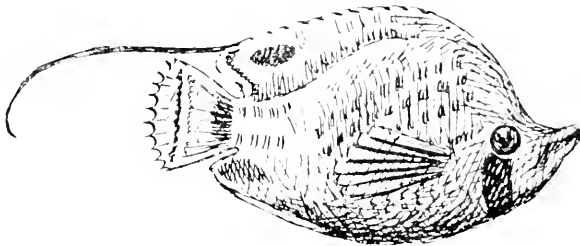
Cousins who live in Honolulu took charge of us for the day, which was all too short for what was to be seen. We first spent some time watching the surf roll in. The blue green of the sea resolves itself into pure white as the huge waves curl and break in endless succession, while the natives ride over their crests on planks. They balance themselves in the most wonderful manner, often even standing on the planks. It looks very dangerous, but they can all swim, and they are very skilful, having begun to learn this pastime when they were tiny children.

We next visited the strangely beautiful aquarium, where we were able to study carefully the glittering tropical fish, which were to become so familiar later on, glancing and gleaming among the coral flowers in the Fiji waters. These fish are of every size and colour and of every shape. Some are grotesque in the last degree and seem to have been created to make one laugh, while others are delicately formed and graceful in every motion, as they wind out and in among their rocks. Almost all are intensely brilliant and some are as gaudy as macaws. There are checks and spots and stripes and dashes. Some wave a banner, some have queer little teeth and others aggressive looking horns, and they are all unfamiliar.

We saw much more of the island, which I cannot now stop to describe. Everywhere we were struck with the great variety of race and costume among the inhabitants. First there were the Hawaiians themselves, in loose European dress, with straw hats—fine looking people, the older women rather too stout. Then there were the Japanese, the women and children very sweet in national dress, and the Chinese, the girls too in national dress, pretty graceful figures in long blue cotton trousers and short jackets, with their beautiful black hair braided in two long plaits and tied with ribbon. They looked very pretty and comfortable as they skipped about unencumbered by skirts. And lastly there were Europeans in light summer clothing, many of them tanned by the sun to a colour almost as dark as that of the natives.

As we made our way back to the ship, on every side Hawaiian flower sellers stood holding out streamers and garlands of

flowers of the sweetest and gayest description, in tempting profusion. My cousins draped me in them, a pretty old Hawaiian custom, and I and all the other passengers looked like May Queens as we stood on deck, waiting for the vessel to steam off into space again. The assembled crowd on the pier gave us a grand good-bye. The fine native Hawaiian band was there in military dress, playing the most lovely, heart-reaching music, the last a wonderful air composed by a native princess. So we sailed away in a dream of music and flowers, and our day at Honolulu receded into a happy memory.



TROPIC FISH (TIVITIVI).

CHAPTER III.

ARRIVAL IN FIJI.

ON the 20th of June I first saw a coral island, a sight which was to become very common, but never commonplace. We passed through the Phoenix Group but sighted only Hull Island—a little fringe of palm trees lying on the horizon. From the description I got it appeared to be a true atoll, that is a coral island or rim of coral surrounding a lagoon. But the chief interest is that turtles abound there, and that somehow the inhabitants of Tahiti, which lies 1400 miles off, found it out and journeyed thither in their open canoes twice a year to get them. It is wonderful that they were able to find their way all these miles without a compass to this little dot in the great ocean, and that they should have been so fond of this food as to venture on such a long and perilous journey in search of it, for the canoes must often have been wrecked and many lives lost.

On the morning of June 29th we were to arrive at Suva, the big English port on the island of Viti Levu, or Great Fiji. It is the largest of the Fiji Islands, of which there are a great many, scattered over a considerable area of sea, nearly eighty being inhabited. Viti Levu is ninety miles long by fifty miles wide.

I had been warned not to expect much of Suva, "very English, crowds of commonplace, new, unsubstantial, ugly houses"—"close and airless," and according to one, "a stuffy dead alive hole." But it would be Fiji. I would soon really see Fiji. The thought thrilled me. It would be the beginning of, I did not know what, of interesting new experience and rich artistic food; and a very beautiful beginning it proved to be.

I was prepared for what was commonplace, so it passed un-

heeded ; but I was not prepared for the lovely harbour, with its graceful background of islands and mountains, as fine in form as I have seen anywhere. Then when we stepped on to the pier there was no mistaking where we were, for in no place else in the world is there anything quite like the true Fijian, and there were some very true types standing about on the pier, ready to help with our boat or engaged with others. A Fijian is not much good in a mill or any place of that kind ; the hard monotonous work does not suit him, and he pines ; but give him work with boats or ships and he is one of God's finest creatures, and a joy to watch. He is considerably taller than the average Englishman, and his physique is massive, but not heavy, with grand proportions, and perfect muscular development. His features, in spite of certain differences from any other nation, are not ugly, though they are apt to give that impression when seen only in photographs. His hair, however, is certainly his crown of glory, and the most striking thing about him at first sight. It is thick and frizzly, and stands out all over his head in a compact mass, which is cut and shaped, much as we shape ornamental yew trees in this country. Each district, I learned afterwards, has its own style, so that a Fijian always knows at once where a man comes from by the cut of his hair.

The arrival of the mail steamer is a great event in Suva, and all along the pier vendors were squatting, displaying such articles as might attract travellers—pure white coral, shells, baskets, necklaces. I was struck with the quiet way they waited, with none of the deafening clamour of Port Said, or Colombo, or Naples. There is a natural politeness about the Fijian which prevents him from ever pushing his wares or insisting on notice.

If you betray an interest he will shew you his things, but if you do not want to buy he detects it at once, and tries to look as if he had never expected it, but was simply pleased with your notice.

The Club Hotel, which was to be our headquarters for the next three months, was very different from the Canadian palaces we had been staying in, but it was the best in Suva,

the new Royal Pacific Hotel not being completed, and the kindness and consideration of Mr. and Mrs. Cox, and their delightful Fijian staff, made up for much that was lacking in order, finish and elegance. We were packed into a very small room, with two very big beds; but it opened on to the verandah which had a glorious view. There was no place for boxes in our room, so they were piled up on the verandah. The guests all had their boxes there, and they might often be seen rummaging in them, with their belongings spread all over the boards. It looked very untidy, and in moving about we had to steer our way carefully, or jump over the things. Fiji, however, seems to produce an atmosphere of good nature and nothing is taken amiss.

What pleased me most was the Fijian servants. I was glad at once to be brought into close quarters with the natives, and I realised from the first that we should be in sympathy and get on well together. The dress now usually worn is a thin white vest, low in the neck and with short sleeves, and a sort of kilt or "sulu," as it is called, which consists of a couple of yards of material wound round the loins, and skilfully tucked in at the waist, so that it remains in place without button or tie, and falls down to the knees. The appearance of these servants is a little alarming at first, with their strong dark copper faces and shocks of soot black hair standing out over their heads, and they do not understand much about knocking at doors, but slip silently into the rooms on their bare feet to attend to their duties. I got quite a fright the first time I suddenly found that I was not alone in my room, but that a dark figure was noiselessly arranging my mosquito net while I was dressing for dinner. He looked at me steadily for a moment, his jet black eyes glittering strangely in the candle light, then quietly went on with his work. I was later to become great friends with these servants. It began with my painting, which I have many times found to be the golden key opening the door to friendship. Being anxious to get a study of a Fijian face, I asked Mr. Cox if he could lend me one of his "boys" for an hour. He willingly consented and I selected Semi, a fine-looking young fellow who waited on us

at table. He was to come and sit on the verandah, so I settled myself there with paints and paper ready to immortalize him, and I waited, and waited. At last I got hold of one of the other boys and managed to make him understand that I wanted to know what had become of Semi. "Semi dressing" was the answer. A little later Semi was still "dressing." I wondered what I was going to see when Semi came. Visions presented themselves of shaved heads and best clothes, such as I had been afflicted with in Italy and elsewhere under similar circumstances, and I wondered if Semi would arrive in trousers and a hard hat. Semi however when he did come

was a vision of delight to an artist. His beautiful dark skin was polished with oil till it looked like a well kept old mahogany table. His vest was removed, and round his bare shoulders hung a wreath of various coloured leaves. But it was his hair which had taken the time. It was all so carefully and evenly combed out as to present a surface like velvet. To do this is a matter of time and requires skill, and a wooden comb with teeth about six inches long is used for the purpose. These combs are troublesome to make and are much valued. I had great difficulty in getting hold of any specimen to bring home.



COMB.

I found there was just one to a household and it could not be spared. But at last I procured a new one at Levuka, and Semi gave me his in exchange. A Fijian's pride and joy is his hair. Besides the careful combing he often bleaches it with lime to a light yellowish brown, afterwards in the remote districts dyeing it, frequently to the most extraordinary colours. In the olden days, before the introduction of scissors, the hair was kept at least as beautifully and carefully cut as it is now, not a hair projected beyond its proper limits, and it was all done with a shark's tooth fixed on a stick, or a bivalve shell. Dressing the hair occupied hours, and the chiefs always had barbers, often more than one, whose sole duty was to dress it. The work was considered of so sacred a nature, that the barbers were not permitted to touch anything else with their hands, they might not even lift their own food to their lips,

but had to be fed by another man, and the cup too, at the great yangona drinkings, was held to their lips for them. Every little lock of hair was separately attended to and spread out so that not infrequently the whole mass measured a yard or more across. This elaborate work of art had to be taken care of. At night there could be no burying the head in a nice soft pillow; instead of this they used, and indeed still use, a thick piece of bamboo, or a bar of wood, or little round log carefully polished and set up on legs, and this is placed under the neck.



PILLOW (OR "HEADREST").

It seems a veritable instrument of torture and a truly great sacrifice to the exigencies of the Goddess of Fashion. We offer up many of our comforts at her shrine, but this seems to go beyond anything we ever do. People, however, appear to be able to habituate themselves to anything, and I have seen the Fijians lie down on the floor, and, tucking the queer little stools under their necks, drop off into a most enviable sound, pleasant sleep.

Semi squatted in front of me in true Fijian fashion, with his legs crossed, and I made a quick sketch in the little time that remained for the work. There was something very interesting about his face, in common with all those of the nicer Fijians, a strange sort of wistfulness, and an expression, especially in the eyes, which reminded me of wild animals. I have seen the same far away look in a caged lion, as with drawn brows, he gazed beyond me, more and more intently, till I wondered what his mind was conjuring up of the wild jungle where he would be.

Semi was enraptured with his portrait. All the "boys" came up to see it, and they were delighted, they could not see enough of it. I could find no place to hide it in my room where it was not pulled out and examined, as also were subsequent sketches of other "boys."

One of my next models was very funny. He placed himself where he could see and be seen from the road, and then he put

himself into the most extraordinary attitudes for the benefit of his friends who passed by. He went through a good deal of violent action, better adapted for a cinematograph than for



SEMI.

my purpose, but I enjoyed watching him, even if there were no great result on paper.

For the first few days I was alone in Suva, Mrs. Hopkins having gone to see some of her friends and discuss our future plans and arrangements with them. I was rather glad to be alone, for I was in a wonderland, which was no wonderland



SUVA HARBOUR WITH PANDANUS TREE.

to her, and I wanted time quietly to think and to gaze. I took long walks by the shore and up among the hills above the town, whence the view of the ranges of mountains on the other side of the harbour was very fine, and the rich tropical vegetation made a charming foreground. There was not the wealth of flowering trees we had met with at Honolulu, but of course it was winter here, though it had been summer there. At no time, however, is Fiji very flowery, on account of the heavy rainfall, but there is a rich harmony about the foliage, which is very pleasing, and with which I felt rather more at home. Sometimes indeed, when in the bush, among green trees and feathery ferns, I was reminded of the west coast of Scotland.

I wandered about the little town, the pier, and the shore, watching with special interest the Fijians whom I saw, and what struck me most was their love of ornament; they take every opportunity of decorating themselves, and it looked very strange to see grown men with wreaths on their heads and garlands round their necks, standing gravely chatting with other men, or occupied with boats, or carrying boxes and other things.

Everything was new and strange to me, and I had even to make acquaintance for myself with the wayside flowers and grasses, and the birds on the shore, and with the everchanging marvellous sky of Fiji, which lends such charm to its sea and hills.

On Sunday I went to the native church, and heard for the first time, what was to be a source of endless delight, our old familiar hymn tunes sung in parts by the Fijians. Their voices are rich and beautiful, and well adapted to this simple harmony. The effect is impressive and grand, like the eternal roll of the ocean surf on their coral reefs.

Mrs. Hopkins came back very bright, and replete with plans for our future, exciting enough to banish sleep and fill me with keen anticipation. The first visit was to be to Mr. and Mrs. Spence at Naitonitoni, where Mr. Spence was Magistrate.

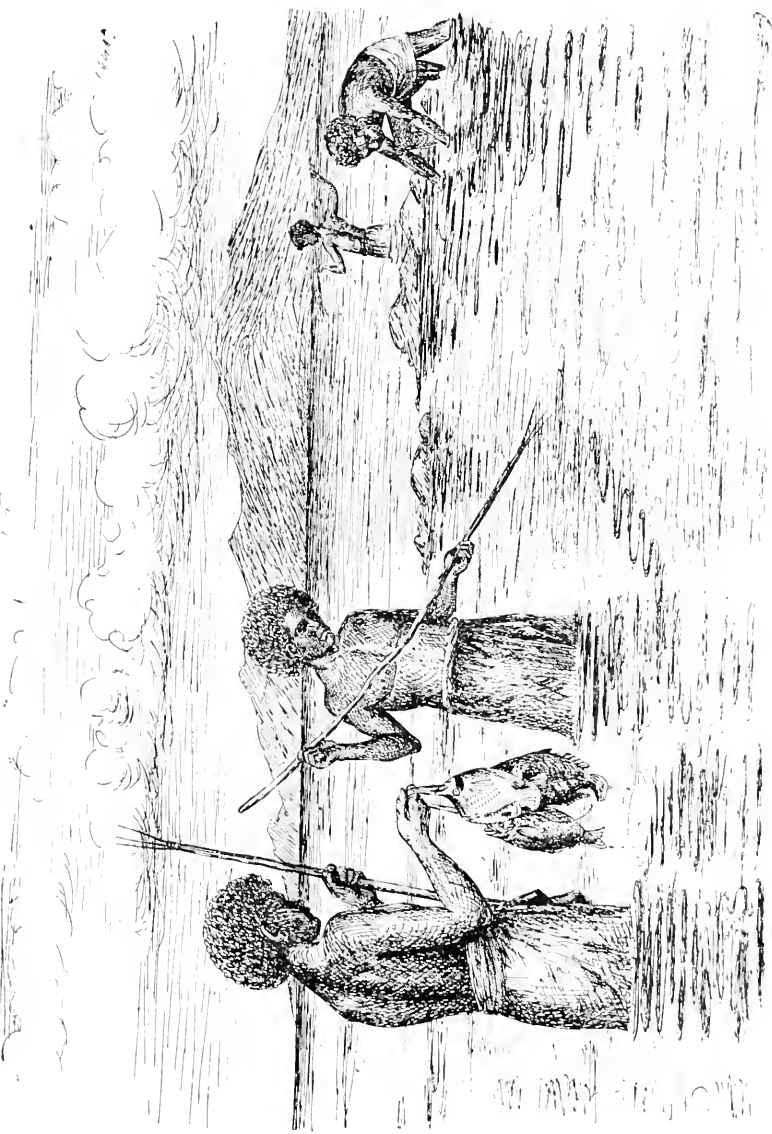
The intervening days were full of interest. Mrs. Hopkins and I both had introductions to Ratu Popé Seniloli, and he

came to see us. "Ratu" is a term of respect applied only to chiefs. It corresponds better to the title "Don" in Spanish than to anything else I can think of. He is a handsome man, and speaks English well, having been educated at Auckland and spent a good deal of time there, but he has not adopted the clipped hair and trousers, which are so unbecoming to a native; there is therefore nothing to mar his natural grace. The Fijian chief is very superior to the "kai-si" (commoner). He is generally taller and better built, with smaller and better shaped hands and feet, and a much more intellectual and refined face. The Fijians hold the truest and highest ideal for their aristocracy, and their chiefs have prided themselves for generations on being able to do everything better than their people—swimming, rowing, sailing, fishing, and even house and canoe building, and their wives excel in all the feminine arts, such as mat and basket weaving, and tapa (native cloth) making. I possess a most beautiful piece of tapa made and painted by Andi Torika, Ratu Popé's wife. "Andi" for a woman corresponds to "Ratu" for a man, and indicates a lady of high position. The tapa is six yards long, and must have been a serious bit of hard work. It is made from the bark of the Masi tree, which is taken off in long strips and steeped in water. Then it is beaten out with a grooved mallet of hard wood, till it assumes somewhat the texture of fine new linen. The strips are beaten together, one after the other, and so completely welded into each other, with a paste made from arrowroot, that it is almost impossible to detect any joins. The finer kinds are bleached in the sun till they are snow white. The painting is a very elaborate operation. It is done in several ways, but the best is obtained by a kind of stencil work. The pattern is cut with a sharp shell into banana leaves, which have been heated at the fire till they have a soft leathery consistency. This is then laid on the material, and the colour is applied with a soft wad of fibre, dipped in a dye produced from red earth, or vegetable charcoal, mixed with the juice of the candle nut, or bread fruit tree, sometimes with the addition of a little of the juice of the sugar cane. The finishing touches are put in afterwards with a feather. Boards

with the raised pattern carved on them are also used in much the same way as we use a printing frame at home, but the result in this case is not so clear and good. There is a third and very primitive method still in use. On a flat surface made of palm leaves closely sewn together, a raised pattern is traced with strips from the mid rib of the leaf sewn firmly down. This is wetted with the dye, and the impression is got by laying the material on it, and pressing it down, so that it is brought in close contact with the raised portions, from which it receives the colour. Ratu Sukuna, one of the chiefs, told me his mother made a great deal of tapa and printed it in this way.

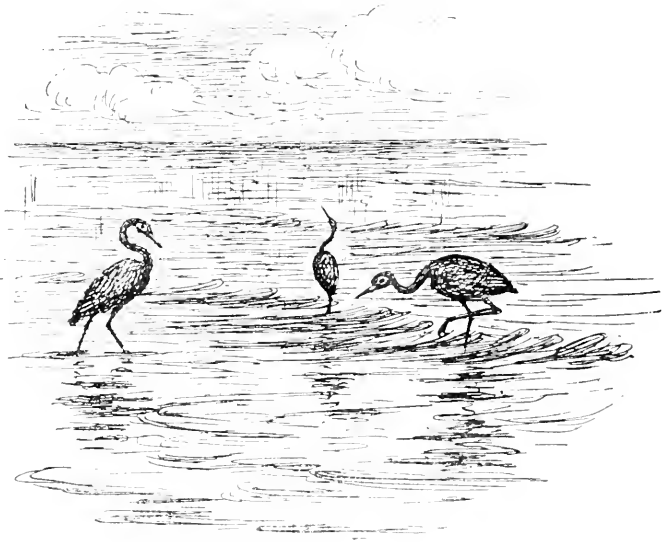
Ratu Popé had many charming plans for our entertainment, but nothing came of them, partly no doubt because he was very busy in the government service at Suva.

One day we went at low tide to the reef, and saw some of the wonderful tropical fish at play among the coral flowers. One tiny little fish abounded, of a brilliant turquoise colour, which glanced and glittered in the water, and a flash of yellow or orange would indicate the passage of some large fish, whose movements were too rapid for us to distinguish its shape. There were also odd sponges, and starfish of a rich ultramarine colour. We were fortunate enough to come upon some men fishing, and very picturesque they looked, with their brown skins against the blue water, and their long fish spears, which they wielded with skill and precision. I perched myself on a slippery rock and tried to sketch them, but clinging to my precarious seat, it was no easy task, and the tide rose so quickly that I soon found myself surrounded by deep water and in danger of being submerged, till one of the men good-naturedly carried me back to safe quarters. It was most interesting to watch the quick and easy way they possessed themselves of the fish. They stood motionless as statues, gazing down into the water, then suddenly the spear flew and a fish was caught. Or a hand was plunged into the water and a fish grasped and brought up. And such fish! They did not seem real. There was every imaginable shape and every colour of the rainbow, like those we saw in the Honolulu aquarium. The men were



MEN FISHING.

pleased with our interest, and kindly gave us a bunch to take home and eat. I tried painting some of them but the exquisite brilliancy soon faded from them, when lifeless and exposed to the air.



BIRDS ON THE SHORE (MVELO).

CHAPTER IV.

FIJIAN ARCHITECTURE.

STARTING for Naitonitoni proved more exciting than we expected, especially for my companion. It lies at the opposite side of the harbour near the mouth of the Navua, one of the five great rivers of Fiji, and a steam launch plies daily; the hour at which it starts depending on the tide. We ascertained the approximate hour and were waiting on the pier before it came in, to make sure of being in time. Launches from Rewa and other places were already there waiting, when at last it appeared and made its way among them. As it did not look very clean, and it was exposed to the sun, which was already very hot, we did not feel inclined to get on board sooner than was necessary, so after seeing our luggage put on, we stood waiting on the pier. Then we thought that, as a horn should warn us five minutes before starting, we had better seek shelter from the sun. I went into a kind of shed with seats, close by, and was entertained studying Fijian women with their funny little black eyed babies, who had also taken refuge there. I could not see the Naitonitoni launch, because the one from Rewa was in front, but as it was booked to start first, I felt perfectly safe as long as it was there and no horn had sounded. Soon, however, a Fijian came in and cheerfully told me "Launchee gone." Jumping up, I was horrified to see our launch making its way out to sea with all our things on board. I shouted and gesticulated but it was no use: on it went. Turning round I saw my companion coming leisurely up the pier. She was so positive about the horn, that it was some time before she grasped what had happened. We learned afterwards that the horn had been stopped because its blast

was too much for the sensitive ears of the Suva people. What was to be done? That was the next question. The launch would not ply again till next day, our hosts were expecting us and all our things had gone on. Mrs. Hopkins went off to find and consult her brother, Mr. Frank Williams, who was in the U.S.S. office close to the pier, and I took shelter behind a pile of wood and amused myself by studying the very abundant sensitive plant. It was most interesting to watch how, at the slightest touch, the whole plant shrivels up, as if it were absolutely dead. Not only do the leaves clap themselves together, but all the petioles and all the minor stems, drop limply down; the effect is magical. Taking the time by my watch, I found it to be exactly three minutes after being touched before the stems again rose, the leaves spread out and the fairy-like little plant was itself again. I was very busy and perfectly happy, when I perceived Mrs. Hopkins rushing distractedly down from the pier. I seemed to have placed myself where she could not fail to see me, but she had missed me. After securing a private launch with considerable difficulty, she came to look for me and passed me by. Nowhere could I be found and no one had seen me. I must have seen some boat that interested me, and, intent on getting a better view, must have walked absent-mindedly over the edge, where a hungry shark had devoured me, sketch book and all, leaving no trace. I hope Jonah's friends were half as relieved when his whale gave him up to them, as Mrs. Hopkins was when her visionary shark returned me to her, but the fright left a severe headache that spoiled for her the delightful trip across the harbour, in a nice clean boat, with a pleasant man. The water was so clear that as we crossed patches of reef, we could see the coral on the bottom and the gay fish glancing and glittering among it.

Midway we sighted the other launch and signalled it. We were glad that they perceived us, for, not knowing what to do with our luggage, they had brought it back. It was not very easy to get it transferred from one boat to the other, for the wind had got up, and the sea was rather rough. But at the imminent risk of its being dropped into the sea it was

pitched over and caught, and luggage and all we arrived safe at the Naitonitoni pier.

Our hosts had given up hope of us and settled down to dinner, so they were not a little surprised when we walked in, but they gave us a hearty welcome, and it was very pleasant to find ourselves in a home, and a very pretty, comfortable home too, with a gracious hostess; and neither she nor her husband ever spared time or trouble or anything else, in their bountiful hospitality to us, during such opportunities as our time in Fiji afforded. Indeed I may say that we were treated with the utmost kindness and consideration wherever we went, both by the English residents and by the natives. All Mrs. Hopkins' old friends were delighted to testify that they had not forgotten her, and every one seemed anxious to show me everything, though I fear I may sometimes have been rather a bore with my many questions, but nothing was ever made a trouble, and magistrates, managers, planters, captains, natives, all united in giving me every advantage in their power for my painting, and when I came away, I strapped up a big load of grateful remembrance to carry to my Norfolk home where I can spread it out and enjoy it at leisure.

The Magistrate's house at Naitonitoni is small and a native "mburé" has been added, in the garden close to the sea, for the accommodation of the numerous visitors who come to this popular spot within such easy reach of Suva.

The "mburé" is built in perfect native style, and as, with modifications, it is characteristic of all the native houses in which so much of our time was to be spent, I shall give a little description of it here.

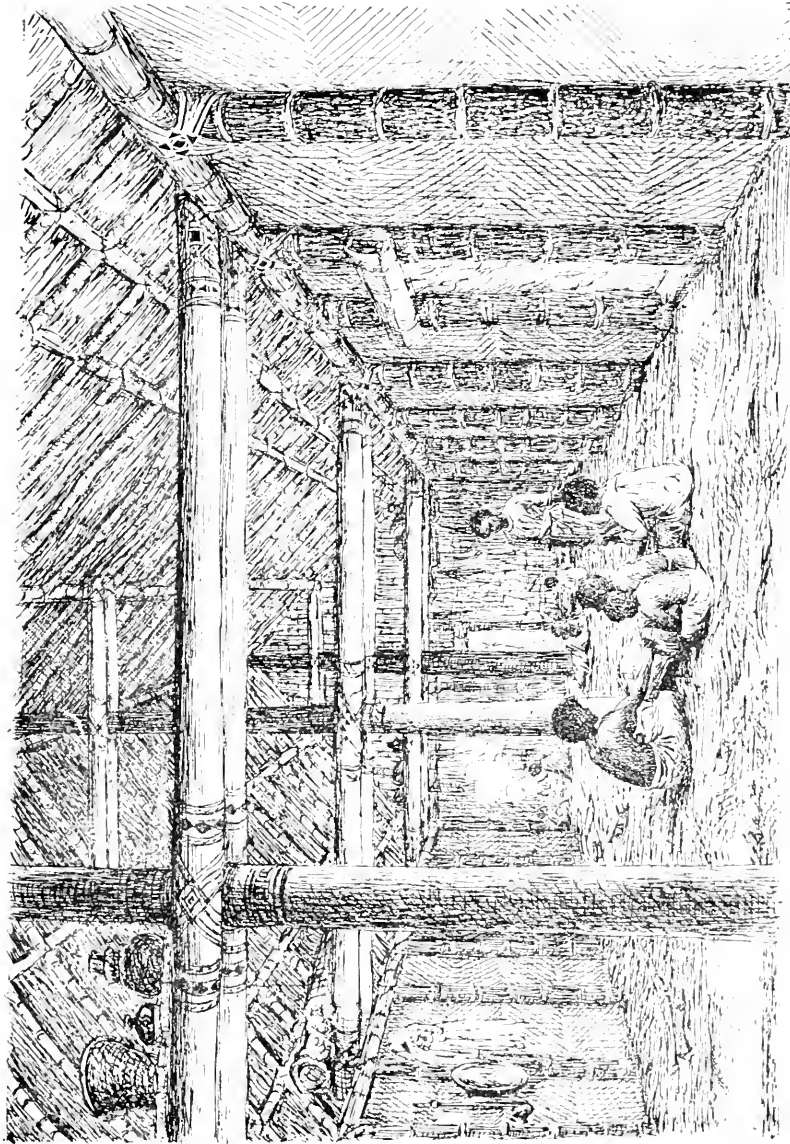
First there is a raised platform of stones and earth; and the earth well flattened down forms the floor. On this the house is placed, and from outside it looks like a large haystack. The sloping roof is thatched with reeds or sugar cane and is very thick. And the ridge pole, which is black, projects a considerable distance beyond at each end. This is very characteristic, and in the houses of high chiefs it is always covered with white cowrie shells. These shells are absolutely sacred to chiefs, who decorate their doorways with them, and

their yangona bowls and their clubs, and they used to wear them round their necks or on their girdles. If a commoner had had the hardihood to adopt a single one, the club would have been the result. Even now it is looked upon as a grave offence worthy of serious resentment and punishment.

The walls of the houses, which are also very thick, are covered on the outside with makita leaves tied together with strips of bark. The bunches are fitted in, and attached neatly and closely one above the other, with the leaves pointing downwards, so as to form a compact surface. When new, the colour is much like that of red winter beech leaves, but after long exposure to the weather, it assumes a delicate purplish grey. These well directed leaves throw off the heavy tropical rain, and the thick walls and roof keep out the sun, and temper the heat, at the same time allowing the air to percolate, so that a Fiji house is cool and never close, and altogether could not be better adapted to the climate.

The interior however is the striking part. The pleasing, though ordinary shape and appearance of the outside, does not prepare one for the unique grandeur of the inside. It impresses one afresh each time one enters. The perfect simplicity, the symmetry, the fine proportions, and the tasteful and harmonious use of natural materials, satisfy the mind like beautiful Gothic or Norman architecture, and it is very sad to think how ephemeral these buildings must necessarily be. There is nothing used in the construction which can defy time, and a house only lasts ten or fifteen years, or at the most twenty years.

The whole house is constructed without the use of a single nail, all the joints and beams and cross bars being carefully fitted and bound together with sinnet, a strong string made of coconut fibre. The natural colour of the string varies from light terra cotta to deep rich brown, and when soaked in the muddy ooze of the sluggish streams, it takes a good black. In binding, these colours are skilfully worked together so as to form symmetrical and beautiful patterns, in great variety, and, each town having its own design, the design indicates the habitat of the artificer. Sometimes a hundred or



INTERIOR OF FIJIAN HOUSE

more men are employed at one time in building a house, and how they manage to work without hopelessly incommoding each other is a mystery.

When a house is to be built, the chief sends round to his people in the various surrounding villages and commands them to come and do it. If a council house, or chief's house, or any house of importance be required, with much elaborate workmanship, workers are brought in large numbers and from very considerable distances. They get no pay, but are handsomely provided for, as long as they are at work. They enjoy it immensely, and do not hurry, so it often proves a very expensive business, and when at last they finish and go home, there is not much left to eat in the town. The place might have been swept by a swarm of locusts, only that the locusts would have spared the pigs, while the builders clear off these too.

Tree trunks and branches form the frame work of all the houses. These are not cut or squared, but only barked and carefully scraped and smoothed, and being round, the upright posts have the effect of majestic pillars. The two end ones are called "king posts" and are very large. In the olden days, with nothing but stone axes, it must have been no small task to cut down and dress these trees. In the chief's houses and in the temples they were of immense size, and it took sometimes as many as two hundred men to drag them from their native woods and get them into position. Great rope-like vines, which in Fiji are exceedingly strong, were passed under them, and a hundred men or so at each side pulled them along, the butt end first. A gradual slope of earth was made which ended abruptly over the hole prepared for the post, and up this slope the post was brought, till its end was well over the hole; the earth was dug away from under it till it overbalanced and dropped into the hole; then it was pulled up into the perpendicular with the help of the vines.

It was the custom in the old heathen days, always, in any important building to put a serf or two into the hole, and make them stand clasping the post, till the hole was filled in and they were buried alive, and they seem to have submitted with

perfect calm to the inevitable. These posts thus became tombstones, and as they are of hard enduring wood (*vesi*), in many places where all else has disappeared, they stand, grim recorders of the savage deed.

In addition to the actual frame-work of the house, there are posts all round the walls, made of the trunks of tree-ferns, and these are most ornamental. The surface has the appearance of black velvet, and the sinnet work which attaches them to the walls contrasts pleasantly with it. The inside walls are reeded, the reeds being beautifully laid and tied with sinnet so as to form patterns.

In the true native house there is no furniture, and nothing is allowed to lie about to disturb the quiet harmony of the building. The floor is covered with quantities of ferns and grass, and over these large mats are laid, on which the inhabitants squat, or sit, or lie. In this house, of course there was European furniture, light and elegant.

The great objection to a Fijian house is its tendency to harbour rats, with which the country is infested. They are very noisy at night and may be seen at any time running up and down the beams and along the rafters. One here was most attentive to me : my companion and I occupied opposite ends of the great room, but the rat kept to my end. The first morning I was surprised to find a big hole in the side of my painting bag. I could not imagine how it had happened, till I remembered that I had had an apple which was gone, then I knew Mr. Rat must have been there. I should not have grudged him the apple, if he had only gone in by the front door and not made an entrance for himself. Next morning my candle was gone, neatly extracted from the candlestick. What annoyed me most, however, was that the culprit had dragged some red hibiscus on to the dainty white toilet cover, which caused great black stains. He had climbed up the flowers and sat on the vase to get out the candle. Next morning it was my soap that was taken, a nice scented piece which I had left on the floor in its dish after my bath. I blamed myself for leaving it there, and next night I was particular to put the dish on the

basin stand. But the soap was taken again. It was really provoking, for scented soap, I was sure, must be expensive in Fiji, and I hated to ask for more. This time I put it under the soap dish on the basin stand, but I could hardly believe my eyes next morning when once more it was gone, and this time it was a big bit. I was much teased by my good natured host and hostess, who insisted that I was making a collection of articles necessary for the visit to Namosi and other wild parts, which we were planning. Afterwards I wrapped my soap up in a handkerchief and put it under my pillow, and it was safe. It was a satisfaction to learn that when another lady and her daughter occupied the room after we left, Mr. Rat continued his depredations. He helped himself to more soap, and being a very clean rat he also took a tooth brush. A search was made, and his hole was found in the thick thatch of the wall, and in the hole a wonderful collection of articles, among them the said tooth brush and all my soap, hardly touched ; so I was absolved.

Excepting for rats, we were never troubled with vermin in any part of Fiji. I never even saw a flea all the time I was there. Here, and in the rest of my narrative, I am simply recounting my own experience, which was limited to three and a half months. I am told, however, that in this last particular I was unusually fortunate and that there are sometimes regular plagues of fleas, which come on quite suddenly and even invade Government House.



THE RAT.

CHAPTER V.

FIJIAN SERVANTS.

HERE, as in the Club Hotel, the servants were Fijian boys dressed alike, and with bright responsive faces. Very efficient they were, to judge by the appearance and arrangements of the house, for everything was in good order, and the food elegantly and well served. Mrs. Spence, however, was at the top and bottom of everything, and if she had not been ever vigilant and ever active, early and late, there would have been little comfort in the house. She had to act puss all the time, for never is the old adage "When the cat's away the mice will play," better exemplified than among Fijian servants. As long as they are superintended, they can do good work, but it is laid down for amusement directly the watchful eye is removed.

A young Fijian chief, Ratu Sukuna (or, to give him his full name, Josefa Lala Vana-aliali Sukuna), who visited me in Norfolk, was amazed that a man and a little boy could accomplish the work in my garden. "Why?" he said, "Six Fijian men could not keep it like that, so much of their time would always be spent resting under those shady trees!" To find the gardeners always at work, at any time in the day, without being watched was a great surprise to him.

Our hostess gave us most *recherché* little dinners with an endless variety of tempting dishes. One pretty entrée was crowned with what I took to be a bright little radish, which I popped into my inexperienced mouth. Alas and alack it was a red pepper, the hottest of the hot! My face was crimson in a moment and the tears were running down my cheeks, and my mouth felt as though the skin had been torn off. The

company were full of sympathy and greatly distressed. Fresh butter was given me to sup, which relieved the pain a little, but it was some time before I had any sense of taste again.

The servants resided in native houses about the place, and as I wandered round in the morning in search of a sketch, I selected the dearest of little laughing babies without a stitch on, but I had to fetch Mrs. Hopkins to explain what I wanted. The mother looked pleased, but went off with the baby saying she would bring it back soon. From the recesses of one of the

haystack-like houses screams arose, and went on increasing for some time, till at last the mother emerged again, carrying such a changed little mite, all in European dress, buttoned up to the neck and down to the wrists, and with a sad little puckered face, damp with tears. I *could* not paint it and the mother looked very disappointed, but Mrs. Hopkins kindly came to the rescue and took a photograph, which turned out better in the end, for a few weeks later the little thing died, and she sent the broken-hearted mother a copy, which was her one consolation.



LITTLE BOY IN MEKÉ
DRESS.

I looked round for another subject for my brush, and perceived a bonny little boy of four, nearly in a state of nature. When I indicated my desire, this time a pleased father carried off the child to attend to his toilet, and disappeared with him into another of

the haystacks. Greatly alarmed, I followed to try and prevent mischief. Fortunately "Meké" (war dance) dress was considered the most suitable for a boy, and I had the pleasure of watching all the preparations. First his little garment was removed, and he was oiled all over and polished from head to toe with the palm of his father's hand, very vigorously, much as one might polish a metal teapot.

When he was considered sufficiently shiny, a gay little "sulu" (loincloth) was put on. Then various leafy vines were selected and plaited together, to form a garland for his neck, and wound round his little arms above the elbow, which last decoration was finished with a big red hibiscus blossom. Lastly a small knotted stick was put in his hand to represent a club, and the little man was ready. His father carried him out and placed him in front of the house, where he stood as stiff and still as a statue till he almost fainted. I had to hurry to finish my sketch as I could not make him understand that he might have a rest. The father watched its progress with infinite delight, and every inhabitant of the place had to see it when it was done.

It is almost impossible to catch the Fijians of to-day in easy natural positions, they pose at once, as soon as they see sketch book or camera. I tried to draw another graceful little boy, but he immediately straightened himself up, and three other little boys came and stood in a row beside him. I could not make them understand that it was not what I wanted, so to please them I began to draw. When I looked up bye and bye, to my surprise there were five, and the middle one was white. It was a little visitor, who, with his mother, was also staying at Naitonitoni, and who had been most earnestly longing for me to immortalize him. He was just as stiff as the rest, and in exactly the same attitude. All five were as grave as judges and the effect was intensely comic.

Among the many delightful plans for our enjoyment were two water picnics, one by sea, and one by river.

For the first we went in a rowing boat out to the little coral island of Nuku-wailala, a very pretty expedition. On the way we faced the island of Mbenga which is a conspicuous point in the view from Naitonitoni. It has a pleasing outline, having much the same contour as Arran from Largs. But the great interest connected with it is that firewalking is still practised there. I much regret that I had not the opportunity of seeing it for myself, but I have heard it described by Mrs. Hopkins and other eye witnesses.

It is only done on important occasions. Great preparations

are made for a feast and the natives assemble in gala dress, those who are to perform wearing only scanty costumes of fresh leaves and grass. They gather round a circular pit, several feet deep and some fifteen feet across, which has been lined with large stones and filled with heaps of firewood. The wood is ignited and allowed to burn furiously till the stones are white hot and cracking, so that they sometimes throw off pieces which fall among the spectators; the wood is then whipped out with loops of vines tied to long sticks. The heat proceeding from the hole is so intense that it is impossible to stand near it. Mrs. Hopkins told me that she leaned forward and held her handkerchief over it, and it immediately caught fire. Into this burning fiery furnace, like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego of old, these Fijians leap with a wild shout and walk unflinchingly across. Then quantities of leaves are thrown in and volumes of steam arise, into the middle of which they again descend, and then step briskly out. Not a hair is singed and there is not a blister on their bodies or feet. Yet as soon as they come out, the yams and taro for the feast are put in among the seething-leaves, and in the course of an hour are cooked ready for eating.

We found a shady nook among the tropical vegetation of Nuku-wailala, where our swarthy boatmen kindled a fire and boiled our kettle and we enjoyed our tea. Then, in the glow of a gorgeous sunset, we made our way back.

As we passed along near the shore, I caught a glimpse under the tall palms of a cluster of native houses, indicating the presence of a most charmingly situated Fijian village, and I was seized with a great desire to go and stay there. It had been decided that, before going into the heart of the mountains, we should make a trial trip to some village, within easier reach of civilisation, to see how I should stand the rough life. There had been much discussion concerning which place to choose, but to my mind this place, Vuni-mbau, seemed to offer every advantage, so the magistrate kindly said he would look into the matter and make arrangements for us.

Our next picnic was a great affair, lasting a whole day and taking us away up the country. It ended our visit to

Naitonitoni, for we branched off at the end of the day to Tamanua, where a visit to the sugar estate there was to begin with a dance, to which our whole party was invited by the manager and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Duncan.

We were up betimes on the morning of July 13th, and our expedition commenced with a drive over a rough road in two extraordinary, ramshackle carriages, with rather ragged Indian drivers. At Thambia, where we reached the primitive sugar railway, I had my first drive in a sugar truck. It is not a luxurious way of travelling but it is better than luxurious, for it is entertaining and exhilarating. Some of the officials connected with the mills have light trucks of their own, fitted with benches, otherwise the ordinary uncovered iron trucks for transporting sugar cane are used, rough seats being put in.

Indians act as the locomotives, sometimes running and pushing the trucks, but more often standing inside and poling with long sticks. In the latter way a great speed is acquired and there is considerable liability to a spill, if there should be any little obstruction, or if the pointing of the lines be not right; but I have never heard of a serious accident. There is but a single line of rails, so if another truck be met, one of the two must be lifted off the line till the other is pushed past. Sometimes a long line of trucks is on the way, and considerable delay is caused; but what matter? We have the whole day before us and can be happy and laugh as well at one place as another. There is no need to hurry, we are out of the world's feverish rush here, and long may it be before Fiji is drawn into the vortex.

From the railway terminus we walked across to the Navua river, and joined it at the village of Raiwanga. I now had the opportunity not only of seeing, but also of walking in a Fijian village, and there is nothing in the world more peacefully beautiful. Such harmony is very seldom attained between human dwellings and their natural setting. The little brown houses nestle pleasantly down among the tall waving palms and the big leaved bread-fruit trees, while the inhabitants, quietly working, or sitting chatting in little groups about

the doors, add to the pervading sense of repose, and there are no rubbish heaps and nothing ugly or offensive to detract from the charm. I was not sorry that there was a little delay about our boats, and it was good news that we were to stop here for tea on our way back.

Two boats took our party up the beautiful river. Our boatmen were all Fijians, and as the magistrate's own servants would not have been enough, he brought also a couple of prisoners from the little gaol connected with his court house. They were very conspicuous with their close shaven hair, the cutting of which must be a great mortification to a Fijian, and with their coarse shirts, stamped with a broad-arrow, but they were not at all alarming, and their faces looked more stupid than bad. It must have been a nice change for them, and I think they enjoyed the picnic as much as any of us. One of the other men made a wreath which he wore in his hair all day, and no one thought it unusual.

The final objective of our expedition was a pretty waterfall in a glen which ran up from the river. Our host had sent men the day before to cut a path through the dense vegetation from the river to the falls. We would think twice in England before giving a picnic if all this had to be done.

Having settled ourselves in a cool shady little dell beside the tinkling water, which gathered in a clear translucent pool at our feet, the big picnic basket was unpacked, and the Fijians were soon busy with preparations for dinner. Some bestired themselves to catch prawns in the stream, while others kindled a fire and put on the kettle, and arranged yams in a row to cook. We all partook heartily, the genial company and the pleasant surroundings making everything taste good.

The river seemed even more beautiful on the return trip, for we had a lovely sky; and in the glow of the sunset we had tea at Raiwanga. Here we branched off for Tamanua, and it was pitch dark before we reached our destination. We had all our evening clothes with us in a basket, and on our way we stopped at the hospital, where the superintendent kindly allowed us to dress in his own rooms. It must have been

rather a change for him when a company of ladies took possession of his place and made free with his things. He was very kind, however, and regaled us with some most acceptable coffee, before we started to grope our way up the long, steep hill to the manager's house.



“ONE OF THE MEN WORE A WREATH ALL DAY.”

CHAPTER VI.

LIFE ON A SUGAR ESTATE.

THE Tamanua house, to which we were going, is on top of the largest of many volcanic cones which dot the wide alluvial plain, through which, after its wild dash from the mountains, the Navua river calmly winds its way to the sea. The brilliant day had ended in a slight drizzle, the ground was slippery with mud and the road exceedingly rough. We tucked up our evening dresses, however, and stumbled along. Some of the gentlemen connected with the mill had joined us, and they knew the way well, so we reached in safety the interminable flight of stone steps which lead from the plain to the top of the steep cone, on which the house is perched without an inch of level ground around it.

We were a little late, and the company had already assembled. To us, emerging from the darkness, the scene looked very pretty and gay, in the light of the acetylene gas, the men all in white, and the ladies in graceful evening gowns; for the English ladies in Fiji dress well, though generally as the result of their own busy needles.

The lady of the house stepped forward to meet us with her two sweet little girls, very creditable specimens of a second generation in Fiji. They became great friends of mine, and their unbounded admiration for my work started them on the thorny path of artistic ambition.

There is no division between the large dining room and the hall, so there was a fine space for dancing on the smoothly polished floors, and it went gaily on till one o'clock in the morning; then there was music for an hour, mostly very spirited singing on the part of the young men, who at last,

with the help of a broad hint from the host, went off with great reluctance about two o'clock in the morning.

These little gatherings are held very frequently, for the sake more particularly of the young fellows connected with the mill. They have a very refining influence, and help to keep up the tone of the whole sugar-mill community, and to prevent the laxity and degeneration to which people are liable in far away regions and hot climates. I have stayed with the managers of three of the great sugar estates of Fiji, and I came away with the highest opinion of them and of their wives. They seem to me to realise the responsibility of their position, and to use it for good. The managers had not only the welfare of their mills at heart, but the welfare of their men, and although themselves grave and serious, they fostered and encouraged in leisure time, innocent gaiety among the people, giving a sense of happy fellowship, which is very pleasant; and their wives, in the position of queens of the little community, helped them valiantly.

Life on a sugar estate is quite different from life elsewhere in Fiji. The Fijian element is conspicuous by its absence. The servants are all Indians, the labourers are all Indians, and the mill-hands are all Indians. Well trained East Indians make very good servants, they do their work quietly and well, and look very ornamental, their curiously wrapped and folded white drapery, little, tight, white jackets, and large white turbans, contrasting with their intensely dark skins.

In their perfect decorum, erect carriage, and unchanging expression, they seem ideal servants to those who like automaton service; but I missed the enthusiastic blundering attention of our friends at the Club Hotel, where there was heart in everything they did: in hurrying to serve us, often bringing us things before they were cooked, and as they flew across the room with our coffee, jostling up against each other and spilling it into the saucer—delighted when praised, but fearfully crestfallen when blamed. These quiet Indians have something stealthy in their movements, which always gave me a sense of uneasiness, and I never felt inclined to trust them. Indeed, when I was sketching among Indians, it was

not comfortable, endless little things disappeared, and I had to look carefully after my belongings ; if I even laid my leather strap down beside me it was carried off, and so silently that I could never detect the culprit, while on the contrary, surrounded by Fijians I never missed anything. In Suva I dropped my gold watch with chain and seals, and was told there was no hope of getting it back ; there were so many Indians about that one of them would be sure to find it and melt it down at once. The crier, however, "cried it," and it turned out to have been found by one of our own "boys" who was delighted to return it to me, and was surprised and pleased when I gave him ten shillings.

The Tamanua house has a very fine view, commanding from its elevation a wide panorama, bounded on one side by the sea, and on the other side by the jagged range of the Namosi mountains, into whose recesses we were to plunge by-and-by. Nearer, stretches the alluvial plain, everywhere planted with sugar cane, the cheerful green of which is here and there interrupted by newly ploughed ground. Along the furrows, horses may be seen guided by picturesque Indians, but in this hot climate horses have to be treated with great care. Too long hours, too hard work, or above all exposure to the hot sun, would be fatal, so at a certain signal they are all withdrawn for the mid-day siesta.

The plain is watered by many streams, and the stately Navua winds through it in graceful curves, spanned by a very wide bridge, which I was told was an engineering feat, and which stretches over the river and the uncertain marshy ground on each side. But the most important point in the whole view is "The Mill." The mill-buildings are on the bank of the river, the tall chimney projected against the sea, and were not so ugly as I expected. They suit the surroundings, and the red roofs, partly screened by sheltering palm trees, tone with the landscape. Within reach of every sugar-estate there must be a mill, as the cane wastes very quickly when cut, and it has to be crushed within twenty-four hours ; so all the work has to go on at once, which involves a large staff of labourers. While the mill is doing its work, busy hands

are cutting the tall cane and carrying it to the trucks, the narrow railways for which intersect the whole plain. As soon as the trucks are loaded, they are taken in long trains to the mill. The manager very kindly took me over the mill, showed me everything and explained the whole working. I was very much interested and wished I had some knowledge of engineering to enable me to grasp it better.

As the heavily laden trucks presented themselves one by one in front of the mill, great hooks descended and, picking the cane off the trucks, drew it up a long slope, where it passed between the crushers, and the juice, which looked like dirty water, was squeezed out and flowed away in streams. When the crushers have done with the cane, the juice has been so completely extracted as to leave nothing but dry fibre, which does not even taste sweet to the tongue. The juice has to go through many processes before it becomes sugar. It is first clarified, by putting in lime which precipitates the extraneous matter, the sediment being then automatically removed by means of a great conical continuous subsider, and carried to filter-presses where every drop of juice is got out, and nothing remains but solid blocks of mud. Meanwhile all the juice flows in a clear stream to the multiple evaporators, from which it emerges concentrated and viscid but still quite fluid. It next passes from one to another of three great vacuum-pans where it is kept boiling. It is boiled *in vacuo* in order to prevent it from becoming uncrystallizable. If boiled under full atmospheric pressure it would become uncrystallizable (that is simple treacle). There is always some waste in the form of treacle, but by boiling it at a low temperature in a vacuum far more of it is crystallized into sugar. Less heat is also required and an economy is effected in fuel. Here granulation is accomplished, and sugar is produced. It is so heavy and black with treacle, however, that it looks much more like tar. The treacle is next got rid of by centrifugal force. The whole product is put into a large perforated metal drum, which is made to revolve at a terrific rate, and the treacle is expelled through the little holes, while the sugar remains inside. The sugar has a rich, fruity

flavour, suggestive of nature and sunshine, which unfortunately disappears in the refining in New Zealand and Vancouver, where it is sent after it has been packed in bags.

The exhausted cane coming from the mill is called megass. It goes to special furnaces, in which it is burned, raising the principal part of the steam for the whole factory. The mud from the sediment is used to manure the ground for the growing cane, so there is no waste in a sugar mill.

Cane is indigenous to Fiji. The natives ate it and used the juice in many ways, but they knew nothing of granulation, and up to 1865, the Europeans imagined that sugar would not granulate in Fiji. The question was finally determined by Messrs. Smith and Harrison at Navua, who made persistent efforts to solve it, the various settlers in the neighbourhood lending them enthusiastic assistance. A quantity of cane was cut and collected. It was first pounded with mallets; then wrung by boys, and a percentage of juice extracted; this was put in a three-legged pot and boiled, then strained through blotting paper. Great was the excitement and delight when a few grains of sugar were found to have remained on the top. This was the first sugar-mill in Fiji; there are now many, and their hungry maws crush up huge quantities of cane. In Tamanua mill alone, 500 tons are made into sugar every day when the mill is working.

Mr. Smith afterwards received the government reward for the first granulation of sugar in Fiji. He came from Demerara, where sugar had long been granulated, and his merit was that he discovered how to modify his experience gained there, so as to suit the slightly different conditions present in Fiji.

As we came home in the evening, the Indian labourers were returning from their work. The women and girls in little groups seemed happy, and were very pretty and attractive with their graceful figures and bright draperies. They stepped gaily along, not a bit as if they were tired with their day's work, and smiled brightly as they passed us, shewing double lines of exquisite, white teeth. Many of them were really beautiful, and perfect pictures, and they have happier faces than the men, and much more responsive. Among the Fijians

the men are far better looking than the women, and though many of the men attracted me, I saw only two or three women whom I admired, or had any inclination to paint, the build and features being of too strong a type for a woman. With the Indians it is otherwise. They are slender and slightly made, and though the men, through immense endurance, can accomplish a great deal of hard work, they do not give one the impression of strength. They are stimulated by what the Fijians lack altogether—ambition. They want to get on, to gather their little pile, to buy a bit of land and live on it, and for this they will work, and screw, and save, and do anything.

The Fijian lack of ambition and unwillingness to work, is due in a great measure to the communal system under which they have always lived, and which, instead of passing away under British rule, has rather become stereotyped. It is impossible for them under this system to feel that anything is really their own. The community alone counts, and their whole work and everything they possess has to be for the good of all.

There is an old Fijian custom, which, in spite of being contrary to British law, still has a firm hold on the people, and which militates strongly against individual effort. This is the right of “kere-kere,” by which certain chiefs are by birth entitled to anything they choose to fancy belonging to certain other people, and the right is so sacred that even when the sacrifice is great, it is made without a grumble and even with an effort at cheerfulness.

I myself met with a very remarkable example of this when staying on the coast with Ratu Saimoni, one of the chiefs. He was looking at my sketch book, and when he came across a sketch of another chief's house with a canoe lying in the dyke in the foreground, he remarked “That Wanga is the Shamrock, and I made it with my own hands.” I was so interested and surprised that he told me all about it. He was anxious to have the most perfect canoe possible, and spared no pains to gain his end. The best vesi wood for the body of the canoe was sought in the depths of the forest, and for material and labour he was £20 out of pocket, not to speak of his own time

which he devoted to the work for over a year. When finished, the boat was a joy to behold, and his pride was great when, a native canoe-regatta having been arranged in Suva harbour, he went up with his wanga and carried everything before him, winning all the races.

In triumph he brought the "Shamrock" home, and drew it carefully up in his own little dock. Next morning he went to look at his treasure—it was gone. A chief who was his superior had fetched it away. It was a great disappointment. I expressed horror and asked if there were no way of getting it back. "No," he said, "none. Everything I have belongs to him, if he chooses to claim it; and his people have all to try to be satisfied if they have anything which so far pleases him that he wishes to possess it." It seems extraordinary that such curious native customs should be observed, contrary to British law, after sixty years of British rule; and it shows how firmly these customs are rooted. They militate strongly against ambition. What is the use of working hard to produce anything good and beautiful, if its very excellence makes it liable to be seized and carried off? The natural consequence of all this is a certain spiritlessness and distaste for work.

Of course work must be done, and if the Fijians cannot be induced to do it themselves, they must make room for those who will. But to me it was very sad to see this beautiful country passing from its natural and rightful owners into the hands of strangers, who settle down and make themselves comfortable, but have no real love for it.

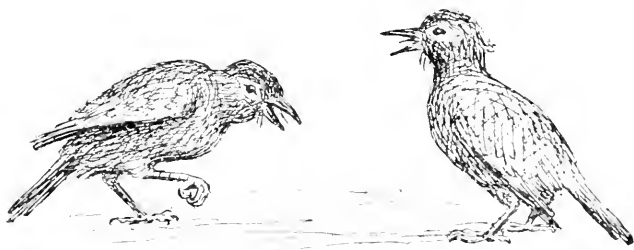
The Indians were brought over in shiploads, indentured for five years, during which time they had to work for their employers. After that period they were free to continue, or to work for themselves, or to go back to India; but they often preferred to stay and work for their employers long enough to lay by a little independence, and start on their own account.

Much has been said against this system of indentured labour, but as far as I could judge it seemed to me that the people were well off, and well cared for. Their little homes are all they require, and they have their own mosques, and

beautifully fitted and arranged hospitals, where they are looked after when they are ill.*

I must not close this chapter about life on a sugar estate without mentioning the mynah birds which form a very important part of the population. These were brought originally from India, to destroy some of the insect pests which infest the sugar cane; and so useful have they proved in this work that, although they have increased enormously, and there are already swarms of them, the planters highly appreciate them. Elsewhere, however, they are becoming rather a nuisance, and are showing themselves destructive, especially to the thatch of the native houses, of which they make sad havoc. They are very noisy and very comical as they stand in groups, arguing and chattering; and as they are fond of human beings, and constantly frequent verandahs, there is plenty of opportunity of studying their antics and enjoying their forward and impudent ways.

* The Government of India has recently put an end to the transfer to Fiji, and other of our tropical colonies, of East Indians, under this carefully devised and controlled system of indenture, which, for some forty-five years in the case of Fiji, has provided the bulk of the manual labour necessary for the sugar and other industries concerned.



MYNAH BIRDS ARGUING AND CHATTERING.

CHAPTER VII.

A WEEK IN A FIJIAN VILLAGE.

PREPARATIONS had been going on meanwhile for our visit to Vuni-mbau, when we were really to leave civilisation behind, and live the life of the people.

Friends were most eager to supply us with every comfort, cups, saucers, plates, knives, forks and spoons, together with sheets, curtains; but we did not want to have with us luxuries which would take away from the true feeling of the native life, so we took only what we considered absolutely necessary. Cups, a tea-pot, two clean mats to lie on, a curtain for privacy, mosquito nets, and our own pillows; the little wooden stools used by the natives would hardly have suited our heads, or rather necks.

We took some provisions to supplement the native food, and it was a good thing we did, for, just as we arrived, to my fellow traveller's dismay, we saw all the men of the village and a good many of the women starting off in canoes, with quantities of provisions, to a great funeral feast, so that there could be but a scanty supply left. We fared excellently however, with her good management, together with what we brought with us. It was on the 17th of July that we started in the magistrate's boat, with three of his men, and it was a long and delightful two and a half hours' row, over river and sea.

The chief's house was allotted to us, but his wife and he were away at the funeral, and the people were greatly distressed on our account, at the absence of the former. "Who would care for us?" "Who would cook for us?" they asked. With my housekeeper, however, there was no difficulty; all she required was the family pot, and it was won-



VUNI-MBAU.

derful what an interesting variety came out of it. There was always enough, though we were seldom alone for our meals. Some two or three natives, squatting round, generally shared with us, or got the remains when we had done. It would be a great want of manners in Fiji to reserve any of the dinner for another day, and it would be thought very mean and greedy, so it does not do to prepare more of one's store at once than can be spared.

We never had any milk at Vuni-mbau, or at any other Fijian village, but there was always at least one cow wandering about picking its livelihood here and there, or sometimes snatching a tit-bit off the roof or wall of a house.

The government demands the presence of these interesting animals in every village, and the order has been carried out very thoroughly, but the object for which it was issued has not been attained. Enquiry having been made into the causes of the rapid decline of the native population, it was ascertained that infant mortality was very great, especially at the time of weaning, there being no transition between mother's milk and adult food. It was considered that cow's milk would solve the difficulty, so a cow was prescribed, and the "mbulumakau" arrived. Cows and bulls are alike "mbulumakau." The name is said to have come from Tonga and to date back to the long ago days when one of the early visitors presented a pair to Finau in Haapai, saying as he gave them, "A bull and a cow."

The cow looks very nice and gives an air of comfort, but there is never any milk. Fijians would need to be very much altered before they could be counted on, regularly every morning and evening, to milk a cow and to keep a proper array of utensils clean and in order. Then what vessels would they use? A cow could not be milked into a banana leaf, or into a five foot bamboo with the divisions knocked out, such as they carry their water in. The household yangona-bowl might serve the purpose nicely, but the household would not like to spare it. Then where would the bowl stand? There are no shelves, and if it were put on the floor, the dog and cat and the hens would help themselves to the milk, and the children would dabble in it.

As it is, the happy calf has the milk. And on great occasions cow and calf fall victims, and are baked whole for the feast. They do not look at all pretty with their spraddle legs sticking up and their necks hanging down, but they are, I believe, quite good eating. And a Fijian, like the King of Beasts, to whom I have already compared him, enjoys a huge feed of butcher meat at any time, when he can get it.

There is no privacy in a Fijian house, and hospitality is one of the strongest native principles. Any one seems to be welcome at any hour and all day. Often late in the evening, swarthy figures slip silently in and squat in groups all over the floor, sometimes remaining a long time and then slipping out again, as silently. They never knock, or make any signal to indicate their approach, but just creep in. Sometimes our presence drew a very considerable number, but I never saw anything but welcome expressed. A young chief told me that when he went home after having been absent, often for the first two or three days and nights he got no rest at all, guests kept dropping in the whole time, and he could not dare even to lie down, as it would have been a breach of manners.

It was perhaps just as well for me that when I first came to Vuni-mbau the village was almost empty, as it let me down gently, and I got more used to the life before having to face the publicity I became accustomed to later on. In the middle of the day Mrs. Hopkins and I had the place nearly to ourselves, as the few inhabitants who were not away at the funeral had gone out fishing and digging.

The chief's house was one spacious room, grand in its simplicity and beauty of proportion. There were fifteen pillars of black, velvety mbala-mbala (tree fern) along each side, and great beams supported the lofty roof, which sloped away up into the darkness, giving a pleasant sense of space. Except for a few wooden headrests, there was no furniture, or anything lying about, to disturb the restful simplicity of the place.

At the end of the room, as in all Fijian houses, there was a raised dais made of bamboo or wood covered with mats, the

number and texture of which indicated the standing of the owner of the house. I have counted as many as thirteen, but as these lie flat one on the top of the other, numbers do not make them soft. This dais is used as a bed by the principal inhabitants of the house, and it was always given to us. It was not a luxurious couch, and I often envied the Fijians extended on the floor, for it was much softer, ferns and grasses being thickly strewn under the mats. There is sometimes a large amount of this material used, giving the floor a billowy appearance, and causing a curious sensation to any stranger walking upon it. It looks strangest at night when an ordinary, rather common English lamp, with a glass globe and coloured container, is planted on it, and stands all askew on the uneven surface, looking most unsafe. The light on the floor was to me very uncomfortable, making my eyes ache when I tried to do anything; and it had little effect in lighting the huge room, which looked very weird with the scantily dressed figures slipping about.

Of course we sat on the floor, as there were no seats except my little far travelled sketching stool, by sitting on which I could sometimes get relief. Our meals too, were served on the floor, with large fresh green leaves for plates, and knives and forks of split bamboo. I was supposed to do the washing up, so the leafy plates suited me very well, and I enjoyed collecting them in the dewy morning and laying in a stock for the day, while my companion got the tea ready and toasted slices of yams and taro for our breakfast.

In each corner of the room there was a fireplace, which was simply a hollow in the floor, surrounded with large stones. How these houses, built of what seems to be most inflammable material, last a week, under these circumstances, was always a puzzle to me. The men too are most careless with their matches and their pipes; I have often seen sparks dropped about among the matting, yet I never saw a fire, though I believe they frequently happen, and sometimes whole villages are burned down. I was not much concerned for anything but my sketches, for it would have been easy enough to have escaped had a fire occurred.

I had a great longing to know the language, and felt if I could only converse I should form a real friendship with the people. They gathered round me when I was sketching and looked at me with the kindest of eyes, and it was quite sad when they spoke to me to have just to shake my head.

One woman would not be beaten, but was determined to make me understand. I gathered at last that she wanted me to follow her, so although I was in the middle of a sketch I got up and went. She conducted me to her house, which was a small one near the sea, and she made me enter. I never saw anything sweeter and daintier in my life; the whole place was spotlessly clean, from the reeded walls to the matted floor. And the bed was covered with the most beautiful mats of her own making, bordered with gay fringes of coloured wools. I aired my one word "vinaka" (good). She was delighted, and reading true appreciation in my expression, a look of intense pleasure and affection passed over her old wrinkled face. She could not contain herself; in a moment her arms were round my neck and her weather-tanned face touched mine in a kindly embrace. It reminded me of a similar experience in the wilds of Majorca,* and I felt the whole world kin.

My grey eyes and the red of my cheeks were a source of endless interest and speculation to the Fijians. Once two women were closely inspecting me and I felt myself under earnest discussion. At last one of them jumped up, and rubbing her finger over my cheek, examined it to see if the colour had come off. When I was relating this anecdote at home, a small niece who was present enquired, "And did it?"

There was one woman whose attentions I was not very

* In 1904 at Easter, my sister and I were on the coast in a wild part of Majorca within reach of the little known, old world town of Pollensa. We learned from the young man who brought us daily supplies from there, that there would be wonderful processions and celebrations in Pollensa, and he proposed himself as guide, an offer we gladly accepted. We saw much that was intensely interesting, then our guide said, "I am going to take you to see the most beautiful thing of all—my mother." He conducted us to a large low room, where a fine featured elderly woman in nun-like widow's costume, was standing with great dignity behind trestle tables, on which were pink and white sweets for sale. When we entered he said with a great ring of pride in his voice, "This is my mother." She stepped gracefully forward and cordially embraced us both, thanking us very prettily in Majorcan for the kind interest we had always taken in her son.

eager to encourage. She was a well made, good looking girl, and she wore her slight clothing with unusual grace, but she was covered all over with Tokelau ring-worm. Her skin was like brown satin, with a brocaded pattern of circles and half circles closely interwoven. The malady did not seem to have missed one inch of her body, but she showed no sign of inconvenience, smiling and chatting with the other girls in the happiest manner. There were others affected in the same way, but she was the worst; and, as they were all particularly friendly, it made me creep when they squatted on my skirts to watch me paint. Not liking to vex them, I always made an excuse to go into the house when I saw them approach.

There were also eye-trouble, and nasty sores about the mouth, especially affecting the young children, which would have made me uneasy if it had not been that there were so few flies to carry about infection. I attributed the want of flies to the absence of rubbish heaps, and to the general care among the people to bury or destroy everything attractive to such pests. The Government insists on systematic sweeping and cleaning of every part of the villages, but the good result is much assisted by a very wide spread superstition which still hangs about here. It is believed that if an enemy should get hold of any personal rubbish, or half-eaten food, and were to curse it, the individual to whom it had belonged would suffer and perhaps die. Hence the cuttings of hair and parings of nails and scraps of worn-out clothing, are immediately burned and never allowed to lie about. The remnants of a meal are given to the fowls, or burned, not a crumb is allowed to stay. I often wondered what the merry little rats lived on when everything they would naturally eat was so systematically done away with. The effect, however, in the village is very pleasing. Wander where you will behind or in front of the houses, there is never anything to offend the senses.

The babies who were unspoiled by eye and face trouble were truly delicious little mortals, with their chubby cheeks and wondering black eyes, ever ready to twinkle into merriment. At first they were very much afraid of the strange white ladies

and screamed and clung to their mothers whenever they saw us ; our fair skins were quite as alarming to them as the sudden apparition of the blackest of negroes would be to one of our own infants. Not being at all used to babies treating me that way, I was much disturbed, but they soon got used to me and there were dimples instead of tears. One specially attractive little mite came to me, and when I held the sweet little dumpling in my arms it felt as if made of black indiarubber. It gazed steadily at me, and I wondered what it was thinking about behind those great expressive eyes.*

* See frontispiece.

CHAPTER VIII.

MOONLIGHT RAMBLES.

THE first evening we took a long walk to the nearest village. The road, not a native road, though made by the natives, was different from anything I had seen before, but it is characteristic of the lower parts of this island of Viti Levu. It is flat, smooth and grassy, wide enough for a vehicle, and raised above the surrounding country, with a ditch along each side; and runs right through the natural forest, where palms and "wild plantains" and all sorts of strange trees grow tangled together, but I saw no flowers, no butterflies, no birds; I do not remember seeing a single butterfly while I was in Fiji. There was a strange death-like stillness everywhere, and it was a relief to come upon life again in the shape of a pretty village on its grassy lawn, with groups of men and women among the houses, who came forward to welcome us with their usual kindness. There was a sudden cry of surprise and delight. Two of the men recognised my companion, and she remembered them, though it was some ten years or more since they had met. Eager questions and answers followed, which of course I did not understand, but we could not stay long, the glow of the sunset warning us that we must be getting home to our quarters. The men politely conducted us all the way back, and it was interesting to see how they kept turning to me so that I should not feel out of it, though I could not understand what they said. In the outskirts of Vuni-mbau they bade us goodbye, warning us at the same time that we had better not wander so far again alone in the evening, as it was "not safe." But it was quite bright, for we were fortunate in having lovely weather and moonlight.

The extreme impressiveness of moonlight in Fiji seems strangely incompatible with the familiar way the moon is treated in the native mythology. There is a ludicrous want of dignity in making the mouse and the moon have a hot discussion. It was left to them to decide how men should die; the moon wanted to arrange that they should all die at once, but the mouse said "Let them have children and grandchildren as I do, and die one by one," and she carried her point. But they wanted to die and go to heaven all together, so they were very angry with the mouse; and that is why they hate the mouse to this day. Again, the moon had to supply the god Takei with fish, and he was so displeased with a shortage that he decided to drown her. He had a delightfully baited pit prepared and a quantity of bamboo water-vessels filled with salt water put ready. The moon's mother was very sad, and she made up her mind to frustrate the plan, so she substituted fresh water for salt. The moon fell into the trap, and when she was enjoying the bait at the bottom of the pit, the water was poured in. She was so used to rain that the fresh water did not hurt her, and she scrambled out, but some of the mud at the bottom stuck to her. Hence the spots on her surface.

We always strayed out in the moonlight before going to bed, and the inexpressible beauty of these rambles cannot be put into words. The moon is so clear, it is like daylight, only much more lovely. One special ramble made an indelible impression on my mind. We left the village behind and wandered along a path which led through graceful ferns and under tall tropical trees. The stillness was tempered by the rustle of the palms, so high above us that in the ghostly light they appeared to be mingling with the stars which twinkled among them. The smooth foliage of all the trees reflected the glittering moonshine; everything seemed made of silver, and the broad banana leaves were sheets of ethereal light, thrown into brilliant relief by the velvety blackness of the shadows. And there was a sweetness in the balmy air, completing the feeling of an absolute perfection, which seemed hardly to belong to this world.

When we reached the village on our return, a crowd of anxious women was awaiting us. They had seen us wander into the forest, a thing they would never do at night, and they did not know what might have happened to us. They were full of congratulations and chatter when we re-appeared. It was like being suddenly awakened from a poetic dream.

One evening I thought the village was on fire. I heard shouts, and rising up from among the trees I saw smoke and flames and dark excited figures projected against them. I hurried to the spot and found a party of almost naked boys and girls playing with bamboo torches which were flaming and sputtering. They were waving them about, wild with excitement and delight, quite regardless of the sparks that flew and ignited the grass. It looked horribly dangerous with all the inflammable native houses so near. The children saw me and thought my anxious expression denoted desire to join in the sport; and one little fellow in the most gentlemanly way stepped forward, handed me his torch, and then with some difficulty got another bamboo lighted for himself. They watched over me with the greatest care and kindness, re-lighting my torch, if through mismanagement on my part it went out, or bringing me another if it burned short and the flame was too near my hand. As for themselves, the fire seemed to have no effect on them whatever. They paid no heed to the sparks which fell on their black glittering bodies, or to the flames that licked their legs as they danced over the embers and among the burning grass, with their bare feet; their eyes sparkling with laughter and their white teeth gleaming in the fire light. One fat little fellow, some three years old, stamped delightedly about over the burning ends that were thrown away and put the flames out with his chubby feet.

It was a most interesting exhibition of native immunity from the effects of fire, and I could not have believed it possible if I had not seen it. Had the children been burned or blistered in any way they could not have been so absolutely happy. And the parents in the village never came to look after them, or showed any uneasiness about them. I seemed to have

stepped into a fairy tale, and to be standing on enchanted ground, surrounded by elves.

My evening dip was as delicious as the evening ramble. The house was close to the sea and a few steps took me into the water, rippling in quiet waves upon the smooth shelving shore. The moon shone through the palm trees and their tall stems cast long dark shadows over the sand. And, as I splashed in the cool water, the phosphorescent lights glittered as if I were bathing in diamonds.



“ONE FAT LITTLE FELLOW SOME THREE YEARS OLD.

CHAPTER IX.

OLD MARITA'S TRAGIC TALE.

WE were told that a very old woman lived in the village. "How old?" "Very, very old." "Eighty years?" "More, much more." "A hundred?" "Yes, and more, probably." No one could tell. There had been no register of births when she was born long ago in the wild, savage days. All anyone knew was that she had seemed old, as long as the oldest inhabitant could remember. I wanted very much to see her, so she was produced from her little house on the banks of the river at the end of the village. Her hair was close cut and thick, and as white as the driven snow, in strong contrast with the brown skin of her wrinkled face. She was very thin, but wiry and strong, and not exceedingly bent. Her eyes were bright and her hearing good, and she seemed as if she might outlive many of the comparatively young people about her. She readily consented to my painting her, and very kindly placed herself in a most un-Fijian attitude, which was evidently very trying to herself. I felt painfully the lack of the language, for I longed to converse; the poor old body looked sadly uncomfortable, and she was so patient and still, that I could see her whole figure trembling with the strain. At last I fetched my interpreter from indoors to tell her that I had finished. At once her face lighted up and her limbs relaxed. She was quite a different creature, and, as she went off to feed her pigs with a bunch of sugar-cane leaves under her arm, she looked very picturesque and the little spotted animals came running to her call.

Sitting for her picture had been an effort, but the attention gratified her, and she arrived in the evening for a chat. She

was all animation then, and proved, by what she told us, to be perhaps the most interesting person in Fiji—the last, the only survivor of as hideous a tragedy as was ever enacted on the face of the earth—the Navua massacre. I had heard the story from my companion who was familiar with the spot where it occurred, and I had read of it in some of the old books on Fiji, but I never expected to have the opportunity then presented to me of being brought into immediate contact with one who had gone through it all. Mrs. Hopkins interpreting old Marita's flow of words, I gazed at the old woman almost with awe, and wondered how she could tell of horror upon horror with such evident delight. I got out my brush and sketched her as she squatted in front of us, her old eyes glittering and her hand gesticulating to impress point after point upon us.

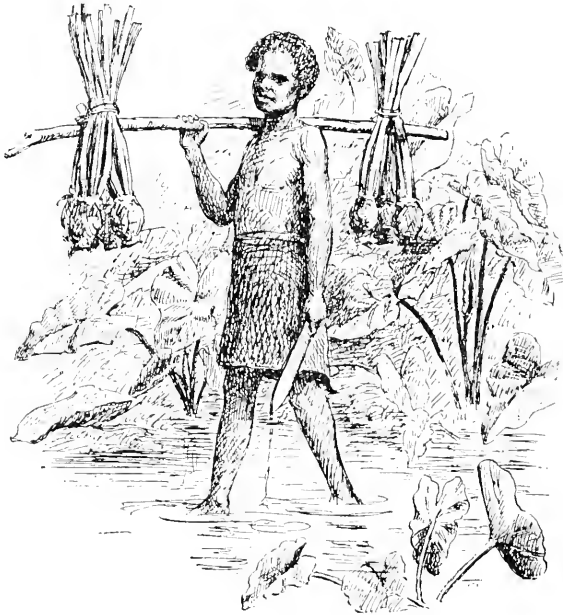


OLD MARITA TELLS HER
TRAGIC TALE.

This is the story:—A tribe by the name of Kai-na-lotha to which she belonged, offended the chief Ra-tui-mbuna who was very powerful and held sway over a wide area. He lived on one of the little conical hills which dot the Navua valley, the one now occupied by the doctor's house. The punishment measured out to the offending village was terrible beyond description. All the inhabitants were condemned to be killed and eaten, one household at a time, annually.

The chief came with his retinue, and there was a great feast. The awful wooden death drum, used only on special occasions, was beaten, producing a dull boom which could be heard for miles. Then the doomed family were all clubbed, baked and eaten, the house was set fire to, and there was one house-

hold less in the village. On the ashes, kurilangi, a kind of taro or arum, was planted, which was always and only eaten with "mbokola" (human flesh). It was supposed to make the human flesh less heavy, and more digestible. This ghoulish garden had to be looked after by the remaining members of the tribe, and the taro tended for their own funeral feast.



BOY CARRYING KURILANGI.

Marita had recollections of being with her mother when she was watering and weeding it, and of seeing it growing with its great handsome, glossy green leaves. When they began to turn yellow the root was ripe, this was the signal for the feast, and the next household was clubbed and eaten. Then their house, now reduced to ashes, became the garden. Marita could remember these awful conflagrations and the flames leaping from thatch to beam, and rising in columns till the

roof gave way and crashed in upon the tenantless hearth. Her family lived in the last house, and the ghastly proceedings had begun before the dawn of her memory and gone on all through her childhood, so she was habituated to the yearly feast. Who partook of the "mbokola" she could not tell. She did not know if any of the inhabitants of the village did so, but she herself had never tasted human flesh, though it had many times been offered to her; the idea disgusted her. At last one house alone remained—her house. For some reason, she did not know why, the hand of death was stayed and her family was spared. They left the desolate village, and came to live in Vuni-mbau. Without leave from the chief to act as passport it would have been useless to come away. They would have been seized, and would at once have met with the same fate as if they had stayed. This is how the inconceivable happened and these Kai-na-lotha stayed in their own homes awaiting their doom. To go was certain and immediate death; on the other hand there was always the chance, as with Marita's household, that the chief might relent, or something arise to stop the massacre.

A man who was present while old Marita told her tale, said he had been present at many cannibal feasts, and that he had once eaten a human hand. This was the first real cannibal I had ever seen and it gave me a strange feeling.

Cannibalism before it was finally given up increased to an alarming extent in Fiji and became a positive passion. In the early days the eating of human flesh is said to have been looked upon as a ceremonial rite. Other food was prepared by women, while the human flesh was cut up and cooked entirely by the priests, who dissected it with knives made of split bamboo, and showed great anatomical skill in the way they separated the parts. Only the bodies of those killed in war were eaten, and when there were none but native weapons, these were few.

The feasts were very serious affairs accompanied by a solemn yangona drinking. Only the high chiefs, priests, and people of importance partook, and never the Kai-si (commoners) or women and children.

“Mbokola” was never touched with the fingers, but special forks were used, and whereas other food was eaten off leaves, it was served in bowls, “ndari ni mbokola.” I am fortunate enough to possess one, a curious vessel with little feet, cut out of a solid block of wood. Mrs. Hopkins managed to secure it for me with great difficulty in the mountains. I have also a

cannibal fork, a remarkable wooden instrument with three long wooden prongs. These were never used for anything but human flesh, and the forks especially, many of which were beautifully carved, were looked upon with great veneration, and handed down from father to son. Each fork even had its own individual name, as also had clubs, spears, etc.; one fork for instance was called “Undro-undro” (a small thing carrying a great burden). When not in use they were hidden away and special care was taken that children should not see them.

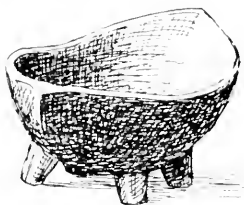


CANNIBAL
FORK.

With the introduction of firearms a great and horrible change was wrought. This began about 1800, when a vessel was wrecked on an outlying reef of the group, and the survivors of the crew purchased their lives by teaching the natives the use of firearms. The chiefs at first thought them wonderful people, and gave them everything they wanted, even to a liberal supply of wives. In return they helped them with their wars, witnessing and encouraging the cannibal feasts. These became very frequent, and the slaughter in war was so great that there were many bodies, and the flesh was now distributed to all classes, to the women and even to the children. Some of the people told us that when they were very young they had actually been given fingers to chew. Parcels also, done up in banana leaves, were sent away as presents to distant friends. With the indulgence the taste grew and became an obsession, and, like drink, it engendered a positive craving. Every occasion had to have its feast and every feast its “mbokola.” It would have been a want of hospitality

not to present it. When there was no war, quarrels were picked and excuses invented to justify clubbing. When this failed, innocent folk were snared, for a constant supply of this loathsome food had to be kept up. Everyone was compelled to partake and more than one of the natives told us they dreaded these feasts, and hated to join in them; for if the indulgence bred appetite in some, it bred disgust in others, and many of the younger chiefs were only too glad to make the arrival of the missionaries the excuse for giving it up.

It has been hinted in some of the books about Fiji, missionary and others, which I have read, that the first lawless visitors to Fiji themselves actually indulged in cannibalism, but of this there is no proof and it is not likely. Many of them, however, paid the penalty of their misdeeds and were killed and very probably eaten, for they lost the respect of the chiefs who had defended them and suffered in consequence. On the other hand, the missionaries coming quite unprotected, without arms, and bringing with them young wives and little children, were almost always well treated even in very savage places, and I know of only one instance of any of them being killed and eaten. Their courage commanded respect, and their clean lives and unvarying kindness drew out affection, so that "the whole armour of God" proved a better protection than swords and guns.



CANNIBAL DISH.

CHAPTER X.

WHERE THE VILLAGE HAD BEEN.

I WAS sorry that anything should interrupt our week in the Fiji village, but even in this remote spot with our one only batch of letters, invitations reached us to a ball which my companion thought it a great pity to miss, and, as our invitations included a boat being sent all the way from Naitonitoni to fetch us and to bring us back, it would have been ehurlish to refuse, so the messenger who brought the letters, took our acceptance back. It was a "bachelors' surprise ball" in the Naitonitoni magistrate's native buri. These surprise balls are a feature in the life of the little English colonies in Fiji. It is the only way the single men, or people with small quarters, have of returning the hospitality they receive so freely. Those who have suitable accommodation get, every now and then, a request to lend their rooms for a certain night, and this is all they have to do with the entertainment. They provide nothing, make no arrangements, and do not even know who is coming. The bachelors in this case sent out the invitations, supplied the provisions, and decorated the mburé.

Our preparations had to be made; my fellow traveller foreseeing such a contingency, had to my surprise, when we were packing our things, insisted that evening dresses must go in. For herself she took material, and proceeded to make her own dress in the native house. It was cut out on the floor without a pattern, then she set off in quest of a sewing machine. I could not believe she would find one in such a place, where, even in the chief's house, there was not a single modern convenience, not even a spoon. But shortly she came back accompanied by a woman carrying a Singer's hand-machine

which was put on the floor, and Mrs. Hopkins, squatting beside it, settled to work. I learned afterwards that there are sewing machines in all the villages. It seems most unnecessary when the ladies' garments are so slight, just two yards of material wrapped round the legs and tucked in at the waist, and a sort of pinafore, or overall, which is taken off when working hard or walking any distance. The Fijian ladies, however, are as concerned about their dress as we are, and these pinafores occupy much of their attention, and are sometimes very dainty with tucks, frills, insertion, and lace, and to have the latest cut in sleeves is of great moment. It would be much better for them, however, if they had to work entirely by hand; they have too little to do now-a-days, and they would be happier if they had to spend a good deal of time quietly sewing.

The new dress proved very successful and becoming, and when tried on, an audience assembled to see it, and it was received with little click, clicks of delight; but still more satisfaction was elicited when we were both dressed ready for the ball; and before we put on our wraps we had to walk up and down to be admired—our things being most carefully examined all over and pronounced "vinaka" (good).

Our boat meantime had arrived with its swarthy rowers, and feeling thoroughly well dressed we set off. When we reached the shore a difficulty arose. The tide was out and the boat lay far away in the distance, leaving a wide expanse of wet sand and mud to be traversed. It was soon overcome, however, by the men picking us up in their powerful arms, as if we were children, and carrying us out to the boat. Then we started on our two-and-a-half hours' journey.

Steadily the men rowed us, and we watched the sun go down behind the water, dyeing the little strips of cirrus clouds red and gold as it sank. Then gradually darkness wiped out everything except the stars which pierced their way through the black dome above us. I do not know how the Fijians found their way, but in due course we arrived.

After the dark river the lighted buri looked brilliant, and very lovely with its Chinese lanterns and gay decorations. All

the furniture had been stacked at one end, and a curtain drawn across. Garlands were twined about the mbala-mbala pillars, and Chinese lanterns and flowers decorated the beams.

Here the dancing went on till late at night, a gramophone yielding the music; and at long tables in the garden refreshments were served.

My companion was rather nervous at the idea of the long row back in the dead of a moonless night, alone with these unknown Fijian men, getting perhaps stuck in the mud, and finally feeling our way through the sleeping village to our house; and she was not a little relieved when our friends declared it to be out of the question, and would not hear of our going away that night. Arrangements were hastily made for us. The curtain in the mburú was drawn back, chairs and tables were pulled off the beds, and we were soon tucked under the mosquito nets among the wreaths and garlands.

Sunday dawned bright and clear, and our surroundings looked strange in the morning light, with the drooping garlands and flower-strewn floor. I went to the native service, which took place early. Though I could not understand the language, the beautiful singing was such a pleasure that I took every opportunity of attending; the rich voices ringing in harmony without an instrument seemed to me the most perfect kind of church music.

The service was in the Court House, the congregation was small but very reverent, and there was a freshness about everyone which gave a pleasant Sunday feeling. The women wore clean white pinafores, and the men were all in white,—white singlet and white sulu,—and every bushy head was so carefully dressed that there was not a hair out of place. The prisoners from the gaol were there too, all freshly washed, and with clean sack-like shirts decorated with the broad arrow. All was reverence, order and decorum. Yet this was Naitonitoni, where savagery and cannibalism ran riot within living memory. The very name of the place, Naitonitoni (the steeping in the waters), speaks of the horrors committed there, for in the rivers the bodies were put to soak till they were wanted for food, and near this place was the terrible Na-Lotha

where Marita had lived. As my fellow traveller knew the site well she offered to take me to it. When she lived here she had often visited it with her children. They used to take baskets with them, and picnic under the great ivi trees which mark the spot. I hardly felt as if I should like to picnic there, but people get used to anything, and familiarity rubs the horror off the greatest tragedies. Things were a good deal changed since she had been here, and there was no path, so that it was difficult to find the way. We tucked up our white dresses, and struggled through the thick vegetation and over treacherous ground. Sometimes we were stopped by an impassable barrier, and had to retrace our steps. We had to cross several native bridges, simple palm-trunks, over water sluggishly oozing through black, slimy mud, and there was rather a heavy smell of dank, decaying vegetation. Sometimes we were afraid we should have to give up, but I was most anxious to get there, and my companion never liked to be baffled, so we struggled on. At last she exclaimed, "There it is," and above the thick undergrowth we caught a glimpse of two great glossy-leaved trees. These were ivi trees (*Inocarpus edulis*) always, and only, associated with villages. They are very umbrageous, and under them people can gather, almost as completely sheltered from the sun as if they were inside a building, and there meetings can be held, and feasts take place. What a story these trees could tell! They stood once on the village green, encircled by pretty houses and carefully tended fruit trees. On the smooth grass the happy children played, as I have often seen them do, making themselves toys, decking themselves with flowers, and laughing in glee over their miniature war dances. Then came the offence and the punishment; not confinement in a well-ordered gaol for the actual offenders, but the slaughter of all, and the awful feasts. It must have been under one of these very trees that judgment was given, and here the chief would come to enjoy the measuring of it out, year after year, till the whole village was gone, and nothing was left to tell the tale but those two great trees.

The jungle had crept in, rank vegetation choked the green,

and great rampant vines clasped and strangled the fruit trees, twisting and entangling everything, and trailing in great ropes to the ground, where ripe fruit had fallen and lay rotting unheeded. It was desolation of desolation. I picked up a few ivi-nuts in their rough brown envelopes, and gathered some of the glossy laurel-like leaves. Then, silent and grave, we turned to retrace our steps. It was no easy matter, and after wandering for some time we found ourselves back in the dreary spot. We started afresh and this time hit our track, but we had to hurry now, for it was getting late. When we came to one of the bridges my guide called back to me to be cautious as it was rather shaky. Looking up to answer I lost my footing and slipped down into the slimy ooze. Fortunately I was able to grasp some branches and climb back to the bridge, but I brought up a mass of mud with me, for I sunk above the knees. We did not know what to do; I could hardly walk and the odour was most offensive. We got stiff leaves and scraped off the thickest of the mud, then, in the nearest water, rinsed what garments we could.

When we reached the house I made my way in unobserved, and, taking off my things, got into bed where I was none the worse for a rest.

CHAPTER XI.

YANGONA.

WE did not return to our romantic quarters till Monday. Fijians have been taught by the missionaries to be very particular about the observance of Sunday, and will do no work that is not absolutely necessary on that day. On Monday we set off in good time, accompanied by our Naitonitoni hostess and a friend, with her small boy. The village was quite deserted when we arrived, and the fire in the house was out. This, however, was remedied by the boatmen, who got a light by rubbing two sticks together. Watching how they managed it was wonderfully interesting, but it took them some time to find the necessary materials. Piece after piece of wood was examined and discarded, till at last they were satisfied and set to work. A thick bit of softish wood well seasoned was held firmly down on the ground by one of the men, while, into a groove in it, the other rubbed a pointed piece of very hard stick, backwards and forwards with all his might. He worked with such a will that the perspiration streamed down, and at last smoke began to rise from the hollow; then a tiny flame which caught the loose fibres the friction had raised. The flame was carefully nursed, a few shavings applied, then bits of bamboo, which lighted up beautifully, and this live-fire was carried into the house and put among some sticks, so that a cheerful fire was soon crackling on the stone hearth.

We felt very hospitable and invited our guests to lunch, and they were delighted to accept our invitation. While they had a little walk we busied ourselves with preparations. My companion went in search of provisions, while I collected the

plates, my long arms coming in very useful in reaching the beautiful broad bread-fruit leaves, too high up to have been gathered by the other women. When I got back to the house the pot was on the fire, and a savoury smell was proceeding from it and from sundry objects invitingly cooking among the sticks. On a clean mat I spread the leaves and some red and yellow peppers, which I viewed now with fear as well as admiration. Two or three flowers here and there, and the split bamboo knives and forks completed the arrangements.

Dinner was ready. And by way of gong we clapped our hands for our guests, who were not long in appearing. We felt superior and blasé when they exclaimed with surprise and delight at everything. I offered my sketching stool all round but it was scornfully declined, and we all sat on the floor. The friend had some difficulty in disposing of her legs and feet, but she would not own to it, and tried elaborately to look extremely comfortable. We all enjoyed our dinner which was really very good. The menu was as follows: roast taro and yam, shell-fish stewed with coconut, boiled taro leaves, and bread-fruit sliced and toasted.

Our guests had hardly gone when the absent inhabitants of the village began to return in canoes and rowing boats, and to troop up in crowds to their houses. Every place was now full, and all the people were chattering as hard and as fast as they could. The character of the place was completely changed, and we now saw the real village life. They had brought turtle back with them, and we saw it cut up with great wooden knives, and tasted the carefully cooked flesh. I did not think it at all good, and wondered that people should have risked their lives many times to obtain it, and that it should be looked upon as such a dainty in England.

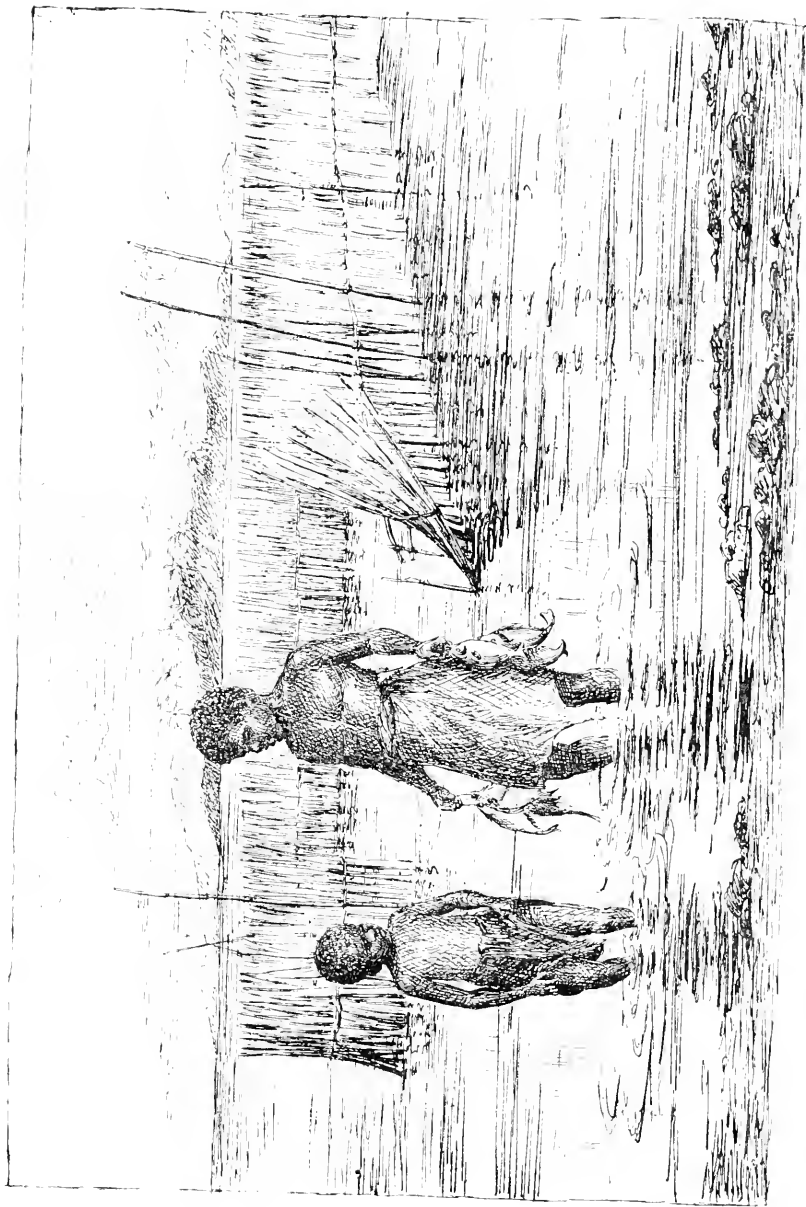
I now made acquaintance with several Fiji dishes, not all to my liking, notably "pudding." I had been told about it and was anxious to see it, when one day it arrived—a woman came in with a parcel done up in a large leaf, and crouching down respectfully before us, she opened it up and displayed a number of damp doughy-looking little balls, which appeared as if they had been much handled, and were not very inviting.

We had to accept, however, but I could only taste one and hide away the rest of it. I found it mawkish, and its appearance was against it. It is made of green bananas and taro grated together to a kind of pulp, with the addition of thick juice squeezed from coconut. It is then tied up in bits of banana leaves as we tie up suet pudding at home, and baked. The natives consider it a great treat, and we were thought very generous because we distributed most of what had been given to us among them. They hardly ever allow their bananas to ripen, but gather them green and cook them, when they have a purely vegetable taste. It seemed to us great waste, and we were very thankful whenever we could get hold of some ripe ones. The absence of ripe fruit to eat when travelling in Fiji was a disappointment.

We went once with a boat to see the fish taken out of the fish-fence. The fence is crescent shaped, the open end towards the shore, and is made of bamboos set into the sand close together. When the tide is in it is entirely under water, and the fish swim into it. When the tide is out the ends of the fence are in dry ground, and the fish cannot get out again, and are easily captured by the skilled hands of the Fijians.

By the evening I think the village must have had its full complement of inhabitants. They crowded into the chief's house, and in the light of the rickety lamp on the floor, we could see them squatting one beyond the other all over the room.

Suddenly I was startled by the very barbaric sound of the beating of the "lali," the famous wooden drum of Fiji, which in the old days used to summon the people to the horrible cannibal feasts. I had seen the drums lying in the village; they looked like great pig-troughs, hollowed out of a tree trunk, and I had been told what they were, but had never heard them till that night. The dull, penetrating half-musical thud, sent a shiver down my back, and I looked round to see what was to happen. The people in the room had all assumed reverential attitudes, and were quietly waiting. Presently the leaves at the door rustled and a tall figure stepped in. It was the native missionary, who with the rest of the people had been



FIJIAN FISH FENCE.

away at the funeral feast. He was dressed in a clean white shirt and sulu, and was a handsome, well-made man, very dark and with bushy hair, but with a singularly sweet expression. He raised his hand in benediction, and the people bowed devoutly. Then he squatted on the floor among us, and the whole company joined in singing, in Fijian, the hymn—"Abide with me"—and never did the beautiful old hymn seem more beautiful. It was sung in parts, with perfect precision, the rich voices of the men blending in sweet harmony with the clear, ringing voices of the women and boys; I felt I should like to listen to it for ever. The native missionary then read a portion of scripture and offered a prayer, the people all kneeling with their foreheads on the ground. After another hymn had been sung he went away as silently as he came, and entered the next house. He goes round thus to each house, and this beautiful little service takes place every night. No worship has ever impressed me so much, though I have heard fine music with well trained choirs in many of the world's most famous cathedrals, where great preachers have expounded the Word of God. This simple service touched a deeper chord.

The light of the one dim lamp on the floor lost itself in the far recesses of the vast room and among the cross bars of the high roof, and it only partly revealed the congregation, all absolutely still and quiet. Outside too there was quiet, for all knew it was prayer time, and work, laughter and talk were suspended. It was difficult to believe how recent were the wild savage days, and that some of those now bending in meek devotion had witnessed the most hideous of cannibal feasts, and been themselves partakers.

Presently the leaves of the door again rustled and a man entered carrying an uprooted plant with thick jointed stems. He squatted near the door and waited. This was a present of yangona root to the chief, and was to be used for brewing the famous Fiji grog. The great wooden yangona bowl was unhooked from the wall, where I had already noticed it hanging, and set in the middle of the floor; then preparations began.

Yangona is a kind of pepper-wort (*Piper methisticum*). It grows in Fiji, but tradition ascribes its origin to Tonga. It is said to have been brought over when the Tongans first accidentally discovered Fiji. It came about in this way:

Night after night the Tongans had watched the sun drop into the sea and a new sun take its place each morning. What



YANGONA ROOT.

waste to lose all those beautiful golden discs! If only one could be captured before it sank, what a splendid ornament it would make hung round the neck as a breastplate!

An adventurous chief and his wife with their young son set off in their canoe in quest of it. They sailed away westwards, and all day long they kept on their course, but in the evening, beyond their reach, the sun vanished into the depths. They were not discouraged but still went on, sun after sun eluding them. At last with the long exposure their boy began to droop and they were glad when they sighted land (Fiji). They made for it as quickly as they could, but arrived too late to save him; as they gently carried him on shore he died. They buried him there, and watered his grave with their tears. By and by a little plant sprang up and grew and flourished: it was Yangona, the delight of Fiji.

Till lately the first process in the preparation of yangona was far from attractive, and I was glad that, for sanitary reasons, it had been modified by the English government before my day, or I could not have made up my mind to partake, and that would have been considered a great slight. Young men with good strong teeth acted as mills and chewed up bits of

the root, being careful not to swallow any of the juice, and when it was thoroughly masticated they rolled it into a ball with the tongue and spat it into the bowl. Now it is ground between two stones instead, but it is said to have lost flavour with the change, and there were those, even among the English, who actually preferred it chewed. Water is next poured into the bowl, and all the fibres of the root are strained out very carefully with the fibre of the vau tree, a kind of hibiscus. A cup, fashioned from half a coconut is then filled by squeezing the juice into it from the fibre used as a sponge, and it is handed to the company in order of rank, each person draining the cup at a single draught, and spinning it back with a quick gesture to the feet of the cup-bearer.

There is much old ceremonial connected with the making and drinking of yangona which I shall describe later on, but this was a very informal affair, and interesting only as my first experience of Fiji grog.

No sooner was this brew finished than another man slipped in with another bunch of the root, and the whole performance began again. Still a third man came in. I was getting dreadfully tired, and felt a sense of despair and a great longing for quiet and to lie down and rest. Mrs. Hopkins said a word to the chief and began stringing up the curtain across our corner, and when this third supply was done the self-invited guests withdrew, and the household settled down to sleep with their necks on their wooden pillows.

Sometimes this yangona drinking goes on all night. Ratu Sukuna, the young chief already referred to, told me that after he had been absent at any time his welcoming friends would sometimes come in one after the other all night, bringing yangona roots, for several nights in succession. Etiquette in Fiji is very stringent. The present must be accepted, however unwelcome, the beverage prepared, and the polite attitude maintained all the time. There must be no lying down or reclining at ease, except for the highest chief present, nor any dropping off to sleep. My young friend showed me how he had to sit all the time, and it seemed as if it could not but be painfully cramping, and the constraint must be all

the more trying as the grog has in itself a soporific effect. But a high-bred Fijian would bear anything rather than wound feelings or give offence, or do what is considered unbecoming.

I tried to make out what was the attraction of yangona. To me it was simply nasty. It tasted like dirty soapy water with a certain astringency which left a curious velvety feeling in the mouth. It does not intoxicate, or go to the head, but when taken to excess it causes a temporary paralysis of the legs. As far as I could make out from description, the sensation produced after taking a good deal is pretty much that of smoking opium—a dreamy feeling of goodness and beauty and happiness, and a vanishing away from the mind of any painful realities. It does not, however, seem to do much harm afterwards, unless when indulged in to very great excess. My young friend said he only felt rather “old” next day; but squatting all night in the same position would produce this feeling without any yangona to account for it.



YANGONA GROWING.

CHAPTER XII.

FAREWELL TO VUNI-MBAU.

THERE was not much repose that night. The Fijians are restless mortals under all circumstances, marching about and talking and going in and out of the house at all hours. But it is worse when they have just met together again after a few days' separation, and I have never seen anything like it, except perhaps in Majorca. They seem as if they could not be still a minute, and they chatter, chatter, chatter, like a colony of rooks. I wondered what all the talk could be about, but no doubt we figured largely in the discourse of those who had stayed behind. Once elsewhere we had been kept awake all night by the restlessness and eloquence of our companions, and finding ourselves alone were trying in the morning to snatch a few minutes' rest when some women came in, eager to help us about our breakfast, and seeing us still lying down they remarked to each other "Oh, these English, how they do sleep!" It was a trifle riling. They could always make up for their broken nights by lying down on the floor in the day time and going fast asleep, but we could not, and were often very tired. It was perhaps just as well under the circumstances, that our week was drawing to an end; yet I was sorry. I felt it was the close of a stage in my life that could never recur; and though it was really only the beginning of my experiences in Fiji, and I should be visiting other and more interesting villages, Vuni-mbau would always hold its own as the first place where I had lifted the veil, and seen into the hearts of the people. The fact that I had chosen it myself gave me a feeling of proprietorship, all the stronger because it was a little place which would always remain obscure, and

never become a sight of the world, as might Namosi and Mbau some day. The



COCONUT PALMS AT VUNI-MBAU.

women, too, who had been round us all the time, were very friendly; and if I could only have broken through the barrier of the language we might have had nice chats. As it was, my small efforts were greeted with enthusiasm. There was tremendous excitement when I brought out a new word, and I could hear them telling each other about it, and going over my whole vocabulary which was not too copious, and as far as I was concerned amounted to almost nothing. In all my travels I had been used quickly to master enough even of the patois of the people I was among, to have pleasant intercourse, but here it was different. I could not grasp even the rudiments of the language, the time being so short and my brain so busy receiving all the wonderful new impressions

of the scenes passing so rapidly before it. I had a last sketch or two to make, and the merry little children as usual

placed themselves so as to be sure to be taken, and screamed with delight when they found their little sparkling black faces on the paper. They have not yet got the shadowy look of sadness which is such a marked characteristic of their elders. While I was sketching under the palms I was startled by something brushing past my shoulder and falling with a terrific crack, at my side. There was a rush of the children, and a coconut* was picked up. If it had fallen on my head I should not have been here to tell the tale. I cannot imagine how there are so few accidents. On enquiry I learned that once a child had been killed, and that a man and a boy had had their heads split open; but this was a small list of casualties, seeing that coconut palms wave over every village, and that the natives live out of doors.

The men were as interested and excited about my sketches as were the children, and one of the chiefs put on all his paraphernalia of war for me to paint him.



RATU AMARE IN HIS PARAPHER-
NALIA OF WAR.

* Coconut is the correct spelling, not "cocoanut" as usually adopted. In a very interesting lecture on the subject, Sir Everard im Thurn tells how the nut got the name of Coco from Vasco de Gama in 1498 or 1499, probably on account of the face-like marks on it when the outer husk is removed, "coco" meaning "grimace" in Portuguese.

A clerical error in an early edition of Johnson's dictionary gave the spelling as "Cocoa nut," confusing it with the very different tropical product called cocoa. from the Mexican "cacastal."

and they acted a miniature battle for my benefit, in which one fell dead. What surprised and delighted them particularly was that the sketch came out at once and they could see it coming; whereas for a photograph faith was required. But the photographs they saw taken generally ended in becoming post-cards, and in their getting copies, and they expected mine, too, to turn into post-cards. I am sure if any of them should go to Suva they would search very earnestly for them in the shops there.

A Fijian loves to see his own likeness; it does not much matter whether it be good or bad; he feasts his eyes on it, with a look of rapture on his face. They delight in all pictures, and they comprehend and understand them wonderfully, far better than our own uneducated classes at home. This makes it very surprising that they themselves never try to draw. I came upon only one instance of native art; it was at Nukuloa: an excited crowd came upon me when I was sketching, carrying with them a very childish representation of a boat, such as might have been done by a little boy of four or five at home, executed in colours on the back of a bit of paste-board. It was held in front of me, between me and the sketch I was doing, with such an evident expectation of admiration that I could not do less than say "vinaka" (good), and enquire who had done it. The crowd disappeared in search of the artist, and soon returned bringing in triumphal procession a pleased but bashful old man, very scantily dressed. He was evidently considered the star of the community, but I was sorry he was such an old man, as I fear the native art of Fiji will soon pass away.

Our week was over, and we had now to say good bye to our village. We were to spend a few more days at Tamanua, while I painted the manager's pretty little daughter, Molly; and early in the morning of July 24th we expected one of his little launches to come and fetch us back to civilisation, but it did not arrive till quite late in the afternoon. I was in no hurry, and I got another sketch, and we had one more dinner off leafy plates on the floor. The tide was so far out that the bare patches of sand seemed to be spreading

themselves here and there as far as Mbenga, and we had almost given up hope of the launch, when on the dim horizon it was discovered, a little speck trying in vain to find an approach to the shore. The Vuni-mbau men were all off fishing, so there was neither boat nor boatman available. The women and boys trooped down, and there was great shouting and gesticulating, till at last the men in the far distance were made to understand that there was a creek leading to a little river, up which they could come. We joined the launch there, but it had to keep well in the middle, not to get stuck in the mud. It came up as far as a native bridge, along which we had to climb and then drop ourselves into the boat. The bridge was, as usual, simply a felled tree thrown across the water, better adapted to the bare feet of the natives than to ours; but eager little black hands were ready to help, and we were soon safely established in as clean a corner as we could find in the oily little boat.

The natives crowded along the bridge, silent and grave, to watch us go. Not a smile on all the dear little faces that had been so merry. It was a true Fijian farewell. We called back "Sa tiko"* and they replied "Sa lako."† Then the noisy little launch started its unmusical clatter, the lovely river with its charming group of natives was left behind, and we were gone.

* "Sa tiko" (you stay)	} The Fijian way of saying
† "Sa lako" (you go)	

CHAPTER XIII.

POLING UP THE NAVUA RIVER.

PRETTY little Molly Duncan with her fair complexion, golden hair, and blue eyes, was a great change from my late models ; she was like a spring flower among the brown leaves of winter.

My paint box had to be well washed, a process in which she took the keenest interest. And then we began. She proved a very good sitter, and a most attentive listener to stories of the goat who went to market, and my own special and very exciting version of Rumpel Stiltzchen. It was a liberation to be able to talk again ; I felt as if I had been labouring under a spell. Little Lily, the older girl, superintended the picture and imbibed my stories with appetite. She looked a little wistful that I could not paint her too and she would have made a sweet picture, but Namosi rugged and grand was calling us from afar, and we had to shout back, " We come."

Namosi was one of the places, perhaps *the* place, I had most set my heart on seeing in Fiji. It is a mountain village, in a setting of jagged crags more extraordinary in form than any I have come across in all my travels. Their outline as seen from Suva harbour is enough to excite any artist, especially one with an interest in geology, and to produce an intense desire for a nearer view.

My fellow traveller, I believe, was the first white lady to visit the spot. It was in her husband's district when he was magistrate at Naitonitoni, and she accompanied him on one of his yearly visits. The difficulties she had then to encounter were very great, crossing turbulent rivers among huge boulders, and being pulled up slippery, perpendicular rocks. By telling me of the wonders of the place, she whetted my desires. Then

she said it would be impossible for me to reach it, and told of dripping clothes and scratched hands. In my case, however, the dangers were rather an attraction, and I was almost disappointed to learn that the magistrate had improved the road, circumventing or removing the chief difficulties prior to a visit of Lady in Thurn, a fact of which he was extremely proud.

The district is inhabited by a very wild tribe, not long turned from barbarism; and the magistrate told us there were signs of restlessness, and that he did not consider that it would be at all safe for us to visit it alone; as, however, he would be going up for his annual council meeting he offered to take us with him, and it was just about this time that he was proposing to go. Circumstances, however, interfered and his meeting was put off till September, too late for us. He tried to dissuade us altogether from going, but when he found that we were quite determined, he rendered every assistance and made things as easy as possible.

As he considered that a proper escort was absolutely necessary, he arranged that the native doctor from Namuamua, a superior and very fine looking man, should accompany us, remain with us all the time, and bring us safely back. Then we had four men carriers and a *chaperon*. Both the magistrate and his wife insisted that we should have a native woman with us for propriety, and to wait on us. A pretty, sweet creature, the wife of a chief, would much have liked to come with us, but her husband was a bit of an ogre and he would not have it. So another lady was procured. I do not know what was the reason of the choice, but certainly it was not beauty. I suppose she considered herself well connected, for she brought more luggage than we, having her own pillows, stuffed cotton ones with frilled pillow cases, and a considerable wardrobe, which enabled her to be resplendent in a silk and lace pinafore at Namosi on Sunday; and no doubt the ladies there realised that she had quite the latest cut in sleeves. She also carried a large umbrella, to protect her from the sun and to save her very dark complexion no doubt! This umbrella proved the greatest bother to me, because, combined with her

broad substantial person, it completely cut off my view when she walked immediately in front of me in the narrow paths, or sat before me in the boat, a view which I had come so far to see, and which was to be seen just once in a lifetime. Sometimes we induced her to put her umbrella down for a little,

but it was soon up again. I am sure it gave her a consciousness of great style and superiority.

It was hard work for our men poling against the stiff current and getting our boat up rapids and among boulders. Formerly it was extremely difficult and even dangerous; but, on account of banana traffic, the worst rocks had been removed by blasting, which was still going on. A certain amount of excitement remained however, especially on the return journey, when the boat swirled and twisted in shooting some of the rapids. Our men were full of talk about an artist who had gone that way the previous year and been overturned. I am afraid they were rather amused at his lamentations over his lost photographs and sketches. I had little concern for a ducking, or even the risk of a shark, but



ONE OF OUR BOATMEN POLING
UP THE RIVER.

I would have failed to see the joke if the Navua had claimed my sketch book, so I kept it in my hand ready to pitch on to the bank should an accident occur. Indeed it was constantly in my hand in order to snatch what impressions I could in season and out of season. Unless I had done this I should have had little to bring home of the wonderful panorama which was always unrolling itself before us in our wanderings through

the islands, the most beautiful scenes appearing when there was the least opportunity to sketch.

Our baggage was reduced to a minimum, as it had often to be taken out of the boat and carried by the men, while we scrambled over stones along the banks, to lighten the boat where the water was shallow and navigation hardly possible. Later, when we finished our journey on foot, the men had to carry it entirely.

We had, however, to take provisions with us, as we could count only on yams and taro at Namosi. When we stopped to lunch on a gravelly island in the middle of the river, the men quietly helped themselves to a loaf each, and one for the chaperon, six out of our supply of eight. We were horrified, and my companion at once took over the provisions and gave them out as she thought fit, and it was astonishing how economically she managed. We all fared alike. Tea and biscuits served us in the middle of the day, and when we put up in the evening in a native mburé she secured the household pot, and with one tin of meat, to which were added yams and taro till there was enough for all, she made a savoury stew. The doctor and the chaperon ate with us, and the men had the rest afterwards. A bit of the two precious remaining loaves handed round after dinner served as pudding, and it was wonderful how nice that bread tasted.

We had lovely weather all the time, which is very unusual here where it is more often wet than fine, the luxuriant vegetation bearing testimony to the frequent rain.

Poling up the river was a true luxury. Our men decked themselves with wreaths of flowers intermingled with streamers of masi (beaten bark), and put roses in their hair, which made a pretty touch of colour and gave a festive appearance. They wore these ornaments the whole time, and, when walking on in front carrying our belongings, they looked very picturesque threading their way among tall ferns and straggling creepers. In all our journeys with carriers, they were constantly decorating themselves. They could not pass coloured leaves or flowers without stopping to gather and bestow some of these about their persons.

The first night we spent at Namuamua, the doctor's home, a beautiful little village clinging to the high cliffs which here rise on each side of the river.

The doctor had been away some little time, and he was disgusted to find everything in his little domain completely neglected, his servants not having done a stroke of work while he was away.

After supper and a little rest, I wandered by moonlight about the village and along the top of the cliffs. The silvery light was so bright that I could see mountain beyond mountain vanishing in the far distance, and the glittering river winding in the valley beneath, appearing and disappearing among the misty shadows of the cliffs. Nearer, the pretty reed-built houses nestled among the palms, and here and there the red glow of a lamp blinked through a doorway, casting a warm line of light across the grass. Nothing could have been more peacefully beautiful.

My companion joined me to say that, in spite of their long, hard day's work, our men had offered to take us a little bit up the river and across to a village on the other side. We were delighted to accept, and we thoroughly enjoyed the row in the moonlight.

From one of the houses we heard chanting as we strolled through the village, and looking in we were much interested to find a large class of tiny boys in leafy garments learning "meké." They were so eager to catch the words of the chants and the correct motions of these intricate war dances, that they went straight on and never heeded us, though the advent of two white ladies must have been a rare event. All these little dark scholars, with their gleaming eyes, brandishing miniature clubs, and swaying their lithe little bodies in unison, had a curious and somewhat impressive effect in the dim lamp light.

A bath in the river ended the day. We slipped down bare-foot through the tangle of dewy vegetation shimmering in the silvery moonlight, and stepped into the glittering water.

The doctor vacated his house for us, and we retired—I was going to say to rest, but there was no rest that night. The

doctor had just come home, and he had to have his welcome, and everything had to be discussed. His friends assembled just outside our door, and they talked and talked all night without stopping. Tired as we were with the long day, it was quite impossible to sleep, and we were glad when it was time to get up and set about arrangements for the last stage of our journey.



ONE OF OUR CARRIERS WITH
COCONUT-LEAF BASKETS.

The first preparation for our pedestrian journey was the making of baskets to carry our food, so as to dispense with the heavy, clumsy packing cases. It was interesting to watch how skilfully this was done. A large palm-leaf was gathered and plaited up, and in about five minutes a substantial and very picturesque basket resulted, with a handle by which it was slung on to a pole. I brought one of

these baskets home, and it was amusing to see the astonishment of the young Fijian chief who visited me at Wroxham, when he saw it hanging up in my studio. "We would call that a very common basket in Fiji," he said.

When all was ready for departure, I wanted to get a remembrance of the whole party setting off, and made my wishes known through my interpreter. The men immediately put down their loads and crossing their arms, arranged themselves in a neat group, like the photo of a cricket team or boating party, all full face in the same attitude. I remonstrated, and when my desires were interpreted to them, and they learned that I wished to draw their backs as they walked away, they became so angry that they looked quite dangerous. I had drawn their fine athletic backs the day before as they poled the boat, and now to want to draw their backs again gave dire offence. There is still a lingering recollection of the old fear of a treacherous dart from behind, which makes a Fijian very nervous about his back, and it is considered bad manners in Fiji to pass behind a person. You must always pass in front; indeed, in the old days, it was a matter of clubbing if any went behind a chief. It was some time before our men recovered from the insult I had unwittingly inflicted, and they were very sulky most of the way to Namosi.

In ascending the river we had already reached a considerable height. We now left our boat behind, and proceeded on foot to make a climb through indescribably grand and beautiful scenery. We kept to the little native path, and had to walk in single file. It was well worn, and wound its way among thick vegetation and through endless streams, which we generally had to ford, as they are spanned only occasionally, when narrow and deep, by a log bridge. The men were always ready to carry us, but I preferred to walk. I wore canvas shoes, leather boots being no good in Fiji where so much wading is required, and I enjoyed stepping through the cool water.

The path was unlike anything I had seen before. It bore the impress of the constant tread of generations of bare feet. Where it made its way over rocks or up the naked

mountain side, the stone was smooth and polished, telling of the many years it had been used ; and it was easy to picture the wild dark men in their fearsome war paint, with their arrows and long spears and murderous clubs, slipping stealthily over this very path, intent on aggression or revenge. These heights were seldom scaled on a peaceful errand. War was the game of life, and all the men played it.

A part of the way led through an alley of hibiscus ; the branches, bright with big scarlet and crimson flowers, met overhead. It told of a white man's effort to live there, which had failed, and house and all were gone. To grow this beautiful hibiscus in Fiji it is necessary only to cut off slender branches and stick them in the ground, and they are soon graceful little trees. Our men renewed their decorations, and we went on our way, which all the rest of the time led through undisturbed nature. Shaddock trees, with fruit like great yellow oranges, dropped their burdens on our path, and we refreshed ourselves with the juice as we walked. They are not so good as oranges, and being very astringent, too much of the juice draws the mouth unpleasantly, producing sore throat. Lemon trees abounded too, old and gnarled, which were laden with luscious fruit, juicy and ripe and richly scented, but too acid to be palatable.

CHAPTER XIV.

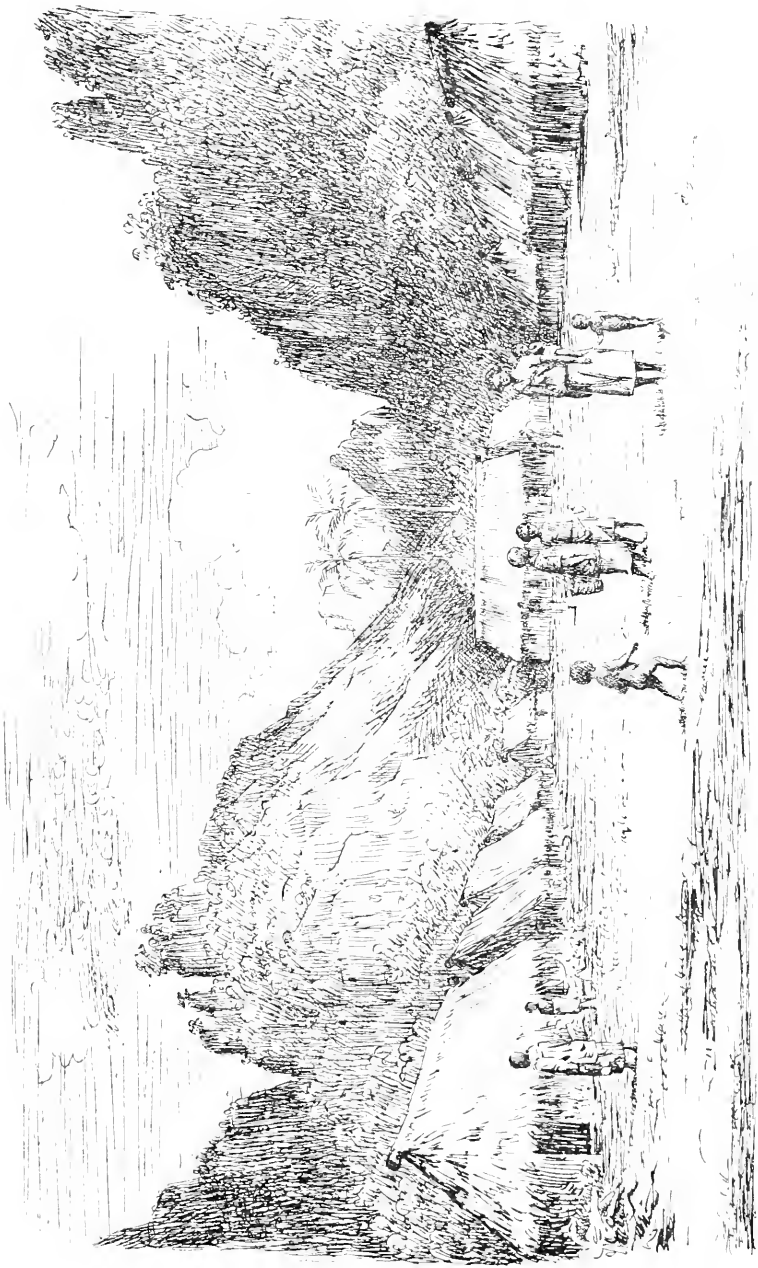
NAMOSI.

THE scenery grew grander and grander. Our path lay high on the mountain side and we looked across a deep valley to mountains which seemed to have been pitched about in fantastic confusion, rent and riven by wild volcanic action long ago, but now smiling in the sunshine and clothed in nature's loveliest dress. Here, in this mild damp climate, wherever there is a little ledge something springs up. In the cracks of the beetling precipices there are little emerald lines, and on the very crest of the mountains, high up among the clouds, there is a feathery edge of green. All over the slopes a sweeping velvet mantle covers every thing, only the undulating lights and shadows indicating the irregularity of the ground underneath. This makes the scenery very individual and exceedingly difficult to paint. It took me some time to get used to it and to feel it to be quite natural.

Then we began to descend and plunged into the jungle which hid everything. Suddenly it opened and we had a peep of the strange crags which surround Namosi, and in a few minutes we were there.

Could it be real—or was I dreaming, and was this a stage where some great play was to be acted, with scenery painted by a master hand ?

It was so utterly different from anything I had seen before, that I stood looking with a dazed feeling and it was some time before I could realise that it was tangible. Even now, when I look back, this first sight of Namosi and the time I spent there, seem more like a dream or a piece of savage poetry of which I formed a part, than an actual event in my life. I



NAMOSI.

had been taken so completely out of myself that it was almost painful to be recalled by my companion's questions, "Well, what do you think of it? Is it as nice as you expected? Are you disappointed?" I had to wake myself up to try to say something appropriate.

There before us lay the broad green "rara," which looked as flat and fair as an English lawn; and round it, neatly and evenly set, the reed houses, at the far end that of the chief, larger than the rest, and with a palm tree at each side. Then, behind, surrounding it on all sides, battlements and bulwarks of rugged crags. No wonder Namosi was difficult to subdue, and that it was one of the last places where cannibalism and barbarism hid themselves away.

The sun was low and streams of golden light poured themselves between the rocks, lighting up into glorious hues the "croton" and dracæna leaves round the houses; while on the grass the people were moving about, the men, fine athletic figures with hardly anything on, and the women in gay draperies and gayer hair, for it was dyed every colour—yellow, orange, and even magenta. All this added to the strangeness of the picture, and made Namosi what it was.

The chief, Ratu Langi-ni-Vala, a pleasant, well-mannered and intelligent man, with a deeply marked countenance, received us with great kindness. He much regretted that, through some mistake, word had not reached him of our coming, so that no preparation had been made to receive us, nor had provisions been got in. He conducted us to his house, which as usual consisted of one very large room, which in this case measured fifty-one feet by thirty-one; and he allowed to us the end with the dais, the place of honour. There we strung up our curtain, which however we could not draw except at night, as that would be thought so rude and unfriendly in Fiji. People trooped in from every side, and, while the chief's pretty Mbengan wife was preparing a meal for us, we were plied with questions. First came the inevitable, "Where are your husbands?" My companion explained that her's was dead. "We know that, but could you not get another?" They were much surprised when she said she did not want one. As for me, they could

not get over the idea that I had never had any husband at all. They failed to understand my family allowing it, and my wishing it. Wherever we went this was always a great source of astonishment and speculation. Mrs. Hopkins often heard them discussing the matter. They evidently thought it great waste of good material and said what a pity it was, for we could have made two strong men so happy. This was a great compliment, as strength is always looked upon by them as the thing most worthy of respect. The strong men might have been very imposing belongings, but we could travel more lightly without them! After learning that I had no husband, the Fijians invariably enquired if I had any children. And Mrs. Hopkins had to tell them that it was not the custom for unmarried women in England to have children.

I strolled out after supper to acquaint myself with my surroundings, which seemed more lovely than ever in the twilight. The people had gone in and there was an air of peace and quiet everywhere; the only sound was the murmur of voices from the surrounding houses and the tinkle of the Wai-ndina, the loveliest of lovely rivers, which flows beside the village. On the other side were black frowning rocks, and dense vegetation hiding with its kindly curtain terrible secrets, some of which were to be revealed to us later on, for *there* once stood the old town of Namosi. It was nice to learn that the sweet village green of to-day had never been stained with blood, or disgraced with heathen orgies, and that the houses, so cheerful and attractive, had never been spoiled by evil rites. When the inhabitants were converted and gave up cannibalism, twenty years ago, they were seized with fear and disgust and could not stay in their polluted village, so they deserted, it and, crossing the river, built the new village, clean and fresh, on the other side.

When I came back the lamp was lighted and stood askew on the billowy floor, and my fellow traveller was squatting native fashion in the middle of a large group of intensely interested listeners, to whom she was telling what had happened in the great far away world since her visit here years ago. They remembered her visit well. It was a great event, and they

had talked about it ever since. They had seen six other white ladies, but she had been the first, and in consequence a person of great distinction. She chatted on and on in fluent Fijian and told them all about the King's funeral, and the coronation and endless other things, and neither she nor her listeners seemed to tire. Fijians are veritable children where there is question of a story. They listen as only children listen, with an intensity of attention and delight, handing over their whole being to absorb the narrative. What a good time I should have had if only I could have spoken the language. I was quite jealous of the talker spinning her yarns while I had to sit dumb, not even knowing what she was talking about.

Our guests sat late and I was very tired. I counted twenty-seven of them, but I daresay there were far more. The light was very dim, and it was difficult to make out the dark figures one behind the other, losing themselves in the shadowy distance of the big room.

At last they melted silently away and we prepared for bed. Our ablutions were performed in the Wai-ndina. The bath in the cool moonlight after the crowded room, was very refreshing, and a good preparation for the night. It was not very easy to sleep however, partly on account of the rats, which were very lively. When they scampered over the floor their little feet made a great pattering on the soft matting, and when they ran along the beams they dropped things down which rattled on the floor. I resented their looking at me in bed, but they never came inside the mosquito net, which thus was useful in more ways than one.

I chose for my resting place the vicinity of a little window with shutters, which I had opened. It was pleasant to feel the night air and to watch the moonlight among the palm trees, but a pussy found the opening convenient, and it was not a little disturbing when she chose many times to jump in and out, right on the top of me. I do not know how the rats and she managed to live so good-naturedly together. It seemed to be carrying peace and goodwill a little too far.

The Fijians too were very restless. I peeped out from behind the curtain, and saw them lying about over the floor

with their little hard "pillows" tucked under their necks. I do not know who they all were, for the chief had only one little boy, a child of three years old, who early in the evening had dropped asleep in a little heap where he had been sitting by the lamp, and had been covered with infinite tenderness by his mother with a warm shawl, and then carried by his father and gently laid down in a far corner. There seemed a good many people altogether and they were always waking up and talking. One old wretch had a great deal to say and when he did go to sleep he snored abominably, so that we much regretted that our useful curtain kept out no sound.

During this part of our travels we had the loan of a hurricane lantern, and we left it alight all night, which was a great comfort. Later we had to do without any such luxuries, but we were more used to things then; we had even to forego our beloved curtain and make the best shelter we could by stringing up a waterproof. The mosquito net we never dispensed with. It was an absolute necessity, and, when the worst came to the worst, it gave us privacy, and a good deal of our toilet could be performed inside, but I often felt as if I were going to bed in the street.

Next day was devoted to sketching, but I wished I had more time before me. It was despairing work to try to catch anything of this entirely new scenery in such a little while, and there was difficulty in settling to one thing when on all sides subjects were calling me to sketch them. I tried to grasp the village with the people flitting about, and they were interested as usual and recognised the tiniest figures. The natives here are different from those by the sea, where there is a mixture of Tongan blood. They are much blacker, and a good many of them have a distinctly wild savage appearance, and of course most of the old people had been cannibals.

One old man, Gangi-ni-Lawa (Strength of the Law), by name, who frequented our house, delighted in telling about the old days, which I fear he regretted. He told with gusto of the feasts after the battles, and he said human flesh was delicious, better than beef or mutton. He remembered too that much talked-of event when the missionary, Mr. Baker

was killed and cooked with his Wellington boots on, which were supposed to be a kind of hide, and he saw one of the feet which was sent here as a gift to the grandfather of the present chief, and I think he may have tasted it, for he said white flesh was not so good as black, being much salter. He was very dark, with a sooty complexion and a heavy unpleasant mouth.

There was an old woman here who boasted of having been



CANNIBAL FAMILY—FOUR GENERATIONS.

a thorough out and out cannibal. She must have reached a great age, for her son and her grandson and her great grandson were all in the village. With difficulty we induced them to come out and stand, so that I might perpetuate the group. The son too had been a cannibal. The expression of all, except that of the little boy, was distinctly repellent though there was a certain handsomeness about them. The old woman was well preserved, erect of carriage, and with remarkable eyes, sharp and

piercing and hawk-like. The lobe of her ear was distended and a large white shell inserted and her fingers were much mutilated. Many of the older people here had several joints missing from fingers and toes; this was a sign of mourning. In case of a death the relatives and friends cut off a finger or toe joint with a sharp stone, searing the stump in the fire, and then carrying the bit to the house where the dead lay. Even children sometimes gave of themselves in

this way, and the trophies of affection and regret were hung round the door. In the case of a person who had been much beloved, or of a very high chief, there would be wreaths of these ghastly relics, on which the near relatives gazed with proud satisfaction.

This old woman was tattooed, as were all the older women in the place. One woman, who had been done with especial care, invited my companion in to see her tattooing. It was exactly like a short pair of drawers and was always hidden by even the scanty clothing of long ago. Though no one could see it, and the process was horribly painful, the girls willingly submitted to it, because this costume was *de rigueur* with the god Ndengei who ruled in the world of spirits, and no woman without her tattoo garment was admitted to his heaven. It was done at the age of twelve or thirteen and occupied days. The young girl was held down by one woman, while another drew the lacy pattern into the flesh with the tooth of a rat or a shark. The pain was so exhausting that intervals of a day or two's rest had to be given in the middle of the operations. Could the faith of us Christians stand such a test? I often think there is many a lesson to be learned from untutored savages.

In the evening I had the last of my moonlight baths in Fiji. It was specially delicious, our dusky chaperon accompanying me, but she sat on the bank in the deep shade of the trees while I splashed into the water. The sky was cloudless and the moon clear and round. It had recently risen and was low, so that the shadows were long and dark. But where the light fell it was bright as day. The new village was all dark, but the silvery rays shot across the rippling water, and lit up the tangled foliage on the forbidden ground of the deserted town on the other side, where no foot but the chief's might tread, and to him it was a place of fear, not to be visited at night. Weird creatures of the imagination peopled the solitudes, and kept guard over the ripe fruit which hung heavy on the trees and dropped into the sparkling waters.

Loath to leave a scene of such fairy-like beauty I stayed some time in the river. When I came out I found my dark

companion a little excited and nervous, and most eager to get back to the house as quickly as possible. An invisible hand, she said, had thrown a stone at me from the shadowy depths of old Namosi. I had neither seen nor heard anything of it, and terror, I was sure, had conjured it up, but the chief took the whole matter very gravely. His ancestors he said, were buried on the top of the rocks which crown the old town; they did not like their solitude disturbed at night, and it would be the ghost of one of them which threw the mysterious stone. It was well, he said, that I had not been killed, and it would not be at all safe for me to venture there again at night.

Mrs. Hopkins would not allow me to open the shutters of the little window any more. She said pussy disturbed her, but afterwards she told me that she had really been nervous, a very unusual thing for her. She did not like the stone episode, and thought a human hand had thrown it, and she disliked the look of a great many of the people. This all gave her a feeling of uneasiness and distrust, which in her mind justified the magistrate's warning, and made her feel that it was necessary to be careful.

In the middle of the night, the stillness was rent by piercing shrieks, and wail after wail followed. A cold shiver ran through me, and I started up to listen. The cries gradually subsided, and there was quiet again, but sleep was hard to woo back. In the morning we learned that the lamentations announced the death of a child who had been ill for some time, and next day when we passed near the house where it lay we could hear the mother weeping and sobbing, a most pathetic sound.

CHAPTER XV.

THE OLD TOWN OF NAMOSI.

IN the morning Ratu Langi-ni-Vala offered to take Mrs. Hopkins and me to see the site of old Namosi. I was glad that the sun was shining cheerily, or the gloom of this weird forbidden spot would have been too oppressive. We left the bright busy village behind and forded the Wai-ndina at its shallowest part, the chief carrying us across the deeper places. On the other side the silence of death reigned, not a living creature stirred, there was not even the humming of an insect to disturb the utter silence.

The chief tore his way through the matted verdure and we followed as best we could. It was difficult to make headway, for the weeds were tall and the great leaves as they tried to open were seized by vines with long succulent stems, which wreathed and twisted over everything, covering the rocks and hanging in long garlands from the trees. They had been very busy, for they had much to hide, much that no one must see. The chief poked about with a stick he carried, then at last he began vigorously to pull away the creepers and expose to view some large stones standing on end. When two or three of the stones were bare he pointed them out to us and told us that each stone represented five people killed and eaten. He had himself counted seven hundred of these, and there were more. They formed a ring right round the old Namosi town—strange monuments of a savage time. Soon it will be impossible to find them any more, for dame nature is already adopting them and they will have disappeared in her arms. We went a little farther, ploughing our way through the thick vegetation where for years no foot had trod. From among it a few posts

stood out, themselves clothed in verdure. This was all that was left of old Namosi. Ratu Langi pointed out two rather larger than the rest, twined with graceful creepers. These were the king posts of the chief's house. He said they were very hard wood and had lasted seven generations. Long ago when they were put in, silent unresisting serfs had held them till the earth was filled in and they were buried alive. The chief showed us where the gigantic cannibal pot had stood, which was large enough to enable two bodies to be cooked at once. Probably it had been brought from the coast and was originally a *bêche-de-mer* pot; but it was gone now and the killing stone near by had been buried out of sight never to be seen again. Round about in all directions were orange trees with beautiful ripe fruit going to waste. The chief gathered a bunch and gave it to us, but he took none himself—they were deliciously refreshing, the best I have ever tasted. From among the grass and weeds sprang great spikes of the most beautiful flowers (*Amomum*, or *thevunga* in Fijian); yet, fond as the Fijians are of flowers, and although these special ones are great favourites with them, much coveted for meké dresses, and general decoration, no one would touch them. Year by year the *thevunga* blooms and the oranges ripen and drop unheeded, guarded by grim superstition, a more complete protector than a whole army of constables.

Above us rose two great steep rocks, on the top of which were buried our companion's ancestors. These were laid on soft mats with their wives who died for them, voluntarily giving themselves to be strangled, that they might accompany their lords to the land of spirits and wait on them there. Here again faith in their own creed gave them courage, and made them cheerfully lay down their lives, believing that it was the one door to heaven and a happy hereafter.

Ratu Langi told us that at the coming of age of his grandfather, Ratu Kuru-ndua-ndua, whose bones were resting on the top of the rock above us, a whole village was sacrificed to celebrate the occasion. The ceremony, which was a great affair, took place when he was about fifteen. A rebellious village was selected and all the inhabitants killed off, the bodies being

brought to Namosi and piled up to form a high platform. Upon this the boy climbed, accompanied by two of his uncles, who invested him with a club and his first clothing, a long strip of pure white tapa. Meanwhile the priest chanted prayers that he might kill many enemies, have long life and never be conquered in battle, the whole assembled town looking on.

At Ratu Langi's father's coming of age there were no victims. Seemann, who was one of the first visitors to Namosi, happened to be there just at the time, and when he learned what was about to take place, and that five hundred inhabitants of the town of Sauana were to be sacrificed, he induced Ratu Kuru-ndua-ndua to spare the town, and to let him do the investing. The ceremony was carried out with great eclat and he gave the boy a gun instead of the usual club, and wrapped him in thirty yards of Manchester print. Now his remains and those of his father lie in this silent spot on the top of the great black rocks.

I was anxious to visit the graves, and we wandered right round the rocks to see if there were any means of access. But the cliffs rose perpendicularly all round to a height of some thirty or forty feet and there did not seem to be a foothold for a cat. How a chief's body could be got up there, with those of his wives, seemed a complete mystery and Ratu Langi could not enlighten us as he had never been up there himself.

The rocks were of very dark stone, blotted over with black lichen which intensified their gloomy appearance. It was relieved only by an orange tree which, high up, had found footing in a crack, and hung down branches heavy with bright coloured fruit.

We left the enchanted garden to its silence and loneliness again and made our way back to human habitation and life.

I think Ratu Langi's wife was very glad to see us safe back. She was waiting for us at the door with her little boy. All the time we were away she had been busy with preparations to welcome the little stranger who was to come by and by and claim a share of the love so largely bestowed on her son.

The preparations were simple, twelve tiny mats woven by her own loving hands out of fine strips of pandanus leaves and edged with scarlet wool, and she showed them to us with great pride. They were very soft and of the most delicate workmanship. I gave much pleasure by laying a pretty necklace on the little pile.

In the afternoon the native doctor proposed taking my fellow traveller to another village a considerable distance away, and not caring for several hours *tete à tete*, she took our chaperon with her. I went a bit of the way but returned alone, as I was eager to make a drawing of some of the more remarkable mountains round Namosi. The walk through this intensely grand and beautiful scenery was a great treat. It was all more like a picture than reality in its utter stillness and silence. The path was a well marked native track on the brow of the hill, and deep down below rippled the Wai-ndina, too far away for the sound of its waters to reach me. Round about was rich tropical vegetation, and across the valley I caught glimpses of the mountains, crag upon crag standing out bold against the sky. But it was necessary to hurry if I was to get a sketch, for the clouds were gathering and beginning to wrap up the highest peaks. I was surprised how far I had gone; and when I reached Namosi the cloud curtain had descended and the mountains were completely blotted out. This was a disappointment indeed, till I be-thought me of the old man who had been a cannibal, and of how interesting it would be to get a sketch of him beating the lali in front of the Christian church.

Namosi is Roman Catholic, but I do not think religion has any great hold. As far as my limited experience in Fiji went, I did not think Roman Catholicism appealed to the people, or had as much influence with them as the simple form of Methodism which I met with at Vuni-mbau and elsewhere. The Namosi church was simply one of the houses rather patched and out of repair. I went to the service on Sunday and found that the inside was somewhat dirty and neglected, and the congregation, mostly women and children, inattentive. They told their beads and mumbled their prayers, which they

did not understand, staring about them, and stopping to make whispered comments upon me. I do not think that the service meant much more to them than their own meki chants, and it was less cheerful and attractive.

My having come back alone interested the people, and when they gathered round me I managed with my rudimentary Fijian and ample signs to make them understand that I wanted Ganga ni Lawa. The man was produced and seemed flattered when he realised my wish to sketch him. I pointed at him, then at my paper and brush, and then at the big lali in front of the church. My meaning was grasped, and we were soon established, I on my little stool, and he with the heavy wooden drum sticks in his hands and his black eyes steadily fixed on me. He got stiff and tired but I could not tell him to rest, and the only thing was to finish as quickly as possible. This dark old cannibal had not a pleasant face and the stare of his eyes seemed to mesmerize me so that I could hardly paint. It was the only time I ever felt nervous in Fiji. It was impossible to forget



OLD CANNIBAL BEATING
THE LALI (FIJI DRUM).

his conversation of the day before, and how completely he had been reared in savagery; one felt too that the savage was in him still, only kept in abeyance by English rule. I was not exactly afraid, but there was a sense of uncasiness in this strange wild place among a people whose language I did not know, painting the dark old Fijian before me with his transfixing eyes. It was a comfort that I was not alone with him and that a large group had gathered to watch the progress of the sketch which I made a hasty one, and it was a relief when I could sign to my model that it was done. He hurried round at once to look at his portrait and though I was not very well pleased

with it myself, it gave the greatest satisfaction to him and to all the other natives. My pictures were the delight of the place. Every evening Ratu Langi asked for them, and they were spread out on the floor under the lamp, and crowds came to see them, sometimes from long distances. Ratu Langi acted showman and pointed out all the interesting details to a thoroughly appreciative audience. He showed very good taste and admired most the best sketches. The group of slightly dressed figures bending over my sketch book in the glow of the lamp looked very picturesque. It was a pity it was not possible to paint them.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE LAST EVENING AT NAMOSI.

EVERYTHING must come to an end. We had reached the last evening at Namosi, and Ratu Langi was determined to make it a memorable one. First, the great yangona bowl was taken down from the wall, and there was a more ceremonious yangona drinking than I had yet seen, though not so ceremonious as we were to see later on. Mrs. Hopkins had instructed me how to handle the yangona cup (a polished half coconut), which was very fortunate, as it was handed to me first, the principal guest, and it would have been a great pity to have made a mistake. It should properly have been handed first to the chief and, as women, not to us at all. We were however always treated as if we had been men and high chiefs. A kneeling figure presented it to me, while the large company behind chanted, strange wild sort of chants. When I took the cup, mercifully only half filled for me, they all clapped their hands in unison as I drained it at a single draught, and then dexterously span it back to the foot of the cup-bearer. My success in accomplishing this always gave great satisfaction, and was received with shouts of applause and exclamations of "A Máthá" (it is dry). With very little trouble, it is wonderful how much pleasure one can often give in travelling, by observing little points of etiquette, and conforming to the usages of the people one is amongst.

During the ceremony gorgeous figures were slipping in through the door—men with well polished and oiled skins, wearing fringes of brilliantly coloured leaves round their waists, and with garlands hung about their necks and twisted round their arms and legs, and leaves and flowers stuck in

their great bushy heads of hair. Each carried a heavy alarming looking club, giving altogether a most barbaric appearance. This was a meké (war dance) arranged for our benefit. The men went through a great many manœuvres in absolute unison, sometimes brandishing their clubs, sometimes apparently listening or pointing to some hidden foe, while their bodies writhed and twisted, many of the motions being so unlike anything European as to give a strange savage look. All the time they chanted weird songs, their actions corresponding no doubt to the words, while their black eyes gleamed and glittered.

These chants are very old and many of them in almost obsolete Fijian. Sometimes they are historical, relating to real events, the memory of which is thus transmitted, but more often they are legends about wild expeditions to impossible places, and hair breadth escapes from monsters.

One tells of the god Okova, whose beautiful wife Tutuwathuwathu was carried off by a gigantic bird; and of his long search for her accompanied by her brother, and of their arrival too late, when the bird had finished his repast, and had left nothing of the lady but her little finger. It tells how the two disconsolate gods prayed three other gods to help them to destroy the bird, and how they sent a wind which blew up its tail and exposed its vitals when a well aimed arrow ended its existence. They pitched its body into the sea, which caused such a commotion and displacement that the water reached the top of the highest mountains. First, however, they had secured a feather to use as a sail for their canoes to take them home. They could not take a wing feather, it would have been too big and would have capsized the vessel.

There are many other similar and equally wild legends. Sometimes the gods get into mischief, and go off with other people's wives. They assume all kinds of disguises—turtles, snakes, etc. One of their gods, on such an errand bent, took the form of a pretty girl and was admitted to the house he meant to rob. But he was discovered by the way he sat and promptly clubbed. He sat with his knees apart as men sit, not with knees together as a girl would have done.

Much in these old stories reminds one of the Greek Mythology.

It was late when the yangona drinking and meké were over, and we had a very early start before us ; but the huge assembled company had no inclination to go away, and, as it was our last night we did not like to hurry them, or seem in any way inhospitable or unkind. Suddenly an old man suggested that as they had done all they could to entertain us, would we not do something to entertain them ? Could we not sing ? My fellow traveller promptly began, and sang " Home, Sweet Home " and some other things, but they wanted me to sing too. I am not used to singing in public, but, strange to say, I was not at all nervous and sang " Dame Goose " and " Baby Bear," and some of the other songs with which I have often entertained my youthful sitters at home, my audience testifying their approval by gentle clapping and exclamations of " vinaka."

Our dark-skinned neighbours were all there, filling the whole great room. I could see my old cannibal among them, lying full length on the floor in a picturesque attitude. He seemed to look blacker than ever, and the whites of his eyes glistened in the lamp light.

A request next came that we should dance. My companion said " We cannot dance without music." One of the meké men said, " But I can play the accordion." He slipped out, and soon returned with the instrument and to our astonishment began to play a familiar waltz ; and my companion at once jumped up on to the dais where we slept at night, which was hard, and not billowy like the floor, and began to dance.

I was taking in the strangeness of the scene, from the dancing figure on the dais to the swarthy musician in his leafy dress, when Mrs. Hopkins swooped down upon me, drew me up to the platform, and insisted on my dancing too. So, in our canvas shoes on the padanas mats to the Fijian music, we performed, shouts of " vinaka " from our wild audience showing their satisfaction. " All the world's a stage and all the men and women merely players." The truth of Shak-

speare's words had often struck me before, but never so forcibly as now. Providence, the great stage manager, allots us each day our parts, but I never thought to take the ballet, and in such a setting! Could my friends at home have lifted the curtain of distance and seen me now, they would have had a great surprise.

At last the people began to slip off, and when the house was comparatively clear we ventured to draw our curtain and to lay ourselves down for the night.

We were up in the morning before it was light. I could not resist groping my way down to the Wai-ndina, and having one last splash in its cool waters. I hoped the angry spirits of the departed would not resent my coming then, as ghosts are not supposed to have much to do with the morning, and in all accounts I have ever read of them they disappear at dawn. And early and dark as it was, life was already beginning in the village, where a few figures were moving about. I looked across once more to the deserted haunted town on the other side, which always stirred my imagination so deeply; the dense vegetation and dark rocks were only just distinguishable, black against the sky. Then I slipped back to the house.

After a hasty breakfast our goodbyes were said; and through the quiet village, in the first gray glimmer of the morning, we passed away, and Namosi like Vuni-mbau had joined the realms of memory.

CHAPTER XVII.

RATU KANDAVU LEVU.

As we threaded our way down over the mountain path the sun rose, first catching the jagged peaks around us, then flooding the whole landscape. It was very warm, and, when we passed into the grateful shade of the thick bush, the light shone emerald green through the big leaves, and lit up the yellow shaddocks, which seemed to shine like golden suns in the dewy morning light. We could not stop to look and admire, for we had a long day before us, but our carriers, with their lightened loads, found it easy work swinging downhill, and had plenty of time to talk and laugh and be merry. They chose to tease our chaperon, pretending to make love to her, and throwing out wild suggestions about running off together into the bush. They enjoyed the fun very much and did all the laughing, but it made no impression whatever upon her; she might have been stone deaf for all the effect their remarks had on her expression. She walked sturdily on, carrying some little belonging of ours and the inevitable umbrella, and she did not even look annoyed. It was strange that so one-sided a joke could have been amusing, but it lasted till we reached Namuamua. We did not stop there this time, but got into our boat and went straight back to Tamanua. This saved a day, and so had allowed us more time at Namosi. A kind welcome awaited us at the end of our journey, and my little friends, Lily and Molly, were quite excited to get us back. They had been very busy while we were away preparing a surprise for us in the shape of an art exhibition, and next morning we were taken into their playroom to see the show. The pictures covered the table, and wherever possible were

stuck on the wall. The style was distinctly post impressionist, and, in default of a catalogue, it was well the young artists were there themselves to explain the motive of the various compositions, or we might have failed to grasp it. I was able conscientiously to admire the breadth of touch and great expenditure of colour; but, when asked if there was not a resemblance to my work, I was obliged to admit that the style was more modern than anything that I had yet reached.

Next day we proceeded to Suva, and our return to the Club Hotel was hailed with joy, Mr. and Mrs. Cox welcoming us warmly. The place was full, but they said they would always find room for us, and they managed by squeezing themselves together and vacating some of their own quarters for us.

As for the "boys," they beamed on us, and I had scarcely undone my straps before they arrived in an army to see my work. The enthusiasm was wonderful—all was "vinaka." Their appreciation was a true pleasure to me, all the more so that there was a certain amount of understanding in the way they noted things, showing that I must have caught characteristics which I had been striving after, but was doubtful of having attained. Then Semi's portrait was asked for again, and once more it was produced for admiration.



RATU KANDAVU LEVU.

One day at lunch a very dark man came in and sat down at one of the tables. He wore European dress, trousers and all, which is so strangely unbecoming to natives, and his hair was cut short. My companion told me this was Ratu Kandavu Levu, the eldest surviving descendant of Thakombau, the great War Lord, or King of Fiji, as the Europeans styled him. Kandavu Levu would have occupied this high position now if Thakombau had not in 1875 joined with the other Fijian chiefs in ceding these islands to the "Great White Chief," Queen Victoria. Even as it is, he is held in much awe by many of the natives,

especially those of Mbau, the old heathen capital, and I noticed that all the "boys" in the Club Hotel crouched on approaching or passing him, which is their way of showing great respect.

After lunch he came across and shook hands warmly with my companion, who introduced him to me. He speaks English fluently, so I was happy in being able to join in the conversation, which on his part was curiously naive. He told us that he had been deposed by the English Government from being Roko (Governing Chief) of Tailevu, and he invited us to come and stay with him at Mbau, and see the great ceremony, when his cousin Ratu Joni Mandraiwiwi was to be installed in his stead. I was struck by the generosity of the invitation, and wondered if in any other country could be found a man who would frankly invite friends to come and see another installed in the place of which he himself had been deprived.

It was a grand opportunity for me, and we were delighted to accept. Mbau was the ancient heathen stronghold from which, during the early part of last century, large parts of Fiji were conquered. I had naturally an intense desire to visit it, and it would be splendid to see it under such circumstances. I had read of it in endless missionary books, and books of travel, and the accounts of what went on there make the blood run cold. It was for a time the seat of, probably, as bad cannibalism and barbarism as the world has ever known.

It occupied a rocky island, not two miles in circumference, which lies within fordable distance, at low tide, of the East coast of Vitu Levu (Great Fiji).

Accounts of it at one time tell of the houses crowded together with only narrow lanes between them, and of the teeming population of more than three thousand, swarming like ants in an ant hill. They tell of the great flotilla of canoes, large and small, which came and went—of Thakombau's really magnificent vessel, the remains of which now lie rotting on the island. I think I am right in saying it was the largest native canoe ever built so far as we know. Then there were the war canoes, also very large, over twenty in number. Be-

sides these, there were some two hundred canoes, or "wargas" as they are called in Fiji, such as are still to be found there, not to speak of numerous dug-outs, "takias," for use round the coast. A large number of boats was absolutely necessary for obtaining supplies for the island, which was of course much too small to provide for its great crowd of inhabitants, and even fresh drinking water had to be fetched from the mainland.

The fishermen or "Butoni" were a much esteemed class. They were allowed sometimes, as there were so many of them, to hire themselves out to other chiefs, on condition of returning periodically to pay tribute, which they did very willingly, and their coming was made a time of rejoicing, and celebrated with a great feast.

The great ceremony of Mbau was to take place on the 9th of August. On the 7th Ratu Kandavu Levu was going over, and he offered to escort us. Our packing was soon done, as we intended to return on the afternoon of the 9th, or the following morning.

We met on the pier after a hurried breakfast, and took the mail boat, a small steam launch, as far as Wai-ni-bokasi on the Rewa, where Ratu Kandavu Levu has a house. The launch went across the harbour, out into the open sea and round through Lauthala Bay up one of the mouths of the great Rewa River.

There was only one other first-class passenger, a plain harmless-looking white man, sitting in the little saloon or cabin when we entered. Ratu Kandavu Levu did not come in with us himself, but he looked in over and over again to ask if we were comfortable. He seemed very uneasy about us. At last he came in and urged us to come out on to the roof, "it would be so much better there," he said. We followed him, but it was quite an acrobatic feat to climb out of the window and round on to the roof. However, we managed it with considerable difficulty, and at the risk of falling into the sea, which had become choppy. Having settled ourselves on some bags and ropes, we had just begun to enjoy the view when there was a sudden puff, and the funnel emitted a volume

of steam and soot which made us jump, and smothered our clean white clothes in dirt. We suggested going in again, but the idea was not favourably received, so we waited for one or two more black shower baths, and then again suggested the saloon. "No," said Ratu Kandavu Levu, "better not"; and he added, "Come with me to the bow," which was the third-class quarters. The third-class passengers were all Fijians, and he unceremoniously cleared the front, and made them pack themselves together as best they could, while we took their places, and sat down with our feet dangling over the edge. It was much nicer than the saloon, and we had a fine uninterrupted view, but I could not understand why the saloon was taboo. It came out, however, that the chief did not think that the Englishman inside was fit company for us; he would not sit with him himself, nor would he allow us to do so.

The first part of the way was much what I had seen before, but when we entered one of the mouths of the Rewa River and began to ascend, it was new to me, and I saw for the first time mangrove swamps. There was something dreary about them, and yet to me interesting. On and on stretched the same monotonous dark green, and endless stems dropped themselves down from the branches into the water in long wands, to root in the mud below. Bronze figures in little but nature's garb, spear in hand, appeared and disappeared among the trees. The spear I knew was only for fish, but it conjured up pictures of the old savage warlike days; and a few primitive dug-outs with little naked boys paddling, or springing from them into the water, gave the finishing touches. We landed at the fine Roman Catholic Church on the Rewa, and walked to Wai-ni-bokasi, where we spent an hour at Ratu Kandavu Levu's house, till a vehicle was got ready for our further progress. Ratu Kandavu Levu himself was to ride. The house was empty, and we were a little disappointed to get no refreshment as we had had nothing since early breakfast.

Our gig when it appeared looked the most extraordinary little affair that I had ever had to do with. It stood on two very high wheels, was ramshackle and exceedingly small, and

it seemed impossible to imagine how room was to be found for Ratu Kandavu Levu's luggage, together with ours, and for ourselves, and the dirty Indian driver. It was a pack! The middle one had to sit Fijian fashion on the top of the luggage, a position which we took in turns.

We rattled off, our chief in front presenting a fine aristocratic appearance on his beautiful white horse. The grassy road through somewhat marshy ground was very rough, and it was raised, with a ditch on each side. We were so jogged and bumped that we were made to realise rather painfully that we had bones under our flesh, and we had to hold on tight, the one perched on the luggage being in frequent danger of getting jerked off.

The view was interesting, the more so as my fellow traveller told me that in the old days it was here that she and her mother and sister had fled for their lives in the night from an angry chief—a thrilling story which she had many times related with great spirit.

Around us stretched the wide alluvial plain, and above in the great expanse of sky the setting sun began to fly banners of the most glorious hues. All round us they spread, growing ever more brilliant—red, blue, orange, yellow, green, scarlet, purple, every colour was there, glowing, changing, mingling. The Indian whipped up his horse and we tore madly along, but the short tropical twilight was soon gone, and we were enveloped in darkness.

We had counted on the moon, but the sky was completely overcast, and the clouds which had been so brilliant heralded rain, and it began to fall in big drops, soon increasing to a heavy shower. It was difficult to see the track, and at last impossible, the dim light from a wretched little lantern and a few flickering fireflies only intensifying the gloom around. Indians hate the dark, and our man became very nervous and hardly able to manage his horse. Fortunately it was a good one, and apparently able to see without light, for it trotted on; but the least mistake would have meant disaster, as the two-wheeled cart was high, and the sides of the road very steep. At one place we came to a long rough bridge

where the horse got frightened and shied, and we nearly had an accident, but my companion promptly jumped out and led him over. At last we reached the sea, and a long way off a light on an island cast a stream of yellow across the water. This island was Mbau, and the light, the chief told us, came from his kitchen.

The sea, which looked as if it would swallow us up, was fordable, and we had to splash in and make our way over. The horse was frightened, and the Indian, who was himself terrified, had to get out and lead it. The water grew deeper and deeper till it was well over his waist, and wetting our feet in the carriage, which rocked and reeled as it went over the irregular surface of the bottom. The poor Indian waded on, and was sometimes almost submerged when he splashed into a deeper hole. He became so beside himself with terror that he let go the bit and tried to run away, but a stern word from the chief brought him to his senses, and he crawled on. At last we were safe on the other side, and the chief's servants were ready to help us out of the carriage and conduct us to the house. The unfortunate Indian had a bad time of it going back: the carriage slipped over the bank, and he and his horse and gig were found later on by some Fijians in a sorry plight in the ditch.

As for us, tired and hungry and wet, we were thankful to find ourselves under Ratu Kandavu Levu's hospitable roof, and to see preparations awaiting us for an evening meal. His housekeeper, a wild-haired Tongan girl, picturesquely dressed



FUSI, KANDAVU LEVU'S
TONGAN HOUSEKEEPER

in orange and red garments, was expecting us and gave us a warm welcome.

Mbau, this former heathen capital with its strange but brief history of power, and war, and savagery, seemed a fitting end to our wild journey.

Ratu Kandavu Levu died on the 11th of December, 1914. He had been living at Levuka, but, feeling very ill, he was on his way to the Suva Hospital and called in at Mbau where he died. Ratu Saimoni Dombui, also mentioned by Miss Gardner King, had relinquished the Roko-ship of Ra and was living at Mbau, when the shock of the news of Ratu Kandavu Levu's death so affected him, that he also died on 14th December, 1914.

Ratu Kandavu Levu has been succeeded in his position as hereditary chief of the Fijians by Ratu Popé, also above-mentioned.—E. IM T.

Since the first edition of this book was published the very sad news has come to hand that Ratu Joni Madraiwiwi died in Suva Hospital on the 13th of last December. He will be more missed than any other Fijian of the present day. The *Fiji Times* says of him: "Thus passes one of the finest Fijians of the present day, a man who had earned the respect and esteem of all classes. Ratu Joni Madraiwiwi, in his official career as in his private life, furnished a splendid example of the inherent high qualities of the Fijian race. Highly educated and animated by the loftiest principles of right and honour, he has always performed his duties, especially those associated with the administration of his provinces, to the entire satisfaction of the Government. He was held in esteem by all classes of the European population of Fiji. His name throughout Fiji is a synonym for rectitude of purpose and high endeavour.

"The funeral service was conducted in the church. There was a large attendance of natives, besides a number of visitors from Suva. The coffin was then raised and the procession in solemn array proceeded to the Hill-top, where the grave had been duly prepared. Here close to the mausoleums of King Thakombau and leading Chiefs were laid to rest the remains of a great Fijian Chief and a noble gentleman."—E. IM T.

CHAPTER XVIII.

IN THE OLD HEATHEN CAPITAL.

RATU KANDAVU LEVU was a polite attentive host, but, though he is a very high chief, there was nothing aristocratic about his house. It consisted of three rather small buris raised as usual on platforms of stones, and united by bridges from door to door. The first was the sitting room, with a sleeping apartment screened off, the second was the dining room, and the third was the kitchen. The building was slighter than usual: the breeze played freely through the walls, and we could even see chinks of light in the morning. The furniture was an odd mixture of Fijian and English—a beautiful old yangona bowl of great size with its correct decoration of white cowrie shells, and valuable tambuas (whale's teeth), among shoddy Birmingham furniture, and engravings of gross English pictures, which he told me with pride had been presented to him by the artist, but which I was sorry to see there. Bits of cheap art muslin vied with beautiful old tapa in adorning the walls. I suppose the natives were very pleased with it all, and thought it fine, but there was none of the grand restful simplicity of a true Fijian interior.

We did not sit on the floor here. We were too far advanced for that, but the common uncomfortable chairs were no improvement, and were very back breaking. There was a writing table, and, behind the screen, English beds with mosquito nets, but no bed clothes.

The table in the dining room was spread with a cloth and plates, ready for a much needed meal, and it was not long before we were partaking of it and finding it very good. There was fish soup served in half coconuts; then roast and boiled

fish, fresh caught in the sea; and finally fowl well cooked, but not prettily served. Fijians never truss their fowls, and the legs stick out in an ugly aggressive manner. Two nice Fijian

lads about twelve years old waited at table, quickly and eagerly. Between each course they handed round a large half coconut with water, to rinse our fingers. It was handed to the chief first, then to us; this was Vaka-viti (Fijian custom), but it struck me as a slip in Ratu Kandavu Levu's otherwise perfect English manners. Hot tea without milk was our beverage, and we had ship biscuits but no bread.



ANDI THAKOMBAU.

After supper, Andi* Thakombau, the most beautiful Fijian lady I have seen, came in to pay her respects, and to offer to do anything she could for us. Ratu Kandavu Levu told us to look upon her as our hostess, and a most gracious hostess she proved herself to be. She also is descended from Thakombau, and is first cousin to Ratu Kandavu Levu. She is much lighter in colour, having a dash of

Tongan blood, and she has fine features and a singularly sweet attractive expression. There is a courtly grace about her manners, whether she be sitting on an English chair or squat-

* "Andi," title indicative of high birth corresponding to Ratu (see Chapter III, page 17). Andi Thakombau's illness prevented a sitting; so the above sketch was done from memory after she had gone to the nursing-home.



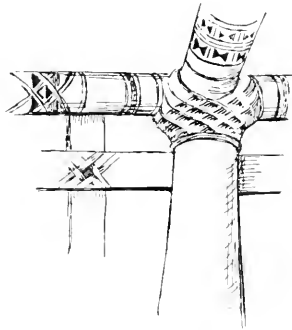
Joni Madrawini
Roko Dua Saekou

ting Fijian fashion on the floor, which gives at once the feeling of rank and birth. She arranged with us that we were to come in the morning to her house and see her little son, and afterwards she was to take us over the town. Then she bade us good night.

The rain meantime had stopped, and we sallied forth and strayed about the dark town. We looked in to see the new Roko, Ratu Joni Mandraiwiwi, who was staying with his cousin, Ratu Mbolo, in his beautiful new house. I thought it very odd that *we* should go to call upon *him*, and at that hour, but it is quite Fijian fashion, and it was taken as a great compliment.

The house is richly decorated with the finest sinnet work I have seen, and is large and spacious, with no cheap English furniture or ornament to destroy its grand simplicity. We were warmly welcomed by both chiefs, and, sitting on the soft matted floor, we chatted, and, as they could talk English, I enjoyed the evening, and absorbed a great deal of interesting information.

Ratu Joni is also an important chief, and related to Ratu Kandavu Levu. He is between fifty and sixty years of age, very dark, tall, and well made. Though he is not handsome according to English ideas, it is pleasant to look at his face, for there is something so good about it; and his expression, which is habitually grave to sadness, lights up in conversation with a very kind smile. He is somewhat bald, and his scanty hair lies close to his head, but he never uses a hat—in former days he would have worn a wig,—and his dress is European as far as coat and shirt are concerned; but he generally wears the sulu or kilt, showing his well developed calves and shapely feet. He is considered the most intelligent of the Fijians, and commands the respect and esteem of



SINNET WORK IN RATU
MBOLO'S HOUSE.

all who come in contact with him, whether Europeans or natives.

He had been in the government service for thirty years, and for the last fifteen years he had been Roko, first of Ra, then of Ra and Mbua, and latterly of Mba. And now, when it was considered necessary to supersede Ratu Kandavu Levu, it did not seem as if a better man could be chosen for the difficult and important post of Roko of Tailevu, in which is situated Mbau.

It is sad that any change had to be made, but in the capacity of an official under the British Government Ratu Kandavu Levu was not a success. Such rights as would have been his by inheritance from his savage ancestors had been abrogated at the cession of the islands in 1875; but he was still looked up to with almost superstitious veneration, and the right as a great chief to take anything he chose to possess himself of, though it was against English law, was still so completely accepted by the Fijians, and so deeply rooted in their minds, that it was almost impossible for him to understand *our* law of *mine and thine*: hence endless troubles and difficulties.

Ratu Kandavu Levu, with the hospitality which is natural to high born Fijians, vacated his house for us, and went to sleep elsewhere: thus we had it all to ourselves when we went back. There were no fastenings to the door, so we just slipped in and went to bed.

I was up betimes in the morning, eager to catch a sight of our historic surroundings, but, early as it was, a cup of tea was sent in before I was dressed.

The doorstep first caught my eye. It was a bit of white marble with an inscription in Fijian on it, and it looked very like a broken tombstone. Ratu Kandavu Levu told us afterwards that it *was* the tombstone of one of his relatives, and he pointed out with pride that there was one at each door. Tombstones are of recent introduction, and they are not an improvement on the true Fijian graves, which, like the houses, have an impressive simplicity about them. The graves are just oblong walls of loose stones neatly piled up and filled in with earth, which is carefully spread and flattened so as to present an

absolutely even surface, upon which, if the grave be well kept, not a single weed is permitted to grow.

These imported grave stones fared very badly in a severe hurricane which occurred in the January previous to my visit. They were tossed about and the majority thrown down and broken. As many as possible were set up again, and those that were too much broken for this were used as doorsteps. This was considered a grand idea, for it would have been such a pity to waste them.

I found that the house was on a green, fenced off from the other houses, and quite close to the sea, with steps leading down to it, ready for a convenient bath. Near by was a steep cliff, on the top of which stood the grave yard, a conspicuous white obelisk marking Thakombau's tomb.

I was called in for an ample breakfast, and afterwards we went to fulfil our engagement with Andi Thakombau.

One of our host's boys conducted us to her house, and as soon as we passed through the fence we found ourselves in the town.

I wondered how far my knowledge of the history of the place affected my impression, but Mbau certainly seemed different from other places. It looked old and time-worn, and there was a gravity about it, and a general dark sombreness of colour, which I had not seen elsewhere. Such trees as existed had deep green foliage, the rocks were dark grey, and so were the stones which formed the steps and terraces, and the platforms of the houses. The monotony was relieved, and a beautiful note of colour gained, by fine peacocks strutting about, and perching on the old trees and among the ruins. I do not know how long they had been there, or where they came from, but they were a very great ornament, and seemed to know exactly where it would be effective to place themselves. Andi Thakombau's mburé was raised up on a rather high terrace, the stones of which were grasped by the curious roots of a pandanus tree. We found her and her mother and her grandmother sitting on the floor, and they received us with graceful politeness, and we sat down beside them. The little son, Ratu Tui Vanua Vou, a beautiful child

of three, was marching about in a most lordly manner, and treating his elders with the greatest contempt. He wore nothing but a little white sulu which *would* come off, but which, to his annoyance, was always immediately refixed by one of his relatives.



RATU TUI VANUA VOU.

When we had sufficiently admired the young chief, Andi Thakombau took us to see the sights of the town. She was very frank about the past. Cannibalism in Mbau was given up in 1854, and that seemed a very long time ago to her, though to us, with our centuries of history, it seems but yesterday. She thought of it as belonging to the dark ages, with as little to do with her as the persecutions of Bloody Mary, or the burning of witches have to do with us. And it certainly was impossible to imagine the sweet creature at our side indulging in, or even being present at, any savage rite. Yet her grandmother remembered it all. She told us she had seen the war canoes coming in with bodies of men, women, and even children, for the ovens, and she was present when, at the death of Tanoa, Thakombau's father, his five wives were strangled to make a soft bed for his body to lie on.

Andi Thakombau showed us where the mbokola ovens had been, those ovens I had so often read of, which at one time were never allowed to be cold, while the heavy smell from them pervaded the air. Then she took us to the large Methodist church, where a class of intelligent looking children were squatting to receive instruction. There she pointed out what seemed to us an extraordinarily incongruous thing—the killing stone from the heathen temple, with a sort of basin scooped in it by the early missionaries, who brought it into the church to use as a font. To them it seemed a beautiful symbol of the conversion of the people, but it sickened me to think of this stone being used as the baptismal font for innocent little babies, and I was glad to learn that the present missionary, who

is more advanced and broader minded than most Methodists, had discarded it, and that Ratu Joni talks of putting it back into the temple, where it would certainly be more appropriate. We went next to the great temple, or rather the remains of the temple, for in the late hurricane it was blown away, together with the large Strangers' House and many other buildings on the island. There were at one time no less than thirty temples on this little island, but this was the largest, the Great Spirit, House. I had read of the building of it long ago, and how, because it was a very sacred edifice, there were human sacrifices to celebrate every stage of its construction, from the putting in of the first posts, to the placing of the cowrie shells on the ends of the ridge poles. Now nothing remained but the king-posts and great wooden pillars all round, reminding me somewhat of Paestum. They were on the top of a very high terrace, or rather several terraces, reached by steps of rough stones at the four sides, now smothered and almost hidden in green. At the foot of each of the flights were large upright stones, convenient perches for the peacocks. These, our guide told us, were consecrated stones, brought as trophies from other places when they were conquered. The one from Rewa she showed with especial pride. Rewa was a rival state, and the stone was obtained after a bloody struggle of many years.

Leaning up against the high wall of the lowest terrace were two remarkable objects—an antiquated anchor and rudder, whose story we were at once eager to learn. Andi Thakombau told us they were the remains of the first ship wrecked on Mbau, that the natives ate all the people on board, and then, finding the ship in their way, and being too ignorant to make any use of the materials, they burned it, saving the anchor and rudder as ornaments for their temple. I have not been able to learn any more details, or the name of the ship.

When we got back to the house, Ratu Kandavu Levu had finished his business and was ready to stroll out with us himself. We walked right across the town to the sea on the other side and as we went we passed the temple. The great naked king-posts were stretching up into the air, and I was looking

at them with a feeling of awe, thinking of the skeleton serfs clasping them underground. "I suppose," I said to our companion, "that several men were buried with each of these posts." "I think not," he answered. "Surely there would be more than one?" I said. "I think none," he replied. Much surprised, I asked what gave him that impression. "Because I put them up myself," was the conclusive answer. It seems that the interesting old temple which appears in the early records of Fiji was completely destroyed, king-posts and all, by a hurricane, and that Ratu Kandavu Levu erected it again somewhat on the old lines as a sort of assembly room, and this was the building which was carried away by the January hurricane.

Our host asked us if we were tired and would like to go in. I asked when dinner would be. "It will be when you wish," he said. I enquired when it would be ready. "It will be ready now," he said. I at once intimated that "now" would be a very agreeable time to have it, so we went back.

As we walked along, a blight seemed to spread itself around us; men, women, and children appeared to be smitten down with some terrible malady, which crippled them in every limb, so that they could hardly crawl along. As soon as they caught sight of our companion they doubled themselves up, like the sensitive plant at the touch of a finger, and not till we had gone on a considerable distance did they straighten up again. This crouching is a sign of respect, and in the olden days any breach of it was instantly punished with the club. Etiquette was strictly enforced in those days and by very stern measures.

It was most interesting staying with this high chief in the old heathen town where his ancestors had ruled for generations, and where so much remains of the old customs. When we were in the house, if a messenger came, he slipped in at the end door:—there are at least three entrances to a Fiji buri, but the side doors are only for the chief and his friends. The messenger came in, bent double, and silently squatted near the door. Sometimes another, and another, would appear in the same way, till there was quite a row of still patient figures. The chief would go steadily on with his writing without showing

any sign, then he would get up and stand in front of them, and, while they squatted, learn from them one by one what they wanted. The first would perhaps produce a note from somewhere about his person, the second might have a question to ask, and the third be charged with the delivery of a present, and so on. When he had dealt with them all they would crawl off again. There were generally one or two waiting, but he let them accumulate, and never interrupted himself to speak to them till there were a good many. An inferior must never be taller than a superior. If a chief happens to be a small man, very unusual in Fiji, those about him must constantly stoop or double up. If he be sitting on the floor, they must crawl about on all fours. The effect is very funny and I could not understand it at all at first. A major whom we met in Suva told me that he once took refuge in a buri, where the natives immediately set about preparing a meal for him, while he sat down on the floor to rest. Now it so happened that most of the utensils required were hanging up on the wall. When the first was wanted one of the natives crept up and asked him to get it down; he good-naturedly rose and did so, and when a second and a third were wanted he complied. At last, however, he grew restive and said "You lazy beggars, can you not get the things down for yourselves?" They looked shocked at the suggestion, and said "But if we stretched up we should be taller than you."

It always struck me as strange on entering a Fijian house to be allowed to stand while the inhabitants themselves remained sitting, or, if they happened to be standing, promptly sat down. It seemed rude and inhospitable till I learned that it was really Fijian respect.*

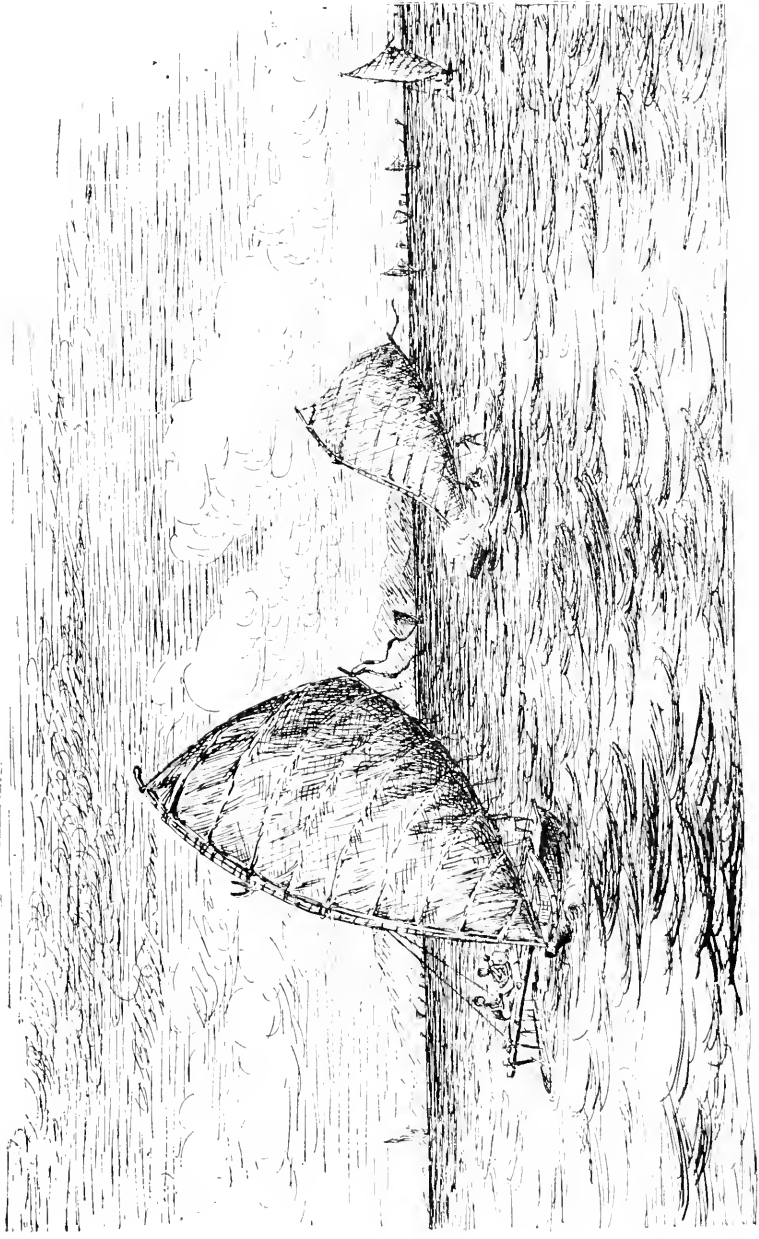
* A somewhat striking instance of native politeness came to my knowledge: a high chief, accompanied by a number of other men, was walking along a mountain path in rainy weather, the path consisting of soft yellow mud. At one point where the path was very slippery he slid and fell and his white shirt and loin cloth were saturated with the mud. Each of his followers on reaching the same spot also allowed himself to slide down, that the chief might not appear awkward, or be the only dirty member of the party.

CHAPTER XIX.

CANOES.

PREPARATIONS for the great ceremony and feast next day were evident everywhere. Leaves and flowers were strewn about where meké dresses were being made, a heap of provisions was being piled on the *rara*, and a great shelter of palm leaves, supported on slender posts, was in course of erection. While I was watching the work my fellow traveller came hurriedly to fetch me, as a flotilla of canoes was coming in, which her quick eye had detected on the horizon line. These canoes are fascinating in their grace and beauty, but I am sorry to say they are dying out, superseded by English cutters, and, alas, motor boats.

I had learned of their picturesqueness years before, and longed to see them. They come and go in the Suva harbour and I had caught exciting glimpses of them in the distance and had sketched all I saw; but to see them in a troop, from near, and undisturbed by anything inartistic and modern, here was the chance for me. I settled myself on the seashore and watched. At first only tiny specks were to be seen in the distance, but gradually they grew larger, and soon the sea was covered with the most exquisite yellow butterflies, wafted towards us across the water. How I wished they would not go so fast. They were no sooner plainly visible than they had reached the shore, the great sail of pandanus matting was being rapidly let down, and the boat drawn up—it seemed just like a flash. With a suitable wind these *wangas* attain a very great speed and leave an ordinary motor-boat far behind. I had the greatest longing to sail in one, but it never was gratified. Ratu Kandavu Levu was to take me in his boat, but



CANOES BRING SUPPLIES FOR THE GREAT CEREMONY AT MBAU.

the wild weather, which kept us storm-stayed for ten days at Mbau, began this very day and prevented it. Then, when Ratu Kandavu Levu had gone, Ratu Joni said we should go with him, but this same storm prevented it; and later, when Ratu Simoni proposed taking us, the weather again interfered and the rain came down in buckets full. It was not to be, but it was a disappointment. Perhaps, if I had gone, I should not now have been writing, for wansas are not very safe, and are often upset. The natives can swim like fish, and are not much coveted by sharks, so an upset is of little consequence to them, especially as they are clever in righting their canoes again. But my ease would have been quite different. Still, the fact that I never sailed in one of these canoes is a matter that I shall always regret.

These boats are curious and very picturesque. Both ends are the same and they can go either way. When they sail against the wind, instead of tacking, the great sail is carried round, and what was the stern becomes the bow. There is no fixed rudder, a large paddle serving the purpose, and when there is no wind two of these paddles propel the boat. The canoes are still made in the same way as the houses, without a single nail or bolt, or any modern contrivance, but the different parts are laced together with sinnet, and caulked with fibre mixed with a kind of pitch or gum obtained from the bread-fruit tree.

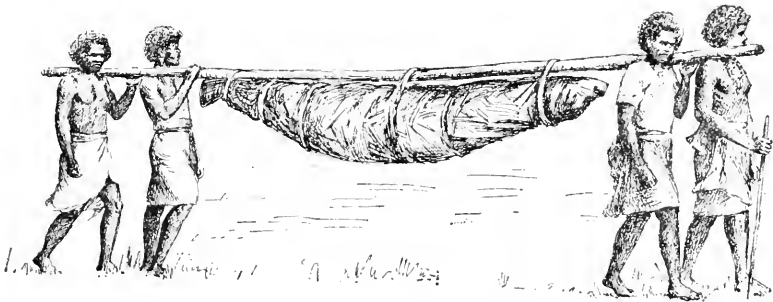
The body of the wanga is a solid tree trunk, and generally of hard vesi wood. The inside is scooped out and the outside is shaped. The upper part is neatly fitted into a groove round the top, little holes are bored, and it is laced on with sinnet. Over this is a platform for the cargo and the crew, leaving one opening which is boxed round, where a man can stand, or a few things be stowed away. Then there is the great outrigger or thama, which steadies the vessel and is held out from it by long poles.

The sail, wherein the great loveliness lies, is very large and is made of strips of fine pandanus matting sewn together, formerly with a needle made of human bone. The matting is a beautiful colour in itself, and, being shiny, it reflects the

colour of the sky and sea, and tones majestically into the landscape, so that it never failed to thrill me with its perfect grace, and harmony with the surroundings.

The Fijians were the master canoe-makers of the Pacific; and the Tongans and all inhabitants of other islands got their canoes from them, or were taught by them how to make them. Sometimes the canoes were very large, as much as a hundred feet long, and instead of a thama, there would be a second canoe, so that a great many people could go in them.

The flotilla of canoes this day was bringing in fish and other provisions for the feast, and fire-wood to cook them. A great quantity of firewood was required, because the native



SHARK BAKED WHOLE.

ovens are many of them very large. Much food had to be got ready for the morrow, and pigs and calves, not to speak of a large shark, had to be cooked whole. During the ceremony we saw the shark strung on a long pole being carried past by four natives. It was done up just as the human bodies used to be, and was very suggestive of the old days when no feast was complete without its mbokola, and it would certainly not have been wanting on such an occasion as this.

The shark is a great feature of all Mbauan feasts, and the inhabitants of the two small islands of Kamba and Kiuva are obliged to supply it. Catching it is a very exciting affair. The natives go out in a canoe and wait in deep water close to a reef frequented by these animals; and there they remain

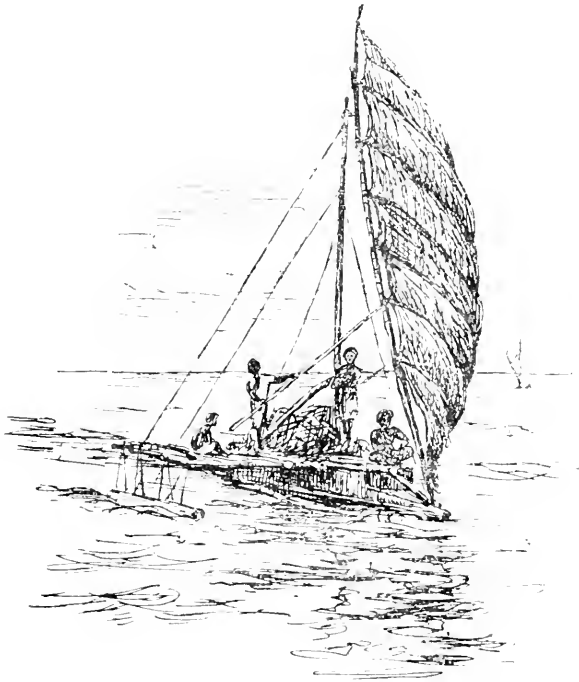
absolutely silent but alert, watching, while one man holds himself ready, a long line of sinnet, with a noose at the end, wound round his arm. Sometimes it is a considerable time before a shark appears, but natives are patient people, and they remain so still that they might be statues. At last one fin gliding over the surface of the water marks the unmistakable approach of the shark to its favourite haunt in the reef. There is breathless silence till it is near enough, then, quick as thought, the native with the line slips into the sea, and, holding to the reef with the arm, over which he carried the line, he passes the other hand under the creature's belly, and proceeds gently to tickle it, which it greatly enjoys, soon becoming stupified with satisfaction. Then, like lightning, the noose is slipped over its tail and the man is safe back in the canoe. But great skill is required and the least mistake would have the most serious consequences. After this the shark is played like a salmon, and dispatched with spears.

Next comes the cooking. The great creature is wrapped in leaves, and carefully tied and bound up with reeds so as to look like a mummy; then put whole into the native oven. These ovens consist of hollows in the ground lined with stones, and are made ready for use by quantities of fire-wood being thrown in, and lighted, and when the stones are quite hot, again extracted with loops of vine stems. Then, after the shark or whatever is to be cooked has been deposited, leaves or reeds or old mats are laid on as a covering, and the earth filled in. There is no way of testing when the food is ready, but the natives seem to know by instinct the right moment to remove the earth and take it out.

These primitive ovens produce very satisfactory results, the food, even when it is a whole animal of considerable size, being evenly and equally cooked through, and having a rich tasty flavour. The shark I was told was very good to eat, but I had no chance of judging for myself. Its flesh is reserved entirely for the "Mbatì" (warriors), and no one else gets any.

When all the food was ready, and everyone had brought

what he could, all the surrounding villages contributing, it was piled up in a huge heap on the rara or village green, and formally presented next day to the representative of the Governor, who, with his native Commissioner, had come down from Suva for the ceremony. The food was then given back to the Mata-ni-vanua, or herald, of Mbau, who distributed it among all the people present, to be afterwards enjoyed in their own homes.



A FIJIAN CANOE (WANGA).

CHAPTER XX.

THE GREAT CEREMONY AT MBAU.

THE 9th of August was a very disappointing day for the ceremony for which such preparations had been made. The sky was black and lowering, and gusts of wind accompanied by heavy rain broke now and then.

Ratu Kandavu Levu was not to be present, and he told us he was going away at midday. He had completed all his preparations:—his yacht lay off the island, his things were packed and on it, and his two Fijian lads were already on board.

We were made welcome by him to remain as long as we liked, but, though he knew Andi Thakombau would look after us, he was concerned for our comfort, and wanted to leave his cook, whom he greatly valued. But we would not hear of it, and my companion said she would cook. This did not prove to be necessary however, for Fusi, his wild-haired Tongan housekeeper, assisted by a very ugly old woman with a squint, managed to do all we required quite nicely. But as they did not wear watches, or have clocks, we could come to no arrangement about hours. Mbau, however, is small and we could always be found and fetched in for a meal when it happened to be ready.

As Ratu Kandavu Levu was going away, his portion of the provisions was brought round, before the distribution, slung on a pole between two natives. It consisted of a large basket containing a variety of vegetables and a pig baked whole. He had a large joint cut off the pig and left for us. It was excellent. I have never tasted such nice pork, before or since.

We could not learn when the ceremony was to take place.

No one knew, and it was a source of surprise that we should expect the hour to be fixed. We were told that we would be sent for when it was time, and about a quarter to eleven messengers arrived to tell us to come.

The leafy shed was finished, but unfortunately the weather was gusty and wet, and the pretty palm leaves, which would have been such a pleasant shelter from the sun, were no protection from the rain. The leaflets formed ducts which poured the water down in little rivers here and there, making pools on the mats which were spread on the grass, and the wind shook the leaves and spattered the drops in all directions.

A large company of men were squatting on the mats, closely packed together, leaving a semi-circular space in the middle, in the centre of which stood a very large yangona bowl, immediately in front of an important looking man. All the men as far as I could see were dressed in sulu and singlet, or shirt, with sometimes the addition of a coat and tie. They seemed a grave and dignified assemblage, many of them with extremely intelligent, interesting faces.

A line of chairs, brought probably from the missionary's house, faced this audience. There were two vacant places left for us, and the rest were occupied by the missionary and his family, the new Roko, Ratu Joni Mandraiwiwi, the Hon. William Sutherland, and in the centre, as representing the Governor, the Hon. Eyre Hutson. There were also mata-ni vanuas, or heralds, attending on Mr. Hutson and Ratu Joni.

The ceremony began with the solemn making and drinking of yangona. A native put the grated root into the bowl and, amid absolute silence, another native poured in water out of an earthen vessel. Then began the mixing and straining with the *vau* fibre, during which process the natives behind chanted gravely. Suddenly the chanting stopped, and an extraordinary figure started up from among the squatting assembly—a tall splendidly built man, dressed in no other clothing than grass and bright coloured flowers and leaves. The effect was most dramatic and startling. When the half coconut which he held in his hand had been filled with the grog, he stood for a moment or two facing us, looking reverently up, with the



SOLEMN YANGONA DRINKING AT MBAU.

full cup in both hands, then he let himself down into a purely Fijian attitude which cannot be described in words, but I hope a sketch may give some idea of it. Without quite getting up, and yet with dignity, he made his way in turn to those who were to partake, sinking in front of each into the same attitude again, and presenting the cup with both hands. Though the cup was nearly full each time, except when brought to us, he never spilt a drop, and it certainly required great skill—obtained no doubt through much practice—to succeed



CUP-BEARER WITH CUP.

in this. In former days the post of cup-bearer must have been a very anxious one, as any mistake brought the club down.

The cup was handed only to Mr. Hutson, Mr. Sutherland, the new Roko, the two heralds, and the missionary, and, out of compliment, to us. All the time it was being handed and drunk the natives behind the bowl solemnly clapped their hands in unison, and each time it was emptied, they shouted "A Máthá" (it is dry). The colonial secretary then read a nice letter from the Governor, in which he said, among other things, that he hoped the new Roko would as far as possible

keep up native customs. Next there was an address from the people to the Roko, and a short and clear speech from him to them, and lastly, a speech from one of the natives, which ended in a very reverential prayer that the new Roko might be strengthened in his difficult work, and that his people might be faithful to him. The Governor and "the English ladies who had so kindly come to witness the ceremony," were also prayed for. The quiet dignified simplicity of the whole thing was very impressive, the more so that close by, visible through the posts of our shelter, towered the ruins of the heathen temple, over the rara in front of which we could see the natives, all through the ceremony coming up from the ovens carrying the shark and all the other suggestive looking food, strung on long poles, ready for the feast.

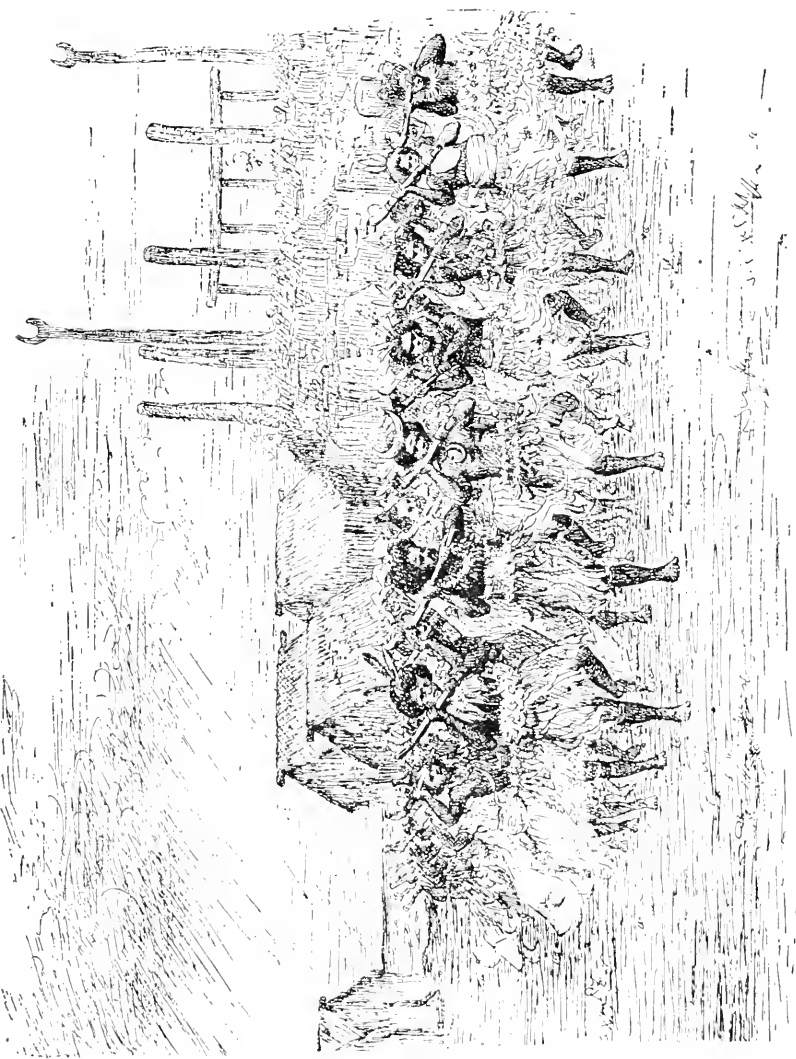
Elaborate war dances were to succeed the ceremony, and the men were gathering. At the risk, however, of missing the first part, we hurried back to the house to bid goodbye to our host, and see him off.

Ratu Kandavu Levu looked very sad, although he had not allowed himself to show it till now, but he was pleased to see us, and he shook hands warmly as he stepped into the canoe which was to carry him to his yacht, which was tossing among white-crested waves some way out from the shore. It did not seem at all safe to start. The sky was very black, and blasts of rain and wind whipped our faces. We remonstrated, but he said "I shall be all right."

No one else knew when he was going, so it was a very quiet send off. Fusi was crying indoors, and none but our two selves stood on the rocks to receive his last wave, as he went off in the storm, never to return to his hereditary home as Roko any more. I knew it was right and had to be, yet I felt disinclined to return again to the festivities to welcome his successor.

We found that he had left word that we were to have some lunch, and that some hot soup and biscuits were waiting ready for us. We were touched with this attention and very grateful for the refreshment.

When we got back the first meké was about to begin. For-



GREAT WAR DANCE AT MBAU.

tunately the lovely flowery dresses of the men were not injured by the rain which fell pretty heavily and it did not interfere with the wild barbaric grace of their movements as they waved their clubs and danced and leaped and stamped in unison, it was astonishing what perfect time they kept. These great big men, in their gay fantastic garments and shiny dark skins had a most strangely striking appearance. As each man designed and made his own dress there was a great variety, and all were more or less interesting. The wreaths and garlands were very beautiful and most skilfully and artistically put together. They were veritable works of art and must have taken a long time to make, and it seemed a pity they could serve for only one occasion. Most of the performers wore broad white sashes of light transparent native cloth, tied in huge bows behind, and many of them too had head dresses of the same, the long broad streamers more than reaching the ground; these last looked like wedding veils, waving and fluttering in the wind as the men danced. Long feathers or reeds stuck in the hair, and savage looking ornaments of teeth or shell completed the costume. There were four mekés got up from different districts. The dresses and arrangements were considered particularly fine, but of course I had no means of comparison. That it was intensely picturesque I can testify, and especially here in Mbau among all the historic surroundings, and performed to the music of the wild dash of the stormy waves on the shore.

Next morning, the tenth, we were to have returned to Suva, but the weather was still very wild. The government party most kindly offered to take us back in their launch, but we should have had a terrible tossing, and I was more than glad to seize on any excuse to remain longer at Mbau. I should like to have stayed a whole month.

Ratu Joni Mandraiwiwi was good enough to put his yacht, the *Tui Rewa*, at our disposal with the splendid Othello-like cup bearer as our captain, and suggested that when the stormy weather passed we should sail round the coast to Nukuloa in Viti Levu Bay, and stay with Ratu Saimoni Dombui. From there we would make arrangements to walk up to Ndarivatu

among the mountains, where the government have put up a rest house, and a country house for the Governor. We would make our way back to Suva, first by walking down till we reached a navigable point on the Rewa (the largest of the Fijian rivers), then, by taking a native canoe down as far as Nausori, which is within easy reach of Suva. I should thus see not only a fine part of the coast, but also cross the island through wild and beautiful inland parts.

When my fellow traveller unrolled the plan to me, I felt that nothing could be more delightful, but I said "What about clothes, etc.?" We had nothing suitable with us, the light dresses we were wearing were already draggled and dirty, and besides these we had brought only our best hats, and a few dainty things for the ceremony. We had not anything with us in the way of rugs; I had my mosquito net and pillow from which I never parted, but she had not even these. It was impossible to go across to Suva to fetch anything, and Mbau had no shops. "Must we give it up?" "Certainly not," said my resourceful guide. "Trust me and I will manage!" and she did.

While I was busy sketching she set off with Fusi, in spite of the gusty showery weather, and after being taken across to the mainland, walked all the way to Nausori, some seven miles, where there was a shop. It was not exactly a Whiteley, and she was unable to procure a good many things that might have been considered necessities if we had not been so anxious to carry out the programme that we would not acknowledge the presence of any lions in the way, however ferocious they might appear. She managed, however, to secure what even we could not possibly do without, a couple of thin cotton blankets, one each, to serve as bed and bedding, material to make two dresses, and some provisions for the way. She picked up a vehicle, and returned in triumph, tired but happy; and that very afternoon, securing the loan of Andi Thakombau's sewing machine, she set about making the dresses.

It was difficult for me to settle upon a subject to paint when I wanted to see everything and to study everything, and to paint everything, and when I could only run out between

showers. I decided on Andi Thakombau's house, but my attention was soon distracted by a troupe of children who had got hold of the gorgeous wreaths and likus of yesterday's meké, and who were trooping about, trying on all the wonderful things, and acting the war dances of the day before, the smaller ones with the brilliant leaves of their gay dresses sweeping the flower-bestrewn grass. It was a pretty sight. Children are children all the world over, and my thoughts were carried back to many a costume party of my little nephews and nieces, arrayed in studio properties in my far-off Norfolk home.

The Mbau children were particularly attractive and full of play, and there was no skin disease or eye trouble to mar them. Toys of primitive manufacture were in evidence here and there, and it was specially pretty to see the little boys sailing their miniature canoes with matting sails, and laughing and splashing with delight when they skimmed gaily across the water.



LAUNCHING TOY CANOE.



MBAU CHILDREN REVELLING IN THE MEKÉ DRESSES.

CHAPTER XXI.

CHRISTIANITY IN FIJI.

ONE afternoon we were asked up to tea by the resident missionary. He lives with his family in a pretty house on the top of the steep hill which forms the centre of the island. It was very restful sitting on the broad verandah, looking out over the wide view of sea and sky and distant land. He indicated to us the various points of interest, among them the island of Viwa where mission work in this neighbourhood first began, and he promised to take us over some day to see it.

The Wesleyans were the first to start missions in Fiji, and they took them up so thoroughly, and spread their stations so widely over the whole group of islands, that there was little room for other Protestant societies, who therefore gave their energies to other places, and left the work here entirely to this body; so that, except where the Roman Catholics came in, soon after the Wesleyans, there was no controversy of doctrine to disturb the infant religion of Fiji.

It was in the autumn of 1835 that the missionaries first reached any Fijian island. These came from Tonga, where a Wesleyan mission had gained footing some ten years before. Mr. Calvert and Mr. Cross, with their wives, came over from Vavau, one of the Friendly Islands, to Lakemba in the Windward Fijian Islands. Almost at the same time the inhabitants of the isolated island of Ono-i-Lau, the southernmost of the Fijis, were visited by a severe epidemic and other troubles, and in their anxiety and distress, they sought the Unknown God, of whom they had vaguely heard from wanderers who happened to land there from Tonga. Their efforts at worship were very touching. They had grasped only the idea that

there was one great God to whose worship one day in seven should be devoted, and, having made great preparations the day before, they assembled in gala dress for worship. They did not know how to begin, and invited one of their own priests to officiate. He offered the simplest of prayers to the Christian God, asking for His blessing, and that they might find means of learning more about Him. They sent off canoes to Tonga for teachers, but there were none to spare. Then, learning that white missionaries had gone to Lakemba, they sent there begging them to come. It was impossible for either Mr. Calvert or Mr. Cross to be spared. All that could be done was to retain the messengers awhile for instruction, which they tried eagerly to grasp ; and then carefully to train one of the natives



THAKOMBAU.

From an old drawing at Mbau.

to be sent as missionary, till one of themselves could visit the island. It was three years before they had any one advanced enough to be given such a responsible position : then they sent a man called Ravuata. When he arrived he found over two hundred natives who had banded themselves together to try to be Christians and live Christian lives.

In 1839 Mr. Cross started mission work in Viwa, an islet close to Mbau. It was unfortunate that he was unable, owing to the determined opposition of the great chiefs, to settle at Mbau itself. Mr. Cross did not realise the supreme importance of such a step till it was too late, for Thakombau showed willingness at first to receive the white teacher, and to make him welcome ; but when he went to Viwa instead, the great chief was probably bitterly offended, for he and his father, Tanoa, who was still the nominal ruler, for many years after opposed the missionaries in every way and did all in their power to shock and annoy them. For fifteen years they had to wait at Viwa only two miles off, knowing

what awful horrors were going on, and utterly unable to do anything. Every effort they made only exaggerated the evil. It was at the instance of the King of Tonga, in 1854, after Tanoa's death, that Thakombau finally renounced cannibalism and adopted Christianity, and a year later Mr. Waterhouse was rather reluctantly permitted to come and live at Mbau.

There is a charming story told by Mrs. Wallis, who accompanied her husband on a *bêche-de-mer* expedition to Fiji a few years earlier, when cannibalism was at its height. The Mbutoni (sailors) had come in a large company to pay tribute, and, as usual, were to be entertained at a great feast, where bokalo would of course be the most important dish. There was no war at the time, but war canoes were sent to fetch what they could, and they trapped fourteen women fishing, and returned bringing them with them. Word of this reached Viwa; Mr. Calvert and Mr. Cross were away on the mainland at a council meeting, and their wives were alone, but they determined that they must do what they could, so they set off in a canoe accompanied by only one native, taking with them as a peace offering, two "tambuas" (whales' teeth) tied together with a ribbon. When they arrived they found they were too late, and that several of the women had been, or were actually being killed. They went bravely on, however, undaunted by painful sights, and walked straight into Tanoa's presence, although it was taboo for a woman to do so. He was amazed, and asked what brought them there. They presented the tambuas and proffered their request. To their great joy he accepted them, and gave orders that those women who still lived should be spared and handed over to the ladies, who had the great pleasure of taking them back with them to Viwa till such time as they could be returned to their homes.

Tanoa was delighted with the ribbon on which the tambuas were strung, and Mrs. Wallis saw him later on, wearing it round his white head-dress. Thakombau was present at the interview, and was so impressed by the bravery of the ladies that he promised to give up cannibalism, and he so far fulfilled his promise that at the next great feast when tribute was brought to Mbau there was no bokalo.

Our visit to Viwa was carried out the first possible afternoon and proved very interesting. It roused the imagination to look back across the water to the little island of Mbau and to think of the fifteen long years the missionaries watched and waited, knowing what was going on, but unable to do anything whatever to stop it.

On the top of the hill with its simple monument we saw the resting place of John Hunt. It is surrounded by Fijian graves with their neatly kept earth encircled by stones. He died in 1848 at the early age of thirty-six, worn out with toil and care, and with sorrow, for one by one little ones were sent him, too fragile to stand the hardships, and his wife and he were called upon with breaking hearts to give them all up. He was the first missionary to lay his bones in this far-off land.

The present missionary has a great affection for the Fijians, and speaks of them in a broadminded way. He told a very interesting story of their hospitality. An Englishman was coming to visit friends on a plantation up one of the large Fiji rivers, and it was arranged that the coasting steamer was to land him at its mouth, where a motor launch would await him to carry him to his destination. When he found himself on shore, however, there was no launch. Wandering along disconsolately carrying his bag, he met some Fijians, one of whom happened to be a chief. They saw he was a stranger, and that he was in straits; by signs they indicated to him to follow. Noting their savage appearance he was uneasy, but he obeyed. The chief took him to his own house, and at once, made preparations for his comfort. In the first place provisions were got ready and put before him, on banana leaves; taro and yams, four eggs, fish and two boiled fowls; the chief squatting beside him the while and encouraging him to eat. At night he was given the dais to himself, and the family slept on the floor at the other end of the house.

The launch having broken down, it was two days before it appeared, and all that time the same liberal and kind hospitality was showered upon him. Before going away he wanted to pay handsomely for his entertainment, but his host would accept nothing. He got the friend who had come to fetch

him to make it clear that it would make no difference in his gratitude for all the kindness. But no, the chief would accept nothing. "You were a stranger and it was our duty to take care of you," he said, and he would have neither money nor gift.

When we came home we found a strange Englishman, established in the house. We were not more surprised to find him than he to find us. He had business in Mbau, and Ratu Kandavu Levu had invited him some time before to come and stay at his house when he had to conduct it. He offered to go and look about for other quarters: as he had been invited, however, and we had been storm-stayed much beyond our time, we did not like to allow this. Fusi came forward and asked us to sleep at her house, and we accepted. I think she was very pleased, and told all her friends of her coming visitors; for when we went over, intending to lie down for the night, they crowded in and took the most trying interest in all our movements. Yangona had to be made, and we had to drink it, and endeavour to look pleasant, but I was very tired and longing for quiet. At last my companion let down her hair and proceeded to comb it. The thick brown shower as it tumbled in wavy masses over her shoulders produced "click, clicks" of delight all over the company, and more and more people were fetched to admire it. Two or three times, when she had begun to wind it up for the night, at an earnest request she had to let it all down again. They wanted to see mine too, and nodded at me, making very expressive gestures indicating the pulling out of hair pins. Comparisons, however, would have been odious, and I pretended not to understand; and finally, when they asked my interpreter to make their desires known, I said my hair would be combed in the morning, not now. It seemed hopeless to get to bed. At last she insisted on the men going away, but she could not dismiss the women, and I wished they would not take such a very embarrassing interest in my every movement, from the winding of my watch, to the drawing off of my stockings, and the emerging of my white feet. By a determined effort to lie down and take no further notice of anything or any one, we got quiet at last.

CHAPTER XXII.

SAILING IN RATU JONI MANDRAIWIWI'S YACHT.

DAY by day we were expecting the weather to settle, so that we could start in the *Tui Rewa* which was all ready for us, but it only got worse, and we learned afterwards that two or three cutters, that had injudiciously put out, had been wrecked.

Each day we were detained, however, was a reprieve to me. Sketching of course was not easy under the circumstances, but interest was so concentrated all round, that, every time I ran out between showers, something new and absorbing was discovered.

The most notable thing was perhaps the consecration stone. My companion found it and called me, and though it hid itself away in the fishermen's quarters, once seen it was striking enough. It stood up boldly from a platform of flat stones, sheltered by old pandanus trees. Here, took place in former days the most serious rite of knighthood. Mrs. Wallis, already referred to, happened to be present when one of these ceremonies was going on, and we are



BLOWING THE
CONCH-SHELL.

indebted to her for a very interesting account of it. To begin with, amid the noisy blowing of conch shells, the king addressed



THE CONSECRATION STONE AT MBAU.

the warriors who had distinguished themselves in battle, using a very old chant in almost obsolete Fijian ; then came the young men who had killed their first foe, and for them there was special disrobing and robing. As each man approached, the priest called him by a new name which he afterwards bore. It was generally the name of the man killed. All those knighted got new names : they could be knighted over and over again till they had quite a string of names. While the name was being given, attendants poured out libations of water from banana leaves which they had been using as vessels. Then followed anointing with sweet scented oil, and an immense number of other ceremonials, among them the handling of clubs. A great many were brought, and, one after another given to these heroes to touch, which seems to have been supposed to bestow special virtue. The proceedings lasted four days, and, except at the beginning, the most absolute quiet was maintained, not a drum being beaten, or any sound made all through the town. The fourth day was so sacred that a baby was not even allowed to cry ! The knights had to pay dearly for the honour, for during these four days they were permitted neither food nor rest, and they might not go away. A shed was erected for their shelter at night, and to screen them from the noonday sun, but they were not allowed to lie down or take their clubs from their shoulders.

When a place was conquered, it was always the effort of the victors to get hold of the consecration stone and carry it off. To lose it was a terrible disgrace, and blood would be spilt like water to get it back again. Hence the pride Mbau has in the consecration stones which ornament the steps of its temple.

When it was too wet to be out I secured a likeness of Ratu Joni. He most good naturedly came and sat for me and I much enjoyed studying his curious but interesting features. It was not easy, however, to see his dark brown face in the badly lighted nibure, and we had to get some white tapa, and hang it up behind, before I could make him out at all.

Food had been a little difficult to obtain owing to the stormy weather, and we had to trench on the provisions procured for our voyage. Even fish was not always obtainable. When-

ever possible, however, the women trooped out with their nets, and Fusi and the old servant always went too. They formed very merry parties, and looked most picturesque, wading about in groups in the water. They took delight in every part of the business. One day I came upon our two preparing the fish for dinner. Before I reached them I could hear their merry laughter. They were sitting beside the steps which led down the low cliffs to the sea, with a basket of fresh caught, living fish beside them. They picked them out one by one, and got them ready for the pot with their teeth. The sensation of the fish wriggling between their lips seemed to be very enjoyable, from the bursts of merriment it evoked. I dined on biscuits and butter that day!

One evening when we went into the dining buri we found dressmaking in progress. Fusi had borrowed Andi Thakombau's sewing machine, and was making herself a shell-pink silk pinafore, elaborately trimmed with Valenciennes lace, and the old woman was helping her. Both were smoking clay pipes, and were blissfully happy. I was looking at the old woman, and thinking what a comic figure she was, with her broad flat face, squinting eyes, and benevolent expression, when she took the pipe out of her mouth and offered it to me, and indeed pressed it upon me. I had to assure her over and over again that I did not smoke, before she would consent to return it to her own mouth.

On Sunday, August 18th, the wind had ceased to whistle and sigh through the reeds of our mbure. I had been long awake thinking over all I had seen and heard and read, and I felt the calm. Before dawn I slipped out and down the steps into the sea. The sky was blue and cloudless, and while I was rejoicing in the fresh, cool water, the sun rose clear and bright and cast a brilliant pathway of gold across the sea.

We had been ready for days with everything packed, prepared for an early start. This was a perfect morning but I did not think the Fijians would be willing to go off on a Sunday. However, a message came saying we had better not lose such an opportunity, as Ratu Joni did not think the fine weather would last; so, after a hurried breakfast, we embarked.

Fusi bade us goodbye at the house, giving me at parting a beautiful piece of Mbau tapa. Andi Thakombau unfortunately had gone : she was taken ill soon after Ratu Kandavu Levu's departure, and had to go across to a nursing home at Nausori.

The people came out of the houses as we passed, to say good bye, and some of them followed us to the shore, but the real farewell came from Ratu Joni. The tide was out, and he carried me himself over the wet sand to the rowing boat which was to take us to the yacht ; and as we sailed away we saw him standing, tall and erect, watching, till he became a mere speck in the distance.

It was a very sweet morning, with just enough wind to carry us along. There was a sense of profound restfulness and Sunday peace, as we glided in the gentle breeze, and watched the old cannibal town growing smaller and smaller, till it lost itself in the morning mist.

When all else had disappeared we could still distinguish the large white church and school house. And over the water fainter and fainter came the tones of the lali, beating to call the people to their devotions.

Then our captain and his three men began to sing beautiful hymns in parts, at first very softly, then gradually letting their voices swell, till the rich harmony seemed to vibrate through the whole air, and fill it with praise. One of the boys had a voice like a flute, clear and pure, and the captain's was the richest bass I ever heard, like the deep tones of a fine organ. He had, in common with many Fijians, a natural ear for harmony, being able to fit in a bass to any air, and even when we sang an English or Scotch ballad he had never heard before he could at once join in harmoniously. A marked feature, too, of the Fijians' singing is the absolute time they keep, and the suddenness with which they stop all together.

So, in God's great cathedral, under the dome of His sky, we worshipped, and felt that it was a Sabbath of Sabbaths.

We glided peacefully all day, but towards evening it fell quite calm and we anchored. After tea we went ashore at a place called Bulumi. The tide was out, and we had a long

row over shallow water. It was the best view I ever had of growing coral. The water was so clear and calm that we could see down beautifully, and it seemed like fairy-land. The coral flowers were of every colour and form—there were green and blue and scarlet and pink, and some were tall and branching, while others were compact, forming cushions and rosettes, and among them the gem-like fishes glittered and flashed. We had a long scramble among rocks and through a mangrove thicket before we reached the village, and were glad to go into the chief's house and rest. A pleasant looking pig formed part of the group, gathered in quiet comfort round the lamp on the floor. Out of respect for us he was turned out, but, being one of the family, he was much offended, and made such a hulloabaloo at the door that, for the sake of peace, we had to beg that he be re-admitted, and he came cheerfully in and sat down beside us. This is the only instance I came across of Fijians making a pet of one of the lower animals. They have cats and dogs of uncertain breeds in their villages, but these never seem to receive any notice or attention.

When the pig had got established, the quiet was again disturbed by most painful heart-rending shrieks. We enquired what it was, and learned that a man was chastising his wife. I did not like it at all, but no one seemed in the least concerned. I never met with this elsewhere, though I came across one other instance of cold-bloodedness in Fiji. It was at Nukuloa during a meké. We could hear a small child crying and crying most pitifully, and no one took the least notice, or seemed to mind. We were told it was only a child that had been left shut up alone.

The starlight row back was interesting and a little exciting, for we grounded several times on coral, and had difficulty in getting off again. We slept on the yacht, and in the morning we sailed into Viti Levu Bay, and landed at Nukuloa (black sand). There we bade good-bye to our captain and crew, and were warmly welcomed by Ratu Saimoui Dombui.

CHAPTER XXIII.

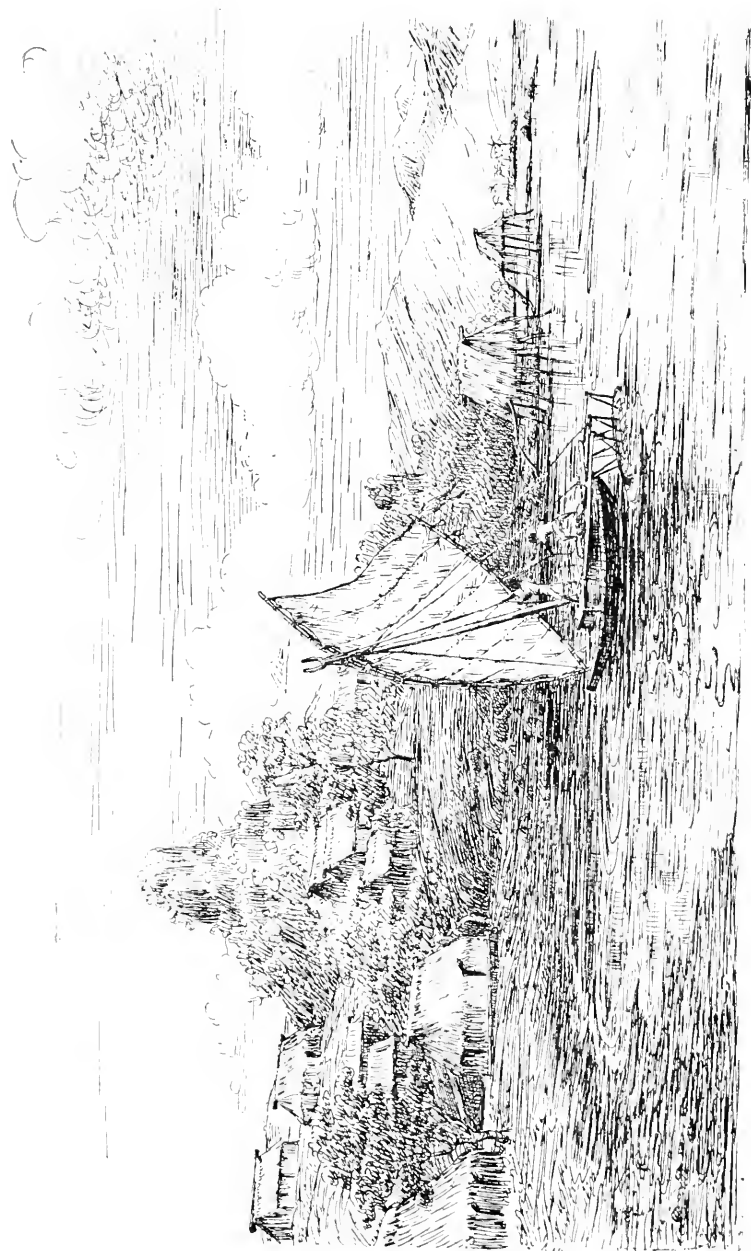
VISIT TO RATU SAIMONI DOMBUI.

NUKULOA is a delightfully picturesque town, and it is quite undisturbed by modern wood or zinc. The pretty little grass houses look like mice creeping about under the trees, and peeping out with black eyes from among the rocks along the sea shore, and from the steep hill at the head of the bay, which is dominated by one of those striking bluffs of rock so characteristic of Fijian scenery.

The colouring is unusual, as the sand justifies the name Nukuloa (black sand) by being really black, and the rocks, wherever exposed on the hill sides, are also very dark.

Ratu Saimoni knew we were coming, and he was prepared with a grand welcome. My companion had known him long before, as he was for six years government provincial scribe at Mathuata, when her husband was magistrate there. His delight at seeing her was wonderful. He took her hand and would hardly let it go; and he led her with great ceremony to the best bedroom, where was an iron bed, covered with many beautiful woven mats with gay fringes. The other bedroom was given to me, while he, with his wife and little adopted daughter, went to sleep elsewhere. The house was built with a central room, a bedroom at each side, and a verandah all round.

A very elaborate dinner of many courses was prepared for us, and two Fijian boys waited. We all sat at table; but the lady of the house looked uneasy, and did not seem accustomed to sitting on chairs and using forks and knives, or to eating with her lord. She never betrayed any wish to join in the conversation, or to learn what we were discussing when we



NUKULOA.

were talking English, which Ratu Saimoni could manage pretty well. Our entertainment and comfort did not concern her either. She left it all to him, and he proved a most anxious and attentive host. So much so, that we were quite unhappy about all the trouble and expense he put himself to on our account.

After dinner we went out for a stroll, and called in at the house of the English doctor, who is established here, and has a small hospital, and an enclosure in which at that time lepers were being gathered together, to be sent for segregation to the Makongai Station.

Tea was brought in, and bread baked by his wife. We had tasted no bread for such a long time that it seemed delicious, and was a great treat. Our hostess was so pleased with our enjoyment of it that she sent us a present of a loaf, and we brought it out at supper, and cutting off a slice or two, offered the plate to Ratu Saimoni's wife. To our astonishment she helped herself to the loaf and left the slices for the rest of the company, evidently thinking this was the modest thing to do. It was a little disappointing to see our precious bread disappear so suddenly, for she ate it all with the greatest equanimity.

The doctor showed us over the hospital. His whole staff, nurses and all, are Fijian, and he told us they did very well. It is hoped that, by training women as nurses, there will be much less mortality among new born infants. There was a little baby, an arrival of the day before, lying on a tiny mat beside its mother, and gazing out into life with big brown eyes. It was a pretty wee thing, with such an intelligent little face that it seemed as if it might have run about and talked. The mother looked weak, and as if she had come through a trying time. A dignified nurse was standing near who, the doctor said, had been splendid, and that it had been rather a bad case. She could do everything, even to the taking of temperatures, and filling in of charts.

In the old days, I was told, the Fijian mother fled to the forest, erected a light shelter and spread a mat, and there all alone she brought forth her young. Then she piled everything

together and set fire to it, and, with her infant, returned to the village, obliterating as she passed every trace of her track. No one must know where her infant first saw the light; if an enemy found the spot, and carried a curse there, woe betide the baby.

We saw the poor lepers in a carefully railed-in enclosure, several Indians and one Fijian. They seemed to be comfortably and well cared for, but they were terribly suggestive of caged animals as they, very willingly at the doctor's request, exhibited themselves, putting their poor maimed arms through the bars to show the stumps of the missing fingers. It was a pathetic sight.

The weather here again was very disappointing, and the rain made it most difficult to secure any sketch at all, which was sad in such a pretty place. Ratu Saimoni let me get an impression of his kind, but most peculiar, un-English face, and while I painted, he told me all about canoe and house building, and many other interesting things.

In spite of the rain, we went for a dip in the bathing pool. A stout native woman offered to conduct us, and we expected it to be close by, but it proved to be a long way off, and through tall grass and weeds, so that we were thoroughly wet before we reached it. It was a beautiful place—a large deep pool with a clear river flowing through it; and when for a moment the clouds lifted we saw the grand bluff of rock standing up above the trees and reflected in the water.

I covered up my clothes as well as I could under an umbrella, but they were already pretty wet, and there was nothing dry when I came to put them on again. Our companion was much surprised at our bathing gowns. "What do you want with a bathing gown when you have got a *towellia*?" she exclaimed. But as the *towellia* remained on the bank, we pre-



RATU SAIMONI DOMBUI.

ferred having bathing gowns. This lovely spot should have been visited only by nymphs and naiads, and our friend looked very funny, sitting on a rock with her broad stout back towards us, performing her ablutions in a business-like manner. I noticed great white scars, forming jagged conspicuous marks over her dark shoulder blades, and thought she must have met with some horrible accident, but was told it would be the result of an attack of pleurisy, or some other lung trouble, cured, native fashion, by severe slashing and burning, a remedy corresponding to our blister or poultice.

There was never any risk of men interfering with us when we were bathing. They are very particular. In olden days if a man were found looking at a woman bathing, he was promptly lynched by her family. They are very modest in their ways, which makes it pleasant to be among them. I certainly never saw any impropriety all the time I was there. Where there are two bathing pools, one is reserved exclusively for the women, and one for the men. When there is but one, then the men and women bathe at different hours, and, if the bath be exposed, there is always a bamboo screen. Often curious little shower-baths* stand up conspicuously in the middle of the village, but to enjoy these the people do not undress, and the water is rained down over clothes and all.

Ratu Saimoni arranged a great yangona drinking, and beautiful meké, for us. It took place in a huge buri, the largest I have seen, and there were a good many chiefs there, and people came from considerable distances to attend. When our host conducted us to the place of assembly, a very considerable company was gathered, squatting in a circle all round the large hall. Without moving or raising their eyes from the ground, they greeted us with a low murmur. This, it seems, is a sign of great respect. With much solemnity the drink was made, while a venerable old man delivered a prayer, expressing gratitude for our presence among them, and offering a petition for our safe journey and ultimate happy return to our own country. Then the whole assembly chanted; after

* These shower baths are not native institutions, but have been instituted by the Colonial Government.

which, amid dead silence, the half coconut, a beautiful old heirloom in this case, was filled and presented first to me. I was glad I had had practice before this very ceremonious affair. As it was, I felt a little nervous; but I acquitted myself well, and the company testified their approval by gently clapping in unison, and a loud shout of "A Máthá" (it is dry) when I span it back empty, and it stopped exactly at the foot of the cup bearer.

Then the meké men slipped in, really beautifully got up, the head dresses being specially remarkable; and they performed a graceful meké for our benefit.

There was something very pleasant about the whole thing. We were in tune with the people, and liked to be among them; and we felt that to them too our presence was a joy.



MEKE HEAD-DRESS,

CHAPTER XXIV.

MAROONED AT SEA.

THE pros and cons of our plans meanwhile were under earnest discussion ; and, after much deliberation, it was decided that we should coast round as far as Tavua Bay, and from there walk up to Ndarivatu. If the weather had been better Ratu Saimoni would have liked to send us round in his own yacht. As it was, however, it seemed best to take the little coasting steamer, *Andi Keva*, which passed this way, and which stopped to take in passengers if it were signalled for. As the time of its coming was uncertain, it was necessary to be on the watch all the while for its possible arrival, and to have everything ready to put on board at a moment's notice.

We laid in provisions for our tour, and Ratu Saimoni added a fine leg of pork, cooked in the savoury native fashion. He also mapped out our trip very carefully, and gave us introductions to the Bulis (minor officials) in the various villages we had to stop at, writing a letter charging them to have every care of us, and to see that we were not cheated, or taken advantage of in any way, and that we got good honest carriers. Then we waited for the boat ; this became rather tiresome, and, when the rain cleared a little, I could not resist slipping down to the shore to finish a sketch, thinking I should see the steamer at once, and that when it was hailed it would wait, so that I could easily go up to the house, and pack my remaining things without causing any inconvenience.

I was absorbed in my work when I became aware of something behind me, and, looking round, perceived two of the Roko's servants quietly waiting with very anxious expressions. They immediately said ; " Boat, Missie, quick," and pointed

up to the house, then proceeded promptly to gather my things, and tear up the path with them. Concerned though they were, they would not speak till I turned and noticed them, as it would have been bad manners.

Sure enough, away on the horizon-line, only just perceptible was a funnel of a steamer, and a tiny streak of smoke. I flew all the long way up to the house, where I found my companion in a fever of excitement. My remaining things were tumbled into my box, while the boys waited to pick it up, and Ratu Saimoni's voice could be heard from without, calling me to hurry.

Then we made all speed down to the beach, where an old war canoe was launched ready for us. It took us out to the queer little steamer, which was trumpeting its desire for departure in a rather nerve-racking manner.

The steamer was dirty and not at all attractive; and all



THE GLOOMY KAUVANDRA MOUNTAINS.

day the rain poured down in torrents, so that we got only glimpses of the fine coast scenery. Towards evening we came in sight of the gloomy Kouvandra mountains where all the superstitions of the Fijian mythology concentrated themselves. Somewhere in their deep recesses their great god, Dengei, is supposed even now to be hiding away. He generally takes the form of a serpent, so that he did not disappear before the missionaries, but promptly became "the old serpent the devil." He does not, however, like his loss of pre-eminence, and all the other changes and disturbances in Fiji; and from all accounts they seem to have brought on a kind of nervous break-down, for he never comes out, or takes any interest in

anything. He does not even trouble to feed himself, but lets an attendant put the food into his mouth. He has always been rather a nervous subject, and was so even in his prime. The noise of pottery making annoyed him, so he struck off with his foot the portions of land where it was being made, and they became islands. That accounts for the fact that potteries in this neighbourhood were always on islands. The roar of the Rakiraki reefs was disturbing, so he ordered silence ; and even now, though the surf breaks there, it does not make the same roar as elsewhere. The clamour of the birds interfered with his sleep in the early morning, and he ordered them to go away. To this day, they are said to leave the neighbourhood at sunset, and not to return till after sunrise the next day. The bats, too, are said to be silent here, because he could not stand their clatter, and ordered them to stop it.

When we arrived at our destination, there was a large punt anchored about a mile and a half from the shore. The steamer stopped alongside the punt, and two Englishmen, and ourselves, and our baggage were put on board, besides the mails, and some cargo. Then the steamer gave a shrill whistle and steamed away, leaving us marooned on the ocean, without any certainty at all that a boat from the shore would come to take us off before night.

It was quite impossible for us to make ourselves seen or heard—we were too far away ; and scanning the shore in the deepening twilight, we could perceive no indications of buildings of any kind : just a great stretch of mangrove with no apparent opening. Fortunately the rain had ceased, and while my companions good humouredly discussed the situation, I got out my sketch book, and was soon absorbed in studying the mountains, and letting my imagination run riot among them. Somewhere hidden in their depths was the heaven of long ago ; so difficult to reach, yet so deeply desired, that horrible tattooing was willingly borne, and widows submitted, and even begged, to be strangled that they might reach it. The way was full of pitfalls, and the departed spirit had to pass through endless trials and dangers before he was

safe. If his courage failed him, or if he were overcome, he was doomed to eternal unrest, wandering for ever about these dreary places, and sometimes making excursions at night to the haunts of men, only to find them fly from him in terror, because there was no more companionship between them. Bachelors had the worst time. The snares that were put in their way made it practically impossible for them to reach the realms of bliss. A heavy tax on bachelors! And it was specially hard, as, in the days when great chiefs took to themselves some fifty to a hundred wives, many men had to go without.

As time went on and the twilight was darkening, we began to grow uneasy at the non-appearance of any rescue boat. It became necessary to consider what we should do. None of us had any matches, so, before it got pitch dark, my companion lifted the boards of the deck we were standing on, to see the possibilities of the hold for sleeping, and she scrambled down, and, pulling the packages about, arranged bags of flour to form beds. Next, we brought out our provisions to share with our fellow travellers, who had no food with them. There was moreover nothing to drink. We were just going to tackle the ham when we heard the joyful sound of the distant splash of oars. So we packed up our things again, and waited, for what seemed a long time. We could see nothing, but gradually, gradually, the sound drew nearer, and at last a boat came alongside. The boat men were much surprised to find passengers; they said they had come out only to fetch the flour and the mails, because they expected a rough night, and were afraid these would all get wet; and they hardly knew how they could take us, but we insisted, and doubtfully they let us get in. The boat leaked considerably, and we were such a heavy load for it that there *did* appear to be some risk of swamping; and, to add to our discomfort, the rain came on again and poured steadily down. It seemed a long mile and a half in the darkness, with the water soaking up from below, and coming down from above; but at last we found ourselves on a sopping little landing stage, on what seemed to be the bank of a river, bordered by mangrove swamp. Here

we and our luggage were put out, while our fellow travellers were taken to a point further on. The boatmen cheered us before they went away by telling us that the mbuli, with whom we were to have stayed, was from home : that his house was occupied by twenty ladies from Mathuata, and, moreover, that it was two miles off. So here we were all by ourselves, in this lonely spot, in the pouring rain, at night, encumbered by baggage, and with no idea where to go or what to do.

CHAPTER XXV.

NDARIVATU SAFELY REACHED.

“WELL, here we are stranded indeed !” exclaimed my companion. I took it very calmly, however, for I was sure she would somehow find means of extricating us from our dilemma.

After some consideration it was decided, that she should go off in search of assistance, while I remained in charge of our belongings.

Sitting on my tiny tin box, an old friend, which from the experience of previous travels had proved the best thing to hold necessaries, I waited—the splash of the retreating footsteps through the mud grew fainter and fainter, and died away in the distance : then there was silence.

I felt strangely small in the big universe of silence and darkness, knowing nothing of my surroundings, or where I was, but my thoughts were busy and kept me company. At last after what seemed a very long time I caught the grateful sound of voices, and knew that my companion had found someone and was coming back for me. She had met a Fijian constable, who curiously enough, had served under her husband, and had been at Lomaloma when he died ; and he remembered her with affection, and was anxious to do anything he could for her. He suggested opening the courthouse, and letting us take shelter there till he went in search of quarters for us. We left our baggage on the landing stage, and proceeded to walk ; but the road was raised and slippery, and we had to feel our way along with our umbrellas in the dark. I slipped and fell in the mud and twisted my right hand painfully, after which the constable assisted me. The

court-house was a spacious native building, new and dry and clean, with a pleasant scent of hay, and we were glad to be under cover. The man returned after some time, saying that it was quite true about the inroad of the Mathuata ladies, and the absence of the buli, that moreover, there being some kind of general gathering and every place being full, he would suggest our remaining for the night in the court-house. It seemed the best thing to do, so he fetched a man and sent him for our belongings, which he brought bit by bit, sopping wet and muddy.

The kindly constable then brought us boiling water to make tea. And, after much needed refreshment, we rolled ourselves in our damp blankets, and in our wet clothes lay down on the floor, where we tried to snatch a little sleep, to the buzz of myriads of mosquitoes, and the patter of the rain, which was coming down in sheets.

Next morning I was stiff and aching all over from my fall, and we were both tired ; but, since there was not much to be got by staying here, we determined, as the rain was abating, to make the first stage of our journey to Ndarivatu ; so, engaging carriers to take our things, we trudged off through the thick yellow mud, bound for the mountains, imbedded in which lay the Government Rest House.

We met one of our fellow travellers of the day before, a Major—who was greatly shocked at our proposed walk. He, too, was going to the rest house, but *he* was going to ride, and he thought we ought certainly to have horses. All the way up we expected him to pass us, but he did not. We reached Waikumbukumbu, the village where we intended to sleep, but the dark windowless house we were to occupy did not seem as clean as usual. The people were busy making both tapa and mats, and there was a great litter. The inhabitants, too, looked very uncivilised, and were more scantily dressed than any I had seen before, some big girls even having nothing on at all, though at our entry, they either drew some rags about them, or hid away. My companion kept saying, "I wish we could go right on up to the top," but it was half-past five already, and the sun was on the point of setting ; so

we decided that it was out of the question, and set about preparing the evening meal, which we much needed. I was sitting on the floor near the door resting, when I perceived a tired man, dragging an unwilling horse up the hill. This was poor Major — perfectly worn out. He had walked most of the way, pulling the horse after him because it would not go. Now his one cry was “Can anyone tell me how to get rid of this beast?” I called assistance, and it was soon disposed of; then we invited the weary traveller in to share our meal. He wanted the food very much, but he could not make himself comfortable in the Fiji house at all; his legs were in his way when he tried to sit on the floor, and he was very ill at ease. We got him a box, and, sitting there, he gradually cheered up, as he watched my companion bustling around preparing a very savoury stew, over the blazing wood on the stones in the corner of the room. After supper the moon rose, and we were much tempted to finish our journey. Alone we would not have thought it right to venture at that hour, but, as Major — also did not like the idea of going on by himself, and said he would be very glad of our company, we decided to combine our forces and go. The Fijians are so afraid of lonely places at night, that our next difficulty was to get carriers. The people said we were mad, or we would never have thought of going, that it was a very, very long walk, and that there were devils about, and ghosts haunting the forests. At last, by allowing a number of both men and girls to come, and offering good pay, we induced them to attend us, and they made a merry party, singing lustily the whole time, which effectually kept evil spirits away.

It was a wonderful walk. The moon was so clear that we could see the distant mountains, range upon range, and the plain, spreading out below, as we ascended. And, in the foreground great aloe-like plants* with tall flower spikes stood out boldly against the silvery distance, and cast a network of black shadows across our path. Aches and pains and fatigues were all forgotten, in the perfect enjoyment of

* This ‘aloe-like’ plant is Sisal hemp (*Fourcroya*), and is not indigenous in Fiji.

beautiful nature. Major — on whom scenery had not such an invigorating effect, was soon tired and often claimed a rest : that, too, was a pleasure. Sitting by the wayside we could enjoy the view at leisure, and it prolonged the time, so that it was midnight before we reached our destination. Major — was expected however, so the Indian who was in charge of the Government Rest House was up, and had everything in waiting to prepare a light, comfortable meal. And, while we were enjoying it, he quickly got beds ready for us all.

We were glad to undress properly, and tuck ourselves up dry and warm, for it was cold in the mountains, the thermometer going down as low as 48° at night.

We remained four days at the Ndarivatu Rest House and it really was a much needed rest. The Chief Justice, Sir Charles Major, and his wife, were staying at the Government Cottage, and the Commissioner, Mr. Russell, with his wife and little girl, lived near by, all cultured people, with much that was interesting to impart. I made great friends with the little girl, Noel, and when I was sketching she always crept up beside me and amused me with her chatter. She was much excited at meeting a "real artist," and I had reason to be grateful to her, for my colours were running out, and she most generously gave me some out of her own little box. I was afraid she would miss them, but she seemed so proud to bestow them that I gladly accepted. Our house-keeping at the Rest House was very entertaining. The arrangements of the establishment were, that people should pay half a crown a day each, and cater for themselves. Major — and we were the only guests and we decided to make common cause. We were to provide breakfast and lunch, and he was to provide dinner. Great was the rivalry between my housekeeper and him, each wishing to surpass the other in variety and luxury of entertainment. It was amusing to see the pride of the host for the time being, when something very special was coming, and the crestfallen expression when it proved a failure. The possibilities of the place, with its one little shop, were not extensive ; but, by dint of much consideration, and long consultation with the Indian cook, the results were often astonishing.

CHAPTER XXVI.

A NIGHT SURPRISE.

ON the 27th of August we left Ndarivatu to continue our journey across Viti Levu ; and I looked forward to it with keen anticipation, as the river part was to be performed in a native canoe.

We had had lovely weather while we were at Ndarivatu ; but it showed signs of changing, and heavy skies had succeeded sunshine. As, however, we were told that in this neighbourhood it was more often wet than fine, we could not put off on that account, especially as I was most anxious to see a great gathering which was to take place at Nasongo, where the magistrate of the district, who lived at Ndarivatu, was holding a yearly general council meeting (Mbose Vaka Yasana). All the men had already gone, which caused a difficulty about carriers for us. The magistrate, however, suggested that we should have boys from the Ndarivatu native school. His selection of four lithe, nice looking youths was made as a reward for good conduct, and they were greatly delighted at the opportunity it gave them of following their elders to the meeting. They stepped along merrily with a bright swinging gait, making a particularly nice escort for us ; and their dress was very pretty—a white cotton shirt rather low in the neck with short sleeves, and a sulu to match, both trimmed with scarlet braid.

We spent the night at Na Vai, the most primitive place I had ever stayed in, and quite different in character from the lowland villages. The houses were round like beehives. This shape resists the hurricanes better, and is usual in the mountains here. They were covered with soft fine grass all over,

and looked as if they were made of chinchilla fur. None of them had any windows, and the entrance was so low that it was necessary to stoop to go in, while banana leaves hanging down represented a door. The chief's house, which was allotted to us, had no furniture of any kind, not even the usual dais. There was nothing in it in fact except the stones forming the fire-place, and the mats on the floor.

There was no oil in the village, and we had nothing with us to make light except my little electric flasher; so we went to bed early, if lying down on the floor without undressing could be called going to bed. Unfortunately my pillow had got packed away, and, not being able to find it in the dark, I had to roll some grass in my waterproof to put under my head. The chief was off to Nasongo with all the other men, but an old man, his father or grandfather, took charge of us, and was very solicitous for our comfort. He was told that we should want to start early next morning; and he promised to fill the kettle and have it boiling, that we might get our tea in good time.

My head was aching, and I could not sleep; so I lay watching the firelight flickering over the beams and losing itself in the high dome of the roof. About two o'clock I had dropped off, when I was startled by the rustle of the dry banana leaves at the door, and in the dim light I could just perceive a dark scantily dressed figure slip in, with something in his hand which looked like a weapon. I sat up, and watching, saw him go straight to where my companion lay sleeping and stoop over her. I turned rather cold, and was distinctly uneasy, till I saw him go to the fire, and proceed to poke it with the stick he had in his hand. The sound woke her, and she enquired with great indignation what he was doing. It was all kindness; he was so anxious our breakfast should be ready in good time that he had come to make up the fire, and put on the kettle. He was packed off, being told that it was much too soon, and he must not come till five. He had no watch, however, and we were so much on his mind that at three o'clock he was back again.

As it was no use trying to sleep we soon got up, and dressed—

or, perhaps I had better say, shook ourselves. Then we made and ate our breakfast by firelight, and while it was still dark started on our journey.

At first we stumbled along, finding our way with some difficulty: then dawn was heralded by the twittering, I might almost say the singing, of birds, which gave a pleasant home feeling to the forest. This seems to be the only hour when the native birds do sing, for as soon as the day had fairly begun they were silent again. Though we had started about the same hour from Namosi we had heard no birds; but of course it was earlier in the season, and probably they had not commenced their spring songs yet.

All through our walk, we were often startled by a curious barking sound, from the depths among the trees, which I learned was the voice of a dove, the barking pigeon according to the white settlers, or the "thon'gé" of the Fijians; it was much more like a dog than a bird.

Almost as soon as we set off a light drizzle began, and increased to a very wetting rain which continued all the rest of our walk, blotting out our whole view, and allowing us only a glimpse now and then of some magnificent peak. We were among the highest mountains in Fiji, and it was sad to have them curtained off. Walking was difficult, for the road was steep, and covered with thick slippery mud, so that it was no easy matter to keep our footing; and both of us had rather severe falls, making us feel sticky and dirty all over when we entered the town of Nasongo. All along the way we could see the deep impressions of horses' hoofs. At some places it looked as if the foot had been withdrawn with difficulty; at others, there was a long streak where the horse had slid, and nearly fallen. The marks did not suggest a pleasant ride and we were glad to be walking. Plenty of bare feet, too, had evidently gone that way; and other paths joined ours all bearing footprints showing that the population had gone one and all to Nasongo, either walking or riding.

The walk was a long one, some fifteen miles or so; and of course the difficulty and slipperiness of it made it equivalent to far more, but we plodded steadily on. The foliage was

very thick, and the greens were very dark in colour, giving a gloomy aspect to the landscape, but I daresay that would have disappeared if the sun had shone out.

The rain had almost ceased as we reached Nasongo, one of the most exquisitely lovely places I have ever visited, with nothing to spoil its perfect harmony and artistic beauty. In

a grand setting of mountain crags, the pretty native houses seem to have fluttered down like birds and settled on every available ledge of the rocks, from which it is almost impossible to distinguish them, the colour is so like. Quantities of "erotons" and dracenas, planted round them, enlivened the whole scene with their brilliant colours, while streamlets trickled down between them, falling over the stones in miniature cascades.



NASONGO CUP-
BEARER IN
OFFICIAL DRESS.

Having started so early, it was only a quarter-past ten when we arrived; and the magistrate was much surprised, and could not understand how we had managed to get there so soon. He himself had ridden the whole way from Ndarivatu the day before, so as to open proceedings early next morning. We had missed nothing, for the council meeting, at which, of course, we could not be present, was beginning in the large council house, and the yangona drinking with which it commences, was just over. The cup-bearer came hurrying for me to paint him. I was giddy and sick with fatigue, but I could not disappoint him altogether, so I made a pencil sketch. He was a most extraordinary guy. His get-up would have been masterly for a clown in a pantomime, but it seemed very out of place for a grave council meeting, and gave one the feeling that the savage days were not far off. His nose was touched with vermilion, and there were patches of black round his eyes and mouth, giving a funny astonished expression;

his hair was yellow, decorated with a wonderful cockade of cock's feathers and red wool ; his liku (grassy kilt) was magenta and blue, and from it a bunch of crimson leaves stuck up over his chest ; he had a barbaric necklace on, and bunches of green leaves round his arms. Conscious of being exceedingly fine, he stood gravely till I drew him, and he was quite pleased with my rough pencil portrait, as were all the others who had gathered to watch the progress. They are easily satisfied.

Our arrival just then was not very convenient, when there were nineteen hundred strangers assembled in the place, receiving hospitality, so that the people themselves were sleeping in kitchens and out-houses, and even out of doors in the rain. A very pretty little house, however, had been reserved for us, the owner and his little boy going elsewhere, while only his wife remained with us. We were made very welcome, for the house was decorated with flowers and leaves to receive us, and fresh leafy bamboos were twined round the ladders that led up to it, and among the strands of long dry grass or fibre which formed the door. We were very thankful to rest, and make ourselves a little clean and tidy, before the magistrate sent for us to join him at dinner in the chief's house which he was occupying.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE MBOSE VAKA YASANA, OR PROVINCIAL COUNCIL MEETING.

WHILE we were dining off the savoury but ungainly Fiji fowl, the magistrate told me a little about the huge gathering now assembled, and its purpose. The Mbose Vaka Yasana is a general provincial council meeting, at which all the chiefs and bulis and important people of the whole district meet, to discuss local arrangements, such as road making, the building and pulling down of houses, water supply, sanitation, etc., and any trouble or difficulty. Fiji is divided into eighteen provinces, and these provinces are self-governing, managing their own affairs. This particular province covers seven hundred square miles, and there are five centres at which the Council meets in turn, so that it comes to Nasongo only once in five years; and that is quite often enough, for the inhabitants of all the rest of the province, nineteen hundred in this case, gather, and have to be hospitably entertained and feasted for about three days, the entire neighbourhood bringing in presents of provisions, so that it must be pretty well drained at the end of the time. Hospitality is one of the strongest characteristics of the Fijian, and he will do anything, give anything, or suffer anything, rather than fail in a single detail. In this case a prodigious amount of food was brought in, and it was very interesting to watch the process, the women bringing offerings, then the men.

The chief's house stands on a high green platform, ascended by notched tree trunks. I went out to look about me, and from there I saw the women assembling on another green

below for the formal delivering over of their gifts, and a wonderful concourse they were, in their gayest of gala dresses. Some of these gowns must have done duty on such occasions for more than half a century. They were the original ridiculously unsuitable dresses supplied by the first missionaries. Wide gowns, which might have been held out by a erinoline, flounced up to the top, and with trumpet sleeves. They suggested the busy ladies of long ago, gathered in little dorcas meetings, plying their needles for the far-away savages, while one of their number read Jane Austen's "nice new books," and Mrs. Jellaby collected money for "top boots and blankets." Then, there were the latest new pinafores, of every gay colour in silk and cotton, with dainty tucks and lace, the wearers of which must have been sorry to expose them to the showery weather. Now the sun was shining, and it showed off to full advantage the ladies' hair, which was the most striking part of their whole toilet. It had all been bleached with lime, then dyed every colour—green, yellow, scarlet, magenta, pale brown. The effect in looking down upon all these brilliant heads was exceedingly strange. I was watching with interest, and I must have looked kind and sympathetic, for one of the women, who seemed to hold an important position, stepped up and very respectfully shook hands with me; then they all followed, streaming up one ladder and down another; it took a long time, and at the end of it my hand ached. I thought I had shaken hands with all the women of the place, but during the rest of the time in Nasongo, those I had missed kept coming to me, wherever I was, to shake hands, not always at very convenient times; and they brought their children too, and even infants in arms had their tiny hands held out for me to shake. I stroked some of the little heads, and after that all the children's heads had also to be stroked. I felt as if I were some kind of dignitary conferring a blessing.

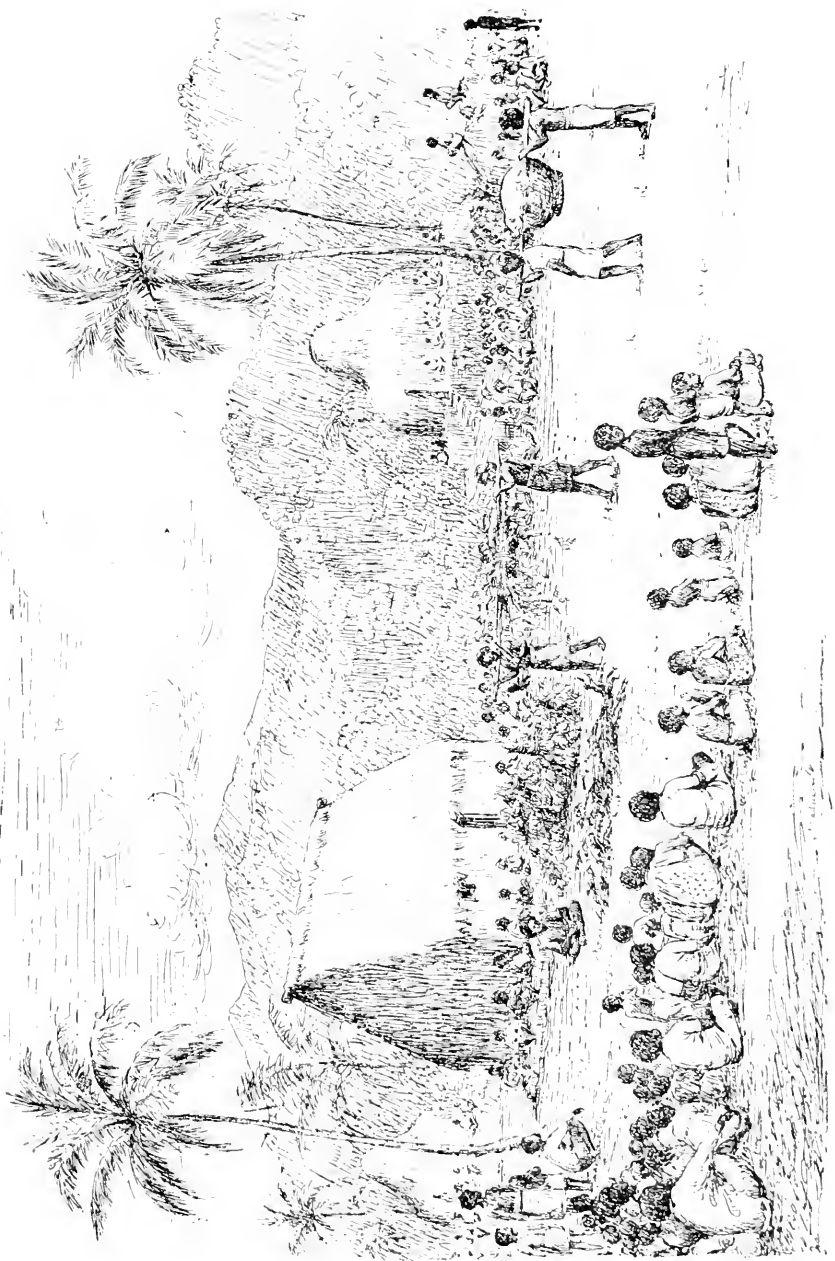
When all the women had assembled with their gifts, at a signal they started single file, carrying taro, yams, bananas, tinned meat, salmon, sardines, butter, biscuits and every sort of thing, and deposited them in a huge pile in front of the

council house. Men followed with larger gifts, five cows baked whole, several calves, twenty-six pigs, etc. These were carried on poles by two or more men. Then the yangona was brought up with a certain degree of ceremony, a large quantity strung on a pole being carried between two men, while an old man, squatting on the grass, solemnly gave thanks for it.

I tried to sketch the scene; but it was almost impossible to get anything as there were so many people, and they were all so interested that they crowded round, and blotted out my view. They recognised the tiniest pin-point sketch as soon as I began it, and rushed frantically off to tell the individual he was being painted, which brought him tearing over to see the result. There was no getting on, so I closed my book in despair. Next day a man who could speak English brought up a native constable to me saying "You draw zis man: show him hisself." I could not understand what he meant, for I had had no opportunity to get a portrait of anyone. Then I suddenly bethought myself of my frustrated effort of the day before, and produced it, and there, painted in two strokes half an inch high, was "zis man." A dark finger pointed him out, and there was a smile of satisfaction.

All day, dresses had been in course of preparation for a specially fine meké, but the affairs of state took so long that the evening shades were falling before the magistrate left the court-house, so it was decided to put it off till night, and have it by torch-light.

After supper I had the opportunity of seeing a Fijian apology which was very interesting. All the chiefs and all the mbulis of the province are required to be present, and in good time, at the council, or to send an adequate excuse. One mbuli arrived only at the very end, and not till after he had received a special message demanding his presence. After supper, two dark figures crept in, and squatted humbly beside the door, the second carrying a tambua (whale's tooth). These were the recalcitrant buli and his mata-ni-vanua. A chief never offers an apology himself: he always brings his herald to do so for him.



THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL MEETING AT NASONGO

The magistrate took no notice at first of the intrusion ; but when he turned, the mata-ni-vanua began to talk, with the most wheedling expression on his face, and he talked and talked, with the tambua strung over his clasped hands. At last the magistrate reached forward, and the tambua was



A FIJIAN APOLOGY.

handed over. Had he not accepted the tambua, it would have been a sign that the apology was insufficient, and the buli would have been in disgrace, and probably degraded.

The war dance at night, with the light of the great flaring bamboo torches, was very fine, and gave a good impression of the old barbaric days. As the torches flared and failed, the wild looking figures in their savage decorations appeared and disappeared, and the war paint and weapons, only half seen, looked more terrible than in the full light of day.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

TROOPING OFF WITH THE CROWD.

ALL next day we remained at Nasongo. I should have liked to have had a long time there, but I wanted a long time everywhere, and we had it not to give. My companion poked about among the people in quest of my much desired *ndari ni mbokola* (cannibal dish), and at last came back in triumph with a very good specimen, which was now being innocently used for taro and other vegetables. Cannibalism was practised here as late as 1874 when, I was told, there was a great rising, and all the Christians were killed off and eaten; and that it was very heroically and effectually put down by a little handful of two hundred men, all natives, supplied by *Thakombau*, and commanded by a Major Harding. They found themselves faced by a troop of two thousand, whom they fearlessly attacked and completely routed and defeated.

There is a sheer precipice above Nasongo, called the *Lover's Leap* because broken-hearted lovers are said to have thrown themselves down from it. There was a case not long ago, when a man fell in love with another man's wife, and the affection was returned. As there was no way of gratifying it in this world, they climbed the mountain together, and jumped over hand in hand, believing that in this way they would be united in the next. The woman was killed, but bushes caught the man, and he was rescued, and still lives. Suicide by leaping from heights is not uncommon in Fiji, and love affairs are the usual cause.

I tried to get some sketches, in spite of the showery weather and the crowds, but it is not possible to obtain any view that

gives much idea of the place, as it is so completely in a basin with the mountains rising abruptly all round.

Coming home in the dusk, having lingered rather late sketching, I was startled when a swarthy figure, with a bushy head of hair, and dressed only in long green fresh grass hung round his waist, slipped out from behind a rock, and laid his hand on my arm. It was not long before I discovered what he wanted, for he looked beseechingly in my face then pointed to my sketch book. I opened it and showed him the pictures, which he gazed at with intense appreciation and delight.



AN INFANT PRODIGY.

In the evening, our host said his tiny son would like to perform a meké for us. He looked a shy baby of about three. When we signified our interest however, he placed himself in the middle of the floor, and went through the most extraordinary performance. His audience was entirely forgotten, and he recited the long chants, and went through all the elaborate motions of all the figures, with the perfect precision of a grown-up man. Even the Fijians present, who could understand everything, were amazed. I gave the child a blue necklace, with which he was delighted, and when I held it out

to him he seized it much as a monkey would have done, and with as little show of thanks.

With three men carriers, we set off next morning, August 30th, for Numbumakita. The people were now trooping away in all directions, and we came upon companies of them everywhere as we passed along the roads. The women apologised to us for taking off their pinafores or overalls, as it was so much easier to walk in the sulu only. As for the men, they mostly wore nothing but a few flowers and bright leaves, the remains of meké dresses, with some gay decorations in their hair, and they all carried clubs. The sun had now pierced the clouds, and the whole effect among the wild scenery was savage and grand. There was one old man accompanied by a little boy, and his tenderness with the child was very pretty. He watched over him all the time, and carried him long distances when he seemed tired. A very nice chief, and a dear little boy with yellow hair decorated with roses, were our companions the whole way. It was pleasant for us, as the chief took a kind charge of us, which was an advantage among such a motley crowd.

When we arrived at Numbumakita, a "seventh day adventist" missionary was in possession of the buli's house, so the chief who was in our company arranged about other accommodation for us. He selected a very large house, and, from the number of men congregated in it, I feared it was the Mburé-ni-sa, or bachelors' quarters, but they made us very welcome, and, though they bore us company till a late hour, they all turned out at night and left us the place to ourselves.

It was formerly the universal custom in Fiji for boys, as soon as they reached the age of adolescence, to leave the parental roof at night, and sleep in a large mburé set apart for the unmarried men. Here, also, the married men generally slept during the long period when the wife was suckling her child. Women were never admitted to this mburé. The missionaries, in trying to establish family life according to our ideas, interfered with this custom, so that it is now found only in the more remote parts. The morals of the people, however, have suffered in consequence.

A few women came in and joined the company. One was nursing a great big boy, who, when he had finished his repast, ran away, and began chattering with some of the men. His mother told us he was three years' old. The Fijian women generally nurse their children for a long time, partly because they have no other food adapted to them while they are very young. They never have babies in quick succession, as it is thought highly improper and wrong, and in former days a woman's family punished her husband in a summary manner, if a new infant appeared on the scenes sooner than they considered right. They say that the reason Englishmen as a rule "are such shrimps" is because the families are too numerous, and the members too near of an age.

Our carriers were no sooner in the house, than as usual their first thought was their hair. Their loads were thrown down, and they possessed themselves of the family comb, and a scrap of looking-glass which they leant up against the wall, and, lying flat down on the floor, they proceeded to work away in turns, carefully disentangling and spreading out every lock. Fond as the Fijian is of his food, his hair is considered first. It was funny to find a looking-glass here, where everything was most primitive, but they are everywhere, and Fijians are as fond of them as monkeys are. The water for our tea, and for boiling our pot, was fetched in bamboo pitchers, thick pieces of bamboo some five feet long, with the divisions knocked out, which make very good water vessels and, when they are brought in full they are set up in rows against the wall.

We were earnestly discussed, and my interpreter, understanding the language was much amused, and told me about it afterwards. One point which required a good deal of consideration was why we should wear shoes. After the matter had been well talked over, the decision was come to that it was to dance in.

The mosquitos here were dreadful. The flaring light of the torches in the evening perhaps helped to bring them into the house. There being no lamps, bamboos were used instead. They were picturesque enough, but looked frightfully dan-

gerous, crackling all over the mats, in a wood and thatch house. My feet got out from under my net at night and I had stings all over the soles. The irritation was maddening for a day or two. It must have been almost like the touch of the nettle-tree (*Laportea*), which grows in this neighbourhood. It is a handsome plant, growing some forty feet or so high, with fine large leaves veined with red. I was warned most particularly not to touch it, for the sting causes a horrible eruption, painful and itchy, which lasts for months. Our carriers were discussing a very unpopular Englishman whom they had served, and they laughed till the tears ran down, at the recollection of seeing him, after a good wash, select some of these nice large pliable looking leaves to dry himself, and of the yell that resulted.

A long walk next day, the 31st, brought us to Wairuarua, a charmingly situated and charmingly picturesque village, with graceful palms, and a lovely background of mountains. There was a pretty river, too, with a most tempting bathing pool, where we were very glad to refresh ourselves.

I wished that I had not been so terribly tired and worried with my mosquito bites, as I could not paint, and only turned sick when I tried, and it seemed such waste to be there, and not to be able to fix anything on paper.

Being very short of clothes on this trip, I had to be my own washerwoman, and, when I went down for a bath in the river I often carried a garment or two with me, and sat on a stone to wash them. When they were well wrung, and carefully spread out, they were generally quite dry enough for wear next morning; and, when the weather was very wet, one damp thing more or less did not make much difference. I often thought of the very careful airing my clothes get at home; but, in the warm equable climate of Fiji, we can play tricks with ourselves which would be madness elsewhere. Excepting for headaches, neither of us was ill all the time we were there, in spite of there being a good deal of dysentery and dengue fever about, but I think never drinking anything but boiled water saved us. The thermometer which I carried with me kept pretty steadily between eighty and ninety night

and day. It seldom went above ninety, and never up to anywhere near a hundred. It was not often below eighty except in the mountains, and an occasional seventy seemed quite cold. It was not necessary to carry any wraps, even at sunset, for there are no sudden chills, which makes the climate safer than that of Kandy in Ceylon, to which I would be inclined to compare it.



BREAD FRUIT.

CHAPTER XXIX.

AMONG ROCKS, OVER RAPIDS IN A NATIVE CANOE.

MR. RUSSEL had most kindly made our arrangements for us on this part of the way, and had ordered that a native canoe with men should await us at the nearest navigable point on the Rewa to carry us down. Two horrid looking men came in in the evening, with hardly anything on. We were told these were our men, and our hearts sank, for we felt that it would not be at all nice to be away for days alone with them on the river. They were very dark, with low foreheads and heavy jaws, and a most forbidding expression about their big mouths. I was sorry, for it seemed a pity that this choice part of our trip should be spoiled by any unpleasantness.

At dawn next morning we started for Waisomosomo, where our canoe was awaiting us. I wished I could linger to sketch the view, it was so beautiful, but we had a long journey before us, and it would not do to be benighted on the river. So my guide allowed me exactly ten minutes, holding her watch in her hand.

What were ten minutes for a scene like that ! White woolly clouds, which had tucked the village up for the night, were drifting away to their home in the sky, and showing us glimpses of blue mountains, grand in their half revelation ; while graceful palms stood out bold against the mist where the clouds still lay. To try to fix the scene in my memory was all I could do.

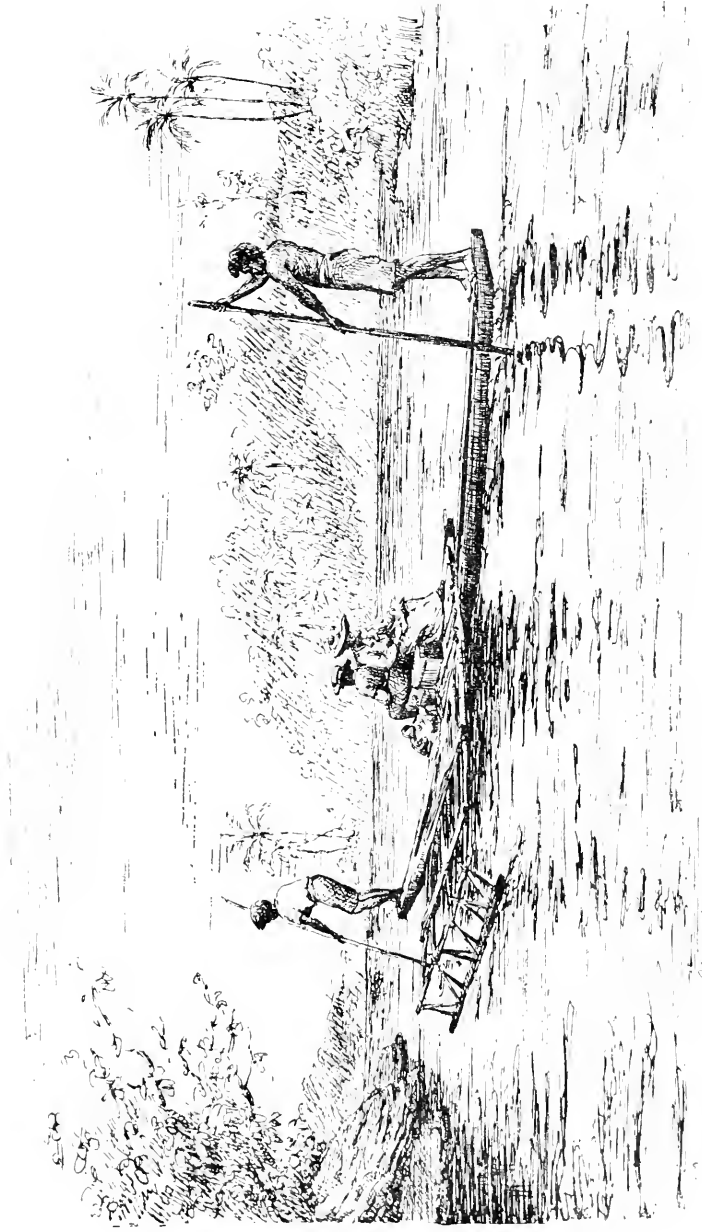
Our carriers justified our fears, by being most unpleasant companions. My interpreter, who understood their language, said they were really nasty, and were trying to make vulgar jokes, so we kept very close together. It was no small relief,

when we approached the river, to be met by two other natives who told us that they were to be our boatmen, and that these men had been engaged only to bring our luggage the seven miles to the canoe.

The boatmen proved all that we could possibly have desired. They also were very dark, with the rather coarse and far from handsome features of the true mountain Fijian; but English gentlemen could not have been pleasanter or more refined in their ways; and, as they were skilled boatmen, and very strong, we spent a happy two days, poling down the river, and shooting the rapids.

When we reached the river and saw our vessel, I could not believe we were to go in it—such a frail primitive affair, and so tiny. It did not seem safe, or even possible, for it to take us and our belongings, and to stem the whirling rapids, and all the dangers of the river. We were told, however, that the water was shallow and that a larger boat would be stranded; so, mid an admiring crowd, our things were put on board and we stepped *in*, or rather *on*, for there is no *in* here. The canoe consisted of a narrow dug-out of Vesi wood, recently made by the boatmen themselves, and a primitive thama or outrigger, tied on with sinnet to bamboo poles, which stretched across the boat, and over which were some bits of wood, forming a rough little platform. Here our packages were placed close together, and we sat back to back upon them.

The men having carefully ascertained that all was steady and trim, we set off; but we had to keep very still, and once when I had grown stiff and ventured to stretch out my legs, it nearly capsized the boat; the equilibrium was upset, it lurched, and the men only just saved it, but they warned me that I must be more careful. As for them, they balanced themselves with perfect ease on the extreme point, to pole, and held their footing firmly, even in tossing over the roughest places. The boat was like a feather on the water, dancing over the ripples, gliding in the calm parts, and flying over the rapids. Sometimes it seemed to be making direct for a rock; but a skilful touch with a pole, and the light craft had turned, and was safely making its way round the side. The motion



OUR CANOE ON THE REWA.

is delightful ; it is full of variety, and the spice of excitement lends it an added charm. For perfection in travelling, give me a canoe on a Fijian river, or an outside car in Ireland.

The weather was showery ; but what did it matter, what did anything matter, on such a boat, in such a scene, with peace and quietness and beauty filling one's very soul !

We were hospitably entertained that night at Matai Lombau by a bachelor magistrate, who gave us his own room, while he slept on the floor in an empty one. All night the rain fell in torrents, and in Fiji it *can* rain. Not infrequently as much as four inches is registered in twenty-four hours, while the average in England is only twenty-five for a whole year. That it does not cause more inconvenience in Fiji is owing to the fact that the soil is porous, and the natural drainage of streams and rivers remarkably good.

Hearing the rain pattering down all night, we wondered what was to happen in the morning, and the look-out as we sat at breakfast was gloomy enough. We had to proceed, however, so we walked, or rather slid, down through the yellow mud to our canoe, and set off under umbrellas and waterproofs, our luggage having been covered with banana leaves to keep it dry. We had a good deal of rain all day, but there were lovely intervals which we much enjoyed. Once our vessel had a very narrow shave, and at a point too where we were told there had been a recent accident with a shark. The heavy rain had increased the current, and the men almost lost control at a dangerous point, and the boat was dashing headlong for some jagged rocks, when by a supreme effort they turned it. We had hardly time to realise our danger ; but, when we found ourselves safe, the men breathed freely and, wiping the perspiration from their brows, they told us what a near thing it had been.

In the evening we arrived at Viria, and here we had to bid our boatmen goodbye. We should have liked to have taken them on to Nausori next day ; but this was the end of their own province, and they might not go beyond it. The Fijians are not allowed to go out of their province without special leave. This old law has been crystallised by the English

Government, because it was found to be wise and good: it prevents an undue crowding of natives to centres like Suva, and keeps them under the control of their own hereditary chiefs.

There is a large banana estate at Viria, where we were kindly entertained by the manager and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Wilson. We were wet, tired and muddy, and had little opportunity of making ourselves respectable to sit at their pretty dinner table. Hospitality, however, overcame everything, and we were made very welcome, and entertained with much interesting conversation. One story which we were told is worth relating, as the incident is so amusing, and is said to have taken place in the part of Fiji we had just visited.

An Englishman was going up that way under government protection,—a stranger who did not know a word of the language, and who was thoroughly imbued with the tales of the old cannibal days. He arrived at one of the primitive mountain villages, and was at once conducted to the chief's house, where the fire was made up and a huge pot put on. Presently some half-naked savage-looking men came in with large knives. They showed him the knives, then pointed at the pot to indicate that they were all going to eat. Thinking he was then and there to be cut up and cooked, he fled in wild excitement. The men ran after him and brought him back but, more frightened than ever he watched his opportunity and again fled, and was again pursued. Half mad with fright he jumped into the river, but he could not swim. Diving in after him, the natives rescued him, and brought him back dripping wet, and in an agony of terror. They offered him food, but he was too terrified to eat. The poor good-natured natives were at their wit's end what to do next, and, as he was under government protection, they felt responsible for him: so they held a consultation, which ended in fetching a horse, putting him on its back, and strapping him to it. Then they led it off to the nearest English magistrate, and delivered him over more dead than alive.

Mrs. Wilson presented me with a beautiful tambua, and was eager that we should remain on a little visit. We had,

however, to hurry back to Suva, to make preparations for our trip to the more remote islands, which I was very anxious to see. So next morning, in a downpour of rain, we set off; and as in such weather it was no use looking out for another canoe and men, we descended to the commonplace, and went in the little launch which plies between Viria and Nausori. At Nausori we stayed with Mr. and Mrs. Fenner in their most charming house. Mr. Fenner was the manager in Fiji for the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, which owns most of the sugar estates in Viti Levu and Vanua Levu. This was the second sugar estate I had stayed at, and we could not have been more kindly received and entertained.

From Nausori we again took a steam launch, which carried us right down the Rewa, and round into Suva harbour. Thus we had followed this wonderful river from its first navigable point to its mouth, a distance of about fifty miles. Twenty-five miles up it is as much as two hundred yards wide, and towards its mouth it is a truly noble stream. When we realise that the whole island of Viti Levu is only two hundred and fifty miles in circumference, it seems very remarkable that there should be such a river, and also two others of not inconsiderable size.

On the 6th of September we found ourselves back at the Club Hotel. Great was the excitement at our return. We had gone for two nights, but had been away a month. The details of our trip and my sketches were eagerly devoured, and we found ourselves people of much importance.

CHAPTER XXX.

A REMOTE WEDDING.

THE *Amra*, the contract steamer, which plies between the islands, was to start on the 10th of September, so the next four days were very busy.

The Fiji group is so scattered, and the distances are so great, that it is not easy in a limited time to arrange visits to all the interesting and beautiful spots. The space between the two farthest points is no less than three hundred and seventy miles, and, though communication is pretty regular now, it takes place in many cases at long intervals, and occupies time.

We were anxious to go both to Lambasa on the large island of Vanua Levu (Great Land), where we had invitations to visit the manager of the sugar mill, Mr. Berry, and his wife, and to Lomaloma on the distant island of Vanua Mbalavu. My companion was enthusiastic about the beauty of the latter, and the opportunities it would afford for painting, so our idea was, to give what time we had to spare to it, and pay only a passing visit to Lambasa. This, however, proved impossible to arrange, for the *Amra* went only on alternate trips to Lomaloma, and on this trip it went no further than Lambasa; thus the only plan was to wait at Lambasa till the boat called a fortnight later, and, in the next journey, to make the round of the distant islands, without stopping at any of them. In some ways this was a disappointment; but it gave me the opportunity of seeing more of English colonial life in Fiji, which is as individual, and in many ways as interesting, as the native life. I had done and seen so much, too, that I was

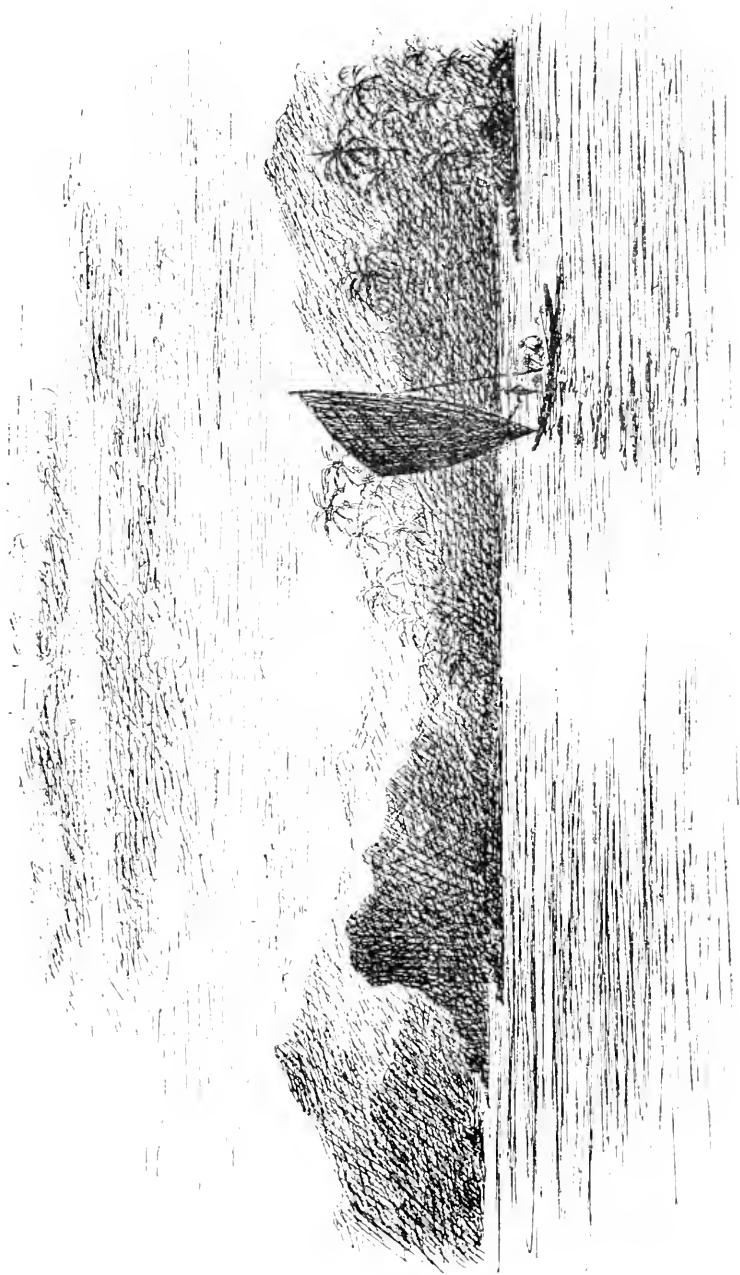
tired, and to remain quietly for a whole fortnight in a sweet peaceful home was an attractive prospect.

By going away then, we missed a great gathering in Suva when all the chiefs of any standing were to meet to discuss some important matters connected with native affairs.* They were already assembling, and it was gratifying to see the pleasure of those we knew, when we came across them in the town. One day I met Ratu Joni Mandraiwiwi. He spied me across the street, and came hurrying over with an expression of the most kind delight brightening his grave countenance. He took my hand, and held it, and would hardly let it go, and he said we must be sure to come again to Mbau, and visit *him* this time, and see his wife and children as soon as they were settled. There was no mistaking the true cordiality and friendship.

The weather on our trip to Lambasa was very wet with but a few fine spells. I should not have seen or accomplished anything, on account of the high canvas round the deck, but for the good nature of the captain, who invited me to come up to the bridge where I was somewhat sheltered, and yet could see about me, and sketch.

We landed for a little while at Levuka, where existed the earliest white settlement, and which consequently was at first the capital of the British colony. Again in the evening we stopped at Somosomo, famous in the old days for its awful cannibalism. The rain had cleared, and by moonlight we walked up to the house of the chief, but he was unfortunately away in Suva. I wish he had been at home as we should have been in sympathy, for he is evidently a great gardener, his grounds being terraced, and most beautifully laid out like those of an English gentleman of good taste. This was the only instance of the kind I came across in Fiji; for, fond as the natives are of flowers, they do not seem to think of going in for any kind of landscape gardening, and there was no garden

* This was the Great Council (Mbose vaka Turanga) to which the chief natives who are also officials are periodically summoned to discuss, at the centre of Government, all important matters affecting Native Administration—thus co-ordinating the views of the Provincial Council (Mbose vaka Yasana), and submitting these for the consideration of the Governor as the King's representative.



SUNRISE AT LAMBASA.

at all round any of the chiefs' houses at which I had stayed. Late in the evening of the 13th, we anchored at Lambasa on Vanua Levu, the second of the two large islands of the Fiji group. Though in form it is totally different from Viti Levu, being long and narrow instead of somewhat square, measuring a hundred miles long by twenty-five wide, it has exactly the same circumference, two hundred and fifty miles.

Here, again, is a considerable river, the Qawa, on the alluvial plain of which grows the sugar cane for the Lambasa sugar-mill, which is situated on the river farther up.

At break of day I rose, and watched the golden disc of the sun appear from behind a dip in the mountains, casting glowing colours into the sky, and a trail of light across the water. The scene was peacefully beautiful, and I was sorry to leave the sea and go away up the river inland. A big red punt, however, was being loaded with our belongings, and with cargo for the mill and its population, and was being made ready to be towed off as early as possible by the little launch in which we were to travel. The captain had hoped to accompany us, and remain at Lambasa till next day; but a wireless message reached him, advising him of a wreck on a reef, and notifying him to come with as little delay as possible to render assistance, and, if practicable, to get the vessel off the reef and tow it back to Suva. We learned afterwards that it proved a very exciting time. The crew were saved; but, when the vessel had just been got off, the hawsers broke, and it went back on the reef, and was completely wrecked. The cargo was wood, and the *Atua* picked up some of it; so we saw it when we again travelled in her. These reefs are dangerous enough now, what must they have been in the old days when none of them were charted! Sound-
ing is no help, because of the sudden and great depths. The captain told me that when a vessel goes on a reef, the bow may be caught on the coral, and at the stern it may be impossible to find the bottom, the water is so deep. The Lambasa manager and his wife got on a reef on their way home from their wedding trip. Had the sea been rough they would have been wrecked. As it was, the steamer escaped at the next high

tide, so little injured that it was able to reach the land in safety.

Going up the river, dragging the heavy punt, took a long time, and at last the punt grounded and hours were spent trying to free it. In the end we had to go on without it, and I do not know what happened to it eventually; but, early as we had started, we did not reach the manager's pretty house till the afternoon. We found the whole place in a stir, because there was to be a wedding, a great event in a secluded island like this, where a little community of English people is cut off from the rest of the world by a stormy sea, with a somewhat uncertain fortnightly service of boats for mails and passengers. The distances on the island itself are considerable, and some of the stations are very isolated and lonely. Still, everybody knows everybody, and everybody is intensely interested in everybody. Lambasa, the district round the great mill, is the London of the island, and the government station is close by, where there are the magistrate and the inspector of police, with the gaol and the prisoners, the doctor and the wireless operator. Everyone was going to the wedding, which was to be six miles from here; and, as the manager's guests, we were specially invited, gaining thus a most novel experience.

It took place about nine o'clock in the evening, at the house of the bride's sister. We trooped down in evening dress from all the houses and bungalows on the hills, to the queer little railway, which winds about in all directions to carry the sugar cane to the mill, and which is much used by the residents for getting about, as there are no roads and consequently no carriages. The trucks are generally poled by Indians; but there is also a quaint old-fashioned engine which looks as if it might have been intimately acquainted with Stevenson, and suggests a child's toy. It was ready waiting for us on this occasion. There was one covered truck, into which the ladies packed themselves like herrings in a barrel, and the gentlemen followed in the open sugar trucks. Then we set off at a speed which was not alarming. It was a dark evening, inclined to rain, so we could catch only glimpses of the surrounding country by the light our engine cast, and the palms

and tropical vegetation looked strangely theatrical, mysteriously lit up, and standing out against the darkness beyond.

At the end of the truck drive there was a hill of somewhat slushy, slippery red mud to climb, but no one minded, nor did they mind the sprinkling of rain. Those who had provided themselves with umbrellas shared them with those who had not, and there was much laughter over the reversion of artificially curled hair to nature. Our way was lit by Chinese lanterns, which looked very pretty hanging among the big-leaved trees.

The verandah of the house was ready for the wedding. It was tastefully decorated with palm branches; and at one end was a pretty leafy bower, from the middle of which hung, on white ribbons, a wedding bell made of leaves, with a little altar and kneeling stool beneath it, at each side of which stood, as still as statues, two young Indian servants in pure white. The effect was oriental and very pleasing.

The missionary was waiting ready for the ceremony; and the bridegroom and best man were there too, but it was some time before the bride appeared. She had been very busy all day with the preparations; and I do not think her own toilet, or that of her bridesmaid, had occupied her mind as much as is usual with brides; but she looked a nice, bright, practical girl, and likely to prove a good useful wife to the planter who was waiting to receive her at the altar.

One of the guests played the wedding march and the hymns, and the missionary gave a rather long tedious address. After the ceremony we went in to supper—such a wonderful display, and beautifully arranged, the elegant sweets which decorated the table, and the lovely cakes and the fruit and vegetable salads, all having been made at home.

Then came the usual speeches and toasts, there being a very lavish supply of wine, followed by dancing on the verandah. Then the bride and bridegroom went off, smothered in showers of coloured paper.

There was to be more dancing; but Mrs. Berry proposed that we should go home with her then, as it was already late and we were very tired.

When we reached the railway, a sharp shower came on. There was only one truck ; and in it were sitting the wedding pair. We were debating what to do when they heard us, and cordially invited us to come in. It seemed a great shame to intrude upon them ; but we could not very well stand in the rain for several hours till the truck came back, so we gladly accepted the invitation. The young couple were going straight to their own home,—no wedding trip, and their only holiday would be the next day, Sunday.

I had a pleasant chat with the bride, who was a very nice girl, and she expressed a hope that we might meet again. They had some time to themselves before they reached the end of their journey, for we got out first, near the mill, while they went to an isolated spot much further on.

CHAPTER XXXI.

STRUGGLE THROUGH A CANE-FIELD.

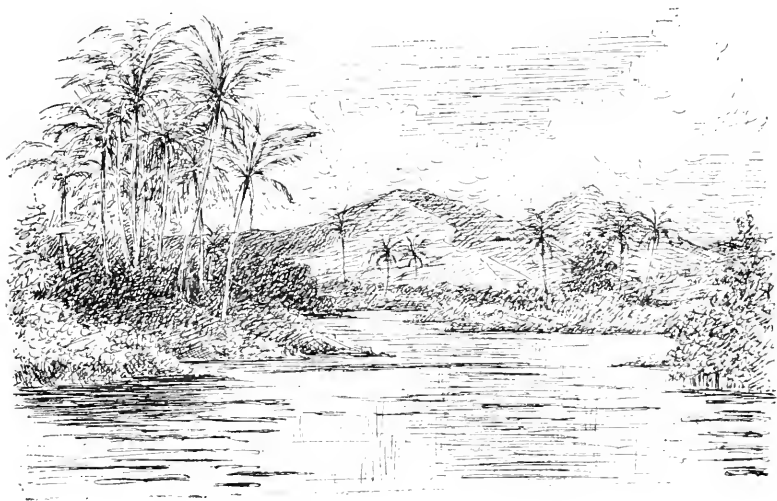
FROM the river, on one of our expeditions, I observed what seemed a good point on the bank from which to obtain a view of the river itself and of the fine chain of mountains beyond.

A sugar cane field skirted the river; and very early next morning I set off to secure a sketch, intending to make my way through the field, and thinking that there would be no difficulty about it; but it proved quite an adventure.

I plunged into the cane, but had gone only a few steps when I came to a deep pool which had to be skirted; and, when I looked back, I saw that the tall cane hid everything all round leaving no visible landmark. I realised at once, how easy it would be to get lost, and to wander backwards and forwards and round and round for hours among these bogs and snares; so I put in practice the "patteran" which I had read of in George Borrow's books, as being used by the gipsies to indicate to each other where they had gone:—that is to make an arrangement of leaves, in passing, at any crossway or corner or bend. I gathered cane-leaves as I went, and, tying a knot in each, I laid them down as I passed, the point always in the direction I had taken. As the cane grew thicker and I had to scramble and struggle through it, I let the leaves nearly touch each other.

It was a most difficult expedition, but I was determined to succeed. My feet stuck in the mud so that my shoes were sometimes sucked off them. The heat was intense, the high cane shutting off every breath of air; and, as I squeezed myself through narrow spaces and jumped over bogs, the perspiration poured down, and I felt sick and faint. Sometimes I thought

I must turn, but then having gone far already, and hating to be defeated, I braced myself for a further effort. After an hour and a half's struggle I found myself right through the field, and my sense of direction had led me exactly to my point of view, for there it lay in front of me; but, alas, between me and it was a black morass. My heart sank, but my blood was up, and reach my destination I would. Scanning the place, I



RIVER QAWA FROM THE CANE-FIELD.

perceived sundry bits of thick wood, floating about, which could be used as stepping-stones, and, with my heart in my mouth, I leaped lightly from one to another. It had to be quickly done, without hesitation, or I should have sunk in the mud, for the bits of timber were not such as to support my weight.

Safe but exhausted and giddy I dropped prostrate on the bank, wondering how I should be able to paint; and I was so thirsty too, that I looked down at the river below, feeling as if I could drink it up. I took out my little bottle

of painting water and examined it longingly. To paint without water would be impossible, nor could I do anything till I had had a drink ; so I carefully measured off half for each purpose ; but it required a great effort to reserve any for my work. Somewhat refreshed I began my sketch ; but the journey had taken long, and I had to count on plenty of time for going back ; so that after all my toil I had but a short while and accomplished little.

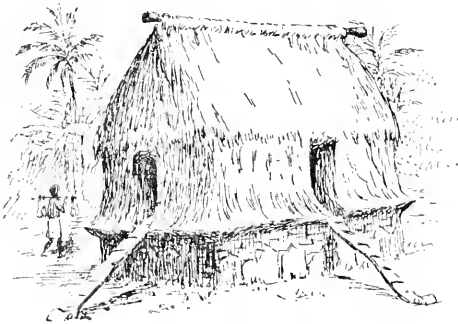
My pattered proved a complete success, and quickly and easily I threaded my way through all the intricacies of the return journey, and found myself up at the house, only a little late for lunch. When I related my experiences they were received with unbounded astonishment, and one, and another, and another, was told how I had crossed a ripe cane field alone to get a sketch. One of the overseers, who had just been testing it the day before to see if it were ready for cutting, said it was a specially heavy difficult field to get into, and he could not have imagined it possible for a lady to make any headway at all, not to speak of going right through it.

The manager sent a very nice Indian with me in a boat next day, to enable me to finish the sketch. He hauled me up the steep bank of the river and held my umbrella over me all the time, so I was in luxury. It took exactly eight minutes to reach my point by water. I was not sorry, however, to have had my experience of the day before ; it roused my imagination, and enabled me vividly to picture real exploration through tall reeds, in unknown parts, and gave me at the same time an intimate acquaintance with sugar-cane.

CHAPTER XXXII.

FIJIAN AFFECTION.

DURING my stay at Lambasa I was brought little in contact with the natives, but I gained a very favourable impression from what I did see. The houses are slightly different from elsewhere. The platforms on which they are built are higher,



NATIVE HOUSE AT LAMBASA.

probably on account of the liability to floods from the river ; and they are smaller than the houses, which project beyond all round, giving a most peculiar appearance, as if they were set up on little pedestals. The thatch of the walls is very thick, the one I measured being over a yard, and outside there are no makita leaves covering any of the walls. The only opportunity I had of getting sketches was when our hostess went to pay some calls by truck, and we accompanied her as far as the nearest native village, which was at a con-

siderable distance, and waited there till she picked us up on her way back. The village was charming, and I thought the type of women more pleasing than elsewhere. I made a surreptitious drawing of a very pretty girl wearing an "ai tombl," the first I had seen, though I had often heard of it. It consists of a lock of hair which is allowed to grow long and is done in a number of little plaits which hang down over one shoulder in a bunch. It indicates virginity, and was at one time universal with pure unmarried girls all over Fiji; but if a girl fell or were married, it was cut off at once. I saw a good many other examples of it in Vanua Levu, and the



LAMBASA GIRL WITH
AI TOMBL.

girls had a coquettish way of tossing their heads and making the stiff little plaits dance. I carried my pencil sketch upside down to hide it; but a peeping head discovered it, and it was recognised, and every one in the village soon learned that this particular girl had been drawn, and came begging to see the result, and when we left the village they ran trooping after us eager for a sight of the wonderful portrait, and all instantly saw the likeness. It was astonishing that these few lines suggested anything to them, especially as

they had never seen anyone draw before. Their artistic perceptions are in advance of anything I have met elsewhere among uneducated people.

Mrs. Hopkins found in the village an old woman who had acted as nurse to her children years before. The meeting was most touching. The poor old woman was so delighted and excited that she did not know what to do. The tears ran down her cheeks, and she caressed the hem of her former mistress' dress, and rubbed her forehead on her hands, looking round at me with a pleading, dog-like expression, eloquent in its request for sympathy in her great joy. It must have been from ten

to fifteen years since they had met. Another old servant sought out her old employer at the house, and the meeting was quite as striking. She came laden with gifts of eggs and with mats of her own making, and, squatting in front of her former mistress, she seemed in every motion of her body, and every look in her face, to be struggling with an emotion beyond all power of expression. I was greatly interested, as I had been told that, friendly as Fijians may seem, they are incapable of any sustained feeling or affection.

We went for a picnic up the country to the hot springs of Mbatini-Kama, and passed through several villages, all clean and pretty. Some of them had earthwork fortifications round them, suggesting the old warlike days. The wild tribes in the mountain recesses were difficult completely to subdue; and it was at Seanganga, on this island, as late as 1893, that the last instance of cannibalism in Fiji occurred.

The men are very well made, and with the girdles of long green grass, which in remote places still often form their only dress, they have a most striking appearance, giving the impression of fine bronze statues. Powerful as they are, however, they leave the hard work to the women. I met a strong young fellow stepping jauntily along with his club over his shoulder, while a woman followed, carrying such heavy bamboo pitchers of water that she was bending and staggering under the weight. I secured a little sketch of him. Having left the picnic party to get a drawing of the flowers of the great



LAMBASA MAN, DRESSED ONLY
IN GRASS; AND PINEAPPLES
GROWING.

Datura whose huge white trumpets had attracted me on the way up, he came and placed himself in front of them, so I hurriedly put him in ; then all the natives of the village wanted to be drawn, especially an old man with very little on but an ugly old hat, a rare possession happily, for a native in Fiji. Lastly a pretty, shy boy was brought ; he must have been of some importance, every one was so anxious I should paint him. Unfortunately only a few minutes elapsed before the rest of my party came up and I had to go. It was tantalising when I was among such willing models and pretty surroundings to have to hurry away.

The scenery at a little distance from where we were staying was very beautiful, and it was tantalising to see it only in passing, as we sped through it on sugar trucks on the way to some merry picnic ; so I was delighted when a planter kindly invited me to come and paint the glorious view from the verandah of his house, on a hill up the country. My hostess was going to see friends further on, and she dropped me at the foot of the hill, promising to pick me up on her way back. The planter had been particularly anxious that I should see his Indian servant, which puzzled me. As soon as I reached the house he said, "Now you must see my boy," and at a signal, the most comical little mite I have ever seen appeared and stood gravely awaiting his orders. With his tiny white jacket and slender little bare legs, he seemed more an elf than a child ; but this was an indentured servant, who had come from India with his widowed mother a year before, and who was actually receiving wages. My host said he had promised to increase the one shilling a week, when his servant could no longer stand on one of his hands. With that, he held down his hand, and the wee man stepped lightly on to it and stood firmly till it was raised and extended to arms length : then it was gently let down, and he was allowed to step off on to the table, where he gravely stood till again lifted on to the floor. He was the most uncanny little servant I have ever come across, a mere baby four years' old : yet there was nothing of the child about him, with his unchanging expression and perfect manners. I asked if he were of any use at all. "Oh

yes, very useful," I was told. He could dust and set the table, but he had to climb up on it to do so; and he could keep the polished floor nice and clean: he was so very near it this was easily managed. Then I was told he was a capital little messenger, and quickly understood what was wanted. "Now," my host added, "I will just show you how clever he is," and addressing the child in Hindustani, he said, "Go and fetch this lady's sunshade and bring it to her." He was away a long time, and his master wondered what could be keeping him. At last he appeared, carrying with difficulty a huge carriage umbrella of his master's, which he had found somewhere after a good hunt.

The view was very beautiful, but I could not resist making this indentured Indian servant my subject; so he and I were left alone together, he with a fan, and I with my paints. He could not grasp the idea of a picture, so he diligently fanned me the whole time; and when I had finished his likeness and showed him the result, there was no change in his expression. I hardly think he understood it, or took in what I had been doing.

On a Saturday there was a very elaborate picnic, for which a most elegant palm booth had been erected at Na Quinqi, a point on the coast which we reached by a long truck drive. The repast was both sumptuous and refined. The greatest delicacy, however, was salad made of the heart of a young coconut palm. It is delicious, but it cannot be often indulged in, as it sacrifices a whole tree: and I felt like a Roman Emperor enjoying a savoury of peacock's tongues. The ladies' dresses struck me again here. They were gracefully and prettily made by their own hands, quite fashionable and up to date, but easy and simple, without hampering exaggeration, and as they were of washing material, oily streaks and marks from our primitive



FOUR YEARS OLD
INDIAN SERVANT.

travelling equipage were only sources of amusement. At a fancy dress ball given by my host and hostess the last night we were at Lambasa, the dresses were really wonderful. They displayed an originality and completeness of design one does not often meet with when professional dressmakers are concerned. No small ingenuity was required, with such slight and indifferent materials as could be procured in the neighbourhood, to produce so good an effect. The difficulties induced a peasant fellowship, the ladies helping the gentlemen by designing and sewing for them, the men, on the other hand, making for the ladies such things as harps, stars, shields, and bows and arrows. And in all, there was the joy of attainment which no shop can sell and no money can buy. I often think that the restless feverish state of society at home, and especially of our women, is caused a good deal by the loss of this happy peaceful occupation, everything being obtainable without effort or trouble.

Rapid communication also militates against a restful state of mind. Here, where people are so much cut off from the rest of the world, they have to settle calmly down to the routine of life, and do their duty day by day, helping each other in time of difficulty, and joining together in lighthearted pleasure when work is done.

Mrs. Hopkins told me of a curious experience she had with one of her servants which is worth recording:—It was her duty to fill the lamps, and to save herself the trouble of fetching a can to bring in the oil from the tank outside, she carried it in her mouth, extending her cheeks almost to the bursting point. She managed neatly to squirt the paraffin into the various reservoirs, and seemed quite untroubled by its flavour.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

FAR, FAR AWAY.

ON September 30th the *Amra* was in, ready to carry us away to the other-end-of-nowhere, and our peaceful fortnight at Lambasa was over. The vessel really arrived the evening before, just in time to allow the captain to come up and enjoy the fancy dress ball. We had been in dread of its appearance all day, for had it come sooner we should have had to go, and miss the ball, which would have been sad; but it all worked out well, like everything else in my brightly starred time in Far Fiji.

Even the wreck on the reef, which had hurriedly called the *Amra* away, had done me a good turn, as it had made it necessary to postpone the victualling of the Wailangilala lighthouse, thus giving me the much coveted opportunity of going there, and experiencing one of the most interesting episodes in my whole trip.

We went first to Rambi, then to Mbutha Bay, and Somosomo, and on the 1st day of October at midday we reached Wailangilala.

It lies away out at sea, far from every place, surrounded by dangerous reefs, where many a vessel has gone to its doom in the blue depths—such a blue, dark ultramarine, changing to a radiant green where the water lies shallow over pure white coral sand. A patch of calm water indicates a sheltered spot, and breakers here and there tell of hidden reefs and make one shiver. Much need here of a lighthouse; indeed it would be impossible to proceed at night without one, and many of the mail steamers pass this way.

The steamer had to lie to, a considerable distance out, and

there was a heavy sea on, so that it was not easy to get into the rowing boat bound for the island, and the other passengers preferred to remain on board. I was of course keen to land, and my companion came too. We went straight up to the lighthouse, and I was very much surprised when I saw the Englishman who looks after it, he is such a fine gentlemanly looking fellow, with a pleasant educated voice. He seemed quite content and happy; but it must be a strangely lonely life, here among the wild things of nature, on such a remote island. For society, he has only his Fijian wife and a little dark adopted daughter, besides two Indian servants and their families, who are regularly changed every quarter. For one hour every three months, when the mail steamer brings supplies, he converses in his mother tongue and gets a breath of outer air. Quantities of books and periodicals are sent: they come from all parts of the world in all languages, even Japan supplying every isolated lighthouse with literature. These, and a gramophone, are company to him till the boat comes again. For the first time I realised that there could be any pleasure, or advantage obtained, from one of those horrid talking, joking, laughing instruments. It was made to prattle for us to hear, and I felt that sometimes in a long evening, a hearty English guffaw might break the solitude, and give a sense of companionship, even if it came from a machine.

I was kindly invited to go over the lighthouse, and would have much liked to do so, and to have a little talk with a man who interested me so deeply; but the time was short, and I was anxious to obtain a sketch.

I had selected a view from the shore, but the coral sand was white as the driven snow, and in the glare of the sun it was blinding, so I had to retreat to the shelter of some trees.

The trees were new to me, the colouring was new to me, everything was new and strange, but the birds were strangest of all. These wild things had no fear; they let us stroke them and pick them up, and one sat on my shoulder all the time I painted, giving a gentle peck to my hair or my ears now and then, with its long pointed beak, or stretching round to



THE SACRED BIRD OF FIJI

examine my lips. It remained with me when I went on board, and as we neared the next island I threw it up in the air, and it flew away and settled on the water close to the shore, swimming comfortably about on the crest of the waves.

On the lonely coast of Vanua Mbalavu, where dark forbidding cliffs, undermined at the base, rise from the deep blue waters, we saw the sacred bird of Fiji* flying in pretty curves and dipping lightly into the sea. It is a strikingly beautiful creature, glistening white, with one long snowy† feather in its tail, from which it gets its name, Lawe ndua (one feather).

There are many stories about it, and it flits gracefully through all the mythology of the country. No one dared to touch it or harm it. It might at any time have been the home of a deity, for when a god wished to travel, his spirit entered the bird, and its wings carried him over the sparkling sea to where he wished to go.

Even now it is believed that these birds guide vessels, and flying in front, take them safely through shoals and between rocks. As I saw them they made a very strong impression; they were so vivid against the dark cliffs, and in their strangeness they helped the feeling of extreme remoteness.

I was glad there were so few passengers on board, so that I could find a quiet corner to sit undisturbed, and think, and wonder, as I passed these far away islands, and watched the wide sea and ever changing sky; and I was able to drink in the sense of loneliness so that I can recall it now: and when I close my eyes, I can feel myself sail away like the birds, among rainbow hues, in a warm atmosphere of peace and beauty.

It was not possible on this trip to gain more than a quick sketch here and there, and a general mental impression of the whole, for when we stopped at Rambi and Mbutha Bay, and Somosomo, Mbavatu, Lomaloma, Mango and Thithia, there was never long delay, sometimes not even time to land. The halt was shorter than usual, on account of the terrible hurricane of the previous January, the same which played such havoc

* *Phaethon athericus*.

† There are really two feathers set close together.

at Mbau. † Whole hillsides were devastated, not a coconut tree left standing, so that there was but little copra (dried coconut), and in some places none at all to be put on board. As a rule, the captain told me, he had to stop at more places, and at some there was a good long wait; but, as my time in Fiji was drawing to a close, it may have been just as well this trip was not prolonged, or I should have missed other things.

On the 4th of October we reached Suva once more. It was known we were on the *Amra*, so, as soon as the boat was sighted, as many of the boys from the Club Hotel as could be spared came to the pier, and were waiting to receive and welcome us.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

TRIBUTE WITH JOY.

WE came back to Suva to find great excitement in the Wesleyan Missionary circles. It was the time for the autumn collection, and to the Fijians the motto, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," is not a mere saying, but a living truth.



FIJIAN WOMEN IN GALA DRESS.

In the old days the giving of tribute was always regarded as a great happiness. It was an occasion of feasting and was looked forward to by the people, who came to give, full of joy, dancing and singing, garlanded with flowers, and dressed in their best tapa. And in the same spirit they still give their subscriptions to the missionaries, all the different provinces vying with each other which will give most, saving up

for weeks beforehand, and giving so liberally that, for long afterwards, they have to deny themselves, sometimes severely.

There was first a great meké in the Suva lawn tennis and recreation grounds, mostly composed of very elaborately dressed women, but to my mind it lacked interest. The modern surroundings and the missionaries walking about in their smooth black clothes, seemed altogether incongruous; but its purpose was served, a little collecting dish in the middle of the ground filled up nicely; one and another danced up to it and surreptitiously slipped in a coin, then danced away as if afraid of detection, and the same one would go again and again, each time putting something in. There must have been a nice little sum at the end of the day.

The great collection, however, took place on Sunday, and I went to the Wesleyan church to see it, being anxious to hear the singing which I was told would be very fine.

A large congregation was gathered, the women all in their gayest garments, and the men in pure white, and decorated with leaves for the great occasion. First there was a short address from the missionary, which of course I did not understand, after which a hymn was announced, and sung in parts without instrumental assistance, by a portion of the congregation, the natives of different provinces singing in turn; then the collecting began. Those who had just sung came hurrying up, and popping coins into the plate, hastily retired; then there was again a hymn, and another group came up; and another; and another. A young Fijian chief of importance marshalled the people, and with an insinuating smile brought them up, the missionary again addressed the people, then the Fijians who had already given, again approached the plate, the chief evidently enticing and encouraging them. Again and again they came hurrying up getting more and more excited, always preceded by the chief, till at last they were actually dancing up the aisle, and the chief with his garland of leaves, smiling and elated, reminded me of "David dancing before the ark of God." I observed some come up as many as five times, and each time drop in a coin, their faces all the while radiant with delight. A few

words from the missionary, and a little smiling encouragement from the chief roused always more and more enthusiasm. I learned that no less than £297 were subscribed that day, and it must have meant to many of those present going almost without necessaries for some time to come, for they gave all they had.

I was told that the plan pursued was to make one province vie with another. "When such and such a province has given so much, surely such and such another province will not like to be behind." That also is why the provinces are kept separate instead of a general collection being made. Then the Fijians have a very strong faith in the next world, and they believe that liberality here, will make a great difference to their position there, so they are anxious to be to the fore in giving.

The Wesleyan church in Fiji has long been self-supporting. It now sends some of the money collected to help poor missions in other quarters. This arrangement, however, is not popular with the Fijians, who are afraid that somehow, if the money goes out of the country it will fail to benefit *their* souls. Their religion is more practical than spiritual. A very amusing instance of this was told to me, which, though I have no way of vouching for its truth, is worth relating. A man was fined three shillings for being drunk. He paid the money, and asked for a receipt for it, but having been told he could not get it he left the court. In the evening, however, he was found still standing at the door, and as the official came out he again asked for a receipt for the three shillings, and was again refused. Next morning, before the court was open, he was back waiting and very earnest in the same request. When the official asked him why he was so keen to have a receipt he said "When on the judgment day my turn comes and God says to me, 'You were drunk on such and such a day, did you pay your fine?' I cannot keep him waiting till I go down below to look for you and fetch you up to tell him that I did, so I want to have a receipt to show."

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE SHADOW OF DEATH.

ONLY six more days remained before the *Atua* was to carry us off and away. We had many things to do and much to arrange, and the time was all too short ; but Mrs. Hopkins learned that old Ratu Tui Dreketi, now in extreme old age, was still alive, and she thought it would be very interesting if I could obtain a sketch of him, as she said he was the last survivor of the chiefs, who in 1875 signed the deed of cession.

There was also a further interest attaching to this chief, as it was from his rage long ago that my companion, in the incident already referred to, and her mother and sister, had to fly for their lives on a dark night in the rain. She was a child then, and he came half drunk to her widowed mother, who was living alone with her two little daughters, demanding her boat, which she courageously refused to give, thereby rousing his rage. In revenge he ordered an attack to be made on her house, and swarthy naked figures in fearsome war paint crept up at night, to storm it with clubs and spears. The widow with her two little girls escaped by the back door, in their night things, and struggling barefoot in the rain, through the tall razor-like grass of the jungle, sought shelter, torn and bleeding, in a village some miles off, where kindly natives received and comforted them, though there was danger in doing so, and wrapping them in native cloth, insisted on vacating their bed for them.

When they returned to their house later on, under police protection, they found everything they possessed destroyed or burned. It was, however, impossible to bring the chief to justice, as no one dared to give evidence against him.

The old man was still living at Rewa, where he had been a powerful chief, though not distinguished for goodness; and his was another instance of the several cases of great longevity I had come across in Fiji, for he was an old man as my companion remembered him.

We were told that although very frail, he had all his senses and was able to converse; and that, if I would let him be in an easy attitude in his own house, he would probably be quite pleased to allow me to sketch him.

Ratu Joni Mataitini, who was then Roko at Rewa, gave us a cordial invitation to come and visit him. This settled our plans, especially as Mr. Williams, Mrs. Hopkins' brother, offered to take us there and fetch us back in his steam launch; so we decided to give two days to Rewa.

We set off early on the 12th of October, and it was a delightful breathing time in the middle of the rush and fag of prosaic packing and preparations.

Rewa is a pretty town and there were more flowers than elsewhere. As we walked from the boat to Ratu Joni's house they delighted me, not only growing round the houses, but climbing up them, and festooning the roofs.

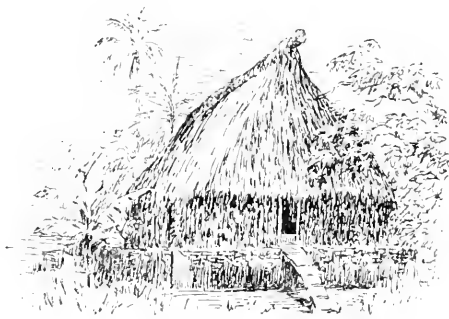
Ratu Joni met us at the door and greeted us with the sad news that poor old Ratu Tui Dreketi had been taken ill and lay a-dying. There would be no sketch, I should not even see him, but would be shown his house and that would be all. It was a great disappointment and came as a shock, and we all felt solemnised and grave.

Ratu Joni Mataitini had a very nice house which he vacated for us. Ratu Mbolo, who was delighted to see us, and two other chiefs, were staying with him, but they all went elsewhere.

The dining-house from which a savoury smell was proceeding, was separate, but with no English innovations; and we were soon called in to a sumptuous dinner, for which, as we were expected, elaborate preparations had been made. Ratu Joni's pretty, refined-looking wife, and his mother and the other ladies of the establishment, did the cooking, brought in the things and waited on us, but did not dine with us. I saw them after-

wards squatting about on the floor, finishing up the tepid scraps we had left, laughing and happy, and perfectly content with their lot. In their dignified and cheerful submission to their circumstances these women commanded respect and esteem, though such arrangements were certainly far from being in accordance with our modern idea of things, and savoured not a little of the old barbarous days.

As for us, we were treated, as usual, as if we had been men and chiefs; and we sat on the floor in a ring with our host and his other guests. I had not seen such an elaborate meal



TUI DREKETI'S HOUSE.

before, served in Fijian fashion, and it was interesting. There were several courses, and everything was beautifully cooked, and dished on leaves, the soup being served in half coconut shells. Specially delicious was a creamy pickle, made from young coconuts and hot peppers. There were no knives and forks; we ate with our fingers, and water in a half coconut shell was handed round between each course to rinse our hands, and in default of napkins, we dried them on leaves.

After dinner I saw Tui Dreketi's house and stayed to sketch. The door stood open and I peeped in—it was all silent, and still, and dark.

A few native women slipped quietly in and out, but he lay still, waiting on the threshold for the great call, when he would

have to answer for what he had done, to One who knew all and understood all.

The old warrior, whose memory could carry him back to the old days of the fierce struggle for supremacy between Mban and Rewa, had hung up his club for ever.

When Thakombau carried off the consecration stone from conquered Rewa, Tui Dreketi must have felt it keenly. What did it matter now? The peacocks were perching peacefully on the old stone by the ruined temple at Mbau, and only one or two people were left who could point out which it was, of the many stones whose bloody history is written in sand—and he was dying—already the consciousness of this world had passed from him, and he would know nothing more till he wakened—where? The mystery of life and death pervaded the air and hung its dark banner over the house.

It was almost too much for me, and I was glad when a shaggy-haired youth came to fetch me in to tea.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

GOOD BYE.

IN the evening there was a yangona-drinking for us, carried out in a serious semi-religious spirit. A beautiful old yangona cup was brought out, finely made, and exquisitely polished with long use. Ratu Joni said it was an heirloom. I was admiring it afterwards, when Ratu Joni put it in my hand and said, "It is yours." I said I could not think of taking it, but he insisted, saying he had another, and would like me to have this one. Next day when I was putting up my things, I quietly replaced it where it had been, intending to leave it behind; but he brought it to me saying, "You have not got your cup." I said I did not like to take it, but he replied, "But I would like you to have it." There was nothing for it but to carry it away, and keep it as a memento of the Fijian generosity which had struck me so forcibly all along.

Ratu Joni wanted to show me various correct ways of suspending tambuas, and went to look for some he had, but he found only two, with nothing but ordinary strings attached to them. "Why," he said, "I used to have fifty." I asked him what could have become of the others. "Oh," he said, "You know how it is: some one comes and asks for the loan of a tambua; what can you do? You give it to him, but it never comes back again." These tambuas range in value from three to five pounds or so; I have priced them myself in shops frequented by Fijians. They are still a necessity for native custom, and are getting rare, so many are being carried off out of the country. The natives are too free and generous: soon they will have none of their interesting old things left.

After the yangona-drinking, before going to bed, all the

chiefs joined together in singing in parts some sweet hymns, and I enjoyed once more Ratu Mbolo's rich bass voice. It was very pleasant, and our last true Fijian evening.

Rewa used to be the best place for pottery in Fiji, and as no pottery was made in the Pacific, by natives, except in Fiji, it was interesting to find works still in existence here; and, although the really beautiful and strange shaped vessels which were the glory of the old Fijian pottery are no longer made, the work that is done is carried on in the old way. Such a simple way! Nothing but a heap of water-worn stones picked up on



POTTER AT WORK.

the shore, no wheel, nothing else, except a kind of oven in the ground to bake the things, much the same as that used for cooking. Yet fine vessels are made, wonderfully symmetrical and sometimes very large. A lump of clay is taken up, about the required size, and turned on one hand, while the other hand fashions it with a stone from the heap, the stone being selected according to the shape that is required. The neck is done after the hand has been withdrawn from inside, by rolling the clay into a long worm between the two hands, and twisting it spirally round the top, till the desired length is attained. Any marking is effected by means of shark's or rat's teeth, and a glaze is put on with a hard resin from the bread-fruit tree; and any variety of colour with vegetable or mineral dyes.

I was even more delighted to find a large canoe in process of construction, because they are rarely made now. Ratu Joni took me to see it. It was very large, designed to hold thirty people, and there was to be a little thatched shelter on the platform. It was pleasant to learn that two more on the same lines were also being made in Ovalau.

Being Sunday, no work was going on ; but Ratu Joni called the master carpenter for me to see him, and hear from him a few things I wanted to know, telling me he was the master canoe builder of Fiji and therefore of the Pacific. He came crawling along, dressed in the lustrous dark brown garment, given him by Dame Nature, and little else ; and he placed himself in front of us, in the humblest of attitudes, with his eyes on the ground. He answered my questions, however, through the chief, with great intelligence and interest.

A messenger came to tell us the launch was there to carry us back to Suva.

Before going, I gazed long at the scene to imprint it on my memory. There was no disturbing element to spoil this perfect picture of a primitive beauty which is passing away all too soon. The palms waved in the tropical sun, over the unfinished canoe and its quaint builder, and the ripples of the incoming tide lapped the bank of the quiet river. Beyond, on the other side the brown native houses nestled in a glorious bed of coloured leaves and strange looking flowers, while the beautiful whole was completed by a graceful group of naked children, wet from the river, laughing and revelling in the joy of life.

We were back at the Club Hotel, with the boys crowding round to see my pictures : and, having come and gone so often it was difficult to realise that this was the last time.

We were too busy to think : still there was a sense of sadness and loss. But it would not be all loss, for the experiences gained in Fiji were a rich storehouse, which I should carry away with me to make life fuller and better ever after.

Friends trooped down to see us off, and Ratu Kandavu Levu was there, but the real goodbye came from the Club Hotel boys. As many of them as could get away came on board,

and they stayed till the last possible minute. They had nothing to say, but their eyes spoke. There was a dog-like look of devotion and pathos which I shall never forget. The anchor was weighed—I sat alone in the stern—the lights of Suva grew paler in the distance—then vanished, and my full heart said “God bless Fiji.”

It was on the eighteenth of October that the *Atua* sailed. But I was to have one more glance at Fiji before it was completely left behind. We stopped next day at Levuka, on the island of Ovalau, and spent several hours there.

I had not been at all well for some time, and Mrs. Hopkins insisted on getting hold of a carriage and making the day one of rest and pleasure, and I was very glad, for it was a perfectly lovely drive and it has left a most delightful impression behind.

The island of Ovalau is beautiful in every way, both as to its natural characteristics and its luxuriant and varied foliage. On one side, as we drove, we had the sea with its bewildering rainbow hues, and on the other, appearing and disappearing among the trees, Koro Korotuka Peak, another of those strange rocky prominences which I have never seen but in Fiji.

We stopped at a pretty village to rest the horse. The women were all carrying about huge nets on long poles, and seemed to be in a state of expectancy; when suddenly the whole surface of the sea became alive with leaping glittering fish. There was a great stampede. The women flew off, and were soon in the sea, gathered in groups of twos, and threes, manipulating the nets. They looked very picturesque and graceful in their gay garments, with their brown arms waving as they twisted and turned the long poles in the glittering water.

The sun was setting as we drove back to our boat, and another lovely picture had been added to memory's gallery.

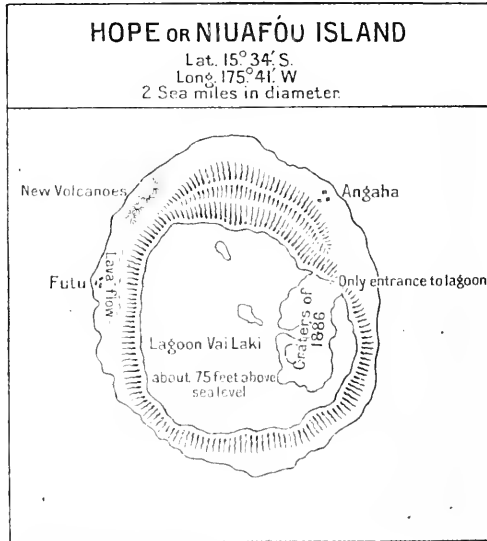


WOMEN FISHING.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

SWIMMING FOR THE MAIL.

ON the 18th of October, just as we were starting, the captain of the *Atua* learned by wireless that smoke and steam had



been seen rising from Niuafoú, Hope Island, indicating some great volcanic disturbance; and, though it was not the usual time for the delivery of the mail, he resolved to go that way, in case the inhabitants of this strangely isolated island should be in distress, and he took the mail with him.



THE NIUAFOU MAIL.

I was greatly delighted, being deeply interested in the island, and having been deploring the fact that it was not the usual time for the mail boat to call there.

The island lies in the ocean, north from Tonga, to which it belongs, and is equi-distant from Fiji and Samoa. It is of volcanic origin and must at one time have been one great volcano. It consists only of the vast crater, now a brackish lake, and of the enclosing crater wall, which rises abruptly from the sea. There is no reef, or shore; the cliffs go right down into the depths of the sea, the free ocean waves dashing full upon them, and there is no harbour or shelter of any kind.

It is quite impossible for any steamer to call there, or to get anywhere near the island, so that mails have to be delivered in a very unusual way, indeed I think it is unique. The boat stops once a month, half-a-mile out, and hoists a flag; then a dark figure, carrying a bamboo cane to which the mail is attached, lets himself over the sea wall and down a sort of slide into the sea and swims out to the ship, from which a rope is dropped: to this he fixes the mail and it is drawn up.

In the meantime all the letters for the island, together with periodicals, papers, etc., are sealed up in a kerosine tin, which is dropped into the sea; then the man grasps it, and fastening it to his cane, swims back with it.

Before daybreak on the 21st we neared the island. The air was laden with the smell of sulphur, but all we could see was a volume of steam rising from the side of the crater wall next the sea, and projected against the coconut-covered slope.

Our flag was hoisted, and presently two men were seen swimming out. Some fresh meat was tied up in a biscuit tin, to reward the second man. This is a great treat, as there is no fresh meat on the island and even fish is difficult to obtain. A man has to swim out to get it, with a basket on his back and a rod. He remains in the water for hours, slipping the fish as he catches them into the basket; but they are a small supply at best and do not go far.

We learned that no less than thirty craters had been active, though several had already subsided; but fortunately little

mischievous had been done, and, curiously enough though all the activity was outside the wall of the old crater, the lake inside, we were told, had risen a number of inches.

There have been several eruptions since history began—in 1853, 1867, and 1886. The one in 1886 was very severe, and there was serious loss of life. It broke out on a Sunday, and, one of the craters burst in the middle of a church where the congregation was assembled. These craters remain on the edge of the lake, but inactive, though there have been grumbings and threatenings now and then.

It seems extraordinary that any one should be found to live on such an island, yet there are over a thousand natives, three English traders and storekeepers, and a half-caste missionary, and for five years there was one English lady. A man who had been engaged in commerce with the island, and who had been there a good deal, came on board the *Atua* at Nukualofa and told me much that was interesting. He said that the trade was entirely in copra, and that the coconut trees were the finest in the Pacific, and probably in the world; and that it was only these palms which made it worth while to live on the island and to carry on trade with it, the troubles involved being so very great, owing to the difficulty of shipment.

At the top of the sea wall at Angaha, on the north of the island, there is a large shed built, and here, as it is ready, the copra is stored. In front of the wall, standing out of the sea, is a large flat rock, and a long slide reaches from the shed to the rock. When a passing vessel is sighted it is signalled, and if it puts in, the sacks of copra are quickly let down the slide on to the rock and hurriedly pitched on board. Should the wind rise in the middle of the process, the vessel has to put out to sea, and the copra has to be drawn up and housed in the shed again till the next opportunity.

The coming and going of the inhabitants is even more difficult as it has to be managed in much the same way. Everything has to be packed ready: then for days and even weeks a watch has to be kept for a chance vessel, and when it does come, it is no easy matter to get passengers and their baggage into it.

I had the pleasure of meeting the one white lady who had lived on the island. Her son, for whom, with a nephew, she had been keeping house, had died, and her nephew's health had broken down; so she was leaving, and we took her on board at Tonga.

She brought with her the chief's daughter, to be educated at Auckland. The girl was very dark and might have been an up-country Fijian. The lady gave me an envelope which had actually gone through the kerosine-tin mail. She would gladly have told me about the place and her residence there, but she was a very bad sailor, so there was no opportunity. I think, however, it was not a life to inspire many ideas or give much to think about.

We watched the two men retreating with their meat and the letters. They looked very small battling with the waves, and it was a relief to catch sight of them climbing safely up the slope.

When the weather is too stormy for swimmers, the mails are thrown over all the same. Then, eager watchers scan the foot of the sea wall, and the tin when it is washed in is caught with hooks on long poles and drawn up. Sometimes, however, it drifts away out to sea and is lost altogether.

The isolation and loneliness of this highly volcanic island seem to me terrible. Should there be any serious disturbance there is no way of escape—no boat, nothing. And there are no means of getting assistance. The inhabitants would have no other alternative but to wait, and accept their doom.

The last news I heard of the island was that the volcanoes I saw had not entirely subsided, and that there had been several alarming threatenings of trouble, the most serious being that the temperature of the lake had risen, which the natives considered a portent of mischief.

I hope, however, that they are wrong and that Niuafo'u will soon at least enjoy peace in its solitude.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

ALA LOTO ALOFA :

(THE ROAD OF THE LOVING HEART).

“ If I have faltered more or less
In my great task of happiness ;
If I have moved among my race
And shown no glorious morning face ;
If beams from happy human eyes
Have moved me not ; if morning skies,
Books, and my food, and summer rain
Knocked on my sullen heart in vain,
Lord thy most pointed pleasure take
And stab my spirit broad awake.”

The Celestial Surgeon.—ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

OUR next halt was to be at Samoa (Navigator Islands), Robert Louis Stevenson's place of exile, where weakness held him prisoner for the last four years of his life, and which, through his cheerfulness, became a heaven on earth.

In his own beautiful words he said, “ The only way to heaven is forgetfulness of self.” He had searched and found that way, and had trod it with a cheery step, leaving a track of light behind.

Early on the 22nd of October we reached Apia, on the island of Upolo. On entering the harbour the first thing that struck me was the evidence of the awful hurricane of 1889, when six American and German men-of-war were wrecked, with much loss of life.

The only other man-of-war in the harbour at the time was the English man-of-war *Calliope*, which was saved by the great skill and promptitude of Captain Kane, who managed to put on full steam, and steer quickly out into the open sea.

The remains of the wrecked vessels still present a sorry sight, standing out of the water, gaunt, naked and rusty.

The next thought was Vailima, Stevenson's home. I was scanning the thickly wooded hills wondering where to look for it, when one of the officers came up and pointed it out, a little speck among the green just below Vaea, on whose peaceful summit the hero lies sleeping "under the wide and starry sky," where undisturbed the wild birds sing and nest, because the Samoan Chiefs knew he loved them, and, in gratified and



↑
VAILIMA.

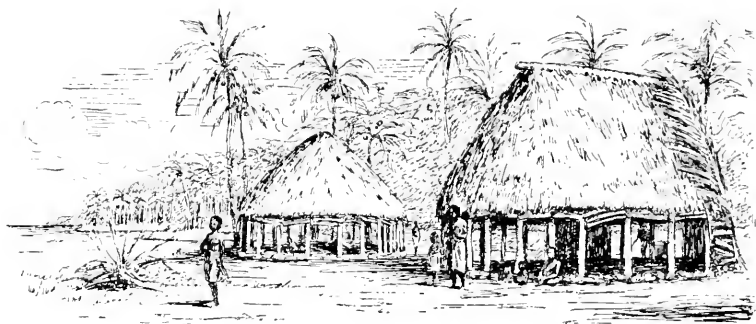
↑
VAEA.

affectionate remembrance of him, forbade the use of firearms on its summit ever after.

Samoa is a hot place, and we were nearing the hottest season. Still, I was very eager to go ashore, and visit both the house and the grave. We were told that the latter would be very difficult, that the ascent was long and steep, and that few people attempted it now.

We enquired as soon as we got on shore the way to Vailima, and were told it was more than three miles off, and a pull up all the way. As to the grave, no one seemed to know exactly where it was or how to reach it. People shook their heads

and said, "You will never climb all the way up Vaea; it is a long way and very steep and there is no road,—no one ever goes." At last a youth, who could speak half-a-dozen words of English, came forward, and said he knew how to go, and could conduct us, but that it would be impossible to walk the whole way there and back. The next thing was to find a carriage to take us as far as the house, but the prices demanded were quite prohibitive. When it seemed almost as if we should have to give it up, the boy got hold of a small vehicle, the owner of which was willing to drive us up as far as Vailima,



SAMOAN HOUSES.

for a reasonable price if we would walk back. As he was going elsewhere he could not wait for us. So we set off at once, taking our Samoan guide with us.

It was a lovely drive. As we passed along the shore, native canoes were plying in the dazzling blue sea, their swarthy occupants manipulating great nets which stretched from boat to boat, making glittering streaks across the water.

Then our road went up through the most luxuriant foliage and passed several native houses and villages.

The expression of tropical heat was everywhere. The houses did not look like houses at all—a circle of posts holding up a beautiful roof of beams and thatch, and a floor of close-set pebbles, this was all. Between all the posts hung rolled up mats which could be let down to give shelter from sun or

wind as desired, and a few mats lay on the floor, but there was no furniture. Any clothes and the other belongings of the people hung from the beams and the posts. The whole effect was very strange. The Samoans are a handsome people, and, in their slight coverings, had a somewhat classical appearance



SAMOAN HORSEMAN.

as they sat or lay in graceful attitudes round about the houses, or on the mats inside. The floors must be very hard and knobbly to lie on at night, for they are made of rounded pebbles closely fitted together, and there was no grass or fern under the mats as in Fiji, and only little wooden pillows were in evidence.

We saw a good many horsemen, and the Samoans look much at home when riding. They ride bareback with an easy grace which is very picturesque, and the horses looked shiny and well cared for, with flowing mane and tail.

On the way down we strayed into an enclosure to pick up red seeds, when a stately native rode past. He saw us and dismounted, and, tying his horse to a tree, approached. I thought he was going to warn us that we were trespassing. He had, however, come only to help us to collect the bright little treasures, and he gathered them very quickly and poured them into my painting bag and into my companion's handkerchief. We felt it a blank not to be able to speak the language, for he and all the natives seemed inclined to be so friendly. In the evening, too, when we were very tired, women most kindly got us tea and made us come into the cool shade of their house to enjoy it. We should very much have liked to have been able to converse and to tell them how refreshing it had been to aching heads.

The men seemed to be mostly tattooed. When the sulu was lifted as they bestrode their horses, or when the wind fluttered it, they appeared to be wearing black lace drawers, of a beautiful elaborate pattern, reaching to the knee, which told out clearly against the pure olive of their smooth and beautiful skin.

We could not tell exactly when we entered upon the famous Ala Loto Alofa (the Road of the Loving Heart), made with their own hands for Stevenson, by grateful chiefs to whom he had been very kind in time of trouble. But, as we neared the house, I knew we must be on it; and I thought of the chiefs toiling at this hard manual labour in the hot season, glad to feel the ache of their limbs and the perspiration dropping from their foreheads, because to build a road to his house *themselves* was the only way they could think of to express the depth of their love and gratitude to their friend.

We dismissed our carriage and walked up to the pretty house. It looked deserted; but it was pleasant that the sun was shining to suggest Stevenson's words. "As the sun lightens the world, so let our loving kindness make bright this house of our

habitation." They are from one of those prayers which he delivered in the beautiful little services he held every evening up to the last evening of his life, with the assembled "folk of many families and nations gathered together in the peace of this roof."

We ventured to ring and ask the servant if we might have one look at the house. A German lady* who spoke English well, came forward and very kindly took us over a good part of it and up on to the verandah; she also invited us to wander at will through the grounds and sketch anything we liked. We could not stay long, however, as we were most eager to visit the grave, and, looking up the hill from the house, it was evidently a formidable undertaking.

Our next difficulty was that our valiant Samoan guide proved to have no idea of the way, and we did not in the least know where to find the path—that wonderful path so quickly and so willingly made eighteen years before, to carry the loved one up to his last resting-place. We thought we had got it and followed a kind of track and scrambled up, but it ended in nothing, then we lit on another and tried that, our guide always in the rear, but it also disappeared in the same way. What were we to do next? That was the question. Our guide sat down and looked as if he would very much like to cry, but we had already climbed a good way and were determined not to be baffled.

As the grave was on the top we decided that if we ascended all the time we must in the end reach it; so we plunged right up through the thicket, squeezing between trees and dragging ourselves up with our arms where it was too steep to walk. It was hard work in the close heat under the trees. At last there was a shout from my fellow traveller; she had found the

* Apia and the greater part of the Samoan Islands had been assigned to Germany by the Convention of November, 1899,—the German flag being hoisted on 1st of March, 1900. Stevenson's house became, as it was at the time of Miss King's visit, the residence of the German Governor, Dr. Solf. It is satisfactory now to be able to note that the German Samoan Islands were seized by the New Zealand Expeditionary Force on 29th August, 1914.

to have his right arm in a sling, and, as if this were not enough, sciatica set in with its keen searching pain. Even now, pure unselfish love, love for little children, foiled the fiend depression and broke the prison bars, so that—

He went, " sailing far away
To the pleasant land of play ;
To the fairy land afar
Where the little people are."

And, in *The Children's Garden of Verses*, he took their little hands, and danced with them among the flowers ; and he packed not an atom of sadness in his light knapsack : it was all left behind.

Sing a song of Seasons !
Something bright in all !
Flowers in the summer,
Fires in the fall !

Where is there another who, in pain and weakness, in a darkened room, with the use only of his left hand, could have penned these happy little verses, whose silver chimes ring with the brightest and purest of melody ?

No wonder Stevenson is worshipped, and if the worship leads others to enlist in his regiment, he will not have lived in vain.

There was no great difficulty in retracing our steps, for, once we had got started on the right track, though much overgrown, it was quite perceptible, but the descent was long and very steep. It was wonderful to think that the coffin could have been carried up all that distance, and one realised more and more the strength of the affection which had overcome every obstacle, and accomplished it. The secret of all that devotion was Stevenson's loving unselfishness.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE KING OF THE FRIENDLY ISLES.

WE were now bound for the Friendly or Tongan Islands.* They present a special feature of interest as being still under native rule, though under British protection, and I was very anxious to visit them, especially as I learned that King George was musical, and had set the Lord's Prayer to music himself, and that he had a very fine choir in his own private chapel. Sir Charles Major gave me an introduction to him, asking him to arrange if possible that I should hear the music. Without an introduction it would have been no use hoping to see him, as he has a horror of being made a show of by sightseers, and when the mail steamer comes in, once a month, he shuts himself up in his palace, and will not leave it at all, not even to go to church, if it happens to be Sunday. The last time he ventured to church when the steamer was there, on coming out he found six cameras, waiting to snap-shot him. I was anxious to obtain a sketch, but this did not look very promising. If, however, I could see him at home it would be interesting, and delightful if it proved possible to hear the music.

The king lives at Nukualofa on the island of Tongatabu, our last stopping place.

We came first to Vavau, the northernmost island of this group, arriving before sunrise on October 25th, and remaining

* Captain Cook named the group "The Friendly Islands," on account of his experience of the character of the inhabitants. He rediscovered the islands, which, as far as is known, had not before been seen by any European, except by Tasman and his companions (in 1643). "The Tongan Islands" is the more usual name, which was originally used by the sailors and beachcombers who frequented this one Island of Tonga, or, more properly, Tongatabu, from about the beginning of the nineteenth century.—E. M. T.

all day. The Vavau harbour is said to be the best in the Pacific, and it has been secured by England. It is certainly supremely beautiful, and we had a glorious view of it as we climbed Talau, an interesting extinct volcano which rises steeply from the shore. Two merry Tongan boys elected to guide us, and took care of us all day. They skipped about round us, and on to the ledges of rock, like a pair of goats, and were a great entertainment. There was evidence that the volcano had not been very long quiet and there are three distinct craters, in one of which we lunched.

Our young guides, who had much enjoyed sharing our lunch, indicated in broken English that they knew a nice way down; and off they set to show us, when, to our astonishment, they suddenly disappeared. We followed, and lo and behold, the "nice way down" was a narrow rift in the mountain from top to bottom, probably caused by the last eruption. Into this our young friends had dropped themselves, and, clinging to little ridges, looked up at us with laughing faces, and cordially invited us to descend. It seemed perfectly impossible and most unsuitable for us, and we demurred; but as they were so eager and so determined to help us we gave way, and, climbing in, we let our feet down while they placed them for us in cracks, and so, step by step, we descended the dark narrow fissure clinging with our hands to the sides. I went first with one small boy, and my companion followed with the other, and she was so directly over my head that, if she had lost her footing she would have come tumbling on the top of me. It was comparatively cool in the cleft of the mountain, which was a comfort on so hot a day, when we were going through such vigorous exertion.

We reached the bottom without mishap, and quite enjoyed our curious experience, which felt a good deal like climbing down a chimney.

In the afternoon the captain took all the passengers for a picnic to a beautiful little bay, and on the way we visited a remarkable cavern, the startling blues and greens of which filled us with wonder.

At sunrise next day, October 26th, we reached Haapai,

the middle islands of this group. It did not look very interesting from the sea, and the same terrible hurricane of the previous January, which had so devastated Fiji, had also swept the Tongan Islands, so that there was little copra to take in, and the captain determined to make his stay as short as possible and thus give us more time at Nukualofa. The passengers were all warned that there was no time to land. I asked, however, if I might go and come back in the launch which delivered the mails, just for the pleasure of the trip; and leave was given. Seeing me going, a lady and her daughter got in too, but they were tempted into landing, as the launch man said there would certainly be a second journey when he would bring them back; but there was none. The steamer trumpeted, the anchor was drawn up, and we were just starting, when I gave information of the missing ladies; and there they were in the far distance, frantically waving from the pier. The kind, good-natured captain was extremely annoyed, but by dint of signals some arrangement was made for getting them off, and after a good deal of delay two blushing, shame-faced ladies crept up the ladder into the ship. It would have been a nice business for them if they had been stranded for a month in Haapai, without money or kit.

Later in the day we passed among many islands and very dangerous-looking reefs. On one of these reefs a steamer lies wrecked, *The Knight of St. George*. It struck me as strangely lonely away out there awaiting its gradual dissolution; but its iron framework was strong, and it might last a long time; a year's breakers had already washed over it, yet from a distance it seemed quite whole. How many more vessels and native canoes, no one knows anything about, must have run foul of these treacherous reefs, and disappeared in the depths below. That lovely blue sea, which looks so charming in the sunshine, would have many a sad story to tell.

The evening of October 26th saw us stepping off the pier at Nukualofa, the chief town of Tongatabu. The first thing that struck me was the extraordinary dress of the people. Over their other clothes, which were very much after the Fijian model, only brighter and gayer, every one, male or

female, wore a ragged dirty mat, twisted round the waist and tied on with a coarse bit of sinnet. Some Tongan ladies, evidently of high rank, had joined us at Haapai, and they also wore it, and looked as if they were emerging from a chrysalis. We learned afterwards that it was national mourning, and very striking mourning too, suggestive of the "sackcloth and ashes" of Scripture. A young chief called Laifoni, closely related to the King, had recently died, very suddenly. He was a handsome boy of seventeen, and a general favourite, full of health and vigour, and fond of cricket and other sports, when one day he cut his foot with a shell, blood poisoning set in, and in three days he was dead.

Carrying with us an introduction to the King, we went at once to the prime minister, Jione Tubou Mateialona, to whom we had brought a letter from a Fijian chief. We were received with the utmost kindness by Mateialona and his wife, the latter a really charming woman, with the most polite and courtly manners; and, as she can speak a little English, I had the treat of being able to converse. The house is of wood and furnished with chairs and tables, and altogether more English than are those of the Fijian chiefs generally. Our host and hostess looked very sad because of Laifoni's death, and through an open door we could see a group of women, sitting on the ground twining beautiful wreaths and garlands of brilliant flowers for the grave.

Glasses of milk from the young coconut were brought in for us. It makes a sweet refreshing and somewhat sparkling drink.

After a little conversation we expressed our wish to see the King, and Mateialona went at once to tell him we were there, and brought back the good news that he would be pleased to see us next morning at ten o'clock.

Mateialona insisted on sending us back to the steamer in his own funny little carriage, with two small Tongan boys to attend to us.

He had told me that he thought it quite likely that the King would take a fancy to me and be quite pleased that I should sketch him. So next morning I armed myself with

suitable materials and my accomplished sketches; and we started at nine o'clock, in the first instance bound for one of the many churches on the island, and afterwards for the Palace, and our audience with the King. The Prime Minister's little carriage was waiting for us at the pier and we stepped in and drove to the church, where we were told the singing would be best, and as the Tongans are a very musical people I looked forward to something fine.

The whole Nukualofa world was marching in two's and



TONGANS, IN MOURNING, GOING TO CHURCH.

three's to church: they are very religious, and everyone goes. The national mourning made the effect most remarkable. The Tongans are fond of dress, and the coarse old mats tied on the top of their smart Sunday clothes, had a very grotesque appearance. A maiden, stepping gracefully along with flowers coquettishly stuck in her black hair, and a pretty pink or white silk dress, looked intensely funny having a hard stiff common dirty old mat plastered on the top, with great holes in it, and rags trolloping down and trailing in the dust, and the man at her side, a young dandy perhaps, or her venerable-looking father, looked quite as peculiar, with this bunchy old rag over his white silk shirt and bright fresh sulu. In church the whole congregation were thus attired, and I could not

resist making a sketch on my white glove of a pretty girl with a fan, which I afterwards transferred to my sketch book. The more ragged the mat the deeper the mourning; and I saw some fascinating young girls slyly enlarging their holes with their fingers during the sermon.

The Tongans are much better looking than the Fijians. They are lighter in colour, their hair is soft and flowing, and their noses well-shaped, and not short and flat and broad. They carry themselves with great dignity, and the girls have a ready smile, which shows a double row of lovely pearly teeth; altogether they are very pleasing.

The preacher had a charming face, and seemed to speak with great earnestness, but of course we understood nothing. One word "ofa" occurred very often, and we afterwards learned it was "love." The singing was good, but not better than I have heard in Fiji. I was much hoping that there might have been a performance of the King's own choir in the evening, and that I should have heard his rendering of the Lord's Prayer to music, and the Halleluiahs Chorus, the singing of which had so impressed Sir Charles Major; but it was not to be.

After church the Premier's little carriage was waiting for us again and drove us to the Palace. Alas! The King was in bed with influenza, and could not see us, but he sent down word that he was very sorry, and would make an effort to come down at ten next morning and see us then. It was a great disappointment.

In the afternoon there was a picnic for the passengers, but I preferred to be alone. The Tongan children gathered about me when I was sketching, and were pleasant company; and at dusk I took a solitary walk, and came upon the cemetery. There were no monuments of any kind; all the graves were



TONGAN GIRL IN
CHURCH IN
MOURNING GARB.

simply beautifully squared earth covered with pure white coral sand, which looked like snow. I handled it, and let it pass through my fingers: it was made of the prettiest little round and starry discs of coral. There was not a weed anywhere. Much constant labour must be required to keep such friable material perfectly square and clean, but the effect produced is a sense of quiet solemn peace.

I found the new grave where the young chief lay sleeping in his white bed—the sleep that knows no waking here; and I recognised the wreaths I had seen being prepared the day before. The grave was covered with garlands of gay flowers whose rich colours told vividly against the white.

The purity and freshness suggested the “white garments,” and the quiet ripple of the sea, the “many waters.” It was a very striking graveyard.

We were very doubtful if we should see the King at all on Monday, but we were there before the appointed time. The Premier and the English Consul were both there to meet us. The King they said, was not at all well, but he wanted to see us, and was dressing. He did not keep us long waiting; we were soon shown into the throne-room, and formally presented.

He was covered with orders and medals, and wore a dark heavy European-like uniform, which must be oppressive in such a climate. He is a big man, six feet four, and broad in proportion, and his weight is twenty-eight stone. He has a dignified kingly presence, and a kind expression in his broad dark face.

After shaking hands with us with his large massive hand, he begged us to be seated. He himself did not take the imposing looking throne covered in red velvet, but sat on a chair in the corner of the room, to be out of the draught. He said he was exceedingly sorry not to have been able to see us yesterday, but he had been obliged to “conceal himself” in bed all day as he was feverish, and he specially regretted not having been able to give us a performance of his choir.

He looked with great interest at my sketches, more particularly the portraits, and he said he would have been pleased to have sat for me if there had been more time and he had

been well. Then he told me he had gone to Auckland and been photographed, and "I'll give you an order to my photographer for a copy of myself and of the Queen." He went and wrote the letter and gave it to me, and he said that if I sent him the pictures, he and the Queen would sign them and return them to me. It was a most unusual mark of favour. I have the pictures duly signed but they are stiff and solemn and I am glad I took a good look so as to be able to draw a more suggestive likeness myself, afterwards.

I had a photo with me of my picture, now in the National Portrait Gallery, of my mother, with her brothers, Lord Kelvin and Professor James Thompson, and I gave it to him. He was delighted with it. The Consul told him a little about Lord Kelvin's work and what a distinguished man he was. He was most interested, and he repeated it all to his prime minister in Tongan. Over and over again he laid his hand on the picture remarking, "This is mine;" and when I was gathering up my drawings he looked anxiously lest I should carry it off by mistake.

We asked if we might see the Queen and the little princess. Her Majesty was immediately called, and appeared very soon in a rich, loose white satin robe, handsomely trimmed, carrying a magnificent baby, an enormous child, with a marvellously intelligent expression for three months' old. I at once asked if I might paint the infant princess and permission was joyfully granted.

My companion took the solid little bundle in her arms, and I proceeded there and then to work. The Queen came behind me and watched every stroke with the greatest interest, and I could hear satisfied little ejaculations as the likeness gradually appeared on the paper. The prime minister also watched from a little distance. The King divided his time between amusing his little daughter and coming to see how the picture was getting on, and in sometimes taking the little burden himself for a while. He said he had some letters he must get off by the mail, and he tried two or three times to go and write them, but he was always irresistibly drawn back to the throne room and the picture, and once, when it was necessary

for the little princess to go to the nurse, the King carried her off himself. I never before painted a picture with a king, and a Queen and a Prime Minister, looking on.

The likeness was considered excellent, and the King wrote



THE KING OF TONGA WITH HIS BABY.

on my sketch the little lady's name and the date both of her birth and of the painting of the portrait. I promised to make a copy of it for himself as soon as I could, but he begged me not to be long, so I painted it on the *Atua* and posted it from Sydney, getting a delighted acknowledgment in return.

The King we were told was concerned at his stoutness, and to keep down his figure he went every week to one of the other

islands where, throwing off his uniform, in slight native dress, he vigorously dug and planted yams and taro, and all the young gallants of the court felt obliged to go with him and follow his example, but they did not relish it.*

* King George Tubou II, died in April, 1918, and has been succeeded by his daughter by his first wife. King George's queen, his second wife, also died in November, 1918, in the terrible epidemic of influenza which decimated Tonga and other of the Pacific Islands at that time.

CHAPTER XL.

“ AT EVENING TIME THERE SHALL BE LIGHT.”

THE time at Nukualofa passed quickly away. We were to sail in the evening of October 2nd for New Zealand, which was the first stage of our long voyage home, *via* Australia and the Cape, and I was very busy, for I was eager to secure every possible record of the new and strange around me, before it was all left behind.

I wanted to sketch the big Avava trees, peculiar to Tonga, and which I was told played an interesting part in its history. They are so umbrageous that they are like large buildings, and under the spreading limbs of one of them the council meetings used to be held; while another was the courthouse, and place of execution, traitors being hanged from its branches. These trees are said to live hundreds of years, and they grow to an immense size. Their huge trunks are like groined pillars, and, looking up, I felt as if I were in a vast cathedral. I was anxious also to get a sketch on the beach showing the great bivalve shells* which lie about and are such a marked feature on the shore. They are pure white and so large and heavy that I could not lift or move them and one of them would comfortably make a child's bath. When alive these shell fish are a serious danger to fishermen or women, wading among the rocks at low tide, for they sometimes close on an unwary foot and hold it fast till the tide comes up, and the poor prisoner is drowned.

I longed to paint many more things, and see more, and do

* The shells are of the "Giant Clam" (*Tridacna gigas*), the flesh of which is a much esteemed food of most of the Pacific Islanders. The presence of these shells on the beach at Nukualofa is due to the same cause as the presence of oyster shells on many frequented beaches in England.



AVAVA TREE, AND BEACH, WITH GREAT BIVALVE SHELLS

more, and learn more, but all the while relentless Father Time with his scythe had been steadily cutting off my days one by one, and this was the last. I wanted to keep it, but, cling to it as I would, he got it too. The *Atua's* horn sounded, it was the "knell of parting day," and we had to go.

The setting sun lay low behind Nukualofa, and in its dazzling light all details were lost, leaving only a vision of tropical beauty, too bright to look at. I closed my eyes as we steamed away. Quickly the sun sank, and against the crimson glow of the sky island after island was projected as we passed. Some were large enough to be inhabited, while others were just a little ring of coconut palms.

The short tropical twilight soon deepened into night, but I sat long gazing into the darkness, and thinking of the beautiful lines in Whittier's *Eternal Goodness*.

I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air ;
But this I know, I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care.

GLOSSARY.

- Ai Tombi.** "A tuft of hair on the head, worn by the natives for ornament." (Hazlewood.) Now worn only by unmarried girls.
- A Máthá.** Literally 'it is empty or dry'; it is the customary exclamation to be made after the eup of 'yangona' (kava) has been emptied to the dregs.
- Andi.** Honorific title pertaining to all women of chiefly rank. (*cf.* Ratu.)
- Avava.** Tongan name for the large and beautiful tree (*Ficus sp.?*) which is a most conspicuous ornament of their landscape. There are not many of these trees in the Islands, and more or less historic interest attaches to such as exist.
- Bêche-de-mer.* The trade name for the 'sea-slugs' (*Holothurians*) which abound on the reefs round the Fiji and most other Pacific Islands. Much business was, and to some extent still is, done in these, which are in great request in the Chinese market, for culinary purposes. The term is also used for the polyglot language which serves as a *lingua franca* throughout a great part of the South Sea Islands.
- Dengei** (more properly Ndengei). The greatest of the so-called 'Gods' of the Fijians.
- Ganga-ni-Lawa.** "The Strength of the Law," here used as a proper name.
- Ivi.** The Ivi tree (*Inocarpus edulis*) is the so-called 'Polynesian chestnut' which is of great and varied service to the Fijians, as to other South Sea Islanders, and the nut of which is a valuable source of food.
- Kai Na-lotha.** Name of a clan now extinct.
- Kai-si.** A common person, *i.e.* not a Chief.
- Kerekere.** The customary right of a Chief (or superior) to obtain from an inferior whatever he asks for.
- King-posts.** The main upright posts—or, in the case of the round form of mountain house, post—on which the beams rest. (The Fijian's own word for King-post is *Mbou*.)
- Kurilangi.** The local name of a special variety of 'taro' (*Colocasia anti-quorum*), an aroid the root of which is a principal food of the Fijians.
- Lali.** The hollowed tree-trunk used as a drum by the natives.
- Liku.** Originally *liku* meant the scanty skirt-like dress of a Fijian woman only. The word for the corresponding dress of a man appears to be *sousou-wai*: but latterly the word *liku* is loosely used for the garment whether of a woman or man.
- Makita.** "The Makita (*Parinarium laurinum*) is a tree about fifty feet high, supplying tough spars for canoes, and having oblong leathery leaves formerly used exclusively in thatching heathen temples, but now also for common dwelling houses." (Seemann. *Flora Vitiensis*.)

- Masi.** This, properly speaking, is the 'paper mulberry tree' (*Broussonetia papyrifera*), the bark of which, specially treated, is made into 'tapa.' Tapa, in Fiji, is generally called 'masi,' and the name is especially applied to the narrow strip of bark cloth which is worn by the men and boys round their waists, the ends being passed between the legs.
- Mata ni vanua.** Literally 'the eye of the land,' and thus the herald always in attendance on Chiefs, to carry on communication between their lords and other persons.
- Mbala-mbala.** This is the tree-fern (*Alsophila lunulata*), the trunk of which is much used in house-building, with very decorative effect.
- Mbalawa.** See below under Pandanus.
- Mbati.** Distinctive name for men of the warrior caste.
- Mbelo.** A species of Ibis which is perhaps the commonest wading bird in the Islands.
- Mbokola.** Human flesh for cannibal feasts.
- Mbosé vaka-Turanga.** The Great Council of Chiefs, which meets only when summoned by the Governor, who is the Great Chief.
- Mbosé vaka-Yasana.** A 'Provincial Council,' i.e. a local council entrusted with the management of the affairs of a Province.
- Mbuli.** The provincial officer immediately below the Roko (*q.v.*) under the Colonial system of native administration.
- Mbulumakau.** Said to be a word invented soon after the first appearance of Europeans in the Islands, to mean horned cattle, whether bulls or cows. Probably an incorrect etymology.
- Mbure.** A Fijian native house.
- Mbutoni.** The Fisherman clan living, when first heard of, at Mbau, but subsequently, whether of their own accord or not, removed to Lakemba, in the Lau group.
- Megass.** A name (of West Indian origin ?) for the sugar-cane after the saccharine juice has been extracted.
- Meké.** A song accompanied by bodily movement, sometimes merely movement of the limbs but more often taking the form of dramatic dance, in which battles, the doings of animals or of the forces of nature (*e.g.* of winds and waves beating on the reefs), and again sometimes traditional incidents in the doings of the clan or of the Chief or principal person in whose honour the mekb is performed. (According to Hazlewood 'seré' is the word for a song without any such motion).
- Mynah.** The starling-like bird (*Gracula*) which was introduced from India to counteract the attacks of injurious insects on the sugar-cane, but which has since multiplied to a troublesome extent in its new home.
- Ndari ni Bokola.** The meat dish which was used for human flesh.
- Ndengei** (*see* Dengei).
- Pandanus.** The scientific name of the 'scew-pine,' at least two species of which (*P. caricosus*, locally called 'voivoi' and *P. verus*, locally called 'balawa') are largely used by the Fijians (as also by the natives of other Pacific islands) for mat-making and as food. The balawa makes a prominent feature in much of the Fijian scenery.

Rara. Hazlewood well describes this as 'the open space in the middle of a town or before the Chief's house. Now-a-days it is generally grass-covered.

Ratu. Honorific title attributed to all men of chiefly rank. (c.f. Andi.) (It seems doubtful whether the word 'Roko' before the English Government gave it an official meaning was not a local equivalent of 'ratu.')

Roko. Now the distinctive title of the head native official of a Province.

Sa tiko. {
Sa lako. { Fijian exclamation and counter-exclamation, used as a farewell.

Sinnet (the proper Fijian word for which is 'mangi-mangi') is the coconut fibre twisted into string and used largely in house and boat building and for innumerable other purposes.

Sulu. Literally means 'cloth' but is now almost exclusively used for the kilt-like waist-cloth which Fijian men wear wrapped round their loins.

Takia. The small sort of canoe which is in everyday use.

Tambua. Now used, practically exclusively, of whales' teeth used as ceremonial offerings. Hazlewood gives 'Tabua, *n.* the collar-bone, sa sau na nona tabua, his collar-bones are prominent, his flesh has fallen away, indicative of a bad state of health. From the partial similarity of form to the collar-bone, whales' teeth are called tabua. Ivory may also be so called.' The practice of giving ceremonial gifts is certainly old and well established in Fiji. Before the entry of European and American whaling ships into those waters made whales' teeth common, the gift, the significance of which was of much greater moment than its intrinsic value, probably took the form of a remarkable-looking shell or even a curiously shaped stone; but when whales' teeth and the desire to collect whales' teeth came into fashion, these ivories came into almost exclusive use for this ceremonial purpose.

Tapa. Bark-cloth, the proper Fijian name for which is 'masi' (*q.v.*)

Taro. "The Taro, or, as the Fijian language has it, the Dalo, is grown in Viti on irrigated or dry ground, perhaps more on the latter than on the former. The water is never allowed to become stagnant, but always kept in gentle motion. When planted on dry ground, generally on land just cleared, a tree or two with thick crowns are left standing in every field, which, as the natives justly conclude, attracts the moisture, and favours the growth of the crop. When the crop is gathered in, the tops of the tubers are cut off, and at once replanted. The young leaves may be eaten like Spinaeh; but, like the root, they require to be well cooked in order to destroy the acridity peculiar to Aroideous plants." (Seemann, *Flora Vitiensis.*) See also under Kurilangi.

Thama. The outrigger of a canoe.

Thevunga. This is (*Amomum Cuvuga*, Seemann) a tall-growing Ginger-wort, the showy crimson and very aromatic flower of which the Fijians make great use in the garlands with which they decorate their persons. The specific name *Cuvuga*, given to it by Seemann, who first described it, is interesting. Seemann made use of its native Fijian name *thevunga*, but, adopting the system of spelling introduced by the Wesleyan missionaries, put a C for the Th (which is soft, as in English *the*) and omitted all indication of the N sound before the G, thus unintentionally setting a difficult problem for any etymologically-minded botanist.

Thon'gè. The so-called 'Barking Pigeon' is a species of *Carpophagus*.

- Tivitivi.** “The name of a small square-tailed fish, something of the shape of a hatchet, from which hatchets most probably receive their name, being called *tivi tivi*.”—(Hazlewood.)
- Tokelau.** A name commonly given to the natives of the Gilbert Islands and Line Islands, who have in the past been transferred, or have transferred themselves, as temporary labourers to many parts of the Pacific distant from their homes. To these migrants is attributed, rightly or wrongly the dissemination of a repulsive skin-disease known as ‘Tokelau ring-worm.’
- Tui.** The title in old days of the Chief of a place, *e.g.* Tui Mbau, Chief of Mbau, or, the early European visitors translated, King of Mbau.
- Undro-undro.** Said to have been the personal name of the cannibal fork of a notorious Namosi Chief.
- Vakaviti.** A very common phrase which may be translated ‘in Fijian fashion’; *e.g.* a Fijian who on returning to the Islands after serving in Europe with the Labour Corps put off his uniform and put on his sulu would be said to be again dressed *vakaviti*.
- Vau.** The fibre from one or more species of Hibiscus, chiefly *H. tiliaceus*.
- Vesi.** A tree (*Azelia bijuga*) from the wood of which the natives made their canoes, headrests, yangona bowls, clubs and almost every other utensil which they needed.
- Vinaka.** An exclamation of approval, as we say ‘Good!’
- Wan’ga.** A canoe, apparently generally used of a sailing canoe.
- Yangona.** The customary drink, called ‘kava’ in more purely Polynesian islands, as for instance in Tonga and Samoa.

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