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**PEARLS OF THE  
SOUTHERN SEAS**



BANANAS.

*Frontispiece.*

# PEARLS OF THE SOUTHERN SEAS

AN ILLUSTRATED HANDBOOK  
OF LIFE IN POLYNESIA

BY

V. A. BARRADALE, M.A.

Formerly of the Malua Institution, Samoa, and Deputation from  
the L.M.S. Board of Directors to Samoa in 1919.

"Where His islands lift  
Their froned palms in air."—*W. H. Miller*

1922

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Dedicated to  
The Members of Howard Congregational Church,  
Bedford, who for fourteen years have made it  
possible for me while in the homeland to do some  
foreign missionary work,  
and to  
The Board of the London Missionary Society, in  
gratitude for its commission to revisit Samoa, 1919.

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## HINTS ON PRONUNCIATION

a may be (1) long (ā), as in father,  
(2) rather short, as in fat,  
or (3) very short (ǎ), like u in smut.

Sāmoā illustrates 1 and 3.

Apiā illustrates 2 and 3.

e, i, o, u, are pronounced as in French. Each of these  
has both a long and short quantity.

ē (long) = English ay, as in May ; e.g. Niuē (New-ay).

ĕ (short), as in poetical.

ī (long) = English ee, as in feet ; e.g., Apia (A-pee-ĭ).

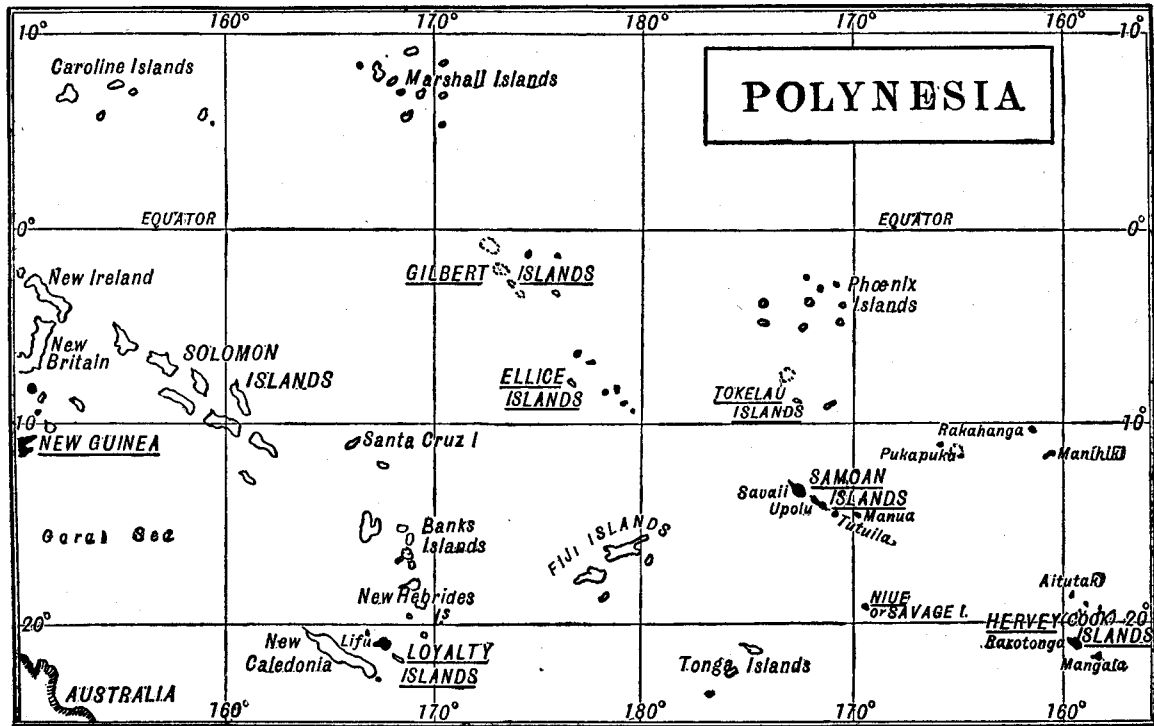
ū (long) = oo, as in book ; e.g., Ūpolū (Ūo-pó-loo).

g is always nasal, and pronounced as ng in sing ; e.g.,  
Papopago (Pangopango).

## CHRONOLOGY

- 1771-1782 Voyages of Captain Cook.  
1782-1788 Voyages of La Perouse.  
1795 London Missionary Society founded.  
1796 The *Duff* sailed for the South Seas.  
1797 The *Duff* landed first L.M.S. missionaries in Tahiti (Society Islands).  
1816-1865 William Ellis (Hawaii, South Seas, and Madagascar missionary: L.M.S. Foreign Secretary.) Wrote a History of the L.M.S. and books on Hawaii, Polynesian Researches, and Madagascar.  
1821 John Williams first visited the Cook or Hervey Islands.  
1830 John Williams's first visit to Samoa.  
1835-1875 A. W. Murray in South Seas: did much pioneering work.  
1838 The *Camden* sailed for the South Seas.  
1838-1849 George Pratt in Samoa. Shared in revision of Scriptures: a pioneer in linguistic and literary work.  
1839 John Williams killed on Erromanga, New Hebrides.  
1841 L.M.S. began work on Maré, Loyalty Islands.  
1844 Malua Institution, Samoa, founded by Geo. Turner and Charles Hardie.  
1844-1864 The first *John Williams* voyaging in the Pacific.  
1849 Opening of the Niuë Mission.  
1858 First teachers left in Tokelau Islands.  
1861 William George Lawes settled in Niuë.  
1864 L.M.S. work on Maré (Loyalty Islands) handed over to Paris Missionary Society.

- 1865 Elikana settled in Ellice Islands.  
 1867 The second *John Williams* wrecked.  
 James Chalmers settled in Rarotonga.
- 1868-1894 Third *John Williams* at work.
- 1870 Gilbert Islands added to Samoan Mission by  
 Rev. S. J. Whitmee.
- 1871 L.M.S. work begun in Papua by Samuel  
 Macfarlane and A. W. Murray.
- 1874 W. G. Lawes settled in Papua.
- 1877 James Chalmers settled in Papua.
- 1888 S.E. Papua proclaimed a British colony.
- 1890 L.M.S. work in Tahiti handed over to Paris  
 Missionary Society.
- 1894 The fourth *John Williams* (present steamer)  
 began her work.
- 1900 Raising of German Flag over Western  
 Samoa and American Flag over Eastern  
 Samoa.  
 Rev. W. E. Goward first resident missionary  
 in Gilbert Islands, south of Equator.
- 1901 James Chalmers and Oliver Tomkins mur-  
 dered in Papua.
- 1917 Northern Gilberts handed over to L.M.S.  
 by the American Board (A.B.C.F.M.).
- 1919 Western Samoa under New Zealand Ad-  
 ministration.
- 1921 L.M.S. work in Lifou and Ouvea (Loyalty  
 Islands) handed over to Paris Missionary  
 Society.



## CHAPTER I

### **Introductory**

#### ROMANCE.

No part of the world is more full of romantic interest than the Pacific. It has the charm of singular beauty. The very names of its islands and archipelagos are musical. It is peopled with child-races, and children are never without their peculiar attraction. Here are laid the scenes of "Treasure Island" and stirring yarns of cruising and adventure; while its sunlit waters, in earlier times, looked upon many a blood-curdling exploit of buccaneer and mutineer.

Commerce, too, has its story of romance. A new Pacific has appeared which is already one of the great trade-routes of the world. Britain, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, France, Holland, Japan, and China each have their interests in this distant sea, and with the completion of the Panama Canal, an even more important era appears to be at hand. Romance has also had its place in the evangelisation of these island-peoples. The history of Christian



missions has given the world some of its most thrilling tales in the adventures, achievements and endurance of missionary heroes. Think of the London Missionary Society alone in the Pacific, and at once come leaping to the mind such names as Henry Nott, John Williams, William Ellis, George Pratt, George Turner, W. G. Lawes, Samuel Macfarlane, and James Chalmers ; the roll of honour is long and illustrious.

While for the world of commerce the strategic importance of the Pacific is to be found in its far-reaching waters rather than in its little islands, for all lovers of humanity and in relation to world-evangelisation, it is the lands—the islands and their peoples—which possess a perennial charm.

#### BEAUTIFUL FOR SITUATION.

To the voyager who has left city-civilisation behind at Sydney or Auckland, San Francisco or Vancouver, the first glimpses and experiences of the island-life are unforgettable. The island of Upolu (Stevenson's Samoa) may be taken as typical of the more fertile tropical isles. Apia is the port on which he looked down from his home at Vailima ; its roadstead is unsheltered and in stormy weather unsafe, not to be compared with the fine land-locked harbour of Pangopango ; here, as in many places throughout the Southern Seas, the captain waits for daylight before

entering through the opening in the reef. For two or three miles along the sea front runs the main street, with its Custom House and wharves, its Government offices and traders' stores, the Roman Catholic cathedral and several Protestant churches, all nestling beneath a bower of luxuriant greenery. As far as the eye can stretch in either direction beyond the port, the shore is thickly fringed with graceful coconut palms, whilst rising in the interior, dark forests richly clothe the mountain-sides to their very summits, 3,000 to 4,000 feet high.

The Pacific Ocean, south of the Equator, is studded with such island-groups and solitary islets. Those in which the London Missionary Society is now at work lie between the Equator and 20 degrees South, and stretch from Papua to longitude 155 degrees West, and include the Cook and Samoan groups, the Gilbert, Ellice and Tokelau islands, and single islands like Ocean Island and Niué. Some are of volcanic origin; many are coral atolls. Some are little more than sand-banks, scorched by the tropical sun; the majority are very fertile and beautiful for situation. All may be included in the generic title, "Pearls of the Southern Seas."

#### PROGRESS OF MISSIONS.

Formerly the London Missionary Society also laboured in the Society Islands (1796-1890), and in the Loyalties, retiring from

## 14      **Pearls of the Southern Seas**

Lifou and Ouvéa in 1921, leaving the very prosperous mission in the hands of the Paris Missionary Society, which already had stations in Maré on the one side and in New Caledonia on the other.

John Williams first visited the Cook Islands in 1821, and Samoa in 1830. The Niué Mission was established in 1849. In 1870 the Southern Gilberts were added to the Samoan Mission, becoming a separate mission in 1900; while, in 1917, the islands of the same group north of the Equator were handed over to the care of the London Missionary Society by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (commonly known as the A.B.C.F.M.) a society very much the same in basis as the L.M.S. The Ellice and Tokelau groups have been worked for many years in conjunction with the Samoan Mission.

For fuller details of the history of these missions, the reader is referred to Lovett's "History of the London Missionary Society," Silvester Horne's "Story of the L.M.S.," Cousins's "Isles Afar Off," and to the Society's Annual Reports. The purpose of this little volume is to deal not so much with *history* as with the *life* of these Pacific islanders, in the hope of presenting a background on which teachers and others interested in missionary endeavour and accomplishment may form an adequately true conception of the place the Christian religion now holds in the daily life of these Southern

peoples, and of the actual conditions under which their life is passed.

### PRIMITIVE DAYS.

In speaking of the manners and customs of the South Seas, it will be convenient to take the central group of Samoa and describe its characteristics. This will give a general idea of the features of daily life, which are more or less common to all the islands. Christianity has wrought many transformations. When John Williams landed at Sapapalii, on the island of Savaii, in August, 1830, an inter-tribal war was raging on Upolu, and the flames of burning villages clearly showed how the victorious king was treating his enemies. This internecine guerrilla type of warfare continued intermittently until half a century ago, when it was brought to an end largely through the influence of missionary teaching. But, even in intervals of peace, the daily life of "Old Samoa" was far from being as happy and attractive as it is to-day. There were no schools; the children and adults grew up to be idle and ignorant, and wayward and wicked, because idle and ignorant. Now Missions have established schools and colleges for girls and boys, and young men and women; they publish books and magazines, and give instruction in carpentry, printing, gardening, and other useful trades. Most of the people know how

to use their hands and brains, and to occupy their time profitably, in ways which were not known to their fathers.

#### EARLY RELIGION.

In olden days Polynesian religion was chiefly of a Totemistic nature. The people worshipped, or feared and sought to appease, the dead spirits of birds and fish and chiefs, and even of things which had no life, such as the weapons of famous warriors. Each family had its own particular god, which was regarded as the protector of all its members. These gods were reputed to dwell in various animals and fishes. One family thought its guardian deity lived in a shark, so that family would never kill a shark, lest it should kill its own special god. Another believed that its god lived in an owl, and would never shoot that particular kind of bird. Another family supposed that its peculiar god lived in a certain stone, and was very careful not to tread on that stone, lest it should trample on its deity. They were also extremely superstitious, and went in continual fear of evil spirits. They imagined, and some do still, that physical pain was caused by these *aitu*, or spirits. A great change for the better, however, has come over these island-peoples, and this is due, in the main, to the life and teaching of Christian missionaries. Savagery and murder are seldom heard of; tribal



A CORNER OF APIA HARBOUR.

Stevenson's grave is more than half way up the mountain behind the ship's mast.

(See chap. 1.)



A POLYNESIAN WAR GOD.

(See page 16.)

warfare is almost a thing of the past ; the old superstitions are fast dying out and peoples no longer worship " gods many," but the majority have family prayers morning and night, worship the one, true and living God, and know Christ to be their Lord and Saviour.

### OPENING THE WAY FOR CHRISTIANITY.

For all who are concerned for the evangelisation of the world, it is a fascinating study to trace how, in the providence of God, this primitive zoolatrous worship, with its animism and totems, helped to pave the way for Christianity. It was one of Tennyson's " little systems . . . that have their day and cease to be," but also one of those " broken lights " of God, without which the full-orbed splendour of Christianity could hardly appear. Our modern study of comparative religions is showing how heathen and pagan religions have helped to spread the true Light, and usher in the reign of Him Who is to be the " Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." The heathen Polynesian religion, slight and unsatisfying as it was, did prepare the way for the reception of the Christian faith. Their gods were chiefly of a spiritual nature, for, though they appeared to worship birds and fishes, and clubs and trees, in reality these were to them but visible symbols of spirits from the spirit-world. Thus they had little difficulty in

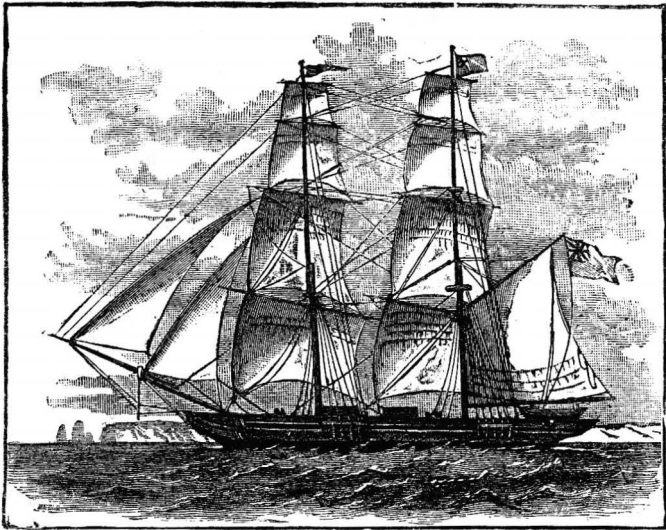


grasping the idea, that the new God of Whom the white man spoke, Who they were taught to believe was the one true and living God, was a Spirit, Who gave His only Son to be incarnated, made flesh for man's sake, and Who must be worshipped in spirit and in truth. They anticipated, too, a future life in the spirit-world, where they, as spirits in their turn, would either make men on earth happy for the favours they had conferred, or punish them in revenge for injuries they had inflicted. They also possessed cities of refuge, within which the refugee was free, and which were occupied by certain families, which were not called upon to fight in time of warfare, but whose duty it was to intercede with the gods for the fighting-men. So that they had some idea of the meaning and efficacy of intercessory prayer. The material, then, was there, in spite of much superstition and degradation, prepared for the Christian apostle to build upon, with the result that, in a generation or two, the missionary message evoked a glad and expectant and sacrificial response, and bore rich fruit in many of the groups and solitary islands of the Southern Seas. One instance may be given here of a people's gratitude. In 1918 the responsible native government of Western Samoa was asked, at the instance of the British Foreign Office, if it desired to express any wish with regard to its political future. It replied, as recorded in a Government White-book, " We



JOHN WILLIAMS.

are unanimous in wishing that Samoa should be under British rule; firstly, because a British Society, the London Missionary Society, first brought the Gospel to Samoa and showed the Samoans the benefits of living under the teachings of the Gospel.”



“THE CAMDEN.”

A brig, of 200 tons, purchased for the work of John Williams in 1838.

## CHAPTER II

# Peoples, Houses and Food

### THE ISLAND-PEOPLES.

THE term Polynesian (Greek *polus* "many," *nésos* "island") is commonly used, for the sake of convenience, to denote all the peoples of the very numerous groups of the Pacific islands, within or near the tropics; but ethnologists and geographers divide them into three groups:

- (1) Micronesia (Gr. *mikros* "small"),
- (2) Melanesia (Gr. *melas* "black"), and
- (3) Polynesia, or East Polynesia.

*Micronesia* lies in the extreme north-west, almost entirely north of the equator. It consists of small volcanic islands, or atolls; and, for our purposes, concerns only the Gilbertese, a race of dark-skinned people, in whose blood are mingled various oceanic and perhaps some continental strains.

*Melanesia* lies in the extreme west, entirely south of the equator, and consists mainly of "comparatively large, crystalline, coral-line and volcanic islands," some of whose

inhabitants are very dark like the Fijians, and others jet-black like the Solomon Islanders.

*East Polynesia* lies on both sides of the equator, and is composed of the twelve volcanic and coralline archipelagos of Hawaii, Phoenix, Ellice, Tokelau, Samoa, Tonga, Kermadec, Austral, Cook, Society, Paumotu, and Marquesas. The Maori of New Zealand and the Niuéans are also to be included in this group. These all have black eyes and hair, but their skin is brown, ranging in shades from pale olive-brown to a dark chocolate hue.

#### HOUSES.

The houses of the Samoans, and generally speaking of the East Polynesians, are simple in construction, picturesque, and built with a good deal of native skill and ingenuity. Some are circular, resembling an inverted half-coconut shell, or giant beehive; others are elliptical, or egg-shaped. Houses of this type stand secure against the high winds that frequently beat upon them. A number of stout tree-trunks are cut and firmly fixed in the ground. On them is built a neat and ingeniously constructed lattice-work frame, and this in turn supports the thatched roof.

In earlier times no nails were used, and all the joining was effected with sinnet, a native string or cord, tough, elastic and strong, manufactured from the fibre of the



*From a drawing by Frank Lenwood.*

**SAMOAN HOUSES.**

coconut husk. The thatch is made from the leaf of the sugar-cane; and instead of walls, plaited leaf-blinds or shutters are suspended round the house, which can be pulled up or let down, as circumstances require. If the wind is blowing half a gale, or the heavy tropical rain is driving in on one side of the house, they are lowered on that side, but usually they are drawn up, and passers-by can see what is going on inside the house. Polynesians trouble little about privacy, and are only just beginning to understand what is meant by our proverb, "An Englishman's house is his castle," or by the French saying, "A coalheaver is lord in his own house." If the family are enjoying a meal, they may be seen sitting on the floor, with folded legs, tailor-fashion, the food in front of them on a table-cloth on the ground too, only the table-cloth is not of white linen, but simply large, freshly-cut banana leaves. Or if you happen to be passing along the road in the hottest part of the day, members of the family may be seen wrapped in Manchester prints or in *siapo* coverings, with their heads, or rather necks, resting on bamboo pillows.

### ROADS.

The roads are, for the most part, primitive; though, where the white man congregates for purposes of government or commerce, as, for example, in Apia and Pangopango

(the British and American ports respectively of Samoa), motor-cars may run for a few miles with varying degrees of comfort. The roads that skirt the coastline, on which most of the islanders live, are not too even and are frequently pitted with crab-holes, which make travelling on horseback or by buggy not too pleasant ; whilst the inland roads, across the islands, are usually little more than narrow tracks over the hills and through the bush, or forest-land : they are often very steep and rough, and impeded by rock-boulders and fallen trees. Sometimes the road, or path, is cut in two by an arm of the sea, or a river, or mountain stream, and the pedestrian has to wade or be carried over, or balance himself across on a narrow bridge, sometimes consisting merely of a round coconut tree trunk, thrown across from bank to bank.

#### FURNITURE.

Before the arrival of the white man, or *papalangi* (literally, "shot from the sky"), the Polynesian did not trouble himself much about furniture or household utensils. He had no knowledge of, or need for, chairs or tables or bedsteads : the ground was sufficient for his purposes. But suspended from the rafters of the roof, or pushed into the thatch, might be seen fishing spears and rods and nets, axes, clubs, bows and arrows, with various baskets containing turmeric and other



articles used in the manufacture of *siapo*, or native bark-cloth, together with coconut water-bottles and other primitive vessels. On two poles lashed lengthways to the centre posts of the house were piled the sleeping-mats and bamboo pillows, and bundles of *siapo*. In the back part of the house was a raised platform, upon which were stored bundles of the more valuable native property, consisting of very finely woven mats, generally known as "Tongan cloth"; whilst from one of the side posts might be seen suspended the large kava-bowl, with a coconut shell drinking-cup. Baskets of food, cooked and uncooked, were slung from a branching stick fixed upright in the ground.

Even to-day the average Polynesian does not use much furniture, though of recent years many have learned how to make and appreciate serviceable tables and chairs and boxes and wooden bedsteads. Originally the houses had only one room; now they are partitioned off into at least three, a living-room in the centre, with sleeping apartments at each end.

#### ARTICLES OF FOOD.

With the importation of tinned goods from England, America, Australia and New Zealand, the people now enjoy a greater variety of foods, but the staple articles of diet are tropical vegetables and fruits, and

fish from the surrounding seas or lagoons. Perhaps the food they most rely on is the banana.

Bananas are eaten as fruit, but more often baked as vegetables, when fully grown, but not sun-ripened. The ovens in which they are baked are shallow holes dug in the ground outside the house, and inlaid with small stones. These are heated by kindling a wood fire on them. The ashes are then cleared away, and the bananas and other vegetables put on the hot stones, and covered in with breadfruit and banana leaves, till all are cooked.

Polynesians have two regular meals a day, one in the morning and one in the evening, but they have hearty appetites and are always ready to eat between meals as well. In the Gilbert Islands, the soil is thin and parched by the equatorial sun, and there is frequent scarcity, when imported rice and tinned foods are not available to eke out the food supply; but on the more fertile islands of Samoa and Niué, and in the Hervey (or Cook) group, there is a plentiful variety all the year round of wholesome tropical vegetables and fruits, such as taro, breadfruit, yams, sweet-potatoes, coconuts, pine-apples, oranges, limes, mangoes and sugar-cane.

#### VEGETABLE FOODS.

The taro plant grows in swampy ground, and has leaves like those of the arum lily,

only much taller, and the root, which is the edible portion, somewhat resembles in shape a mangel-wurzel; when it is cooked in the native oven it has a pleasant floury taste. It makes a fairly good substitute for bread, as does also the breadfruit, which, however, is not a root like the taro or the yam, but grows on a large tree. Indeed a plantation of breadfruit trees, with their dark green leaves, by moonlight, with the native houses nestling beneath, is one of the most beautiful sights to be seen, even in the lovely island-pearls of these Southern Seas. The wood of the tree is highly prized for building purposes, and the fruit is a most valuable article of food. Though it is called a fruit, it is really a vegetable. About the size of a small melon, it has a green rind and is pithy inside. It has not much flavour, but is wholesome and nourishing, when baked. It is also used as a savoury, or cheese, being allowed to "ripen" for this purpose in pits dug in the earth.

The yam has a more delicate flavour than taro, and requires a more careful culture and frequent change of site. It is a long, rather slender root, and a good well-baked yam is even more delicious than a mealy potato.

#### FRUITS AND NUTS.

Oranges grow abundantly in the Cook Islands, but in Samoa they are thick-skinned and bitter, and used by the people as a



BREADFRUIT TREE.

substitute for soap. Pine-apples and limes are among the most juicy and refreshing of Pacific fruits.

The coconut is both food and drink, and, in copra-making, provides the islanders with one of their chief industries and means of subsistence, alongside the white trader or planter. The flesh of the young nut is used to make sauces and delicacies, while the "milk" enables the traveller to refresh himself with a cool, slightly effervescing drink, when he may be far away from any spring or rivulet. The trees are very tall and picturesque, and add much to the beauty of the landscape. The long graceful fronds grow only at the top, with the nuts in their fibrous husks clustering under them, close to the trunk, which itself is bare for a distance of sixty or more feet up. The old, mature kernel, when sliced and sun-dried, is known commercially as copra, from which coconut oil is distilled, and which is largely used in the manufacture of soaps, margarine, and other articles of merchandise.

#### PANDANUS.

The pandanus tree, or screw-pine, is common throughout the islands, but acquires a special value in islands like the Gilberts, where trees are few and vegetation is scarce. Its leaves are used in many groups for the plaiting of sleeping-mats, but in the Gilberts

every part of the tree—wood, leaf, and fruit—is employed to supply life's commonest necessities. The trunk is used as a pillar to support the roofs of the larger buildings, such as the native Council houses and the churches. Short ones are also used for the four corner-posts of the more open native dwelling-houses, the trunk being inverted, so as to stand firmly on the stump end of three of its branches.

The fruit is extremely fibrous, and very nutritious, if not too palatable. It is eaten either raw or cooked, and the people also dry a great deal of it, when it presents the appearance of brown sawdust, after the processes of cooking, pounding, sun-drying, and yet a second pounding. When finished, it is stored in cylinders made from the leaf of the tree. The quantity made is usually sufficient to last the family until the next year's harvest, when a fresh supply is prepared.

#### **FISH AND FLESH.**

Apart from vegetables and fruits, the Polynesians live chiefly on fish, of which there are many varieties and abundant supplies, and which they catch by hand and spear and net, by methods at once skilful and ingenious. They are adept swimmers, as much at home, men, women, and children, in the water as on land.

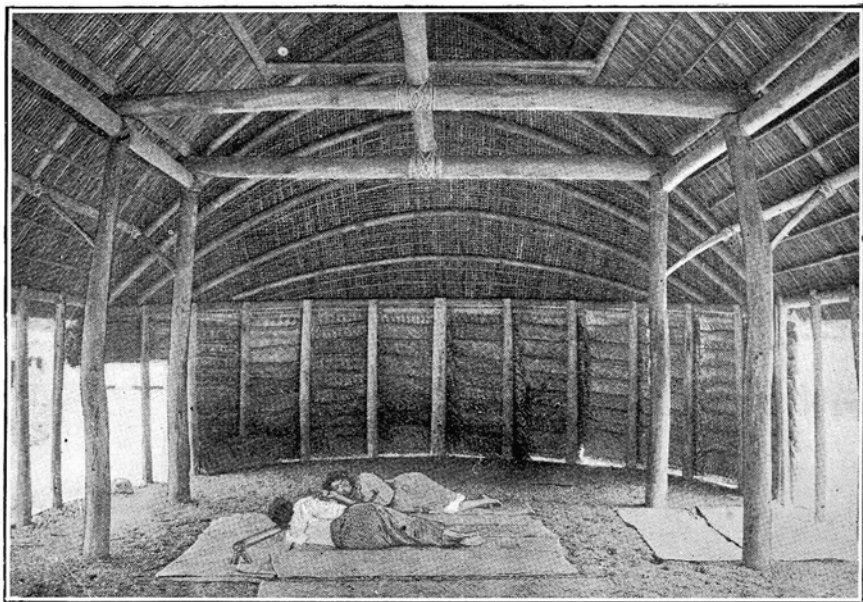
Fowls and pigs have been introduced, from the time of Captain Cook, into many of the

islands, and though they deteriorate owing to their wild life in the bush, the flesh is much appreciated as a change from fish and vegetable foods.

#### **KAVA AND ALCOHOL.**

Kava is a beverage which merits some description. It is prepared from the root of a plant of the "pepper" species. It is the drink of courtesy and hospitality in many Pacific groups. If a chief wishes to do honour to another chief or to make a white man welcome, he will summon maids of the village to make kava. A piece of the dried root, resembling ginger, is taken and grated in the presence of the guests. In less civilised times it was chewed. It is mixed with water in a special bowl with legs, all carved out of one piece of wood, and after being strained, is scooped up in a coconut shell cup, and offered, with ceremony, to the guests in order, from the highest in rank or importance to the lowest. It is hardly an appetising drink to look at, nor is its flavour exactly pleasant, but, though slightly narcotic, it does not appear to be intoxicating.

In the groups where the London Missionary Society is now at work, European and American Governments have consistently made and enforced laws forbidding white traders to supply the natives with alcoholic liquors, whilst in Samoa and other islands full prohibition is now in force.



AN AFTERNON NAP.

(See page 25.)





WHERE THE TARO GROWS.

(See page 27.)

## CHAPTER III

### Recreations

#### PASTIMES.

THE games and amusements described in this chapter are in vogue in Samoa, where I have seen or taken part in them, but they are also common to many of the South Sea islands. Some of them the islanders learned from the white peoples, but some they were accustomed to before missionary or sailor or trader visited them.

Children and adults often play the same games and indulge in the same pastimes. They are very fond of wrestling, boxing, tug-of-war, quoit playing, running races, and rowing matches. They even have kicking contests, the object being to kick the opponent down to the ground. This is neither as cowardly nor as easy as it sounds, seeing that the competitors wear neither boots nor shoes, and their limbs are usually well anointed with coconut oil.

**HITTING THE TARGET.**

Another recreation is spear-throwing. A target is erected at a distance. Sometimes the spear is a light stick, thrown slantwise, so that it may strike the ground, and then rise and bound on to the target. Sometimes the target may be a young coconut palm, dug up and fixed root upwards. Then, instead of a spear, a heavy pointed stick may be used, which is thrown into the air, so that it may travel in a curve and fall upright and stick in the target. The children play with the light stick.

They also play hide-and-seek; only when the hider is discovered, if he can run to a certain place without being caught by the seeker, he has the privilege of hiding again.

**FORFEITS AND RIDDLES.**

In the game of spinning the coconut the players sit in a circle. Sometimes the game is played indoors, but usually in the open air, in the village square, where public meetings are held. A player inside the ring spins a coconut, as we might "turn the trencher." When it stops spinning, they look to see to whom the eye-end of the nut is pointing, and that person pays a forfeit.

They have also other "forfeit" games, e.g., making rhymes. Sides are picked, one choosing the names of trees, the other names of people. Those who choose the trees

might say, "There is a *fau* (hibiscus tree), tell us a man's name to rhyme with it." A correct answer would be *Fulifau*. Or one side might name a bird, and the other would be expected to name a fish that rhymed with it. A name must not be repeated, and if the rhyme is not quickly given, a forfeit is required.

There are also guessing games. Two children will sit opposite each other on the ground. One will hold up a closed fist; then quickly show a certain number of fingers, and immediately open his hand, palm upwards. The other is expected, without hesitation, to hold up the same number of fingers. If he fails, the opponent scores a point, or receives a forfeit.

Among the guessing games, which grown-ups indulge in with as much interest as children, are riddles. The following are a few specimens :

There are twenty brothers, each with a hat on his head.

*Answer.*—A person's fingers and toes; the nails are the hats.

Four brothers, who are always carrying their father.

*Answer.*—A bamboo pillow, with its four legs.

A man who keeps on-calling out night and day.

*Answer.*—The surf beating continually on the coral reef.

A man who stands between two hungry fish.

*Answer.*—The tongue between the teeth of the upper and lower jaws.

A man who stands continually out of doors holding a burden.

*Answer.*—A banana tree, with a bunch of bananas.

The Samoans have their alliterative catch-sentences, corresponding to our "Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppercorns," "Round the rugged rock the ragged rascal ran," and "Sister Susie's sewing shirts for soldiers." Here is one :

Na au sau mai Maliolio,  
 Lou ala i umu,  
 Lou ala i paito,  
 Lou ala i puto pute,  
 Lou ala i pute puto.

If any one stumbles in saying it, he has to pay a forfeit.

They have games something like our draughts and quoits, and are fond of marbles, adults getting as excited over the game as children.

#### DANCING.

Among the most popular of all South Sea amusements was, and is, dancing. The "night dances" of olden days were invariably of an obscene nature, and, as public

opinion has become increasingly Christianised in one group and another, they have been almost entirely discontinued. The general missionary policy has been to urge the native Church absolutely to discourage these immoral dances, and at the same time to use its influence to make the more innocent day dances a healthy and pure form of recreation. Where criticism has been passed on this policy, it can only have been made in ignorance or wilful oblivion of the real character and tendency of the night dances. Day dancing is sometimes accompanied by singing and then consists of a variety of graceful motions and gestures; sometimes the performers are the young people of the villages, each blowing a bamboo flute while dancing, the action being more acrobatic and contortionist, leaping up and down, turning round, and throwing the arms and legs into strange attitudes. In all these dances the spectators will join with a running accompaniment of hand-clapping.

#### CRICKET.

Cricket they may have learned from sailors of some British man-of-war; or a missionary may have started it in his boarding school, the boys on their return home introducing it to their villages. But whatever the origin, it soon caught on and spread through the islands. The Samoan has introduced

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many variations, and his is a most amusing game to watch or play. The bat is a sort of round club slightly curved and flattened on the face, much heavier and thicker at the hitting end, and lends itself to "slogging" rather than to scientific cutting, placing, and driving. They do not play on carefully prepared pitches, but on any fairly open and passably level ground. There are few tall scores, as in our Test cricket or county matches, because there are so many in the field. There are frequently two hundred or more on each side, and a match will last for two or three weeks; indeed, the number of players seems to be limited only by the time available. Women play as keenly as men. During the game a band will often discourse music, though the instruments are usually drums of hollowed-out logs or empty kerosine tins. It is great fun and strenuous exercise in the tropical heat, but it is a serious thing in many ways when matches are prolonged for several weeks.

At one time missionaries in Samoa were pilloried as "kill-joys" and accused of forbidding members and adherents of the churches to play cricket at all. That was not true, but some restrictions became necessary. So far as I can tell, the facts were these: Many Samoans became cricket mad. Big matches were played in various centres for large stakes. Not only would three or four hundred or more be playing in a game, but whole

villages would make boat journeys to the cricket ground. During the two or three weeks of the match all work would be given up. The food plantations were neglected; no copra was cut; no schools were held; church life was largely suspended. The villages in which the matches were played began to complain of the inconvenience caused by the immense crowds which Samoan etiquette compelled them to entertain, whose presence reduced them to a state of semi-starvation. Disputes would frequently arise, and occasional fights; much bad blood was shown, and this at a time of intense political and inter-tribal unrest. Storekeepers and traders complained that serious injury was being done, since plantations were neglected and no copra cut. In the end representations were made to the Government officials, with the result that a law was passed limiting cricket to two days a week. The authorities appealed to the missionaries to use their influence with the people to submit loyally to the new regulation. They were naturally in sympathy with the appeal, for church and school organisations were suffering, and the moral condition of the people was being adversely affected. At the next half-yearly meeting of L.M.S. pastors and lay delegates the matter was laid before them. They agreed that congregations should be urged to obey loyally the Government edict, seeing that it was issued for their welfare, and in



the interests of peace, righteousness, and honest industry. Experience had taught the Samoans that the missionaries were their truest friends, and, further, a Samoan can always be influenced by a reasoned and sympathetic argument, when he would be deaf to a bald command. The result in this case was that they submitted without complaint to the regulation ; and the story that Samoan Christians were forbidden by kill-joy missionaries to play the innocent healthy game of cricket was probably the fabrication of irresponsible globetrotters, who were ignorant of the local conditions, or antagonistic to missionary ideals and activities.

#### HORSE-RACING AND GAMBLING.

A similar story was going the rounds with regard to horse-racing, when I was in Samoa after the disastrous epidemic of pneumonic influenza towards the end of 1918. During the New Zealand military occupation several race-courses were opened on the island of Upolu, one of them being in the public park at Apia. Samoans are keen on horse-riding ; they were invited to race, and the totalisator (a betting machine familiar at New Zealand race meetings), was introduced to the islands. In the main it was native gambling, thus encouraged, which supplied the necessary funds. The Protestant missionaries petitioned the Administrator to prohibit Samoans



MAKING KAVA.

(See page 32.)



RIDING THE SURF ON PLANKS AND IN CANOES.

(See page 42)

from using the totalisator. The reply was that should the native Parliament demand it, it would then be deemed a matter for Government consideration. In the end the chiefs made so strong a representation to the Administration that the totalisator was closed to Samoans on all the courses except that in Apia. With the suppression of the gambling excitement the country races died out, and the story was then circulated that missionaries had deprived the people of the innocent sport of horse-racing.

#### BOATING AND FISHING.

The South Sea peoples are passionately devoted to water sports. Boating and boat-racing are as popular as cricket. Fishing is daily work to provide one of the necessities of life, but certain forms of it, especially those carried on in the tranquil waters of the lagoon, are accompanied with so much fun and laughter and song that they may well be regarded as recreations. The late Rev. J. B. Stair in his valuable book, "Old Samoa," obtained the names of nearly a hundred different methods of fishing used by the Samoans, "thirty-four of which were with nets, seven with spears, sixteen various, seventeen for shell-fish, and twelve with baskets and pots." Men, women, and children employed themselves in these different modes of fishing, some of which required the united

efforts of numbers, while not a few were attended with danger. Shark, bonito, and turtle hunting by means of rope-noose or iron-headed spear provides for these islanders the sport of fox-hunting, with the added thrills of big-game hunting.

#### **SURF SWIMMING.**

Surf swimming, canoe gliding, and jumping the reef are other forms of aquatic sports common to many of the Pacific islanders. The surf swimmer stands on the outer edge of the coral reef, with the flat end of a three- or four-foot board pressed against his chest, stretching his hands over the rounded end, biding his time to jump off, so that a big wave may carry him to the beach. James Chalmers (Tamate), when a young missionary, nearly lost his life in an attempt at surf swimming. "During our stay on the island of Niué," he wrote, "I nearly lost my life. I was greatly interested in the surf swimming, and often watched the lads at it. One day the sea was particularly big, and I determined whilst bathing to try and run in on a sea with a plank. I got too far out, and was sucked back to the big boulders, and the seas washing me about, I got much bruised and cut. I can remember feeling that all was lost, when a great sea caught me and threw me on to a boulder, and I felt 'now or never,' and with a terrible effort I clung to



A SEASHORE SCENE.

Native children greeting the arrival of the *John Williams* steamship, whose smoke has appeared on the horizon.

it, and then, rising, gave one spring and landed where help could come to me. I was picked up and carried to the house. I was in bed for several days. I never again tried surf swimming." But the native lads and young men enjoy few things better, and will amuse themselves with this sport for hours together.

#### GLIDING AND REEF-JUMPING.

Children are especially fond of gliding; they go out in little canoes to meet the smaller waves rolling back from the barrier reef; then just at the right moment they skilfully paddle their canoes round and glide back on the crest of the waves towards the shore, plying their little paddles as hard as they can, and shouting with delight, especially if a canoe happens to get capsized.

The coral reef is often jagged and sharp, sometimes worn smooth by the water continually dashing against it and over it, but it is always a source of danger to boats. In some places there are openings through which boats and even large vessels may pass; in other places where the reef has not been built so high, the natives will wait for a big wave to come and lift them over, boat and all. This is called "jumping the reef," and the slightest miscalculation in timing the wave or judging the height of it may mean that the boat and all its

occupants will be upset in the white, foaming surf, and perhaps dashed against the coral rocks.

### MUSIC.

The Polynesians are extremely fond of singing, though the Gilbertese are not musical; they have no instruments, nor could they sing before the missionaries taught them. The Polynesians sing whenever they can, in their homes and at their work and in their amusements; they encourage themselves to endurance by singing as they row their boats and paddle their canoes, when they dance, and often while they fish; and they sing with great heartiness in church. Most of their songs and hymns are started in a high key by a small choir, the rest all joining in as a sort of bass or alto chorus.

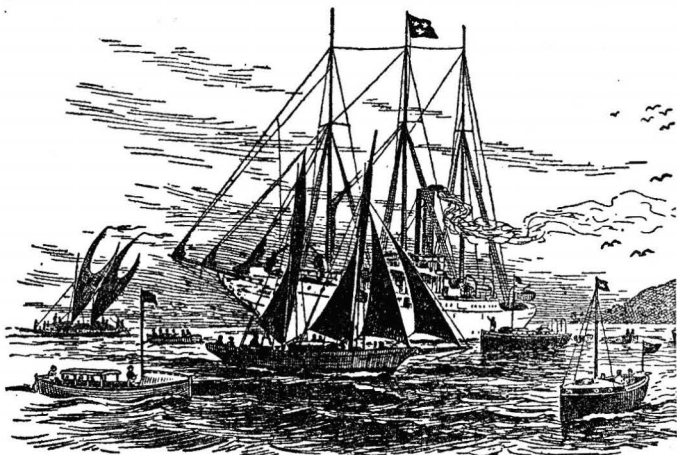
Their musical instruments consist of simple wooden drums, conch-shell trumpets, bamboo flutes, and pipes, or whistles, made of different varieties of wood. Under the white man's tuition, capable drum and fife bands have been established. Pianos and American organs afford much pleasure to the more advanced of the people, and certain of the churches, particularly where there are younger and more educated pastors, have gone to considerable expense to secure good instruments and modern tune-books, and take great pains with the musical portion of public worship.



**DRAMA AND FILMS.**

The Samoans are themselves arranging and presenting Scripture dramas, after the type of the old English morality plays.

Within recent years cinematograph films have been introduced into the Cook Islands, and pictures are shown several evenings a week in Samoa, both at Apia and Pangopango.



**THE STEAMSHIP "JOHN WILLIAMS IV."**

The fourth of the ships named after the Apostle of Polynesia.

## CHAPTER IV

### **Climate**

#### UNIFORMITY AND VARIATIONS.

POLYNESIA presents a considerable uniformity in its climatic and biological conditions. Islands nearer the equator may be a few degrees warmer than those three or four hundred miles farther away, but almost everywhere the prevailing winds are the moist south-east trades, which in the "hot season" veer round to the west and north-west; these, too, bring moisture-laden clouds, so that the rainfall is generally high, and the soil exceedingly fertile.

There is, however, this exception to be borne in mind, that some atolls—e.g. the Gilberts—lie too low to arrest the air currents, and therefore receive very little moisture, and grow but little in the way of edible vegetation.

#### TEMPERATURE.

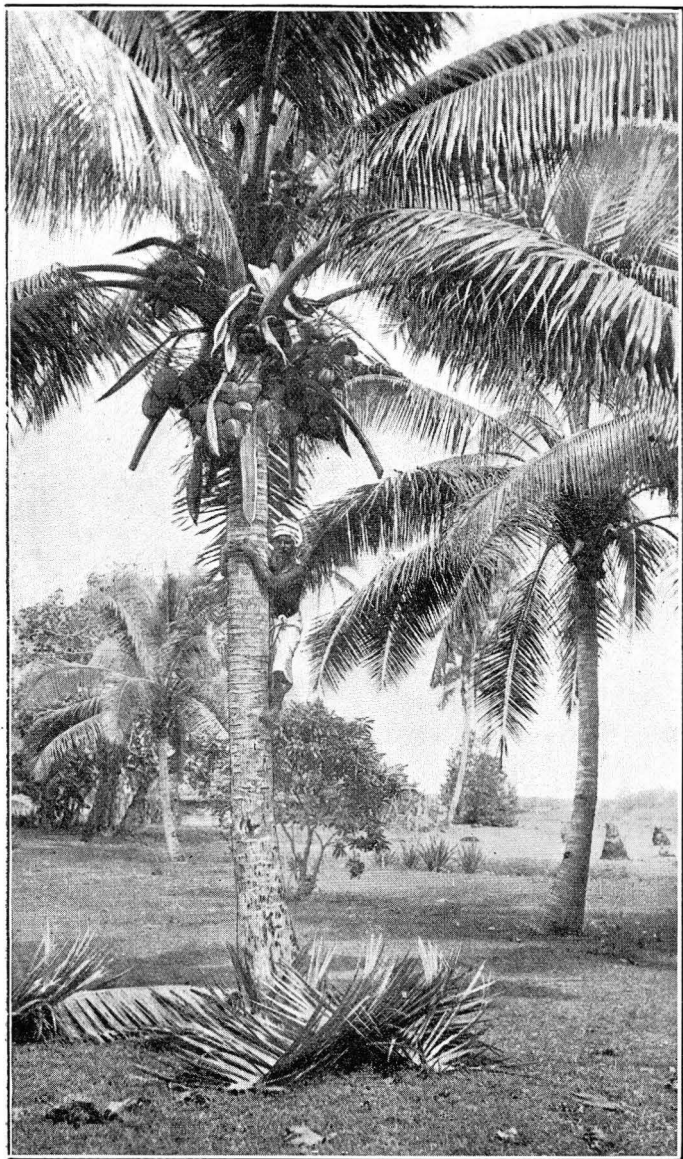
In Samoa, which is about in the centre of the South Sea groups, the average

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temperature is 83 degrees indoors, and the thermometer seldom falls more than ten to fifteen degrees below that all through the year. The climate is therefore hot and damp, of the steamy forcing-house variety, though it is tempered during the day, except in the "hot" or "wet" season," by the prevailing south-east winds. As tropical countries go, the islands are regarded as healthy; though the continual heat and damp are lowering to the constitution, producing low fevers and boils and gastric and nervous disorders, yet the porous nature of the volcanic subsoil keeps the ground free from the swamps of stagnant water, in which the malarial mosquito breeds and thrives.

### CLOTHING.

The Polynesians need little clothing by day, and at night simply wrap a coverlet round them by way of bedclothes. In earlier times their clothing was made of leaves, and usually consisted of a girdle and belt. Sometimes the girdle consisted of a paper-mulberry cloth, made by the process described in the next chapter. But with the march of civilisation and since white traders have been anxious to sell their goods, the native cloth has been largely replaced by prints and drills of European manufacture. The children still enjoy great freedom from clothes, but the adults are eager to imitate the white

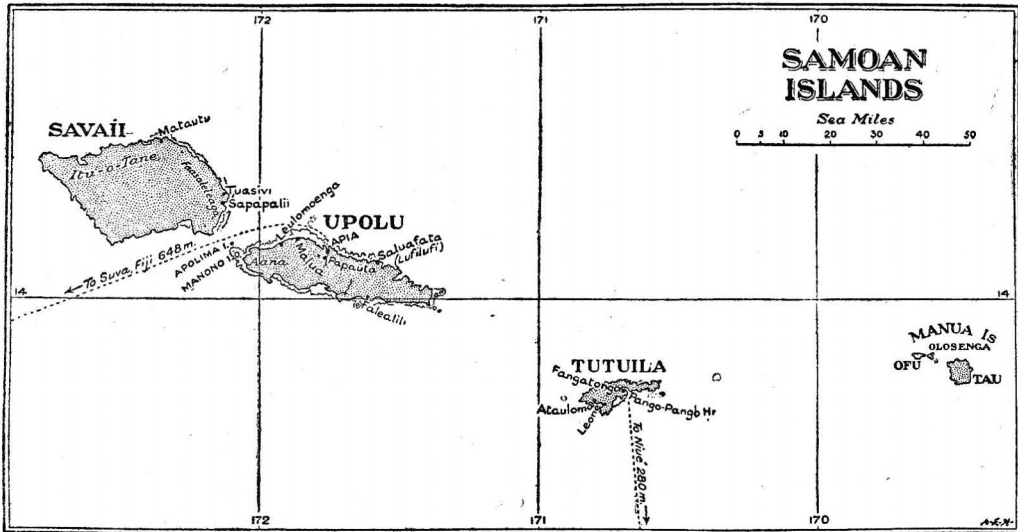


COCONUT PALMS.



A FINE MAT GARMENT AND CARVED WOOD HEAD-DRESS.

(See page 48.)



man to a certain extent, though they are wise enough not to adopt European clothes in every particular. For special occasions and when not at work the men wear a thin vest, or jacket of white drill, and a loin-cloth of calico or linen, whilst the women look both graceful and comfortable in long, loose-flowing print dresses of various colours and patterns.

#### FINE MATS.

In olden days fine mats were considered the most valuable articles of clothing. These are hand-made by women, about two yards square, from the dried leaves of a shrub of the lily family. The leaves are split up into strips an eighth of an inch wide, and woven on a pillow. Many months and even years are spent in making a single mat, and they form the dowry of the girls of each family on their marriage. They are worn as skirts by the village belles on festive occasions, when, with the six-inch fringe adorned with the scarlet feathers of the paroquet, these tawny-hued mats make quite a showy appearance, the brown skin of the wearers forming an effective foil. Another variety of mat is made from the bark of the tropical nettle plant. Such mats are bleached white, and have a shaggy, woolly appearance, which looks comfortable, but rather too hot for the climate.

## ADORNMENTS.

The Polynesian women are exceedingly fond of ornaments. They often wear necklaces of shells or shark's teeth or scented berries, and rings of cut tortoiseshell. Hair and ears are commonly adorned with bright-hued flowers. In war time the men used to wear head-dresses made of human hair. On ceremonial occasions high chiefs still display them, the hair bleached light brown with lime-water and adorned with scarlet feathers. These head-dresses are greatly prized, because the paroquet which supplies the feathers has almost disappeared from the islands, destroyed probably by the wild-cats of the bush. In front the bushy plume of hair is arranged on a frame of rods, narrowing at the forehead and broadening as it rises. This is set with polished shells or mirrors. Both men and women take a great pride in their hair, often stiffening it with breadfruit gum, or else dressing it with a pomade of light-coloured clay, which, when washed off with a lime solution, dyes the hair a much-coveted brown shade. This is done partly from a love of appearance and partly to protect their heads from the scorching heat of the sun, for they wear no hats, though frequently they carry umbrellas. They have neither boots nor stockings, and walk barefoot long distances through the bush and over rough, stony tracks and sharp,



sun-baked lava beds. Before the introduction of scissors and razors, hairdressing and shaving must have been painful operations, for the hair was sawn short with a shark's tooth, and shaving was done by means of two cockleshells. On festive occasions girls and women wear in their hair tall, fragile wooden combs of fretwork patterns.

#### ANIMALS AND BIRDS.

The islands, as might be expected from their volcanic origin or coral formation, have few animals. The only savage ones are wild boars and cats, the bush descendants of pigs and tame cats, introduced for domestic purposes, perhaps by Captain Cook during his voyages of discovery. There are a few snakes, but apparently they are not venomous. Pigs are commonly kept and prized as food. Dogs and cats are found in many houses, but the dogs are poor creatures, and the cats have killed off many of the most beautiful birds, without having diminished the hordes of bush-rats, which constantly overflow into the villages and houses, which, for the most part, line the sea coast. A large species of land-crab, the robber-crab, inhabits caverns and crevices of the rocks, especially near the shore, and feeds upon coconuts, peeling off the husk with its powerful claws, and then climbing some way up the tree and letting the nut fall so as to break it open.

Despite the depredations of cats, pigeons, doves, owls, wild ducks, plovers, herons, rails and swallows are some of the varieties of birds still to be found throughout the islands. Of bats there are two species, the smaller one resembling the English bat; the larger one, or flying-fox, is found in very large numbers and is most destructive to fruit, especially the banana and mango.

#### INSECT LIFE.

A remarkable feature of Polynesian natural history is the day and night chorus of the crickets (*cicadae*). The day-cricket chirps throughout the daylight hours, and the night variety from a little before sunset throughout the night. About half an hour before sunset the day-crickets are suddenly silent, so that for a short time not a sound is heard, and then all at once the night *cicadae* commence their cry simultaneously. So markedly and regularly does this take place all the year round, that the time of change has become recognised as an established hour of the day, and travellers, recording their experiences, will ask, "Where were you *cried?*" as naturally as we might inquire, "Where were you at sundown?"

Another curious feature of Samoan natural history may be mentioned here. A sea-worm, known as the *palolo*, very singular in its habits and much prized by the people as

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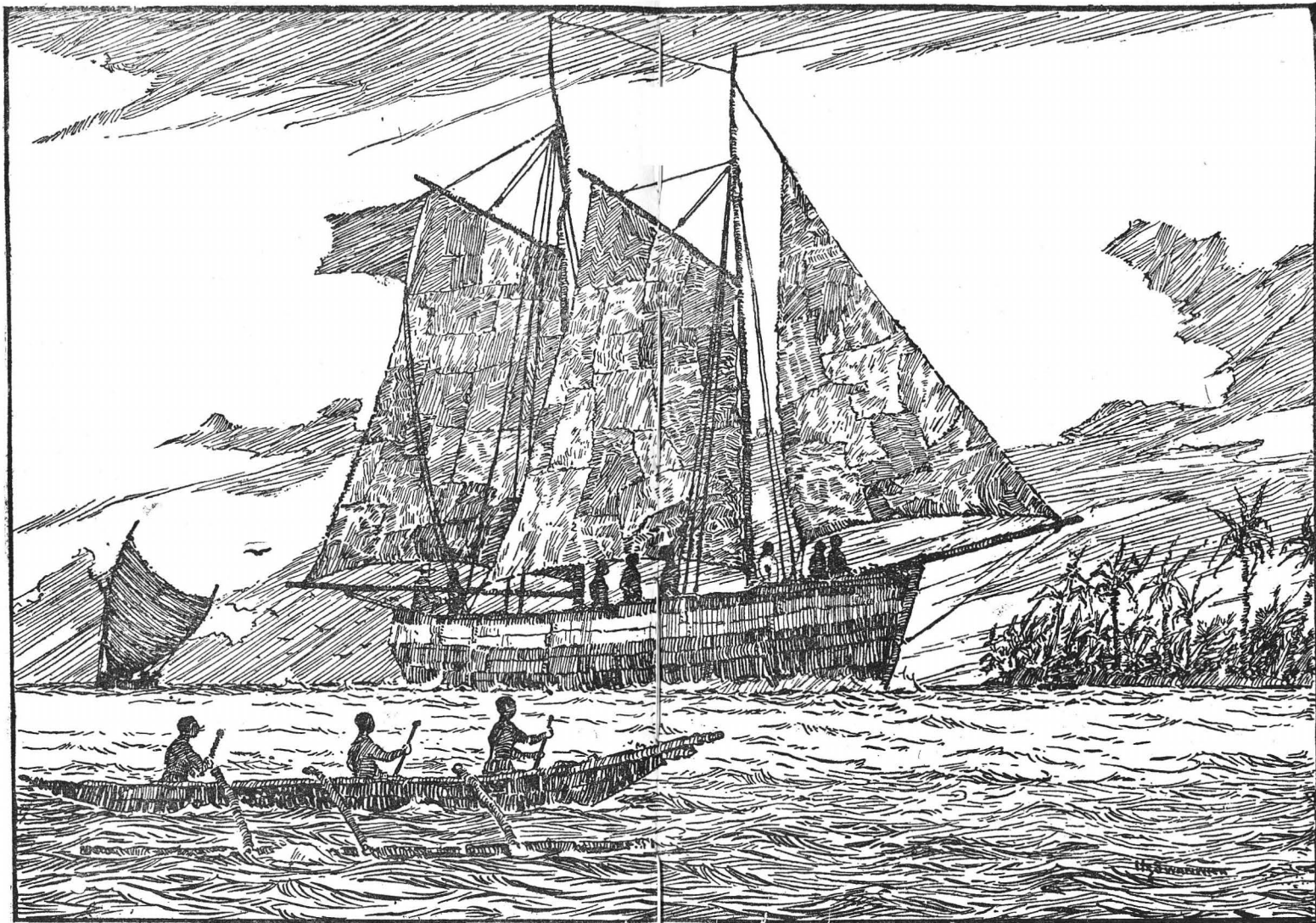
a rare article of food, rises from the openings of the reefs on two days only, in the mornings of the third quartering of the October and November moons ; it is never seen at any other time. After sporting on the surface of the sea for a few hours on each of these two days, it disappears as mysteriously as it came. None are ever seen again until their return the next year, when the visit is repeated under exactly the same remarkable conditions. In size the *palolo* resemble small straws, and are of various lengths and colours, green, brown, white, and speckled, whilst in appearance and mode of swimming they may be compared to small snakes. They are brittle, and if broken, each piece swims off, as though it were an entire worm.

Insect life abounds, including mosquitoes, large cockroaches, stinging centipedes (four inches long), scorpions, spiders, ants, white-ants, and many others. Leeches are found in swamps and streams, and lizards, of many varieties, abound in the bush.

### SEASONS.

The seasons are usually known as the "dry" and the "wet" or "rainy" seasons, though in Samoa and the surrounding groups there is much rain in the dry season and much more in the wet ; whilst in the Gilberts and other low-lying islands the rain is fitful and scarce, and often eagerly looked for. The

dry season lasts from April to October or November, and the wet from December to March. Towards the end of March the winds often blow with almost hurricane strength; not with such terrific force as in Fiji and some other parts of the Pacific, but still they are much too strong to be agreeable, and frequently work a great deal of havoc to houses and trees. The rain descends in torrential downpours, and is picturesquely and truly described by Robert Louis Stevenson, in one of his Vailima letters, as "a hideous Niagara of rain, roaring, shouting, and demonizing." These gales tear up the banana plantations, overturn native houses, and at times mow down coconut palms and breadfruit trees as easily as a scythe will cut grass. The coral-cement houses and churches stand firm, but unless great care is taken and heavy branches placed on the thatch, the roofs of these may be lifted up and carried away bodily. Sometimes, as an additional precaution, they are tied down with ropes. A severe storm is named in Samoa *O le afā*, which means literally "It will be four," i.e. the wind will blow from all the four points of the compass at once. When a storm of this force blows only on the sea, tremendous damage is done to shipping. A classic description of such a gale is given in Stevenson's "A Foot-note to History."



A reconstructed picture of the schooner *Messenger of Peace*, built by John Williams and trained Rarotongans in 1827. The boat was built in fifteen weeks. Her size was 70 to 80 tons. The fascinating story of the building of this ship from meagre resources will be found in "John Williams—the Shipbuilder," and in "Wiliamu."

## CHAPTER V

# Employments and Trades

### WAR ACCOUTREMENTS.

THE South Sea races, from the early days of their history, have followed many simple trades, though from the white man's viewpoint, they can hardly be called hard workers. Some of their most distinctive occupations were associated with warfare and military equipment. The Polynesians wore little armour, as much of their fighting was of the guerrilla type carried on under cover of the bush. Their weapons were primitive, shaped chiefly with the help of stone tools, the principal ones being slings, ironwood clubs, axes with stone heads, and spears with pointed tips of ironwood or stone, and barbed with jagged shark's teeth or the sting of the ray-fish. The spears, eight feet in length, were made of coconut wood, and the ray-fish barb was a wicked contrivance, for it was intended to break off from the spear in the body of the unhappy victim. In the majority

of cases there was no way of extracting it, and the wounded man died in agony.

The Gilbert Islanders were fiercer warriors and a more bloodthirsty people, and not having the cover of the bush for protection, were accustomed to rely more on the use of armour. They wore a complete suit, ingeniously contrived, which must have been very serviceable in hand-to-hand fighting. It covered the body from head to foot, and included helmet, coat, and trousers. It was made of tightly netted and woven coconut fibre cord, tough and resistant. A wonderfully manufactured cuirass of the same material gave additional protection to the chest, back, neck, and back of the head. The helmet was fashioned out of the skin of the porcupine fish; it was shaped when the skin was new and pliable; when dry, it became hard like metal. The whole suit is the nearest approach to European clothing found in the Pacific Islands, and afforded a considerable protection against even the formidable shark's teeth weapons. Through the influence of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and with the restraints of more civilised government, the manufacture of war equipment has happily become very largely an employment of the past.

#### PEACEFUL OCCUPATIONS.

It must always be borne in mind that, mainly owing to the enervating conditions

of climate, the South Sea peoples do not work stated hours like the white man in more temperate zones; they work a little at a time, and more or less as the fit seizes them, and they rest almost longer than they work. It is only those who have been in close contact with white men, the missionary in particular, who have any conception of the dignity of toil, or the chivalry of labour, or any idea of regular work as a prime factor in the development of character. Even these are altogether unwilling to undertake continuous labour on the white man's plantations. This has led to the introduction of coolies from China and the Solomon Islands, the planter claiming that the islands cannot be usefully worked for purposes of commerce or for the general welfare without such aid, and the Christian missionary and the social reformer finding it extremely difficult successfully to counter the claim. Among the chief peace occupations indigenous to the islands, however, were house-building, canoe-building, tattooing, net-making, and the manufacture of cloth, mats, fans, baskets, fish-hooks, and sinnet. J. B. Stair, in his "Old Samoa," gives a list of thirty-one trades.

#### HOUSE-BUILDING.

The building of a house in the Islands is one of the most important occupations, as it is everywhere. If a man wanted a house erected, he would go to a master-builder,



explain what sort of a house he desired, and then offer a valuable fine mat as a sign that he would honourably pay for the work to be done. If the mat were accepted, it was understood that the builder was ready to undertake the job. That was the only agreement made. They did not discuss how much the house was to cost ; it was simply left for the builder and his men to erect it, and the man for whom the work was to be done would nearly always pay what was asked for. If he did not, he was soon in a fix, because the builder and his men would leave the house unfinished, and in accordance with native custom, no other builder dare finish it. The builder and the workmen were paid in fine mats, for the Polynesians knew nothing of "money" in those days. Barter was the universal currency. If it were a large house, the cost might run to several hundred fine mats. Besides these, the workmen had their board and lodging found while the house was being built.

Though the native dwellings look like wooden huts, yet it used to take six or even nine months to construct them. This was because the workmen had so few tools, and the few they had were very slow to work with. They had, of course, no iron or steel, but simply stone and shell axes and adzes. It might take them a day to fell a single tree, and perhaps all the next day would be spent in sharpening their axes again.

**CANOE-BUILDING.**

Another trade of great importance to sea-going and fishing peoples was canoe-building. It is not so important now as it was fifty years ago. European rowing boats have come much more into fashion. Many chiefs and pastors have their private boats, and most villages possess larger ones. Motor-boats also are coming into vogue. These are all much more comfortable and roomy than the small canoes, or even the long narrow ones of olden days.

The canoe is chiefly used to-day for fishing, or when one or two natives require to make a voyage within the lagoon, or across the narrower straits from one island to another. These canoes are not as neatly and carefully made as in former times. In early days it was an expensive business to get a canoe built, for only skilled workmen could make them. All the timber had to be cut with stone hatchets, and the boards were cleverly sewn together with sinnet. To make them watertight they were caulked with the gum of the breadfruit tree, which made a capital substitute for pitch. Sometimes they were forty or fifty feet long, and as they were seldom more than twenty-five or thirty inches wide, they required an outrigger to keep them steady in the water. This outrigger was a simple wooden framework securely attached to one side of the canoe.

The canoes were strongly built and often beautifully finished. Many of the South Sea islanders travelled hundreds of miles in them. They would erect a sail and paddle along, just as we might on an English river in a little Canadian canoe. Some of the legends of the Maoris of New Zealand indicate that Polynesians have voyaged in this way for thousands of miles. Of course they would call at islands on the way, but the feats of endurance must have been extraordinary, for the voyagers would be days and nights on the open sea in all weathers, and travel hundreds of miles without landing anywhere.

A canoe was the more costly, because it was constructed, not in the builder's workshop, but in the neighbourhood of the house of the chief who required it. This meant that the chief had to furnish the board and lodging, not only of the master-builder, but also of his family and servants and many of his relations, as well as of the workmen and their families and attendants. For this purpose the chief had to enlarge his taro patches and banana plantations, and usually to beg or borrow a large number of fine mats from his kinsfolk and friends in order to pay the account. One drawback to this arrangement was that they would soon come and borrow back, and thus the more industrious and progressive were tempted to lose initiative and cease from working, arguing that it was of little use for them to toil if the more idle could have for

the asking the fruits of their labour. The Polynesians are only just beginning to understand the wisdom of Paul's law of life: "If any will not work, neither let him eat."

#### TATTOOING.

Another trade that used to be much more common than it is to-day was tattooing. Tattooers were highly paid, generally in fine mats and food. But the custom is rapidly dying out, for it was not only a very painful process, but was generally accompanied by many evil practices. In olden days tattooing was regarded as a sign of manhood, and it was submitted to by all males between the ages of twelve and fifteen. The tattooing instrument was a human bone, usually taken from the bodies of those killed in war. These bones were rubbed thin and flat, and then notched like combs by being cut with the sharpened edges of strong sea-shells. These comb-like bones were fixed into a wooden handle, dipped into a black candle-nut pigment, then driven into the skin with a wooden hammer. This was done again and again, day after day. It might be a month or longer before the treatment was finished. Many things are hastening the disappearance of this custom. Civilisation is leading the men to wear more clothing, and so they are unable to gratify their vanity by displaying the tattooed patterns, which were often



SAMOAN WARRIOR, WITH HEAD-DRESS.

(See page 58.)



THE BUILDING OF A HOUSE.

(See page 60.)

skilfully drawn and gave the impression that the wearer had put on a suit of small clothes. The expense and the painful nature of the long drawn-out operation are also leading to its discontinuance ; but, most of all, Christian education and the spread of the Gospel are constraining the people to hate the evil practices that accompanied it.

### SORCERY.

In olden days the Polynesians firmly believed in sorcery. The sorcerer would pretend to charm disease away by saying incantations and making a sing-song noise over the sick person. If the patient recovered, the skill of the sorcerers would be eulogised ; but if, as was generally the case, the patient got no better, the sorcerer would make plausible excuses to account for the failure, and the ignorant, credulous people would accept them, and be quite ready to rely on him again when illness seized them. The native doctoring consisted largely of gentle friction with the hand and copious use of oil, and the application of leaf-poultices. These measures were frequently very efficacious, but most of the people are only too thankful now to avail themselves of the benefits of modern medical and surgical skill. Native surgery was very crude and extremely painful. Few of the people retain any faith in sorcery.

**FISHING TACKLE AND SINNET.**

Fishing-nets of various kinds have long been manufactured in the islands. Several of the Polynesian tribes excel in this industry. It is the work of women, and confined principally to certain inland villages, because they are nearer to the raw material which abounds in the bush, viz., the bark of the hibiscus tree. The rough outer surface of the bark is scraped off with a shell on a board, and then the remaining fibres are twisted with the palm of the hand across the thigh into a strong whipcord, or finer twine, according to the size of the meshes of the net. As the cord lengthens, the woman fills her netting-needle, and when that is full, works it into her net. Nets are made of all sizes, from eighteen inches square to the seine of a hundred feet long. For fishing on a large scale, one hundred men might join twenty nets together, and in the lagoon opposite their villages haul in great quantities of mullet and other fish. Many of these nets, especially the smaller ones, are finished off with such skill that they might easily be taken for articles of European manufacture. For fishing with the hook the pearl-shell hook has long been in use and no European invention has yet superseded this purely native contrivance. A strip of the shell is cut off, two or three inches long, and rubbed smooth on a stone so as to resemble a small fish.



On the underside is fastened a hook made of tortoiseshell, or perhaps nowadays an English or American steel one. The hook is concealed by two small white feathers in imitation of the fins of a little fish. Without any bait this pearl-shell contrivance is thrown out at the stern of a canoe, with a twenty-foot line, and usually a bite soon follows.

Sinnet, or native string, is made principally by the old men. They sit at their ease at home and plait it with great rapidity. At political or other meetings, where there are hours of formal speech making, they take the work with them, and improve the time at this cleanly, useful occupation. It is made from the fibrous husk of the coconut, and varies in thickness and strength according to the number of the plies.

#### CLOTHMAKING, DYES, AND WEAVING.

The women tend plantations of the paper-mulberry shrub, which they cultivate for the sake of the inner bark, which is used in the manufacture of the native cloth known in Samoa as *siapo*. When the stems are about six feet long they strip off the inner bark and wash and scrub it on a board with shells to get out the juice; then they beat out the strips with a ribbed wooden mallet until they are eight or nine inches wide. These they stick together with an arrow-root paste, then paint on them various

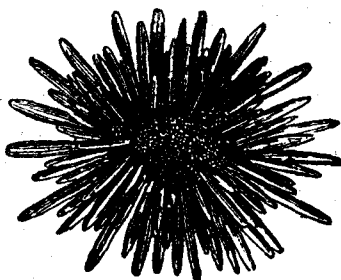
designs with little brushes made from the fibre of the pandanus fruit. The paint is procured from tree juices and roots, from plants and seeds, and from coloured earths. A beautiful crimson was produced by mixing the inner bark of the root of the Malay apple with sea water and coral lime. Yellow was prepared from turmeric and oil. Browns were obtained by mixing the inner bark of the *pani* with sea water, and a fine purple from the young shoots of the mountain plantain. A black colour was imparted to various articles by burying them in the soft ooze of a taro swamp. Pieces of this native cloth are often twelve yards long and two yards wide. Lengths of two yards are still worn as loincloths by the men, though these have been largely superseded by cotton goods.

Baskets and fans are plaited as of old from the coconut leaf ; floor mats and sleeping mats and a finer kind of basket are woven from the pandanus leaf (see also Chapter II). Niuéans manufacture considerable quantities of serviceable straw hats.

#### THATCHING.

Corrugated iron and tiles are now largely used for the roofing of churches, schools, stores and public buildings, but thatch still covers the native dwellings. This is made by the women, who have the care of the

sugar-cane plantations from which it is procured. When a house is to be thatched, all the women and girls of the village set out early in the morning to gather the old leaves of the cane, while the dew is still on them, so that they are pliable for handling. Each one straps a big bundle of these on to her back with the bark of the hibiscus shrub, and they form a procession back to the village. When a great quantity has been secured, they sit out under the trees and string them on rattan canes a yard long, which the men have brought from the bush. Each roof needs hundreds of such lengths, and the men tie them on the wooden lattice-work of the roof with sinnet. A roof needs re-thatching about every five years.



A Sea-Urchin, from which the Rarotongan children made their first slate pencils.

## CHAPTER VI

# Home Life and Modern Industries

### PROGRESS.

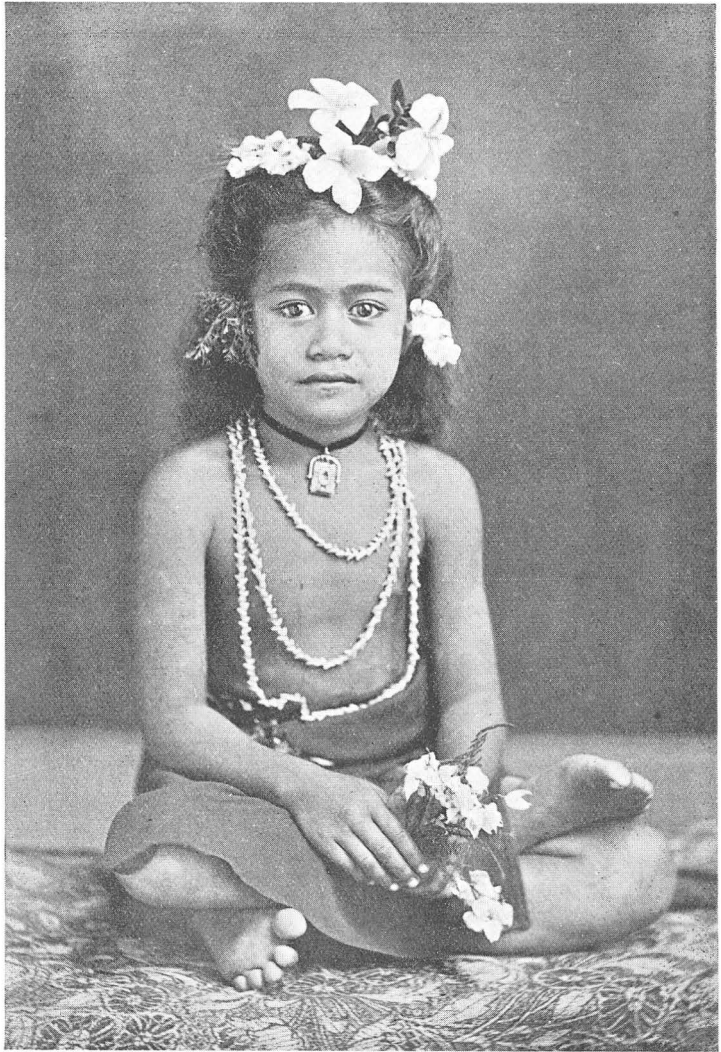
GOD has worked miracles in these Southern Seas. The people are changed very much for the better, as the Gospel of Jesus Christ always uplifts those who accept it and seek to live by its standards. Our ancestors were once woad-painted savages, worshipping heathen deities like Tiu, Woden, Thor and Frea\* ; and the great changes that the centuries have brought about are largely due to the fact that so many of the British people have sincerely accepted Christian principles. So it is with many among the South Sea peoples. They manifest the change in their home life ; they show it in their desire to improve themselves and use their time to greater profit ; they show it in their desire to learn, and, above all, in the Christian lives which so many are anxious to live.

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\* The gods of Death, War, Thunder and Peace, from which are derived the names of Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.



SAMOAN ARCHITECTURE.  
A Ward in the Pango Pango Hospital.



A DAUGHTER OF SUNNY SAMOA.

### SAVAGERY.

The Polynesian peoples are a fine type of native race, well-framed and muscular. In time of war or when meeting for the first time the unknown white man, they showed themselves fierce and savage. They did not practise cannibalism in the ordinary sense in which we use the word, that is to say, they did not kill human beings in order to feast on their flesh as did the Melanesian peoples of Fiji and the Solomons and the New Hebrides and New Caledonian groups. Human bodies were occasionally cooked by the brown peoples and also by the Micronesian Gilbertese, though they affirm that in such cases it was always the body of "an enemy who had been notorious for provocation or cruelty, and that eating a part of his body was considered the climax of hatred and revenge, and was not occasioned by the mere relish of human flesh" (*cp.* George Turner's "Samoa," page 108). La Perouse, the French explorer, recorded of the Samoans in his journal in 1787 that they were "a barbarous nation with atrocious manners." Captain Cook gave to Niué the name of Savage Island because of the wild and un-governable character of its inhabitants, and though he called the Tongan group "the Friendly Islands," he might have given it quite a different name could he have foreseen that of the nine L.M.S. missionaries

settled there in 1797 three were to be cruelly clubbed to death in less than three years after their landing.

#### ATTRACTIVE QUALITIES.

But in peace time and under normal conditions the Polynesian races were marked even in early days by many winsome and agreeable qualities. They are amiable in disposition, and by temperament courteous and hospitable. They are child-like, though by no means without guile. Admiration of them is constantly tinged with feelings of disappointment, but affection for them never dies, for they show many attractive and pleasing characteristics. Though their semi-civilised mode of life in some ways tends to untidiness and insanitary conditions, yet in their persons they are cleanliness itself. Walking along the beach, in almost every village may be seen one or two large pools. They are the bathing pools. The people have no bathrooms, no water supplies laid on, but every day they bathe in these sheltered pools, which are often formed by natural springs of fresh water, though at high tide the sea flows into them. These pools, or flowing streams, are also their laundries. By slapping the dirty linen on big stones, or beating them with a stick, they are cleansed, if damaged, but it is better to have them clean, if frayed or cut, than uninjured because



unwashed. It may be added that the women and girls who have been trained by missionaries' wives or women missionaries can often wash and starch and iron in a way that would not discredit an English steam laundry.

But the general family life of the Polynesian people is, in many respects, much more attractive and pleasant than it was half a century ago. Parents are fond of their children, though often too indulgent. Many of them send them to school, weekday and Sunday, more regularly than some English parents send theirs on Sunday, though not so regularly as the Attendance Officer requires English children to attend the elementary schools. A growing number of parents are keen for their older boys and girls to have a good education in the high schools and district schools; and for the youths later on to enter the colleges or training institutions at Malua (Samoa); Takamoa, Rarotonga (Cook Islands), Rongorongo, Beru (Gilbert Islands), and the smaller one on the island of Niué, so that they may enter the home ministries, or go abroad as missionaries to Papua, and the Tokelau and Ellice groups, or to more solitary islands like Ocean Island and Nauru, which lie about 250 and 450 miles respectively to the westward of the Gilberts. In very few homes do the family neglect to have morning and evening prayer, to ask God's

blessing upon the day and thank Him at night for all His benefits.

#### THE WORK OF GOD.

Apart from school and college life, larger numbers of the younger generation throughout the South Seas are being trained to follow useful occupations. Not many years ago all the educated Polynesian youths wished to become Christian ministers or missionaries, and the girls to become the wives of ministers or missionaries. That is one great proof of the enormous change from a century ago, when everybody worshipped the spirits of birds and fishes and trees. But of course it was a mistake for them to regard, as they did, ministerial and missionary work alone as "the work of God." Missionaries found it necessary to teach them that all good work pleases God, and they have largely succeeded by showing them the value of useful trades. The people are coming to see the material advantages and the spiritual blessings that come from using their hands and brains, and they are rapidly getting a truer idea of what God's work means.

Increasing numbers find employment in printing establishments and trading stores; some are becoming acquainted with the value of cocoa and rubber planting and other forms of tropical agriculture. In Apia and

## Home Life and Modern Industries 75

Pangopango they are becoming accustomed to wireless telegraphy, the telephone, electric light, motor-cars, and other quite modern inventions. Others have entered Government service and are holding positions of trust and responsibility. On my deputation work recently in Samoa I found that my "study" boy of twenty years before was filling the post of chief native interpreter under the New Zealand administration, and during the visit of Lord Liverpool (the Governor-General), I heard him officially translating the speeches of the King's representative to important assemblies of chiefs and people. New openings are also being made for the younger women, and when girls leave the High Schools at Papauta and Atauloma they may be trained, and are being trained, in British and American hospitals to become certificated district nurses.

This larger and truer conception of the meaning of "the Work of God" has recently been exemplified, in an unusual form, by a Gilbert Island student on the completion of his course at the Rongorongo Institution. It was desired to station a pastor on Fanning Island (hundreds of miles away to the east of the Gilberts) to care for the spiritual needs of the three or four hundred Gilbertese on that and Washington Islands. The Fanning Island Company only saw its way to consent, on the condition that the student should be indentured on practically the same terms as

the other labourers, and teach the children, and do his ministerial and pastoral work in his own leisure time. Notwithstanding these difficult conditions, this Gilbert Islander (who was also a fairly skilled carpenter) and his wife volunteered, both indenturing for three years as labourers.

### CARPENTRY.

In the Samoan District Schools and the High School at Leulumoenga and the Malua College, lads and young men are taught carpentry, and some of them show great proficiency, building and repairing boats and making excellent tables, boxes, wardrobes, chests of drawers, and many fancy articles besides. One good result of this is that new churches are more fittingly furnished and decorated than the older ones. At the Rongorongo Institution, too, in the Gilberts, industrial and manual work have always taken a prominent place in the curriculum of the students. In the carpenters' workshop timbers are prepared for the erection of houses; school and church furniture is made; the Society's boats are painted and repaired, and many odd jobs, both large and small, are executed. Carpentry is thoroughly enjoyed, and the students are apt and smart pupils.

### THE PRINTING PRESS.

Printing is another of the useful employments for instruction in which the South

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Sea peoples are mainly indebted to Christian missionaries. The important printing establishment at Malua, in Samoa, was started in 1900 in a small building with three native lads as workmen. To-day there is a fine two-storied building, with much more modern machinery, a largely increased staff, a Samoan foreman (who has been a respected pastor), and a skilled missionary printer as superintendent. It is quite a paying concern from a business point of view. A monthly magazine is published in Samoan which has a wide circulation, and hymn-books and school primers and text-books for use in the College are printed and bound, and orders constantly executed to the complete satisfaction of Government officials and the white population.

There is also a Mission Press for the Cook Islands, now waiting for the appointment of a missionary superintendent, whilst printing is also done in Niué for the mission on that island. There is a considerable degree of printing and publishing activity in the Gilbert Islands, where an efficient and self-supporting printing press has been established at Rongorongo.

### DEVELOPING CHARACTER.

The establishment of these printing presses has meant that the work of the Society has been done much more satisfactorily, and with greater economy and despatch ; but the finest

feature of all has been that, as with carpentry and other forms of industry, so with printing, the Samoans, Rarotongans, Niuéans, and Gilbertese are learning how to use their hands and brains and wisely spend their time, and also how to live in friendly co-operation side by side with the white man. In these and other ways they are being lifted out of the sins which are bred by idleness and want of development of God-given talents, and are thus becoming stronger, wiser and better men. Sex morality is slow of attainment in Britain, as we are frequently reminded to-day. Is it surprising that it is low in the South Seas and that there are many falls among islanders who "only ninety years ago knew no standard but desire and no deterrent but fear." The opportunities are many, the temptations very strong, and as yet the counter-attractions are very weak. In public opinion illegitimacy is no blight upon a child's future, which, for the child's sake, is good and merciful, but it is a serious matter that illegitimacy involves hardly any stigma upon the father and mother. Then, again, "parents are often reluctant to give their daughters in marriage until the young fellow has reached either rank or seniority. The result is that, when a young man has not these qualifications, he runs off into the bush with the girl he cares for, in the hope that this will compel the parents to consent to the marriage. If the parents are obdurate, the

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connexion is frequently broken off again. No great blame seems to attach to any of the parties concerned. In such ways the missionary is often disappointed to find that the boys and girls of finest promise have lost their purity. Again, it is too often with the white men from Christian countries that the girls go wrong. In such cases where lies the blame? " (Lenwood, *Pastels from the Pacific*, p. 79.) For many years the Polynesians have been lovable, happy, and generous peoples of the light-hearted, big-children type. These qualities are all the while being raised to a higher plane by the working of Christian truth among them as a leaven for righteousness. Contact with the white man, too—while, alas! it has introduced them to white men's vices—is most surely adding a strain of virility to their character; and there are many who hope and believe that, through the media of healthy competition and friendly co-operation, assisted, too, by the discipline of grievous calamities, such as the Great War and the plague of pneumonic influenza, in which hardships they shared with the larger world, they will develop a grit and fibre and robustness which have not characterised them hitherto.

## CHAPTER VII

### **Education**

#### SPOKEN LANGUAGES.

BEFORE the arrival of Protestant missions, the South Sea peoples had no schools. They could not read, for they had no books; they could not write, for there was no written language. Their languages were spoken ones, and that was all. They had no alphabets, and practically no idea of any such thing as education. Folklore and poetical folk-songs were learned by ear, committed to memory, and in this way passed on from generation to generation. They exercised the body, being splendid swimmers and walkers and climbers, but paid little attention to the training of the mind. So the early missionaries set to work in this direction. They reduced the spoken sounds of the languages to writing, and at length made the written form as complete as the spoken, thus accomplishing the first step towards bringing reading and writing within the reach of all. They were greatly assisted in



this labour of love by the fact that the Polynesian tongues are closely related, in all probability being derived from the parent language of the great Malayo-Polynesian family, which spreads across two seas, from Madagascar in the Indian Ocean to Easter Island in the South-east Pacific. Malaysia seems to have been the original home of the Polynesian, who closely resembles the Indo-nesian of the Malay Archipelago.

#### WRITTEN LANGUAGES.

Literature in the island tongues is not extensive, which is not surprising, for the demand is limited when peoples are ignorant, but with the progress of education the demand is growing, more books are being translated and larger editions issued and sold. The majority of missions have also their magazines, regularly published, which not only keep the village and out-stations in touch with the head-stations and missionary ideals, but also give news of the larger world and furnish their readers with translations from Shakespeare and other standard or modern authors. In each island or group of islands, the Bible or portions of it were translated into the vernacular, and simple books prepared; in course of time, schools and colleges were established and text-books written and printed for the use of children and students. In connection with pioneer linguistic studies

of this kind many L.M.S. missionaries should be held in honourable remembrance, including George Pratt, A. W. Murray, George Turner, Henry Nisbet, Thomas Powell, and James E. Newell in Samoa ; in Niué, George Pratt, W. G. and F. E. Lawes, and Paulo (who translated the Gospel according to St. Mark into Niuéan before the settlement of any white missionary) ; and John Williams, Charles Pitman, Aaron Buzacott and William Gill in the Cook Islands.

#### DAY SCHOOLS.

In each island under L.M.S. influence schools have been established. In this chapter it will be convenient to describe them as they obtain in Samoa, but it may be assumed that the description here given applies, generally speaking, to the Cook Islands and Niué, and also to the Gilberts. In the Ellice and Tokelau Groups, and on Ocean Island and Nauru, the schools are at present in the charge of South Sea teachers, with such supervision on the part of white missionaries as is rendered possible by the periodical visits of the s.s. *John Williams*. In each village there is an elementary school and nearly all the children attend. The school is usually held in the church building. In the lowest standards the alphabet and figures are learned. In standard III the children are taught reading and writing, simple addition,

the multiplication tables, the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer. In the higher standards, geography, arithmetic and Scripture are included in the time-table.

#### BOARDING SCHOOLS.

At each head-station, i.e. where a missionary lives, there is a District Boarding School recruited by examination from the Village Schools. The missionary superintends, with a trained native teacher assisting. The curriculum embraces reading, writing, composition, arithmetic, geography, Samoan grammar, Old and New Testament Scriptures, Bible history, and industrial and plantation work. Many of the scholars pass on to the High School at Leulumoenga, where about a hundred youths receive a more advanced education, including, among other subjects, higher arithmetic, algebra, English, and normal training. A particular feature of this School has been its industrial and manual classes, which have covered a wide range, including carpentry, boat building, smithery and tropical agriculture. Many of the lads, at the end of their course, pass by competitive examination, into the College at Malua.

#### GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOLS.

There are also two High Schools for girls, one opened at Papauta in British Samoa in 1891, the other at Atauloma, on the island of Tutuila in American Samoa, which was

founded in 1901. These provide a good all-round training for the most promising girls of the islands. In addition to the usual school subjects, including music, careful attention is given to needlework, washing and ironing, and the plaiting of baskets and fans and other articles of Samoan manufacture. But the great ideal of these schools is to train the girls and young women to become thoughtful and intelligent Christians, and they are both doing a most valuable work for the present and future uplifting of Samoan womanhood. Many of these girls have become wives of Samoan missionaries in Papua and the Gilbert, Ellice and Tokelau islands, and a great many more, wives of native pastors and teachers in the homeland of Samoa. Within the last few years the New Zealand and American Administrations have found girls leaving these schools to be their best pupils for training as nurses.

#### COLLEGES.

The oldest, largest, and most widely known of all the educational institutions in Samoa is the Malua College. In earlier years it was more of a school ; of late years its curriculum has been more closely adapted to the needs of students who have heard God's call to the home ministry or missionary work in other parts of the Pacific. It was founded in 1844 by George Turner and Charles Hardie ; it has about a hundred students, more than half of

whom are married ; and the staff consists of two white missionaries and their wives and three Samoan tutors. This will give some idea of the importance and size of the work. Among the missionaries whose names are honoured for long and faithful service in the institution are the Revs. George Turner, LL.D. (1844-1852), Charles Hardie (1844-1854), Henry Nisbet, LL.D. (1859-1876), John Marriott (1878-1905), and James E. Newell (1881-1910). The present Principals are the Revs. J. W. Hills and A. Hough. Besides Samoan students, natives from the New Hebrides, Niué, the Cook Islands, and the Loyalty and Gilbert, Ellice and Tokelau Groups, have been trained at Malua, who have returned to their own lands as Christian pastors and teachers. The wives of the missionaries have also had their full and honourable share in the good work by training the students' wives. It will, of course, be understood that the development of *character* is as invaluable a part of the education given as the furnishing of the mind or the training of the hand.

Similar institutions have since been established on the islands of Rarotonga (Cook Islands), Niué, Beru (Gilberts), and at Vatorata in Papua.

#### NATIVE PIONEERS.

A college, like a tree, is to be judged by its fruits. These are to be seen in the

evangelisation of the South Sea peoples and Papua. But even a brief sketch like this of the Malua Institution would be altogether incomplete if no reference were made to some of the most notable students. There was Peniamina (Benjamin), of Niué. Hearing of the work of John Williams and of many Samoans who had embraced the Christian faith, he made his way in an American whaling-boat to Apia, became a student at Malua, was taken back to Niué in 1846 by Mr. Nisbet, and, in spite of much persecution, became a pioneer missionary to his own people. His work was continued by another student, named Paulo. He and his wife, in 1836, were the first Samoan missionaries to Niué. For sixteen years he laboured faithfully, and died at his post to the great sorrow of the people.

In 1861 Elikana, a deacon of a church on the island of Manihiki in the Penrhyn Group, was storm-driven, in a boat made of two canoes lashed together, for eight weeks, over fifteen hundred miles of ocean, and at last, with five companions, reached Nukulaelae, an outlying island of the Ellice Group. Being kindly received, he tried to repay his hosts by telling them of Christ. Soon realising the inadequacy of his training, he went to Samoa, became a student at Malua, and four years later returned, with Mr. Murray and several teachers, and became a pioneer in the evangelisation of the Ellice Islanders.

Kirisome was another honoured "old student," who, having worked in the Ellice Islands for nearly fifty years, passed peacefully away in 1918 in the influenza epidemic which devastated Western Samoa.

Mala'itai, who entered the college in 1861, became so good a student of his own language and the manners and customs and religion of "Old Samoa," that he was able to render memorable service to the band of gifted missionaries who prepared the excellent version of the Samoan Bible, which is still in use to-day.

Pao was a student of the Rarotonga Institute, and became in 1842 the "Apostle of Lifou," in the Loyalties. He was of an ardent and adventurous spirit and endowed with much native shrewdness and sagacity. Great success attended his efforts; schools were instituted and churches built. For eighteen years he laboured, with daring, fortitude and perseverance, dying in the work in 1860, and it was his labour that largely paved the way for the noble life-work of the Rev. James and Mrs. Hadfield, who settled on Lifou in 1878, and only retired in 1921, when the Paris Missionary Society took charge of the Mission.

Another noble Rarotongan student was Ruatoka, whose missionary career in Papua lasted for forty years. Mr. Lovett, in the "History of the London Missionary Society," says of him: "No reader of Mr. Chalmers's

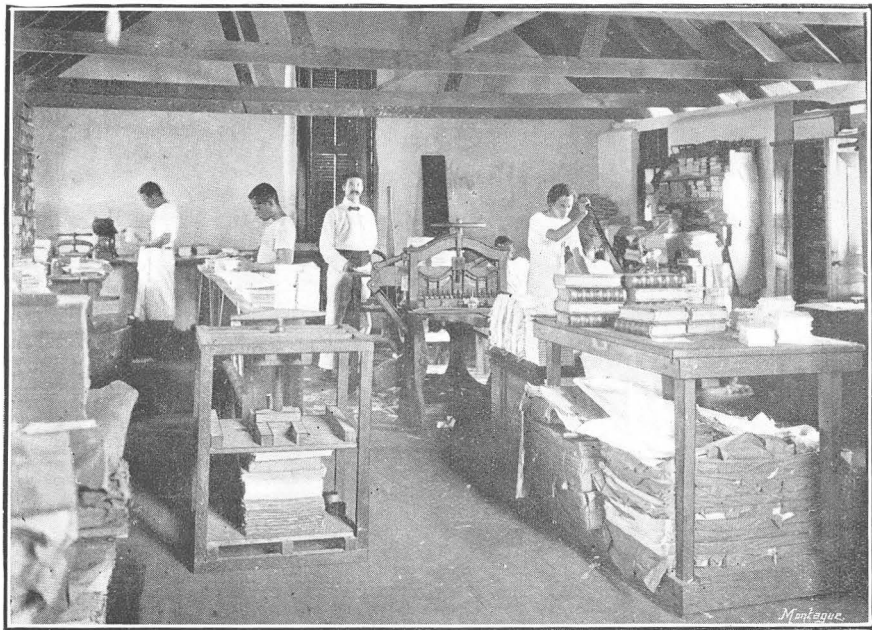
## 88      **Pearls of the Southern Seas**

thrilling books needs to be reminded of Ruatoka's wonderful career. No higher praise can be afforded him than that he is probably the noblest of the long succession of Eastern Polynesian teachers who have done such grand service for New Guinea."

### AIM OF THE L.M.S.

From this chapter it will be manifest that in the South Seas religion and education have worked hand in hand. The great aim of the London Missionary Society is to spread "the glorious Gospel of the blessed God," and that has always been kept in the very forefront by our South Sea missionaries. But they have also wisely remembered that education is a fair handmaid of religion, a most precious civilising agent for the moulding of the character of a people's Christianity, furnishing it with robustness and strength, and the power to endure ; saving to save, and blessing to bless.





BOOKBINDING DEPARTMENT, MALUA, SAMOA.



A CHRISTIAN FAMILY IN THE COOK ISLANDS.

## CHAPTER VIII

# Christianity and the Community

### THE LEAVEN OF CHRISTIANITY.

IN former chapters it has been shown that Christianity has revolutionised for good the community life of the South Seas peoples. Weakly infants are no longer got rid of in the bush ; they are cared for with parental affection, and, as they grow up, given the best education that is possible in the village and district and high schools. Family life has been greatly sweetened and purified. Tribal warfare, with all its attendant evils, has largely been discontinued. The wide-spread observance of family prayer is symptomatic of improved conditions and aspirations. The desire for education and Christian teaching has been quickened and uninterruptedly intensified. The peoples are more and more coming to realise that all honest, faithful work is of God, " His work."

## THE CHURCHES.

The predominant factor, however, in the upward progress of these primitive races has been the church life of the community. In Samoa there are 209 L.M.S. churches, eleven on the little island of Niué, twenty-one on the five islands of the Southern Gilberts—and the same system is being developed throughout the Northern Islands. The Cook and Tokelau and Ellice Groups have also a church in each village. These churches have their own pastors, who also serve as village schoolmasters, and they are all self-supporting. The pastors are, almost without exception, well-trained men, at Malua, or Takamoa (Rarotonga), or Rongorongo (Beru), or at the Institution on Niué. In the L.M.S. Report for 1921, the latest statistics show that in Samoa there are 7,494 Church members; in the Cook Islands, 2,800; in Niué, 1,800; in the Tokelau and Ellice Islands, 1,722; and in the Gilberts and Nauru, 3,705, making a total for these Missions of between 17,000 and 18,000, together with a further total of nearly 37,000 adherents. These figures constitute a very large percentage of the populations. Indeed the Church is of immense importance to the South Sea Islander; he is sincerely attached to it, and the regularity of his attendance at public worship can hardly be surpassed in any part of the world.

### CHRISTIAN LIBERALITY.

The churches are all built and paid for and kept in repair by the people themselves. In Samoa the whole work has become perfectly self-supporting. Over and above ministerial stipends and the building and maintenance of the churches, sufficient funds are contributed year by year to the L.M.S. to cover the whole cost of the staff of white missionaries and the expenses of running the *John Williams* in Samoan waters, and also a further sum for missionary work in other lands. The total contributions in 1920 from the five Missions just named, including the contributions to the L.M.S. and sums locally applied, amounted to the grand total of nearly £20,500.

It may be further mentioned that, in the same year, in the Loyalty Islands of Lifou and Ouvea, there were twenty-nine churches, with a Training Institution, 2,257 church members, and 6,160 adherents, and the contributions reached the fine figure of £1,720.

### CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

Progress towards accepting responsibility for Church government has not kept pace with the advance toward self-support. The communistic life of the island peoples, which has tended generally to discourage ability and handicap initiative, has made the South Sea Islander slow to accept freedom from the benevolent superintendence of the

missionary in the matter of church government. In the past, where he has attempted to manage his own church affairs, he has been much handicapped by native tradition and custom, which have inclined him to substitute formalism for the freedom of the spirit. "In Samoa, native etiquette (the *Faa-Samoa*) restricts life at many points, and even in the Church, the law plays an important part. In many cases against the advice of missionaries, the churches have passed numbers of church laws, and some of these verge on legalism and tend to the manufacture of minor sins. It is so much simpler to base religion on the list of things which we must not do than to keep on aspiring toward the weightier matters of the law." (Lenwood, *Pastels from the Pacific*, p. 79).

But considerable progress has been made of late years in the direction of a more healthy church government. In the Local and District Councils of the Pastors, and in the larger Assemblies, the European missionaries are in a very small minority, and even if by means of superior knowledge or strength of character they were to carry their point against the real feeling of the native delegates, these could always resort to various effective forms of passive resistance. Slowly but steadily the native Church is producing leaders, men of a more independent and self-reliant type, who have the will as well as the ability to lead, and who are bringing

South Sea church government into the region of things practicable.

**SUNDAY SCHOOLS AND SOCIETIES.**

As in our own land, so in the South Seas, the largest and most important branch of work that is carried on by the churches is the Sunday School. Its influence on the life of the community is beyond all calculation. In 1920 the returns were incomplete from the Cook, Tokelau, and Ellice Islands, but in the four other Missions (Samoa, Niué, the Gilberts and the Loyalties), there were 6,787 L.M.S. Sunday School scholars being regularly taught. The pastor is usually the superintendent, and he has as helpers young men and women who have been trained in the High Schools, and former students of the Training Institutions, who have for various reasons not been able to enter into the recognised ministry.

In many places there are vigorous branches of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour and the L.M.S. Watchers' Prayer Union. The church choir, too, is a great institution. It has been pointed out that the South Sea peoples have not many books to read. Besides the Bible, the Mission magazine and various school and college text-books, they have translations of the "Pilgrim's Progress," "Ben-hur," "Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare," missionary biographies, and a few others, but the number is small and the

range, of necessity, limited. They are, however, passionately fond of singing. The hymn-book is highly prized, and some of the pastors go to much trouble and expense to secure modern tune-books. The weekly choir practice takes the place of our concerts and musical and literary societies. It is of great value for keeping the younger men, in particular, in close touch with the churches and the Christian life, and exerts, therefore, a most beneficial influence on the well-being of the community as a whole.

#### FOREIGN MISSIONS.

But not only is the home life of the islands benefited by the various Christian agencies that have been described; the leaven for righteousness is also working outwards, into the regions beyond. From these churches and schools and training institutions for many years there has gone out a constant supply of Samoan, Niuéan, and Rarotongan missionaries, with their wives, into the outstations of the Cook Islands, to the Tokelau, Ellice, and Gilbert Groups, and to Papua, and their example and influence have been signally blessed of God to the uplifting of the standard of life among the less enlightened communities of these island populations. This work has been greatly facilitated, indeed only made possible, by the possession by the Society of the four successive mission vessels named *John Williams*, which have patrolled



the islands of the Southern Pacific for nearly eighty years. The crowning glory indeed of the older Polynesian Missions has been their missionary devotion, heroism, and enterprise, and this little book may fitly be brought to its conclusion by quoting Mr. Lovett's well-deserved eulogy. He is speaking of the New Guinea or Papuan Mission, but his testimony applies with almost equal force to the island groups of the Southern Seas: "The mission possesses exceptional value and interest from the fact that the native teachers, the men and women who carry on the arduous work of these stations, are themselves the fruit of missionary work in Polynesia. During the last twenty-five years,\* the flower of Christian manhood and womanhood in Samoa, Rarotonga, the Loyalty Islands, and other parts of Polynesia have devoted themselves to the great task of evangelising New Guinea. Not a few have been murdered; many more have succumbed to the climate; many have spent themselves in the work. But as the workers have fallen, others have always pressed forward, eagerly and willingly to fill the places of those who have finished their course. No episode in modern missions is more thrilling and inspiring than the story of what the Polynesian native teachers have done and have suffered."

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\* Mr. Lovett wrote in 1899.

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