THE FIJIANS

A STUDY OF THE DECAY OF CUSTOM

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Author: Basil Thomson

Contributor: Bolton Glanvill Corney
James Stewart

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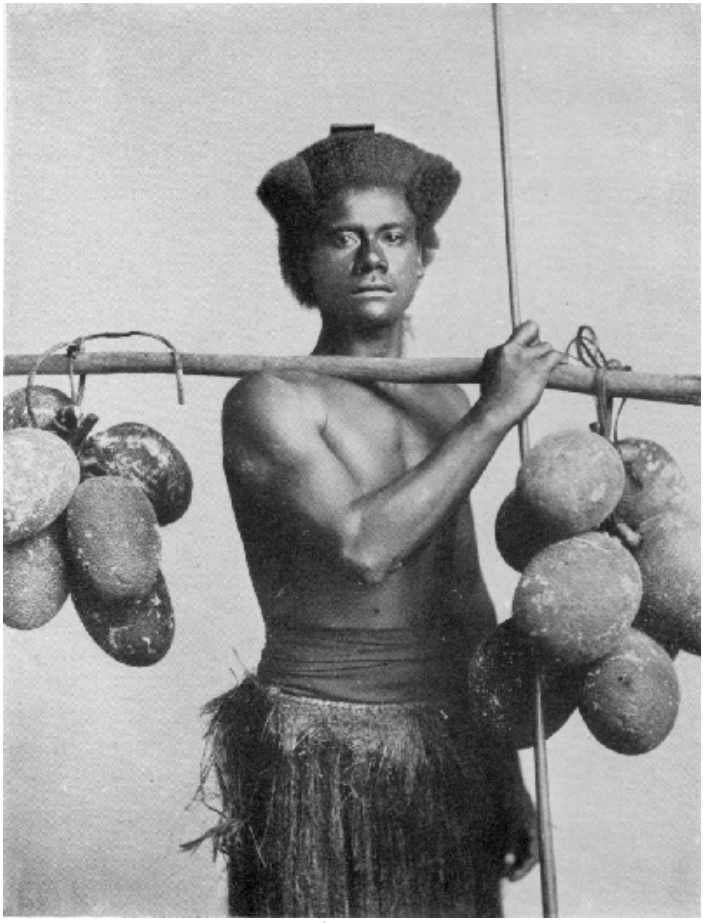
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THE FIJIANS

A STUDY OF THE DECAY OF CUSTOM



BREADFRUIT.

THE FIJIANS

A STUDY OF THE DECAY OF CUSTOM

BY

BASIL THOMSON

AUTHOR OF "THE STORY OF DARTMOOR PRISON," ETC.

ILLUSTRATED

LONDON
WILLIAM HEINEMANN

1908

OTHER WORKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR

South Sea Yarns
The Diversions of a Prime Minister
A Court Intrigue
The Indiscretions of Lady Asenath
Savage Island
The Story of Dartmoor Prison

(*In collaboration with* LORD AMHERST OF HACKNEY)
The Discovery of the Solomon Islands

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PREFACE

This volume does not pretend to be an exhaustive monograph on the Fijians. Their physical characteristics and their language, which have no

bearing upon the state of transition from customary law to modern competition, are omitted, since they may be studied in the pages of Williams, Waterhouse and Hazlewood, which the author has freely consulted. All that is aimed at is a study of the decay of custom in a race that is peculiarly tenacious of its institutions—the decay that has now set in among the natural races in every part of the globe.

The author lived among the Fijians with short intervals for ten years, first as Stipendiary Magistrate in various parts of the group, then as Commissioner of the Native Lands Court, and finally as Acting Head of the Native Department. Much of the anthropological information was collected for the Commission appointed in 1903 to investigate the causes of the decrease of the natives, of which the author was a member, and of that portion of the book his fellow-Commissioner, Dr. Bolton Glanvill Corney, C.M.G., and the late Mr. James Stewart, C.M.G., should be considered joint authors, though they are not responsible for the conclusions drawn from the evidence.

To Dr. Corney, whose services to medical science in the investigation of leprosy and tropical diseases in the Pacific are so widely known, his special thanks are due. He also received valuable assistance from Dr. Lynch, the late Mr. Walter Carew and a number of native assistants, notably Ilai Motonithothoka, Ratu Deve, the late Ratu Nemani Ndreu, and others. The late Mr. Lorimer Fison also helped him with many suggestions.

The ideas expressed in the introduction were formulated in the author's presidential address to the Devonshire Association in 1905: the marriage system

and the mythology were described in papers read before the Anthropological Institute: some account of the "Path of the Shades" and the fishing of the Mbalolo are to be found in others of the author's books.

The spelling adopted for native words may be displeasing to Fijian scholars, particularly the rendering of *q* by *nk*, but although *wanka* may not represent the Fijian pronunciation as accurately as *wangga*, it is certainly less uncouth. Hazelwood's spelling, excellent as it is for the purpose of teaching Fijians to read and write their own language, is misleading to English readers, and the abandonment of his consonants *c* for *th*, *b* for *mb*, *d* for *nd* and *g* for *ng*, needs no apology.

London, 1908.

INTRODUCTION

The present population of the globe is believed to be about fifteen hundred millions, of which seven hundred millions are nominally progressive and eight hundred millions are stagnant under the law of custom. It is difficult to choose terms that even approach scientific accuracy in these generalizations, for, as Mr. H.G. Wells has remarked, if we use the word "civilized" the London "Hooligan" and the "Bowery tough" immediately occur to us; if the terms "stagnant" or "progressive," how are the Parsee gentleman and the Sussex farm labourer to be

classed? Nor can the terms "white" and "coloured" be used, for there are Chinese many shades whiter than the Portuguese. But as long as the meaning is clear the scientific accuracy of terms is unimportant, and so for convenience we will call all races of European descent "civilized," and races living under the law of custom "uncivilized." The problem that will be solved within the next few centuries is—What part is to be taken in the world's affairs by the eight hundred millions of uncivilized men who happen for the moment to be politically inferior to the other seven hundred millions?

For centuries they have been sleeping. Under the law of custom, which no man dares to disobey, progress was impossible. The law of custom was the law of our own forefathers until the infusion of new blood and new customs shook them out of the groove and set them to choosing between the old and the new, and then to making new laws to meet new needs. This happened so long ago that if it were not for a few ceremonial survivals we might well doubt whether our forefathers were ever so held in bondage. With the precept—to do as your father did before you—an isolated race will remain stationary for centuries. There is, I believe, in all the history of travel, only one instance in which the absolute stagnation of a race has been proved, and that is the case of the Solomon Islands, the first of the Pacific groups to be discovered, and the last to be influenced by Europeans. In 1568 a Spanish expedition under Alvaro de Mendaña set sail from Peru in quest of the Southern continent. Missing all the great island groups Mendaña discovered the islands named by him Islas de Saloman, not because he found any gold there, but because he hoped thereby to inflame the cupidity of the Council of the Indies into fitting out a

fresh expedition. Gomez Catoira, his treasurer, has left us a detailed account of the customs of the natives and about forty words of their language. And now comes the strange part of the story. Expedition after expedition set sail for the Isles of Solomon; group after group was discovered; but the Isles of Solomon were lost, and at last geographers, having shifted them to every space left vacant in the chart, treated them as fabulous and expunged them altogether. They were rediscovered by Bougainville exactly two centuries later, but it was not until late in the nineteenth century that any attempt was made to study the language and customs of the natives. It was then found that in every particular, down to the pettiest detail in their dress, their daily life and their language, they were the same as when Catoira saw them two centuries earlier, and so no doubt they would have remained until the last trump had not Europeans come among them.

If, as there is good reason for believing, the modern Eskimo are the lineal descendants of the cave men of Derbyshire, who hunted the reindeer and the urus in Pleistocene times, the changelessness of their habits is to be ascribed to the same cause—the absence of a stimulus from without to break down the law of custom.

In the sense that no race now exists which is not in some degree touched by the influence of Western civilization, the present decade may be said to be a fresh starting-point in the history of mankind. Whithersoever we turn, the laws of custom, which have governed the uncivilized races for countless generations, are breaking down; the old isolation which kept their blood pure is vanishing before railway and steamship communication which

imports alien labourers to work for European settlers; and ethnologists of the future, having no pure race left to examine, will have to fall back upon hearsay evidence in studying the history of human institutions.

All this has happened before in the world's history, but in a more limited area. To the Roman armies, the Roman system of slave-owning, and still more to the Roman roads, we owe the fact that there is not in Western Europe a single race of unmixed blood, for even the Basques, if they are indeed the last survivors of the old Iberian stock, have intermarried with the French and Spanish people about them. An ethnologist of the eighth century, meditating on the wave upon wave of destructive immigration that submerged England, might well have doubted whether so extraordinary a mixture of races could ever develop patriotism and pride of race, and yet it did not take many centuries to evolve in the English a sense of nationality with insular prejudice superadded. Nationality and patriotism are in fact purely artificial and geographical sentiments. We feel none of the bitter hate of our Saxon forefathers for their Norman conquerors; the path of our advance through the centuries is strewn with the corpses of patriotisms and race hatreds.

Nor was the mixture of races in Europe the mere mingling of peoples descended from a common Aryan stock, for if that were so, what has become of the Persians and Egyptians, worshippers of Æon and Serapis and Mithras, who garrisoned the Northumberland wall; of the host of Asiatic and African soldiers and slaves scattered through Europe during the Roman Empire; of the Negroes introduced into southern Portugal by Prince Henry the

Navigator; of the Jews that swarmed in every medieval city; of the Moors in southern Spain? Did none of these intermarry with Aryans, and leave a half-caste Semitic or Negro or Tartar progeny behind them? How otherwise can one account for the extraordinary diversity in skull measurement, in proportion and in colour which is found in the population of every European country?

If we except the inhabitants of remote islands probably there has never been an unmixed race since the Palæolithic Age. Long before the dawn of history kingdoms rose and fell. Broken tribes, fleeing from invaders, put to sea and founded colonies in distant lands. Troy was no exception to the rule of the old world that at the sack of every city the men were slain and the women reserved to be the wives of their conquerors. Doubtless it was to keep the Hebrew blood pure that Saul was commanded to slay "both man and woman, infant and suckling" of the Amalekites, the ancestors of the Bedawin of the Sinai peninsula.

It may be argued that the laws of custom have been swept away by conquering races many times in the world's history without any far-reaching consequences—those of the Neolithic people of the long barrows by the warriors of the Bronze Age; those of the British by the Romans; those of the Romano-British by the Saxons; those of the Saxons by the Normans. But there was this difference: in all these cases the new customs were forced upon the weaker race by the strong hand of its conquerors, and as it had obeyed its own laws through fear of the Unseen, so it adopted the new laws through fear of its new masters. It was a rough, but in the end a wholesome schooling. We go another way to work:

we do not as a rule come to native races with the authority of conquerors; we saunter into their country and annex it; we break down their customs, but do not force them to adopt ours; we teach them the precepts of Christianity, and in the same breath assure them that instead of physical punishment by disease which they used to fear, their disobedience will be visited by eternal punishment after death—a contingency too remote to have any terrors for them; and then we leave them like a ship with a broken tiller free to go whithersoever the wind of fancy drives them, and it is not surprising that they prefer the easy vices of civilization to its more difficult virtues. In civilizing a native race the *suaviter in modo* is a more dangerous process than the *fortiter in re*.

The law of custom is always interwoven with religion, and is enforced by fear of earthly punishment for disobedience. This fear is strongest among patriarchal races whose religion is founded upon the worship of ancestors. To depart from the customs of the ancestors is to insult the tribal god, and it is therefore the business of each member of the tribe to see to it that the impiety of his fellow-tribesmen brings no judgment down upon his head. In such a community a man is only free from the tyranny of custom when he dies. As in the German's ideal of a well-governed city, everything is forbidden. Hedged about by the tabu he can scarce move hand or foot without circumspection. If he errs, even unwittingly, the spirits of disease pounce upon him. In Tonga almost every day he performed the *Moe-moe*, an act of penance to atone for unconscious breaches of the tabu, and in the civil war of 1810 it was the practice to open the bodies of the slain to discover from the state of the liver whether the dead warrior had led a good or an evil life.

Among the races held in bondage by custom there were, of course, rare souls born before their time in whom the eternal "Thou shalt not" of the law of custom provoked the question "Why?" But they met the fate ordained for men born before their time; in civilized states the hemlock, the cross and the stake; in uncivilized, the club or the spear. Perhaps the real complaint of the Athenians against Socrates was that an unceasing flow of wisdom and reproof is more than erring man can endure, but the published grounds for his condemnation were that he denied the gods recognized by the State, and that he corrupted the young. This, as William Mariner tells us, is what men whispered under their breath when Finau, the king of Vavau in the Friendly Islands, dared to scoff at the law of tabu in 1810, and he was struck down by sickness while ordering a rope to be brought for the strangling of his priest. In fact the reformers of primitive races never lived long: if they were low-born they were clubbed and that was the end of them and their reforms; if they were chiefs, and something happened to them, either by disease or accident, men saw therein the finger of an offended deity, and obedience to the existing order of things became stronger than before.

The decay of custom, which may be fraught with momentous consequences for the civilized races, is proceeding more rapidly every year. It can best be studied by examining the process in a single race in detail, and for this purpose the Fijians, who are the subject of this volume, are peculiarly suited, because by their isolation through many centuries no foreign ideas, filtering through neighbouring tribes, had corrupted their customary law before Europeans came among them, and so decay set in with startling suddenness despite their innate conservatism. What

is true of the Fijians is true, with slight modifications, of every primitive society in Asia, Africa and America which is being dragged into the vortex of what we call progress. The fabric of every complete social system has been built up gradually. You may raze it to the foundations and erect another in its place, but if you pull out a stone here and there the whole edifice comes tumbling about your ears before you can make your alterations. It is the fashion to assert that native races begin to decline as soon as Europeans come into contact with them. This arises from our evil modern habit of making false generalizations. The fact that some isolated races suddenly torn from the roots of their ancient customs begin by decreasing rapidly is so dramatic that we eagerly fasten on the generalization that weaker races are doomed to wither away at the coming of the all-conquering European, forgetting the steady increase of the Bantu races in Africa, and of the Indians and Chinese up to and even beyond the limit of population which their country can support.

The main cause of the sudden decrease of a race is the introduction of new diseases which assume a more virulent aspect when they strike root in a virgin soil, but we are now beginning to learn that this cause is only temporary. For a time a race seems to sicken and pine like an individual, but like an individual it may recover. In the decrease from disease there seems to be a stopping-place. It may come when the race has been reduced to one-fifth of its number, like the Maoris, or to a mere handful like the blacks of New South Wales, but there comes a time when decay is arrested, and then perhaps fusion with another race has set in. The type may be lost, but the blood remains.

It is against the attacks of new diseases that the law of custom is most helpless. The primitive theory of disease and death is so widespread that we may accept it as the belief of mankind before custom gave place to scientific inquiry. The primitive argument was this: the natural state of man is to be healthy, and everything contrary to Nature must be the doing of some hostile agency. When a man feels ill he knows that an evil spirit has entered into him, and since evil spirits do not move unless some person conjures them, his first thought on waking with a headache is "An enemy hath done this." Out of this springs all the complicated ritual of witchcraft, fetish and juju, which by frightening natives into destroying or burying all offal and refuse that might be used against them by a wizard, achieves the right thing for the wrong reason. The "Evil spirit" theory of disease is thus not so very far removed from the bacillus theory: in both the body has been attacked by a malignant visitor which must be expelled before the patient can recover. It is in the methods adopted for making the body an uncomfortable lodging for it that the systems diverge. In all ages the essential part of therapeutics has been faith in the remedy, whether in the verse of the Korân swallowed by the Moslem, in the charm prescribed by the medieval quack, in the "demonstration" of the Christian Scientist, in the prescription of the medical practitioner. Mankind survives its remedies as well as its epidemics. England has a population of nearly forty millions, even though, less than a century ago, as we learn from Creevy's memoirs, blood-letting was regarded as the proper treatment for advanced stages of consumption.

It is, I think, safe to assume that in the centuries to come there will be representatives even of the

smallest races now living on the earth, and that the proportions between civilized and what are now uncivilized peoples will not have greatly altered, though the political and social ideas which underlie Western civilization will have permeated the whole of mankind. It is therefore important to inquire whether the uncivilized races are really inferior in capacity to Europeans. Professor Flinders Petrie has expressed the view that the average man cannot receive much more knowledge than his immediate ancestors, and that "the growth of the mind can in the average man be but by fractional increments in each generation." In support of this view he declares that the Egyptian peasant who has been taught to read and write is in every case which he has met with "half-witted, silly and incapable of taking care of himself," while the Copt, whose ancestors have been scribes for generations, can be educated without sustaining any mental injury. I venture to think that there are more exceptions than will prove any such rule. In New Zealand it has been found that Maori children, when they can be induced to work, are quite equal to their white school-fellows. Fijian boys educated in Sydney have been proved to be equal to the average; Tongan boys who have never left their island write shorthand and solve problems in higher mathematics; Booker Washington and Dubois are only two out of a host of negroes of the highest attainments.

Australian aborigines, and even Andaman Islanders, have shown some aptitude when they have overcome the difficulty of a common language with their teacher; New Guinea children do very well in the mission schools. The Masai are the most backward of all the East African tribes, yet Mr. Hollis, the Government Secretary of Uganda, employs two

Masai boys to develop his photographs. It is, in fact, doubtful whether there is any race of marked mental inferiority, though, as among ourselves, there are thick-witted individuals, and these may be more common in one race than in another. Certainly there is no race that suffers mental injury from teaching. In all uncivilized people there is a lack of application, and any injury they sustain arises from the confinement necessary for study. It is character rather than intellect that achieves things in this world, and character is affected by education, by climate, and by pressure of circumstances. There are now in almost every uncivilized race individuals who are defying the law of custom to their material profit, though not to their entire peace of mind, for they have begun to understand that the riches of the European may be dearly purchased, and that in anxiety about many things happiness and contentment are not often found.

But though all peoples are teachable there are racial idiosyncrasies which we are only beginning to discover. Why, for instance, should the Hausa and the Sudanese have a natural aptitude for European military discipline while the Waganda find it irksome? Why do the Masai, whose social development is Palæolithic in its simplicity, make trustworthy policemen and prison warders, while the Somalis have been found utterly worthless in both capacities? Why are the Maoris and Solomon Islanders natural artists in wood-carving while the tribes most nearly allied to them are almost destitute of artistic skill? These natural aptitudes suggest what these races may become when we have struck off their fetters of custom and have forced them to compete with us.

Cheap and rapid means of transit are sweeping away the distinctions of dress, of custom, and, to some extent, of language, which underlie the feeling of nationality, and the races now uncivilized will soon settle for themselves the vital question whether they are to remain hewers of wood and drawers of water for the white man, or whether they are to take their place in free competition with him. The "Yellow Peril," which implies national cohesion among the Mongolians, may be a chimera, but it is impossible to believe that a white skin is to be for ever a sort of patent of nobility in the world state of the future.

History teaches us that there can be no middle course. Either race antipathy and race contempt must disappear, or one breed of men must dominate the others. The psychology of race contempt has never been dispassionately studied. It is felt most strongly in the United States and the West Indies; a little less strongly in the other British tropical colonies. In England it is sporadic, and is generally confined to the educated classes. It is scarcely to be noticed in France, Spain, Portugal or Italy. From this it might be argued that it is peculiar to races of Teutonic descent were it not for the fact that Germans in tropical countries do not seem to feel it. It is, moreover, a sentiment of modern growth. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Englishmen did not regard coloured people as their inferiors by reason of the colour of their skin. It appears, in fact, to date only from the time of slavery in the West Indian colonies, and yet the Romans, the Spaniards, and the Portuguese, who were the greatest slave-owners in history, never held marriage with coloured people in contempt. The only race hatred in the Middle Ages was anti-Semitic, and this was due to the Crusader spirit. The colour line, as it is called, is drawn more

firmly by men than by women, and deep-seated as it is in the Southern States just now it may be nothing more than a passing phase of sentiment, a subconscious instinct of self-preservation in a race which feels that its old predominance is threatened by equality with its former servants. If you analyze the sentiment it comes to this. You may tolerate the coloured man in every relation but one: you may converse with him, eat with him, live with him on terms of equality, but your gorge rises at the idea of admitting him to become a member of your family by marriage. In the ordinary social relations you do not take him quite seriously; if he is a commoner you treat him as your potential servant; if a dusky potentate you yield him a sort of jesting deference; but in that one matter of blood alliance with him you will always keep him at arm's length. That is the view even of the Englishman who has not lived in a black man's country, and upon that is built the extraordinary race hatred of the Southern States, where a white man will not consent to sit in a tramcar with a negro, though the white man be a cotton operative and the negro a University professor.

If this race contempt were a primitive instinct with the white race the future of mankind would be lurid indeed, for it is impossible to believe that one half of humanity can be kept for ever inferior to the other without deluging the world with blood. But it is not a primitive instinct. Shakespeare saw nothing repulsive in the marriage of Desdemona with a man of colour. Early in the sixteenth century Sieur Paulmier de Gonneville of Normandy gave his heiress in marriage to Essomeric, the son of a Brazilian chief, and no one thought that she was hardly treated. It may not be a pleasant subject to

dwell upon, but it is a fact that women of Anglo-Saxon blood do, even in these days, mate with Chinese, Arabs, Kaffirs, and even Negroes despite the active opposition of the whole of their relations. History is filled with romantic examples of the marriage of European men with native women, to cite no more than de Bethencourt with the Guanche princess; Cortes with his Mexican interpreter; John Rolfe with Pocahontas.

It is the fashion to describe the half-caste offspring of such mixed marriages as having all the vices of both races, and none of the virtues. In so far as this accusation is true it is accounted for by the social ostracism in which these people are condemned to live. Disowned by their fathers, freed by their parentage from the restraints under which their mothers' people are held in check, it could scarcely be otherwise, but those who have lived with half-castes of many races will agree that in intellectual aptitude and in physical endowment they are generally equal to the average of Europeans when they have the same education and opportunities, and that there is no physical deterioration in the offspring of the marriages of half-castes *inter se*.

At the dawn of this twentieth century we see the future of mankind through a glass darkly, but if we study the state of the coloured people who are shaking themselves free from the law of custom, we may see it almost face to face. Race prejudice does not die as hard as one would think. The Portuguese of the sixteenth century were ready enough to court as "Emperor of Monomotapa" a petty Bantu chieftain into whose power they had fallen; and the English beachcomber of the forties who, when he landed, called all natives "niggers" with an expletive prefix,

might very soon be found playing body-servant to a Fijian chief, who spoke of him contemptuously as "My white man." In tropical countries the line of caste will soon cease to be the colour line. There, as in temperate zones, wealth will create a new aristocracy recruited from men of every shade of colour. Even in the great cities of Europe and America we may find men of Hindu and Chinese and Arab origin controlling industries with their wealth, as Europeans now control the commerce of India and China, but with this difference—that they will wear the dress and speak the language which will have become common to the whole commercial world, and as the aristocracy of every land will be composed of every shade of colour, so will be the masses of men who work with their hands. In one country the majority of the labourers will be black or brown; in another white; but white men will work cheek by jowl with black and feel no degradation. There will be the same feverish pursuit of wealth, but all races will participate in it instead of a favoured few. The world will then be neither so pleasant nor so picturesque a place to live in, and by the man of that age the twentieth century will be cherished tenderly as an age of romance, of awakening, and of high adventure. The historians of that day will speak of the Victorian age as we speak of the Elizabethan, and will date the new starting-point in the history of mankind from the decay of the law of custom.

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Photographs by WATERS, *Suva, Fiji.*

THE FIJIANS

CHAPTER I

THE TRANSITION

The Fijian of to-day is neither savage nor civilized. Security from violence has fostered his natural improvidence. The missionaries, who have effected so marvellous a change in his moral and religious sentiments, who have induced him to join in the suppression of such customs as polygamy, cannibalism, strangling of widows, amputating the finger as a mark of mourning, dressing the hair in heathen fashion, wearing the loin bandage, tattooing and many others, have neglected to teach him to care for his health and his physical well-being. They have taught him to cultivate his mind rather than his food plantation, and they have given him no immediate punishment for thriftlessness and disobedience to take the place of the old club law.

He was accustomed to be ruled by a strong hand because no other rule was possible, and he is suffering from the fact that civilization was not forced upon him. If, instead of being ceded, the country had been conquered and each man relegated to his place with a strong hand, the dawn of settled government would have been less bleak.

Having never known the struggle for existence that prevails in the crowded communities of the old world, he was spurred into activity by the fear of annihilation, for upon his alertness his existence depended. Intertribal wars conquered the natural indolence and apathy of the people, but, with the bestowal of the *pax Britannica* this impulse failed. The earth yielded all they required for their simple wants, and they were free to indulge their natural indolence. They lack the alertness of races who have to contend against savage animals, from which the Fiji islands are free, and they have none of the steady application of those who must compete with others for their daily bread.

Yet, in being thriftless and apathetic, they are but obeying a natural law which the modern state socialist is too apt to minimize if not to ignore. Without the necessity for a struggle between man and man or man and Nature there has never been any progress. Society must stagnate or slip backwards without the spur of ambition or of fear; the natural bent of all men is to be idle. The old world Paradise was a garden that yielded its fruit without cultivation; the old world punishment for disobedience was the decree that man should earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. Industry and thrift are hardly to be looked for in a luxurious climate among a sparse population, but rather among

those races whose climate and soil yield food only at stated seasons of the year, and then grudgingly in return for unremitting labour, or in those crowded communities whose local supply of food is insufficient. When we blame the Fijians for their thriftlessness we are prone to judge them by too high a standard, and to forget that they are land-owning peasants, a class which even among ourselves is exempt from the grinding necessity of perpetual toil —a state that has come to be regarded as the natural lot of the poor. The primitive organization of village communities among whom the tie of individual property is loose and ill-defined enough to please the most advanced socialist, causes thrift to be regarded as a vice, and wasteful prodigality the highest virtue.

LACK OF IMAGINATION

The Fijians have already adopted some of the tools of civilization; the native canoe has given place to vessels of European model, and so far as clothing is necessary, European fabrics have taken the place of the old *Liku* and *Malo*. "Mbau," say the natives, "is adopting European fashions"—the superficial fashions that take the fancy—"and where Mbau leads others will follow in time." In spite of the whirlwind of war and rapine that devastated the country fifty years ago, it would now be difficult to find a more honest and law-abiding community than the Fijian, so far as intercourse among themselves is concerned. It is true that their sympathies are not yet wide enough to allow them to think of others. Many an otherwise excellent Fijian will, with a clear conscience, deceive and cheat a foreigner; if his pig strays, he will pierce its eyes with thorns, or throw

quicklime into them to blind the animal and prevent it from straying again; a poor half-witted woman who annoys her neighbours by wandering into their houses has the soles of her feet scored with sharp knives to keep her at home. Sympathy has had no time to develop, and consequently his sentiments are confined within the limits of his own joint family, and do not reach up to the foreigner or down to the lower animals.

In most respects the Fijian is some centuries behind us and it is unreasonable to expect him to leap the gap at a single bound; yet it is nevertheless unnecessary that he should follow the tortuous road by which we arrived unguided at our present state of development.

CHAPTER II

THE AGE OF MYTH

Of all inhabited countries in the world Fiji is probably the poorest in history. No European, who left a record behind him, had intercourse with the natives until 1810, and the historical traditions of the natives themselves scarcely carry back their history beyond the middle of the eighteenth century. While the chiefs of the Marquesas and Hawaii are said to recall the names of their ancestors for seventy-three generations,[1] the chiefs of Mbau cannot give the name of any of their predecessors before Nailatikau, who reigned during the last

quarter of the eighteenth century, and the earliest name recalled by other tribes of longer memory is only the sixth generation from the reigning chief. It is not that the Fijians were less prone than other islanders to embody their tribal history in traditional poetry, but that the political *morcellement* of the tribal units left the poets nothing to record. A century ago Mbau was nothing but a petty fortified village in the interior, governed by chiefs whose names were unknown three miles from its public square. The chiefs of Rewa were equally obscure, and the songs which celebrated their petty achievements died with the generation that sang them. When the great wave of unrest in the interior of Vitilevu sent them forth to fight their way to a new home on the coast, and to found confederations of the tribes they had subdued, their history was born; and at its birth died the old traditions of the tribes they conquered, for vassals in Fiji have nothing to do with memories of departed greatness.

THE BOND OF *TAUVU*

Besides the historical *meke* there remain a few mythological sagas which refer to a far older period. With ancestor-worshippers like the Fijians the founders of their race attain immortality denied to their descendants, who at the most become demi-gods enjoying a place in mythology only as long as their deeds on earth are remembered. The founders of the Fijian race are known as *Kalou-Vu*—Gods of Origin—and the sagas that relate their exploits, overlaid as they are with glosses by the poets, undoubtedly contain the germ of traditional history of a very ancient date. The historical outline of the

Nakauvandra sagas is supported by another class of evidence, namely the *tauvu*.

The word *tauvu* means literally "Sprung from the same root," or "of common origin." It is applied to two or more tribes who may live in different islands, speak different dialects, and have, in short, nothing in common but their god. They do not necessarily intermarry; they may have held no intercourse for generations; yet, though each may have forgotten the names of its chiefs three generations back, the site of its ancient home, and the traditions of its migrations, it never forgets the tribe with which it is *tauvu*. Members of that tribe may run riot in its village, slaughter its animals, and ravage its plantations, while it sits smiling by; for the spoilers are its brothers, worshippers of its common ancestor, and are entitled in the fullest sense to the "freedom of the city." In several instances I have traced back the bond of tauvu to its origin, the marriage of the sister of some high chief with the head of a distant clan. Her rank was so transcendent that she brought into her husband's family a measure of the godhead of her ancestors, and her descendants have thenceforth reverenced her forefathers in preference to those of her husband. But in the majority of cases—and it is the exception to find a clan which is not tauvu to some other—the bond is too remote for tradition to have preserved its origin, and in these the two clans were probably offshoots from the same stock. Perhaps there was a quarrel between brothers, and one of them was driven out with his family to find another home; or a young swarm from an overcrowded hive may have crossed the water to seek wider planting lands for their support, as the first Aryan emigrants burst through the barriers of their cradle-land and overran Europe. Had the

Aryans been ancestor-worshippers Rome would have been *tauvu* with Athens, and the descendants of the youths driven forth in the Ver Sacrum *tauvu* with Rome.

The general tendency of the bonds of *tauvu* in the western portion of the group is to confirm the sagas of Nakauvandra in suggesting that the cradle-land of the Fijians was the north-western corner of Vitilevu, whence the tide of emigration set northward to Mbua, eastward along the Tailevu coast, and south-eastward down the Wainimbuka branch of the Rewa river. Besides the saga of Turukawa, printed in another chapter, there are fragments of a still earlier poem relating the first arrival of the *Kalou-Vu* in a great canoe, the *Kaunitoni*, tempest-driven from a land in the far West. The fragmentary saga of the *Kaunitoni* must be accepted with caution, since it was committed to writing so late as 1891, when educated Fijians were already aware that Europeans were seeking evidence of their arrival in the group.

But there is proof enough of the western origin of the Fijians in the fact that they are the eastern outpost of the Melanesian race and language, that their blest abode of spirits lies beyond the setting sun, and that the Thombo-thombo, or Jumping-off-places of the Fijian shades, all point westward; there is proof enough of the Nakauvandra range being their cradle-land in the belief that the shades of the people of the Rewa delta must repair to Nakauvandra as the first stage in their last sad journey.

FIJI PEOPLED FROM THE WEST

The following is a translation of an ingenious commentary upon these fragments, written by Ilai Moto-ni-thothoka (Eli Stabbing-spear)—-

> "Long ago in a land in the far West there were three great chiefs, Lutu-na-sombasomba, Ndengei, and Wai-thala-na-vanua; of these Lutu-na-sombasomba was the greatest. And they took counsel together to build a vessel in which they might set sail with their wives, their children, their servants, and their dependants, to seek some distant land where haply they might find a good country where they might abide. So they sent a messenger to a chief named Rokola bidding him build them a vessel. And Rokola told his clan, who were the carpenter clan, the orders of the chiefs, and the carpenters built a vessel and called it the *Kaunitoni*. And when the vessel was made ready, they prepared their provisions and their freight, and went on board. Now there were many other families that made ready their vessels to accompany them. In the *Kaunitoni* went Lutu-na-sombasomba and his wife and five children, together with his chest of stone in which were stored many things—his patterns of work (*Vola-sui-ni-thakathaka*) and his inscribed words, and many other inscriptions.[2] And with them went Ndengei and Wai-thala-na-vanua and

other families, a great company of men and women. And the chief Rokola went also with his family. After sailing many days they came to a land which seemed pleasant to many of them, and these beached their vessels, and abode there. But the remainder kept on their course. Perhaps this land at which the others stayed was New Guinea. And as they sailed on, lo! another land was sighted, and some of them, being eager to land there, beached their vessels and occupied it. Perhaps this land was New Britain. And they came upon other lands at which some tarried until there was left only the *Kaunitoni* and a few other vessels. And these launched forth into the boundless ocean where they found no land. And the sky grew dark, so that the vessels parted company, for tempestuous weather was upon them. It was no common storm, but a great cyclone that struck them, for it was the wind called *Vuaroro* or *Ravu-i-ra* (west-north west). And the blast struck the *Kaunitoni*, so that they were sick with terror, and could think of nothing but that they must die.

"In the blackness of the storm the vessels were scattered, and the *Kaunitoni* drifted ever eastward down the path of the storm. And as the hurricane continued for thirty

days, and the vessel ran before the wind without finding any land, Lutu-na-sombasomba's chest of inscriptions fell overboard into the sea. But on the thirtieth night the keel of the vessel struck upon a rock, and she lay fast, and immediately the storm abated. Then they saw land before them, and knew that they were saved. And in the morning they went ashore and built shelters there: therefore the place was called *Vunda* (*Vu-nda*—lit. 'Our Origin'), because it was the first village that they built, and they rejoiced that they were saved from the hurricane that had beset them.

"This is the *meke* of the cyclone that struck them—

"'Rai thake ko Ndaunivosavosa,
Na vua ni thagi lamba sa toka,
Na kena ua ma mbutu kosakosa
Na *Kaunitoni* ka sa vondoka,
Na kena ua ma rombalaka toka,
Tangi mate ko Lutunasombasomba,
Nonku kawa era na vakaloloma,
Nonku kato vatu ka mai tasova,
Mai lutu kina na nonkui vola,
Da la' ki moce ki ndaveta ni kamboa.'

"'Lutunasombasomba gazed afar,
Behind him gathered the scud of the hurricane
The mighty rollers battered him,

And beat upon the *Kaunitoni*,
The mighty rollers burst over him,
Lutunasombasomba cried a bitter cry,
Alas! Alas! for my descendants,
My chest of stone is overset,
My inscriptions (*vola*) have fallen out of it,
Let us go and sleep in the harbour of the Kamboa (a fish).'

"And all the time they tarried at Vunda, the chief Lutu-na-sombasomba could not rest for thinking of his inscriptions that had been lost in the sea. And he sent some of his young men to go and seek them,[3] for he reflected that his descendants would grow up ignorant if these inscriptions were indeed lost to them. So the young men set out with their sail close hauled, and as they voyaged they were astonished at the sight of islands right in their course to the westward, and disputed among themselves, some affirming these to be the islands at which some of their company had landed before the hurricane struck them, while others cried, 'Impossible; they were far away.' So they called the islands Yasa yawa[4] (Yasawa). Long did they scull the vessel up and down the sea seeking the lost inscriptions, but finding them not. And then he who commanded the *Kaunitoni*, and

was named Wankambalambala (Tree-fern-canoe), spoke, and said that they should return to Vunda and tell their Lord, Lutu-na-sombasomba, that his inscriptions could not be found. For they were wearied with rowing up and down, and the wind had failed them. Then one of them called Mbekanitanganga climbed the mast to look for the ripple of the wind, and saw a puff of wind coming up from the west, and when this reached them Wankambalambala, the sailor, ordered the great sail to be hoisted and they set their course for Vunda. But they knew not where Vunda lay, and they beached the vessel at an island, and landed upon it, wondering at the fertility of the place, and they said 'Let us stay here awhile (tiko manda la eke) and presently we will seek the land where Lutu-na-sombasomba is, to tell him that we cannot find the inscriptions we were sent to seek.' But Wankambalambala said that they should go first, and afterwards return to live on the island 'Manda-la-eke.' So they composed a song telling how they found Manda-la-eke, and since the name was too long for the rhythm of a song they shortened it to Malake to suit the rhythm, as they also shortened the name Yasa yawa to Yasawa. This is

the song they made—

'"Rai vosa ko Lutunasobasoba,
I Ragone, dou vakarau toka,
Na *Kaunitoni* mo dou tavotha,
Mo nou yara manda nai vola,
Nodratou latha ratou thokota,
Ra tathiri ni lutu ni iloa,
Sokosokoni mbongi ma siga vaka,
Sa siri ko Natu Yasawa,
E ruru na thangi ka thiri na wanka
Mai kamba ko Mbeka ni tayanga
Me sa la' ki lewa thangi toka manda,
Yau koto na nde ni thangi thawa,
Mbula koto mai na thangi raya,
Ninkai vosa ko Wankambalambala,
Mai mua ki vanua nonda wanka,
Latha levu era vakarewataka,
Rai ki liu na nkoluvaka,
Ka kuvu tiko na muai manda,
Ucui Malake ka kombuata,
Uru ki vanua me ra thambe sara,
Yanuyanu ka ra volita manda,
Sa nkai ndua na koro vinaka,
Era siro sombu ki matasawa,
Na tokalau ka yau talatala,
Sa thangi tamba na soko ki raya,
Ka ndromu na singa e vakana nawa.'

'"Then Lutunasombasomba spoke,
Make ready boys,
Haul down the *Kaunitoni*,
And go and seek the inscriptions,
Bend our sails to the yards,
They drifted hither and thither till all landmarks were lost,
The Yasawa group is seen on the

horizon
The breeze dies away; the vessel is becalmed,
Bekanitanganga climbs aloft,
To sit and look for signs of wind.
The flying wrack of the hurricane is at hand,
A breeze from the west is freshening
Then speaks Wankambalambala
Set our course towards the land,
They hoist the great sail,
We shout as we look ahead,
The spray shoots up from our prow,
We make the cape of Malake
And lower the sail to go ashore,
They make the circuit of the island,
This is indeed a pleasant land,
They go down to the landing-place,
This wind is in exchange for the south-east wind,
A wind permitting no westward voyage,
The sun sets in the ocean gulf.

And they set out from Malake and sculled[5] their vessel to the mainland; and there they met Ndengei standing on the shore, having come to explore the country. Him they told of their discovery of a very fair island. And they asked him of Vunda, and were directed towards the west. So Ndengei came on board and they coasted westwards to Vunda. And when they told Lutu-na-sombasomba how his inscriptions were lost for ever, he was sore

grieved, and from this time his body began to be infirm because his heart was grieved for his lost inscriptions.

THE FIRST SETTLEMENT

"And when Ndengei saw that Lutu-na-sombasomba grew infirm he commanded that they should abandon Vunda, and remove to a fair land that he had seen, lest the old chief should die and never see it. So he bade the chief Rokola to build other canoes to be tenders to the *Kaunitoni* in the eastward voyage. And as soon as all these canoes were built they poled them along the coast, and beached them opposite the land they wished for, and their stuff they carried up into the hills, and the first house they built was for Lutu-na-sombasomba. The posts and the beams of this house were all of pandanus trunks. In this house, therefore, abode their chief, and he called the whole land Nakauvandra (Pandanus Tree) to be a memorial of the first house built there which was built of pandanus trunks. And therefore, the country is called Nakauvandra even to this day."

Although, as I have said, this commentary is to be received with caution, there can be no doubt that a

few years ago there were still to be found on the north-east coast of Vitilevu fragmentary traditions of a voyage to Fiji undertaken by the personages mentioned in the poem, and the name, Vunda, which is still attached to the north-western corner of Vitilevu certainly indicates that it was the earliest settlement of some party of immigrants. It would, indeed, be strange if the westerly winds, that sometimes blow steadily for days together during the summer months, had not brought castaway canoes to a group of islands which cover five degrees of longitude. Instead of one arrival there must have been several, and whether Ndengei came in the first or a later company is not important. The subsequent superiority of Ndengei as a *Kalou-Vu* over his chief Lutu-na-sombasomba may be accounted for by his heroic exploits in the great civil war that divided Nakauvandra as related in the epic of Nakavandra which is given in another chapter.

ANTIQUITY OF THE FIJIANS

In attempting to fix a date for the first Melanesian settlement in Fiji the widest field lies open to the lover of speculation, for it is unlikely that when a few years have passed, and the last guardians of tradition have made way for young Fiji, any fresh evidence will come to light. The only monuments of a past age are rude earthworks in the form of moats and house foundations, a few stone enclosures known as *nanga*, no older than the period covered by tradition, and a stone cairn or two erected by the

worshippers of the *luve-ni-wai*. The Melanesians buried their dead in their own houses if they were chiefs, leaving the house to fall to ruin over them; in the open if they were commoners, or in limestone caves wherever there were to be found, and there is no trace of tombs or hewn stone such as are found in Tonga and other islands colonized by Polynesians. Until the stalagmitic floors of the limestone caves have been examined systematically it is not safe to say that Paleolithic Man never inhabited the islands, but it is at least very unlikely. The earliest trace of human occupation yet discovered is a polished hatchet found in alluvial deposit on the bank of the River Mba about twelve feet below the surface, during excavations carried out in the erection of a sugar mill; but in a river subject to heavy annual floods, during which great quantities of soil are brought down from the hills, the depth is no proof of age. In the island of Waya (Yasawa) a *cache* of polished hatchets was discovered in 1891. Three of these were gouge-shaped for cutting away the wood on the inside of canoes or drums, and of elaborate finish, but there was nothing to show that they were of ancient date.

On the other hand, if the islands were peopled from a single immigration as native traditions seem to show, or even by successive arrivals of castaway canoes, many centuries would be required to raise the population to a total of 200,000. The widespread bond of *tauvu* between tribes speaking different dialects, and already showing divergence of type as in the cases of Nayau and Notho, and Mbau and Malake, sets back the original immigration many generations. There is nothing in Fijian tradition corresponding to Mr. Fornander's discovery in Hawaiian myth of a culture among the early

immigrants superior to their condition when Europeans first came among them. Mr. Fornander believes that the Polynesians were acquainted with metals in their old home and navigated in large vessels built of planks. Their degeneracy was the natural result of their new surroundings, for if we were to take a number of European craftsmen, carpenters, smiths and fitters, and transport them with their families to an island destitute of metals, where they would be cut off from renewing their tools when worn out, we should find them in the second generation with nothing left of their former culture but the tradition, and perhaps the name of the metals their fathers used. This was the case with the Hawaiians. The tradition survived, and they had a name for the iron tools which they saw in the hands of their Europeans visitors. But the Fijians had no name for metal. Their first iron tools were brought to them by the Tongans, and they adopted the Tongan name, with the prefix of *Ka*, "thing—"*Ka-ukamea* (Kaukamea), "iron thing," just as their name for Europeans—*Vavalangi*—was taken from the Tongans from whom they first learned of the existence of the white race.

FORNANDER'S THEORY

It is impossible to discuss the age of the Melanesian settlement in Fiji without considering the traditional history of the Polynesians, and it is with real regret that I am driven to disagree with the bold conclusions of the principal authority on Polynesian history—Mr. Abraham Fornander.[6] The true value of his book lies in the preservation of the ancient genealogies and songs of the Hawaiians, which

would otherwise have died with the generation of bards who chanted them, and in its ingenious reconstruction of the native history of Hawaii. The industry and research which he has brought to bear upon the kinship of the Polynesians with the Cushite races of the old world have resulted in little more than the collection of a mass of undigested evidence. There is no close chain of deduction to bind the whole, and nothing stands out from the confusion except the undoubted fact that the Polynesians are an offshoot from one of the ancient Asiatic races, and that they reached their present widely scattered abodes by way of the Malay Archipelago. If Mr. Fornander had not insisted upon a prolonged sojourn (*séjour* he prefers to call it) in Fiji before they colonized the eastern groups, as the principal link in his chain of argument, it would not be necessary to review his opinions here; and, so high a respect is due to his knowledge of the Hawaiian myths and so wasteful of energy is controversy between two workers in the same field, that I should allow his assertions to pass unnoticed but for the fact that they undermine the very foundations of Fijian history and ethnology. As it is I shall confine my criticism to the portion of his argument based upon Fiji, and leave the rest of his work to be reviewed by Polynesian ethnologists. Fornander's temptation lay in knowing Hawaii thoroughly, the other Polynesian groups imperfectly, and Fiji not at all. Making his deduction from Hawaii, he sought his proofs from the others by guesswork. The true history of a native race can never be written by one who is not thoroughly soaked in the traditions and language of the people, and since no one man can be an authority upon more than one branch of a people so widely scattered as the Polynesians, a perfect treatise will not be written

until Fornanders shall be found contemporary in Tonga, Samoa, New Zealand, Tahiti, the Marquesas, Rarotonga, Futuna, Wallis, and Hawaii, and collaboration arranged between them. To such a task the Polynesian Society in Wellington might well devote its energies.

Fornander's conclusions may be summarized as follows—

> (1) That the Polynesians are of pre-Vedic Aryan descent.
>
> (2) That at from A.D. 150-250 they "left the Asiatic Archipelago and entered the Pacific, *establishing themselves in the Fiji Group*, and thence spreading to the Samoan, Tonga, and other groups eastward and northward."
>
> (3) That about the fifth century A.D. Hawaii was settled by Polynesians who reached the group by a chain of islands that have since disappeared, and were isolated there for some six centuries.
>
> (4) That in the eleventh century began a period of unrest, during which there was frequent intercourse between the Marquesas, Society, Samoan and Hawaiian peoples for five or six generations.

I quote the fourth conclusion because I believe that it has a bearing upon the Polynesian strain of blood which we find in the eastern portion of the Fiji

islands.

Now, Fornander's route for the Polynesians rests upon the assumption that they sojourned for more than three centuries in Fiji after the country had been settled by Melanesians, and that they were driven out bag and baggage by the Melanesians with whom they left behind nothing but their mythology and customs. If this is true the first arrival of the Melanesians in Fiji is set back beyond our era; if it is false, Fornander's theory falls to the ground. He bases his belief not upon any indisputable references to Fiji in Polynesian traditions, but upon "the number of Polynesian names by which these islands and places in them are called, even now, by their Papuan inhabitants,"[7] and upon the Polynesian words and folklore to be found incorporated in the language and Mythology of Fiji.[8] Upon this he estimates the Polynesian sojourn in Fiji to be thirteen generations, and says that these alleged facts "argue a permanence of residence that cannot well be disputed."[9] And so they would if they were true, but, unhappily for his argument, they are not. He conjectures the Polynesian's landing-place to have been in the western portion of Vitilevu, where, with one exception, the local and tribal names are pure Melanesian, and this exception—the tribe of *Noikoro* in the centre of the inland district—has a well-preserved tradition of emigration from the south-eastern coast of the island. Moreover, the dialects of Western Vitilevu are Melanesian, with less infusion of Polynesian words than any of the languages lying eastward of them. And lastly, it is impossible to believe that so momentous an event as the struggle between the two races, and the final expulsion of one of them, would have left no trace behind it in the traditions of the victors, when so insignificant an

event as the arrival of two castaways, the missionaries of the Polynesian cult of the *Malae* is recorded in detail. Had Fornander had the talent for sifting evidence he held the clue in his hand when he wrote, "The large infusion of vocables in the Fijian language, and the mixture of the two races, *especially in the south-eastern part of the group*, indicate a protracted *séjour*, and an intercourse of peace as well as of war," for it is in this very fact that the Polynesian infusion is strongest on the eastern margin of the group, and wanes with every mile we travel westward, until it is lost altogether, that the real truth lies. It is this. The Melanesians landed on the north-western shore of Vitilevu, and thence spread eastward throughout their own group. At the islands of the Lau group they met a check in the 400 miles of open ocean that lay beyond, swept by the contrary wind of the south-east trades. Meanwhile the Polynesians, having long colonized the eastern groups, perhaps by way of Micronesia or Futuna or even by the north-eastern islands of the Fiji group, but certainly not by Great Fiji, entered on their period of navigation which Fornander assigns, I believe erroneously, to the eleventh century, were carried westward by the south-east trades, by single canoes whose male castaways were generally killed and eaten, but whose females were taken to wife by the chiefs. The superior attractions of their lighter coloured progeny led to the women of the mixed race being in request as wives among the darker Melanesians to the west. Many such castaway colonies are referred to in Tongan tradition. Early in the sixteenth century King Kauulu-fonua pursued the murderers of his father through the islands of the Samoan group to Futuna in vessels more seaworthy than the Tongiaki of Cook's day.[10] Kau Moala, the

navigator, voyaged to Fiji at the close of the eighteenth century,[11] when we learn that the *grand tour* for a Tongan gentleman included a campaign in Fiji.

POLYNESIAN CASTAWAYS

The people of Ongtong Java ascribe their origin to a Tongan castaway canoe; the names of the Tongan ancestors of the Pylstaart Islanders (since removed to Eua in Tonga) are recorded, though their shipwreck is two centuries old. The people of the reef islands of the Swallow group, though purely Melanesian in everything but their tongue, have traditions of castaways who were influential enough to impress their language, but not their blood upon their entertainers, just as the Aryan immigrants impressed their customs, folklore and language upon the Neolithic peoples they found in Europe.[12] The natives of Rennell I. and Bellona I. in the Solomons have preserved the physical characteristics of Polynesians. It is far more probable that Nea and Lifu in the Loyalty Islands, and Numea (Noumea) in New Caledonia received their Polynesian names from such chance settlement, than that they are, as Fornander would have it, echoes of permanent colonies which passed away more than fifteen centuries ago. Turning to Fiji itself we find innumerable traditions of such Polynesian visitors, though never a trace of the far more important event of a Polynesian occupation. The chief family of Nandronga traces its descent from a single Polynesian castaway who was washed up by the sea about 1750. The chief of Viwa three generations ago took to wife a Tongan girl, the only survivor of a murdered crew. The chiefs of

Thakaundrove claim relationship with the kings of Tonga through an ancestress of that family who was cast away early in the eighteenth century and saved by clinging to the deck-house when all her companions perished.[13]

These are only a few out of a series of Polynesian immigrations that may be numbered by hundreds, of which a tithe would suffice to account for the Polynesian language and blood to be found in Fiji. A stepping-stone in Fiji was necessary to Fornander's theory of Polynesian migrations, and if he had not been blinded by his desire to find it, he would have seen the obvious import of his declaration that in the eleventh century the Polynesians had a *renaissance* of navigation. Such a period of unrest, of distant voyages undertaken with no compass but the stars, in clumsy craft, on seas swept continually by a south-east wind, must have resulted in numerous shipwrecks on the eastern shores of islands lying to the westward.

His work contains but three appeals to Fijian folklore, which are, besides, the only evidence he stops to specify. "In the Fijian group, where much of ancient Polynesian lore, now forgotten elsewhere, is still retained, the god 'Ndengei,' according to some traditions, is represented with the head and part of the body of a serpent, the rest of his form being of stone." This he regards as a trace of serpent-worship, a "peculiarly Cushite out-growth of religious ideas." If this be evidence of Polynesian kinship, then were the ancient serpent-worshippers of Kentucky also Polynesian, together with a host of other races, who, being human, evolved the religious ideas common to humanity. Moreover, the serpent nature of Ndengei is a modern gloss added by the poets of Raki-raki

after the Ancestor-god had been consigned to the gloomy cavern of Nakauvandra, for to the Fijian of the west every cave has a monstrous eel or serpent lurking in its recesses, and issuing to glut its maw upon unwary mortals who venture too near.

TRADITION OF A DELUGE

Fornander's second quotation from folklore is designed to prove no less than a Polynesian reminiscence of the Hebrew legend of the building of Babel, forgotten by the Polynesians, but "stowed away" by them in the memory of their former hosts, the Fijians. Thomas Williams is responsible for this tradition of a vast tower erected on a great mound in Nasavusavu Bay, Vanualevu, which collapsed, scattering the builders to the four winds. No trace of this tradition is now to be found, and one cannot but remember that Williams drew his information from his converts, to whom he was teaching that the Mosaic books related the genesis of their own race, and who knew that a confirmation drawn from their own traditions would be highly comforting to their missionary. But though there was no great mound to point to, and the existence of any such tradition may be doubted, to what, even if true, does it amount? To a coincidence such as is to be found in many primitive religions, or, if you will, to a suggestion that the Fijians are an offshoot of the Semitic stock, but scarcely to evidence that the Polynesians, who have no tradition of the kind, bequeathed it to the Fijians.

Fornander's third link is the tradition of the Deluge which is found in the folklore of both races. This, as

might be expected, is quite sufficient evidence for him, not only of a Polynesian sojourn in Fiji, but of Polynesian descent from the "Cushite-pre-Joklanite Arabs," who, it is true, have no such traditions themselves, as far as we know, but certainly ought to have been at least as well favoured in this respect as the Semites and Aryans.[14] This is not the place to discuss the Deluge traditions. It is enough to say here that every island in the cyclone-belt is subject to destructive floods, that every district in Fiji has its own distinct tradition, and that in the provinces of Rewa and Mbua floods that are known to have occurred within the last 125 years have already been canonized in the realm of myth. If the Fijian and Polynesian heroes had sent forth a dove, which was the distinctive feature in both the Babylonian and Hebrew accounts, owing to the custom of the Semitic navigators carrying doves as part of their necessary equipment to ascertain the proximity of land, then something might be said for the traditions as evidence. But to quote so universal a human tradition as the Deluge-myths as evidence of intercourse or common origin is as rational as to draw such deductions from the belief in malevolent deities.

DATES CALCULATED FROM GENEALOGIES

Now, although Fornander's chronology has no direct bearing upon the date of the Melanesian arrival if, as I have shown, the Polynesians had no settlement in the group, the method of calculating dates should be the same for both races. Our only guide for events that happened in Polynesia before Tasman's voyage,

1642, is in the natives' genealogies, calculating by generations. They contain two obvious tendencies to error. It was very rare for a man of consequence to carry the same name throughout his career. Adoption, any notable exploit, or succession to a title were constant excuses for such changes, and it is quite possible that in the older genealogies the same hero is recorded twice under different names. Moreover, it is by no means certain that the names were not those of the reigning chiefs, and seeing that the succession often went to the next brother when the son was not of an age to wield the power, it is highly doubtful whether every name represented a generation. I know one genealogy where, in the portion relating to historical times, one of the recorded names was younger brother to the chief who precedes him.[15] This may account for the great diversity of readings found in the same genealogy, one version being shorter than another. On the other hand, there is the tendency to omit the names of remote personages whose short reign or insignificant character have failed to stamp themselves on the memory of posterity. There is thus a double tendency to error—on the one side to multiplication of generations, and on the other to curtailment by omissions. But even supposing that Fornander's genealogies are correct, it is difficult to see how he could arrive at an approximate date without showing more discrimination in fixing the length of a generation. All his dates are calculated upon a generation of *thirty years*, because that is the average length generally assigned in Europe. But Polynesia is not Europe, and generations in Polynesia, where men marry much earlier, are less than thirty years, as he might have discovered by taking the average in historical times. This I have

done both in Tonga and Fiji, with the result that the generations in both races average from twenty-five to twenty-seven years. The Tui Tonga family is a very fair guide, because the office went invariably from father to son, and the holder was so sacred that he was never cut off by a violent death. The generations of this family since 1643 average twenty-seven years, while those of the temporal sovereign, the Tui Kanakubola who were often the victims of rebellion, average only twenty years apiece. The history of Hawaii was so bloodstained, that it is unlikely that Hawaiian generations averaged more than twenty-five. Five years in a generation makes a vast difference, for the date given by Fornander for the Polynesians' arrival in the Pacific is set forward from the fifth to the seventh century, and for their arrival in Hawaii from the eleventh to the thirteenth.

Abraham Fornander has done inestimable service to future students of Oceanic ethnology by preserving for their use songs and traditions that would otherwise have passed into oblivion, but he will be used as a storehouse of data rather than as an exponent of history, and I feel that I am best serving his reputation by cutting away the false deductions that would have tainted the sound and wholesome facts which form the larger portion of his work. I cannot leave him without wishing that he had made better use of Bancroft's saying, which he printed as his text on the title-page, "It is now a recognized principle in philosophy that no religious belief, however crude, nor any historical traditions, however absurd, can be held by the majority of a people for any considerable time as true, without having in the beginning some foundation in fact."

FOOTNOTES:

[1] *The Polynesian Race*, by A. Fornander, Vol. i, p. 193.

[2] We detect here a flavour of the commentator's superior education.

[3] A somewhat futile proceeding unless they were of wood.

[4] Distant land

[5] Fijian canoes are sculled with long oars worked perpendicularly in a rowlock formed by the cross-ties of the outrigger, or of the two hulls in a twin canoe. With powerful scullers a speed of three miles an hour is attained in a dead calm.

[6] *The Polynesian Race, Its Origin and Migrations.* London, 1880.

[7] *The Polynesian Race, Its Origin and Migrations*, Vol. i, p. 33.

[8] *Ibid.*, Vol. i, p. 167.

[9] *Ibid.*, Vol. i, p. 33.

[10] See my *Diversions of a Prime Minister*, p. 308.

[11] Mariner's *Tonga.*

[12] *The Melanesians*, Codrington.

[13] Tukuaho, Premier of Tonga, and descendant of the Tui Tonga and Tui Haatakalaua families, was staying with me at Auckland, N.Z., when Ratu Lala, Tui Thakau, of Fiji, arrived in the town. Both chiefs asked me to bring about a meeting on the ground of their relationship. Though each could speak the language of the other their shyness led them to insist that I should interpret the conversation, which was carried on in Fijian

and Tongan. After the usual formalities the two chiefs spoke of the adventures of their Tongan princess through whom they were related, and the Tongan and Fijian versions of the tradition were substantially identical.

[14] "Unfortunately we have no well-preserved account of the Flood from the Cushite-Arabian quarter; but I am inclined to consider the Polynesian version as originally representing the early traditions on this subject among the Cushite-pre-Joklanite Arabs."—*The Polynesian Race, Its Origin and Migrations.* London, 1880, p. 90.

[15] The Vunivalu geneology of Mbau.

CHAPTER III

THE AGE OF HISTORY

Of the centuries that lie between the age of myth and the age of history there are but the feeblest echoes. From the ethnology of the people of to-day we may infer that the stream of immigration swept down the northern coast of Vitilevu, and, radiating from Rakiraki, crossed the mountain range, and wandered down the two rivers, Rewa and Singatoka, until it reached the southern coast and peopled Serua and Namosi. Another stream must have crossed the strait to Mbua on Vanualevu, and spread eastward. Melanesian blood can be traced even in the Lau sub-group, but before any permanent settlement was

made there Polynesian castaways, driven westward by the prevailing wind, must have begun to arrive. At the dawn of history, about 1750, Vitilevu was almost purely Melanesian, but the Lau and Lomaiviti islands, Taveuni, Vanualevu, and Kandavu were peopled by half-breeds between Melanesian and Polynesian, the Polynesian strain waxing stronger with every mile from west to east.

The peopling of the waste lands was accelerated by war. There is scarcely a tribe that does not claim to have migrated from another place, sometimes from parts relatively remote from its present locality, and if it were worth the labour, the history of the migrations of each of them might even now be compiled, partly from its own traditions, partly from the tie of *tauvu* (common Ancestor-gods) with other tribes distantly related to it. But, as it would be merely the history of a few fugitives from the sack of a village, driven out to find asylum in a waste valley, and founding in it a joint family which lived to grow into a tribe, such an inquiry would be barren and profitless.

The traditions of Tongan immigration are too numerous to be set down here. From 1790, if not earlier, an expedition to Fiji was an annual occurrence. The most important was the arrival of the Tui Tonga's canoe in Taveuni, from which sprang the chief family of the Tui Thakau, and the stranding of the two little old men who instituted the *Nanga* Cult, which recalls the rites of the Polynesian *Malae*. The chiefs of the Nandronga and Viwa (Yasawa) also trace their descent from Tongan castaways, and are very proud of the connection.

The fact that traditionary history is so meagre is in

itself an indication that there were no powerful confederations before the nineteenth century. The related tribes of Verata and Rewa in the south and Thakaundrove in the north-east seem to have been the only powers that wielded influence beyond their borders, but their intercourse with other tribes must have been very restricted. In islands where male castaways, having "salt water in their eyes," were killed and eaten, there was little spirit for discovery and adventure.

The imprint of the Tongan immigration is to be seen, not only in the blood of the tribes with whom the immigrants mingled, but in their mythology, for whereas the religion of the inland tribes is pure ancestor-worship, that of the coast tribes is overlaid with a mythology that is evidently derived from Polynesian sources.



DESCENDANTS OF TONGAN IMMIGRANTS PERFORMING THE TONGAN DANCE *LAKALAKA*.

Early in the eighteenth century there seems to have

been an upheaval among the inland tribes of Vitilevu which sent forth a stream of emigrants to the coast, whether as fugitives, or as voluntary exiles in search of new lands, there is no tradition to show. This event was destined to have a tremendous influence upon the political destiny of the islands, for among the emigrants was the tribe of Mbau, sturdy mountain warriors, still bearing in their physiognomy and dark complexion the proof of their Melanesian blood and their late arrival in the sphere of Polynesian influence. This tribe, humble as it was in its origin, was destined, partly through chance, partly by its genius for intrigue, to win its way within a century to the foremost position in the group.

THE RISE OF MBAU

Rewa, descended from the earliest settlers on the delta of the great river, could alone boast an ancient aristocracy and a complex social organization which entitled it to be called a confederation. The rest of the group was split up into tribes, little larger than joint families, which treated all strangers as enemies, and held their lands at the point of the spear.

The Mbau people settled upon the coast about a mile from the islet now called by their name, but then known as Mbutoni, which is connected with the mainland by a coral reef fordable at high water. Upon the islet lived two tribes of fishermen, named Levuka and Mbutoni, who were supplied with vegetable food by the inland chiefs in return for fish. Being subject to the Mbauans, they supplied them with a navy, for a tribe lately descended from the mountains was distrustful of the sea.

Wedged in between Verata on the north and Rewa on the south, Mbau was continually at war with one or the other. Her pressing need was men, "the men of Verata and Rewa" (to quote from the *meke* that records her history), and as she held her own, those who had grievances against her powerful neighbours, broken tribes fleeing from their conquerors in the hills, flocked to her for protection, and her needs were satisfied. But her territory did not exceed ten square miles.

About 1760, Nailatikau being Vunivalu, or secular king, the chiefs moved from the mainland to the islet, which was known thenceforward as Mbau. The fishermen had for some time been waxing insubordinate, and their offences culminated in the eating of an enormous fish which ought, by custom, to have been presented to their chiefs. They were expelled from the island. The Levuka tribe fled to Lakemba, still retaining their hereditary right to instal each successive Vunivalu in his office. The Mbau chiefs scarped away the face of the island so as to form the embankment upon which the present town is built. Nailatikau died about 1770, and was succeeded by his second son Mbanuve. During his reign the fishermen of Lasakau from the island of Mbenka, and of Soso, from the island of Kandavu, were employed in reclaiming more land from the sea, and were allowed to settle on the island. The first intermarriage with the Rewa chiefs dates from this period. The story goes that a Rewa canoe, being hailed as she passed Mbau, replied that she was bound for Verata for a princess to mate with the king of Rewa; that the crew was induced to take a Mbau lady in her stead, and that a Rewa princess was sent to Mbau in exchange. Thus the Mbau chiefs passed from being *parvenus* to a place in the aristocracy of

their adopted country.

As the date of the first arrival of Europeans, which was to have so profound an influence upon the natives, is in dispute, it may be well to mention the recorded voyages chronologically.

Tasman, who sighted Vanua-mbalavu in 1643, did not communicate with the natives. Cook, who had had information about the group from Fijians settled in the Friendly Islands, discovered the outlying island of Vatoa, the southeasterly limit of the group, and called it Turtle Island, but bore away to the north-east.

In April 1791, a few days after the famous Mutiny of the *Bounty*, Bligh passed through the centre of the group in an open boat. His urgent need of provisions would doubtless have impelled him to communicate with the shore had he possessed firearms, and had he not just lost his quartermaster in a treacherous attack made upon him by the natives of Tofua. As it was he was chased along the northern coast of Vitilevu by two sailing canoes, which only left him when he cleared the group by Round Island, the most northerly of the Yasawa sub-group.

THE FIRST EUROPEAN VISITORS

The first Europeans who had intercourse with the natives, so far as we know, were the prize crew of the little schooner built of native timber in Tahiti by the *Bounty* mutineers in 1791. Having shut up the mutineers in "Pandora's Box" (as the little roundhouse on the quarter-deck of H.M.S. *Pandora* was called) Captain Edwards victualled and manned

the mutineer's schooner as his tender, but he parted company with her in a storm off Samoa an hour before a fresh supply of stores and water was to be put on board of her. The island of Tofua had been the appointed rendezvous in such a contingency, and the schooner duly made the island, but, having waited in vain for the *Pandora*, her commander, now desperate for want of provisions, made sail to the northwest, and cast anchor at an island which was almost certainly Matuku in the Lau sub-group of Fiji. Here she lay for six weeks with boarding nettings up, but the natives appear to have treated their strange visitors with friendliness and hospitality. After terrible sufferings, from which the midshipman lost his reason, and numerous encounters with the natives of the Solomons or the New Hebrides, this handful of brave seamen made the Great Barrier Reef opposite Torres Straits, which, for want of time to search for a passage, they boldly rode at in a spring tide, and jumped, escaping without injury to their little vessel. Mistaken for pirates by the Dutch authorities, they were clapped into prison, where Captain Edwards found them after himself suffering shipwreck on the Barrier Reef.

Unfortunately neither Oliver, the gunner in command of the schooner, nor any of his shipmates published the story of these adventures, and the Record Office has been searched in vain for the log which they must have handed over to Edwards; otherwise we might have had a very valuable description of the Fijians a century ago. One or other of the native poems describing the first arrival of European ships may refer to this voyage.

This visit, or perhaps an unrecorded one about the same year, 1791, had a sinister influence upon Fijian

history, for the evidence which will be set forth in a later chapter points to it as the cause of the terrible epidemic of *Lila* (wasting sickness) which decimated the group.

In the following year, 1792, Captain Bligh ran along the coast of Taveuni in H.M.S. *Providence*, and was followed by canoes.

On April 26, 1794, the "snow" *Arthur* touched at the Yasawa Islands, and was attacked by the natives.

In 1802, or 1803, a vessel was wrecked on the Mbukatatanoa Reef, subsequently named Argo, from a vessel of that name which was cast away upon it. A number of Europeans wearing red caps over their ears and smoking pipes were rescued by the natives of Oneata, and gunpowder seems to have come into the hands of the natives, who used the powder for blackening their faces and hair, and the ramrods of the muskets as *monke* (hair ornaments).[16] The tradition says that some of the white men were killed and some taken to Lakemba by the Levuka tribe, the same that had been expelled from Mbau, who happened to be at Oneata at the time. We do not know what became of these survivors. Perhaps they were slain as a propitiatory sacrifice to the god of pestilence, for from the traditions of Mbau we learn that Mbanuve, the son of Nduru-thoko (Nailatikau), the Vunivalu of the Mbau, died of a new disease introduced by a foreign vessel, and was surnamed Mbale-i-vavalangi (He who died of a foreign disease) in accordance with the custom of calling dead chiefs after the place where they were slain, as Mbale-i-kasavu (He who fell at Kasavu, etc.). On his death the Levuka people came from Lakemba to instal his successor, Na-uli-you (New steer-oar), and they

brought with them a canvas tent, which was the first article of European manufacture which the Mbau people had seen. We may fix this date with some confidence. On the day of the installation there was a total eclipse of the sun, the heavens were like blood, the stars came out, and the birds went to roost at mid-day. While the dysentery was sweeping through the islands the people were startled by the appearance of a great hairy star with three tails. Now, the only total eclipse of the sun visible in Fiji about this period was that which occurred at 9.20 a.m. on February 21, 1803. The total phase lasted 4·2 minutes, or within one minute of the longest possible total phase. The comet is not so easy to identify. It may have been Encke's comet of November 21, 1805, or the famous comet of 1807.[17]

THE FIRST BEACHCOMBERS

Shortly after Naulivou's accession, that is to say some time between 1803 and 1808, the first of the sandal-wood traders touched at Koro, where some Mbau chiefs happened to be.[18] Joseph Waterhouse, the missionary, was told that a white man, called "The Carpenter," and a Tahitian deserted from this ship, and came to Mbau; that the white man became inspired by Mbanuve, the late Vunivalu, and shivered and foamed at the mouth like an inspired Fijian, and was, much to his own profit, accepted by the Na-uli-you as a genuine priest. He dwelt in the house erected over Mbanuve's grave, where he took to drinking kava to his own undoing, but that before his death he told the natives that there was a God superior to Mbanuve or any Fijian deity. I have never been able to obtain any confirmation of this story: on

the contrary I have been assured that Charles Savage was the first European to land at Mbau, but as the arrival of ships must have been not infrequent as soon as the presence of sandal-wood had become known, and whalers were ranging the Pacific, it is not improbable.[19]

MISCONDUCT OF THE WHITES

In 1808 there happened an event which left an enduring mark upon Fijian history. The American brig *Eliza*, with 40,000 dollars from the River Plate on board, was wrecked on the reef off Nairai. The majority of the crew escaped in the ship's boats, and boarded another American vessel which was lying off Mbua for sandal-wood; the rest took passage in native canoes that happened to be at the island, one to Mbau and the others to Verata, while the natives looted the wreck. The man who went to Mbau was the Swede, Charles Savage, a man of much character and resource. Having been refused leave to return to Nairai to search for a musket, he pointed to a *nkata* club, which bears a distant resemblance to a gun, and bade them bring him from the wreck a thing of that shape, and a cask of black powder like their own hair-pigment. The native messengers were successful; the musket was found built into a yam-hut as one of the rafters. Having demonstrated the uses of a musket before the assembled chiefs, Savage took part in a reconnaissance towards Verata, the state with which Mbau was then at war. He took with him a gourd containing a letter addressed to the white men at Verata, bidding them flee to him at Mbau, as it was the stronger state. The gourd was tied to a stick just out of arrowshot, and as the canoe retired the

Verata people carried it into their fort, and in a few days later the other whites joined him at Mbau. Savage with his musket now began to carry all before him. He had a sort of arrow-proof sedan chair made of plaited sinnet, in which he was carried into musket-shot of the enemy's entrenchments, and from which he picked off the sentinels until the garrison fled. Thus Mbau subdued all the coast villages as far as the frontiers of Rewa. Savage cleverly kept his fellow-Europeans in the background without arousing their enmity. He alone carried the musket; he alone could speak the language fluently, and to him the other whites thought that they owed the good-will of the natives. Two great ladies were given him to wife, and the order of *Koroi* was bestowed upon him with the title of Koroi-na-vunivalu. Yet he stoutly refused to conform to native customs, and so he kept the respect of the chiefs. Shortly after the shipwreck the visits of ships became frequent, from India, America, and Australia. They lay for many weeks off the Mbua coast, while the crew cut and shipped sandal-wood; and the sailors, allured by the story of the dollars lost in the *Eliza*, deserted, or were discharged in considerable numbers. The dollars, though one or two were found as lately as 1880, were scattered beyond recovery, and the sailors drifted away, some to Mbau, and others to the villages on the sandal-wood coast, where they took native wives, and adopted every native custom except cannibalism.[20] The natives could give them everything they wanted except tobacco and spirits, and to acquire these, and to keep their position among their hosts, they would hire themselves out to the masters of sandal-wood ships at a monthly wage of £4, paid partly in knives, tools, beads, and firearms. William Mariner, who visited Mbau in 1810

on board the *Favourite*, the vessel in which he escaped from Tonga, found a number of whites there whose reputation both for crimes, vices, and for quarrelling among themselves was so bad that his informant, William Lee, was glad to make his escape from them. During Savage's absence with the army they nearly brought annihilation upon themselves. At a great presentation of food, the king's *mata* omitted to set aside a portion for the white men, and they, incensed at what they took for an intentional insult, ran to the stack of food, and slashed the yams with their knives. Now, this is an insult which no Fijian will brook, and they were promptly attacked. They killed a number of their assailants with their muskets, but when the hut in which they had taken refuge was fired, they had to make for the sea. Three were clubbed as they ran, but two, Graham and Buschart, swam out to sea, and returned only when they were assured of the chief's protection. Thus did they save their lives, the first to perish more miserably at Wailea, the second to be the means of discovering the fate of de la Pérouse.

Savage could not afford to jeopardize his influence with the chiefs by mixing in the quarrels of the other Europeans. With his two wives, who were women of the highest rank, he lived apart from the others, in the enjoyment of all the privileges of a native chief who was Koroi. But when not engaged in fighting, he also spent the winter months on the sandal-wood coast, working for the trading ships. Among the regular arrivals was the East Indiaman *Hunter* (Captain Robson), which, on her third voyage to Fiji in 1813, carried Peter Dillon as mate. Dillon had spent four months in the group in 1809, and had acquired a slight knowledge of the language, besides winning the respect of the people for his magnificent

physique, and his Irish good humour. He had, as he tells us, prepared a history of the islands from the date of their discovery to 1825, but the manuscript has disappeared, and is not likely now to come to light. Interesting as it may have been, its value as a history would have suffered from the lively imagination of the writer.

Captain Robson's methods of obtaining a cargo would not have commended itself to the Aborigines' Protection Society. On anchoring at Wailea, he was wont to enter into a contract with Vonasa, the chief, to aid him in his wars in return for a full cargo. The enemy's forts were carried with a two-pounder, and the bodies of the slain were then dismembered, cooked, and eaten in Robson's presence. On this occasion the same policy was pursued, but whether owing to the exhaustion of the forest or to the indolence of the natives, a full cargo was not forthcoming. At the end of four months, two hundred Mbauans, led by two of the king's brothers, arrived in their canoes to take their white men back to Mbau, and with their help Robson resolved to punish the faithlessness of the Wailea people. The landing party fell into the ambush known in Fijian tactics as *A Lawa* (The Net), that is to say, they were drawn on by the feigned flight of a party of the enemy until they were surrounded. Dillon, with Savage and three others, gained the summit of a low hill, where they kept their assailants at bay, while the bodies of their comrades were cooked and eaten in their sight. Despairing of help from the ship, Savage went down to try his powers of persuasion on the chiefs, but he too was treacherously killed and laid in the oven before Dillon's eyes. Their ammunition exhausted, the prospect of torture before them, the three Europeans had resolved upon suicide, when by a

fortunate accident they were able to seize a heathen priest who had ventured too near, and by holding him as hostage for their lives, they made their escape. In the following year Mbau took ample vengeance for the massacre of their chiefs.[21]

THE MASSACRE OF WAILEA

There is a story that Maraia, Savage's half-caste daughter, then a child of four,[22] remembered her father's last night at Mbau. Lying awake she saw him open his sea-chest which he always kept locked, and take from it a string of glittering objects. Startled by her childish exclamation, for he thought himself alone, he kissed her and said that he was going away for a long time, and must hide his property in a place of safety. That night he poled himself over to the mainland, and when she awoke next morning the canoes had sailed for Mbua, from whence her father never returned. Probably the string was made of Chilian dollars from the wreck, which now lie buried somewhere on the mainland opposite Mbau.

After Savage's death Mbau continued to consolidate her power. News of her success tempted the broken tribes to flee to her for protection, and settle on the conquered lands. Thus did Namara become borderers (*mbati*) to Mbau. The story is a curious illustration of Fijian contempt for human life. Two brothers of Namara had stolen down to the sea shore for salt, and were seen by the king, Naulivou, then cruising along the shore in his great canoe. He presented them in sport with a shark and a sting-ray. Overwhelmed by his condescension, the brothers

began to contend for the honour of giving his dead body in return for the fish. Their cousin standing by exclaimed, "Is a man's life more precious than a banana? Let the elder be clubbed." So the elder bowed his head to the club of the younger brother, who presented the body to the chief. Grieved at what they had done, Naulivou ordered the body to be buried, and said, "I wanted no return for the fish. Go, fetch your wives and children, and settle on this land, and be my *mbati* (borderers), for I have need of true men."

The navigable canal called Nakelimusu, which shortens the voyage between Mbau and Rewa by connecting two of the river mouths, and is almost the only example of native engineering, was constructed in this reign shortly after the sack of Nakelo in 1810. The Queen of Rewa at that time was a Mbau princess, and when Nakelo sent her submission to Mbau, craving leave to rebuild the fortress, one of the conditions imposed was that the isthmus between the two rivers should be cut at its narrowest point, where it is about 400 yards wide. The Nakelo men dug a ditch into which the water could wash at high tide, and the rapid current did the rest.

Though Mbau did not long enjoy a monopoly of muskets she was able to purchase more ammunition than her rivals. European sailors still continued to pour into the islands, for after the exhaustion of the sandal-wood forests, whalers began to frequent the group, and there sprang up a desultory, but profitable trade in *beche-de-mer*, the sea-slug so highly prized by Chinese epicures, and in cocoanut oil. None of these attained the same influence as Savage. They were rather the chief's sycophants and handy men, who mended muskets, and beguiled his

leisure by telling stories of far-off lands. A chief likes to have in his retinue some alien, unfettered by the *tabu*, whom he can make his confidant, and a chief who could not boast of having a tame white man was not much esteemed. A tame negro was a curiosity even more highly prized. The natives as a body appear to have treated the white men with tolerant contempt, as beings destitute of good manners and the deportment proper to those who consort with chiefs.

In 1828 Mbau was at the zenith of her power. She had absorbed the Lomaiviti islands, and was disputing the Lau group with the Tongan immigrants. On the northern coast of Vitilevu her influence was felt as far west as Mba, and she exercised a nominal suzerainty over Somosomo, the state then paramount over the eastern half of Vanualevu. The inland and western tribes of Vitilevu alone were entirely independent of her influence.

INSURRECTION AGAINST TANOA

That her empire was the influence of a person rather than of a state was shown in 1829, when her leader, Naulivou, better known by his posthumous title of Ra Matenikutu (Lord Lice-Slayer) died. His younger brother, Tanoa, who succeeded him, had neither his ability nor his physique. Among the Europeans he was known contemptuously as "Old Snuff," from his habit of daubing himself with black pigment, and he was unpopular among his own people. From the day of his accession there were rumours of conspiracy, and during his absence at Ovalau in 1832 the rebellion broke out. Tanoa fled to Koro, and would

there have been put to death, had not Namosimalua of Viwa, who had been sent to arrest him, secretly connived at his flight to Somosomo, where he was safe. The rebels installed as Vunivalu one of his brothers named Tuiveikoso, chosen because he could be trusted to act as their tool, and refrained from the usual custom of putting Tanoa's adherents to death, though Namosimalua of Viwa, whose motives are not easy to understand, urged that the king's son, Seru, should be killed. But the boy was allowed to live on at Mbau, where he grew to manhood, without exciting any suspicion of the mark which he was to make upon Fijian history.

At first the Europeans took no part in these political disturbances. The more respectable of them had removed to the adjacent island of Ovalau, where they formed a settlement under the protection of Tui Levuka, plying the trades of boatbuilding and sail-making, and selling native produce to passing vessels. Those who chose to remain at Mbau were Fijianized whites who lived upon the natives.

Tanoa was not idle. Being *vasu* to Rewa he had no difficulty in inducing the king of that state to ally himself with Somosomo and to declare war with Mbau. By the promise of a cargo he even hired an American vessel to bombard Mbau. Having taken up a position at the anchorage she fired a broadside, but the Europeans on the islet, having trained a gun upon her, carried away her jib-boom at the second shot, and she slipped her cable and returned to Somosomo.

The leader of the rebellion was Ratu Mara, a man born before his time. Professing to be in favour of peace, of free intercourse, and of a new era of

bloodless government, he was immensely popular with the whites. He is still remembered as the only Fijian warrior who took fortified villages by direct assault, and who was absolutely fearless in battle. It is even said that, on hearing of the missionaries in Tonga, he declared his intention of inviting them to Fiji to displace the religion in which he no longer believed. In person he was tall and very powerful, and his acts show him to have been of great intelligence and perseverance. Friendly as they were to Mara, the Europeans so much disliked the other chiefs of the usurping government, who had advocated a massacre of all foreigners, that they resolved to support Tanoa, and secretly sent him a contribution of arms and ammunition.

Tanoa had meanwhile been undermining the power of the usurpers by the old expedient of bribing the borderers. In obedience to an oracle at Somosomo he had removed to Rewa, and was intriguing with a party at Lasakau, the eastern end of Mbau, inhabited by fishermen. A number of villages on the mainland had also been won over. Seru meanwhile, though grown to manhood, was believed to be above suspicion. His only objects in life seemed to be its amusements. He was the leader and the idol of a band of youths of his own age, who passed the days and nights in sports and wantonness. Suddenly, by a preconcerted arrangement a number of villages declared for Tanoa, and when the news reached Mbau one morning, it was found that the Lasakauans had built a war fence during the night, dividing their quarter of the town from that of the chiefs. Aghast at this turn of events the chiefs summoned a council of war. Namosimalua urged the immediate arrest of Seru, and his own nephew, Verani, whom he suspected of treachery, but it was then too late. The

two youths had taken refuge in Lasakau. Namosimalua's musket, fired at his nephew, was the signal for civil war. But the *coup d'état* was complete. The Lasakauans had prepared a number of flaming darts which they threw into the thatch of the nearest houses. A strong wind swept the conflagration through the town. In half-an-hour every house was in ashes, and the inhabitants were fleeing to the mainland.

THAKOMBAU'S *COUP D'ÉTAT*

As soon as the news reached Rewa, the army was put in motion. Village after village was destroyed, though, contrary to the wish of Seru, its inhabitants were spared by the king of Rewa. Tanoa himself re-entered Mbau at the close of 1837, after an exile of five years. Seru received three names. His own party called him Thikinovu (the centipede), which bites without warning; the usurpers called him Na Mbi (the turtle pond), in allusion to the number of people who were killed and eaten by him, but the name by which he was generally known was Tha-ko-mbau ("destruction to Mbau," or "Mbau is undone "),[23] signifying the success of his *coup d'état*.

The day of reckoning had come. A price was set upon the head of all the usurping chiefs, and no one dared to give them asylum. Thakombau slew many of them with his own hand, and they were cooked and eaten by the Lasakauans, whose hereditary duty it was to provide material for the cannibal ovens. Grisly stories are told of this orgy of revenge. It is said that a rebel whom Thakombau hated was brought before him, he ordered his men to cut out the man's tongue,

and that he ate it raw, joking with the wretched man about the change in his fortunes. When tired of the sport he sent him out to be further tortured, and when death released him from his sufferings he was cooked and eaten.

The arch-rebels, Mara and Namosimalua, were the last to be taken. Thakombau pursued Mara from village to village until he came to Namata, where he suffered a repulse. He then set himself to buy over the Namata chief. Early one morning Mara's faithless hosts surrounded him. His magnificent courage did not desert him. For some time he fought single-handed for his life, but numbers prevailed. Gashed by hatchets and knives, he fell at last, and his body was presented to Thakombau. Namosimalua was allowed to return to Mbau, and Tuiveikoso, the figure-head of the rebellion, and Tanoa's elder brother, were not molested.

In 1837 the first missionaries, Mr. Cross and Mr. Cargill, of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, arrived in the group. The Lau islands, already colonized by Tongans, were the natural starting-point for their labours; but Mr. Cross visited Mbau, and had an interview with Thakombau, from whom he sought permission to settle on the islet. The moment was unfortunate, and the young chiefs answer very natural under the circumstances. "Your words are good to me, but I will not hide from you that I am now at war, and cannot myself hear your instruction nor even assure you of safety." Mr. Cross misunderstood the answer. If he had seized upon the bare permission to reside at Mbau, itself a great concession, his labours would have been greatly lightened. As it was, his departure gave great offence to Thakombau, who opposed all further overtures

from the missionaries, and the offer was not renewed for fifteen years.

In September, 1837, a great meeting was held at Mbau. Having made submission to his brother, Tuiveikoso, an aged, corpulent and lame man, was pardoned by Tanoa, who described him as "a great hog, grown too fat to walk about, and able to do nothing but sleep, and wake to pick his food." The sole guilt of the rebellion was fixed upon Namosimalua. On the following day he was brought to trial, when he frankly admitted having accepted six whales' teeth to kill Tanoa. To the astonishment of everybody Tanoa gave him his life. The secret of the confession and Tanoa's clemency was that, to use a Fijian metaphor, Namosimalua had been "eating with both sides." It says much for his diplomacy that he preserved his life against the hatred of Thakombau, who had not forgotten his endeavours to persuade the rebels to kill him.

PUNISHMENTS FOR PIRACY

The rebels had made one serious mistake. During Tanoa's exile in 1833 they had urged Namosimalua to seize the French brig, *L'Aimable Josephine* (Captain Bureau), lying at Viwa. The Viwa chief, scenting danger, declined at first to have anything to do with the project, but his scruples were overborne, and the crew was massacred by Namosi's nephew, who was thereafter called Verani (Frenchman). The captured vessel did not prove to be of much value. Her native crew did not dare to sail her within sight of other vessels, and eventually she was cast away. In October, 1838, M. Dumont d'Urville, who touched at

the group on his return voyage from the Antarctic sea, exacted reparation for this act of piracy by burning Viwa, the inhabitants being in hiding in the neighbourhood. He did not then know that Captain Bureau had to some extent provoked his fate by taking part in native wars.

In 1840 Captain Wilkes, of the United States Exploring Expedition, visited the group, and deported Veindovi, the king of Rewa's son, for having instigated the massacre of part of the crew of an American vessel. He also severely punished the people of Malolo, an islet at the western extremity of Vitilevu, for the murder of two of his officers. These proceedings undoubtedly had a great effect in protecting the lives and property of Europeans from chiefs whom they had offended.

In the same year war broke out between Somosomo and Vuna, two districts in the island of Taveuni. Mbau pursued her usual policy of weakening her rivals by supporting the weaker side, and, regardless of the debt owed to Somosomo by Tanoa during his exile, espoused the cause of Vuna. Thakombau's elder brother, Wainiu, who was vasu to Somosomo, and had designs upon the succession to Tanoa, took the opportunity of betraying his intentions. He fled to Somosomo, whence he proceeded to buy over the borderers of Mbau on the mainland, within a few miles of the town. The most formidable of the tribes that joined him was Namena, which Thakombau was powerless to reduce by open attack. The stratagem which reduced Namena from a powerful tribe to its present condition of serfdom is worth narrating for the light it throws upon Fijian methods of diplomacy. Namena sent messengers to Viwa to win over Namosimalua to the cause of Wainiu. The chief

received them apparently with open arms, but secretly informed Thakombau that he had a plan for effecting the massacre of all Namena's fighting men without a campaign. The plan was simple. Mbau was to lay siege to Viwa, and the Viwans were to invite Namena to garrison the town. But only blank cartridge was to be used, and the rest was to be left to him. The Viwans, many of whom were nominally Christians, for the missionaries had settled in the island, were kept in the dark till the last moment. Mbau played their part in the comedy admirably. When the blank cartridge was fired many of the warriors feigned death, but when they reached the moat, the gates were thrown open, and the Viwans joined their mock assailants in massacring the unfortunate Namenans. One hundred and forty warriors were slain, and forty widows were strangled to their manes, a blow from which the tribe has never recovered.

Thakombau had now virtually become regent. He had not only to direct the foreign policy of the confederation, but to keep a watchful eye upon conspirators at home. One of his brothers, Raivalita, sailed from Vuna with the intention of assassinating him. But the plot was betrayed, and as Raivalita left the house after reporting his arrival to his father, he was waylaid and clubbed. In 1845 war broke out between Mbau and Rewa, owing chiefly to a personal feud between Thakombau and Nkara, son of the king of Rewa, who had had an intrigue with one of Thakombau's wives. It was an illustration of the old Fijian proverb that a quarrel between brothers is the most difficult to patch. There had been almost annual skirmishes between the border villages, in which the chiefs took desultory interest, but in this war the issue lay between the chiefs themselves.

Hostilities were precipitated by an act of treachery. Rewa had burned the town of Suva[24] during the absence of the fighting men, and had sent a message to Mbau saying that, as honour was satisfied, the people would be spared. But on the following day the fugitives were ambushed on the Tamanoa heights.[25] The war dragged on for six months, being for the most part little more than the burning of outlying villages, and the cutting off of stragglers, all of whom were killed and eaten. The ties of vasu between members of the royal families had much confused the issue. One of the sons of the king of Rewa, Thoka-na-uto (or Mr. Phillips, as he preferred to call himself) had joined Mbau from the first, and a number of the border villages had followed his example, and were in the field against their feudal lord. White men were fighting on both sides, in one or two cases naked and blackened like the natives.

DESTRUCTION OF REWA

The end came in June, 1845. Defections from Rewa had been frequent; indeed, in this war desertion was scarcely regarded. Early in June the Rewans had sent a chief to Mbau to treat for peace, a fatal step, for Thakombau bought over the envoy to betray his countrymen. The Mbau army was to invest the town, and while it was attacking, traitors within the walls were to set it on fire, and begin slaying their fellow-citizens. The plot was entirely successful. As the enemy reached the bank of the river opposite Rewa, the town burst into flames. The traitors within its walls had already begun slaughtering. Meanwhile, a Mbau chief shouted to the queen to cross the river in a canoe to her own people, the Mbauans, and to bring her children and Mbau retainers with her. As they were embarking the king himself came down to the canoe. The Mbauans shouted to him to go back, but he would not. As he was crossing the river he was fired upon; he was wounded by a spear as he was disembarking. Then Thakombau ordered one of his brothers to club him, but he was afraid to strike so great a chief. The wretched king pleaded hard for life, and his wife joined her entreaties; but Thakombau reminded him of the calumnies he and his sons had spoken, and told him sternly that he must die. Snatching from an attendant a club with an axe head lashed to it, he clave his skull to the jaw, and his wife and children were splashed with his blood.

Indirectly the Rewa war had a sinister bearing upon the fortunes of the whites. In May, 1844, a European,

who had fought on the Rewa side against Mbau, sailed for Lakemba with one of Tanoa's wives, who had run away from Mbau, and was now deputed by the Rewans to induce Lakemba to revolt from Thakombau's government. He was wrecked on the island of Thithia, and the Europeans of Levuka, hoping to recover some of the vessel's gear, of which they stood in need, sailed to that island. Failing in this, they went on to Lakemba, whither the shipwrecked man had escaped. For a time they hesitated to give him a passage to Rewa, for he was as much disliked by them as he was by the natives, and they knew the danger of displeasing Thakombau. But he offered a sum of passage-money which overcame their scruples, and they carried him off just in time to escape the war canoe which Thakombau had sent in pursuit of him.

Thakombau not unnaturally regarded this as an act of hostility, and Tui Levuka, who was becoming alarmed at the power of the whites in his town, and at the extent of land which he had alienated to them, seized the opportunity for beseeching his suzerain to deport them from the island. The peremptory order for their removal was a severe blow to the prosperous little settlement, which had to abandon the fruits of so many years of labour, and begin life afresh. A fine schooner, half built, had to be abandoned on the slips, and the houses left to be gutted by the natives. It speaks well for their peaceable disposition that they did not remove to Rewa, where they might have restored its waning fortunes in the struggle with Mbau, and that they chose Solevu Bay in Mbua, which was at peace with Thakombau. The new settlement was unhealthy and inconvenient for communication with ships, and long before the five years of exile was completed Tui

Levuka and the Mbau chiefs had repented of their precipitancy, which had cut them off from the services of the white artisans which were so necessary to them. The request for permission to return, made early in 1849, was readily granted.

THE SECOND REWA WAR

In 1846 Thakombau led an army of 3000 men, nominally to help Somosomo against Natewa, but in reality to increase his own influence at the expense of his ally. This he did by commanding the attack in person, and contriving to spare the lives of the defenders, while receiving their submission himself. The result of this campaign, for which Somosomo paid an enormous subsidy, was to make Natewa a tributary of Mbau, and diminish the influence of Somosomo.

On September 1, 1847, Rewa was again destroyed by Thakombau. The sister whom he had promised to Tui Nakelo as a bribe for his treachery to Rewa had been given instead to Ngavindi, chief of Lasakau, and Tui Nakelo in revenge offered to join Ratu Nkara, the son of the king of Rewa, whose feud with Thakombau had provoked the last war. Between them they rebuilt Rewa, and repulsed the Mbauans sent to prevent them. But Tui Nakelo was assassinated by means of a plot devised by Thakombau, who advanced to Tokatoka, and sent thence a message to Ratu Nkara that he wished him no ill, and that if he would remove with his people to the islet of Nukulau, and allow him to burn Rewa *pro forma*, he would molest him no further. Ratu Nkara

accordingly withdrew all his men, not to the islet mentioned in the message, but to a hill top whence he could watch the Mbau canoes surrounding Nukulau to capture him, "Pig's dung!" he exclaimed; "does Thakombau take me for a fool!"

In 1849 Captain Erskine visited the group in H.M.S. *Havannah*, and gave Thakombau an exhibition of the precision of marine artillery, which had an important bearing on the history of the next few years. It inflamed the king with a desire to possess a gunboat of his own, and two were ordered, one from America and one from Sydney. The almost annual visit of ships of war about this time had impressed Thakombau with the importance of doing nothing that would give any excuse for foreign intervention. But neither Captain Fanshaw, Captain Erskine, nor Sir Everard Home, who urged Thakombau in turn to abandon cannibalism and the strangling of widows, the last named so vehemently that they parted on bad terms, had much effect upon him. The fact was that, as after events proved, Thakombau did not feel himself strong enough to do so. In the fifteen years between 1835 and 1850 he had fought his way into the foremost place in Fiji, and his influence in the latter year was such that the American Consul, Mr. Miller, in a letter of remonstrance actually addressed him officially as Tui Viti (King of Fiji). But the Europeans could not see beneath the surface, and none knew, as he himself did, upon what a quicksand his power was built. His maintenance of the ancient customs, his opposition to Christianity, denounced so bitterly by the missionaries, was part of a set policy. Had he embraced Christianity when it was first pressed upon him, he would have remained the petty chief of a few square miles, a mere vassal of the mission, all his days, for the missionaries

discountenanced war, and it was only by war that he could hope to extend his influence. He alone of all his people foresaw that the mission would destroy, first the ancient polity, and ultimately the independence of the Fijians. His dialogues with the missionaries,[26] who for fifteen years were importuning him to let them live at Mbau, bantering as they were in tone, show how consistent was his policy, and they do not justify all the abuse that was heaped upon him by the mission historians. He respected the men; he objected to their doctrine, which, he said, might be suitable enough for Europeans, but was not adapted to the Fijians. His forbearance to the missionaries who so often thwarted him was remarkable: he allowed them to live at Viwa, within sight of Mbau, and to proselytize his subjects: he was personally kind and courteous to them, though he received nothing at their hands in return, as by Fijian usage he had a right to expect. The missionaries, so far from allowing him any personal credit for his kindliness, crowed over his courtesies as surrenders to their diplomacy. As an absolute sovereign he had cause enough to quarrel with them. Without preaching actual treason, they were always denouncing the customs which he practised, and denying the pretensions to divinity which were accorded to every ruling chief; the mission stations were cities of refuge to which every disaffected native fled when his treason was discovered. They themselves admit that the converted natives openly boasted that they were exempt from service in the army, and that murderers, "who were punishable even by Fijian law, fled to mission stations, and hypocritically professed an anxiety for Christian instruction."[27] The Christian natives refused to fight for their country.

There was in fact a party in the state which denied their ruler's authority, and were not only apostates from the national religion, but disaffected towards the government. It was therefore remarkable, not that he made an attempt to persecute, but that he made only one.

PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIAN CONVERTS

In December, 1850, Thakombau declared war on all Christians. The heathen villages on the Tailevu coast for a distance of fifty miles rose, and laid siege to Dama and to the island of Viwa, where the missionaries lived, but Thakombau had issued orders that no injury should be done to the lives and property of the Europeans, lest there should be a pretext for foreign intervention. The missionaries appealed to a Tongan chief, who, with 300 men, was on a visit to Mbau. This chief dispatched a canoe to act as a guard for the missionaries, and some of its crew were killed by the besieging force. The Tongans were now involved in the war, and as the whites were also supporting the Mission with supplies, Thakombau very wisely called off his troops and there was peace.

In 1850 Thakombau had touched the pinnacle of his fortunes, and we are now to see upon what his authority rested. So long as he ran in the grooves of custom his power was absolute, but no sooner did he introduce innovations than it began to crumble beneath him. Late in 1851 the two gunboats of sixty tons, ordered by him abroad, were delivered, and the agents began to press for payment. He ordered a levy

of *bêche-de-mer* throughout his dominions. The labour entailed by this new tax was far less than that of house-building or providing food, but the one was new, and the others sanctified by custom. Moreover, his subjects knew that the *bêche-de-mer* they were called upon to fish would find a ready sale with the Europeans. Many of the villages flatly declined to obey; some took the sacks, and let them rot in their houses; others burned the sacks before the eyes of the king's messengers. In January, 1852, Thakombau, who seldom abandoned any project in the face of opposition, took 1000 fishers with him to Mathuata, and set them an example by fishing with his own hands, but his men worked grudgingly, and the proceeds of the expedition were small. He then sent a party in the ship to New Caledonia, where sufficient *bêche-de-mer* was collected to pay for one of the vessels, and she was handed over to him. This purchase was the most unpopular act of his reign.

The long-expected death of old Tanoa occurred in 1852, and, despite the protests of the missionaries and captains of ships-of-war, Thakombau took part in the immemorial ceremony of strangling his father's widows, who, in accordance with custom, themselves contended for the honour of being strangled to prove their loyalty to the dead. The missionaries affect to trace his troubles to this act of barbarity, but they had probably the effect of delaying them, by proving to his chiefs that their king was before all things a Fijian still.

REVOLT AGAINST THAKOMBAU

On the death of Thoka-na-uto (Mr. Phillips), who as

Thakombau's ally was nominally king of Rewa, Ratu Nkara came from his hiding-place in the mountains and succeeded to the chieftainship. He is the most romantic figure in Fijian history. Years of guerrilla warfare, when he was a fugitive with a price upon his head, had not broken his indomitable spirit, nor weakened his lifelong defiance of his victorious enemy, Thakombau. He had never stooped to the acts of treachery that had stained the career of his rival, and had he lived longer his courage and skill in warfare would have raised the city of his fathers from its ashes to be the capital of the first state in Fiji. Rewa was rebuilt, and Nkara set about corrupting the border villages of Mbau. He was successful beyond his hopes. In a few weeks Mbau was enclosed in a ring of revolted towns, for not only was the mainland aflame from Kamba to Namena, but Ovalau, under Tui Levuka, had declared its independence. There can be no doubt that for this the Europeans at Levuka were partly responsible. They had never forgiven their summary expulsion from Levuka in 1844, nor Thakombau's request to Captain Macgruder to deport them all from the group. They were at this time the most orderly and law-abiding community of Europeans in the Pacific, having by hard work and trading accumulated a good deal of property. They were not in a position to take up arms openly against Thakombau, and their only overt act was to punish the natives of Malaki, an island subject to Mbau, for the destruction of an English cutter called the *Wave*. In December, 1853, Levuka was destroyed by an incendiary who was believed to be acting under the orders of Verani, Thakombau's lieutenant. The whites lost all they possessed, and on the following day Thakombau visited the town in order to express his sympathy,

and avert any suspicion of connivance. During his progress through the ruined town the Europeans, many of whom knew him well, let him pass without a sign of recognition, and he left the place anxious and dispirited.

At this juncture he had sore need of friends. The unexpected revolt of his personal serfs at Kamba was a veritable disaster, for they had charge of his largest canoe, the sails and stores of his gunboat, and his principal magazine. A few days after his formal installation as Vunivalu on July 26, 1853, his army was beaten off by the Kambans, his faithful lieutenant Verani was assassinated in Ovalau, and the rebellion spread. He knew that he had now to reckon with traitors among his own kin. Ratu Mara, [28] who had for many months been a voluntary exile from Mbau, had returned to the delta to be the figure-head of the rebellion, and Tui Levuka, whose authority was not sufficient to control the rebels of Ovalau, persuaded the Europeans to send for him. At this moment a schooner arrived from Sydney with a consignment of arms for Thakombau, and the European consignee, Pickering, declined to deliver them.

On October 30, 1853, Thakombau yielded to the importunities of the missionaries so far as to allow the Rev. Joseph Waterhouse[29] to take up his residence at Mbau, probably in the hope that he would be a useful advocate in the event of misunderstanding with European governments. In November he received an unexpected visit from King George Tubou of Tonga, then on his way to Sydney. He turned this visit to good account by promising the king a large canoe (the celebrated Ra Marama) if he would revisit him on his return home. There now

seemed to be a prospect of a favourable turn to his fortunes. Tui Levuka, doubtful of the success of his rebellion, made a secret compact with him to play the traitor to his own side, and Thakombau now prepared to crush Kamba. His plans were impeded by the secession of his kinsman Koroi-ravulo, who secretly bribed five hundred of his army to absent themselves from the rendezvous, and in March, 1854, he set forth with barely 1500 men. He had foolishly neglected to seize the opportunity of a hurricane, which had levelled the defences of Kamba, and when the assault was made the Kamba garrison had been stiffened with a number of whites and half-castes from Levuka, who foresaw that the fall of Kamba would place Levuka in the power of the victorious army. Thakombau commanded the assault in person. Having cleared broad roads for retreat in case of a sortie 500 men advanced to the attack, but they were seized with a sudden panic, and the whole army fled in confusion to their canoes. A further defeat at Sawakasa, the stronghold of Koroi-ravulo, completed Thakombau's discomfiture.

Ratu Nkara and his friend Mr. Williams, the United States Consul, Ratu Mara, Tui Levuka, and the Europeans of Ovalau, who had combined to bring him to this pass, styled themselves the "League." Their agreement, as set forth in a letter from Pickering to Williams, afterwards made public, was "to stop all ships of going to Mbau," and to invoke the aid of the first ship-of-war that might arrive. Consul Williams's ill-directed activity in the cause proved the undoing of all the schemes, for he wrote a violent letter to the newspapers in Sydney, urging the destruction of Mbau as the first duty of civilized nations, which, when translated to Thakombau, convinced him that his only chance of salvation lay

in conciliating the missionaries. A letter which he received at the same time from King George of Tonga persuaded him that it was high time to embrace Christianity. His defeat at Kamba after so many favourable omens had rudely shaken whatever belief he may have had in the gods of his fathers, and if he now rejected the support of King George and the missionaries he would have had no friends left. He had been profoundly moved by the news of the assassination of Tui Kilakila, the chief of Somosomo, which, the missionaries assured him, was a judgment on him for his opposition to Christianity, and he was moreover suffering from a painful disease of the leg. Cut off as he was from communication with the Europeans who opposed the conversion of Mbau, there was no hostile counsel to neutralize the persuasions of the missionaries.

THAKOMBAU CONVERTED

On April 28, 1854, the momentous decision was made. Assembling his chiefs he read the two letters to them, and announced his decision, reminding them of the prosperity of Tonga since the adoption of Christianity. On the following Sunday he attended service with about three hundred of his chiefs and retainers, all clad in waistcloths, for the missionaries had ordained that the outward sign of conversion should be clothes. As soon as the people had recovered from their astonishment there was a convulsion that nearly cost Thakombau his life. Rewa was still stoutly heathen, and all the malcontents in Mbau flocked to the enemy. The island of Koro also rose. Mbau was now hemmed in, and for the first time since 1835 it was put into a state of defence.

But there were traitors within. Yangondamu, Thakombau's cousin, won over by two of the king's brothers who had joined the enemy, had engaged to assassinate him. His house was crowded with young chiefs anxious to pay court to the rising power, while Thakombau sat alone, deserted by all but the missionary and a faithful Tongan. This immediate peril was averted by the dispatch of Yangondamu in command of a force to reduce the Koro rebels, and while he was away a Captain Dunn arrived from America with a cargo of arms, which he insisted upon selling to the Mbauans despite the entreaties of the Europeans.

The missionaries had already made a clean sweep of cannibalism, the slaughter of prisoners, and the strangling of widows, but when they tried to force a constitution on European lines upon the king they found him obstinate. "I was born a chief, and a chief I will die," he said, and his firmness, distasteful as it was to the missionaries, saved, not only himself, but also the cause of the mission; for, as Waterhouse himself records, "the populace, long favourably inclined towards the new religion, now hated Christianity because it was the religion of Thakombau," and if Thakombau had added to the other sins the abdication of his authority, nothing could have saved him or the cause of his foreign advisers.

On November 8, 1854, Thakombau was induced by Captain Dunn to hold a conference with his brother, Ratu Mara, on his ship, the *Dragon*. This meeting, effected with so much difficulty, resulted in nothing but a profession of reconciliation. Thakombau had so far humbled himself as to sue his enemy, the king of Rewa, for peace, but his overtures were haughtily

rejected. In the same month he attended an inquiry held by Captain Denham on H.M.S. *Herald*, at which he formally withdrew all the charges he had made against the Europeans, much to the chagrin of the missionaries, who had forwarded them to the commander. The Europeans had sent three representatives, who roundly charged the king with the burning of Levuka, but of this charge he seems to have cleared himself. This was the first occasion on which he officially stated the limits of his dominions. He had explained the suzerainty which he claimed over Somosomo, Lakemba and other states, but when asked point-blank to declare the limits of the territory in which he would undertake to protect the Europeans, he indicated a territory no larger than an English country parish, and his reply was disconcerting to those who had been styling him Tui Viti, King of Fiji.

A DEATH PORTENT

His conciliatory spirit, being set down to fear, had availed him nothing, and in the last months of 1854, the fate of Mbau still hung in the balance. Ratu Nkara had offered to end the contest by a duel between the two kings. "It is shameful," he said, "that so many warriors should perish; let you or me die": but Thakombau replied, "Are we dogs that we should bite one another? Are we not chiefs? Let us fight with our warriors like chiefs."

But in January, 1855, the low tide of Thakombau's fortunes began to turn. Rewa was stricken with alarm at the news of a portent. Andi Thivo, one of the Rewa queens, noticed that tears were exuding from one of the roots of taro set before her. She

addressed it, asking why it wept. Was Rewa to be destroyed? Was her father about to die? Was Thakombau? Were any of the chiefs whom she named? But the taro made no sign. Was her lord, the king of Rewa, near his death? A voice from the taro said "Yes," and the weeping ceased. The report spread through the length and breadth of the land, and the people waited in hushed expectancy. To them their king was already dead. Suddenly the war-drums themselves were hushed. The omen was fulfilled; Ratu Nkara, "the Hungry Woman," "the Long Fellow," was no more. A mighty man, Thakombau's only dangerous enemy, had fallen. He died of dysentery on January 26, 1855, having in his last moments promised to turn Christian if he recovered, swearing nevertheless to have the blood of Thakombau. But he was speechless during his last moments, and could not bequeath a continuance of the war to his chiefs.

Though he had shown the missionaries many kindnesses and allowed them to live with him, though he had had more intercourse with white men than any other chief, he died in the faith of his fathers. In the last months of his life he was with difficulty restrained from wading into the river, where sharks were seen, in order to prove to the missionary, Moore, that his person was sacred to them. A fortnight before his death he completed the building of two heathen temples to ensure his victory over Mbau, and sent a polite message to the missionary asking him to hold his services in another part of the town, "lest the gods should be angry at the noise." He said that he did not intend any disrespect to Jehovah, but was putting his own gods on their last trial, and desired to give them every chance of success. Though his chiefs were still

heathen, out of respect for the missionary only one of his wives was strangled, and she, as they explained, was old and already half dead.

On the death of Thakombau's personal enemy Rewa was glad enough to make peace with Mbau, but the Mbau rebels, who had to fear reprisals, continued the struggle. But in March King George of Tonga arrived at Mbau with forty large canoes to take away the war-canoe presented to him by Thakombau. After trying in vain to bring about a reconciliation, and suffering the loss of one of his own chiefs through the treachery of the rebels, King George agreed to lend his troops to Thakombau. The prospect of this foreign interference so incensed the people that tribes which had hitherto taken no part in the struggle threw in their lot with the rebels, and every one who opposed Christianity, or had anything to fear from Mbau, joined the enemy. The priests were inspired; the oracles spoke. The Tongan fleet would be derelict at Kamba for want of hands to work the sails after the battle. It was to be a death-struggle between the old gods and the new.

The promontory of Kamba was to be the battlefield, and the fortress at its extremity swarmed with warriors. For three days the allied fleets waited near the fort in the hope that it would capitulate without a siege, but on April 7 they bore down upon the promontory—a formidable spectacle. They were received with a volley of musketry. By all the rules of Fijian warfare this should have checked the landing for that day, but to the astonishment of the Kambans it did nothing of the sort. The sails were lowered, and, leaving their dead and wounded to the care of their women, the Tongans rushed to the attack. There were more surprises in store for the garrison;

instead of hiding behind trees, and trying to scare the defenders into flight, the Tongans advanced to the assault in the open, and recked nothing of the men who fell. King George, who commanded in person, had decided to invest the town by throwing up fortifications fronting the defences, and to starve it into submission, but the Vavau warriors pressed on, and took the place by assault. They afterwards defended themselves for this act of insubordination by saying that they were looking for the defences, and, taking the rampart for mere outworks, had found themselves in possession of the town before they were aware of their mistake—a familiar form of Tongan boasting. The Tongans lost fourteen killed and thirty wounded; the Mbauans, who had been mere spectators, escaped almost scatheless. More than two hundred of the enemy were killed, the greater part by the heathen Fijians on the Mbau side, and two hundred prisoners were taken. Thakombau was willing to spare all but Koroi-ravula, but King George interfered to save his life, which was justly forfeited by European as well as Fijian law. The submission of the rebels was complete. No less than twenty thousand natives proved their allegiance to Thakombau by accepting Christianity and adapting their customs to the wishes of the missionaries.

THE TONGANS TAKE KAMBA BY ASSAULT

It is not to be understood that the conversion of Thakombau was the first success of the missionaries. A printing press had been at work for many years, and, even in the Mbau territory, many hundreds of

the natives had been taught to read and write. There were mission stations in Lakemba, Somosomo, Rewa, Levuka and Mbua, and in many of the coast villages there were native teachers, the Christian and heathen natives living amicably side by side. The Christians claimed immunity from war service, and it was therefore not to be wondered at that Thakombau showed indecent glee when appealed to by the missionaries for help against persecution at Mbau. "You have often refused to fight for me, and now you have a war of your own on your hands, and I am glad of it." But the Lau group professed Christianity to a man; in the Lomaiviti islands the heathen were in a minority, and now, by Thakombau's conversion, the north-east coast of Vitilevu adopted the new faith. Only the inland and western tribes of the two large islands continued in the faith of their fathers, and these were soon obliged to fight for their religion.

In 1858 Thakombau's peace of mind was again rudely disturbed. Williams, the United States Consul, whose enmity against Thakombau was personal, had never relaxed his efforts to bring about foreign intervention. During the Fourth of July festivities in 1849 Williams's house on the island of Nukulau had been burned to the ground, and though report attributed the fire to pure accident during a display of fireworks by its convivial master, Williams laid his loss at the door of Thakombau. There were other claims by American citizens, and Williams's persistency at length induced the American Government to send a frigate to make inquiries. Commodore Boutwell had visited Mbau in 1855. His high-handed treatment of Thakombau, and his ready acceptance of the *ex parte* statement of the claimants, passed almost unnoticed in that eventful year, but in

1858 the king was made to realize that the American award of £9000 as compensation to American residents was no empty threat, but was a claim that must be met. He had had a sinister experience of the danger of levying from his subjects contributions not sanctioned by custom, and he knew that the task was hopeless.

But this was not all. A new star had risen on the eastern horizon, and Mbau was now threatened by the Tongans. Occasional intercourse between Tonga and Fiji had taken place for perhaps three or four centuries, through canoes plying between the different Tongan islands having been driven westward by the trade wind, but it was not until later in the eighteenth century that it became regular. At the time of Cook's visit in 1772 it had become as much a part of every young chief's education to take part in a warlike expedition to Fiji as it was in England a little later to make the grand tour. The Tongans steered for Lakemba, where they took part with one or other of the factions that happened to be at war, and, having taken the lion's share of the loot, and built themselves new war-canoes in Kambara of *vesi*, a timber very scarce in Tonga, they set sail for their own country. But not a few stayed behind, and gradually a little colony of Tongan-speaking half-castes established itself in all the principal windward islands.

THE TONGAN CONQUESTS

In 1837 the influence of the Tongans in Fiji received an unexpected impetus from the arrival of the first Wesleyan missionaries, who sailed from Tonga to

Lakemba with a retinue of Tongan teachers. They were at once joined by all the resident Tongans, who were now as zealous in converting the Fijians to Christianity as they had formerly been in converting their property to their own use. The countenance and encouragement of the white missionaries fostered their natural arrogance, and, when persuasion failed to effect conversion, stronger methods were sometimes resorted to. By the year 1848 the Tongans had got thoroughly out of hand, and King George, who was not yet secure against conspiracy, foresaw that any rival who might choose to recruit partisans in Fiji could return to Tonga with a formidable army. In order to provide a legitimate outlet for the ambition of his cousin Maafu, he dispatched that redoubtable warrior to Fiji ostensibly as governor of the Tongan colony, in reality as conqueror of as much of the group as he could take. Maafu's strong personality, aided by the lash, soon reduced the turbulent Tongans to order, and island after island of the eastern group went down before him. The Tongan teachers, now established in most of the western islands, acted as his political agents, and the missionaries were powerless to discountenance aggressions that were avowedly made with the object of spreading the Christian faith. So horrible were the excesses of his warriors in these raids that the Wesleyan authorities were occasionally obliged to wash their hands of him, but their somewhat half-hearted protests did not prevent Taveuni and the greater part of Vanualevu from falling under his control.

The Tongans had carried all before them by their superior courage and dash in frontal attack, and by their intelligent use of European weapons.[30] In 1858 Maafu's cruisers were ravaging territory

claimed by Mbau, and the two powers stood face to face. Thakombau was wise enough to see that, in the event of an open rupture, even if he should gain an initial advantage over Maafu's warriors, he could not hope to stand against a power that had all Tonga to draw upon for recruits, and that with America pressing for its debt, and Maafu bent upon conquest, he had every prospect of finding himself in vassalage to one or the other. In his extremity he turned to Mr. Pritchard, the English Consul, who, having a firm belief in the future of the islands as a cotton-growing country, was anxious to attract immigrants with capital. On Mr. Pritchard's advice, Thakombau executed a deed of cession, offering the sovereignty of the group to England on condition that he should retain the rank and title of Tui Viti (King of Fiji) accorded to him by the American Government,[31] and that, in return for 200,000 acres of land, the British Government should satisfy the American claims.

Some pressure was put upon the Home Government from the Australian colonies to induce it to accept the offer upon the ground of the high price to which cotton had risen in consequence of the disturbances in the Southern States of the Union. Colonel Smythe, R.A., was sent out to report upon the proposal, but, in the face of his assurance that Thakombau's authority controlled less than half the group, the Government, already embarrassed by the expenses of a Maori war, could not entertain the offer.

The prospect of annexation had attracted from New Zealand a large number of Englishmen, some of whom settled in the island. In 1861 the European colony numbered 166 adults, of whom the majority were respectable people. They bought large tracts of

land from the native chiefs, who sold recklessly whether the land belonged to them or not.

ANNEXATION

From 1861 to 1869 the Europeans increased to 1800, and the control of political affairs passed from the native chiefs to Europeans, who served as a check upon Maafu's ambition. The mission spread rapidly, until by 1870 all but a few of the inland tribes were nominally Christian. Various unsuccessful attempts were made to establish a settled government, but in 1871 Thakombau was declared constitutional sovereign of the entire group, with a ministry and two houses of parliament, a form of government ridiculously unsuited to the needs of the country, seeing that the natives, who numbered nearly one hundred to one, were to have no votes. Thakombau had an army officered by white men, and made abortive attempts to conquer the interior, but the new government did little beyond plunging into debt, and splitting the country into factions. In 1873 the political state of the group had become intolerable, and on British Commissioners being sent to inquire into the matter on the spot, the chiefs were induced, after some hesitation, to cede the sovereignty to England unconditionally. The Deed of Cession was signed in September, 1874. No doubt the chiefs acted to some extent under pressure from the Europeans, who had purchased land which they could not enjoy while it was in occupation by natives, and for which they desired to have titles. The Lands Commission had a task of extraordinary difficulty. Tracts had been sold by chiefs who had no title to them, and sometimes the same land had been sold to two or more purchasers. Many of the deeds

produced could never have been understood by the natives who signed them, and often the boundaries were imperfectly described. Sir Arthur Gordon,[32] the first Governor, wisely decided to govern the natives as far as possible through the machinery that he found in operation, and it encountered no open opposition with the exception of an insignificant rising in the western interior of Vitilevu, where the tribes, provoked by the encroachments of their neighbours on the coast, and alarmed at the ravages of the measles, reverted to their heathen gods for a few months. This outbreak was put down by native levies.

Thakombau, who received a pension of £1500 a year, was loyal to the British Government, and, both in the administration of his own province and in his intercourse with other chiefs, used his immense influence to promote the contentment of his people under their new rulers. At his death in 1882 the last of the great chiefs passed away, for Maafu had died in the preceding year.

FOOTNOTES:

[16] One of them, having thus smeared his head, stooped to the fire to dry it; the powder flared up, and he leapt forth into the *rara* singed bare to the scalp.

[17] The native poems of the time refer also to a hailstorm, which destroyed the plantations, a hurricane which caused a tidal wave and a great flood, and raised the alluvial flats of the Rewa delta several feet, a tradition which has support in the fact that a network of mangrove roots underlies the soil at a depth of four or five feet. The hurricane is said to have carried the pestilence away with it.

[18] They boarded her and directed her to the sandal-wood district in Mbau, returning to the shore with a pig, a monkey, two geese and a cat, besides knives and axes and mirrors. The native historians name her captain "Red-face."

[19] It is well here to correct an error for which Thomas Williams was originally responsible, and which has been copied by almost every writer on Fiji since his day, namely, that "about the year 1804 a number of convicts escaped from New South Wales, and settled among the islands." The only foundation for this story is that "Paddy" Connor, who was actually a deserter from a passing ship, was popularly supposed to have "done time," and that the morals of the early settlers were such that if they were not convicts they ought to have been. Putting aside the extreme improbability that escaped convicts should beat 1200 miles in the teeth of the prevailing wind, while so many eligible hiding-places lay near at hand, it is certain that the first white settlers were all shipwrecked sailors, deserters, or men paid off at their own request.

According to M. Dumont d'Urville, two escaped convicts named "Sina" and "Gemy" (? Jimmy) were concerned in the seizure of the *Aimable Josephine* in 1833.

[20] Among the settlers in 1812 was one who was believed to be secretly addicted to cannibalism, and was ostracized by his own countrymen.

[21] The story of this adventure, as narrated by Dillon, in his *Voyage in the South Seas*, is the most dramatic passage in Polynesian literature.

[22] The same Maraia who was afterwards

forcibly married to the captain of a Manila ship.

[23] Cakobau, according to Fijian spelling.

[24] Now included in the grounds of Government House.

[25] The massacre took place on the site of the present residence of the manager of the Bank of New Zealand, and four hundred persons were massacred without distinction of sex or age.

[26] See *The King and People of Fiji*, by Joseph Waterhouse.

[27] Waterhouse, p. 188.

[28] The second rebel chief of that name.

[29] Author of *The King and People of Fiji*.

[30] Maafu was the first to employ cannon in native craft in Fiji. He had two small pieces mounted on the decks of canoes, which, if they did but little execution in a bombardment, often ended a siege by striking terror into the hearts of the garrison.

[31] Mr. Miller, the British Consul in Hawaii, first addressed Thakombau as "Tui Viti" (King of Fiji) in a letter written in 1849 on the subject of the American claims, it being the policy of the claimants to make one chief responsible for damages sustained in every part of the group, however remote from the frontiers of Thakombau's territory.

[32] Now Lord Stanmore.

CHAPTER IV

CONSTITUTION OF SOCIETY

Chiefs—The Growth of the Confederation—The Confederation in Decay—Lala, Communal and Personal—Community of Property through Kerekere.

The principal authority upon the state of society among the Fijians when Europeans first came into contact with them, is the Rev. Thomas Williams, a man possessing intelligence and observation and the instinct of anthropological research without the training necessary for systematic inquiries. Belonging to the pre-speculation period, he described what he found and not what he wished to find, and in this respect he is a valuable witness, but, like other missionaries, he used a loose terminology in describing Fijian society, making the word "tribe" serve any group of men from a family to a state. His manuscript fell upon evil days. His scientific instinct of accuracy and detail was ludicrously out of keeping with the spirit of the missionary publications of those days, in which any customs that did not suit the English middle-class notions of propriety were either passed over as heathen wickedness too deplorable for description, or set forth (with a rich commentary of invective) in an obvious spirit of exaggeration to show the subscribers at home how perilous were the lives of missionaries, and how worthy the labourer of his hire. In his simple love of truth, Mr. Williams had forgotten to point the usual moral, and when Mr. Calvert brought home his manuscript in 1856, the Missionary Society decided that it must be edited with vigilance. A Bowdler was found in the person of a Mr. George Stringer Rowe, otherwise unknown to

fame, who re-wrote most of what was supplied to him, he apparently having no special knowledge of the subject. "But here," says this maiden-modest editor, whenever the outspoken Williams dares to touch upon the marriage laws, "even at the risk of making the picture incomplete, there may not be given a faithful representation."

SINISTER FATE OF WILLIAMS' MS.

The manuscript has long disappeared, and now we can never know exactly what was Williams and what was Rowe. In respect of its scientific accuracy, it may be questioned whether it did not find in Rowe a worse fate than the "Scented Garden" met at the hands of Lady Burton. Fortunately for science the loss of Williams's manuscript is not as irreparable as a distinguished anthropologist would have us believe. Mr. McLennan, in rating Mr. George Stringer Rowe for his meddlesome editing, remarks, "The natives were speedily converted first, and slowly extinguished afterwards. Comparatively few of the natives remain, and our chance of knowing well what were their laws and customs is perhaps gone for ever."[33] Upon this curious assumption, he treats "Fiji and the Fijians" as modern Biblical critics treat the Pentateuch—namely, as an obscure treatise whose loose terminology can only be read by the light of internal evidence. Had he taken the trouble to ascertain that the Fijians, so far from being extinguished, still number more than two-thirds of their strength when Williams wrote, and maintain their old tribal divisions and some of their social organization intact; had he cared to look through the

mass of evidence collected since the cession of the islands in 1874, he would have spared his readers a lengthy commentary, and himself a number of errors which go far to explain his unscientific attitude in his great controversy with Morgan on the classificatory system of relationship.

The key to the Melanesian system of government is Ancestor-worship. Just as every act in a Fijian's life was controlled by his fear of Unseen Powers, so was his conception of human authority based upon religion. Patriarchy, if not the oldest, is certainly the most natural shape into which the religious instinct of primitive man would crystallize. First there was the family—and the islands of the Pacific were probably peopled by single families—ruled absolutely by the father with his store of traditions brought from the land whence he came. His sons, knowing no laws but those which he had taught them; planting their crops, building their huts and their canoes under his direction, bringing their disputes to him for decision, have come to trust to him for guidance in every detail of their lives. Suddenly he leaves them. How are they to believe that he whose approval they courted, and whose anger they feared but yesterday, has vanished like the flame of yesterday's fire? His spirit has left his body; yet, somewhere it must be watching over them still. In life he was wont to threaten them with punishment for disobedience, and even now, when they do the things of which he disapproved, or withhold their daily offerings of food at his tomb, punishment is sure to follow—the crops fail; a hurricane unroofs the hut; floods sweep away the canoe. Thus they come to propitiate the spirit armed with such powers to harm, and, in response to their prayers, victory is given them over their enemies.

When they are beaten back, he is frowning upon them: when the yams ripen to abundant harvest he is rewarding their piety.

In this most natural creed was the germ of government. Each son of the dead father founded his own family, but still owed allegiance to the earthly representative of their deified father—the eldest son—on whom a portion of the father's godhead had descended. Generations came and went; the tribe had increased from tens to hundreds, but still the eldest son of the eldest, who carried in his veins the blood of the common ancestor in its purest form, was venerated as the head of the tribe. The ancestor was not forgotten, but he was now translated into Kalou-vu (lit. Root-God) and had his temple and his priests, who had themselves become a hereditary caste, with the strong motive of self-interest for keeping his memory green. His descendant, the tribal chief, is set within the pale of the tabu: his will may not be disobeyed, nor his body touched without incurring the wrath of the Unseen. The priests and the chief give one another mutual support, the one by threatening divine punishment for disobedience; the other by insisting upon regularity in bringing offerings to the temple.

RISE OF THE CHIEF'S POWER

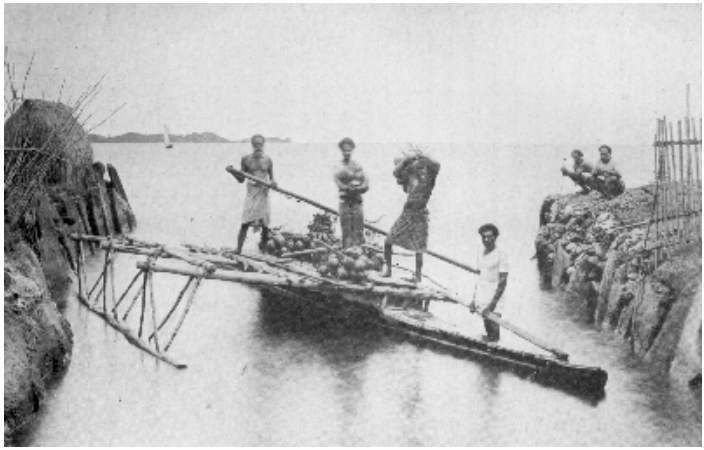
Had there been no war in Fiji the power of the aristocracy would have been limited. Among the mountain tribes of Vitilevu, who seldom extended their borders by conquest, the chief, while enjoying some measure of religious veneration, can issue no

important order without the consent of the council of elders. He can exact no truckling homage where every member of the tribe is a blood relation. But for conquest, Fiji would have been a country of tiny independent states, no larger than a single village could contain. From conquests sprang the great confederations. The chief of a conquering tribe rose to be head of a complicated social body; the members of his tribe an aristocracy supported by the industry of an alien plebs composed of tribes they had conquered and fugitives from other conquerors. These too had had their tribal gods and tribal chiefs, but what have men, reduced to open slavery, to do with such dignities? A generation of ill-usage sufficed to wipe out the very memory of independence. For god and chief alike they had their suzerain, upon whose indulgence their lives depended.

Besides the fortune of war, the chiefs owed much of the enormous increase in their power to their system of land tenure. The land boundaries of the tribe were telescopic. Every tribe owned as much land as it could defend against the encroachments of its neighbours. There was, as will presently be explained, individual ownership of land actually under cultivation, but all waste land was held, theoretically, in common. And, since the mouthpiece of the tribal will was the chief, the waste lands were at his disposal. So long as he gave it to his own people to use he gained no power, but as soon as fugitives, driven out by other conquerors, began to run to him for protection, and were granted land on which to settle, he found a body of tenants springing up who regarded him as their personal overlord. It was to him that they paid their rent in kind and in labour; it was to him, and not to the tribe, that they gave feudal service in war. The chief of a great

federation had thus two distinct classes of vassals—serfs conquered in war, and feudal tenants.

Before the advent of Europeans and the introduction of firearms, the confederations were never very large. Tribe fought with tribe on equal terms; the besieged had an advantage over the besiegers. Every tribe had a natural stronghold, stored with food and water for many weeks, into which it would retire in times of danger. If they did not carry it at the first assault, by surprise, or by treachery from within, the besiegers went home to await a better opportunity, for the slow starvation of a garrison by organized siege had never occurred to any native leader. The largest confederations known to us by tradition—Verata and Thakaundrove—controlled less than ten miles of coast line. With the introduction of gunpowder in 1808 native wars became far more destructive. The powerful chiefs immediately doubled their power, and yet Thakombau, the head of the most powerful confederation of all, even in the zenith of his power, never ruled directly over more than fifteen thousand people, though, undoubtedly, he could bring influence to bear upon half the group.



Bringing first fruits to Mbau.

The development of autocracy followed certain well-defined lines. At first the chief was priest and king after the order of Melchisedec of the Ammonite city, Jebus—that is to say, he received divine honours while wielding the temporal authority. But as the tribe grew the temporal power became irksome to him. The tradition of the founding of the temporal line in Tonga about the beginning of the seventeenth century throws the clearest light upon the origin of the spiritual and temporal lines. A king of Tonga had goaded his people into assassinating him; and his son, after avenging his murder, sought to put a buffer between himself and his rebellious subjects by delegating his executive power to his younger brother, reserving to himself all the solid advantages of his high station without any responsibilities. Safe from popular outbreak, he began to enjoy increased veneration owing to the more rigid tabu that hedged him in. In another case preserved by tradition the temporal power was founded by the indolence of the supreme chief. In order to rid himself of the cares of government, he constituted his brother his hereditary

minister, and bequeathed to his descendants an ornamental and dignified retirement. The Mikado and the Shogun are analogues of the Roko Tui and the Vunivalu.[34]

ORIGIN OF SPIRITUAL CHIEFS

In Fiji, the process of scission was found in every stage of evolution. Among the Melanesian tribes of the interior it had not begun; in Rewa the spiritual Roko Tui still wielded the temporal power; in Mbau and Thakaundrove he was beginning to lose even the veneration due to his rank. Just as the coast tribes had begun to adopt the Polynesian gods in addition to their own ancestral mythology, so they were more ready to follow the Polynesian example of separating the temporal from the spiritual chiefs.

The constitution of Mbau may be taken as a type of the Fijian constitution. First in rank was the Roko Tui Mbau (Sacred Lord of Mbau). His person was sacred. He never engaged personally in war. He was the special patron of the priests, who, in return, were unstinting in their insistence upon his divinity. He alone might wear his turban during the kava-drinking. It was tabu to strangle his widow, though the widows of no other chief were exempt from paying that last honour to the dead. At his death no cry of lamentation might be uttered, but a solemn blast was sounded on the conch-shell, as at the passing of a god.

Next in rank came the temporal chief, the Vu-ni-valu (Root of War, or Skilled in War), who was at once Commander-in-Chief and executive Sovereign. He

never consulted the Roko Tui Mbau in temporal affairs, and he enjoyed tabu privileges little inferior to those paid to his spiritual suzerain. The Vunivalu always belonged to the Tui Kamba (Lords of Kamba) sept, and the Roko Tui Mbau to the Vusaratu ("Chief sept").

The Tunitonga, the hereditary adviser and spokesman of the chiefs, ranked next. He was the state matchmaker, and disposed absolutely of the young chief girls, whose natural guardian he was.

The Mbete (priests) and Mata-ni-vanua (Royal messengers, *lit.* Messengers of the land) were next in consequence, though the chiefs of the Fisher septs wielded influence in proportion to their force of character.

Each sept had its own quarter of the town, the heralds at its eastern extremity, next the Vusarandave (hereditary soldiers), and the fishermen nearest to the mainland. Across the narrow straits were the planting lands of the subject tribes, who might be seen at every low tide, wading across the ford with contributions of food.

The Confederation in Decay.

The first effects of foreign interference was to strengthen the power of the chiefs; the second, to destroy it. For more than two years Mbau enjoyed a monopoly of muskets, which enabled her almost to double the extent of her territory. To the eastward the kingdom of Somosomo swallowed up the whole of Taveuni and the eastern portion of Vanua Levu, while the Tongan immigrants under Maafu first conquered the Lau group, and then threatened the

independence of Mbau itself. The immediate effect of subjugation was to blight the traditions and religion of the conquered tribe, for independence is as necessary to their life as light and air to the life of a plant. It is astonishing how quickly the status of a Fijian is reflected in his bearing. In an assemblage of Fijians an unskilled eye can pick out the members even of tribes who were subdued within the memory of men still living, by their slinking gait, their shifty eye, and the humble curve of their spine. A few years have changed them from warriors into beaten curs. Their chief, a hewer of wood like themselves, ceases at once to inspire respect; they approach him now without crying the *tama*, the prerogative he used to share with the gods themselves; they keep the *tama* for their alien conqueror and his gods; of their own they pretend to have forgotten the very name, nor dare they any more to claim *tauvu* relationship with any cousin-tribe that has preserved its freedom. They have dropped out of the social fabric, and chief and subject alike spend their lives in weaving ignoble plots to alleviate the squalor of their servitude.

INFLUENCE OF CONQUEST

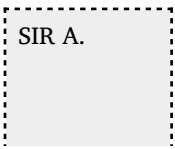
Far otherwise the conqueror. He who, but a generation back, would have sweated in the yam-field with his men, now grew fat upon the contributions of his tenants and the toil of his kitchen-men. His harem was crowded with the daughters of allied chiefs, and the fairest girls from every conquered village. Panders and sycophants flocked to him; dwarfs and negroes and renegade Europeans were in his train; buffoons told dirty stories over his evening kava bowl; poets forged

heroic genealogies for him, and when he went abroad men squatted on the ground with averted faces and *tama*'ed. Every vessel that he used was sacred, and brought death to any lowborn man that touched it. Every member of his tribe swam upon the tide of his prosperity. His village became a village of chiefs, with serfs of their own to plant food for them, where the youths were trained to the chief-like exercises of war and seamanship and dancing, and the old men spent their nights in feasting and concocting plots for extending their dominion. As for the Roko Tui, the Sacred Chief among the conquered tribes—there being no place for such rank among serfs—he was fain to surrender his sanctity; among the conquerors he degenerated into an ornamental symbol of the powers divine.

The chief was seen at his best among those tribes that had preserved their independence without seeking to extend their borders. Among the Melanesian tribes in the western half of Vitilevu, in a number of isolated islands, such as Vatulele and the Yasawa islands, the chief was veritably the father of his people. Neither his dignity, nor the sanctity of his person depended, as with us, upon any adventitious barriers between himself and his subjects. Familiarity bred no contempt. Like them, he wore nothing but the *malo*; with them he plied the digging-stick at planting time. And yet, though any might approach him, none forgot the honours due to him. When Roko Tui Nandronga worked himself into a drunken fury over the accidental burning of his kitchen, his whole people, chiefs and all, besmeared themselves with ashes, and crawled to his feet to sue forgiveness; and when the Colonial Government threatened to deport him for unjust exactions levied on his people, the very people who had suffered from

his extortions implored the Governor to reinstate him, saying that they loved him as a father. "Can we picture," asks Teufelsdröckh, "a naked Duke of Wellington addressing a naked House of Lords?" Had the sage seen a Fijian chief among his people he would have marked how the naked brown skin may be clothed in a divinity that needs no visible garment to lend it dignity.

The first blow at the power of the chiefs was struck unconsciously by the missionaries. Neither they nor the chiefs themselves realized how closely the government of the Fijians was bound up with their religion. No sooner had a missionary gained a foothold in a chief village than the tabu was doomed, and on the tabu depended half the people's reverence for rank. The tabu died hard, as such institutions should die. The first-fruits were still presented to the chief, but they were no longer carried from him to the temple, since their excuse—as an offering to persuade the ancestors to grant abundant increase—had passed away. No longer supported by the priests, the Sacred Chief fell upon evil days. Disestablished and disendowed, he was left to subsist upon the bounty of the temporal chief, whose power and dignity had, as yet, suffered no eclipse, for it was not the interest of the Europeans who were now crowding into the group to attack it. The chiefs guaranteed their lives and property, the chiefs sold them land, and protected them in their occupation of it; the chiefs levied contributions to pay for the contracts they had made with them; and, in return, the white men were always ready with muskets and ammunition to help them to keep rebellious vassals in check.



GORDON'S NATIVE POLICY

The temporal chiefs sounded the death-knell of their privileges when they were persuaded to cede their country to the British Government. Had they realized the consequences they would have preferred the danger of conquest by Maafu and his Tongans, or bullying by American commanders, as more than one has since confessed to me. But Thakombau was weary of bearing the brunt of European aggression, and when Thakombau persuaded, who was strong enough to hold aloof? The British Government began wisely enough considering the information at its disposal. Sir Arthur Gordon (now Lord Stanmore), the first governor, was gifted with a rare sympathy with native modes of thought. With the experience of the disastrous native wars in New Zealand before his eyes, he realized the importance of governing the country through its own strong native government. To deprive the chiefs of any of their privileges, to deny them all share in the government of their people, would have been to convert, not only them, but their people into enemies. To accept and improve the native system was at once the most just, the most safe and the most economical policy. His expert advisers were Sir John Thurston and Mr. David Wilkinson, the former deeply versed in native politics, and the latter in native customs, if not in customary law. With their help he set about enclosing the natives as it were within a ring fence. The islands were divided into provinces coinciding roughly with the boundaries of the existing confederations as he found them. The ruling chiefs were made lieutenant-governors under the title of *Roko Tui*, borrowed from the Sacred Chiefs who had

no longer any use for it; the province was sub-divided into districts under chiefs with the title of *Mbuli* ("Crowned"); the system of village councils was extended to the province, and to the high chiefs themselves, who met once a year to make recommendations to the Governor. War and cannibalism were of course put down, and polygamy, which had long been forbidden by the missionaries, was discountenanced, but otherwise the existing native customary law was embodied in a code of regulations passed expressly for the natives to be administered by native magistrates under European supervision.

Lala

It was here that the first mistake was made. The chiefs' privileges were well understood; their limitations had never been studied. It was known that the chief could command the gratuitous service of his subjects, provided that he fed them while they were working for him. It was not understood that each confederation had its own system of privileges. Mr. David Wilkinson, the Native Commissioner, had a most complete knowledge of the Confederation of Mbua, and he seems somewhat hastily to have assumed that the Mbua system prevailed *mutatis mutandis* throughout the group. Nor does he appear to have clearly understood the difference between the chiefs' personal privileges and his right to impose taxation for the good of the commune.

In the native mind the distinction is very clearly marked. There are, in fact, two distinct kinds of *lala*. The first, which I will call "personal *lala*" was the payment of rent in the form of tribute or service to

certain powerful chiefs by the tenants settled upon their land. The second, which is best described as "communal *lala*" was taxation in the form of tribute or service on behalf of the commune.

LEVY BY *LALA*

It is necessary to draw a clear line of distinction between communal and personal *lala*, because while the former was universal throughout Fiji, the latter was limited to those confederations in which the chief had private rights in the land, and also because the two forms of *lala* originated in totally different institutions, which are by no means confounded in the native mind. By Europeans, both official and "anti-official," they seem always to have been confounded. To the critics of the Colonial Government the word *lala* is synonymous with "authorized oppression," or, as a recent writer chooses to call it, "legalized robbery"; to the framers of the Native Regulation No. 4. of 1877, the two were so confused that they are enumerated haphazard without any attempt at classification. In that regulation *lala* is limited to house-building, planting gardens, road-making, feeding strangers, cutting and building canoes, and turtle fishing. By Regulation No. 7 of 1892, the communal aspect of *lala* was extended by giving any resolution of the Provincial or District Council that had received the written assent of the Governor the force of law. The exercise of *lala* was limited to the Roko Tui of the province, or the *Mbuli* of a district, and the penalty for disobedience to their lawful commands was a fine not exceeding 2s., or fourteen days' imprisonment in default, with a slightly increased penalty for a

subsequent offence.

Now, of the limitation set forth in the Native Regulations, house-building, canoe-building, planting gardens and fishing turtle belong to personal *lala*, though they may occasionally be applied for communal purposes; while road-making, feeding strangers and complying with resolutions of the Native Council are certainly exercised for the good of the commune. And yet the Regulation, put into the hands of a number of official chiefs, by no means entitled them to personal privileges that were only due from tenants to their landlord.

Communal Lala

In its communal aspect *lala* is the axis of the primitive commonwealth. A native cannot by himself build his house, or dig his plantation, and he has no money with which to pay others for doing so. Accordingly, he applies to the chief, who, acting as the mouthpiece of the commune, summons all the able-bodied men to come to his assistance. In return he must provide food for them, and he must take his turn in helping each of them whenever his services are required. Both in the larger confederations and the miniature republics of the inland tribes, this kind of *lala* is applied by the chief of sept or chief of village with the consent of the council of elders.

Communal *lala* is also indispensable for the performance of all public works, such as road-making, bridge-building; the erection of public meeting-houses, such as the church or *Mbure-ni-sa*, and it was also legitimately applied to such quasi-communal services as the repair of the chief's canoe or house, the planting of food and catching fish, for

the entertainment of strangers coming to trade with the tribe. In this respect the *lala* corresponds closely with our system of local rates. When exercised by the supreme chief to levy contributions for the equipment of an army or an embassy, it may fitly be compared with public taxation. Without it, the condition of the natives' houses, already bad, would become worse; their crops, already diminished, would become insufficient for their support; their villages, often now neglected, would become unfit for habitation, and the purchase and maintenance of boats and vessels become impossible. Where it has been abolished, as in Tonga and the Tongan community settled in Fiji, the necessity for combination is so keenly felt that the people have evolved a substitute of their own. Men and women voluntarily form themselves into clubs called *Kabani* (company) under various fanciful names, which are called together under the direction of an elected president to build houses, plant gardens, and do other combined work for one another. Disobedience to the order of the president is visited by a money fine, or by expulsion. A person who belongs to no club can obtain no assistance from his fellows.

I am not sufficiently acquainted with the history of the *corvée* in Egypt or the *rajakarya* of Ceylon to say whether they, like the *lala*, were instituted to meet the necessity of combination among a primitive people. The *rajakarya*, we know, was abolished because the high chiefs much abused it, but they did not begin to do so until the law of custom had begun to decay, owing to intercourse with Europeans. We had the *lala* ourselves up to the thirteenth century, or the magnificent churches of the Norman and Gothic periods would never have been built by people who were content to live in thatched hovels: in Scotland it

survived until much later.

LIMITATIONS OF THE *LALA*

The communal *lala* has suffered far less decay than the personal. The chief had no selfish interest to tempt him to push it to excess; the people felt it no injustice, though they were compelled to supply extravagant contributions of food and property for the frequent *solevu*. Nor do they grumble at being compelled to contribute a sum of some £5000 annually for the purchase and repair of vessels owned in common, for these exactions, burdensome as they are, minister to their natural vanity. It was when the government applied the principle of communal *lala* to sanitation that they began to cry out, for this was a clear infraction of the law of custom. Their fathers did well enough with a road twelve inches wide, with bridges formed of a single slippery log, with village squares unweeded save on the occasion of some great public function. When the chief orders the widening of roads and bridges, he is not voicing the want of the commune but the will of the foreigners.

It is worth noting as an illustration of communal *lala* that for the first few years after annexation the communal vessels usually belonged to the province. The people who contributed the purchase money did not grumble, because they regarded the collection as a personal levy by their chief. The vessel was at the disposal of the *Roko Tui*, who regarded it as his private yacht. But as soon as the people grasped the idea of owning a vessel in common, they began to subscribe for district and village boats, in which they

enjoyed an ample return for their money. The government exercises a wise control over such collections. No money may be levied until the resolution of the Native Council has received the sanction of the government, and sanction is never accorded when the levy is likely to put an undue burden upon the people. And here again is an instance of how one cannot tamper with native customs without letting loose a pack of unforeseen evils. The collection of money for the purchase of vessels is a useful spur to activity; it maintains a profitable colonial industry without putting any strain upon the natives. But with increased facilities for travelling there is growing up a practice on the part of both men and women of wandering from island to island on the village boat, billeting themselves upon the people they visit, and leaving their families to take care of themselves.

Personal Lala

If there had been but one system of land tenure throughout the group, the loose limitation of the personal *lala* enacted by the government would have worked well enough, so long as the hereditary chief had been the holder of the government office. But among no primitive people in the world, perhaps, is found so great a diversity of institutions relating to land as among the Fijians. The group being the meeting ground of the Polynesians, whose ruling aristocracy claimed special rights in the soil, and the Melanesians, whose institutions are republican and who hold their waste lands in common, there is every grade of land tenure ranging from absolute feudalism or serfdom to peasant proprietorship. And the systems are further complicated by the natural

peculiarities of the soil; in river deltas where cultivable land is continually shifting and but little labour is required to reclaim fields from the mud flats, ownership becomes necessarily individual, and a regular system of transfer springs up.

For several years it did not occur to any one that the right to personal *lala* was merely a property in land. For the first few years after annexation the government had enough to do in settling the land claims of Europeans without touching the thorny question of native titles. The Lands Commission established the fact that the chiefs had no right to sell land without consulting the wishes of their people, but it was outside the scope of the inquiry to define what their interest in the land really was. That the government had a suspicion of the truth is shown by Section 4 of Regulation No. 5 of 1881, in which it is provided that 40 per cent, of the rent of lands leased to Europeans is to be given to the Turanga i taukei—a status that exists in all the large confederations, but which is unknown among the tribes of Melanesian origin in western Vitilevu.



Building a Chief's House.

PERSONAL *LALA* IS RENT

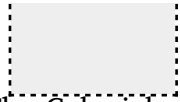
It was not until 1890 that the government found leisure to attack the native boundaries, and then the truth came out. By that time the natives had come to regard land from a new point of view. The principal commodity of old Fiji was food. Land had no value except in so far as it produced food, and, therefore, the mere possession of it was not coveted unless there were inferiors living on it as cultivators. But as soon as it was realized that land, when leased to Europeans, produced money, the earth-hunger of the chiefs increased a thousandfold. They now laid claims to lands which, twenty years before, they would not have accepted as a gift, and tried to prove their case by quoting instances in which the resident cultivators had done them *lala* service. The rival claimants would as eagerly assert that the services in

question were given in token of gratitude for protection, or out of mere neighbourly feeling in times of scarcity—for anything, in short, but rent, and would allege delicate shades of distinction in the ritual employed. But all alike admitted that a chief's interest in land would be established if he could prove an ancient right to order gardens to be planted by subject tribes, or to demand services from them in house-building, fishing or contributions for the entertainment of visitors. In few cases did the chiefs claim an absolute proprietorship in the soil; they admitted that the land was vested in the people living upon it, subject to the usual tribute.

Personal *lala*, then, was a landed interest. The chiefs of the large confederations had acquired it partly by appropriating the common lands of the tribe, and partly by the conquest or protection of the weaker tribes that made up their confederations. And if this seems to be but a slender title to so enormous a privilege, let it be remembered that the large landed proprietors in Europe have come by their property in no more regular or legitimate a fashion. Until the establishment of the Copyhold Commission some of the landed interests in England were quite as divergent from modern ideas as *lala*. Yet, among those who advocate that property in land should be transferred from the landlord to the State, there are few who propose to make the change except upon the basis of fair compensation to the landlords. It is a recognized principle of modern legislation that whenever a class has acquired certain rights by prescription, no measure injuriously affecting such rights shall be enacted without fair compensation. Policy as well as justice made it incumbent upon the British Government to confirm in their ancient rights the chiefs who had voluntarily ceded their country.

But the attempt to reduce these rights to written law was most unfortunate. Chiefs who were landlords were, at a stroke of the pen, given the right to exact personal *lala* from tribes who were not their tenants; and throughout quite half the group, the right to personal *lala* was conferred upon chiefs who were not landlords at all, and had no claim to it whatever. Confusion became worse confounded when the hereditary chiefs were expelled from office for misconduct, and persons of inferior rank were appointed to succeed not only to their official duties, but to their private rights to personal *lala*. Had the question been understood it would have been easy to frame a regulation of limiting the exercise of personal *lala* to those chiefs entitled to it by ancient usage, allowing each disputed case to be decided on its merits, and to limit the holders of government offices of *Roko Tui* and *Mbuli* to *lala* for communal purposes. It says much for the tenacity of customary law that the chiefs took so little advantage of the ignorance of the government—an ignorance that may be compared with the mistakes made by the Indian government in the matter of the Ryots. The chiefs of the miniature republics of western Fiji have never attempted to claim personal *lala*, and even chiefs, such as *Roko Tui Ra*, who were brought from other provinces by the government to be *Roko Tui* over people who had never been federated under a paramount chief, have used their powers very sparingly, although they were placed in the false position of having to maintain large establishments on very insufficient salaries.

LALA RECEIVES LEGAL SANCTION



The Colonial government has been bitterly attacked by certain European critics for permitting *lala* to exist at all. Insufficient knowledge of the subject has betrayed them into expressions as inaccurate as they are intemperate. "Slavery," and "Legalized Robbery," are not the strongest terms that have been applied to *lala*, and the people have been described as sunk in apathy and despair under the exactions of their chiefs. Let us see how far these charges are borne out by facts. The native regulations that defined the *lala* also provided that—"If any town shall desire to commute its *lala* work due to any chief for a fixed annual payment in money or in kind, and such chief shall have accepted such commutation with the Governor's sanction, the right of *lala* cannot again be resumed by him. A record of all such commutations shall be kept in the Native Affairs Office." Although many native communities now receive large incomes from rents and surplus taxes, from which commutation could be paid, there has been no single instance of an application to commute the *lala* during the thirty-one years in which the Regulation has been in force. If the people felt the *lala* to be oppressive they would not have hesitated to tender the trifling annual payment that would free them from it. There is no doubt that the *lala* has been pushed beyond its legitimate uses, but always by the chiefs of the confederations. Personal *lala* cannot be legitimately applied without the reciprocal obligation of providing the workers with food (*vakaotho*), and when the chief neglects this obligation, or uses the *lala* in the execution of work for Europeans, the *lala* at once becomes, not legalized robbery, for it is illegal, but oppression. An instance of this occurred before annexation, when, as already related, the American Government had fined king Thakombau

£9000 for the destruction of Vice-Consul Williams's house in a fire that was probably accidental. The people of the Tailevu coast were ordered to fish *bêche-de-mer* for sale to Europeans in order to meet the American claim, but they refused, though they knew that refusal might cost them their lives. For Thakombau they would cheerfully have stripped themselves of all they had, but to collect produce destined for a foreigner was an infringement of the law of custom.

The instances of oppressive *lala* nearly all came from one province—that of Thakaundrove—governed by a young chief who, having been educated in Sydney, wished to live in European style beyond his means. For abuse of the *lala*, especially in levying goods for sale to Europeans, he was punished more than once by the government. The people who complained against him were those over whom the hereditary right to *lala* did not exist, and not those who were the natural tenants of his estates. It is a significant fact that although the people have largely lost their fear of lodging complaints against their chiefs, most of the complaints that are made allege wrongful division of money or land, while very few indeed are based upon abuse of the *lala*. The commission appointed in 1893 to inquire into the causes of the decrease of the natives went very fully into these charges, and reported that throughout the largest portion of the group, no real discontent existed, and that in those provinces where the chief had influence enough to abuse the *lala*, the reported discontent was rather in the nature of grumbling at the inexorable regularity of the call for tax and communal work than at the chief's *lala*, for punctual recurrence is peculiarly abhorrent to the desultory mind of the Fijian. These murmurs, which are not thought

worthy of being formulated in complaints, naturally reach the ears of the resident Europeans, to whom they are given as excuses for broken promises, and for disinclination to work. The fact is that *lala* by a hereditary chief, unless pushed to great excess, is not considered a hardship by a Fijian. And seeing how lately the chiefs enjoyed absolute power, and how the temptations laid in their way by the introduction of money have increased, it is surprising how little they have abused their power. It is unreasonable to expect from them an entire freedom from errors which are not unknown in our own civilized society, where the rich take advantage of the poor, the strong of the weak, the shrewd of the simple.

SPOLIATION SANCTIONED BY CUSTOM

Defects are common to all social systems, and at the most the legal recognition of the so-called communal system and the government of the chiefs was a temporary compromise intended to last only until the people could walk alone. The hostile critics of the system have viewed the question solely by the light of modern civilization, holding the belief that whatever fails to coincide with that system must be forcibly dragged into line with it. They have forgotten that no social system is perfect, that in civilized society there are many who own more property than they can profitably use, while others have scarcely enough to maintain existence. Our own system is in a process of transition. Our upper classes, formerly basing their claim of rank upon the purity of their descent, now rely upon the possession of wealth. The relations of master and servant having

passed from slavery to wage-earning, are now in the first stage of evolution from wage-earning to profit-sharing. The system may some day reach perfection, perhaps in the direction of state socialism, but it is not in its present state a model upon which the Fijian should be made to mould itself.

Two examples of spoliation recognized by customary law should here be cited, because though they are "robbery" legalized by the law of custom (albeit unlawful in the eye of the government), it has never occurred to any one of the victims to seek redress. The first was exercised by what is known as the right of the *vasu* which has its origin in the peculiar marriage laws of the Fijians. Every Fijian was said to be *vasu* to the clan of his mother, and in theory had a lien over all the property of her family, but of course only the sons of women of high rank would dare to claim such a right, though low-born *vasus* could always count upon a welcome at the hands of their cousins. To the rights of the *vasu levu* (great *vasu*), *e.g.* the son of the reigning chief's daughter or sister who was royal on both sides, there was practically no limit. He might ransack the houses, sweep the plantations bare, kill the pigs and violate the women without a murmur from the unfortunate dependants of his kinsmen. In this way villages are occasionally swept of everything of value. I do not think that in former days the people felt anything but honour in being so singled out for plunder, and even now, when they are fully aware of their legal right to refuse, the ties of custom are stronger than their new-born love of independence. They give their property with an outward show of good-humour, and vent their mortification in grumbling among themselves, and to the neighbouring Europeans. I remember Mbuli Malolo, who, as chiefs went, had a

high reputation for care of the welfare of his people, taking his ten-year-old daughter, just recovered from sickness, for a tour round the poverty-stricken islands of the Mamanutha group. The little girl was led from house to house to point out every article of clothing and furniture that happened to take her childish fancy; and, everything she chose being swept up and carried instantly to her canoe, she left a trail of destitution behind her. Though the poor people knew that I had power to redress their grievance, they made no complaint; they only mentioned the matter to account for their abject poverty. In 1887 I offered to interfere on behalf of certain natives of Koro, thus despoiled by one of the Mbau chiefs, but the natives themselves begged me to take no action, saying that it was their custom to give whatever their chiefs asked, and that their grumbling to Europeans who had given me the information was not to be taken seriously. In this they could not have been actuated by fear of the chief's resentment, for he belonged to another province, and had no official relations with them.

NATIVES MAY COMMUTE *LALA*

The other example is the curious custom arising out of the tie of *vei-tauvu*, which, though not due to the influence or authority of chiefs, has also sometimes the effect of stripping a village of all movable property. As already explained, the people of two villages, who, though now widely separated, worship the same god—that is, trace their origin to a common source—are said to be *vei-tauvu*, and have the privilege, when visiting one another, of killing

the domestic animals, stripping the food plantations and appropriating all chattel property belonging to their hosts. A remarkable instance of this occurred in 1892. The formerly influential, but now quite insignificant, island of Nayau, on the eastern confines of the group, contrived, with the utmost difficulty, to raise a hundred pounds for the purchase of a cutter. In due course the people came to Suva to take over their little vessel. On the first night out, whether by accident or design, they dropped anchor at the chief village of the tribe of Notho. Under ordinary circumstances they would have behaved themselves as befitted persons of their insignificance, but, no sooner had they anchored than a deputation of the Notho chiefs put off in a canoe to bid them welcome as brothers of the *tauvu*. In the speeches of welcome allusion was made to the old tradition of the origin of the Notho tribe, how, in times long past, a princess of Nayau had been swallowed by a monstrous shark, and how a Notho chief having slain and ripped the monster, rescued her and took her to wife. Her rank being superior to his, her children worshipped the Tutelary God of Nayau, which was a shark, and the two tribes became *vei-tauvu*—that is to say, of common origin. In these poverty-stricken islanders the men of Notho were now to recognize the elder branch of their family. It took a little persuasion to convince the visitors of the full extent of their good fortune, but when they were convinced they made ample amends for their neglect. While the men of Notho sat passive in their huts, they ran riot through the village, tearing down the cocoanuts and plantains, rifling the yam stores, and slaughtering every pig and fowl that did not escape by flight. They destroyed, indeed, far more than the hold of their little vessel could contain, and they left their

dear brothers of the tauvu with nothing but complimentary speeches to console them for the famine they would have to face.

Unlike the *vasu*, the *vei-tauvu* was used reciprocally. The Notho clan cherishes the intention of visiting Nayau, and exacting from their brothers an eye for an eye. But the custom, like the tie of relationship in which it is founded, is already in decay, being incompatible with the growth of modern ideas of property. Had it been frequently exercised the government would long ago have put a stop to it.

The Commission of 1893 recommended the government to encourage the chiefs' tenants to commute the obligation of personal service. In Tonga, on the abolition of the personal right of *lala*, the chiefs were compensated by being made Lords of the Manor over large tracts of land which yielded a fixed rental from every native occupying them, and from every European settler to whom the landlord chose to lease land. The Crown collected all rents and paid them over to the landlord, who, however, had no right of eviction. The tenants held their land on hereditary tenure, and default in payment of rent was visited with distraint instead of eviction. This system was possible in Tonga, because in ancient times the land there was regarded as the property of the spiritual chief, the Tui Tonga, who could thus be made to grant manors to his inferior chiefs without doing violence to native ideas: but in Fiji, where the rights of the Crown have never been insisted on, and the land is for the most part vested in the commune, such a scheme would be impracticable.

In Fiji the time has come for adopting one of three schemes, for the tendency towards the sub-division

of the communal land among individuals is growing so rapidly that unless something is done immediately, the government will find itself face to face with a very serious difficulty. Either the tenants should be induced to buy out their chiefs' interests for a sum down to be invested for the chief by the government, or an annual money compensation in lieu of all personal *lala* should be fixed by the native land court; or in those districts in which land is likely to be leased to Europeans, portions of the communal land should be vested absolutely in the chief in lieu of all personal *lala*, with the power to lease, but not to sell, his holding. The economical aspect of this latter arrangement would be to throw open to settlement on easy terms considerable areas of native land in various parts of the colony, for the chief would eagerly welcome tenants who would yield him an income in money in lieu of the services of his people. While many of the chiefs would gladly accept such commutation, it is doubtful whether the people, superabundant though their land is, would voluntarily part with any portion of it for an equivalent, so slender in their estimation is immunity from personal service. Yet, so tenacious is the law of custom, that for some time after they had commuted their obligation it is probable that the people would continue to give their services voluntarily to their chief, whose prestige would be in nowise affected by the legislative restrictions imposed by foreigners.



Spoil from the plantations—(Taro, Cocoanuts and Yangkona).

At the end of 1898, however, a step was taken towards compelling obedience to the Native Regulations in the appointment of four European travelling inspectors who divide the group between them, and go from village to village, persuading, exhorting, and, in the last resort, threatening with prosecution persons who neglect to comply with the Native Regulations concerning sanitation and the planting of food. It is too early to look for any tangible results from this measure, of which the success must chiefly depend upon the tact of the persons selected for the appointments. But, in so far as it is a recognition of the fact that the people cannot govern themselves, and that it is safe to substitute Europeans for native agents now that the powerful chiefs of confederations are passing away, leaving a mere tithe of their power to degenerate descendants, it may be a step in the right direction.

COMMUNISM THROUGH *KEREKERE*

Community of Property through Kere-Kere

The Fiji commoner reckons his wealth, not by the amount of his property, but by the number of friends from whom he can beg. There is no time in the history of the Fijians when literal communism obtained. The tribal waste land, it is true, was held in common, but the land actually in cultivation for the time being, and the cocoanut and other fruit trees were the recognized property of the man who planted them and of his heirs. Poultry and pigs were held individually, and the ownership was jealously guarded, the poultry being marked in various ways to secure identification, and native manufactures of all kinds were the individual property of the makers.

But, while individual rights were thus far recognized, the claims of the tribe and of relationship were so strong as to constitute a lien upon all individual property. A man who would regard the theft of his pig as a deadly injury, and who would resent a stone thrown at his pig as an insult offered to himself, would not feel aggrieved if called upon by communal *lala* to provide food for visitors to the village, even though they were unwelcome, nor would he think of refusing any of his possessions to a fellow-townsman who begged them of him, consoling himself with the reflection that the gift affords him a claim upon the borrower at some future time.

What the *solevu* was between tribes, the *kere-kere* was between individuals—a mere substitute for trade by barter. A man had more salt in his house than he

wanted; his more needy neighbours begged it of him. He in his turn, wanting yams for his daughter's marriage feast, has a claim upon each one of them. And so the system works out to a balance. It may be the first stage in evolution from the state in which the proprietary unit was the tribe, or more probably it is the most ancient of all laws of property, and dates from the day when Palæolithic man first found a bludgeon that balanced to his liking. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine how primitive society could exist without some such custom as communal *lala* and *kere-kere* within the limits of the tribe. So long as there was but one standard of industry and all men worked alike, the system answered well enough; but, as soon as each individual became free to indulge his natural indolence, having no longer the stimulus of fear, the custom was mutilated. The industrious had no longer any incentive to industry, knowing that whatever they accumulated would be preyed upon by their more idle relations. Fear of public opinion still prevents the richer native from refusing what is asked of him, though he knows very well that the recipient of his bounty is too idle and thriftless ever to be in a position to yield him an equivalent.

THE FATE OF A REFORMER

Kere-kere, which was formerly the pivot of native society, now wars unceasingly against the mercantile progress of the people. One might multiply instances of the resentment shown by Fijians against any of their number who tries to improve his position, or accumulate property, by braving the ridicule of those who would beg of him. In the few cases in which Fijians have shown sufficient independence to defy

the importunities of their friends, they have been made the victims of a kind of organized boycott well calculated to deter others from attempting to follow their example. There is the case of Tauyasa of Naselai on the Rewa river, who had a banana plantation and paid coolies and Fijians to work for him. His industry prospered so that he was able to buy a cutter and a horse, and furniture for his house. To the chiefs who flattered him, and the host of idle relations who wanted to live upon him, he turned a deaf ear, obstinately refusing to part with his property. They retaliated by circulating infamous stories about him, and by ridiculing him with the taunt that he was aspiring beyond his station, and was trying to ape his superiors, the reproach that is of all the hardest for a Fijian to bear. The worry of this petty persecution preyed upon his mind so grievously that he took to his mat, and foretold the day of his death. But not even his memory was allowed to rest in peace, for the native teacher who preached on the Sunday following his death, cried, "Who shipped China bananas on the Sabbath?" and then in the pause that followed, he whispered hoarsely, "Tauyasa!" Again he shouted, "Where is Tauyasa now?" and slowly twisting his clenched fist before him he hissed between his teeth, "He is squirming in the everlasting flames."

A native of Ndeumba, who used to make a net income of £250 a year from his banana plantation, and had money deposited in the bank, asked not long ago whether the government would not make the custom of *kere-kere* illegal, so as to furnish him with an excuse for refusing to give money away. He could only keep his profits to himself by depositing them in the bank and saying that he had none, and who knew whether the bank might not some day stop

payment as he had heard banks had done in Australia? If the government would only make begging between relations illegal, he said he would have a valid excuse for refusing to give; otherwise he would always be ashamed to refuse money to importunate relatives. When this was mentioned to some Mbau women of high rank without the disclosure of the man's name, they at once identified him with Sakease, whose niggardly spirit appeared to be notorious.

Occasionally Fijians of the lower classes show real strength of character in their thirst for progress. The province of Mba in Western Vitilevu, having no paramount hereditary chief of its own, had been, for administrative purposes, placed under the control of a *Roko Tui*, artificially created by the government, and one Sailosi, a well-educated man of inferior birth and quite unconnected with the province, was appointed provincial scribe—an office of small pay but great responsibility, for the scribe is not only the official adviser of the *Roko Tui*, but also treasurer for the large sums of tax-money and rents that have from time to time to be distributed. This man did his work very well, and was proportionately unpopular in the province. Surrounded by enemies who desired his downfall, he contrived to acquire property and to live as far as he could in European comfort. He filled his house with furniture and cultivated a flower garden. After several abortive conspiracies to deprive him of his post by false accusation and of his life by witchcraft, incendiaries burned down his house and all it contained while he was absent on official business in Suva, and on his return the people pressed forward with pretended expressions of sympathy to enjoy his discomfiture. He surveyed the ruins of all he possessed without a sign of emotion,

and then he said, "It is well; I have always wanted a larger house, and now you will have to build me one." And they did. It is sad to have to record that this man, too, fell a victim to the temptation of borrowing from the public funds, which so few Fijian functionaries can resist.

Though few Fijians can be brought to trust a bank with their savings, they are quite alive to the advantages of receiving interest. When the Native Commissioner had been trying to foster a habit of investment through the pages of the vernacular newspaper he received a letter enclosing four shillings. "I send you this, sir," ran the letter, "in order that you may make it give birth. I should like its yield to be one dollar once a month."

FEAR OF RIDICULE OBSTRUCTS PROGRESS

It seems to be a common belief among Europeans that one has only to abolish the power of the chief to secure to every native the fruit of his own industry. That this is not so is proved by the example of the Tongans, who, being a less conservative people than the Fijians, are more inclined towards social progress. The powers of the chiefs were there abolished by law in 1862, but, during the forty-four years that have elapsed, the principal result of the change has been to impoverish the chiefs without enriching the people, while the loss of the power of combination has deprived them of the power of building any but houses of the poorest description. And in Fiji the majority, being naturally indolent, are interested in preserving the ancient right of begging

property from a relation and the fixed determination of the idle majority to live at the expense of the industrious minority; and the moral cowardice of the minority in not resisting their organized spoliation quite neutralizes the encouragement to accumulate savings which should have resulted from the recognition of private property by English law. No less in Tonga than in Fiji is ridicule the most effective weapon of intimidation. The people are enslaved, but to a more merciless despotism than the tyranny of chiefs—the ridicule of their fellows.

If native laws are to exist at all under the new order, this native habit of *kere-kere* must be swept away. New wants must be developed, wealth must take the place of rank as the factor of social importance, the idle must be made to feel the sting of poverty. The easy-going native must be made to feel the pangs of the *auri fames*, the earth must be cursed for him, competition with its unlovely spawn of class hatred, pauperism, and vagrancy must be cultivated in a people to whom they are unknown, for at present the Fijians have no spur to the acquisition of money except the desire for some particular luxury. The earth need only be tickled to laugh back in harvest. Most of the necessaries of life are produced equally in every village. When a native takes produce to the market it is for no abstract desire for the possession of money; he has in his mind a definite object upon which the proceeds should be spent; a new *sulu*, a lamp, or a contribution to the missionary meeting. If he has no such object he will let the surplus produce of his garden or his net decay rather than undergo the trouble of taking it to the market. Facts never pointed to a clearer conclusion. Under his own social Arcadian system the Fijian thrived and multiplied; under ours it is possible that he may thrive again;

but under a fantastic medley of the two he must inevitably go under. No man can serve two masters.

FOOTNOTES:

[33] *Studies in Ancient History*, 1876.

[34] That the native tradition was not invented to account for the tribal constitution is shown in the form of the story, which records the assassination and the subsequent delegation of power without assigning any reason for the latter, or noticing the connection between the two. (See my *Diversions of a Prime Minister*, p. 304.)

CHAPTER V

WARFARE

The state of incessant intertribal warfare in which the first missionaries found the Fijians has led certain writers to represent them as a bloodthirsty and ferocious race whose sudden conversion to the ways of peace could only be accounted for by supernatural agency. There was one missionary, however, whose zeal in the cause of his church never obscured his natural truthfulness. "When on his feet," says Thomas Williams, "the Fijian is always armed.... This, however, is not to be attributed to his bold or choleric temper, but to suspicion and dread. Fear arms the Fijian.... The club or spear is the companion of all walks; but it is only for defence. This is proved

by every man you meet: in the distance you see him with his weapon shouldered; getting nearer, he lowers it to his knee, gives you the path, and passes on."[35]

The same writer puts the annual losses in battle, without counting the widows strangled to their husbands' manes, at from 1500 to 2000. But this estimate was made when every tribe had muskets, and the possession of fire-arms emboldened tribes to take the field who would otherwise have agreed with their enemy quickly. None of the great confederations existed before 1800: the influence of Mbau scarcely extended beyond the mangrove swamps that face the island stronghold; Somosomo did not claim sovereignty even over the whole of Taveuni; even Rewa and Verata might have reckoned their territory in acres. In the eighteenth century, therefore, a belligerent tribe could put but a handful of men into the field, armed with weapons no deadlier than the spear and the club. As late as Williams's day the great confederations of Mbau and Rewa could not, even with the help of mercenaries from Tonga and elsewhere, raise an army of 1500 without immense difficulty; and, if the annual slaughter amounted to less than 2000 out of a population of 150,000 almost constantly at war when three out of every five men carried a musket in addition to his other arms, the mortality from war must formerly have been quite insignificant.

It used, I know, to be said that the mortality was less with fire-arms than with native weapons, and this was true if the victims of native marksmanship only were taken into account, but the moral effect of gunpowder made the club and spear more deadly. The trade muskets which were imported in the early

days by the traders in enormous quantities were flintlocks and "Tower" muskets, and when fretted by rust were often more dangerous to the man at the stock than to the man at the muzzle. The native marksmanship, always erratic, was not improved by a custom, common in Vatulele and other parts of the group, of sawing off the greater part of the stock, and firing with the barrel poised in the left hand at arm's length.

WAR FOSTERED MORALITY

Few native traditions have come down to us from the eighteenth century, but there are so many references in tribal histories to an upheaval among the inland clans obliterating all earlier historical landmarks, that there is ground for believing that the wars before 1780 were little more than skirmishes, and that war on a larger scale began with the convulsion that drove so many of the inland tribes to seek asylum on the coast, and left so profound an impression on the traditional poetry. War on a destructive scale is impossible among a people split up into petty joint families, each bent upon defence rather than conquest. In order to understand the political state of Fiji two centuries ago one must examine the institutions of other races that are still in the same condition. The natives of the d'Entrecasteaux Islands as I saw them in 1888 afford an excellent illustration. As we travelled along the coast we found that every village had its frontier, a stream-mouth, or a sapling stuck upright in the sand, beyond which none would venture. The natives did their best to dissuade us from crossing these boundaries by representing their neighbours as

thirsting for the blood of strangers. But on the other side of the frontier we found a meek folk, lost in wonder that we had come through the last stage of our journey unscathed, so cruel and ferocious were its inhabitants. Every man lived in active terror of his neighbour, and went armed to his plantation, but this did not prevent him from being a most skilful and industrious husbandman, or from living to a good old age. The fear being mutual, there was, in reality, scarcely any war; an occasional attack upon a woman or an unarmed man served to keep the hereditary feud alive.

The social evils of such a state of *morcellement* may easily be exaggerated. The trivial loss of life is more than counterbalanced by the activity, alertness and tribal patriotism which are fostered in an atmosphere of personal danger. Every man having a selfish interest in the increase of his own tribe, public opinion compelled the observance of those customary laws that guarded the lives of women and young children. The lazy could not then idle away their day in philandering with the women; the adventurous could not evade their share of the communal labour by paying long visits to distant islands, even if they did not find enough to sate their taste for adventure at home. The *insouciance* that has followed the decay of custom was impossible, because the tribe that gave way to it was lost. The teaching of all history is that man deteriorates as soon as he ceases to struggle either against hostile man or unkind nature. A barren soil, an overcrowded community, or a fauna dangerous to man will serve the need, but in a country where there is food without tillage, land enough for twenty times the population, and no man-eating tiger or poisonous snake, there must be war to keep the people from

sinking into paralyzing lethargy. It must be remembered that the most devastating wars are less destructive than mild epidemics. The slaughter in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, estimated at 80,000 in France alone, worked out to little more than two in 1000 of the population—less, in fact, than in recent epidemics of influenza.

The causes of war among the Fijians rank in the following order of importance: Land; women; insults to chiefs (such as a refusal to give up some coveted object—a club, a shell-ornament, or a tame bird—or the unlawful eating of turtle, which are the chief's prerogative); wanton violation of the tabu; despotism or ambition of chiefs whom the malcontents hope to settle by a blow from behind in the turmoil of battle. But the most galling insult never provoked war unless success were assured by the oracles. An apparently restless thirst for war, which was carefully reported to the enemy, was a mere sham to feel the temper of the border tribes, and to frighten the other side into overtures for pardon. The real preparation consisted in rebuilding ruined temples, clearing away the undergrowth of shrines half-buried in weeds, and erecting new temples to the manes of chiefs who had lately attained the Pantheon. The issue then lay with the priests who interpreted the will of the gods, and grew fat on the offerings presented to their patrons.

A favourable oracle depended upon the attitude of the Mbati,[36] or border tribes, for no priest, in the paroxysm of inspiration, ever forgot the earthly conditions of success. The borderers in large confederations, such as Mbau and Rewa, enjoyed extraordinary independence. They knew their value too well to pay tribute to their nominal overlord,

who, so far from expecting it, fawned upon them, and took care that they received the lion's share in any division of property, for any neglect was certain to drive them into coquetting with the enemy. Though their arrogance was sometimes difficult to bear, he must stomach the insult, for the chief was twice lost whose Mbati went over to the other side. On the other hand, the lot of the Mbati was not altogether to be envied, for they had to bear the first brunt of attack, and in the struggle between Mbau and Rewa in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, Mbati of both sides were fighting incessantly. The constant alarms made the Mbati the finest warriors in Fiji. Politically they formed an *imperium in imperio*, and their influence was paramount in the tribal councils.

DECLARATION OF WAR

Assured of the loyalty of the Mbati, the chief looked about him for allies. To tribes with which he was connected by marriage, or by the tie of *tauvu* (*i.e.* common ancestry), or which owed him a debt for past help, he sent costly presents, and the enemy, who was certain to be kept informed of every movement, followed this by sending a costlier gift to *mbika* (press down) the first present, and purchase neutrality. Councils were held, in which the entire plan of campaign was laid down, and orders were sent to all the tributary villages to hold themselves in readiness; a refusal always meant, sooner or later, the destruction of the village. The Mbati and the outlying villages were meanwhile strengthening their defences, either by entrenching a neighbouring hill-top or by deepening the moat, and building reed

fences with intricate passages through the earthwork ramparts.

It sometimes happens that inferior combatants each pin their faith on the aid of a superior chief, while he, for his own interest, trims between the two, inclining to the weaker party in order to reduce the stronger, whom he reassures with flattering messages. In promising his aid he would, in ancient times, send a spear with a floating streamer; more recently the custom was to send a club with the message, "I have sent my club; soon I myself will follow." It was death for tributaries to *kanakanai yarau* (*i.e.* eat with both sides). The other side were kept fully informed of these preliminary negotiations, and had made similar preparations. No formal declaration of war was therefore necessary, though there were instances of it. Usually the declaration took place in more practical fashion by the surprise and slaughter of an unarmed party of the enemy—women fishing on the reef, or a messenger returning home in his canoe. On the news of this exploit the war-drum was beaten and the *tangka* was held. Thereafter no visitor, though he belonged properly to the opposing side, might depart. Custom required that he should fight on the side of his hosts.

The *tangka* was a review, held on the eve of leaving the chief village, and at every halting-place on the way to the battlefield. It was a ceremony that appealed to the Fijian temperament with peculiar force, since, to adapt the phrase of a classic in the literature of sport, it was "the image of war, with less than ten per cent. of its danger." The warriors, arrayed in all the majesty of their war-harness, met to defy a distant enemy, to boast of their exploits on a future day, not to the unsympathizing eyes of

strangers, but to a gallery of applauding friends. The public square of the village was lined with the townsfolk and their women; at its further end sat the paramount chief and his warriors. Presently the approach of a party of allies is announced with a loud shout; led by their chief they file into the open, painted with black and white, armed and turbaned, their eyes and teeth gleaming white in terrifying contrast with their painted skins. The *tama*, the shout of respect, is exchanged, and a man, who is supposed to represent the enemy, stands forth and cries, "Sai tava! Sai tava! Ka yau mai ka yavia a mbure!"[37]

Thereupon begins the *mbole*, or boasting. The leader first, then the warriors next in degree singly, after them companies of five, or ten, or twenty step forward into the open, brandishing their weapons before the presiding chief and boasting of their future exploits at the top of their voices. Williams records a few specimens of these *mbole*:—

THE BOASTING CEREMONY

"Sir, do you know me? Your enemies soon will!"

"See this hatchet, how clean! To-morrow it will be bathed in blood!"

"This is my club, the club that never yet was false!"

"The army moves to-morrow; then shall ye eat dead men till you are surfeited!"

> (Striking the ground with his club) "I make the earth tremble: it is I who meet the enemy to-morrow!"
>
> "This club is a defence; a shade from the heat of the sun, and the cold of the rain. You may come under it!"
>
> A young man approaches the chief quietly carrying an anchor pole, and smashing it across his knee, cries "Lo, sire, the anchor of —— (the hostile tribe); I will do thus with it!"

These boasts are listened to with mingled laughter and applause. Thus far and no farther does Fijian courage reach, for the performance in the field falls woefully short of the promise. There the natural timidity and caution of the race reasserts itself, and a reputation for desperate valour may be cheaply won. During the *mbole* the chief will sometimes playfully taunt the boasters; hinting that, from their appearance, he should have thought them better acquainted with the digging-stick than the club. At the close of the *tangka* the presiding chief usually made a speech, appealing rather to the self-interest of his allies than to their attachment, promising them princely recompense, and sometimes giving them more definite promises, such as a woman of rank, as a reward for valour in the field. Such a woman was called "The cable of the Land," and was highly esteemed in the tribe to which she was given.

The armies, even of the great confederations, rarely exceeded 1000 men. A greater number could only be assembled with an immense effort. The chief command was vested in the Vu-ni-valu (*lit.*, Root of War). The titular chiefs of the auxiliary tribes acted

as officers.

The first objective of the invading army was an outlying village of the enemy. This might be a fortress on a hilltop, strongly entrenched by nature, or a village in the plain, defended with an earthwork about six feet high, surmounted with a breastwork of reed fencing or cocoanut trunks, and surrounded by a muddy moat. Sometimes there was a double or a triple moat with earthworks between. There is endless variety in these fortifications, for advantage was always taken of the natural defences, and almost every important hilltop in Western Vitilevu is crowned with an entrenchment of some kind. Though there were generally from four to eight gateways, defended by traverses, and surmounted with a look-out place, some strongholds had but one gateway and that so difficult of access as to be impracticable to the besiegers. The fort of Waitora, situated on a hill two miles north of Levuka, is a rock about twenty feet higher than the surrounding ground, and inaccessible save by means of a natural ladder formed of the aerial roots of a huge banyan-tree, which arch over at the top so as to form a tunnel just big enough to admit the body. The great rock fortress of Na-koro-vatu on the Singatoka river was taken in the rebellion of 1876 by surprising the only approach on a Sunday morning, when the rebels thought that the government troops would be in church. The besiegers crept up a jagged rift in the rock as steep as the side of a well, and utterly impregnable against more vigilant defenders. In the island of Vatulele, an upheaved coral reef honeycombed with caverns, the fortress of Korolamalama was a cave defended by a breastwork of stones, watered from a well in its inmost recesses, and provisioned for a siege of many months. The last

stronghold of the rebel mountaineers in 1876 was a cave large enough to contain the population of all the neighbouring villages, and impregnable to every weapon except smoke, an expedient commonly employed by the force attacking such defences. On the other hand, the chief towns of large confederations, such as Mbau, Mathuata and Rewa, were not fortified at all, because if the enemy had been victorious enough to approach them, their inhabitants would have seen that all was lost and would have sued for peace.

TORTURE OF PRISONERS

The first care of a besieging army is to prepare for defeat. Each division of the army prepared its own *orua*, paths diverging from the fortification down which they could run if assailed by a sortie, or taken in the rear by an ambush. Sieges were never of long duration: the attacking army, lacking any kind of commissariat, seldom carried food for more than three days, and were in straits while the besieged were living in comfort on their ample supplies. Like every root-eating people, the Fijians require a heavy weight of food per head to satisfy them, from five to ten pounds' weight of yams or other roots being the normal daily food of a full-grown man. Consequently, if the first assault failed, they usually retired to deliberate and secure fresh supplies. Fortresses were seldom starved into capitulation, though, as they were generally ill-provided with water, this method of attack, so peculiarly suited to the native character for caution, would generally have succeeded. It was tabu for a messenger to go direct to the army lest he should dispirit the troops.

He had first to go to the capital, whence his message was dispatched to the Vu-ni-valu by a herald of the town.

A siege began with an interchange of abuse. The attacking chief would cry in the hearing of both sides, "The men of that fortress are already dead: its present garrison are old women!" Another, addressing his own followers, shouted, "Are those not men? Then have we nothing to fear, for we are truly men." A warrior from within retorts, "You are men? But are you so strong that if you are speared, you will not fall until to-morrow? Are ye stones, that a spear cannot pierce you? Are your skulls of iron, that a bullet will not penetrate them?" Under the excitement of this war of words indiscreet men were betrayed into playing with the name of the chief of the enemy. They will cut out his tongue, devour his brains, use his skull for their drinking-cup. These became at once marked men, and special orders were given to take them alive. On Vanualevu the punishment that awaited them was the torture called *drewai sasa*, to carry fuel like old women. A bundle of dry cocoanut leaves was bound upon their naked backs and ignited, and they were turned loose to run wherever their agony might drive them.

Meanwhile, within the fort the war-drum is beating incessantly, now signalling for help to friends at a distance, now rattling a defiance to the enemy, for, as in Abyssinia, the drum beats have a recognized language. As a further provocation to the besiegers, when the wind favours, the war-kite is hoisted. This is a circular disk of plaited palm-leaves, decorated with streamers of bark cloth. The string is passed through a hole in a pole or bamboo twenty or thirty feet long, erected in a conspicuous part of the fort.

The string is then pulled backwards and forwards through the hole so as to keep the symbol of defiance floating over the heads of the approaching foe.

Upon the stronger fortresses direct assaults were rare, but when the attacking party felt themselves to be superior, the Vu-ni-valu issued orders for a general advance, specifying the detachment which was to have the honour of leading. There is nothing impetuous in the manner of attack. The assailants creep stealthily forward until they are almost within spear-throw, and then every man acts as if his first duty was to take care of himself. Every stone, every tree has a man behind it, for the Fijian can outmatch the world in the art of taking cover. Having gone so far, the assailants shout the war-cry to encourage one another and to intimidate the enemy,[38] and watch their chance for spearing some one exposed on the ramparts. Sooner or later the defenders are betrayed into a sally, each man singling out an antagonist with whom to engage in single combat. But the assailants seldom wait for the rush, each man trusting to his heels for safety. There is no disgrace in this, for as the Fijian proverb has it:—

"A vosota, na mate,
A ndro na ka ni veiwale."

"To brave it out is death,
To run is but a jest!"

If, however, the defenders obstinately refuse to be drawn, and the leading detachment has shouted itself hoarse to no effect, it is relieved by a second, or even a third, until the siege is abandoned for the day. In the face of a determined attack a Fijian garrison loses heart and makes but a spiritless defence, and this

explains the universal success of the Tongans, who carried everything before them by their spirited assault.

TREACHERY HELD A VIRTUE

More often a fastness was reduced by stratagem. The favourite method was the *lawa*, or net, which seldom failed, for all it was so well known. Posting a strong body of warriors in ambush on either flank, a handful of men would approach the fort with simulated fury. Seeing their small numbers, the defenders left their defences and fell upon them, whereupon they took to flight and led the pursuit right into the belly of the "net." Then the horns closed in upon them, and they were surrounded. It was such a trap as this that compassed the destruction of the landing party from the East Indiaman *Hunter* at Wailea in 1813, when even that crafty and experienced warrior Charles Savage expiated his crimes. Cunning was more esteemed than courage; the craft of Odysseus more than the battle-fire of Achilles. There is no equivalent in the Fijian language for the word "treachery," for *lawaki*, the nearest synonym, signifies a virtue rather than a crime, and a successful act of treachery evoked the same admiration as triumphant slimness is said to do among the Boers. It is such differences in moral ethics that make the gulf between the East and West. Williams records how a Rakiraki chief, Wangkawai, who had contracted to assist the chief of Nakorovatu in war, brained him with his club during the ceremony of the *mbole*, and massacred his people in cold blood—an act which the treacherous ally had been planning for years; how Namosimalua, chief of

Viwa, having undertaken to protect the people of Naingani against Mbau, led them into the jaws of the enemy, and helped to slaughter them; but the annals of every village will supply from recent history instances quite as striking as these. If loss of life in open fight was small, treachery often resulted in considerable slaughter. Williams thought that the casualties in a native war commonly amounted to from twenty to one hundred. The largest number within his own experience was at the sack of Rewa in 1846, when about 400, chiefly women and children, were slaughtered.

The scenes that followed the sack of a fortress are too horrible to be described in detail. That neither age nor sex was spared was the least atrocious feature. Nameless mutilations, inflicted sometimes on living victims, deeds of mingled cruelty and lust, made self-destruction preferable to capture. With the fatalism that underlies the Melanesian character many would not attempt to run away, but would bow their heads passively to the club-stroke. If any were miserable enough to be taken alive their fate was awful indeed. Carried back bound to the chief village, they were given up to young boys of rank to practise their ingenuity in torture, or, stunned by a blow, they were laid in heated ovens, that when the heat brought them back to consciousness of pain, their frantic struggles might convulse the spectators with laughter. Children were strung up to the masthead by the feet, that the rolling of the canoe might dash out their brains against the mast.

But little loot was taken, and every man kept what he could seize upon for his own. At the first hint of attack the women were laden with everything of value which could be stored in a secret magazine at

some distance from the fortress; what remained was often destroyed by the burning of the huts. Williams sets down the loot of one chief whom he knew as seven balls of sinnet, several dogs and five female slaves, but he believed that part of this was pay and part plunder.

The return of a victorious party, especially if they brought the bodies of the slain, was an extraordinary scene. The noise and confusion which shocked the early missionaries seem all to have been part of an ancient prescribed form. If the war-party returned by sea the dead bodies of men and women were lashed to the prow of the canoe, while the warriors danced the *thimbi*, or death-dance, on the deck, brandishing their clubs and spears, and uttering a peculiar falsetto yell. The women rushed down to the beach to meet them, and there danced and sang with words and gestures of an obscenity never permitted at other times. In this dance young maidens took part, and when the bodies were dragged ashore, joined with their elders in offering nameless insults to the corpses. Then the men, seizing the bodies by the arms, dragged them at full speed to the temple, sometimes, as at Mbau, dashing the brains out against a stone embedded in the earth before the shrine. All social restrictions were then loosed, and, in the mad excitement, sexual licence had full rein in open day.

THE WAR-CRY

Every tribe has its own distinctive war-cry, or rather death-cry, for it is shouted only when giving the death-blow to an enemy. Though this is distinct from the name of the tribe, and very seldom uttered, it is so firmly fixed in the mind of every tribesman that, even in these days, when it has not been heard, perhaps, for a whole generation, every full-grown member of the tribe can remember the word. In Land Inquiries I made a point of asking what was the death-cry of each claimant, and also of questioning witnesses regarding its origin. Many of the words appeared to be place-names, though the places could not be identified, and few of the words could be translated, nor did any have any relation to warfare. In not a single case could a witness offer any explanation except that the word had been handed down by the ancestors of old time, and the origin must therefore remain in doubt. The memory of the death-cry is as tenacious as that of the tribal *tauvu*.

The mode of treating for peace varied with the district. Sometimes a woman of high rank, dressed in gala costume, was presented to the victors with a whale's tooth in her hand; sometimes an ordinary *mata* was deputed to carry the whale's tooth. In Vatulele and other places a basket of earth was presented in token that the soil, and all that it produced, was at the disposal of the conqueror. The terms, especially in cases of the last of these *soro*, were hard; the vanquished were reduced, not merely to tribute-bearers, but to actual serfs and kitchen-men. In a single generation their very physical

bearing was changed.

The Investiture of Koroi

The religious ceremony of *Koroi* deserves attention as having, as far as I am aware, no parallel among other primitive races, though the native converts profess to see in it a close resemblance to the Christian rite of baptism. It was rather an investiture of knighthood for prowess in battle, accompanied with the knightly preparation of fasting and vigil.

Every warrior who has slain his man, woman, or child in battle is entitled to the honour, and takes a new name with the prefix *Koro-i* (*lit.*, "Village of"). Every time his club is blooded the ceremony is repeated and a new name conferred, so that it was not uncommon for a warrior to change his name four times or even oftener. In olden times the slayer of ten bore the prefix *Koli* (Dog), and the slayer of twenty *Visa* (Burn), but as the influx of foreigners began to check war, these honours were granted upon easier terms. There is a proverb bearing upon these honours: "The slayer of ten closes one house; the slayer of twenty closes two houses."

I have tried in vain to have light thrown on the origin of this institution, which, being religious in character, and under the control of the priests, must have had its foundation in some historical tradition.

Waterhouse, who seems to have been an eye-witness, thus describes the ceremony as practised at Mbau:—

> "The ceremonies last for four days. When a war-party returns the canoes are poled to Nailusi. The warriors

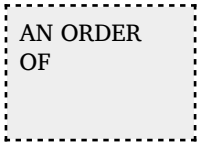
who have killed their man, bedaubed with paint, and clothed in new *malos*, rush ashore carrying reeds with streamers attached. These they fix vertically in the posts of the temple of Thangawalu, the war-god. When they return to their canoes the whole army advances, the novices armed with spears decorated with pennons bringing up the rear. As they approach the square they execute the *thimbi*—death-dance, a sort of Fijian *Carmagnole*. The elders who have stayed behind to guard the town then demand the names of the new *koroi*, and give each of them a new weapon. At night the *wati*, or dance of the knights, is performed. The spectators form a ring round the dancers, who are divided into three companies—(1) the candidates; (2) the consecrated knights and warriors; (3) a select body of women. During the night the candidates break their fast for the first time, and the dancing is kept up till late in the following morning. In the afternoon vast quantities of plantains are presented to those who have played esquire to the candidates.

"On the third day is the *Ngini-ngini*, or consecration. Each candidate marches separately into the square at the head of his personal friends, who are loaded with property. As he

approaches the temple of the War-god, the officiating priest announces his new name, which the people then hear for the first time, although the candidate has himself chosen it on the previous evening. Piling their presents in a heap, the new knight and his party retire to make room for another candidate. This ceremony is conducted in silence with a stately dignity and decorum in curious contrast with the hideous licence and uproar of the *thimbi* death-dance of the first day.

"The last day is the Day of Water-drinking. Early in the morning canoes are sent to fetch the water from a certain stream on the mainland. When they round the point a great shout is raised, 'Lo! the water-canoes!' and every one shuts himself fast behind doors, for now every noise, even the crying of children, is tabu. In this strange silence the water is carried to the temple where the new knights are assembled, and there they drink it.

"For several days they are kept in the temple under the usual restrictions laid upon persons who are tabu. They may not use their hands to feed themselves, nor wash themselves."



KNIGHTHOOD

John Williams thus describes the ceremony as he saw it in Somosomo:—

> "The king and leading men having taken their seats in the public square, fourteen mats were brought and spread out, and upon these were placed a bale of cloth and two whale's teeth. Near by was laid a sail-mat, and on it several men's dresses. The young chief now made his appearance, bearing in one hand a large 'pine-apple' club and in the other a common reed, while his long train of *masi* dragged on the ground behind him. On his reaching the mats, an old man took the reed out of the hero's hand, and dispatched a youth to deposit it carefully in the temple of the war-god. The king then ordered the young man to stand upon the bale of cloth; and while he obeyed, a number of women came into the square, bringing small dishes of turmeric mixed with oil, which they placed before the youth, and retired with a song. The *masi* was now removed by the chief himself, an attendant substituting one much larger in its stead. The king's *mata* next selected several dishes of coloured oil, and anointed the warrior from the roots of his hair to his heels. At this stage in the proceedings one of the spectators

stepped forward and exchanged clubs with the anointed, and soon another did the same; then one gave him a gun in place of the club; and many similar changes were effected, under the belief that weapons thus passing through his hands derived some virtue. The mats were now removed, and a portion of them sent to the temple, some of the turmeric being sent after them. The king and old men, followed by the young men and two men sounding conches, now proceeded to the seaside, where the anointed one passed through the ancients to the water's edge, and, having wet the soles of his feet, returned, while the king and those with him counted one, two, three, four, five, and then each threw a stone into the sea. The whole company now went back to the town with blasts of the trumpet-shells and a peculiar hooting of the men. Custom requires that a hut should be built, in which the anointed man and his companions may pass the next three nights, during which the new-named hero must not lie down, but sleep as he sits; he must not change his *masi*, or remove the turmeric, or enter a house in which there is a woman, until that period has elapsed. In the case now described the hut had not been built, and the young chief was permitted

> to use the temple of the god of war instead. During the three days he was on an incessant march, followed by half-a-score of lads reddened like himself. After three weeks he paid me a visit on the first day of his being permitted to enter a house in which there was a female. He informed me that his new name was 'Kuila' (Flag)."

It is a remarkable fact that once in Fijian history an European was made *koroi*, for among the Fijians foreigners were outside the pale of tribal society, and could never aspire to enjoy the freedom of the tribe. But in 1808, when Charles Savage, the Swede, escaped with his musket from the wreck of the brig *Eliza*, and enabled Mbau to conquer her great rival, Verata, with the aid of his new and terrible weapon, he was made *koroi* against his will. I had the details of the ceremony from the old men of Mbau, who had the tradition from their fathers. Jiale (Charlie), as they called him, submitted to be stripped to the waist and smeared with turmeric and charcoal, but insisted on retaining his trousers during the procession. And when he found that he was to abstain from eating and drinking for three days, he shamefully broke the tabu, burst out of the temple in a rage, and went to his own home, a fact that was not likely to be forgotten.

The decay of custom in warfare began with the introduction of fire-arms, which first made the establishment of great confederations possible, and so diminished war. The musket made the task of the early missionaries easier, for when they had won

over the chief of a confederation, the vassal tribes followed like a flock of sheep, and so the musket ultimately put an end to war. The inland tribes, who could get few muskets, and whose frontiers, therefore, were the limits of the village lands, were the last to embrace Christianity.

There are pathetic stories of the terror inspired by the musket. At the siege of Verata men held up mats to ward off the bullets; at Nakelo, Savage was carried into action in an arrow-proof sedan chair of plaited sinnet, from which he picked off the defenders until they surrendered and were clubbed.

The rise of confederations changed everything. A village knowing itself weak in numbers and in arms, did not dare to defy the might of a power like Mbau or Rewa, and hastened to put itself under the protection of a powerful chief, paying tribute to him as a member of his confederation. Thus, while gunpowder increased the number of combatants engaged on either side, it almost put an end to the internecine struggles of village against village.

WAR CUSTOMS CHANGED BY FIREARMS

Between 1860 and 1870 native warfare underwent a more drastic modification by the formation of Thakombau's army organized, officered and drilled by Europeans. When led by Europeans, the natives developed an unexpected courage in the field, and the campaign against the hill tribes of Navatusila impressed the whole group with the superiority of European methods. The Armed Native Constabulary,

established immediately after annexation, and recruited from widely distant districts, tended to make drill so popular that the first step of any native conspirator has been to teach his followers evolutions compounded of native war-dances and European drill, in which the Fijians see a close resemblance.

FOOTNOTES:

[35] *Fiji and the Fijians*, p. 43.

[36] The name *Mbati* has been erroneously derived from Mbati = Tooth, and *Mbati-ni-vanua* is sometimes translated "Teeth of the Land." The true derivation is, of course, from Mbati = Edge or Border, *i.e.* Border of the land. Borderers have ever been broken reeds to lean upon from their proneness to consult their own interests by going over to the stronger side.

[37] An archaic phrase, whose meaning is now lost. Williams translates it "Cut up! Cut up! The temple receives," which perhaps is near enough, the meaning being that the bodies of the slain will be dismembered, cooked, and presented to the gods.

[38] When the story of the *Iliad* was being translated into Fijian I asked a Fijian what part of the story most appealed to his people. He said at once that it was that which describes Achilles putting the whole Trojan army to flight by merely shouting to them from the bank of Scamander.

CHAPTER VI

CANNIBALISM

About 1850, when the first details of cannibalism among the Fijians began to reach England through the missionary reports, there was a good deal of scepticism. Naval officers who had visited the group had seen nothing of the practice, which, indeed, seemed incompatible with the polished and courtly manners of the chiefs who entertained them.[39] But as soon as the existence of the practice was proved there came a reaction, and its extent is now as much exaggerated as it was formerly underestimated. Professor Sayce, for instance, in a book published within the last few years,[40] has committed himself to the ridiculous assertion that the Fijians ate their aged relations—an act which would be regarded by them with a horror at least as great as would be felt by an European. To eat, even unwittingly, the flesh of your relation, however distant, or to eat or drink from a vessel used by a man who had done this, would result, so the Fijians believe, in the loss of all your teeth.

Except in rare cases, none but the bodies of real or potential enemies were eaten, and these must have been slain or captured in battle, or cast away in wrecks "with salt water in their eyes." The bodies of those who had died naturally were invariably buried, and though there are instances recorded of the secret desecration of graves for the purposes of cannibalism, these were very rare, and they excited disgust among the people themselves.



MORALITY OF CANNIBALISM

There are various traditions of the origin of cannibalism, but all agree in saying that it was not introduced from without, and that there was a time when the practice was unknown. The most plausible ascribes it to the practice of presenting the human body a sacrifice to the gods as being the most costly offering that could be made, and that, as all presentations of food were afterwards eaten, the human sacrifice was treated in the same way. It is tabu for an inferior to decline food offered to him by a chief. If a slave cannot eat a cooked yam so presented to him, he wraps it up and takes it home with him to eat at a future meal, or if he throws it away, he does it secretly lest he should give offence to the donor. Thus in 1853 the chief of Somosomo, in reply to the missionary's remonstrance, said, "We must eat the bodies if Thakombau gives them to us." This obligation was tenfold stronger when the gods themselves were the givers.

But whereas in times past cannibalism was confined to ceremonial sacrifices in celebration of victory, the launching of a chief's canoe or the lowering of its mast, it increased alarmingly about the end of the eighteenth century—that is, a few years before the arrival of Europeans—just as human sacrifice and its attendant cannibalism among the Aztecs became intolerable just before the Spanish conquest. In the Fijian mind it was but a step from offering gifts to a god and taking them to a high chief, and great feasts soon came to be considered incomplete without a human body to grace the meal. Among a few of the chiefs there began to grow a vitiated taste for human

flesh, though there were not a few who never overcame their dislike to it.

The moral attitude of Fijians towards cannibalism is as difficult to understand as our own is difficult to explain. Apart from the fact that cannibalism must entail homicide, there is no manifest reason for our horror of the practice, except our reverence and tenderness for the dead. Most, if not all, of the other carnivora are cannibals, and the distinction we draw between the flesh of men and the flesh of other mammalia is purely sentimental. Our other instincts are based upon some law of Nature whose infraction is visited by Nature's penalties; yet, so instinctive is the horror of cannibalism in Aryan races that not one of them has thought of condemning it in its penal code, and cannibalism has never been illegal in Europe. Some trace of this instinct is discernible among the Fijians. Human flesh was tabu to women, and the Mbau women of rank who indulged in it did so in secret. Except in moments of excitement, the cooked flesh was shared out with elaborate ceremonial, and eaten only in the privacy of the house. The care with which the practice was concealed from Europeans, though partly due to the knowledge that it would excite detestation and contempt, suggests also some trace of instinctive shame. The tabus and ceremonies surrounding it clearly indicate its religious origin. The alarming drum-beat, called *Nderua*, which haunts all who have heard it; the death-dance (*thimbi*); the presentation of the body to the War-god of Mbau, and the part played by the priests in Vanualevu and other places; the eating after decomposition had set in when the slightest taint in other meat excited disgust; and, lastly, the fear of touching the meat with the fingers or the lips, and the use of a special fork which was

given a name like a person, are all evidences that the gods had a share in the rite. Every part of the body had, moreover, its symbolic name, which was only used in connection with cannibalism. The trunk, which was eaten first, was called *Na vale ka rusa* (the house that perishes); the feet, *Ndua-rua*(one-two). The fiction that bodies intended to be eaten were popularly called "Long pig" (*Vuaka Mbalavu*) is founded upon a *vakathivo*, or jocose toast of Tanoa, chief of Mbau, after drinking kava, in which the object of desire was concealed in a euphemism, such as *Sese Matairua*! ("spear with two points," *i.e.* the breast of a virgin).

AN ACT OF VENGEANCE

Dr. E. B. Tylor gives six reasons for the practice of cannibalism—Famine, Revenge or Bravado, Morbid Affection, Magic, Religion, Habit. Three of these had no application in Fiji. The famines were transitory, and in Tonga, where cannibalism was occasionally resorted to from this cause, the practice died as soon as the cause was removed. Cannibalism from morbid affection, such as Herodotus describes among the Essedones of Central Asia, was equally unknown, since, as I have already said, the Fijians had a superstitious horror of eating their own relations; and as to magic, I do not think that any trace of a belief that by eating the flesh of a warrior the eater absorbed his courage can be found. There remain Religion, Revenge or Bravado, and Habit, which were at the root of the Fijian practice in the order enumerated. The history of the Aztecs shows how soon ceremonial cannibalism degenerated into a vicious appetite for human flesh. In the Fijian wars

of the early nineteenth century a portion of every captive was eaten, and raids were undertaken solely to procure human flesh for chiefs who had become addicted to cannibalism. But bravado and the gratification of revenge was the most powerful motive with the bulk of the people. In Nandronga the liver and the hands of an enemy were sometimes preserved by smoke in the house of one whose relations he had slain; and whenever regrets for the dead would wring his heart, the warrior would take down the bundle from the shelf over the fire-place, and cook and eat a portion of his enemy to assuage his grief. Thus he continued to sate his vengeance for one or two years until all was consumed. In the native mind the poles of triumph and of humiliation are touched by the man who eats his enemy and the man who is about to be eaten. Even to-day the grossest Fijian insult is to call a man *Mbakola* (cannibal meat); the most appalling threat to exclaim, "Were it not for the government I would eat you!" There was but one higher flight of vengeance, and that was to cook the body, and leave it in the oven as if unfit for food. The Rev. Joseph Waterhouse dug up one of these ovens while gardening at Mbau. The element of vengeance superimposed upon religion is admirably illustrated in the narrative of John Jackson,[41] who was an eye-witness of what he relates. The bodies of the slain were set up in a sitting posture in the bow of the canoe by being trussed under the knees with a stick as schoolboys play at cockfighting. The drums kept beating the *nderua* all the way across the strait, and as they neared the village a man kept striking the water with a long pole to apprise the inhabitants of their success, and the warriors danced the *thimbi* on the deck. It was usual for the women to troop

down to the water's edge dancing a lascivious dance, and when the bodies were flung out, to cover them with nameless insults; but in this instance (on the Vanualevu coast near Male) they were carried to the village square and set up in a row, with their war-paint still on them, while the whole population of the village sat down in a wide circle. An old man now approached the bodies, and, taking a dead hand in his, began talking to them in a low tone. Why, he asked, had they been so rash? Did they not feel ashamed to be sitting there exposed to the gaze of so many people? Gradually becoming intoxicated with his own eloquence and wit, he raised his voice and delivered the last sentences as loud as he could shout. At the climax of his peroration he kicked the bodies down, and ran off amid the plaudits and laughter of the spectators, who now ran in upon the bodies, and, seizing an arm or a leg, dragged them off through the mire and over the stones to a temple standing apart in a grove of ironwood trees. A heap of weather-whitened human bones lay before it, and other bones were embedded in the fork of shaddock-trees, where they had been laid many years before. An old priest, with nails two inches long, was there awaiting them, and stones were ready heating in a fire for the oven. A number of young girls now surrounded the bodies and danced their lewd dance, singing a song whose import could be guessed from their action in touching certain parts with sticks which they held in their hands. The butcher, armed with a hatchet, some shells and a number of split bamboos, now got to work. He first made a long deep gash down the abdomen, and then cut all round the neck down to the bone, and severed the head by a twist. In cutting through the joints he showed some knowledge of anatomy, seeing that he used nothing

but a split bamboo, which makes a convenient knife, since it is only necessary to split off a fresh portion to obtain a sharp edge. The trunk, the hands and the head were usually thrown away, but on this occasion, the bodies being but few, all was eaten except the intestines. Banana leaves were heaped on the hot stones of the oven, the flesh and joints were laid on them, and the whole covered with earth until the morning. The cooked meat was then distributed with the ceremonies usual at feasts, and warriors from a distance, after tasting a small portion, wrapped up the remainder to take home as a proof of their prowess.

THE EATING OF A MISSIONARY

When a chief or a warrior of repute was cooked, portions of the flesh were sent all over the country. The body of the missionary Baker, killed at Navatusila (Central Vitilevu) in 1860, was thus treated, almost every chief in Navosa receiving a portion.[42]

When a body had to be carried inland it was lashed to a pole face downward in order that it might not double up, the ends of the pole resting on men's shoulders. In dragging the body up the beach the following words were chanted in a monotone, followed by shrill yells in quick succession.

"Yari au malua. Yari au malua.
Oi au na saro ni nomu vanua.
Yi mundokia! Yi mundokia! Yi mundokia Ki Ndama le!

Yi! u-woa-ai-e!"

"Drag me gently. Drag me gently!
I am the champion of thy land.
Give thanks! Give thank!"
etc.

As the practice of cannibalism grew, many refinements of cruelty were devised for enhancing the gratification of revenge. According to Seemann, [43] a whole village in Namosi was doomed as a punishment to be eaten household by household. They obeyed the chief's command to plant a taro bed, and as soon, as the taro was ripe a household was clubbed, and the bodies eaten with the vegetables. None knew when his turn would come, for the house was chosen at the whim of the executioners. One might be tempted to enlarge upon the horrible suspense in which these unhappy villagers must have lived, and to wonder why they did not flee to some distant province, but such sympathy would be wasted. If the story is true, we may be sure that they went about their daily tasks without a thought about the club hanging over them, and that the idea of flight never entered their heads, for the Fijian looks not beyond the evening of the next day, and certain death within a year or two seemed no nearer to them than it does to us who pursue our futile little tasks with Death plucking at our sleeves, having at the most but two decades to live.

The torture (*vakatotonga*) consisted in the mutilation of the victim before death. To avenge the of one of his relations, Ra Undreundre of Rakiraki ordered a woman captured from the offending village to be laid alive in a wooden trough and dismembered, that

none of the blood might be lost. This was a form of punishment practised in Tonga in ancient times. In several well-authenticated cases the flesh of a victim has been cooked and offered him to eat. A Fijian prisoner undergoes these torments with stoical fatalism, making no attempt at escape or resistance. In the entertainment of the Somosomo natives at Natewa, Jackson saw standing by the pile of yams a young girl who was to be killed and eaten when the ceremony of distribution was over. She showed no outward sign of distress at her impending fate. At the risk of his life Jackson caught hold of her and claimed her as his wife, and the chiefs, more amused than angry at his breach of etiquette, granted his request.

THE CANNIBAL FORK

Neither sex nor age was a defence against the cannibal oven. Aged men and women as well as children were eaten, though the flesh of young people between sixteen and twenty was most esteemed. The upper arm, the thigh and the heart were the greatest delicacies; an ex-cannibal in Mongondro told me that the upper arm of a boy and girl tasted better than any other meat. The same man, who had eaten part of the missionary Baker, said that the flesh of white men was inferior to that of Fijians, and had a saltish taste. Jackson describes it as being darker in colour, and the fat yellower than that of the turtle. In the police expedition to Navosa in 1876, Dr. (now Sir William) McGregor surprised a village, and found a human leg, hot from the oven, laid out upon banana leaves. The skin had parted like crackling, disclosing a layer of yellow fat.

When the flesh is kept for several days it is said to emit a phosphorescent light in the darkness of the hut. The Fijians cannot understand our feeling about the killing and eating of women and children. *Moku na katikati* (club the women and children) is their principle, and they explain that, since the object of war is to inflict the maximum of injury upon the enemy, a twofold purpose is served by killing women —distress to their relations, and the destruction of those who might breed warriors to avenge them.

The most celebrated cannibals from liking were Tambakauthoro, Tanoa and Tuiveikoso of Mbau, and Tuikilakila of Somosomo, but the reputation of these pale beside that of Ra Undreundre of Rakiraki. His victims were called *Lewe ni mbi* (contents of the turtle-pond), and his fork had a name to itself— *Undro-undro*, a word used to designate a small person carrying a great burden. His son took the missionary to a line of stones, each of which represented a human being eaten without assistance by his father since middle-age. They numbered eight hundred and seventy-two, but a number had then (1849) been removed! The special fork used exclusively for human flesh points clearly to the religious origin of the practice, forks being never employed for other kinds of food, even food presented to a god. There was some quality in human flesh that made it tabu to touch it with the fingers or the lips. Moreover, the fork was tabu to every one but its owner, and if it belonged to a high chief, it had always a name of its own. The genuine forks have now all been removed from the country, and those offered for sale in the group are forgeries.[44]

Persons slain in battle were not invariably eaten, for chiefs of high rank were often spared this indignity,

and if a friend of the dead man happened to be of the victorious party he might intercede to save the body from the oven. In such cases a truce is called, and the relations are allowed to come and remove the body for burial. At the funeral the mourners cut out their thumb nails and fixed them on a spear, which was preserved in the temple to remind them of the service done to them, and at the close of the war they made valuable presents to their benefactor to extinguish the debt.

The abolition of cannibalism cannot possibly have had any results unfavourable to the race. It was an excrescence upon the religious and social system, and it might have been swept away without disturbing them in any way. In its later development, moreover, it was responsible for raids in which many lives were lost.

FOOTNOTES:

[39] It is strange that the only act of cannibalism seen by any member of the United States Exploring Expedition in 1840 was the eating of an eye—a part of the body which was nearly always thrown away.

[40] *The Religions of Ancient Egypt and Babylonia*, p. 8.

[41] *Erskine's Voyage*, 1853.

[42] There is a well-worn story that the chief of Mongondro received a leg from which the Wellington boot had not been removed. Taking the leather to be the white man's skin, the chief was much impressed with the toughness of the superior race.

[43] *Mission to Viti.*

[44] The Rev. F. Langham was the first to point out the test for these forgeries. The genuine forks are carefully finished at the root of the prongs; the forgeries have inequalities and splinters. Mr. H. Ling Roth has questioned this distinction, but I have never known it fail in the specimens I have examined.

CHAPTER VII

RELIGION

Ancestor-gods—Gods of the After-world—The Ndengei Myth—Luve-ni-wai—Mbaki—The Priesthood—Witchcraft—Kalou-rere.

The religion of the Fijians was so closely interwoven with their social polity that it was impossible to tear away the one without lacerating the other. It was as unreasonable for the people to continue to reverence their chiefs when they ceased to believe in the Ancestor-gods, from whom they were descended, as for the Hebrews to conform to the Mosaic law if they had repudiated the inspiration of Moses. Religion was a hard taskmaster to the heathen Fijian; it governed his every action from the cradle-mat to the grave. In the tabu it prescribed what he should eat and drink, how he should address his betters, whom he should marry, and where his body should be laid. It limited his choice of the fruits of the earth and of the sea; it controlled his very bodily attitude in his

own house. All his life he walked warily for fear of angering the deities that went in and out with him, ever-watchful to catch him tripping, and death but cast him naked into their midst to be the sport of their vindictive ingenuity.

The Fijian word for divinity is *kalou*, which is also used as an adjective for anything superlative, either good or bad, and it is possible that the word was originally a root-word implying wonder and astonishment. Sometimes the word is used as a mere exclamation, or expression of flattery, as, "You are *kalou*!" or "A *kalou* people!" applied to Europeans in connection with triumphs of invention among civilized nations, either in polite disbelief, or disinclination to attempt to imitate them.

The Fijian divinities fall naturally into two great divisions—the *Kalou-vu* (Root-gods), and the *Kalou-yalo* (Spirit-gods, *i.e.* deified mortals). There is much truth in Waterhouse's contention that the Kalou-vu were of Polynesian origin brought to Fiji by immigrants from the eastward, and imposed upon the conquered Melanesian tribes in addition to their own Pantheon of deified mortals, and that the Ndengei legend, which undoubtedly belonged to the aborigines, was adopted by the conquerers as the Etruscan gods were by the Romans. The natives' belief in their own tribal divinity did not entail denial of the divinities of other tribes. To the Hebrew prophets the cult of Baal-peor was not so much a false as an impious creed. The Fijians admitted from the first that the Jehovah of the missionaries was a great, though not the only, God, and, as will presently be shown, when converted to Christianity, they only added Him to their own Pantheon. So, in giving their allegiance to the chiefs who conquered

them, it was natural that they should admit the supremacy of the gods of their conquerors, who, by giving the victory to their worshippers, had proved themselves to be more powerful than their own gods. Wainua, the great war-god of Rewa, is said to have drifted from Tonga, and his priest, when inspired, gives his answers in the Tongan language. The Rewans had given the chief place in their Pantheon to the god of mere visitors.

THE FIRE GOD

First among the Kalou-vu was Ndengei, primarily a god of Rakiraki on the north-east coast of Vitilevu, but known throughout Fiji except in the eastern islands of the Lau group. The evolution of this god from the ancestor and tutelary deity of a joint-family into a symbol of Creation and Eternity in serpent form is an exact counterpart of Jupiter, the god of a Latin tribe, inflated with Etruscan and Greek myth until he overshadows the ancient world as Jupiter Optimus Maximus. The variants of the Ndengei myths are so numerous that they must be reserved for another chapter; it is enough here to say that Ndengei and the personage associated with him are proved by the earliest myths of his home on the Ra coast to be deified mortals who have risen to the rank of Kalou-vu by their importance as the first immigrants and the founders of the race.

Next in order to Ndengei is Ndauthina (the torch-bearer), the god of the seafaring and fishing community throughout Fiji. That he is one of the introductions from another system of mythology and not a deified mortal of Fiji is strongly suggested by the fact that all the fisher-tribes are *tauvu* or *Kalou-*

vata (worshippers of the same god, and therefore of common origin). These tribes, by the nature of their occupation, are prone to scatter widely, though comparatively late arrivals in the group. They seldom own any land in the province of their adoption, but attach themselves to the chiefs, from whom they enjoy marked privileges in return for their services. It would take but few years for the newest arrivals, scattering thus among far distant islands, to disseminate their cult throughout a group of islands, and there is nothing in the Ndauthina myths that disproves their Eastern origin. The fisher-tribes had the best of reasons for keeping the freemasonry of their bond of *Kalou-vata* (*lit.*, same God) alive. Their calling subjected them to frequent shipwreck, and by the law of custom the lives of castaways were forfeit—a survival, perhaps, of a primitive system of quarantine. But the shipwrecked fisherman might always find sanctuary in a temple dedicated to Ndauthina, and thus win the "freedom of the city" in a village where he was a stranger.

Ndauthina was the Loki, the Fire-god of the Nibelung myth. He is the god of Light and of Fire—the fire of lightning and the fire of lust in men's blood. His love of light in infancy prompted his mother to bind lighted reeds upon his head to amuse him, and now he roams the reefs by night hooded with a flaming brazier. He is the patron of adulterers, and himself steals women away by night. He loves night attacks, and flashes light upon the defences to guide the besiegers. Taking human form he sells fish to the doomed garrison, who, noticing a strong smell of fire, know that Ndauthina has been among them, and that their warriors will not see another sun. His pranks and whims are numberless. When plots are hatched against his favourites a voice cries "Pooh!"

through the reed-walls, and he flies off to put his friends upon their guard. He buoys up a rotten canoe to tempt warriors to embark in her only to lure them into club-reach of their enemies. But upon his friends the fishermen he plays no pranks, giving them fair winds and good fishing.

Ratu-mai-Mbulu (Lord from Hades), though primarily a local divinity of the Tailevu coast, is also probably a foreign intruder. Through him the earth gives her increase. In December he comes forth from Mbulu, and pours sap into the fruit trees, and pushes the young yam shoots through the soil. Throughout that moon it is tabu to beat the drum, to sound the conch-shell, to dance, to plant, to fight, or to sing at sea, lest Ratu-mai-Mbulu be disturbed, and quit the earth before his work is completed. At the end of the month the priest sounds the consecrated shell: the people raise a great shout, carrying the good news from village to village, and pleasure and toil are again free to all.

In a hole near Namara he lies in serpent form, and thither the Mbauans carried food to him once a year, first clearing the holy ground. Unlike the other gods he drinks no kava, for the wind and noise of a blast on the conch-shell are meat and drink to him. There was once an agnostic of Soso, the fisher class of Mbau, named Kowika, who set forth alone to set his doubts at rest. To a snake sunning himself at the cave-mouth he offered fish, but this was the great god's son. When he was gone to summon his father from the cave, a greater snake appeared—the god's grandson he proved to be—and he departed with a more urgent message. At length there issued a serpent so huge and terrible that Kowika doubted no longer, and proffered his gift in fear and trembling,

but as the god was loosening his vast coils he shot an arrow into them and fled. As he ran a voice rang in his ears, crying, "Nought but snakes! Nought but snakes!" And so it was. The pot was cooked when Kowika reached home, but his wife dropped the skewer with a shriek, an impaled snake wriggled on its end. When he lifted the bamboo to drink, snakes poured forth instead of water. He unrolled his sleeping mat; that too was alive with snakes. And as he rushed forth into the night he heard the voice of the priest prophesying the fall of the city as a just punishment for the sacrilege of wounding the God of Increase. He took the one way of salvation left to him: he *soro*-ed in abject humility, and he was pardoned.



Totemism

The shark-god is the tutelar divinity of numerous tribes who are not *tauvu* with one another, unless they call him by the same name. Waterhouse gives the following list of names under which the shark is invoked: Ndakuwanka, (Outside-the-canoe), Circumnavigator-of-Yandua, Feeder-of-fish, Lover-of-canoe-spars, Waylayer, Rover-of-the-man-groves, Expectant-follower, Ready-for-action, Sail-cleaner, Lord-Shark-that-calls, Tabu-white, Tooth-for-raw-flesh. The tribes that invoke Ndakuwanka are *tauvu*, but the Soro people who worship Ndakuwanka recognize no tie with the Yandua tribe, who invoke the Circumnavigator-of-Yandua. Each of these names covers a distinct cult, and the fact that a number of

unrelated tribes should have agreed in choosing the shark for their god needs explanation. That shark-worship is pure totemism is shown by the beneficence of the shark to his worshippers, and the obligation that lay upon them not to eat their divinity. Mana, a Soro native, capsized in the open sea, called upon Ndakuwanka to save him, and a shark rose near him and towed him safe to land by his back fin. The same god jumped athwart a Soro canoe in the invasion of Natewa in 1848, turned over to show the tattooing on his belly, and leapt back into the sea to lead his votaries to the attack. In 1840 a tabu shark was eaten at Navukeilangi in the island of Ngau, and all who had eaten of it died. But there the usual features of totemism stop. The spirits of the dead do not pass into the totem; men never assume the shark form; the shark-totem does not necessarily intermarry with any other totem. Totemism in Fiji does not affect the social system in any way. It is an accident rather than a design in the religious system; an anthropomorphic divinity would have served as well. Nor is it totemism in decay, as some have suggested, for with the cult of the totem so active and vigorous some survival of its attendant customs in the marriage laws or in the beliefs of the future state would assuredly have been found. The mental attitude of primitive races in all parts of the world to worship a species of living animal or plant taught the Fijians where to look for their tutelary divinity, and the shark being to a people seafaring in frail craft the most dreaded and implacable of all the animal kingdom, a number of diverse tribes chose to propitiate the shark independently.

The shark, though the commonest, is not the only totem. The hawk, the eel, the lizard, the fresh-water prawn, and man himself have their adherents. The

man-totem were perhaps the only tribe who never practised cannibalism, the flesh of their totem being forbidden to them.

Totemism, in this limited form, was perfectly consistent with ancestor-worship. Except in the case of the shark—a malevolent being claiming constant propitiation from fishermen—the totem had not often a temple or a priest. Saumaki, the river-shark, was remembered as a piece of tribal tradition, but his totem worshipped other gods. They were sometimes *tauvu* through gods independent of their totem. Lasakau and Sawaieke, Nayau and Notho were *tauvu* through their shark-totem, but Rewa and Verata were *tauvu* through an ancestor-god, Ko-mai-na-ndundu-ki-langi, or Ko-Tavealangi (Reclining-on-the-sky), and greeted one another in the formula, "Nonku Vuniyavu" (Foundation of my house). Many tribes have either forgotten or have never had a totem, and the greater number of those who have preserve the tradition as a piece of family history, and refer to it with a smile, which is apt to fade when they survey the ruin of their property on the morrow of a visit from a devastating horde of their *tauvu* kin.

THE SOUL'S LAST JOURNEY

Gods of the After-world

Besides the divinities that concerned themselves with terrestrial affairs, there was a well-peopled mythology of the after-life. These beings had neither temples nor priests. They haunted well-known spots on the road by which the Shades must pass to their

last resting-place, but as they left the living unmolested, the living were not called upon to make propitiatory offerings. They were kept alive by the professional story-tellers, who revived them after funerals, when men's thoughts were directed to the problem of Death, and they gained in detailed portraiture at every telling. In a land where every stranger is an enemy, the idea of the naked Shade, turned out friendless into eternity, to find his own way to the Elysium of Bulotu, conjured up images of the perils that would beset every lone wayfarer on earth, and the Shade was made to run the gauntlet of fiends that were the incarnations of such perils.

Though the story of the Soul's journey agreed in general outline, the details were filled in by each tribe to suit its geographical position. There was generally water to cross, either the sea or a river, and there was, therefore, a ghostly ferryman (Vakaleleyalo) who treated his passengers with scant courtesy. There was Ghost-scatterer, who stoned the Shade, and Reed-spear, who impaled him. Goddesses of fearsome aspect peered at him, gnashing their teeth; the god of murder fell upon him; the Dismisser sifted out the real dead from the trance-smitten; fisher-fiends entangled cowards in their net; at every turn in the road there was some malevolent being to put the Shade to the ordeal, and search out every weak point, until none but brave warriors who had died a violent death—the only sure passport to Bulotu—passed through unscathed. The names differed, but the features of the myth were the same. The shades of all Vitilevu and the contiguous islands, and of a large part of Vanualevu took the nearest road either to the Nakauvandra range, the dwelling-place of Ndengei, or to Naithombothombo, the jumping-off place in Mbau, and thence passed over

the Western Ocean to Bulotu,[45] the birth-place of the race.

What belief was more natural for a primitive people, having no revealed belief in a future state except than that the land of which their fathers had told them, where the yams were larger and the air warmer, and the earth more fruitful, was the goal of their spirits after death. We almost do the same ourselves. Englishmen who emigrate never tire of telling their children of the delights of "home" as compared with their adopted country. If the Canadians or South Africans knew nothing of England but what they had heard from their fathers, and had no beliefs concerning a future state, England would have come to be the mysterious paradise whither their souls would journey after death, and their "jumping-off place" would be the mouth of the St. Lawrence or of the Orange River. With the Fijians the traditions have become so dim with antiquity that nothing remains but a vague belief that somewhere to the westward lies the Afterworld, and that the Shades must leap from the western cliff to reach it.

THE PATH OF THE SHADES

Every step of the soul's journey was taken on a road perfectly familiar to the people, and constantly frequented by daylight. But after nightfall none were found so foolhardy as to set foot upon this domain of the Immortals, while the precincts of Ndengei's cave and Naithombothombo (the Jumping-off place) were tabu both by day and night. In 1891 a surveyor, employed in sketching the boundaries of the lands

claimed by the Namata tribe, was taken by his native guides along a high ridge, the watershed between the Rewa river and the eastern coast of the main island. As they cut their way through the undergrowth that clothed the hilltop, he noticed that the path was nearly level, and seldom more than two feet wide, and that the ridge joined hilltop to hilltop in an almost horizontal line. Reflecting that Nature never works in straight lines with so soft a material as earth, and that natural banks of earth are always washed into deep depressions between the hills, and are never razor-edged as this was, he had a patch of the undergrowth cleared away, and satisfied himself that the embankments were artificial. Following the line of the ridge, the saddles had been bridged with banks thirty to forty feet high in the deepest parts, and tapering to a width of two feet at the top. The level path thus made extends, so the guides said, clear to Nakauvandra mountain, fifty miles away. For a people destitute of implements this was a remarkable work. Every pound of earth must have been carried up laboriously in cocoanut leaf baskets and paid for in feasts. Even when the valley was densely populated the drain on the resources of the people must have been enormous, for thousands of pigs must have been slaughtered and millions of yams planted, cultivated, and consumed in the entertainment of the workers. With the present sparse population the work would have been impossible. It was thought at first that this was a fortification on a gigantic scale, for Fijians never undertake any great combined work, except for defence, to preserve their bare existence. It could not be a road, because the Fijian of old preferred to go straight over obstacles, like the soldier ants that climb trees rather than go round them. The old men

at Mbau, whom I questioned, knew no tradition about it, except that it was called the "Path of the Shades," and that it was an extension of one of the spurs of the Kauvandra mountain range. Of one thing they were certain—that it was not built for defence. Then I asked for guides to take me over it, and three grey-headed elders of the Namata tribe were told off to accompany me. We started in the driving rain. My guides were reticent at first, but when we had climbed to the higher ridge, and were near the "Water-of-Solace," the spirit of the place seemed to possess them, and at every turn of the path they stopped to describe the peril that there beset the poor Shade. The eldest of the three became at times positively uncanny, for he stopped here and there in the rain to execute a sort of eerie dance, which, if it was intended to exorcise the demons of the Long Road, was highly reprehensible in a professing Wesleyan. Little by little I wormed the whole story out of them, together with fragments of the sagas in which it is crystallized. After I had reached home two of my native collectors were sent to Namata to reduce the tradition to writing. The following is a literal translation of what they brought me—

The Spirit Path (*Sala Ni Yalo*)

There is a long range which has its source at Mumuria in the Kauvandra mountain, and stretches eastward right down to Nathengani at Mokani in Mbau. It is called the Tuatua-mbalavu (Long Range), but in Tholo and Ra it is called the Tualeita. This range is nowhere broken or cut through, nor does the course of any stream pass through it. And all the streams that discharge into the Wainimbuka take

their source in this range, and also the streams that run towards the sea, on the whole coast, from Navitilevu to Namata.

Now our ancestors said that the souls of the dead followed this range on their way to Kauvandra, and at the foot of the range at Mokani was their fountain of drinking water, called Wainindula. We begin our account of the "Spirit Path" at Ndravo, for at that place all the souls of those who have died at Mburetu, and Nakelo, and Tokatoka, and Lomaindreketi, and Ndravo crossed the water.

This is the story—

THE GHOSTLY FERRYMAN

When a man died his body was washed, and girded up with *masi* and laid in its shroud. A whale's tooth was laid on his breast, to be his stone to throw at the pandanus-tree, which all the Shades had to aim at. And while his friends were weeping, the Shade left the body and came to a stream so swift that no Shade could swim across it. This stream was called the Wainiyalo (River of the Shades), but it is now called the Ndravo river. When the Shade reached the bank he stood and called towards the Mokani side, where the god Themba dwelt, the same whose duty it is to ferry the Shades across the water. Now Themba has a great canoe, divided in the middle; one end is of *vesi*, and in this the chiefs embark; but the other is of *ndolou* (a kind of bread-fruit), and on this the low-born Shades take passage. The name of the place where they stand and call Themba is Lelele. When the Shade reaches Lelele he stands and calls,

"Themba, bring over your canoe." And Themba answers, "Which end is to be the prow?" If the Shade answers, "The *vesi* end," Themba knows that it is the shade of a chief, but if it cries, "Let the bread-fruit be the prow," it is a low-born Shade, and the bread-fruit end touches the bank.

When the Shade is ferried across from Lelele it goes straight to the bluff at Nathengani, but before it reaches it it has to cross a bridge called Kawakawa-i-rewai. Now this bridge is a monstrous eel, and while the Shade is crossing it, if it writhes it is a sign to the Shade not to tarry, for it means that his wife will not be strangled to follow him. But if the eel does not writhe, then the Shade sits down, for he knows that his wife is being strangled to his manes, and will soon overtake him.

Now, as he climbs the bluff at Nathengani the path is blocked by an orchid, and from this orchid the disposition of the man is known, whether it is good or bad; for if it is the Shade of a man kindly in his life, and he cries to the orchid "Move aside," it allows the Shade to pass, but if it is the Shade of a churlish man the orchid will not move, but still blocks the path, and the Shade has to crawl beneath it. And when he reaches the top of Nathengani he sees the pandanus-tree, and he flings his stone at it. If he hits it he sits down to await his wife, for it means that she has been strangled and is following him, but if he misses it he goes straight on, knowing that no one is following him as an offering to his manes.

It is also related of the eel-bridge that if it turns over as a Shade crosses it, that is a sign that the husband or wife of the Shade has been unfaithful during life, and that when the Shade feels the eel turning he goes

forward weeping, because he knows that his wife had been unfaithful to him in life.

A goddess named Tinaingenangena guards the end of the range at Nathengani. These are the verses that relate to her:—

Let us send for Tinaingenangena,
To teach us the song,
When we have learned it we are dissolved in laughter,
Her short *liku* is flapping about,
As for us we are being laughed at,
The Shade of the dead is passing on,
Passing on to Nathengani,
He is stepping on the bridge; the eel-bridge,
It writhes and the Shade rolls off,
My dress is wet through,
He speaks to the orchid at Nathengani,
Speaks to the orchid that blocks the road,
Move a little that I may pass on,
He breaks the whale's tooth in half,
Breaks it that we may each have one,
That we may throw at the red pandanus,
He misses and bites his fingers in chagrin,
She loves her life too well.

And as the spirit travels onward it comes to a *Ndawa*-tree called "The-Ndawa-that-fells-the-Shades" (*Vuni-ndawa-thova-na-yalo*), which stands at Vunithava. This it climbs to tear down the *ndawa* fruit to be its provision for the journey, and it weeps aloud as it goes in self-pity for the deceit of the wife who had been unfaithful, as it now knows.

And now the Shade hears the voice of the god Ndrondro-yalo (Pursuer-of-Shades), and he strides towards the Shade bearing in his hand a great stone

with which he pounds the nape of his neck, and the *ndawa* fruit the Shade is carrying is scattered far and wide. Therefore this spot was called Naitukivatu (the Place-of-the-pounding-stone).

THE WATER OF OBLIVION

Then the Shade comes to a place called Ndrekei, where there are two goddesses named Nino, whose custom it is to peer at all the Shades that travel along the "Spirit-path." These goddesses are terrible on account of their teeth; and as the Shade limps along the path they peer at it, creeping towards it, and gnashing their teeth. And when the Shade sees them it cries aloud in its terror and flees.

And as the Shades flee they come to a spring, and stop to drink. And as soon as they taste the water they immediately cease their weeping, and their friends who are still weeping in their former homes also cease, for their grief is assuaged. Therefore this spring is called Wai-ni-ndula (Water-of-Solace).

And as soon as they have finished drinking they rise up and look afar, and lo! the *mbuli* shells of the great dwellings of Kauvandra are gleaming white, and they throw away the rest of their provision of *via*, and to this day one may see the via they throw away sprouting at this place, where no mortal may dig it. For now they know that they are drawing near their resting-place; therefore they throw away their provisions that they may travel the lighter.

These are the verses that tell of the journey of the Shade from Vunithava to the Water-of-Solace:—

What do we see at Vunithava?
A *ndawa*-tree weighted to the ground with fruit,
Climb it that we may eat,
To be provision for the Shades on their long journey,
Here have we reached the "Stonebreaker,"
He pounds us and spills our *ndawa* fruit,
Thence we go forward limping,
Nino begin to creep forward peering at us,
Now we arrive at the garden of puddings,
We stop to rest at the Wainindula,
We meet and drink together, e e.
Having drunk we are mad with joy (forgetting the past)
The Kai Ndreketi are growing excited,
They have sight of our bourne,
The shell-covered ridge-poles to which we are journeying
They seem to pierce the empyrean
We throw down our provisions,
Soon the great *via* plants will appear (that have sprouted from the *via* thrown away).

Journeying on from the Water-of-Solace the Shade comes to a place called Naisongovitho, where stands a god armed with an axe. The name of this god is Tatovu. When the Shade reaches this place Tatovu poises his axe and chops at his back, and thenceforward the Shade goes with his back bent. Presently he reaches Namburongo, where the god Motonduruka (Palm-spear) lies in wait to impale every Shade with a spear fashioned from a reed.

Wounded with the rush-spear of Motonduruka, the Shade journeys on to a place called Natambu, where there is a god called Naiuandui who wounds him in the back, and he goes forward reeling in his gait. Therefore is this place called Naimbalembale (the

Reeling-place).

There are verses that tell of the journey of the Shades from Rokowewe to Naimbalembale:—

Rokowewe ("Lord Ue-Ue!") announces us,
"Prepare, ye old women,"
They prepare their nets and shake them out for a cast,
They entangle them (the Shades), and cast them out,
Tatovuya (the Back-cutter) cuts them down,
Motonduruka (the Cane-spear) stabs them,
Naiuandui bruises them,
How far below us lies Nawakura,
How far above Mambua,
Mambua the land of insolence,
The land to which the spirits of every land come,
We are struck down, we are slain,
We go on reeling from side to side, e e.

Now when the Shades have passed Naimbalembale they reach a spot called Narewai. Here they have to crawl on their bellies. Thence they journey to a place called Nosonoso (the Bowing-place), which they have to pass in a stooping posture. There they bow down ten times.

Thence they come to Veisule, where they throw down the provisions they have taken and faint away. Thence they are dragged on to Nayarayara (the Dragging-place) as corpses are dragged to the ovens to be cooked. Thence they travel to Nangele.

THE DREAD FISHERWOMEN

Thence they come to a place called Navakathiwa (the

Nine-times). This they have to encircle nine times. Thence they have to journey on till they come to a spot called the Watkins (the Pinching-stone). Every Shade has to pinch this stone. If he indents it it is known that he was a lazy man in his lifetime, for his nails were long, as they never are when a man has been diligent in scooping up the yam hills in his garden with his hands. But if his nails do not indent the stone it is known that he was industrious, for his nails were worn away with working in his plantation. From the "Pinching-stone" they go forward, dancing and jesting, towards the god Taleya (the Dismisser), who is the god that lives in the great *mbaka*-tree at Maumi. Then Taleya asks each Shade how he died, whether by a natural death, or by the club in war, or by strangling, or by drowning. And if he answers "I died by a natural death," Taleya replies "Then go back and re-enter your body."[46] Hence is the god called Taleya—the Dismisser. But if the Shade replies that he was slain in war or drowned, Taleya lets him pass on. The Shades that are sent back to re-enter their bodies do not always obey, for some are so eager to reach Kauvandra that they disobey his command.[47]

Thence the Shades follow the Long Road to a spot called Uluitambundra, which is on the junction of the road with Namata. At this spot there is a god who announces the Shades with a shout. His name is Rokowewe, and when a Shade reaches Uluitambundra he shouts "Ue, Ue, Ue!" And two goddesses at Naulunisanka on the road shake out their nets in readiness, for they are set to net the Shades as they pass. These goddesses are called Tinaiulundungu and Muloathangi, and they make a sweep with their net. If it be the Shade of a warrior it will overleap the net as does the *kanathe*; but if it be

the Shade of a coward it will be entangled like the *sumusumu*, and the goddesses will disentangle it and bite its head as if it were a fish, and will loop up their nets and throw the fish into their baskets. These goddesses inhabit the "Long Road" (Tualeita), and they loiter in the path listening for the sound of wailing from the villages below them, for the sad sound is wafted to the "Long Road." But the real dwelling of these goddesses is Ulunisanka, a peak on the road. There is a saga about these goddesses, and how they fish for the shades of the dead. It is well known in Namata among the women there, and it is called "Shade of the Dead" (Yalo mate).

The goddesses are looping up their nets,
They are listening to the sound of weeping,
From what village does this weeper come?
Let us stand and dispute about it,
It is weeping from the village of ——?
They spread out their nets for a catch,
They spread their net across the belly of the road,
We hold the net and wait,
The shade of the dead is topping the ridge,
Let us lift up the head of the net cautiously,
The Shade leaps and clears the net at a bound,
One goddess claps, and clasps her hands, and the other bites her fingers (in chagrin).
I look after the Shade, but it is far on its way,
Let us fold up the net and return.

The Shades that have escaped from the Fisherwomen at Uluisanka follow the "Long Road" to Naikathikathi-ni-kaile[48] (the Calling-place-for-kaile). In the valley below this spot are two goddesses boiling *kaile*, and when the Shade reaches the spot it calls to them for *kaile*. If it calls for a red *kaile* it is known for the Shade of a man slain in war,

but if it calls for a white *kaile* it is the Shade of one who was strangled. Some, however, call for *kaile* from Mburotu; these are they who have died a natural death, and *kaile* from Mburotu are taken to them. Other things, too, are called from this place.

When each Shade has received the *kaile* for which he called, he passes on to a place called Naikanakana (the Eating-place), and there he eats. Thence he goes on to a place called Nailililli (the Hanging-place). Here there is a *vasa* tree, and from the branches are hanging like bats the Shades of the little children who are waiting for their fathers or their mothers, and when one sees its mother it drops down, and goes on with her to Kauvandra.

WHERE THE SHADES MEET

The children cry to the Shades as they pass, "How are my father and my mother?" If the Shade answers, "The smoke of their cooking-fire is set upright" (meaning that they are still in their prime), then the child-Shade cries, "Alas, am I still to be orphan?" But if the Shade replies, "Their hair is grey, and the smoke of their cooking-fire hangs along the ground," the Shade of the child rejoices greatly, crying, "It is well. I shall soon have a father and a mother. O hasten, for I am weary of waiting for you."

Thence the Shade follows the "Long Road" to a place called Vuningasau-leka (Short reeds). Here the Shades stop to rest for a time, and they turn to see who is following them, and there they recognize each other, and become companions for the rest of

their journey to Kauvandra. Hence this place of Vuningasauleka is a by-word when there is strong anger between two persons. If one would tell the other that he will not see his face or speak to him again until one of them is dead, he says, "We two will meet again at Vuningasaleka," meaning that they will never meet again in this world.

Thence the Shades journey to Nankasenkase (the Crawling-place). Here they kneel down and crawl to the place called Naisausau (the Clapping-place), where they stand upright and clap their hands. In former times a village of the Naimbosa tribe was in this place, and they say that in those days they used to hear about them the sound of the hand-clapping which the Shades made at Naisausau.

Thence they pass on to a place called Tree-fern-target (Balabala-ulaki), where there is a tree-fern at which reeds are thrown, and here they stop to throw at it. And next they come to Levukaniwai, and then to Vakanandaku, where they rest for a time with their backs turned to one another (Vakanandaku). Then they come to Naterema (the Coughing-place), and here they cough loudly. Thence they pass through the place called Buremundu, to Nainkoronkoro (the Place of Wonder), and there they stand and marvel at the world, the beauty, the pleasures, the sorrows, and the labour of it. Here they take their last look at the world before passing on to Kauvandra.

Passing through Nakovalangi, and Bulia, and Navunindakua, and Matanikorowalu (the-Gate-of-the-eight-villages), which is a village of Vungalei, they come to a place called Naisa-vusavu-ni-weli (the Spitting-place). Each Shade as it arrives at this spot spits at the foot of a *ndrindriwai* tree, and go on to

another place called Naikanakana (the Eating-place), and here they stop to eat. Now our fathers have told us that when we dream that the spirit of a dead man is eating us, it signifies that the Shade has reached Naikanakana-ni-yalo, and that there he finds the spirits of us the living, and that straightway he pursues our spirits with intent to devour them. Therefore we sometimes say, "Last night the Shade of so-and-so ate me, and I shouted till I almost died."

Having eaten the spirits of the living, the Shades of the dead pass onward to Vunivau-nkusi-mata (the Hybiscus-for-wiping-the-face), and here they break off leaves of the hybiscus, and wipe their faces with them. If it be the Shade of a man the leaf will be black, but if it be the Shade of a woman the leaf will be red.

Thence they pass on to a spot called Navuniyasikinikini (the Sandal-wood-tree-to-be-pinched), for in this spot there is a sandal-wood which is pinched by all the Shades, and if the nails of the spirit make an impression on the tree, it is known that it is the Shade of a lazy man, but if the Shade pinches and leaves no impression it is plain that it is the Shade of an industrious man who is diligent in gardening.

Thence they pass on through the places called Naloturango and Tova, through Navitikau and Tanginakarakara, still following the "Long Road" through Thengunawai and Naitholasama and Nathau.

THE DANCE OF THE GODS

Next they reach a spot called Mbalenayalo (the Spirit falls), and as each Shade reaches this spot it suddenly falls down with a loud report. Thence they pass through Thenguna-sonki (Pigeon's rest), Drakusi (the Wound), and Nambaikau (the Wooden wall), and Kelia, and Suva, and Waitamia, the waterfall of Ndelakurukuru (Thunder-hill), Namatua's city. Now this is a great city of the gods built on the "Long Road." Here the Shades enter a house near the *rara* (village square) called Naisongolatha (Sail-cloth door). In this house they are to rest and witness the dance of the gods of Ndelakurukuru. And when the gods have finished dancing the Shades of the dead dance before them in their turn in the great house of Nasongolatha. This is the song of the gods:—

I am in the house of Nasongolatha,
Likuse-ni-karawa speaks,
The great chiefs are met to practise a song,
Thou, dear to women, come and practise.
Mbatibukawanka leads the song,
Thavuthavu-mata (the Face-stealer) follows.
(This god used to steal the faces of good-looking men in order to seduce women.)
He carries the club Singana-i-tamana (His father's triumph).
Roko Matanivula ("Lord Moon") is next;
Whence do all these chiefs come?
They are the chiefs from Molikula,
All their brothers follow them,
They assemble in the *rara*,
They turn once and scrape their feet,
They stamp and the earth splits,
Like the sound of thunder in the morning.

When this song is finished the Shades leave the house to bathe in the bathing-place of

Ndelakurukuru, which is called Ndranukula (the Red pond). This pool is in the middle of the city. And when they are about to bathe, the god Namatua, who rules the city of Ndelakurukuru, exorcises the water. This is the song with which he exorcises it:—

Bathe at Ndranukula and Namatua speaks,
There is a wind on Ndelakurukuru (Thunder-hill).
The breeze is scented with *ndomole* flowers,
As clear water flowing forth from a spring.
All my children are dancing,
Weliwelinivula (Moonshine) leads the dance,
Together with Molikula.

And after they have bathed the Shades go to look at the quicksand. This sand is white and very fine, and the spirits go to look at it, and after trying to cross it they fall asleep from very weariness, for, being a shifting sand, it cannot be crossed. This is the song that tells of it:—

I fall asleep at Nukutoro, the quicksand,
The sound of the singers and the drummers floats to me,
The sound of the spear-dance from the mountains,
The onlookers in their delight climb one upon another to see.

The guardians of the mountains sing on,
The calves of their legs are like shaddocks,
Their red turbans are of the colour of blood,
Like the fruit of the *vutore* tree floating down a river.

Then the children of Namatua are assembled to be counted in order that the Shades may know their numbers, the children of the god of Vungalei. And when they are counted they are found to number one hundred and two, and they are called collectively the

Vuanivonokula (the Fruit-of-the-red-kula). This was their title of honour. Now all these sons of Namatua are young gods, strong and handsome. This is a portion of one of the poems that relates to them:—

Let the sons of the god be counted,
They number one hundred and two;
The fruit of the *vono* is drifting,
The fruit of the red *vono*.[49]

The Shades, watching the dances of Ndelakurukuru and marvelling at the strong and warlike appearance of the young gods, long to repay them by singing a song of their own land. But they can only sing of their own sufferings. They think that they will thus raise in the minds of the gods anger against the mortals that are still living, and against the race of mosquitoes, and flies, and black ants, for the dead are ever malignant towards the living. This is their lament:—

My Lords, in ill fashion are we buried,
Buried staring up into heaven,
We see the scud flying over the sky,
We are worn out with the feet stamping in the earth, [50]
The rafters of our house (the ribs) are torn asunder,
The eyes with which we gazed on one another are destroyed;
The nose with which we kissed has fallen in;
The breast to which we embraced is ruined;
The thighs with which we clasped have fallen away;
The lips with which we smiled are fretted with decay;
The teeth with which we bite have showered down,
Gone is the hand which threw the *tinka* stick,
Rolled away are the hawks' stones (testiculi),

Rolled away are the blunters of razors
(alluding to the custom of shaving the pubes).
Hark to the lament of the mosquito:
"Well it is that they should die and pass onward;
"But alas for my conch-shell that they have taken away" (the human ear).
Hark to the lament of the fly:[51]
"Well it is that they should die and pass onward,
But alas! they have carried away the eye from which I drank."
Hark to the lament of the black ant:
"Well it is that they should die and pass onward;
"But, alas! for my whale's tooth that they have taken away!"
(The male organ; the most vulnerable point of attack for that insect when
a native sits down.)



Painting a *tapa* shroud.

THE LAMENT OF THE SHADES

And when the gods of Ndelakurukuru heard this song they cried, "Liku tangoi ya io," which signifies in the language of the immortals, "The mortals' way of burial is well enough, are we to condemn it for a song?"

We are sitting and the stars are appearing,
My feet are in the ferry canoe,
There is trampling on the Path of the Shades
They are following the "Long Road."
I go on and speak as I go,
The world there is lying empty,
I am standing on the firm ground,
I stand on the hard path,
The path that leads straight to Kauvandra,
The dance of the "Mbuno-ni-tokalau" echoes,
What tree shall I take shelter under,
I sit under the *ndanindani* tree,
We sit there chattering,
Our food is thrown away,
Our children are weeping,
I hate to be buried looking skywards,
I hate being buried to be stamped upon,
The hand with which I threw my *tinka* stick has been torn off,
My legs have fallen off, like rotten fruit.
Our bodies have been broken in half,
Our teeth have showered down till not one is left,
Our pupils have been turned round to show the whites,
Turned so as to show the whites,
The whole land is tremulous with haze,
I sit down and weep with head bowed to the earth,
Let us go and enter the house at Naisongolatha,
Ndaunivotua has entered it (the singer of the *votua*),
To teach us to sing the *votua*,
They keep remembering as they dance,

They sleep till it is daylight.

The reminiscence of Greek myth in Themba, the ghostly ferryman, and in the Water-of-Solace is, of course, mere coincidence. The republican sentiments of Charon find no echo in Fiji, for Themba reserved the hard-wood end of his craft for aristocratic passengers. The Water-of-Solace, too, was a more complex invention than the Water of Lethe, for the Fijians, whose emotions are transient, make their Lethe an excuse for the shortness of their mourning for the dead. "And his friends also ceased from weeping, for they straightway forgot their sorrow, and were consoled." The saga is valuable for the light that it throws on the moral ethics of the Fijians. Cowardice and idleness were the most heinous crimes; a life of rapine and a violent death were passports to the sacred mountain. A natural death was so contemned that the Shade was commanded by Taleya to re-enter the body and die respectably. This part of the story was of course devised to account for recoveries from trance and fainting fits. Life on earth was not a desirable possession. Seeing the misfortunes that overtook the spirit in its last journey, the Fijians might well have exclaimed with Claudio—

"The weariest and most loathed worldly life,
Is Paradise to what we fear of death."

Yet so gloomy and joyless is the prospect of a return to life that the Shades who are offered the privilege by Taleya do not all obey, so "anxious are they to reach Nakauvandra."

Light is also thrown upon a fact wonderingly related by the early missionaries, that the widows of dead

chiefs themselves insisted upon being strangled to his manes, although it was notorious that they did not love him. It was their good name that was at stake, for we read that when the Shade had missed his throw at the pandanus-tree, and knew therefrom that his wives would not be strangled, he went on weeping, for he had now a proof that they had been unfaithful to him in life.

THE ANCESTOR GOD

The religion of a primitive people springs from within them and reflects their moral qualities, and the modification that it receives from the physical character of the country in which they live is a mere colour that goes no deeper than the surface. Every turn in the "Long Road" embodies an article of social ethics. If there had been no long spur protruding from Nakauvandra into the plain the story would have been different, but the moral ethics of the race would somehow have been illustrated; the industrious and courageous would somehow have been rewarded; the man of violence would have had some advantage over the man of peace; the Shades would in some way have shown their preference for the terrors of death to the gloom of life; the idle and the cowardly would somehow have been put to shame.

The Ndengei Myth

Ndengei is supreme among the *Kalou-Vu* (original gods), and his authority was recognized by the whole of Vitilevu and its outlying islands, and by the

western half of Vanualevu. The oldest tradition in which his name occurs mentions him as one of the first immigrants with Lutu-na-somba-somba, but his fame far exceeded that of his companions, and so many myths gathered about his name, that when the first missionaries arrived he had come to be a counterpart of Zeus himself. In serpent form he lay coiled in a cavern in the Kauvandra mountain above Rakiraki, and when he turned himself the earth quaked. Enormous offerings of food were made to him by the Rakiraki people. Several hundred hogs and turtle were carried to the mouth of the cavern, which the priests approached, crawling on their knees and elbows. One of the priests then entered the cave to proffer the request. If it was for a good yam-crop he would reappear, holding a piece of yam which the god had given him; if for rain, he would be dripping with water; if for victory, a fire-brand would be flung out in token that the enemy would be consumed, or a clashing of clubs would be heard, one for each of the enemy that would be slaughtered. Beyond the limits of his own district he had scarcely a temple, and little actual worship was paid to him, though in the great drought of 1838 King Tanoa of Mbau sent propitiatory offerings to him; and even in Raki-raki itself, there is a humorous song in which Uto his constant attendant, is represented as visiting the public feasts for the god's portion, and returning to Ndengei with the rueful intelligence that nothing but the under shell of the turtle was allotted to him. In some versions Ndengei has the head and neck only of a serpent, the rest of his body being of stone. He is the creator of mankind, but he has no emotions, sensations, or appetites except hunger.[52] Another version describes him as sending forth his son, Rokomautu, to create the land. He scraped it up from

the ocean-bed, and where his flowing garment trailed across it there were sandy beaches, and where the skirt was looped up the coast was rocky. He also taught men how to produce fire.

When the missionaries first attempted the conversion of Rakiraki the people thought that Christianity was a mere variant of their own cult of Ndengei, using the following argument: Ndengei = the True God; Jehovah = the True God; therefore, Jehovah = Ndengei. Many years later the false prophet, Navosavakandua, whose career is set forth hereafter, used a similar argument to prove that his teachings did not clash with those of the missionaries, but were merely a newer revelation.

Ndengei was a purely Melanesian deity, and therefore, as I have said, the whole of Abraham Fornander's argument of a settlement of Polynesians in Fiji from the second to the fifth centuries a.d., which is founded on the fallacy that Ndengei was of Polynesian origin, falls to the ground.[53] For the serpent-worship indicated in the serpent form of Ndengei, on which he lays so much stress, is a modern gloss, and, even if it had been ancient, it would have proved no connection with the Polynesians, since snake-superstitions are common throughout Melanesia.

THE SHOOTING OF THE SACRED PIGEON

The great saga of the war in Nakauvandra is far older than the myth ascribing serpent form to Ndengei, and there the god figures as a splenetic and irascible

old man, as no doubt he was in his remote earthly career. I take the story from the version written down by Ilai Motonithothoko, to whom I have referred elsewhere. When Ndengei had grown old the settlement on the Kauvandra mountain consisted of several villages, one of which belonged to Rokola and his carpenter clan, and the grandsons of the first arrivals were grown men. In the village of Nai-langonawanawa, on the slopes of the mountain, lived two twin grand-nephews of Ndengei, named Na-thiri-kaumoli and Na-kau-sambaria, who having brought down a pigeon with an arrow without injuring it, clipped its wings and tamed it. They gave the bird the name of Turukawa, and every morning and evening, and at flood-tide and ebb-tide, its cooing resounded far and wide over the mountain. Old Ndengei, hearing its voice, sent a messenger to ask the youths to give it to him, but they were absent from home, and the messenger, assured by their father that their consent was not necessary, took the bird to his master. Ndengei wanted the bird for a practical purpose. Elderly Fijians are somnolent, and the pigeon's cooing at sunrise was useful in arousing him from slumber.

Next morning the twin brothers were startled at hearing their pigeon cooing in Ndengei's village, and when they heard that it had been taken away without their consent, they flew into a rage, crying, "Sombo! is this to be the way with us children of men?" And they made ready their bow, which was called Livaliva-ni-singa (Summer-lightning), and set forth to shoot Turukawa. And when they drew near the banyan-tree in which he was perched, they doffed their turbans; therefore the place is called Aithavu-thavu-ni-sala (the Doffing-place) to this day. And they shot an arrow at Turukawa, who fell dead

to the ground. And they drew out the arrow, and went to the carpenters' village, Narauyamba, because it was fortified, and their own village was not fortified.

For four days Ndengei missed the cooing of his Awakener, and he sent Uto, his messenger, to see what had become of him. And Uto came to the banyan-tree, and found the body of Turukawa, and saw the arrow-wound, and said, "There is none who would so forget Ndengei as to kill his Awakener but the twin brothers whose bird he was. Why have they gone to live at Narauyamba, except it be because it has a war-fence?" And he told Ndengei his suspicions. Then he went to the brothers and questioned them, and they said, "Yes, we did shoot Turukawa."

Then Ndengei sent to them to come to him, and they refused. And his anger blazed up within him, and he cried with a terrible voice, "Go, tell them to depart to a land where I am not known!"

But this also they refused to do, and Rokola ordered his carpenters to build a war-fence of *vesi* timber, very high, with neither joint nor chink in it. And when Ndengei knew that the carpenters had entrenched themselves, he sent messengers to Rokomouto to come and help him.

Then there was war in Kauvandra—such a war as has never since been seen in Fiji. Joined to Ndengei were Rokomouto and his clan, who had settled on Viwa, and together they laid siege to the fortress. Many heroes fell on either side, but never a warrior could storm the wall of *vesi* built by the carpenters. But now Rokola devised a dreadful engine of war. Before the gate of his fortress there was a ragged rift in the

mountain-side. He sent out his warriors to cut stout vines in the forest, and suspended a bridge of twisted vines over the chasm. From the tops of two stout posts, planted within the fortress, he stretched ropes that appeared to be mere supports to the bridge, but were in reality a trap such as the men of Notho use when they would snare wild duck in their taro-beds. For when a man trod upon them he was caught fast in a noose, and the defenders hauled suddenly upon the ropes, and swung him high over the rampart into their midst, where they could club him at leisure. Then warriors were sent out to flee before the enemy to entice them on the bridge, and many were caught in the trap, and swung into the fortress to meet their doom. Thus were Ndengei's forces dispirited.

THE GREAT DELUGE

There were traitors in Ndengei's camp, who were conspiring with the enemy, and carrying food to him by night. These men were seized, and being found guilty on their own confession, were exiled from Kauvandra for ever. They left the mountain, some going towards Matailombau, others towards Navosa. Now, when Ndengei saw that he could not prevail against the fortress, he sought out one Mbakandroti, a man related to the carpenters, who had chosen to take part with Ndengei against his own kin, and bade him devise a plan for betraying the fortress. That night a spirit appeared to Mbakandroti in a dream, and told him to cut down a *vungayali*-tree that grew close to the rampart. And when he had related his dream, one Vueti was appointed to cut it down. He had scarce laid his stone axe to the root when water began to gush forth from the wound. All that day the

water poured into the fortress, and by nightfall it was knee-deep, and rising still. So the carpenters took counsel, and resolved to ask pardon of Ndengei, since the gods were with him. So Ndengei took counsel with his chiefs, and they said, "These craftsmen are too valuable; we cannot destroy them; let them be exiled!" The fountain had now become a mighty river flowing southward from the mountain, and the craftsmen built them canoes in haste, and embarked, and sailed down the stream till they came to a new land, and there they settled. These are the ancestors of the carpenter clan at Rewa.[54] But there was no pardon for the twin brothers; to their exile there was to be no limit. Yet, for Rokola's sake, they were given time to build their canoe. And Rokola built them a vessel such as has never since been seen in Fiji, and named it Nai-vaka-nawanawa (the Lifeboat), and sailed away down the stream into the western ocean, and were never heard of more; only the prophecy remains that one day they will come again. It will presently be related how the false teacher Na-vosa-vakandua turned this prophecy to account.

The Epic of Dengei

Ko Dengei sa tangi langalanga,
"Bongi ndua, bongi rua ka'u yandra
Bongi tolu, bongi va ka'u yandra,
Sa tambu ndungu ndina ko Turukawa,
Isa! nonku toa, na toa turanga,
Isa! nonku toa, na toa tamata,
Tiko e ulunda na ka rarawa,
Au lolova kina, au tambu kana,
Matanivanua, mai thithi manda,

Mai thithi sara ki Narauyamba,
Mo tarongi rau na ndauvavana,
'Kemundrua, ru vanai Turukawa?'
Sa tambu ndungu ni vakamataka,
Ma lolo koto Kotoinankara,
Ma mbunotha no a wai ni matana,
Vakasunka me ramothe mai wanka."

Thus did Dengei weep tears of annoyance,
"One night, two nights have I lain awake,
Three nights, four nights have I lain awake,
Not once has Turukawa cooed,
Alas! my fowl, my noble fowl!
Alas! my fowl, my man-like fowl,
Sorrow has taken possession of my brain,
I am sick with it; I cannot eat,
Come, herald, run,
Run straight to Narauyamba,
Question the archers, and say,
'You, did you shoot Turukawa?
Not once did he coo at daybreak,
The 'Cave-dweller'[55] is still fasting,
The tears are welling from his eyes;
The men are off to sleep on board.'

THE CRAFTSMEN DECLARE WAR

The Herald Speaks

Nonku nduri tiko ni karakaramba,
Sa talaki ma Kotoinankara,
"Matanivanua mai thithi manda,
Mo lakovi rau na turanga,
Nonku toa sa mate vakathava?

Au tambu kila no a kena thala."
Soraki ka tukutuku ko Mata,
Ma mbolea mai ko Nakausamba,
'Matanivanua, mo na ngalu manda,
O kenda kethe na luve ni tamata,
Oi au na luve ni mathawa,
Oi au na luve ni vula thandra,
Vakathambethambe nga ko Waithala,
Ka levu ko cava kei Mata,
Au kaya mo na sa vavi manda,
Tha nde ko senga ni na laukana,
Ni ko rui kaisi tha sara,
Au a lenkata na vula ma thandra."
Ko Nathirikaumoli ma vosaya,
"Me tukuna ma Kotoinankara,
Nona ruve e rawata vakathava?
E kune e wai, se rawata matha?
Ko la'ki tukuna me nda tu sa vala,
Sa vu ni tha nga ko Turukawa,
Me tawase kina ko Nakauvandra,
Sa tha nondatou tiko vata,
Me ngundu na masi me tou sa vala."
Kena moto ma rara no kivata,
Na malumu me thavu e na wakana,
Ko wilika ma na sai mbalambala,
Tiko sombu ndaru na okaokata,
E undolu vakatini sa rawa,
Me tou tinia na masi ni vala,
A ndrondro a ue ki sankata.
Mataisau era mbose toka,
Era mbose, era ndui vosavosa,
Me nkai vosa mai ko Rokola,
"Mbai vesi mo ndou la'ki vonota,
Matamata mo ndou la'ki karona,"
Na mbongi ni vala ka sa tini toka,
Kena wa ma mbuki ma so vota,

Velavela ko Lutunasombasomba,
Sai koya nga na ndauloloma,
Nda nkai nanuma tale nona vosa,
"Tou a nkai kune ka ngona,
O ndou nguthe tou na mbokola,
Me mai mbaleta nai votavota."
E tini na vuthu ka tambu na vosa.

I am wearied with the labour of poling,
Dispatched with this message from the Cave-dweller,
"Come, herald, run,
Summon the two chiefs to come to me,
Why was my fowl slain?
I know of no evil that he did."
Thus the herald gave his message,
Nakausamba answers him boastfully,
"Herald, hold thy peace,
We are all the children of men,
I am the child of space,
I am the child of the rising moon,
Which Waithala made to rise,
This herald is full of questions,
My way would be to have thee roasted,
It would be a pity not to have thee eaten,
For thou art the worst of lowborn men;
I have confined the rising moon."
Then speaks Nathirikaumoli,
"Tell this to the Cave-dweller,
How came he by his pigeon?
Found he it in the water, or found he it on land,
Go, tell him that we will fight for it,
Turukawa is the root of the evil,
It is by him that Kauvandra is divided,
It is not well that we should live together,
Up with the flag and let us fight."
His spear lies ready on the shelf,
And his club can be snatched from the eaves,

Have you counted the spear-points of tree-fern?
Sit down and let us number them,
Ten times one hundred in all;
Let us hoist the pennants of war,
The welkin rings with the tumult.
The craftsmen are sitting in council,
They consult, each gives his opinion,
Rokola now speaks,
"Go and fit close a rampart of vesi,
Give special heed to the gate,"
Ten days has the battle raged,
The rope has snared them; they are dismembered,
Lutunasombasomba is dishonoured,
He it is who is to be pitied,
Let us then recall his words,
"We are now in terrible plight,
You gloat over our corpses,
Thinking how ye will dismember them for the feast."
The poem is finished and there is silence.

Vunivasa

Ndungu toka ni singa ko Turukawa,
Sa tambu ndungu ni vakama taka,
Tangi ko Ndengei ru sa lomana,
Isa nonku toa, na toa turanga,
U vula ndua koto ni tambu kana,
U vula rua koto ni lolovaka,
Me ndua me thithi ki Narauyamba,
I tarongi rau na ngone turanga,
Oi ndrua, ru vanai Turukawa,
Sa tambu ndungu ni vakamataka,
"Tiko i ulunda na tiko vinaka,
Ru sanga voli nai vakayandra."
Ra tukia ni mbongi na veivala,
Ndua nai valu ma sorovi rawa.

Tambu ni sorovi mo ndru la'ki kamba,
Era mba nai valu i ruarua,
Ndua i yaviti yae; ndua i tambili, yae,
Ului Ndreketi era sa mbini.
Seu nai valu i matasawa,
Ia la'ki seu ki sawana,
Ru la'ki samuti ko Nakauvandra,
Vosa i cei a vuna vala?
Thimbi koto nai valu sa rawa,
Lave a osooso ni turanga,
Enda vala, enda vala, enda vala—i!

Second Choir

Turukawa used to coo all the day long,
He did not coo at daybreak,
Ndengei wept for love of him,
Alas! my fowl, my noble fowl,
For a whole month I have eaten nothing,
For two months have I fasted for him,
Let one run to Narauyamba,
And question the two young chiefs,
Did ye shoot Turukawa?
He did not coo at daybreak,
"Joy possesses us,
We did injure the Awakener."
They joined battle at nightfall,
It is a war that can never be atoned.
Never atoned; go, storm the fortress,
Both sides joined battle,
Ah! one is clubbed, Ah! another is down,
The bodies of the Ului Ndreketi are piled high.
The war spreads even to the shore,
Aye, spreads even to the sea-shore,
The Kauvandra tribes are thrashed,
Whose was the word that set the battle going?

Lo! the death-dance for the ending of the war!
Crash goes the club into the thick of the chiefs!
We fight, we fight, we fight—i!

This poem is given in the dialect of Rakiraki. As in all Fijian poems there are no indications of the speaker, and it is as difficult to translate as a modern play would be if all the speakers' names and the stage directions were omitted. Judging by the phraseology I take it to be a late version of the ancient story, probably not more than a century old. The older poems contain archaic words whose meaning is unintelligible to the natives of these days, for the language is being steadily impoverished as the older generation is giving place to men taught in the mission schools.

The Tuka Heresy

THE IMMORTALITY HERESY

In 1876 the Fijians had all nominally accepted Christianity. In every village throughout the group services were held regularly by native teachers of the Wesleyan Mission; the heathen temples had been demolished; and all customs likely to keep alive the old heathen cults had been sternly discountenanced. Even the old men conformed outwardly to the new faith, and it was hoped that, as they died out, the old beliefs would perish with them. But it was not to be expected that they had really abandoned all belief in the religion of their fathers.

Towards the end of 1885 strange rumours were carried to the coast by native travellers from the

mountains. A prophet had arisen, who was passing through the villages crying, "Leave all, and follow me." He had gathered around him a band of disciples on whom he was bestowing the boon of immortality (*tuka*), to fit them to consort with their ancestors who were shortly to return from the other world bringing the millennium with them. The Commissioner of the Province, the late Mr. Walter Carew, found the rumour to be substantially true. A man named Ndungumoi, of the village of Ndrauni-ivi in the Rakiraki district, who had been deported in 1878 to one of the Lau islands for stirring up sedition, but had been allowed to return home about three years before, had announced that he had had a revelation from the ancestor-gods. He said that the foreigners had deported him to Tonga and still believed him to be there. They had tried to drown him, he said, by throwing him overboard with the ship's anchor tied about his neck, but, being *vunde* (charmed), he had swum safely ashore with his body, leaving his spirit behind to deceive the foreigners. Taking the title of Na-vosa-vakandua (He who speaks but once), the native title for the Chief Justice of the Colony, he appointed two lieutenants, who went through the mountain villages enrolling disciples and teaching them a sort of drill compounded of the evolutions of the Armed Native Constabulary and native dances. The prophet carried about with him a bottle of water, called Wai-ni-tuka (Water of Immortality), which conferred immortality upon him who drank of it. People paid for the boon at a rate varying from ten shillings' to two pounds' worth of property, and so remunerative was this part of his business, that at a feast held at Valelembo he could afford to present no fewer than four hundred whales' teeth, a king's ransom according to the Fijian

standard. Fortunately for the Government, the prophet was no ascetic. He had enrolled a bevy of the best-looking girls in the district to be his handmaidens, by persuading them that his holy water conferred not only immortality, but perpetual virginity, and that they therefore ran no risk of the usual consequences of concubinage. It was through the parents of these "Immortality Maidens" that information first reached the Government officers.

Ndungumoi's teachings were an ingenious compound of Christianity with the cult of Ndengei. Recognizing probably that the Mission had too firm a hold to be boldly challenged, he declared that when Nathirikaumoli and Nakausambaria, the twins who made war against Ndengei, had sailed away after their defeat, they went to the land of the white men, who wrote a book about them, which is the Bible; only, being unable to pronounce their Fijian names correctly they called them Jehovah and Jesus. His, therefore, was the newer revelation. There was some controversy among the faithful whether Ndengei was God or Satan. Most of them inclined to the latter belief, because Satan, like Ndengei, was a serpent. They named various places round Kauvandra Roma (Rome), Ijipita (Egypt), Kolosa (Colossians), etc., and they said that if a man were bold enough to penetrate to the recesses of the great cavern he might see the flames of hell.

THE ARREST OF THE PROPHET

The prophet had more practical concerns than the discussion of problems in theology. The twin gods,

he said, were about to revisit Fiji, bringing all the dead ancestors in their train, to share the ancient tribal lands with their descendants: the missionaries, the traders, and the Government would be driven into the sea, and every one of the faithful would be rewarded with shops full of calico and tinned salmon. Those who believed that he was sent before to prepare the way would be rewarded with immortality, but the unbelievers would perish with the foreigners. The white men, he said, were fully aware of what was coming, as was shown by the officers of men-of-war who, when questioned as to why they squinted through glass instruments, looked disconcerted, and said evasively that they were measuring the reefs, whereas in fact they were looking for the coming of the divine twins. In the meantime the faithful were to drill like soldiers, and the women to minister to them. They used a travesty of English words of command, and pass-words such as "Lilifai poliseni oliva ka virimbaita,"[56] which is not sense in any language.

Temples were built secretly at Valelembo and other places, wherein, behind the curtain, the god might be heard to descend with a low whistling sound. A white pig, a rarity in Fiji, and probably a symbol for the white men, was being fattened against the day when it was to be slaughtered as a sacrifice to the ancestors.

The prophet had fixed the day; the feasts were all prepared; threats about what was to happen to church and state were being freely exchanged, when the prophet was arrested. He then besought his guards not to send him to Suva, and so defeat all the glorious miracles he was about to work for the redemption of the race. Unless the twin gods

reappeared on earth the power of Ndengei, which is the Old Serpent, would continue in the ascendant, for the twins were they of whom it was foretold that they should bruise the head of the serpent. He was a sooty-skinned, hairy little man of middle age, expansive enough with the native warders in Suva gaol, but reticent when questioned about his mission. He was deported to Rotuma, where he is still living, and the outbreak was stamped out for the time.

In 1892 the heresy broke out afresh. One of his lieutenants, who had been allowed to remain in the district, began to receive letters from him. He would stand in the forest with a bayonet, and the magic letter fluttered down from the sky and impaled itself on the point. This was the more remarkable since Ndungumoi could not write. Holy water was again distributed, there was more drilling, and the end of British rule was again foretold. This time the Government decided to let the light and air into Ndrauni-ivi, the fount of superstition; the people, lepers and all, were deported in a body to Kandavu, and the very foundations of the houses were rased to the ground.

These false prophets were not all self-deceived, nor were they wholly deceivers. They were of that strange compound of hysterical credulity and shrewd common-sense that is found only among the hereditary priests of Fiji. They knew what strings to play upon in the native character. The people are arrogant and conservative; they secretly despise foreigners for their ignorance of ceremonial, while conforming to their orders through timidity; their nature craves for the histrionic excitement and the ceremonial proper to traffic with unseen powers. They chafe secretly at the ordered regularity imposed

upon them; at the inexorable punctuality of the tax-collector, at the slow process of the courts in redressing their grievances, at the laws which forbid them to seize with a strong hand the property they covet. It would have been no disgrace to them to yield allegiance to a conqueror, but the white men never conquered them, and therefore the tribute which they pay annually in the form of taxes is an ever-recurring dishonour. They pant for change—for the coming of a time when the heroic stories that they have heard from their fathers shall be realized, and their chiefs be again lords paramount over their own lands. They have forgotten the curse of war, the horror of the night attack, the tortures, the clubbings, the ovens, the carrying into captivity, to which half at least of the tribes would again be subject if their millennium came; for all the gifts which the Empire has bestowed upon its coloured subjects, the *Pax Britannica* is the last to be appreciated. Good government? They would welcome the worst anarchy so it were their own and not the foreigner's!

A HEATHEN REVOLT

Upon all the jangling strings Ndungumoi harped, half believing the while in the mission he professed. The Fijians secretly hated the foreigners and coveted their goods; the foreigners should be swept away, leaving their goods behind them. They found the Mission services tame; they should dabble in the black art as often as they pleased; they loved the excitement of conspiracy, and they admired the Old Testament; if they believed in him they might hatch plots against the Government with biblical sanction.

Left to themselves the Tuka superstitions would have resulted in bloodshed, if not in grave political danger. To the white settlers in the outlying districts the natives are in the proportion of many hundreds to one, and these must infallibly have fallen victims to Ndungumoi's demand for blood-sacrifice. The outbreak would probably have been confined to the island of Vitilevu, and the Government could have counted on nearly one-half of the group to aid in suppressing it; but as in the case of Hauhauism among the Maoris, which the Tuka resembled, the military operations would have been protracted and costly.

The Revolt at Seankanka (*Seaqaqa*)

The outbreak in the Mathuata province in 1895, which had no political importance, is interesting from the fact that the rebels at once returned to heathen worship and to cannibalism, as if there had not been a break of more than twenty years. The district of Seankanka includes a number of inland villages whose people scarcely ever visit the sea-coast. Split up into little communities of three or four houses, they have been as completely cut off from the influence of the Mission and the Government as if they were in another country. It may indeed be doubted whether heathen practices of some kind were not carried on continuously, although the people were nominally *lotu*. They were naturally a peaceable folk who only asked to be left alone, and the coast people had long been irritating them by putting upon them more than their share of the communal and tax work of the district.

On June 11, 1895, the Governor received a letter

from the Roko Tui Mathuata announcing that on the last day of May a native constable sent to serve a summons at the inland village of Thalalevu had been attacked and beaten by the inhabitants, who had subsequently taken the villages of Nathereyanga and Ndelaiviti without bloodshed. The Governor, Sir John Thurston, sailed that night for Mathuata with a small force of armed constabulary, and found that the rebels had followed up their success by burning the village of Saivou, killing two of its inhabitants, named Sakiusa and Samisoni, whose bodies were afterwards found dismembered and prepared for cooking. The rebels had retired to an old hill fortress called Thaumuremure, where they were strongly entrenched. On the march inland the besiegers had to pass the grave of the late Buli Seankanka in the village of Nathereyanga, and there they interrupted some of the rebels, who had carefully weeded the grave, and were in the act of presenting kava to the spirit of the dead chief to implore his aid. The siege of Thaumuremure will not loom large in history. The garrison numbered at the most one hundred persons; they had no arms but their spears, while the besiegers carried Martini-Henry rifles. But the garrison bravely blew their conch-shells and danced the death-dance till the last. It was all over in a few minutes. Nine men were shot dead, and the rest took to their heels, to surrender a few days later, while the Government force could boast but three spear-wounds. Nkaranivalu, the arch-rebel, and the two old heathen priests, who had eaten the arms and the legs of the two victims of the outbreak, were carried to Suva to expiate their crime. The people of the scattered villages were collected into one large village under the eye of their chief, and the district was at rest.

The outbreak is only interesting in that it shows how the Fijians confuse Christianity with the Government, and cannot throw off the one without repudiating the other; and how cannibalism was a religious rite and not the mere gratification of a depraved taste.

The Mbaki, or Nanga Rites

THE RITES OF THE FIRST FRUITS

We have now to consider a cult which is remarkable in more than one respect—in its contrast to the religious system of the Fijians, its resemblance to certain Australian and Melanesian rites, and in the sidelights which it seems to throw upon the origin of ancient monuments in Europe.[57] Fijian mythology is essentially tribal; the Mbaki took no cognizance of tribal divisions. It was rather a secret religious society bound together by the common link of initiation. The rite of initiation is a curious echo of the Engwura ceremony of the Arunta tribe in Central Australia as described by Messrs. Spencer and Gillen. The Nanga, the open-air temple in which the Mbaki was celebrated, has more than a slight resemblance to the alignments at Carnac in Brittany and Merivale on Dartmoor.

The Nanga was the "bed" of the Ancestors, that is, the spot where their descendants might hold communion with them; the Mbaki were the rites celebrated in the Nanga, whether of initiating the youths, or of presenting the first-fruits, or of recovering the sick, or of winning charms against wounds in battle. The cult was confined to a comparatively small area, a

bare third of the island of Vitilevu. Outside this area it was unknown, and even among the tribe that built and used the Nanga there were many who knew nothing of the cult beyond the fact that a certain spot near their village might not be visited without exciting the displeasure of the gods, although members of tribes that worshipped other gods, and were frequently at war with them, resorted to the Nanga, which they were not permitted to approach. Even when the two tribes were at war those of the enemy that were initiated were safe in attending the rites, provided that they could make their way to the Nanga unobserved.

The Nangas are now in ruin. There is a large and very perfect one at Narokorokoyawa, several in Navosa (Western Tholo), and three on the south coast between Serua and the Singatoka river. On the western coast there are said to be two, one in Vitongo and the other in Momi. I have visited several whose structure was so identical that one description will serve for all. The Nanga is a rough parallelogram formed of flat stones embedded endwise in the earth, about 100 feet long by 50 feet broad, and lying east and west, though the orientation is not exact. The upright stones forming the walls are from 18 inches to 3 feet in height, but as they do not always touch they may be described as "alignments" rather than walls. At the east end are two pyramidal heaps of stones with square sloping sides and flat tops, 5 feet high and 4 feet by 6 feet on the top. The narrow passage between them is the main entrance to the enclosure. Two similar pyramids placed about the middle of the enclosure divide it roughly into two equal parts, with a narrow passage connecting the two. The western portion is the Nanga-tambu-tambu (or Holy of Holies); the eastern the Loma ni Nanga

(or Middle Nanga). In the Nangas on the south coast the two truncated pyramids near the entrance are wanting. At the middle of the west end there is another entrance, and there are gaps in the alignments every six or eight feet to permit people to leave the enclosure informally during the celebration of the rites. Beyond the west end of the Nanga near Vunaniu the ground rose, and on the slope were two old graves upon which were found the decayed remains of two "Tower" muskets. It is possible that chiefs were buried near the "Holy of Holies" of all the Nangas in order that their Shades, who haunted the graves, when summoned to the Nanga by their living descendants, should not have far to come.

HOW THE RITES ORIGINATED

Attention was first called to the Mbaki cult by the Rev. Lorimer Fison, of the Wesleyan Mission, who, though he did not visit any Nanga, wrote an account of the rites in the charming style that marks all his writings.[58] He overcame the natives' reluctance to reveal these dread secrets by a ruse. While he was describing the Australian Bora rites to one of the *Vunilolo Matua* of the Nanga a woman passed, and, lowering his voice, he whispered, "Hush! the women must not hear these things!" Covering his mouth with his hand the old native exclaimed, "Truly, sir, you are a Lewe ni Nanga. I will tell you all about it." Mr. Adolph Joske was probably the first European to see and describe the great Nanga at Nerokorokoyawa, and he has added much to our knowledge of the rites[59]. The two accounts vary in detail, perhaps because Mr. Fison drew some of his information from Nemani Ndreu, the Raisevu, who seems to have

supplemented his ignorance of the Mbaki with excerpts from his own Kalou-rere cult, and from the rich stores of his imagination.

The tribes that used the Nanga were the Nuyamalo, Nuyaloa, Vatusila, Mbatiwai and Mdavutukia. All these tribes have spread east and south from a place of origin in the western mountain district. They are of Melanesian type, and have fewer traces of Polynesian admixture than the coast tribes. The Mbaki, while its Nanga-temple bears a superficial likeness to the Polynesian Marae, has a very strong resemblance to Melanesian institutions; its dissonance with the Fijian religious system at once suggests that there must be some tradition of its introduction from over-sea. For this we have not far to look, for the tradition is green in the memory of every initiate.

"Long ago two little old men, called Veisina and Rukuruku, drifted across the Great Ocean from the westward, and passing through the Yasawa Islands, they beached their canoe upon the little island of Yakuilau, which lies by the coast of Nandi. Veisina, who landed first, fell into a deep sleep, and slept till the coming of Rukuruku. From the spot where Veisina lay sprang *thanga* (turmeric), and from Rukuruku's footsteps sprang the *lauthi* (candle-nut—*Aleurites triloba*), and therefore the followers of Veisina smear themselves with turmeric, and the followers of Rukuruku with the black ash of the candle-nut, when they go to the Nanga.

"The two old men took counsel, saying, 'Let us go to the chief of Vitongo and ask him to divide his men between us that we may teach them the Mbaki.' And when they made their request the chief granted it,

and gave them a piece of flat land on which to build their Nanga. There they built it and called the place Tumba-levu. The descendants of men to whom these two little black-skinned old men taught the mysteries of the Nanga are they which practise it to this day. When they left their home and travelled eastward they carried the mysteries with them. The Veisina do not know what the Rukuruku do in the Nanga, nor do the Rukuruku know the mysteries of the Veisina."

Here we have the earliest tradition of missionary enterprise in the Pacific. I do not doubt that the two sooty-skinned little men were castaways driven eastward by one of those strong westerly gales that have been known to last for three weeks at a time. By Fijian custom the lives of all castaways were forfeit, but the pretence to supernatural powers would have saved men full of the religious rites of their Melanesian home, and would have assured them a hearing. The Wainimala tribes can name six generations since they settled in their present home, and therefore the introduction of the Nanga cannot have been less than two centuries ago. During that time it has overspread one-third of the large island.

The following account of the rites is gathered from inquiries that I have made of old men who accompanied me to the Ndavotukia Nangas, supplemented by the full accounts written by Messrs. Fison and Joske. The Veisina and Rukuruku sects used the same Nanga, but were absolutely forbidden to reveal their mysteries to one another on pain of madness or death. In Wainimala they seem to have held their respective festivals in alternate years. But a few of the youths of each sect were initiated in the mysteries of both, in token, perhaps, of the common origin of their institutions. Mr. Joske says that no

Nanga was used twice for an initiation ceremony, but I found no support for this statement among the Ndavotukia, whose Nanga was said, and certainly appeared, to have been used for generations.

THE PROCESSION

Each "Lodge" comprised three degrees: (1) The *Vere Matua*, all old men who acted as priests of the order; (2) the *Vunilolo*, the grown men; and the *Vilavou* (*lit.*, "New Year's men"), the youths who were novices. The great annual festival was the initiation of these youths, who were thus admitted to man's estate, and brought into communion with the ancestral spirits who controlled the destinies of their descendants. The word *Vila* is the inland synonym for Mbaki, which, with the distributive affix *ya* (ya-mbaki) is the coast word for "year." The *Vilavou*, or New year ceremony of initiation, was an annual festival, held in October-November, when the *ndrala*-tree (*Erythrina*) was in flower. The flowering of the *ndrala* marked the season for yam-planting; the same seasons were observed by the Hawaiians and Tahitians as the New Year. The rites of the Veisina differed slightly from those of the Rukuruku, but as they were more tame and formal I will give precedence to the Rukuruku.

Preparation for the *Vilavou* began months before the appointed time by putting all kinds of food and property under a tabu. On the occasion of the last ceremony a number of pigs had been dedicated by cutting off their tails and turning them loose in the vicinity of the Nanga. *Masi* was beaten, clubs and spears were carved, paint was prepared for the bodies of the worshippers, and a vast quantity of

yams was planted. As the *Vere* of Ndavotukia expressed it, "If any man concealed any of his property, designing not to give it, he was smitten with madness." The same fate awaited any that killed one of the tailless pigs, or dared to dig up any plant that grew near the Nanga. Invitations were sent to the members of other Nangas, who were called the *Ndre*, and they brought lavish contributions of property.

On the day appointed the *Vere* and the *Vunilolo* went first to the Nanga to present the feast and make other preparations, while in the village novices were having their heads shaved with a shark's tooth, and being swathed in coils of masi. A procession was then formed. An old *Vere* went first, carrying a carved staff with a socket bored in its upper end. Blowing upon this as on a flute, he sounded a shrill whistle, and the boys followed in single file, carefully treading in his footsteps. As they approached the Nanga they heard the weird chant of the *Vunilolo*, which was supposed to imitate the sound of the surf breaking on a distant reef. The boys flung down their weapons outside the sacred enclosure, and with the help of the *Vunilolo* divested themselves of the huge swathing of *masi*, each lad revolving slowly on his axis while another gathered in the slack, like unwinding a reel of cotton. It being now evening, the property was stored in a temporary shelter, and the ceremony for the day was over. The ovens were opened, and all feasted together far into the night. For four successive days this ritual was repeated, until the storehouse was full to bursting. Thus were the novices made acceptable to the ancestral spirits.

On the fifth day an immense feast was prepared, and the boys were so weighted with the cloth wound

about their bodies that they could scarcely walk. They followed the *Vere* piping on his staff as before, but as they approached the Nanga they listened in vain for the welcoming chant. The enclosure seemed silent and deserted, but from the woods broke forth shrill parrot calls, and a weird booming sound, which they presently came to know as the note of a bamboo trumpet immersed in water. The old *Vere* led them slowly forward to the eastern gate of the Nanga, and bade them kneel and crawl after him on all fours. Here a dreadful sight appalled them. Right across the entrance lay the naked body of a dead man, smeared with black paint from head to foot, with his entrails protruding. Above him, stretched stiff, with his head upon one pyramid and his feet on the other, lay another body, and under this hideous arch, over this revolting threshold they were made to crawl. Within the enclosure their hearts turned to water, for the dead men lay in rows, smeared with blood and entrails, and over every body they had to crawl. At the further end sat the chief *Vere*, regarding them with a stony glare, and before him they were made to halt in line. Suddenly he burst out with a great yell; the dead men started up, and ran to wash off the blood and filth in the river hard by. They are the *Vere* and a few of the *Vunilolo*, playing the part of the dead Ancestors with the aid of the blood and entrails of the pigs now baking in the ovens.

THE INITIATION

The ancient priest now relaxes the ferocity of his mien, and displays an activity remarkable for a person of his years. Capering up and down, he chants in shrill tones: "Why is my enclosure empty? Whither

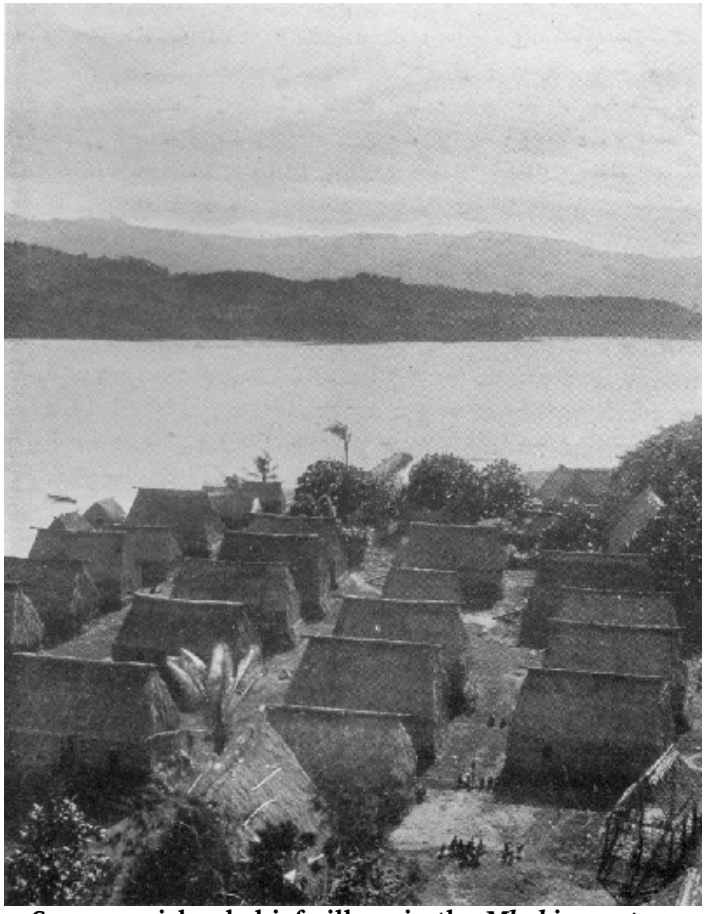
have its inmates gone? Have they fled to Tumbalevu (the deep sea)? Have they fled to Tongalevu?" Presently he was answered by a deep-toned chant, and the *Vunilolo*, washed, oiled and garlanded, return with rhythmic step, each carrying a club and a root of kava. When all are seated in the Nanga four of the *Vere* come in, the first carrying a piece of roast yam, the second a piece of pork, the third a shell of kava, and the fourth a napkin of native cloth. The first three put their offering, which is carefully wrapped against contact with the fingers, to the mouths of each of the *Vilavou* in turn, who nibble the food, sip the kava, and allow the napkin-bearer to wipe his mouth. Then one of the old *Vere* admonishes them solemnly against revealing any of the mysteries to the uninitiated, or infringing any of the tabus of the Nanga, or being niggardly in contributing their property, for the penalty attached to all these grievous sins is insanity and death.

The *Vunilolo* now brought in food, and towards evening the *Mundu*, a great pig dedicated years before and allowed to run wild in the sacred precincts, was dragged in and presented to the boys. Feasting was continued for several days, during which the boys did not leave the Nanga, except to obey the calls of nature. By the sacrament of food and water, too sacred even for the elders' hands to touch, they have become *Vilavou*: their Ancestors had deigned to receive them as members of the Nanga.

A few days after this it was the turn of the women, who had thus far been rigidly excluded, to come to the Nanga. The usual dress of the women of these tribes was a *liku*—narrow enough, truly, but still sufficient for decency. But for this occasion they were dressed in a series of such fringes as would

satisfy the most puritanical if they did not begin too late and end too early. The fringes were tied one over another from the waist to just below the breast, so as to clothe the trunk in a neat thatch, and, seeing the postures the women had to assume, it was a pity that a thatch starting at the waist should not have been carried downwards instead of in the other direction. In this fantastic garb, with hair dyed black, the women proceeded to the Nanga with baskets of food. At the entrance they dropped on their hands and knees, and crawled into the enclosure in single file, the men sitting on either side of a narrow lane left for the procession, and crying, "*Lovo ulu! Lovo ulu!*" (Keep your heads down!) During this performance it was strictly forbidden for the women to gaze about them, or to look behind them, on pain of insanity. The lane was interrupted with little mounds of freshly-turned earth, and over these the women had to crawl. It was in topping these mounds that a better arrangement of the fringes suggested itself. In the inner chancel of the Nanga the *Vere* were chanting a song called the *Vaya*. The chief *Vere* dipped his hands in a bowl of water, and prayed to the Ancestors to bless the women with ample families. This is called the *Vuluvulu* (hand-washing), and as the *Vuluvulu* is the ordinary form of release from a tabu, it is possible that it is intended to absolve the women from the usual consequences of entering a place forbidden to them. As to what happened after this, the native accounts are in conflict. Mr. Joske's informants declared that women only entered the Nanga to bring food, and that the rites were orderly and inoffensive; Mr. Fison says that when the women emerged from the enclosure, "the men rushed upon them, and an indescribable scene ensued. The men and women addressed one

another in the filthiest language ...," and that from this moment until the close of the ceremonies "very great licence prevailed." Mr. Walter Carew was assured that in Wainimala the men rushed upon the women while they were in the Nanga, and that any woman laid hold of was the lawful prize of her captor. Among the Ndavotukia I had no difficulty in obtaining an account of the ritual until I came to this point, but here all my informants broke off with a self-conscious giggle, and said that they knew no more. One told me frankly that they "did things that they were ashamed to think about in these enlightened days, and, when pressed upon the point, wrote down for me a song of gross indecency connected with the tattooing of women. A native of Mbau, who lived for some years near the Nanga, assured me that the visit of the women to the Nanga resulted in temporary promiscuity; all tabus were defied, and relations who could not speak to one another by customary law committed incest. This would account for the mystery that is thrown about the rite even now. The festival was a propitiatory sacrifice to the Ancestors to bless their descendants with increase, and the temporary abrogation of all human laws that interfered with freedom between the sexes had a logical place in such a sacrifice.



Serua, an island chief village in the *Mbaki* country.

FEEDING THE SACRED PIGS

On finally leaving the Nanga the property was carried to the village, together with two candlewood saplings, which were set up in the village with

appropriate songs, and the property was piled between them. Those who were not members of the Order had to keep fast within doors, for if they inadvertently caught sight of the worshippers they would have been smitten with insanity. The invited visitors, who were in hiding near the village, were now summoned by parties of the Order, who went out chanting a song to find them. These they followed to the village square, where they deposited enormous quantities of property by the saplings. The feasting and licence continued for several days. On the last day the *Vere* shared out the property, taking the best care of their own interests, and a number of the pigs were shorn of their tails and turned out near the Nanga to serve for a future celebration. It was an act of piety to feed these pigs, to which the sacrificer calls the attention of the Ancestors in words such as these: "Remember me, O ye our chiefs, who lie buried. I am feeding this pig of yours." To kill one was an inconceivable sacrilege. One of these great brutes was living within a year of my visit to the Nanga. It met its death at the hands of an irreligious half-caste, whose continued sanity after this sacrilegious deed was attributed to his foreign parentage.

The ceremony ended with the *Sisili* (or Bath). All the men went in company to the river, and washed off every trace of the black paint. The *Vilavou* were then drawn up before the *Vere* on the river bank to listen to a long discourse upon the new position they had assumed. They were admonished to defer to their elders, to obey the customary law of the tribe, and to keep the secrets of the Nanga on pain of the sure vengeance of the Ancestors. Especially were they to avoid eating eels and freshwater fish and all the best kinds of food. These must be presented to the elders,

for their food, until they had attained a higher rank in the Order, must be wild yams and food that is held in less esteem.

Minor Rites of the Nanga

As the Nanga is the earthly dwelling-place of the Ancestral spirits, it is not necessary to seek the intervention of a *Vere* in order to invoke them as in the case of the Fijian tribal deities, who can only be consulted through the priest. A member of the Nanga could approach the Ancestors at any time by depositing an offering on the wall with proper invocations. For many years after the people had abandoned heathenism the native mission teachers used to keep a sharp look-out for footprints leading in the direction of the Nanga. Two years after the conversion of the Wainimala people a visitor to the Nanga found property and food and the carcasses of pigs in a state of putrefaction, showing that sacrifice was still being made. The Nanga that I last visited had not been used for twenty-eight years. At the eastern end I found the *Vere's* whistling staff, just where he had planted it in the earth. Moss-grown and fretted with decay, it still emits a shrill whistle when I blow upon it. All about the enclosure candle-nut trees had sprung up from the nuts that had been thrown aside, and about the walls were strewn a number of the curious funnel-shaped cooking-pots that were only used during the Nanga celebrations.

The *Sevu* (First-fruits) of the yam harvest were always piled in the Nanga before the yams were dug, and allowed to rot there. From these decayed offerings numerous yam-vines were seen sprouting among the undergrowth. From this custom the

Nanga is generally spoken of as the Mbaki, which, as I have said, also gives its name to the Fijian year—ya-mbaki.

Before going on the war-path warriors used to repair to the Nanga to be made *vunde* (invulnerable). The rites appear to have been similar to those of the Kalou-rere.

CIRCUMCISION

But next in importance to the *Vilavou* celebration was the rite of circumcision, which Mr. Fison says was practised as a propitiation to recover a chief from sickness. My inquiries did not confirm this. I was assured, on the contrary, that while offerings were certainly made in the Nanga for the recovery of the sick, every youth was circumcised as a matter of routine, and that the rite was in no way connected with sacrifice for the sick. But, although Mr. Fison may have been wrong in his application of the ceremony, his description of the rite itself is undoubtedly correct. He says: "On the day appointed, the son of a sick chief is circumcised, and with him a number of other lads who have agreed to take advantage of the occasion. Their foreskins, stuck in the cleft of a split reed, are taken to the Nanga and presented to the chief priest, who, holding the reed in his hand, offers them to the ancestral gods, and prays for the sick man's recovery. Then follows a great feast, which ushers in a period of indescribable revelry. All distinctions of property are for the time being suspended. Men and women array themselves in all manner of fantastic garbs, address one another in the most indecent phrases, and practise unmentionable abominations openly in the public square of the town. The nearest relationships—even

that of own brother and sister—seem to be no bar to the general licence, the extent of which may be indicated by the expressive phrase of an old Nandi chief,[60] who said, 'While it lasts we are just like the pigs.' This feasting and frolic may be kept up for several days, after which the ordinary restrictions recur once more. The rights of property are again respected, and abandoned revellers settle down into steady-going married couples, and brothers and sisters may not so much as speak to one another. Nowhere in Fiji, so far as I am aware, excepting in the Nanga country, are these extravagances connected with the rite of circumcision."

The Priesthood

The priesthood was no exception to the Fijian rule that all skilled trades must be hereditary. But inasmuch as any man who showed a natural aptitude for carpentry or haircutting or the exorcism of evil spirits might win a *clientèle* as a canoe-builder, a barber, or a doctor, so a clever rogue who could shake well and make a lucky forecast of public events might pretend to inspiration by a god, and obtain a grudging recognition from the chiefs. In practice this seldom occurred, because the recognized deities were amply furnished with a priesthood who brooked no interference from an amateur, and to overcome their opposition and the cold suspicion of the chiefs demanded a very rare combination of assurance and cunning.

It is doubtful whether the high chiefs believed in the inspiration of the priests, though it suited their policy to appear to do so. There was rather an understanding between the two orders, not the less

cordial that it was unexpressed. The priests depended for subsistence upon the offerings made to the god, and a priest who delivered oracles unfavourable to the chief's policy saw his temple falling into decay and his larder empty. On the other hand, so enormous was the influence of the oracle upon the common people that the chief had the best reason for keeping the priests in good humour. Both knew that neither could stand firm without the support of the other. A chief with whom the gods were angry enjoyed but a waning authority; a priest whose god the chief did not think worth propitiating fell into disrepute and was soon superseded by another who could shake as well and more wisely. Such relations between the powers spiritual and temporal are not unknown in other latitudes.

Williams relates that the Thakaundrove chief presented a large offering to the gods on the morrow of a warlike expedition. Among the gods invoked was Kanusimana, but in the subsequent division of the feast the priest of that deity was put off with one wretched pudding instead of the turtle he had expected. That night the god visited him, and foretold defeat as a punishment for the slight, and the tidings were carried to the king, who immediately countermanded the expedition, knowing that the depressing effect of the news upon the spirit of his warriors would bring defeat. In a similar case, however, matters took a different turn. "Who are you?" asked the chief angrily. "Who is your god? If you make a stir I will eat you."

A HEATHEN REFORMATION

A more organized resistance to sacerdotal pretensions was seen in the "Reformation" in the Rewa province. A few years before the arrival of the missionaries the chiefs found it necessary in their own interests to disestablish the whole priestly caste, which, as they said, had fallen into the hands of "low-born persons of ill repute," or, in more intelligible language, which had begun to assume the *imperium in imperio* that has provoked Reformations in another hemisphere. They repudiated the entire priesthood publicly, and announced that members of the ruling family had received inspiration. The sacerdotal clan immediately fell into their proper rank in society—a very humble one—but the arrival of the missionaries deprived the new state-made priesthood of a fair trial.

The priests were not always the tools of the chiefs; sometimes they were the mouthpiece of the people's discontent at some unpopular exercise of authority. "The famine is eating us up because you gave the large canoe to Tonga instead of to Mbau." "This hurricane was sent to punish us for your refusal to give the princess to the Lord of Rewa."

The priests of one god were generally, but not always, confined to one family. They owed their consideration to their office rather than to their rank, which was generally humble. They ranked according to the importance of the god to whom they ministered. When the chieftancy and the priesthood were united in the same person, both were of low order. The titular spiritual chief (Roko Tui) was not a priest, although divine honours were paid to him, for the act of inspiration appeared to be thought derogatory to the dignity of a high chief. The priesthood could not be dispensed with, because the

gods could not be approached except through the medium of a priest, who could only be inspired in the temple of his god except on rare occasions, such as a campaign in a distant island, when the oracle must be consulted in a private house if at all.

"One who intends to consult the oracle dresses and oils himself, and, accompanied by a few others, goes to the priest, who, we will suppose, has been previously informed of the intended visit, and is lying near the sacred corner, getting ready his response. When the party enters he rises and sits so that his back is near to the white cloth by which the god visits him, while the others occupy the opposite side of the *mbure*. The principal person presents a whale's tooth, states the purpose of the visit, and expresses a hope that the god will regard him with favour. Sometimes there is placed before the priest a dish of scented oil with which he anoints himself and then receives the tooth, regarding it with deep and serious attention. Unbroken silence follows. The priest becomes absorbed in thought, and all eyes watch him with unblinking steadiness. In a few minutes he trembles; slight distortions are seen in his face, and twitching movements in his limbs. These increase to a violent muscular action, which spreads until the whole frame is violently convulsed, and the man shivers as with a strong ague fit. In some instances this is accompanied with murmurs and sobs, the veins are greatly enlarged, and circulation of the blood quickened. The priest is now possessed by his god, and all his words and actions are considered as being no longer his own, but those of the deity who has entered into him. Shrill cries of '*Koi au! Koi au!*' (It is I! It is I!) fill the air, and the god is supposed thus to notify his approach. While giving the answer the priest's eyes stand out and roll

as in a frenzy; his voice is unnatural, his face pale, his lips livid, his breathing depressed, and his entire appearance like that of a furious madman. The sweat runs from every pore, and tears start from his strained eyes; after which the symptoms gradually disappear. The priest looks round with a vacant stare, and, as the god says, 'I depart!' announces his actual departure by flinging himself down on the mat, or by suddenly striking the ground with a club, while those at a distance are informed by blasts on the conch, or by the firing of a musket, that the deity has returned to the world of spirits. The convulsive movements do not entirely disappear for some time; they are not, however, so violent as to prevent the priest from enjoying a hearty meal, or a draught of yankona or a whiff of tobacco, as either may happen to be at hand. Several words are used by the natives to express these priestly shakings. The most common are *sika* and *kundru*. *Sika* means to appear, and is used chiefly of supernatural beings; *kundru* means to grunt or grumble. The one refers to the appearance, the other to the sound attendant upon these inspired shakings.

AN INSPIRED PRIEST

As whatever the priest says during the paroxysm is supposed to be direct from the god, a specimen or two of these responses will be interesting.... A priest of Ndengei, speaking for that divinity, once said, "Great Fiji is my small club. Muaimbila is the head; Kamba is the handle. If I step on Muaimbila I shall sink it into the sea, while Kamba shall rise to the sky. If I step on Kamba it will be lost in the sea, and Muaimbila shall rise to the sky. Yes, Vitilevu is my

small club. I can turn it as I please. I can turn it upside down."[61]

The propitiatory offering might be anything from a bunch of cocoanuts covered with turmeric powder to a great feast. In the last case, part, called the *singana*, was set apart for the god, the rest apportioned among the people. In theory the god consumed the spiritual essence of all the food, and the people ate its grosser fibre. The *singana* was eaten by the priest and a few privileged old men; it was tabu to youths and women.

The psychological aspect of the inspiration of the Fijian priest is difficult to appreciate. The inspired paroxysm is something more than conscious deception. Williams was present when a famous Lakemba priest was questioned by the Tongan chief, Tubou Totai:—

"Lanngu, did you shake yesterday?"

"Yes."

"Did you think beforehand what to say?"

"No."

"Then you just say what you happen to think at the time, do you?"

"No. I do not know what I say. My own mind departs from me, and then, when it is truly gone, my god speaks by me."

Williams adds that this man "had the most stubborn confidence in his deity, although his mistakes were such as to shake any ordinary trust. His inspired tremblings were of the most violent kind, bordering on frenzy."[62] He was, no doubt, absolutely sincere.

In this race, as in the Hindus and the Malays, there is an undercurrent of hysteria which no one looking at their placid surface would suspect. In the first heat of conversion to Christianity it was quite common in the Mission services for a man to be inspired (by the Holy Spirit, as he said) and to interrupt the minister with an outburst of gibberish accompanied with all the contortions that seized the heathen priest. His companions would try to calm him by patting him gently with soothing exclamations, and the good missionaries, who had been enlarging on the gift of tongues at Pentecost, were not a little embarrassed in discouraging the practice. The "revival" which took place at Viwa in 1845 was a curious instance of this. To judge from John Hunt's account of it, the entire island was seized with religious hysteria, and "business, sleep and food were entirely laid aside" for several days, until the missionaries had to force the new converts to eat. Such ebullitions are rare in these days, but that they are still smouldering unsuspected is shown by the hysterical outbursts of emotion that sometimes take place at the *Bolotu* or Night Revival meetings, introduced from Tonga. More than one generation must come and go before all danger from this neurotic chord in the Fijian constitution is removed. Any acute cause of native discontent which might be fanned into active hostility to the white race would most certainly produce the heathen priest again, and the most dangerous of these might well be the man who now delivers eloquent emotional sermons to Wesleyan congregations Sunday after Sunday. Such a spectacle would shock the European missionaries beyond expression, but it would not surprise those who know the natives intimately. The schism of Ndungumoi and the heathen outbreak of Vanualevu in 1895 were but

a bubble from the seething pitch that lies below the placid outer crust of the converted Fijian.



Even now a practised eye might pick out from an assembly of Fijians the sons of the heathen priests, by their shifty glance, their crafty expression, and their smooth, insinuating address, which are as much a part of them as the set of their eyes and the colour of their skin.[63]

Witchcraft

Ndraunikau (*lit.*, leaves)

In 1618 two women were executed at Lincoln for burying the glove of Henry, Lord Rosse, in order that "as that glove did rot and waste, so did the liver of the said lord rot and waste." The belief illustrated by this trial is found in every people, in every country, and in every age. Dr. E. B. Tylor has remarked with much force that the occult sciences are nothing but "bad reasoning." There being obvious relation between a glove and its owner, between a waxen image and the person it represents, the sorcerer reasons that what he does to the one will happen to the other. Health being the normal condition of all, except the very aged, sickness and death must be the work of some malevolent agency, divine or human; and, if the sick person is free from all suspicion of sacrilege, the gods can have no motive for afflicting him. Instead of "Whom the gods love die young," the

primitive man reads "An enemy hath done this." This theory of disease being once established, it is a short step to the professional agents of disease, who, for a consideration, will wreck the health of the strongest man with the simplest of tools—a lock of his hair, a scrap of his food, or a garment that he has worn. The belief in such powers is not more wildly foolish than our own theory of microbes would have seemed if it had been put forward before there were microscopes to prove its truth. It could at least point to success in its support, for there can be no doubt whatever that numbers of bewitched persons did actually die—from fear—and that many sick recovered as the result of curative counterspells that put new heart into them.

The terror of witchcraft was never absent from the mind of a Fijian. Williams relates that the sceptics who laughed at the pretensions of a priest trembled at the power of the wizard, and that this was the last superstition to be eradicated from the mind of the convert to Christianity. It would be more true to say that the Christian native has never lost it. The professional wizard was not necessarily a priest, but if he had not the protection of sanctity, he was a person of considerable courage, for witchcraft was a dangerous profession. The pay was very high, but since the transaction could never be kept entirely secret, the wizard had to brave the resentment of his victim's relations.

A CHIEF IS BEWITCHED

The procedure was this: If a man desired the death of a rival he procured something that had belonged to his person—a lock of hair, the parings of his nails, a scrap of food, or, best of all, his excreta, for

witchcraft by these produced incurable dysentery. With these he visited the wizard by night, taking a whale's tooth as an earnest of the reward that he would pay when the death of his rival was accomplished. The wizard then prepared the charm by wrapping the object in certain leaves of magical properties, and burying the parcel in a bamboo case either in the victim's plantation or in the thatch of his house. In a few days the man began to sicken—generally, no doubt, because hints of the design had been conveyed to him—and if the charm could then be discovered and destroyed, he would recover. But if a diligent search failed, offerings were made to the gods, or the chief in whose district the wizard lived was invoked to use his authority. It was more common, however, to fee another wizard to make the charm innocuous by counterspells, which were often effective through the fresh hope infused into the sufferer, to the profit of both practitioners. When the victim died the wizard claimed his reward by attending the funeral with a blackened face, and bold indeed would be the employer who dared to bilk him. This practice was sometimes abused. Any sudden death being ascribed to witchcraft, a professional wizard, who was entirely innocent, would blacken his face at the funeral in the hope that some one who had an interest in the death would pay him the fee he had never earned. Such a case occurred as late as 1887 at the funeral of Mbuli Mbemana, who died of a chill contracted in taking a huge *vesi* log down the river as a king-post for the council-house at Nandronga. A man with a blackened face was pointed out to me at the funeral, and shortly afterwards a formal complaint was made by the dead man's relations against the river tribes of having fee'd this wizard to compass the Mbuli's

death. I summoned them to a meeting, but all my arguments were impotent against the undoubted fact that the Mbuli was dead, that the river tribes detested him and had an interest in his death, and that their wizard had appeared with a black face at his funeral. *Fiat experimentum*: let them commission their most famous wizards to compound a spell that no man could withstand—I would supply them with all the material they wanted—and if I still lived they would put away this superstition for ever. They discussed the proposition with gravity, and replied through their spokesman that this would be no proof at all, for it was well known that white men, who subsist on outlandish meats, were proof against Fijian spells. There was with me a Tongan, named Lijiate (the nearest the Tongans can get to "Richard"), whose enlightened contempt for the dark-mindedness of these heathen had been expressed with unnecessary emphasis. Him I proffered as a substitute. But I had reckoned without my host. "Pardon me," he said, when I asked him for a lock of his hair, "but I almost believe in it myself." One stout-hearted Fijian servant was ready to step into the breach, but it was then my turn to interfere, for the knowledge that he was bewitched would lay the stoutest-hearted Fijian low in less than a week.[64]

A man, delirious with triumph at his narrow escape, once brought me a spell that he had found buried in the thatch of his house in Tawaleka. It was a bamboo six inches long, corked with a tuft of grass. Within was a shred of *masi*, torn, no doubt, from his clothing and a handful of withered leaves of some bush shrub. He wished me to hold inquisition over the countryside in the hope that his enemy would confess the crime, for *ndraunikan* had been wisely

made a punishable offence. Its utility has long passed away, and its power for harm remains. Apart from the death and suffering it may inflict on the victim through terror, it not infrequently leads to actual violence. The murder of Mbuli Mbureta in 1884 is a notable instance. At the trial of his murderers it was elicited that a number of disaffected chiefs in his district had fee'd a wizard to remove him by witchcraft. When weeks had passed, and the unpopular chief continued in obstinate good health, the wizard's employers taunted him with his lack of skill, and received a definite promise of the Mbuli's death before a fixed date. The promise was kept; the victim disappeared, but when his body was discovered it was found that the skull had been fractured by an axe-stroke from behind.

In the face of such instances as these it demands some courage to assert that upon the whole the belief in witchcraft was formerly a positive advantage to the community. It filled, in fact, the place of a system of sanitation. The wizard's tools consisting in those waste matters that are inimical to health, every man was his own scavenger. From birth to old age a man was governed by this one fear; he went into the sea, the graveyard or the depths of the forest to satisfy his natural wants; he burned his cast-off *malo*; he gave every fragment left over from his food to the pigs; he concealed even the clippings of his hair in the thatch of his house. This ever-present fear even drove women in the western districts out into the forest for the birth of their children, where fire destroyed every trace of their lying-in. Until Christianity broke it down, the villages were kept clean; there were no festering rubbish-heaps nor filthy *raras*.



SOOTHSAYERS

In this respect Fijian witchcraft was immeasurably superior to that of other primitive races who employ similar methods. The Gold Coast tribes slay men by spells of roots tied together with a curse;[65] the priest-king Laibou of the Wa-Nandi tried to annihilate the Uganda force sent against him by leaving a snake tied to a dog near their camp.[66] The Swahili bury medicine at the door of the hut by which the doomed person must pass.[67] But in none of these cases are the excreta of the victim necessary, nor does the superstition react in the interest of public health.

Kinda and Yalovaki

Not less important in the native polity were the wizard's services in the detection of crime. This was a special branch of the black art, and the *ndaukinda* seldom engaged in the deadly business of *ndraunikau*. When property was stolen the owner took a present to the seer, and told the story of his loss. The seer, bidding the man pronounce the names of those whom he suspected, fell into deep abstraction, and presently checked the man at a certain name, announcing that an itching in his side or this finger or toe proved the person named to be the thief. If the seer was a member of the tribe he would dispense with the names, and would begin to twitch convulsively and himself pronounce the thief's name. If he was lucky enough to hit upon the right man—and an intimate knowledge of the characters and relations of his fellow-tribesmen often enabled him to do so—the offender would confess at once, for to brazen out a theft against the evidence of a seer's

little finger demanded an effrontery that no Fijian could boast. The proper course for a person wrongfully accused by a seer was shown in the case of Mbuli Yasawa, who in 1885 was charged with embezzling the district funds. It appeared that the funds in question were intact, but that, through an error in book-keeping, the scribe had led the people to believe that a considerable sum had been abstracted. Persons were deputed to consult a noted seer, called Ndrau-ni-ivi, whose finger tingled at the mention of the Mbuli's name. The poor Mbuli, knowing for the best of reasons that he was innocent, instead of taking the obvious course of submitting his books to be audited by the magistrate, presented a larger fee to a rival seer to "press down" (*mbika*) that given to Ndrau-ni-ivi, and triumphantly vindicated his character by the verdict of his practitioner's great toe. Upon this evidence he prosecuted his slanderers for defamation before the Provincial Court. The cunning and knack of clever guessing necessary for the lucrative calling of the seer formerly made the business a monopoly of the priests.

The *yalovaki* (soul-stealing) was an even surer method of detecting crime. It was the mildest form of trial by ordeal ever devised, but no boiling water or hot ploughshare could have been more effective. If the evidence was strong, but the suspect obstinately refused to confess, complaint was made to the chief, who summoned the accused, and called for a scarf. Usually the man confessed at the bare mention of the instrument, but if he did not, the cloth was waved over his head until his spirit (*yalo*) was entangled in it, and it was then folded together and nailed to the prow of the chief's canoe. Then the man went mad, for the mad are they whose soul have been stolen away.

Charms

There is no unusual feature in the Fijians' belief in charms. They were carried to avert calamities of all kinds, but principally shipwreck and wounds in battle. A mountain girl, who had never before seen the sea, was once a fellow-passenger with me in a stormy passage to Suva. A heavy lurch of the little vessel threw her sprawling on the deck, and I noticed that, while the other natives were bantering her, she was crying bitterly. Her fall had disengaged a pebble from her hand which had been given her as a talisman against death by drowning. Charms have their uses in litigation I had once before me a little old man who enjoyed some reputation for skill in witchcraft. Being sentenced for some petty offence, he solemnly removed his loin-cloth, and took from between his thighs a little bag, containing dried root, and flung it away with a gesture of contempt, much to the amusement of the enlightened native police, who explained that it was an amulet against conviction.

TRAPPING THE LITTLE GODS

The Kalou-rere

The *kalou-rere* differed from other religious observances in that, though it was practised in most parts of the group, either under its prevailing name or that of *ndomindomi*, the form was universal. The votaries were youths of the male sex only: there was no recognized priesthood; the cult was rather one of

the effervescences of youth which in England find their vent in the football field and the amateur stage. The object of the rites was to allure the "Little Gods"—the *Luve-ni-wai* (Children of the Water)—a timid race of Immortals, to leave the sea, and take up their temporary abode among their votaries on land. Beyond the gift of immunity from wounds in battle, and such pleasure as may be drawn from the excitement of the secret rites, it is not clear that the Little People conferred any boon upon their worshippers commensurate with the labour and privations that worship entailed, but more than this has been urged against Freemasonry by its critics.

In a retired place near the sea a small house was built, and enclosed with a rustic trellis fence, tied at the crossings with a small-leafed vine, and interrupted by long poles decorated with streamers. Within the enclosure a miniature temple was erected to contain a consecrated cocoanut, or some other trifle. No effort was spared to make the place attractive to the shy little gods; the roof of the house was draped with *masi*; the wall studded with crab-claws, and span-long yams and painted cocoanuts were disposed about the foundations that they might eat and drink.

A party of twenty or thirty youths spent several weeks in this enclosure, drumming every morning and evening on the ground with hollow bamboos to attract the sea-gods. During this long period they observed certain tabus, and spent the days in complete idleness. Williams heard of a party who, to facilitate the landing of the *Luve-ni-wai*, built a jetty of loose stones for some distance into the sea. When they were believed to be ascending, flags were set up in some of the inland passes to turn back any of them

that might try to make for the forests inland. On the great day a Nanga-like enclosure was made with long poles piled to a height of twelve inches and covered with green boughs, spears bearing streamers being set up at the four angles. Within this the lads sat gaily draped, with their votive offerings of clubs and shells before them, thumping their bamboo drums on the earth. Presently the officers of the lodge were seen approaching headed by the *Vuninduvu*, a sort of past-master, armed with an axe, and capering wildly; the *Lingu-viu* (Fan-holder) circling madly round the drummers, waving a great fan; the *Mbovoro*, dancing and carrying in his hand the cocoanut which he is about to break on his bent knee; the *Lingu-vatu*, pounding his nut with a stone. Amid a terrific din of shrieks and cat-calls the gods entered into the *Raisevu*, who thereafter was regarded as a peculiarly favoured person. Then all went mad; the *Vakathambe* shouted his challenge; the *Matavutha* shot at him, or at a nut which he held under his arm, and all became possessed with the same frenzy as the inspired priests. One after another they ran to the *Vuninduvu* to be struck on the belly, believing themselves invulnerable, and if the *Vuninduvu* was over-simple or over-zealous he sometimes did them mortal injury. Williams, who gives the above description of the rites, says that in the old days the orgy was free from licentiousness: we shall see how they have deteriorated since the conversion of the people to Christianity.

THE CAREER OF A *RAISEVU*

On the western coast of Vitilevu the favourite

ascending place of the *Luve-ni-wai* is marked with a large cairn of little stones, which has grown year by year with the stones flung upon it by each worshipper and by every passer-by. The more republican institutions of the western tribes permit a commoner to rise to considerable influence, and not a few of these great commoners can trace their eminent career to the youthful distinction of having been the *Raisevu*. The combination of hysteria and cunning and impudence necessary to that distinction raised Nemani Ndreu from the lowly position of a commoner of a Nandi village to be the official *Roko Tui* of Mba. At the date of annexation in 1874 he was *Tui Rara* (Town-crier); in the heathen outbreak two years later, he was naturally found upon the winning side, and his services as guide and spy were so useful that he rapidly rose in Government favour. I was present at the council when his appointment to the highest office open to Fijians was announced. In an impassioned speech to a cold and hostile audience he suddenly burst into tears that coursed down his cheeks and impeded his utterance, and his most inveterate enemies seemed to be affected. As we left the council-house he turned to me, with the tears still wet upon his cheeks, and said, "How then? Didn't I do that well?" It is unnecessary to add that he was an eminent local preacher.

The *kalou-rere* was one of the few offences which, under British law, was punished with flogging, a harsh provision if the rites were as innocent as Williams represents. The truth is that they have changed sadly for the worse. The rites are still occasionally practised in secret, but though the ritual is much the same, it may be doubted whether any of the votaries believe that they are alluring the "Little Gods" from the sea. A few lawless young chiefs get a

band of roysterers together in a secluded place, and there go through a travesty of the rites as an excuse for nocturnal raids upon the hen-roosts of the neighbouring trader. Usually an equal number of girls are induced to visit them by night under the pretence of practising heathen dances, which are, in reality, mere orgies of debauchery. In one of these cases, reported in detail by the late Mr. Heffernan, stipendiary magistrate of Ba, the frenzy of the votaries was quite genuine, but it found vent in sensuality, the dancers having access to their partners in a set measure controlled by words of command.

FOOTNOTES:

[45] Buro-tu, or Bulo-tu as the Samoans and Tongans call it, is Buro, or Bouro or Bauro with the suffix *tu*, signifying high rank, which is found in the words *tu-i* (king) and *tu-ranga* (chief). There are two places of that name in the West, namely, Bauro (S. Christoval) in the Solomon Islands, and Bouro in the Malay Archipelago. Quiros heard of an Indian, "a great pilot," who had come from Bouro when he visited Taumaco in the Duff Group in 1606, and Mr. Hale, the philologist in Wilkes Expedition, tried to establish the identity of the Malay Bouro with the sacred island, by assuming that the "arrows tipped with silver," which Quiros says were in possession of this native, showed that there was communication between Taumaco and the Malay Islands. But, as Dr. Guppy points out (*The Solomon Islands*, p. 277), the Bouro there alluded to must have been S. Christoval, which was only 300 miles distant, and the silver arrows a relic of the Spanish expedition to that island forty years before. Nevertheless, it is quite possible that S.

Christoval was named Bouro by emigrants from the Malay Island after their old home, and that S. Christoval was a halting-place of the race on their journey eastward.

[46] The disgrace of dying a natural death is so keenly felt that the bodies of the Tui Thakau of Somosomo, and the Rokovaka of Kandavu, who die naturally, are struck with a stone on the forehead or clubbed, to avert the contempt of the gods [Waterhouse].

[47] Thus the Fijians explain recovery from trance.

[48] An edible root related to the yam.

[49] There are many poems relating to the gods at Ndelakurukuru. They are all well known at Namata, where they are performed on great occasions, such as the feast made on the departure of the Thakaundrove chiefs.

[50] The Chief of Lakemba used to assure the missionaries that they could do him no greater favour than to give him a wooden coffin, that his body might not be trampled on [Williams].

[51] The indigenous fly is nearly extinct. He is larger than the European species that has supplanted him, and his buzz is louder.

[52] Williams, *Fiji and the Fijians*, p. 21.

[53] *The Polynesian Race*, pp. 44, 167, 168.

[54] This was the Fijian deluge. There are traditions of great floods within historical times. One of them, about 1793, purged the land of the great Lila epidemic. The waters rose over the housetops; hundreds were swept away, and the silt left by the receding waters raised the alluvial flats of the Rewa river several feet, a statement that is borne out by

the fact that a network of mangrove roots underlies the alluvial soil at a depth of four or five feet. This flood was preceded by a great cyclone. Traditions of great floods are preserved by almost every primitive people.

[55] Dengei was supposed to inhabit a cavern in Nakauvandra.

[56] *Oliva* is the name of Captain Olive, formerly Commandant of the Armed Constabulary; *virimbaita* is "to hedge in." The other words mean nothing.

[57] The alignments at Carnac in Brittany and Merivale on Dartmoor are suggestive of the rites of the Mbaki.

[58] *Journal Anthrop. Instit.*, Vol. xiv, p. 29.

[59] *Internationales Archiv. für Ethnographie*, Bd. II, 1889.

[60] Probably Nemani Ndreu, whose career I have described.

[61] Williams's *Fiji and the Fijians*, p. 224.

[62] Williams's *Fiji and the Fijians*, p. 224.

[63] Such a one was Kaikai of Singatoka, whose exploits as a prison-breaker were set forth in my *Indiscretions of Lady Asenath*.

[64] In 1902, under the flooring stones of a prehistoric kistvaen near the Sepulchral Circle on Pousson's Common, Dartmoor, two tresses of human hair were discovered, neatly coiled up. They were doubtless the record of witchcraft practised within the nineteenth century, on the same plan as that of the Fijians.

[65] *Nine Years at the Gold Coast*, by Rev. D.

Kemp.

[66] *Campaigning on the Upper Nile and Niger*, by Lieut. Vandeleur.

[67] *East Africa*, by W. W. Fitzgerald.

CHAPTER VIII

POLYGAMY

From the writings of early travellers it might be inferred that the Fijians practised polygamy to the same extent as the Arabs and other Mahommedan nations, but a moment's reflection will show that this was impossible. The high chiefs, it is true, were accustomed to cement alliances by taking a daughter of every new ally into their households, and these women with their handmaids, who were also the chief's potential concubines, swelled their harems inordinately; and as travellers were always the guests of the chiefs, and described things as they found them, these exceptional households were taken as fair samples of Fijian family life. But inasmuch as the Fijians could not draw upon other races for women, and the sexes of the children born throughout the group numbered about the same, to say nothing of the practice of female infanticide, it is obvious that for every addition to the chief's harem, some commoner had to go without a wife.

This view is borne out by the missionary, James Calvert, who, in defending the abolition of polygamy

by the missionaries, says: "Polygamy is actually confined to comparatively few. It is only the wealthy and powerful who can afford to maintain such an expensive indulgence."

MISSIONARIES PUT DOWN POLYGAMY

The actual facts were these: The highest chiefs had harems of from ten to fifty women, counting concubines, according to their rank and importance; the chiefs of the inland tribes had five or six wives, who cultivated their plantations for them, and were more agricultural labourers than wives; the chiefs of tributary tribes had seldom more than two wives, and the bulk of the people were monogamists. Young men of the lower orders married rather late in life for a primitive race, rarely, it appears, before the age of twenty-five. Under these conditions it might be expected that there would have been some form of prostitution, but in fact there was nothing of the kind. The nearest approach to it was to be found in the chief's kitchen, where the women in attendance on the chief's wives, especially those nearing middle age, were wont to sit and gossip with their lord's male retainers. In the tributary villages the young men were too well watched in the *mbure*, and the girls in the houses of their parents, for there to have been much philandering. Thus, if it comes to a question of fact—and the terms are to be applied in their most literal sense—the Fijians have a better title to be called monogamists than the men of civilized Europe.

The action of the early missionaries in breaking down polygamy did not result in as much hardship

as might be supposed. Their policy is set forth in the following instructions from the Society to its ministers: "No man living in a state of polygamy is to be admitted a member, or even on trial, who will not consent to live with one woman as his wife, to whom you shall join him in matrimony, or ascertain that this rite has been performed by some other minister; and the same rule is to be applied in the same manner to a woman proposing to become a member of the Society." The chiefs seem to have made little difficulty about this. They were married to their principal wife, and the rest went home to their friends, where they had not long to wait for husbands, since there was a certain prestige in marrying a woman who had belonged to a high chief. The discarded wives rarely complained of their dismissal, for their lives in the harem had been unenviable. Exposed to the jealousy and tyranny of the chief wife, they were subjected to daily mortification, and if they had the misfortune to displease the great lady, they were set upon and beaten and ill-treated by her attendants.

At the time of annexation in 1874 the Mission order quoted above had been sufficient to stamp out the custom everywhere but in the hill districts of Vitilevu, where the older chiefs still had from two to four wives apiece. The Government wisely resolved to recognize all these wives as legally married,[68] but not to allow any more polygamous marriages, and in a few years the custom died out of itself. In the polygamous households with which I came into contact the wives were all stricken in years, and they lived harmoniously together, dividing the labour of wood-cutting, water-carrying, and tilling their husband's garden between them.

I do not think that the abandonment of polygamy has had any effect upon the vitality of the race, for the simple reason that its practice was very limited in extent. Then, as now, practically all the women were appropriated. The evils arising from polygamy among the natives in South Africa, cited by the Commission appointed in 1882 by the Governor of Cape Colony to inquire into native customs—namely, idleness of the men, enforced work by the women, immorality of young wives wedded to old men, forced marriages of girls, strife and jealousy among the wives leading to the practice of witchcraft and the sale of young girls—were not prevalent in Fiji; nor had the reasons there adduced in its favour—that polygamy is a provision against old age, since the children of the young wives maintain their parents when the older children have left the home—any application in the Pacific Islands.

FOOTNOTES:

[68] Native Regulation 12 of 1877 provided that "all marriages performed and confirmed according to Fijian customs before the passing of this Regulation" should be legal and binding.

CHAPTER IX

FAMILY LIFE

Among the tribes in Fiji, where Melanesian blood

predominates, the *mbure-ni-sa*, or unmarried man's house, was a universal institution. In the Lau group the strong admixture of Polynesian blood had in some degree broken down the social laws connected with this house, although in most villages the house existed. Among the purer Melanesian tribes of the interior of Vitilevu, after twenty-five years of Christianity and settled government, the *mbure-ni-sa* exists as a part of the social life of the village, as if obedience could still be enforced.

The *mbure-ni-sa* was usually the largest house in the village. It was the men's club in the day-time and the men's sleeping house at night. No woman could enter it without committing a grave breach of propriety. Young boys below the age of puberty went naked and slept with their parents at home; but, from the day that they assumed the *malo*, or perineal bandage, they removed to the *mbure-ni-sa* at nightfall, and slept there under the eyes of the elders who either had no home of their own or had adopted the mbure-ni-sa from choice. When the young man reached the age for marriage his mother chose a wife for him from among his concubitant cousins, *i.e.* the daughters of his maternal uncle; and immediately after the marriage he removed from the *mbure-ni-sa* to a house of his own, or to that of his parents. In parts of Vanualevu, where uterine descent was still recognized, he removed to the village of his wife's parents.

As soon as his wife was confined he was banished again to the *mbure-ni-sa* for the entire suckling period, which lasted from two to three years. During the whole of this time, unless he had more than one wife, he was obliged to live a life of celibacy.

In the above description I am, of course, speaking of the ordinary middle-class Fijian. The higher chiefs, having several wives, provided a separate house for the confinement, and never saw the *mbure-ni-sa* again after their marriage. Men of the lowest rank had generally no wives at all.

The *mbure-ni-sa* thus served a double purpose. The girls of the tribe sleeping with their parents, and the young men being practically incarcerated every night under the eyes of their elders, there was little opportunity for immorality before marriage. With the duties of defence, of fighting, of providing food and of fishing, the young men had little time for philandering, and it is asserted by many of the elder natives that it was a rare thing for a girl to have lost her virtue before marriage. Such sexual immorality as took place was between the young men and the older married women.

But the chief value of the *mbure-ni-sa* undoubtedly lay in the separation of the parents of a child during the suckling period. Natives, when asked to account for the decrease in their numbers, have for years mentioned the breaking down of this custom of abstinence as the principal cause, asserting that cohabitation injures the quality of the mother's milk. Not understanding the true cause that lay behind this belief, Europeans, medical men as well as missionaries, have treated the opinion with contempt, without, however, shaking the natives' fixed belief. Within the last few years a missionary, the late Rev. J. P. Chapman, characterized this custom of abstinence as an "absurd and superstitious practice."



The Mbure-ni-sa (Club House).

The teaching of the missionaries, who believed that the only perfect social system was to be found in the English mode of family life, and the example of the Europeans settled in the group, have broken down the custom of the *mbure-ni-sa* in all parts of the islands, except the mountain districts of Vitilevu. The example of the native teachers, one of whom is to be found in every village, was in itself enough to discourage a custom which the men had long found irksome, and the natives assert that a large number of infant deaths might have been prevented if public opinion still sufficed to keep the parents apart.

PROLONGED PERIOD OF SUCKLING

The Fijian word *ndambe* has been loosely applied to the custom of separating the parents while the mother is suckling her child. The word is really an adjective signifying the injury sustained by the child

whose parents cohabit too soon after its birth. It becomes *ndambe*, that is to say, it shows symptoms of general debility, accompanied with an enlargement of the abdomen. The infringement of the rule of abstinence is described at Mbau by a slang word, *nkuru vou*. During the long period of suckling—varying from twelve to thirty-six months—the mother abstained from cohabitation from the fear of impoverishing her milk, a superstition which hid behind it a most important truth; namely, that a second conception taking place during the suckling period must cause the child to be prematurely weaned. While the *mbure-ni-sa* still existed, secret cohabitation between the parents was made the more difficult by the custom of young mothers leaving their husband's house and living with their relations for a year after the birth of a child; since the adoption of English family life, husband and wife no longer separate, but give their parole to public opinion to preserve the abstinence prescribed by ancient custom. The health of the child is jealously watched for signs that the parents have failed in their duty. If it fall off in condition it is declared to be *ndambe*, and the mother is compelled to wean it immediately, with an effect upon the child which varies with its age. If it suffers it is said to be *kali ndole*—prematurely weaned. The Fijians have no artificial food for their infants. There is nothing between the mother's milk and solid vegetable food, and until the digestive organs are fit to assimilate such foods the child must be kept at the breast. Among European women menstruation is rarely re-established during the period of suckling, and there is therefore no particular danger to the child in cohabitation during this period. At the worst, if conception takes place, the child can be brought up

upon artificial diet. With Fijian women, however, menstruation often recommences at the third or fourth month after parturition, and cohabitation, even at this early stage, often results in a second pregnancy. The mother is physiologically incapable of nourishing at the same time the fœtus within her and the child at her breast, and the symptoms of defective nutrition become evident in the latter very soon after the new conception has taken place. The child must be weaned at once, since it soon becomes too weak to undergo the strain of a change of diet; it becomes *ndambe*. An old Fijian midwife told me that the children of elderly men are less often *ndambe* than those of young men, because the older father, being less ardent, is more likely to observe the rule of abstinence.

Nearly half the Fijian children born die within the first year. In many cases, no doubt, death is caused by premature weaning owing to a second conception, but there is no doubt that a number of weakly children are brought into the world through the physical incapacity of the Fijian mother for bearing healthy children in quick succession. This incapacity may proceed from some inherent racial defect, or from improper or insufficient food. Under the old wise system of abstinence, the forces of the mother had time to recuperate before she was again called upon to bear the strain of maternity, but with the early death of her child she is at once pregnant. The birth-rate is increased by the production of a weak offspring that will go in its turn to swell the death-rate; in other words, a lower birth-rate would tend to increase the population.

In Tonga and in the Gilbert Islands the separation is rigidly enforced. In the latter group *ndambe* is called

ngori. The relations of the mother exercise extreme vigilance to prevent the couple from cohabiting, and the husband who infringes the rule is scolded by his wife's relations and sent for the future to sleep with the young men.

Lieutenant Matthews, who visited the Sierra Leone River between 1785 and 1791, says of the Mandingoes: "Mothers never wean their children until they are able to walk and carry a calabash of water, which they are instructed to do as soon as possible, as cohabitation is denied to them while they have children at the breast." Even in Japan, where there is artificial food for infants, prolonged suckling is still the rule. Sir Edwin Arnold[69] says: "Japan is of all countries, except England, that where fewest children die between birth and the age of five years; albeit a point in favour of Japanese babies is that they are nursed at the breast until they are two or even three years old."

The Pitcairn Islanders, who possess goats, but are otherwise as ill provided with artificial food for infants as the Fijians, were found by Beechey in 1831 to be suckling their children for three and even four years."[70]

It is proper here to notice traces of the couvade, not perhaps indicating that the couvade itself was ever practised as a custom, but showing rather how widely spread are the ideas underlying that custom. In the province of Namosi, where children were suckled for three years, there is a belief that if the father, when separated from his wife, has an intrigue with another woman his child will fall off, showing the symptoms of *ndambe*. The sickness is called there by the suggestive name of *veisangani tani* (*lit.*, "alien

thigh-locking"). Dr. R. H. Codrington[71] says of Mota (Banks Islands): "When a child is born, neither father nor mother eats things, such as fish or meat, which might make the children ill. The father does not go into sacred places which the child could not visit without risk. After the birth of the first child the father does no heavy work for a month lest the child should be injured." Mr. Walter Carew says of the district north of Namosi: "I have frequently observed a father abstain from certain articles of food from fear of affecting the child, born or unborn; and I have often joked the people about it. Once I persuaded a man to break the tabu and eat some fowl. Unfortunately, the child died some time afterwards, and the father more than half believed me to have been the cause of its death." In discussing this belief as a trace of the couvade, Starke quotes Dobizhoffer's remarks upon the Abipones: "They comply with this custom with the greater readiness because they believe that the father's rest and abstinence have an extraordinary effect on the well-being of unborn infants, and is indeed absolutely necessary for them.... For they are quite convinced that any unseemly act on the father's part would injuriously affect the child on account of the sympathetic tie which naturally subsists between them, so that in the event of the child's death the women all blame the self-indulgence of the father, and find fault with this or that act."

Among the Lake Nyassa tribes the husband ceases cohabitation as soon as his wife announces her pregnancy, and does not resume it until the child is weaned. If he has no other wife "he will strive to remain chaste in the fear lest, if he commit adultery, his unborn child will die."[72] Among the Atonga, in the same region, the husband has no relations with

his wife for five or six months after the child's birth. If he has access to any other woman during this period, the popular belief is that she will certainly die.[73]

This widely extended custom of prolonged suckling among non-pastoral peoples seems to show that Nature intended the human mother to suckle her offspring until it had developed the teeth necessary for masticating solid food. Civilization, ever driving Nature at high pressure, has found artificial food for infants, leaving the mother free to bear the stress of a second maternity. To meet this increased strain the civilized mother is nourished and tended with a care that is never bestowed upon her savage sister. Barbarism followed the law of Nature and supported it by a customary law of mutual abstinence, but the customary law of the Fijians has been mutilated and has left them between two stools, not yet adopting the conveniences of civilization and obliged, nevertheless, to do the high pressure work of the civilized state without help. The reproductive powers of the Fijian woman of to-day are forced, though her body is no better prepared by a generous course of food to meet the strain than when she was allowed to follow the less exacting course of Nature for which only her body is fitted. And to make matters worse, the Fijians, recognizing the evils of too frequent conceptions, drink nostrums to prevent them, probably injuring thereby the child at the breast.

THE MISSIONARIES' MISTAKE

If the missionaries, as is said, are responsible for breaking down these customs of abstinence, and still

regard it as "absurd and superstitious," it is a pity that they did not recognize another important difference between European and Fijian society—the irregular and insufficient nourishment for the women and the lack of artificial food for infants—and devote their efforts to reforming this before they discouraged a custom so admirably adapted to meet the evils of a lack of cereals and milk-yielding animals. It is too late now to go back. The Fijian husband will never again consent to enforced separation from his wife. Rapid conceptions and a high birth-rate must be reckoned with, and the only feasible remedy is to improve the diet of the nursing mother, and induce the people generally to keep milk-yielding animals for their children. Cattle thrive in Fiji, but the efforts of the Government to convert the Fijian agriculturist to pastoral pursuits cannot be said to have been successful.

FOOTNOTES:

[69] *Some Pictures from Japan*, by Sir Edwin Arnold.

[70] *Beechey's Voyage*, p. 128.

[71] *Notes on the Customs of Mota (Banks Islands)*, by the Rev. R. H. Codrington, M.A.

[72] *British Central Africa*, by Sir H. H. Johnston.

[73] *Ibid.*, p. 415.

CHAPTER X

THE MARRIAGE SYSTEM[74]

There are two systems of kinship nomenclature current among Fijians, one indicating consanguinity, and the other kinship in relation to marriage. This latter system radiates from the central idea of Concubitancy, and it is this system that is now to be discussed. The word "Concubitant" is adopted because, besides being a fair translation of the Fijian word *vei-ndavolani* (*vei* = reciprocal affix, *ndavo* = to lie down), it expresses the Fijian idea that persons so related ought to cohabit.

In order to understand the system it is necessary to free the mind from the ideas associated with the English terms of relationship, and to adopt the native terms, which are as follows:—

(1) *Tama*—Father, or paternal uncle.

Tina—Mother, or maternal aunt.

Tuaka—Elder brother, sister, or cousin (not concubitant).

Tathi—Younger brother, sister, or cousin-german (not concubitant).
Luve—Child.

Tuka—Grandfather.

Mbu—Grandmother.

Makumbu—Grandchild.

Tumbu—Great-grandparent.

(2) *Ngane*(reciprocal form, *vei-nganeni*)—The relationship of a male and female of the same generation between whom marriage is forbidden, *i.e.* brother and sister, both real and artificial.

Ndavola (reciprocal form, *vei-ndavolani*)—The relationship of males and females of the same generation between whom marriage is right, and even obligatory—consequently sister-in-law.

Tavale (reciprocal form, *vei-tavaleni*) —Male cousins who would be concubitant if one were a female, consequently a man's brother-in-law.

Ndauve (reciprocal form, *vei-ndauveni*)—Female cousins who would be concubitant if one were a male—consequently a woman's sister-in-law.

Vungo—Nephew, *i.e.* son of a man's sister or woman's brother, also son-in-law or daughter-in-law, also used reciprocally.

Ngandina—Maternal uncle or father-in-law; vocative form in the case of father-in-law, is *ngandi* or *momo*.

Nganeitama—Paternal aunt or mother-in-law; vocative form in the case of mother-in-law, is *nganei*.



THE CONCUBITANT RELATIONSHIP

Besides these there are compound names for some of the more remote relationships, and names for certain connections, such as *karua* (*i.e.* "the second," reciprocal form, *vei-karuani*), used of wives of a bigamous household, and also of children of the same father by different mothers.

I propose to call the Ngane (reciprocal form, *vei-nganeni*) tabu, because marriage between them is forbidden. *Vei-ndavolani* I call "concubitants," because marriage between them is right and proper.

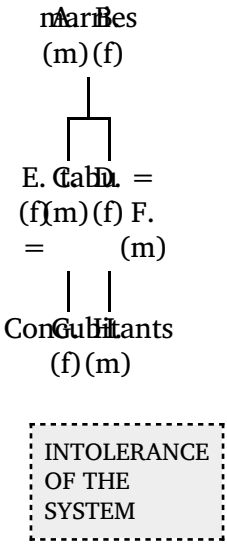
The tabu relationship occurs—

(1) Between the son and daughter of the same parents.

(2) Between children respectively of two brothers or the children respectively of two sisters, such children being male and female.

From a Fijian point of view, in both these cases the relationship is exactly the same. The father's brother and the mother's sister share with the father and the mother an almost equal degree of paternity. Thus a man or a woman, referring to his or her father's brother calls him *Tamanku* (my father), and if he is asked *Tamamu ndina?* (your real father?) he will answer *A Tamanku lailai* (my little father). The same applies to the mother's sister. The tabu relationship also occurs artificially between the children respectively of concubitants who have broken through the system, and have not married, but to this I will refer in its proper place.

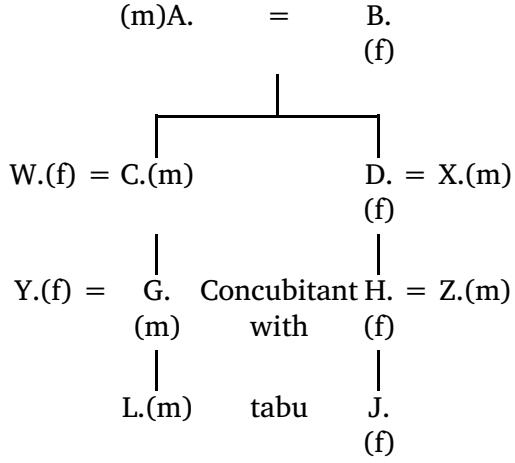
Concubitants.—This relationship occurs between persons whose parents respectively were brother and sister. The opposition of sex in parents not only breaks down the barrier of consanguinity, but even constitutes the child of the one a marital complement of the child of the other. The young Fijian is from his birth regarded as the natural husband of the daughters of his father's sister and of his mother's brother. The girls can exercise no choice. They were born the property of their male concubitant if he desire to take them. Thus the custom, if generally followed, would enclose the blood of each family within itself, and obstruct the influx of a new strain at every third generation. The natural tendency towards the renovation of the blood would be checked, and its stagnation be continued. Thus—



A. and B. were concubitants, their children tabu. G. and H. being the children of tabu relations are concubitants. They marry, and of course their

children being brother and sister are again tabu. But if D. had been a male who had married F. a female, G. and H. would have been tabu. It will thus be seen that the concubitant and the tabu alternate generation after generation. The children of concubitants must be tabu, and the children respectively of tabu must be concubitant.

It must of course happen that persons who are concubitant have a mutual dislike to one another and do not marry, or, since a man cannot marry all his concubitants, or a woman all her concubitants, the system is dislocated by some of them marrying persons who are in no way related to them. Thus—



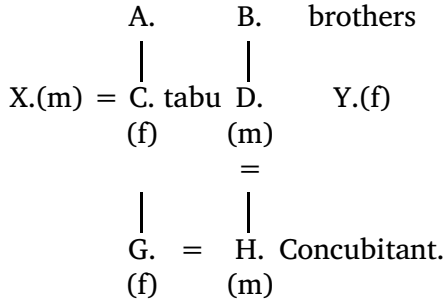
G. and H. are concubitant, born husband and wife, as were their grandparents A. and B., but they grow up and take a dislike to one another and each marries some one else. Yet the system takes no account of such petty interruptions as likes and dislikes. They were born married, and married they must be so far as their children are concerned. They have each

married outside the tribe, yet their children L. and J. are tabu just as much as if G. and H. had married and they were the offspring of the marriage. G. and H. have in fact dislocated the system for all posterity, but the system goes on, refusing to admit the injury done to it. The most striking feature in the system is this oppressive intolerance. It is so indifferent to human affections that if a man dares to choose a woman other than the wife provided for him his disobedience avails him nothing. His concubitant is still his wife, and her children are his children. It will, it is true, give way so far as to recognize as his wife the woman he has chosen, but only on the condition that she becomes his fictitious concubitant, and that all her relatives fall into their places as if she had actually been born his concubitant.

This brings us to a fresh starting-point from which the concubitous relationship is established. Since a man who is the concubitant of a woman is necessarily also the concubitant of all her sisters, by a natural evolution, if he marries a woman unrelated to him by blood, and *ipso facto* makes her his concubitant, all her sisters become his concubitants also. In the past they would have been his actual wives, for a man could not take one of several sisters —he was in honour bound to take them all. In the same way a woman and her sisters became the concubitants of all her husband's brothers, and upon his death, she passed naturally to her eldest brother-in-law if he cared to take her. This does not imply polyandry or community among brothers, but rather what is known to anthropologists as Levirate, a woman's marriage to her brother-in-law being contingent on her husband's death.

Tabu Relationships.—Hitherto we have dealt with

persons sprung from the respective marriages of a brother and sister, and have not touched upon the offspring respectively of two brothers or two sisters. These are tabu to one another, being, as I have said, regarded as being as closely consanguineous as actual brothers and sisters.



C. and D., being the offspring of two brothers, are tabu. They marry respectively their concubitants, and their offspring G. and H. are concubitant. Thenceforward the concubitant and tabu relationships occur in alternate generations. It must not be understood, however, that in these remote occurrences the tabu relationships are always strongly tabu, or that the concubitant relationships always entail marriage. The fact is remembered, that is all. "They are *vei-nganeni*!" "But they are married!" "Yes, but their *vei-nganeni*-ship is remote." (*Ia ka sa yawa nondrau vei-nganeni.*)

CONCUBITANT MARRIAGE IS DECREASING

It will be well at this point to examine the exact nature of the obligation existing between

concubitants. The relationship seems to carry with it propriety rather than obligation. Concubitants are born husband and wife, and the system assumes that no individual preference could hereafter destroy that relationship; but the obligation does no more than limit the choice of a mate to one or the other of the females who are concubitants with the man who desires to marry. It is thus true that in theory the field of choice is very large, for the concubitant relationship might include third or even fifth cousins, but in practice the tendency is to marry the concubitant who is next in degree—generally a first cousin—the daughter of a maternal uncle. A very good illustration of this occurred a few years ago among the grandchildren of the late king Thakombau. The concubitant of his granddaughter Audi Thakombau was Ratu Beni, chief of Naitasiri, but for various rascalities he had been deported to the island of Ono. Meanwhile her relations proposed an alliance with the powerful chief family of Rewa, and she was formally betrothed to the young chief Tui Sawau. But just before the marriage Ratu Beni was liberated, returned home, and at once laid claim to his concubitant. The claim was allowed by her relatives, the match broken off, and for some time the relations between Mbau and Rewa were so strained that the chiefs went in bodily fear of one another.

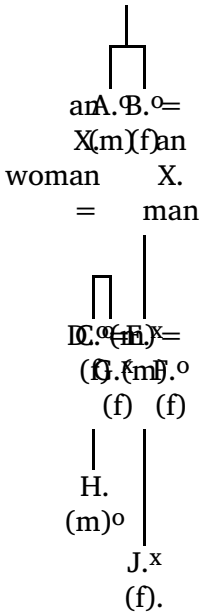
I have always been assured by the natives that the practice of concubitancy has greatly decreased since the introduction of Christianity and settled government. From the fact that thirty per cent, still marry their concubitants, it may be guessed how universal the custom must formerly have been. Now that free communication exists between the islands, and men have a far larger field of selection, they are

said to choose rather not to marry their concubitants. Ratu Marika explained this by saying: "One has no zest for one's *ndavola*. She is too near. When you hear man and wife quarrelling, one says, 'What else? Are they not *vei-ndavolani*?'" The result is curious. They do not marry as they did formerly, but they commit adultery either before or after marriage. No sooner is a girl married than her concubitant comes and claims her, and so strong is custom that she seldom repulses him. It is said that about fifty per cent of the adultery cases brought before the criminal courts of the colony are offences between concubitants, but a number never come before the courts because the husband does not care to prosecute. There are few prosecutions for fornication between concubitants, because the complainants, the parents of the girl, do not feel themselves to be aggrieved.

Vei-tavaleni.—It is natural to expect some peculiarity in the relations between males, who would, if they were male and female, be concubitants. This relationship is called *vei-tavaleni*. To break through for once the rule of not using European terms, I may remark that *vei-tavaleni* must of necessity mean both cousin and brother-in-law, and the reason is sufficiently obvious. Your *tavale* is a brother of the woman to whom you were born married; *ergo*, your brother-in-law. The fact that you do not marry her makes no difference. She is your natural wife, and he is your natural brother-in-law. Even if your *tavale* has no sister, he is still your brother-in-law, because, potentially, a sister might be born to him, who would be your wife. At this point I thought that I had found an inconsistency in the logic of the system. As the children of *vei-ndavolani* (concubitants) are tabu, I supposed, naturally, that the children of *vei-tavaleni* would be tabu also; but I found, to my surprise, that

this was not so. Their children became *vei-ndavolani* (concubitants). It seemed illogical, but I supposed that it was done as a compensation. The parents could not marry because they were of the same sex; therefore, to compensate the system for the loss of a concubitant marriage, their children were made to repair the accident by being concubitants.

I pointed this out to Mr. Fison, and he, looking at the system purely from the point of view that it was a development of group marriage, when the entire tribe was divided into two exogamous marrying classes, said that he saw no inconsistency at all. We worked the problem out on paper, and discovered that, with the class marriage as a clue, this fact became perfectly consistent and logical—



Let us suppose the population to be divided into two

great classes, X. and O. Descent, in Fiji, follows the father, therefore the two *vei-tavaleni* D. and E. belong to opposite classes. D. O. marries an X. woman. E. X. marries an O. woman. Their children obviously belong to two opposite classes. They cannot therefore be tabu, and, through their relationship, they become concubitant. We thus stumbled upon an analogy that goes far to uphold the theory that concubitancy is merely a development of exogamous group marriage.

LOGIC OF THE SYSTEM

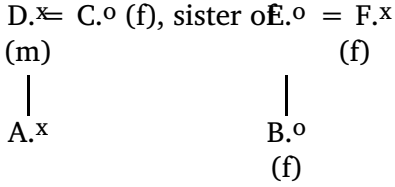
Vei-ndauveni.—Let us now consider the relations between females who would have been concubitants had they been of opposite sexes. They are called *vei-ndauveni*, which, according to our phraseology, would mean cousin and sister-in-law, for in the concubitant system these terms are one and the same thing. As in the case of the concubitants, the *vei-ndauveni* is curiously stretched to cover the case of a man marrying a stranger woman unrelated to him. She becomes *vei-ndauveni* to his sister as a logical deduction from the fiction that she is concubitant with him, and as the children of *vei-ndauveni* must be concubitant, so her children and her sister-in-law's children are concubitants.

Ngandina.—The system extends even to the earlier generations. The *ngandina* means in our phraseology both mother-in-law and uncle and father-in-law, for since your wife is the daughter of your mother's brother, it is obvious that he must stand to you in both those relations. A man may marry a woman unrelated to him, yet his father-in-law becomes forthwith his uncle (*ngandina*), for by the marriage

he has constituted his wife concubitant with him, and this entails the fiction that her father was tabu to his mother (*i.e.* her brother), and therefore his uncle.

Vungo.—Nephew, *i.e.* son of a man's sister or woman's brother, also son-in-law or daughter-in-law, used reciprocally, as *vei-vungoni*.

My mother's brother is my *vungo*; my sister's son is my *vungo*; my daughter's husband is my *vungo*. Under our system there seems little akin between these three relationships, but in the Fijian system they are one and the same.



Concubitants.

A.'s mother's brother, A.'s *vungo*, has a daughter B., who is concubitant with A. Whether she marries him or not, A was born her husband, and he is therefore her father's *vungo*, son-in-law and nephew. It is to be remembered that marriage is never permitted between relations of different generations. Under no circumstances must *vei-vungoni* marry, though under the rules of exogamous marrying classes they would, unless specially forbidden, have been permitted to marry. In the above table, A. being an X., his mother's brother is an O. On no account must the latter marry G., A.'s sister, who is an X., but if A.'s *vungo* has a daughter B. O., the marriage between A. and B. at once becomes obligatory. Here is to be found a reason for the curious custom of the avoidance of a mother-in-law among the Australians

and other tribes. Many theories have been advanced for this, but, with the exception of Mr. Fison, I believe that no one has propounded the true explanation. It is that in uterine descent a man's mother-in-law belongs to the class from which he must take his wife. But she, being of a different generation, is tabu to him; hence he must avoid her absolutely, lest he be tempted by her charms to break through the law of the system.

This marriage system is practised generally throughout the Fiji Islands, with the following exceptions and modifications:—

In the province of Namosi the descendants of two brothers or of two sisters are regarded as tabu throughout as many generations as their parentage can be remembered, and are strictly forbidden to intermarry. The children of concubitants who have neglected to intermarry do not, as in Mbau, become tabu, but are made to repair their parents' default by themselves becoming concubitants.

CONCUBITANCY UNKNOWN IN POLYNESIA

In Lau, Thakaundrove, and in the greater portion of Vanualevu, the offspring of a brother and sister respectively do not become concubitant until the second generation. In the first generation they are called tabu, but marriage is not actually prohibited. The children of two brothers or of two sisters are, as in Mbau, strictly forbidden to intermarry.

Inquiries that have been made among the natives of Samoa, Futuna, Rotuma, Uea, and Malanta (Solomon

Group), have satisfied me that the practice of concubitant marriage is unknown in those islands; indeed, in Samoa and Rotuma, not only is the marriage of cousins-german forbidden, but the descendants of a brother and sister respectively, who in Fiji would be expected to marry, are there regarded as being within the forbidden degrees as long as their common origin can be remembered. This rule is also recognized throughout the Gilbert Islands, with the exception of Apemama and Makin, and is there only violated by the high chiefs. In Tonga, it is true, a trace of the custom can be detected. The union of the grandchildren (and occasionally even of the children) of a brother and sister is there regarded as a fit and proper custom for the superior chiefs, but not for the common people. In Tonga, other things being equal, a sister's children rank above a brother's, and therefore the concubitant rights were vested in the sister's grandchild, more especially if a female. Her parents might send for her male cousin to be her *takaifala* (*lit.*, "bedmaker") or consort. The practice was never, however, sufficiently general to be called a national custom. So startling a variation from the practice of the other Polynesian races may be accounted for by the suggestion that the chiefs, more autocratic in Tonga than elsewhere, having founded their authority upon the fiction of their descent from the gods, were driven to keep it by intermarriage among themselves, lest in contaminating their blood by alliance with their subjects their divine rights should be impaired. A similar infringement of forbidden degrees by chiefs has been noted in Hawaii, where the chief of Mau'i was, for reasons of state, required to marry his half-sister. It is matter of common knowledge that for the same reason the Incas of Peru married their full-

sister, and that the kings of Siam marry their half-sisters at the present day.

Origin of the custom.—I venture to offer here three possible explanations of the origin of this custom, leaving it to the acknowledged authorities upon the history of marriage to point out what in their opinion is the true explanation:—

1. It may be a survival of an earlier custom of group-marriage and uterine descent such as is to be found in the Banks Islands, where the entire population is divided into two groups, which we will call X. and O. A man of the X. group must marry an O. woman, and *vice versâ*. The children, following the mother, are O.'s, and are, therefore, kin to their mother's brother rather than to their own father. Their mother's brother, an O., marries an X. woman, whose children are X.'s, and are potential wives to their first cousins; although in the Banks group the blood relationship is not lost sight of, and close marriages are looked upon as improper, whilst in Fiji such a union would be obligatory.[75] The children of two brothers of the X. group, following their mothers, would be O.'s, and therefore forbidden to marry; and so also would be the children of two sisters. Thus far the results of the two customs are the same; but in the Banks group consanguineous marriage is checked by public opinion, which in Fiji favours such marriages. Group-marriage on precisely the same lines has been noticed in Western Equatorial Africa[76] and among the Tinné Indians in North-West America.[77]

In Fiji, agnatic has generally taken the place of the uterine descent (although in some parts of Vanualevu traces of the custom still appear to linger), but the existing system of *vasu*, which gives a man

extraordinary claims upon his maternal uncle, may be an indication that concubitant marriage is a survival of the more ancient custom. The *vasu* system is found to some extent among all peoples who trace descent through the mother. Tacitus, speaking of the ancient Germans, says that the tie between the maternal uncle and his nephew was a more sacred bond than the relation of father and son.[78]

ORIGIN OF CONCUBITANCY

2. It is also possible that concubitant marriage is a relaxation of the stricter prohibition in force amongst the Polynesians. The origin of these prohibitions may, perhaps, be found in some such occurrence as that described in the "Murdu" legend of Australia, quoted by Messrs. Fison and Howitt in *Kamilaroi and Kurnai*—

"After the Creation brothers and sisters and others of the closest kin intermarried promiscuously, until, the evil effects becoming manifest, a council of the chiefs was assembled to consider in what way they might be averted."

Some such crisis must have been reached in every group of islands that was peopled by the immigration of a single family, and the natural solution in every case would have been to prohibit the marriage of both classes of cousins-german. But, little by little, the desire for alliances among chief families, for the restoration of the claims of *vasu*, and for the restoration of an equivalent of the tillage rights given in dowry, may have chafed against the prohibitions until these were so far relaxed as to allow the marriage of cousins in the degree most effective for

promoting an interchange of property. For a similar reason Moses ordered the daughters of Zelophehad to marry men of their father's tribe, in order that their property should not pass out of the tribe, and "their inheritance remained in the tribe of the family of their father" (Numbers xxxvi. 12).

3. A third solution may be found in the transition from uterine to agnatic descent, a change that came about gradually as social development prompted the sons to seize on the inheritance of their father to the exclusion of the nephew (*vasu*). With the admission of the father's relationship to his son grew the idea that he was the life-giver and the mother the mere vehicle for the gestation of the child, and the child came to be regarded as related to his father instead of to his mother.[79] Thus Orestes,[80] arraigned for the murder of his mother, Clytemnestra, asks the Erinyes why they did not punish Clytemnestra for slaying her husband Agamemnon; and, upon their answer that she was not kin to the man she slew, he founds the plea that by the same rule they cannot touch him, for he is not kin to his mother. The plea is admitted by the gods. By this rule, a man is not kin to his father's sister's daughter, she being kin to her father only; but her affinity to him would render their marriage convenient as regards the family possessions. From long usage a sense of obligation would be evolved, and such cousins come to be regarded as concubitant. The children of sisters would still be within the forbidden degrees, for, although not kin through their mothers, their fathers, being presumably the concubitant cousins of their mothers, would be near kin.

I incline to accept the first explanation—that the custom of concubitancy has been evolved from an

earlier system of group-marriage and uterine descent. I think that it dates from the remote period when there was indiscriminate intercourse between the members of two exogamous marrying classes, when it was impossible to say who was the actual father of the children born. Under such a system the reputed offspring of two brothers might in reality be the children of only one of them, and the children of two sisters might have a common father, and their union be incestuous. But the children of a brother and sister respectively could not possibly have a common parent, and their intercourse was therefore innocuous. For the same reason the children of concubitants who were not known to have cohabited were still held to be tabu to each other, for the male concubitant had a right of cohabitation with the female of which he might at any time have availed himself, and their offspring reputed to be by their other partners might in reality be half brother and sister without their knowledge.

CENSUS OF CONSANGUINEOUS MARRIAGES

Though the Fijian system of relationships is closely allied to those of the Tamils in India and the Two-mountain Iroquois, and the Wyandots in North America, none of these, except the Tamils, I believe, recognize the principle of concubitant cousinship. The custom must be regarded, I think, as being one of limited range, evolved from marriage laws of far wider application. It undoubtedly exercises upon the Fijians a marked influence in promoting consanguineous marriages—an influence from which the other races in the Pacific are comparatively free,

if we except the inhabitants of the island of Tanna in the New Hebrides and possibly some other islands not yet systematically investigated.

Concubitancy in practice.—The fact of a race of men habitually marrying their first cousins promised to exhibit such remarkable features in vital statistics that we did not stop short at investigating the theory alone. We caused a census to be taken of twelve villages, not selected from one province, but chosen only for convenience of enumeration in the widely separated provinces of Rewa, Colo East, Serua, and Ba. I am indebted to the late Mr. James Stewart, C.M.G., for the analysis of the returns which follows: —

In the twelve villages there were 448 families. The couples forming the heads of these families have had born to them as children of the marriage 1317 children, an average of 2·94 to each marriage. But of these 1317 children, only 679 remain alive, 638 being dead. The heads of these families therefore do not replace themselves by surviving children, for only 51·5 per cent. survive, while 48·5 are lost.

We divided the married couples into four classes—

(1) Concubitant relations who have married together. These we found to be on inquiry in nearly every case actual first cousins. They formed 29·7 per cent. of the total number of families.

(2) Relations other than concubitant cousins who have intermarried. Two-fifths of these are near relations, uncle and niece, and non-marriageable cousins-german, brother and sister according to the Fijian ideas. But the remaining three-fifths are more distantly related than are the concubitants. These

form 12·3 per cent. of the total number of families.

(3) Fellow villagers—natives of the same village, but not otherwise related—who have married together. These form 32·1 of the total number of families.

(4) Natives of different villages, not being relations who have intermarried. These form 25·9 of the total number of families.

Thus it will be seen that the concubitant and other relations who have intermarried number over two-fifths of the people, while one-third of the married people have been brought up together in the same village, and only one-fourth, not being relations, have come from different villages.

When we examined the relative fecundity of these divisions the result was not a little startling—

133 concubitant couples have had 438 children, or 3·30 children per family.

55 families of relations have had 168 children, or 3·06 children per family.

144 families of fellow-villagers have had 390 children, or 2·71 children per family.

116 families of natives of different villages have had 321 children, or 2·77 children per family.

It will thus be seen that as regards fecundity, concubitant marriages are greatly superior to any of the other classes.

But since fecundity does not necessarily mean vitality, the question is, how many of the children born to these respective divisions have survived? and we find the unexpected result that whereas the other

classes have changed places, the concubitants again show themselves to be superior.

Of 133 families of concubitants, there were 438 children, of whom 232 survive, and 206 are dead.

Of 55 families of relations, not concubitants, there were 168 children, of whom 72 survive, and 96 are dead.

Of 144 families of townspeople, there were 390 children, of whom 212 survive, and 178 are dead.

Of 116 families of natives of different villages, there were 321 children, of whom 163 survive, and 158 are dead.

VITALITY OF INBRED CHILDREN

The concubitants with an average surviving family of 1·74 show, therefore, not only a higher birth-rate, but far the highest vitality of offspring.

The relations other than concubitants show, it is true, the highest fecundity next to the concubitants, but their rate of vitality is the lowest of the four classes, since more of their children have died than are now living.

Second in point of vitality come the fellow-villagers, but they are far behind the concubitants.

From our preconceived ideas of the advantages of out-breeding we should expect to find that the offspring of natives of different villages would have shown, if not the highest fecundity, at least the highest vitality, for this is the class in which the

parents are not related. On the contrary, we find that the families of these unrelated people are only third in point of vitality.

In view of the unfavourable position which the "relations other than concubitants" hold in this analysis, it is well to divide the group into two sub-classes. Of the fifty-five families of "relations," thirty-three are stated to be *kawa vata* (*i.e.* of the same stock, but not necessarily of the same family or generation). The remaining twenty-two families, on the other hand, consist of such unions (incestuous from the Fijian point of view) of *vei-nganeni* or *vei-tathini*, that is to say, brother and sister, or cousins not concubitant; *vei-vungoni*, uncle and niece, or aunt and nephew; *vei-tamani*, father and daughter, or paternal uncle and niece; and *vei-luveni* or *vei-tinani*, maternal aunt and nephew, or mother and son. We have therefore, for purposes of identification, divided the group into—first, relations distant; second, relations specified.

Divisions.	Number of Families.	Children of the Marriage.		
		Alive.	Dead.	Total.
Relations (distant)	33	49	61	110
Average per family	--	1·48	1·85	3·33
Relations (specified)	22	23	35	58
Average per family	--	1·05	1·59	2·64
Total	55	72	96	168
Average per family		1·31	1·75	3·6

The fecundity of these distant relations thus appears to be much higher than that of the specified relations, and a little higher even than that of the concubitants—the highest of the four groups. The comparative figures are as follows—

	Average Family.		
	Alive.	Dead.	Total.
Vei-ndavolani (concubitants)	1·74	1·56	3·30
Relations (distant)	1·48	1·85	3·33

The vitality therefore is much less in the case of relations distant than among the children of the concubitants.

The fecundity of the division, "relations specified," is lower than that of any of the four groups, and the vitality of their progeny is greatly inferior to any of the other classes.

For the last twenty years the Fijians have been either stationary, slightly increasing, or decreasing, according to the prevalence of foreign epidemics, the balance being in favour always of decrease. The different figures show that no class of the population replaces itself by surviving children of the marriage. But the deficiency is made up by the children of former marriages, and illegitimate children, who form a large portion of the population, but whose case it was not necessary to consider for the purposes of this chapter. But we find the startling fact that the class that most nearly succeeds in replacing itself is that of the concubitants, which, consisting of 133 families, or 266 individuals, have, out of a total number of children born to them of 438, a surviving progeny of 232. If we add the surviving step-children

of these individuals, their total surviving progeny becomes 317, thus replacing the heads of existing families, and leaving 51 children to replace the parents of the step-children. In every respect the concubitants appear to be the most satisfactory marriage class. They amount to only 29·7 per cent. of the population, but they bear 33·3 per cent. of the children born, and they rear 34·2 of the children reared; and, including step-children, they rear 34·7 of the children who survive.

CONCUBITANCY JUSTIFIED BY RESULTS

It is not a little remarkable that the two extremes of vitality should occur in the two classes in which in-breeding prevails. The larger class of the concubitants (in which class also is found the highest fecundity) shows the highest vitality of the four groups. The smaller class, the relations other than concubitants, second in point of fecundity, discloses the lowest vitality, and yet the proportion of these marriages which would be regarded as incestuous by our system is small. It is not to be forgotten, however, that in marriages which are regarded by the people as socially right and proper, more care may be bestowed upon the offspring both by the relations of the parents who nurse the mother and child and by the parents themselves. By the same reasoning it is probable that the offspring of marriages regarded as incestuous are neglected by the relations of the parents, and, as a consequence, that less pride is taken in them by the parents themselves.

It has not been found that concubitants marry either earlier or later in life than the members of the other classes, and it is to be remembered that concubitants are very often natives of different villages, which may tend to prevent the relations attending upon the mother in her confinement. One of our native witnesses assured us, moreover, that the union of concubitants was seldom a happy one. Quarrels between husband and wife would certainly outweigh any advantages in favour of child-bearing which the social propriety or fitness might be held to create. But even supposing that the influences at work to make concubitancy so satisfactory a procreative element in the population are of a moral nature, the difference is so marked that there is a balance over to be accounted for by some other explanation. That they rear a larger proportion of their children may be partly or wholly due to the fact that their relationship to each other gives them a higher sense of responsibility, but that they bear more children capable of being reared argues a superior physical fitness for procreation. I am aware that the figures are far too small to allow of any generalization from them, but at the same time it is to be remembered that the inhabitants of these twelve villages represent a fair sample of the population, and also that we found the relative positions of the married classes to be generally the same in each village taken individually.

We have here a phenomenon probably unique in the whole range of anthropology—a people who for generations have married their first cousins and still continue to do so, and among whom the offspring of first cousins were not only more numerous but have greater vitality than the children of persons unrelated. Nay more, the children of concubitants—

of first cousins whose parents were brother and sister —have immense advantages over the children of first cousins who were the children of two brothers or two sisters respectively. In no other part of the world does there exist so favourable material for investigating the phenomena of in-breeding among human beings. Is it possible that we have stumbled upon an important truth in our physical nature? Throughout Europe there is a widespread prejudice against the union of first cousins, a prejudice that must have arisen from the observation of chance unions. Two French scientists, MM. Lagneau and Gueniot, have lately attempted to combat this prejudice that marriage of first cousins is in itself productive of evil in the offspring. By classifying the people of Batz, who, they affirm, are the offspring of generations of consanguineous marriages, they found the population to be comparatively free from the morbid characteristics usually attributed to consanguinity, and they traced the cases of scrofula and similar morbid taints back to its origin in the parents and grandparents. From this they argued, that if scrofulous or rickety children are born of parents nearly related, it is due to the fact that hereditary taint of disease on one or both of them has not been diluted by marriage with a person unrelated to them. It is a pity that in their investigations they did not trace the exact tie of consanguinity between the parents. It might have been seen, whether in Europe as in Fiji, the union of the children respectively of a brother and sister is innocuous, while that of the children of two brothers or two sisters respectively produces evil effects upon the offspring.



MARRIAGE POSSIBLY BENEFICIAL

The point at issue, therefore, is this. Is the classificatory system of relationships after all more logical in an important respect than our own? Is there really a wide physical difference between the relationship of cousins who are offspring of a brother and sister respectively and that of cousins whose parents respectively were two brothers or two sisters? Ought marriage in the one case to be allowed or even encouraged, and in the other case as rigidly forbidden as if it were incestuous? More complete and detailed statistics than it is possible to give within the limits of this chapter are at the service of any one who will attempt to answer these questions by going more deeply into the subject.

Due allowance being made for local variations, the marriage customs of Fijians of the middle class in heathen times may be thus summarized.

The man's parents, having ascertained that their overtures would be acceptable, sent betrothal gifts (*ai ndunguthi*) to the parents of the girl. The token of acceptance was sometimes a miniature *liku* (apron). If *vei-ndavolani* (concubitants), they were often betrothed in early childhood; sometimes, however, a girl child was thus promised to a man old enough to be her grandfather. In either case the girl's parents kept strict watch over her, for any lapse on her part would cover them with shame and dishonour. If the betrothed whom she thus dishonoured was a man of rank her own relations would not scruple to put her to death, as was done by the great chief Ritova in 1852, when his sister thus disgraced him. While the

girl is growing up her friends were supposed to "nurse" (*vei-mei*) her, or they might take her to the bridegroom's parents to be cared for till the marriage. When she reached puberty the bridegroom's friends prepared a quantity of property, consisting of mats and bark-cloth, and called the *yau-ni-kumu*, or the *solevu*, and presented it formally to the parents of the girl, and marriages were often delayed for years when the bridegroom's family were too poor to acquire property commensurate with their pride. It was this pecuniary element, and also the custom of *vasu*, which gave every Fijian a lien over the property of his mother's family, that made each clan so jealous in counting the interchange of wives. "*Veka!*" they would exclaim when a fresh proposal was made, "they have had already five women from us, and we but three from them, and now they ask us for a sixth!"

The actual ceremony varied very much with the rank of the parties to the marriage. There was no religious element, and the priests took no part in it. But however humble the couple there were two indispensable ceremonies—the wedding feast, provided by the bridegroom, and the *vei-tasi*, or clipping of the bride's hair. I have failed to discover the author of the fiction, quoted by so many anthropologists, that marriage in Fiji was consummated in the bush. This was never the case. On the night of the feast the bride was taken to her husband's house, which had been either built specially for her, or was lent by the groom's parents. There the marriage was consummated, without any ceremony except in the case of high chiefs, when the announcement was made by a great shouting. On the morrow was the feast of the clipping, when the long tresses (*tombe*) grown behind each ear as a token of

virginity were cut off.[81] In the inland districts the girl's head was shorn, and she entered forthwith upon her labour as a hewer of wood and a drawer of water, ugly enough by this disfigurement to discourage any admirer. The old women of the bridegroom's family had ascertained meanwhile whether the bride had had a right to wear these love-locks, and if the result of their inquiries was unsatisfactory, the feast was made the occasion for putting her friends to shame. By a slash of a knife the carcasses of the pigs, which were presented whole to the visitors in the village square, were so mutilated as to intimate in the grossest imagery that the bride had had a history. The Fijians, however, always preserved a delicacy in these matters which was strangely wanting in the Samoans and Tongans. In Samoa the innocence of the bride was tested in the sight of the whole village by a sort of surgical operation performed by a third person (*digito intruso*); in Tonga the nuptial mat was paraded from house to house.[82]

FIJIAN LOVE LETTERS

There was, in some parts of the group, an occasional "marriage by capture" that would have gladdened the heart of Maclennan, but it was ceremonial, and I doubt whether it ever could be described as a custom. The betrothal gifts having been accepted some time before, the girl was waylaid and carried off. If she was unwilling she ran away to some one who could protect her; if she was content the marriage feast was made on the following morning.

Though as a rule the wishes of the bride were not

consulted, there were certainly matches of *vei-ndomoni* (mutual affection), and young people sometimes eloped with one another to the bush. But the flame of passion soon burnt itself out; the couple soon settled down into the comfortable relations of mutual convenience; there was never a trace of idealizing sentiment between lovers.

The *ndunguthi-ni-alewa* has now given place to the *vola-ni-alewa*, and the former phrase is obsolete. *Vola-ni-alewa* (writing to a woman) includes both the betrothal gift and the letter which accompanies it. Very artless and business-like are some of these proposals. "If you love me I love you, but if you love me not, never mind, neither do I love you; only let us have certainty." Sometimes the women write the letter. One that came into my hands soared to a poetic height. "Be gentle like the dove, and patient like the chicken," but concluded somewhat lamely with, "When you have read this my letter, throw it down the drain."

In September 1875, a few months after the cession of the group, the Council of Chiefs recommended the prohibition of betrothal gifts on the ground that they tended to infant betrothals, and consequently to the compulsory marriage of ill-assorted couples, who separated immediately without consummating it; that girls should be free to marry whom they chose on attaining the age of sixteen; that the licence should be granted by native magistrates after due inquiry; and that the ceremony should be performed either by a European magistrate or by a minister of religion. These recommendations, liberal enough when one considers how recently those who framed them had been freed from the bonds of custom, were embodied in a native regulation, to which was added

three years later the sensible provision that the bridegroom should first be provided with a house of his own. But as the betrothal gifts, which were of no great value, seemed on consideration to be less objectionable than was at first supposed, a Regulation was afterwards passed to make them legal.

The real obstacle to marriage proved to be the *yau-ni-kumu*. While it consisted only of native manufactures there were few men who could not provide it with the help of their relations, but as soon as it became fashionable to give knives, print, etc., for which money was required, there were difficulties. The unhappy bridegroom, knowing how lightly a Fijian girl may change her mind, had the ceremony performed on the understanding that the marriage should not be consummated until he was able to pay for his bride. While he was accumulating the property to redeem her, the bride lived with her parents. Months passed, and in many cases a prosecution for adultery took the place of the promised festivities, though the marriage had never been consummated. This state of things appeared to be more common on the north-east coast of Vitilevu than elsewhere.

OBSTACLES TO MARRIAGE

In 1892, therefore, a Regulation was passed again prohibiting betrothal gifts, and making it illegal to keep married people apart because the *yau-ni-kumu* had not been presented, and provided a penalty for enticing married women from their husbands. There still remained the magistrate's power to refuse a

licence if the relations advanced "reasonable objections," for by the law of custom objections to intermarriage with a tribe of traditional enemies were reasonable. The native chiefs, mindful of their own feelings if their daughters were to make a *mésalliance*, clung to this power of veto, and without their co-operation it was useless to attempt more legislation. And, since there is probably no community in which poverty, or class distinctions, are not obstacles to marriages of inclination, the Fijians have little to complain of.

FOOTNOTES:

[74] The information in this chapter was collected by the Commission on the Native Decrease (1891), of which the author was a member.

[75] Thus, John X. marries Mary O. They have two children, male O. and female O. (belonging to the mother's group). These marry female X. and male X. (father's group). Their children would be X.'s and O.'s respectively, following their mothers, and, if of opposite sex, could intermarry, although public opinion regards the union as improper in consequence of the near relationship of the parents.

[76] Du Chaillu, *Trans. Ethn. Soc.*, N.S., Vol. I, p. 321.

[77] *Smithsonian Report*, 1866, p. 315.

[78] De Mor., Germ., XX., quoted by Sir John Lubbock.

[79] We find it stated by Dr. Codrington that there is a remarkable tendency throughout the islands of Melanesia towards the substitution

of a man's own children for his sister's children and others of his kin in succession to his property; and this appears to begin where the property is the produce of the man's own industry.

[80] Quoted by Sir John Lubbock, *Origin of Civilization*.

[81] In these degenerate days the *tombe* are worn by many unmarried girls who have no right to them.

[82] I remember a high chief in Fiji, who had married a Tongan girl, complaining bitterly of the invasion of his privacy by the bride's aunt, who insisted upon officiating as a witness, and relating with glee how, in the small hours, he had forcibly bundled the old lady out into the night.

CHAPTER XI

CUSTOMS AT BIRTH

It has already been shown that the decay of the Fijian race is due, not to a low birth-rate, but to an excessive mortality among infants. The mean annual birth-rate for the ten years 1881-1891 was 38.48. This compares very favourably with the mean annual rates of European countries, which vary from 42.8 in Hungry to 25.9 in France. In England the rate is 35.3.

The excessive mortality among Fijian infants makes it necessary to examine very closely the practices of the native midwives at the risk of wearying the reader with somewhat technical details.

Native midwives are generally the ordinary medical practitioners, and are termed *Vu-ni-kalou* (skilled in spirit-lore), or *Yalewa vuku* (wise woman), though that term belongs more properly to the wives of the hereditary *matai sau* (canoe-wrights and carpenters). These women keep their craft secret, and as a consequence it often becomes family property, being handed down from mother to daughter. The natives assert, however, that so far from the craft being regarded as hereditary, any person who thinks she has discovered a new remedy is at liberty to follow the business when so inclined. This opens a wide field to quackery, of which any woman with more cunning or self-assertion than her neighbours can avail herself for the sake of credit or of gain.

MIDWIVES

None but a few of the female relations of a lying-in woman are admitted to the house when she is in labour, the mixed attendance customary in Tonga on such occasions not being tolerated. When the labour pains begin the woman assumes a squatting posture, but during the throes of childbirth she lies back in the arms of two friends sitting behind her, who support her shoulders while the midwife stations herself in front. From a physiological point of view this is a disadvantageous position, but it appears to be adopted by chance rather than design, it being a natural posture for a people who both sleep and sit on a matted floor. The midwife makes a digital examination for the purpose of ascertaining the presentation, which is generally normal. The membranes are not tampered with, and nothing else is done until after the natural birth of the child. Then the midwife clears its mouth of mucus with her fingers or with her lips. Midwives differ on the point of the moment at which the umbilical cord should be severed. Some of them seem to know that the cord pulsates, but they do not understand the reason, for the Fijians know nothing of the circulation of the blood. They generally wait until the child breathes or cries out. If it emits no cry the general practice is to compress the cord between the finger and thumb, and to squeeze the blood onward towards the child. Sometimes they rattle a bunch of *kitu* (gourds) near its ear in the hope of awakening it. Neither artificial respiration nor a dash of cold water is ever resorted to, though cold water is used in Tonga in extreme cases, and the natives mention cases in which

children must have perished through the neglect of this precaution. The cord is then measured from the navel to the knee, and cut square across with a mussel-shell, or a bamboo knife. Now-a-days scissors are sometimes used. It is never severed by biting as is done by some natural races, nor is it ever tied or knotted. Native opinions vary as to whether bleeding occurs in consequence of the cord not being tied. The midwives deny that it does, but some women declare that it is a good thing for the "bad blood" to drain out of the cord. Severance of the umbilical cord without ligature is not so unsafe as might appear, for the experience of obstetricians goes to show that there is less risk of hæmorrhage when the cord is left long, though, of course, bleeding is more likely to occur from a clean transverse cut than from an oblique cut, or a laceration. After division the fœtal end is wrapped in a shred of bark-cloth, and coiled down on the abdomen. The blood that oozes from it is absorbed by the cloth, which is changed occasionally.

As soon as the child cries and the cord has been severed an attendant washes it in cold water. A drink of cold water is given to the mother with the view of stimulating the uterus to contract and expel the afterbirth. Retention of the placenta is the one contingency dreaded by native women, but the midwives say that it is as rare as it is dangerous. Among the inland tribes the midwives often introduce the hand to extract the placenta, but among the coast people they believe it to be an experiment which is better left alone. In cases where the drink of cold water fails in its intended effect, herbal infusions are administered, and poultices are sometimes applied externally, but the safe expedient of compressing the uterus by placing the hand on the

abdomen is unknown to Fijian midwives—a surprising fact in a nation of masseuses. It seems clear that Fijian mothers sometimes die from retained placenta, and that the blame is laid at the door of the midwife if she has ventured upon any manual interference. One woman stated that some of her friends went through life in dread of pregnancy through the popular fear of retained placenta.

The occasional retention of portions of the membranes appears to puzzle Fijian midwives. They lay particular stress upon the impropriety of removing such fragments—*ai kumbekumbe* (cleavings), they call them—even when they have been extruded spontaneously, but, on the contrary, are careful to tie them down *in loco* under a bandage of bark-cloth, trusting the rest to nature. They admit, however, that women to whom this happens are usually feverish for some time, and they evidently think the situation dangerous.

FORTITUDE OF FIJIAN MOTHERS

After the conclusion of the third stage of labour some midwives of the inland tribes introduce the hand as far as the *bai ni yate* (*lit.*, fence of the liver) or the *tuvu ni ngone* (fœtal source, *i.e. Fornix vaginæ*), and, bending the fingers, clear out all the clots they can find. Others adopt the better practice of raising the mother to a sitting posture to facilitate their discharge by gravitation.

An infusion called *wai-ni-lutu-vata* (medicine for simultaneous birth) is sometimes taken during the later months of pregnancy, to induce an easy labour

and the descent of the placenta at the proper moment.

Among the hill tribes of Vitilevu labour seems to be more easy and expeditious than on the coast, and yet, notwithstanding their less varied experience, the midwives of those tribes enjoy a higher reputation for skill, and also follow more orthodox methods than their sisters among the more enlightened tribes. Both, however, display the same ignorance of the rudiments of physiology, and are as empirical in their midwifery as in their treatment of ordinary sickness.

The infant mortality is attributed by many Europeans to the hard work done by the women during pregnancy, and immediately after childbirth. The native belief is that a woman should do no heavy work up to the time of quickening, but that thenceforward the more she works the easier will her confinement be. Though this maxim is universal, the practice during pregnancy varies with the individual and the locality. Among the hill tribes women leave their house as early as the day after their confinement; they generally do so about the fifth day. Cases are recorded in which a woman has gone out in the morning in an advanced stage of pregnancy, and has returned in the evening with a load of firewood on her back and a new-born child in her arms. But at Mbau, and among the higher classes generally, women are kept to the house for a full month, and among the high chiefs the *bongi ndrau* (hundred days) are observed, the mother abstaining from all but purely domestic occupations for that period.

Accidents of childbirth seem to be rare with Fijian

women. All the midwives that have been questioned agree that mal-presentations are uncommon, and that only one case of an arm-presentation had occurred within their experience. When abnormal presentations do occur they are regarded as being the fruit of an adulterous connection, and when the child dies, as it invariably does, the death is put down to this cause instead of to want of skill on the part of the midwife. The Vital Statistics put the still births at 6 per cent., and in a few provinces at 10 per cent., but it has been ascertained that many of these represent cases of fœtal death before delivery.

In western Vitilevu, the centre of belief in witchcraft, confinements used to take place out of doors. A temporary hut is run up near the yam-garden, often at a considerable distance from the village, and the pregnant woman takes up her quarters there for the event. No preparation is made beyond taking a rough creel, padded with dried grass, for the reception of the new-born infant. The people use neither mat nor bark-cloth for the purpose, being loath to destroy it afterwards, and saying, "How will you get rid of the blood with which it will be stained?" The hut, too, is floored only with grass. As a rule there is no midwife, and the woman does all that is necessary for herself. The key to these primitive customs is the belief in witchcraft. The most effective tools of the wizard are the excretæ of the intended victim. If the woman was attended during her confinement a grass-blade, stained with blood, might be secreted by a malicious person, and used to compass her death. She uses no mats because mats are too precious to be wantonly burned, and every mat she had used would be a weapon in the hands of her enemies. So she brings her child into the world unaided, and burns the hut and all it contains before she sets out for the

village. Now, mark how superstition works for sanitation. Whereas the child of the coast is brought into the world in a stuffy hut, and swaddled in dirty bark-cloth, reeking with impurities, the inland baby and its mother are guarded against infection by a law of cleanliness more rigid than any that the Mosaic code enjoined.

PRACTICES OF THE GILBERT ISLANDS

As the Gilbert Islanders are credited with being excessively prolific, and are said to be the only race in the South Seas that would increase if artificial means were not used to prevent the population exceeding the capacity of the islands, it will be well to compare their methods of midwifery as described by Tearabugu, a professional midwife. On her island —Tamana—much attention is paid to pregnant women. They do no work during the first two months of pregnancy. At the seventh month they are anointed with oil; about the eighth their limbs are given passive exercise, and they go to a separate house to be shampooed by expert masseuses, in order to train their muscles to bear the labour pains. The umbilical cord is measured to the middle of the child's forehead, and cut, but not tied. The placenta is extracted by hand if it does not come away naturally. In cases of mal-presentation the midwives know how to give assistance. The mother does no work during suckling, and, if it is necessary to wean the child prematurely, a substitute for the mother's milk is found in a butter made from the fresh fruit of the pandanus. The midwives are reputed to be exceptionally clever, and the labours easy and safe.

Tearabugu could not remember a single case which had terminated fatally for the mother. She said that four or five children are considered enough, and any above that number are not allowed to come to maturity. All the women practise abortion because they are so prolific. If they did not they would have from ten to twenty children apiece. But neither medicine nor instruments are used. The common method is to pound the abdomen with a billet of wood, and this is not fatal to the mother. Now, however, the practice is being abandoned, because the missionaries have persuaded the people that it is dangerous.

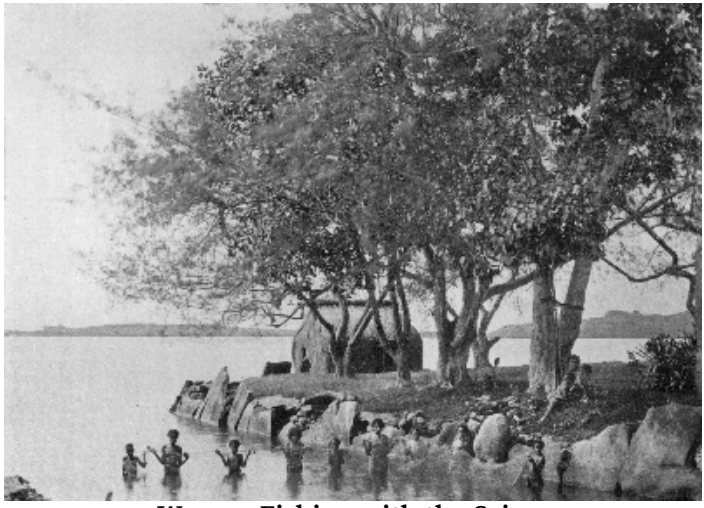
Lactation

The Fijian child begins life with a dose of medicine. As soon as it has been washed in cold water a little of the juice of the candle-nut-tree (*Aleurites triloba*) is put into its mouth to make it vomit. Then a ripe cocoanut, or in some places a plantain, is roasted and chewed into a pulp, which is dropped into a cocoanut-shell cup. A piece of bark-cloth, shaped like a nipple, is dipped into this, and given to the child to suck. The mother's first milk, being considered unwholesome, is drawn off, and for the first day, or, in the case of a chief's child, for the first three days, the baby is put to the breasts of a wet nurse, if its rank is sufficient to command her services. The wet nurse is strictly forbidden to bathe or fish in salt water, and there must not be too great a disparity of age between her own and her foster child. When the mother's breasts are full, her child is given to her to suckle, but now, as in the old days, the children of chiefs are suckled by more than one woman. In Tonga the mother suckles her child as soon as the

milk comes.

In one respect only have the ancient customs relating to suckling children begun to break down; the missionaries have tried to discourage the employment of a wet nurse, probably because her own child is likely to suffer from neglect.

Among the common people it has always been the custom for two girls from the wife's and two from the husband's family to feed and tend the new mother, unless her rank is too lowly to entitle her to the services of more than one. The two grandmothers of the child, if living, also help to tend the mother. But at the tenth day they all leave her to the care of her husband. This custom fits into the waning practice of concubitous marriage, (*q. v.* ante), for if the husband and wife belong to different islands the wife's relations are unable to contribute their services to her support. During the first ten days the mother is confined to a vegetable diet. She is forbidden to eat what the native call *ka ndamu* (red things, *i.e.* fish, crabs, pork, or broths made therefrom), and is fed upon taro or bread-fruit puddings (*vakalolo*), yams, taro, or spinach. At the end of ten days she goes about her house-work, and if she cannot command the services of her relations to enable her to lay up for the *bongi ndrau* (hundred days), she resumes all her ordinary outdoor work except sea-fishing, for, as the natives say, "there is *dambe* in the sea, and if the mother wets her leg above the calf in salt water, her milk will be spoiled."



Women Fishing with the Seine.

REMARKABLE CASE

It is perhaps owing to their hard work and low diet that Fijian mothers so often suffer from a deficiency of breast milk, and that so many children die from *matha na mena suthu* (drying up of the milk) and *londo i suthu* (privation of milk), *i.e.* from the death, absence, or neglect of the mother. When the mother's milk fails her breasts are oiled and steamed and painted with turmeric, and are kept warm by bandages of bark-cloth, while she eats spinach, *mba vakoro* (a mixture of spinach with shell-fish), and drinks fish soup and spinach water. Kava, which was absolutely forbidden to women of the last generation, is now drunk by both pregnant and nursing women under the belief that it induces easy labour and promotes a flow of milk when all other means fail. But if the flow of milk is re-established, the more nutritious diet is at once discontinued, for

quantity is all that is aimed at.

When the milk fails or the mother dies the child's chances of surviving are slender indeed. Its grandmother will carry it from house to house imploring nursing mothers to give it suck. With one accord they all begin to make excuses. They have not milk enough for their own children; there are many other women more able to than they. In Thakaundrove a woman who is not nursing sometimes takes the place of the mother. She is fed on spinach, and is oiled and tended like the real mother, and in course of time, if the child continues to suck her breasts, the milk comes, and the child is reared. There is a well-attested case—and it is said to be by no means a solitary instance—in which the grandmother suckled the children during the mother's frequent absences from home. They were the children of her youngest daughter, and yet she contrived to induce a flow of milk for each of the four children in succession. It is not surprising that all the children died in infancy, for such milk could have little nutritive value.

Statistics show that, even counting the children that are fortunate enough to find a wet nurse to adopt them, in at least three cases out of four the death of the mother means the death of the child also, and that the mortality is only a shade lower in cases where the mother is deficient in breast milk. The father's absence from home is also a fatal condition, for the mother is then obliged to take her baby with her to the plantation, where it is left under a tree while its mother works in the sun. Among the Motu tribes in New Guinea a sort of crèche is improvised in the corner of the field; every nursing mother goes to work with her child slung in a net bag. These bags

are slung from the branches of a tree, and are guarded by one of the women told off for the duty in rotation. I remember coming suddenly upon one of these trees at a turn in the path. Its dead branches bore a round dozen of this strange fruit—fat brown babies fast asleep with their knees doubled up to their chins and their flesh oozing from the meshes of the net bags. Near the same village I saw a woman, who had probably lost her baby, doing her maternal duty to a sucking-pig and a puppy.

The only substitute for milk known to the Fijians is *mba* water, *i.e.* water in which the stalks of the taro (*Calladium esculentum*) have been boiled. It contains a large proportion of glucose, a little starch, a trace of albumen, some malic acid, a pinkish or pale violet colouring matter intensified by acids, water and cellulose, but no tannic or gallic acids. The microscope showed it to be free from oxalate of lime or other raphides. In the uncooked stalks and leaves there is a highly acrid oily matter, which, however, is completely dissipated by heat even below 200° Fahrenheit. *Mba* is not unlike boiled beet stalks, and the sweet and mucilaginous liquor must be a palatable and not unsatisfying food for a child in ordinary health, though it is far from being as nutritive as mother's milk. It is strange that the Fijians have never thought of adding to it the strainings of grated cocoanuts which abound in every village, though even so the food would still be deficient in proteids.

In Tonga, on the other hand, children are generally reared safely by hand upon a diet of cooked breadfruit made into a liquid with cocoanut-milk. I have heard of one instance of a child that was reared on sugar-cane. The Gilbert Islanders use a butter

made of the fruit of the pandanus made fresh every day, and they also give their children young cocoanuts to suck through a hollow rush.

INSANITARY HABITS

Weaning

If all goes well the child is weaned when three or four of both the upper and lower incisors appear. For a month or two before this the mother has been in the habit of giving it a slushy mess of yam to prepare it for solid food. While weaning it she gives it chewed yam or taro in addition to *mba*, and there is something to be said both for and against this practice. The saliva is rich in ptyalin, which does not act upon proteids or fats, and is therefore not secreted in any appreciable quantity during the first year of infant life. As the starch that is so plentiful in yam and taro is insoluble, it must be converted into something more digestible before it can be assimilated. The acid of the gastric juice would retard this conversion, but the ptyalin of the saliva, like the diastase of malt, has the property of converting moistened starch, when kept at a warm and even temperature such as that of the body, into dextrin and glucose, which are easily assimilated. Thus, while the mother feeds her child upon a diet which it is not yet prepared to deal with, she supplies from her own mouth the necessary moisture, warmth and ptyalin for making it digestible. Without the chewing the mashed yam would produce diarrhœa.

On the other hand, the human mouth is the hotbed

of bacteria, which, though innocuous to the adult, may well be hurtful to an infant. The Fijian uses no toothbrush but his index finger, which is seldom as clean as the mouth it is intended to cleanse. It is therefore possible that the fermentative action that causes diarrhœa in children may be set up by the chewing, and the germs of specific constitutional disease may be sometimes introduced. Tuberculosis and leprosy, so far as our present knowledge of them goes, appear likely to be transmissible in this way, and the Fijians are largely affected by both tubercle and leprosy. Most Fijian mothers are heavy smokers, and the residuum of tobacco may well impart a poisonous property to the food.

CHAPTER XII

CIRCUMCISION AND TATTOOING

Like the Arabs, the Fijians circumcised their boys when just entering upon puberty, about the twelfth year. In heathen times the age seems to have been somewhat earlier, for Williams gives the age at from seven to twelve, which corresponds with the custom of the ancient Egyptians, from whom the Jews probably derived the custom. It does not appear to have been strictly a religious rite, though, like all ceremonial acts of the Fijians, it was invested with a religious observance of the tabu. The operation was generally performed in the village *mbure*, upon ten or twenty youths at a time, by one of the old men, who

used a piece of split bamboo. The blood was caught on a strip of bark-cloth, called *kula* (red), which in some places was suspended from the roof of the temple or the house of the chief. Food, consisting of a mess of greens, was taken to the boys by women, who, in some places, as they carried it, chanted the following words:—

"Memu wai onkori ka kula,
Au solia mai loaloa,
Au solia na ndrau ni thevunga,
Memu wai onkori ka kula."

"Your broth, you, the circumcised,
From the darkness I give it,
I give you *thevunga* leaves,
Your broth, you, the circumcised."

CIRCUMCISION A RELIGIOUS RITE

The word for circumcision, *teve*, may not be uttered before women; in their presence it must be called *kula*. The proper time for performing the rite is immediately after the death of a chief, and it is accompanied by rude games—wrestling, sham fights, mimic sieges, which vary according to the locality. Uncircumcised youths were regarded as unclean, and were not permitted to carry food for the chiefs. The ceremony was generally followed by the assumption of the *malo*, or perineal bandage, for children of both sexes went naked to the tenth year, or even later if of high rank; but this was not invariable, for the *malo* was worn sometimes many months before, and sometimes not assumed till some time after the

ceremony. The assumption of the *malo*, or of the *liku* (grass petticoat) by the child of a chief was the occasion of a great feast, and the postponement of this feast sometimes condemned the child to go naked until long after puberty. The daughter of the late chief of Sambeto was thus still unclad till past eighteen, and the unfortunate girl was compelled, through modesty, to keep the house until after nightfall.

The custom of circumcision still persists despite the abandonment of the ceremonial that attended it. The instrument is now usually a trade knife, and the operation is performed in the privacy of the boy's family, who may, or may not, give a feast to his near relations. I have tried unsuccessfully to obtain any traditions that would give a clue to its origin. The most that a Fijian can say is that to be uncircumcised is a reproach, though to a people who cover the pudenda with the hand even while bathing, and probably never expose their nakedness even to their own sex throughout their lives, this can have but little weight. No doubt the Fijians brought the custom with them in remote times, and its origin is probably the same in their case as in that of the Nacua of Central America, the Egyptians, and the Bantu races of Africa—namely, the idea of a blood sacrifice to the mysterious spirit of reproduction.

Shortly before puberty every Fijian girl was tattooed. This was not for ornament, for the marks were limited to a broad horizontal band covering those parts that were concealed by the *liku*, beginning about an inch below the cleft of the buttocks and ending on the thighs about an inch below the fork of the legs. The pattern covered the Mons Veneris and extended right up to the vulva. There is not much art

in the patterns, which are, as a rule, mere interlacing of parallel line and lozenges, the object being apparently to cover every portion of the skin with pigment. The operation is performed by three old women, two to hold the patient, and the third to use the fleam. It is done in the daytime, when the men are absent in their plantations. The girl is laid stripped upon the mats opposite the open door, where the light is best.

With an instrument called a *mbati*, or tooth, and a cocoanut shell filled with a mixture of charcoal and candle-nut oil, the operator first paints on the lines with a twig, and then drives them home with the *mbati*, which consists of two or more bone teeth embedded in a wooden handle about six inches long, dipping it in the pigment between each stroke of the mallet, and wiping away the blood with bark-cloth, while the other two control the struggles of the patient. The operation is continued until the patient can bear no more, for in the tender parts between the thighs it is excessively painful. There is usually some inflammation, but the wounds heal quickly. A ceremonial feast is generally given by the girl's parents.

In addition to this tattooing, barbed lines and dots were marked upon the fingers of young girls to display them to advantage when handing food to the chiefs, and after childbirth a semicircular patch was tattooed at each corner of the mouth. In the hill districts of Vitilevu these patches are sometimes joined by narrow lines following the curve of both lips. The motive for this practice, which even Fijians admit to be a disfigurement, is to display publicly a badge of matronly staidness and respectability. The wife who has borne children has fulfilled her

mission, and she pleases her husband best by ceasing for the remainder of her life to please other men.

The tattooing of the buttocks has undoubtedly some hidden sexual significance which is difficult to arrive at. It is said to have been instituted by the god Ndengei, and in the last journey of the Shades an untattooed woman was subjected to various indignities.

REASON FOR TATTOOING WOMEN

The motive of the girl in submitting to so painful an operation was the same as that which underlies all subservience to grotesque decrees of Fashion—the fear of ridicule. If untattooed, her peculiarity would be whispered with derision among the gallants of the district, and she would have difficulty in finding a husband. But the reason for the fashion itself must be sought for in some sexual superstition. When I was endeavouring to obtain some of the ancient chants used in the Nanga celebrations on the Ra coast, I was always assured that the solemn vows of secrecy which bound the initiated not to divulge the *mbaki* mysteries sealed the lips even of their Christian descendants. I was persuaded either that they had forgotten the chants, or that they considered them unfit for my ears, for it was impossible to believe that the reward I was able to offer would fail to tempt a Fijian to risk offending deities in whom it was evident that he no longer believed. After infinite persuasion the son of a *Vere* was induced to dictate one of the chants, and it proved to be an extremely lascivious ode in praise of buttock tattooing—the

only instance I am acquainted with in Fijian chants in which lechery and not religious awe animated the composer. Vaturemba, the chief of Nakasaleka in the Tholo hills, who was always plain-spoken, chuckled wickedly when I questioned him upon the matter, and declared that physically there was the greatest difference in the world between mating with a tattooed and an untattooed woman (*Sa matha vinaka nona ka vakayalewa, na alewa nkia*), and that the idea of marriage with an untattooed woman filled him with disgust. He left me with the impression that besides the other advantages he had mentioned, tattooing was believed to stimulate the sexual passion in the woman herself.

The Mission teachers have long waged war against the practice as a heathen custom, and in most of the coast districts it has fallen into disuse, but in the upper reaches of the Singatoka river, though the people have long been Christians, it still persists, though not universally. Interference with it by a man, albeit a Mission teacher, was evidently considered indecent in itself, for men cannot, without impropriety, concern themselves with so essentially feminine a business. More than one teacher was charged before my court with indecency for having returned to the village to admonish the tattooers while the operation was being performed.

With the introduction of writing it has become common for young men and women to tattoo their names on the forearm or thigh of the person to whom they happen to be attached, and there are comparatively few who do not carry some memento of their heart's history thus ineffaceably recorded. The inconvenience of this custom in a people as fickle as the Fijians does not seem to trouble them.

The keloids, or raised cicatrices, that may still be seen (though the custom is dying out) upon the arms and backs of the women are formed by repeatedly burning the skin with a firebrand, so as to keep the sore open for several weeks. The wart-like excrescences that result are arranged in lines with intervals of about an inch, in half-moons or curves, or in concentric circles. Sometimes they are formed by pinching up the skin, and thrusting a fine splinter through the raised part. They are intended only for ornament, and have no other significance.

The only other interference with Nature is the distension of the ear-lobes in the older men of the hill districts. The ear is first pierced, and gradually distended by the insertion of pieces of wood of increasing size, until the lobe forms a thin cord, like a stout elastic band, and is large enough to receive a reel of cotton, or a circular tin match-box, which are both in favour as ear ornaments. Sometimes the cord breaks, and if the owner has not ceased to care about his personal appearance he will excoriate the broken ends, and splice them with grass fibre until they reunite.

CHAPTER XIII

THE PRACTICE OF PROCURING ABORTION

Procuring abortion in the old days appears to have been limited to women of high rank who, for reasons of policy, were not allowed to have children. When it

is remembered that every lady of rank who married into another tribe might bear children who, as *vasu*, would have a lien upon every kind of property belonging to their mother's tribe, it is not surprising that means were taken to limit the number of her offspring. In a polygamous society every wife had an interest in preventing her rivals from bearing sons who might dispute the succession with her own offspring, and the chief wife wielded an authority over the inferior wives that enabled her to carry her wishes into effect. Waterhouse mentions that professional abortionists were sent in the train of every lady who married out of the tribe, with instructions to procure the miscarriage of her mistress. The Rev. Walter Lawry, who visited Mbau in 1847, declares, on the authority of all the resident missionaries, that the practice was reduced to a system. But these motives did not operate with the common people, who were seldom in a position to pay the practitioner's fee, although, no doubt, dislike of the long abstinence enjoined during suckling and disinclination to bear children to a man they hated were motives strong enough to induce a few women in every class to rid themselves of their children. The abortionist's craft was then in the hands of a few professional experts, who made too good a thing of their trade to trust their secrets to any but their daughters who were to succeed to their practice.

All this is now changed. Both the motive and the means have spread far and wide. The secrets of the trade are common property, and the act is unskilfully attempted by the mother or older female relation of every pregnant woman who cares to take the risk of an operation. By a strange irony the rapid increase in the practice of abortion in recent years is to some extent the doing of the missionaries. With the decay

of the custom of separating the sexes at night intrigues with unmarried women increased, and to fight this growing vice the missionaries visited the breach of the Seventh Commandment with expulsion from Church membership. The girls have come to prize highly their *thurusinga* (*lit.*, entrance into daylight), as communion with the Wesleyan Church is called, and, when they find themselves pregnant, the dread of exposure, expulsion and disgrace drive them to the usual expedients for destroying the evidence of their frailty. Although by suppressing the usual feasts and presentations in the case of illegitimate births, and by refusing the sacrament of baptism to illegitimate children, the Mission authorities may have given some impetus to the practice of abortion, there can be little doubt that an illegitimate birth brought even more shame upon families of every rank but the lowest in heathen times than at present—unless the putative father was of high rank. There still exists enough of the stern customary law that punished incontinency to cast a social stigma upon the mother of an illegitimate child; there still survives enough of the ethical code that refused to regard the procurement of abortion as a criminal act to warrant women in choosing what is to them the lesser of two evils. Moreover, the tendency to the practice of abortion is cumulative. A girl induces miscarriage to escape the shame of her first pregnancy. To the natural tendency of women who have once miscarried to repeat the accident is added the temptation to undergo, for the second time, an operation that has already been successful. If Fijian women dislike the burden of tending children born in wedlock, much more do they shrink from maternity coupled with the disgrace of illegitimacy. The natives themselves quote instances

of a number of minor motives, such as the dread of the pains of childbirth, and the determination of a wife not to bear children to a man she hates or quarrels with—motives which have influenced women of every race from the beginning of time, and which will continue to do so until the end.

METHODS VEILED IN SECRECY

A high birth-rate is not incompatible with the extensive practice of abortion, where the proportion of stillbirth is also high, and the women are so careful to conceal their practices that it is highly probable that they conspire to represent to the native registrars as post-natal deaths miscarriages that have been caused artificially. The natives of Vanualevu are reputed to be the most adept in procuring abortion, and the three provinces included in that island show the abnormal stillbirth-rate of 10 per cent, of the total births, while their general birth-rate is the lowest in the colony. It must be remembered that, since procuring abortion is regarded as a criminal act, the practice is now concealed, not from any sense of shame, but from fear of criminal prosecution. The practice is veiled with so much secrecy that very few prosecutions have taken place.

The methods of the Fijians are, as in other countries, both toxic and mechanical. Certain herbs, called collectively *wai ni yava* (medicines for causing barrenness), are taken with the intention of preventing conception, but the belief in their efficacy is not general. Some midwives, however, say that, when taken by nursing mothers with the view of preventing a second conception, they result in the

death of the child. Another midwife—one of the class to which the professional abortionists belong—assured us that miscarriage resulted more frequently from distress of mind at the discovery of pregnancy than from the drugs that were taken. The abortives vary with the district and the practitioner, but they are all the leaves, bark or root of herbs, chewed or grated, and infused in water, and there is no reason why some of them should not be as effective as the medicines employed for the purpose by civilized peoples, though the mode of preparation is naturally more crude, and the doses more nauseous and copious than the extracts known to modern pharmacy. The "wise women" appear to know that drugs which irritate the bowel have an indirect effect upon the pelvic viscera. Andi Ama of Namata stated that old women caution young married women against drinking *wai vuso* (frothy drinks), meaning a certain class of native medicine made from the stems of climbing plants whose saps impart a frothy or soapy quality to the infusion, which are taken under various pretexts, but generally as cathartics. None of these drugs have yet been collected and subjected to examination or experiment, and if any reliance can be placed on the belief placed by old settlers in the efficacy of native remedies, it is possible that some of them will find an honourable place in the Pharmacopœia.

I do not think that many miscarriages are caused by the taking of infusions alone, though there are undoubtedly cases in which a long illness, or even death, has resulted from such attempts. Nevertheless, even though it be extremely difficult to procure abortion by administering herbs, as stated by one midwife, it is certain that every determined interference with the course of nature must be

attended with danger.

Foremost among mechanical means is the *sau*, which is a skewer made of *losilosi* wood, or a reed. It is used, of course, to pierce the membranes, and in unskilful hands it must be a death-dealing weapon. Indeed, it must more often be fatal to the mother than to the fœtus; for Taylor has pointed out that this mode of procuring abortion is only likely to succeed in the hands of persons who have an anatomical knowledge of the parts,[83] and even the "wise women" have shown themselves to be guiltless of even the most elementary anatomical knowledge. There are, however, well-attested cases of persons living who bear the mark of the *sau* on their heads. In 1893 there was a man living in Taveuni who bore the scar of such a wound on his right temple, and the fact that the right parietal bone would be the part wounded by an instrument used shortly before the commencement of labour in normal presentations gives a strong colour of truth to the story of Andi Lusiana and other trustworthy natives who knew the young man and the circumstances of his birth.

CRUDE OPERATIONS

The various methods of inducing miscarriage by violence, such as are practised by the Gilbert Islanders, who pound the abdomen of a pregnant women with stones, or force the fœtus downwards by winding a cord tightly about her body, are not resorted to by the Fijians, but the practice of *vakasilima* (*lit.*, bathing), a manual operation which midwives are in the habit of performing with the object of alleviating the ailments of pregnancy, do, either by accident or design, sometimes result in a

radical cure by causing the expulsion of the fœtus. The patient is taken into the river or the sea, and squats waist-deep in the water with the "wise women," who subjects her to a vaginal examination to enable her to ascertain the condition of the *os uteri*, and, through this digital diagnosis, to determine the particular herb to be used locally or internally. Some women assert that the examination under water is adopted for cleanliness only, but most seem to believe that there is virtue in the operation by itself without any subsequent herbal treatment. As there are many practitioners who devote themselves exclusively to this branch of practice, it is more than likely that it is often used as a pretext for an attempt to procure abortion, for a rough manipulation of the *os uteri* may excite uterine contraction, and so bring about expulsion of the fœtus. Treatment by *vakasilima* is used in every form of disease in the abdominal region to which women are subject, and the manipulation of the fundus and vagina is so rough that the patient cries out with the pain.

Bombo (massage) is sometimes practised upon pregnant women with the result, if not the intention, of producing miscarriage. A few years ago a notorious instance occurred at Rewa. A pregnant woman, who suffered pain and discomfort, was received into the Colonial Hospital. After a week's detention the surgeon advised her to go home, and await the term of her gestation, since she was suffering from some functional derangement common to her condition. She fell into the hands of a noted amateur "wise woman," who diagnosed her complaint as possession by a malignant spirit, and proceeded to exorcise it by the usual means of forcible expulsion by massage. The pinching and kneading began at the solid parts of the trunk, and

when the evil spirit fled for refuge into the limbs, they were continued towards the extremities, and the apertures of the body, which are the natural avenues of escape for the afflicting spirit. But the only spirit which the masseuse succeeded in exorcising was the patient's own, for she died of the operation, and the facts were concealed from the authorities for some weeks. The magisterial inquiry did not elicit whether the object was abortion, or merely the alleviation of pain.

A census taken in 1893 of the families of twelve villages showed that out of 448 mothers of existing families 55 had been subject to abortion or miscarriage. If these villages were representative of the people at large, 12·7 per cent, rather more than one-eighth, of the child-bearing women of the Fijians have to contend with this adverse condition, and, as has been said, the provinces that have abnormally low and decreasing birth-rates—Mathuata, Mbua, and Thakaundrove—are the very parts where the "wise women" are noted for their skill as abortionists. These facts would almost suffice in themselves to account for the decrease of the race.

The Government has made half-hearted attempts to stamp out the practice of abortion. The heavy penalty provided by Native Regulation No. 2 of 1887 having failed for want of prosecution, the native magistrates were ordered to hold inquests in all cases of infant deaths, but when all the witnesses are in league to conceal the truth, it would be surprising if the intended effect of intimidating professional abortionists were secured by such means. Post-mortem examinations of women dying in premature confinement were thought of, but it was feared that the repugnance which Fijians feel to these

examinations would lead to the concealment of death in such cases.

FAILURE OF PROSECUTIONS

It was hoped that the Travelling European Inspectors appointed in 1898 to go from village to village enforcing the Native Regulations might initiate a few prosecutions, and so frighten the professional abortionist, who now practises with complete impunity, for as soon as the people have an object-lesson of the risk she is running in her nefarious occupation, a quarrel among the women of the village will bring forward informers to denounce her. But, since no legal penalty has ever succeeded in stamping out a practice that is secretly approved by the popular conscience, all that can be hoped for is a slight decrease in the stillbirth-rate.

FOOTNOTES:

[83] *Medical Jurisprudence.*

CHAPTER XIV

THE INSOUCIANCE OF NATIVE RACES

If we were called upon to name the one invention that stands between savagery and the growth of civilization we might fairly choose the timepiece of

sundial. Fixed routine in daily life is unknown to primitive man, whose functions are controlled only by the impulse of the moment. Even among civilized races the most stagnant are those who have never learnt to put a value upon time, and who, like the Spanish, give an honourable place in their vocabulary to the word *mañana*, or its equivalent. Few, if any, of the natural races have made any provision in their vocabulary for any division of time less than the day; they have no word for hour, minute, or second, nor would they have any for day, if Nature had not divided the one from the other by intervals of darkness. Only three divisions of time were known to the Fijians: the year (*yambaki*), so named from the heathen harvest home (*mbaki*); the lunar month (*vula*); and the day (*singa*). He identifies any greater divisions of time by naming the reigning chief of the period, or by saying, "When so-and-so was so high," indicating some aged man in the party and marking his height at the time of the occurrence in the air with the hand. He will indicate the time of an event in the immediate past or future by the yam crop—"When the yams are ripe," or "At last planting time"; about the remote future he never troubles himself.

FIJIANS ABHOR PUNCTUALITY

The Fijian eats when he is hungry, or when the sight of cooked food whets his appetite; he bathes only when he would cool his body; he sleeps when he is disinclined to work or when darkness has made work impossible; regular hours for all these functions are quite unknown to him. His nearest approach to regularity is his observance of the season for yam

planting, but this is because tradition has taught him that if he fails to plant his yams when the *drala*-tree is in flower, he will lack food in the following year. On one day he will work in his yam patch from sunrise till evening, and bathe at five o'clock and sleep the whole night through after a heavy meal. On another he will return from work at noon, and slumber away the hot afternoon, spending the night in feasting and dancing. He is improperly fed, not because food is scarce, but because he is incapable of the routine of regular meals or of any moderation. In times of plenty his diet is not improved, because he wastes his surplus in prodigal feasting. In times of scarcity he suffers because he will not husband his resources. System of any kind is peculiarly irksome to him. The Rev. W. Slade, a Wesleyan missionary, gives a good instance of this characteristic in the case of the mother of a seven-months child born in the neighbourhood of his mission station in 1893. "The woman herself cannot supply sufficient nourishment to the child, and has been told to come to the house twice a day for fresh cow's milk. She came for a few days and then ceased. Upon inquiry I found that, although the child was dying of starvation, she found it irksome to apply for the milk. Her maternal affection failed under the strain of walking one hundred yards twice a day." In the few instances in which a Fijian has attempted to keep cattle he has shown that he would rather let his beasts die of thirst than be bound by the necessity of giving them water at stated intervals. He cannot use dairy produce because he would fail to milk his cows regularly and to wash the utensils in which the milk was kept. The law of custom knew these defects in his character and provided for them. In the days of intertribal warfare if a village was to exist at all it must have

food stored against a siege. There was a season for planting yams, and the soil would yield nothing to the slovenly planter. Public opinion took care that no man in the community shirked his work. The pigs and poultry thrived because they required neither feeding nor tending at regular hours. The canoe was kept under shelter, and the matsail stripped from the yard on the first threat of a downpour of rain, because their owner knew that he would have to pay the carpenter for repairing them in food planted by his own hand. But the law of custom has made no provision for innovations. The sailing-boat, the one possession in which the Fijian takes the greatest pride, is allowed to decay almost past repair before he will think of refitting it, although he is well aware that a regular supply of paint and rope would have made much of the expense unnecessary. He is still passably energetic about his ancient pursuits of planting and fishing, but this fishing, which might be turned to profitable account in the supply of the daily market, is a mere desultory sport pursued because it provides an ever-varying succession of excitement. The desultory habit of mind which defers to the morrow all that does not appeal to the impulse of the moment affects all his surroundings, makes his house squalid, his diet irregular, and his village insanitary.

His insouciance, which was kept in check by the law of custom, had its root, like most other evils, in selfishness—a quality which is quite as much at home in a communal as it is in a civilized state of society, where defrauding the commonwealth is looked upon as a venial offence provided that it is not found out. In a communal state of society the instinct of the individual is to do and to give as little as possible. When the law of custom is breaking

down, as among the Fijians, discovery entails but little disgrace. In being selfish the Fijian is only being what white men are. He has no patriotism and no nationality; he does not regard Fiji as his country, for Fiji is the whole world as he knows it. The pride that he once took in his own little tribal cosmos is dying out now that he no longer has to fight for it, and he concerns himself less about the natives of the twelve provinces besides his own than an ordinary Englishman troubles about the Andaman Islanders. So that the enjoyment of his lands in his own lifetime is not interfered with, the Fijian does not feel called upon to avert the total extinction of his race by any measures that demand from him the slightest exertion.

WEAKNESS OF THE MATERNAL INSTINCT

The want of the maternal instinct in the Fijian women is no new quality, but the law of custom took it into account and provided against it. The tribes that reared most male children had the most fighting men, and they alone could hold their own. A tribe of habitually neglectful parents was wiped out mercilessly, and within the limit of the tribe the old men and women who had grown-up sons were the last to suffer from want or insult. These incentives to the care of children may not have been constantly before the minds of Fijian parents in the old days, but they moulded the daily life of the community, and gave each member of it an interest in the welfare of his fellows. Under the *Pax Britannica* a tribe has no longer any interest in being numerous except the fear of losing possession of its communal land, and this

fear is tempered by the knowledge that if the land is leased to planters the rent money will go further among few than among many. Parents no longer look to their children to support them in old age. The law protects them from aggression, and they have none of the fear, which besets members of civilized communities, of destitution in their declining years.

Instances of the absence of the maternal instinct in Fijian mothers might be multiplied. They love their children in their own casual way; so long as they are not called upon to make the slightest self-sacrifice for them they are foolishly indulgent to them. One cannot spend a single night in a native village without realizing how immeasurably inferior the Fijians are in this respect to Indian coolies or even to the Line Islanders. When questioned on this subject an old Line Island midwife remarked, "We Tokelau love our children; the father loves them quite as much as the mother." Therein lies the greater part of the difference; the Fijian mother would look in vain to her husband for any sympathy or assistance in the upbringing of her children. In the old days when the safety of the tribe demanded as many boys and as few girls as possible, female children were often destroyed, but it does not appear that any protest or resistance was ever made by the mother. The case I am about to relate is not to be taken as a fair example of Fijian women, because instances quite as revolting have been recorded among women of civilized communities. Some years ago, a woman in the Rewa province, noticing that the dark corners of her house were much infested by mosquitoes, kept her two-year-old child naked, and forced it to stand in the corner until its body was covered with the insects, which she then killed by slapping it. She set this awful mosquito trap so often that the poor child

died of its injuries. It is fair to say that natives speak of this revolting story with disgust, for the sins of Fijian mothers are sins of omission rather than of commission. A learned work has lately been written to prove that the key to evolution is the development of maternal instinct, which varies enormously in strength, not only in different species of mammalia, but in individuals. Struggle for existence tends to develop the instinct, since those who possess it will perpetuate their offspring to the exclusion of those who do not.

The Fijians are in a transition stage between two systems of struggle for existence—the physical struggle of intertribal war, and the moral struggle of modern competition. It is vain to hope that the maternal instinct can be artificially implanted in them, but if they are ever moved to take up the "black man's burden," and set themselves to compete against the motley population that is pouring into their islands, natural affection, which is now kept down by the savage's dislike of all restraint and routine, may be born in them.

CHAPTER XV

SEXUAL MORALITY

There is no point upon which primitive races differ more than in their regard for chastity. Among civilized peoples there has been an ebb and flow of sexual morality so marked that historians have had

recourse to the explanations of the example of the Court, or the fluctuations of religious earnestness among the people, assuming that, but for Christianity and education, mankind would be sunk in bestial licence. Every traveller knows this to be a fallacy. In Africa, of two races in the same stage of social development and in constant intercourse with one another, the one may tolerate a system bordering on promiscuity, and the other punish a single lapse with death. If it were possible to generalize in the matter, one would say that the higher the civilization and the greater the leisure and luxury, the looser is the sexual morality; and the ruder the people and the harder the struggle against nature for subsistence, the weaker is its sexual instinct and the more rigid is its code. But there are more exceptions than will prove this rule. The Chinese, who were civilized before our history began, are not as a race addicted to lechery; the Fuegians, who have scarce learned to clothe themselves against the bitterest climate in the world, do not even seek privacy for their almost promiscuous intercourse.

Respect for chastity, in fact, is a question of breed rather than of law and religion. A full-blooded race may use law to curb its appetites, yet may break out into periodic rebellion against its own laws; a cold-blooded people, like the Australian blacks, may tolerate what appears to us a brutish indulgence, and yet apply the most contemptuous epithet in their language to the man addicted to sensual pleasure.

There was nothing in the institutions of the two great races of the Pacific Islands to account for the remarkable difference in their regard for chastity. They were reared in the same climate, nourished with the same food; the same degree of industry

sufficed to provide them with all that they required. The power of the aristocracy among the Polynesians should have been more favourable to social restrictions than the republican institutions of the Melanesians. If the influence of a strong central government tended in either direction, which the fact that sexual restrictions were the same in both the powerful confederations and the village communes of Fiji effectively disproves, the Polynesians should have been the more continent. And yet, with nothing save race temperament to account for the difference, the Polynesians were as lax as the Melanesians were strict in their social code. It was the licence of the Tahitian and Hawaiian women which tempted seamen to desert their ships, and so led to European settlements in the Polynesian groups while the Melanesian remained almost unknown. The prostitution that sprang up in the principal ports attracted whaleships, which sometimes took sides in native quarrels. The stories of their excesses brought the missionaries, and the destruction of such customary law as still survived was greatly accelerated.

The Melanesians, on the other hand, offered no such temptation to passing ships. They practised no open-handed hospitality; their fickle temper kept their visitors perpetually on their guard against attack; they generally kept their women out of sight, and the women themselves were not only ill-favoured, but also excessively shy of Europeans. Though ships have frequented Fiji for nearly a century, and the group has had a foreign population of several thousands for five-and-twenty years, professional prostitution among Fijian women is so rare that it may be said not to exist. Nevertheless, the decay of custom has by no means left the morality of the Fijians untouched.

Let us compare what it was with what it is.

THE OLD CODE PUNISHED INCONTINENCE

In heathen times, as I have already said, there was a very limited form of polygamy. The powerful chiefs had as many wives and concubines as their wealth and influence would support, but the bulk of the people were monogamists. The high chiefs were an exception to the general rule of continence. They did not, it is true, often carry on intrigues with girls of their own station, but they could send for any woman of humble birth, particularly in the villages of their *vasus* or of their dependants by conquest. In this, as in other things, the chiefs were above the law, and many of them made a practice of asserting the privileges of their station. A low-born woman, whether maid or wife, received the summons as if it had been a divine command, however distasteful it might be to her. If she hesitated, and the chief condescended so far as to entreat her, sealing his entreaty by sniffing at her hand (*rengu*), refusal was impossible. This kiss of entreaty from a chief is, even now, so much dreaded by unwilling girls that they will use violence to prevent the nose of their wooer from touching their hand, for the Fijian kiss, like that of all oriental races, is a sharp inhalation of breath through the nostrils.

Considerable licence was tolerated at every high chief's court between the chief's retainers and the female servants of his wives. These were women taken in war, or good-looking girls from the vassal villages who had enjoyed the short-lived honour of

concubinage. They did the rough work of his kitchen, and were lent to distinguished visitors who cared for that kind of hospitality. But the wives and daughters and favourites of the chief were inviolable, and the man who dared to meddle with them played with his life.

Boys and girls were allowed to associate freely during the day-time, and to play such games as *veimbili* and *sosovi* together, but they were kept apart during the night. The girls slept with their mother, and the boys, as soon as they had attained puberty, were compelled to sleep in the *mbure-ni-sa*, the village club-house, in which the unmarried men, the village elders and strangers slept. The girls were so carefully watched that they seem generally to have retained their chastity until marriage, and the young men, fully occupied with the training proper to their age, had neither the opportunity nor the inclination for sexual intrigue.

In every community sexual laws were of slow growth; they were not the expression of a high ethical standard, for primitive races see no sin in sexual intercourse *per se*, but rather of a growing sense of public convenience; they were not the inspiration of a lawgiver, but the expression of the tribal conscience. The Seventh Commandment was an inscription upon tablets of a law that was already observed by the Hebrews. The Fijians had evolved their law from considerations that were purely practical. Women were chattels; a virgin was more marketable than a girl who had had adventures; an illegitimate child was a burden upon its mother's parents. And besides these primitive considerations, incontinence was an infringement of the Fijian marriage law which provided each individual woman

with her proper partner, and maintained the equilibrium of exchange of women with the intermarrying tribe and a just interchange of marriage gifts. A people who can complain in such terms as, "They have had four of our women already, and we but two of theirs, and here they ask us for a fifth," was not likely to tolerate clandestine love affairs among their daughters. That a high moral standard was not the cause of their strict law was shown by the fact that the married women in heathen times practised a laxity of morals unknown to them before marriage. Adultery was punished by fine if the parties were of equal rank, and by death if the offender was of lower rank than the husband and the act could be interpreted into an insult. But the women went about their amours discreetly, choosing the times when their husbands were absent on war parties, and reflecting that "what the eye does not see, the heart does not grieve for."

ILL EFFECTS OF EDUCATION

With the introduction of Christianity there came a change. Sexual licence, formerly prevented, was now only forbidden. The missionaries' endeavours to inculcate "family life" on the English plan produced a surprising result. The *mbure-ni-sa* was gradually deserted by all but the old men; the youths went to sleep in their parents' houses, and, when once the novel idea of unmarried men sleeping in the same house with women had been digested, the other houses of the village were open to them. Association of the sexes and emancipation from parental control did the rest. There were other changes. Education

begat in the young a contempt for the opinions of their elders. Against the precepts of the old men, who had formerly controlled every detail of the village life, there were the opposing teachings of the missionary and the trader, both startling the young with echoes of a wider world than their own. While the elders stayed at home, the young made voyages to the European settlements of Suva and Levuka and tasted vice with the loafers on the beach; they served three years with the constabulary and the police, or worked a year on the plantations, revelling in their new-found freedom, aping the manners of half-castes and white men who talked evil of dignities, and would pass the highest chiefs, even the governor of the colony, without doffing their turbans. Their favourite topic of conversation is their amours, and they have the Gallic indifference to the good fame of the women who have yielded to them. Illicit relations extend far beyond the limits of the village. When young men are together in a strange village some one exclaims, "*Me-nda-kari*" (*lit.*, "Let us rasp," *i.e.* shape to our will by repeated solicitation); and the inferiors in rank will immediately constitute themselves procurers to their chief—a *rôle* which suggests no taint of infamy in their minds. Sometimes they work through an old woman, sometimes through a young man of the place who is dazzled by the notice taken of him by such distinguished guests. The women are beguiled to the trysting-place, and yield rather from feebleness of will than from appetite for vice. It is this frailty of will that makes it difficult to believe in the charges of rape that are frequently tried in the courts. The Fijian woman seems rarely to yield willingly to any but her chosen lover. She is, moreover, so muscular that any real and sustained resistance would prevail

against violence, but whether from her habit of obedience or some psychological reaction of the sexual instinct, she cannot resist ardent solicitation. "He took me by the hand," a girl exclaimed to the court, when asked why she did not cry out, as if the accusation of violence was by no means weakened. If a woman cannot be brought to a tryst her lover resorts to *vei-ndaravi* (*lit.*, crawling); that is to say, he will crawl into the house where she is sleeping with her companions and lie down beside her without awakening them, and profit by her frailty of will. I have known of cases where a young chief, personally distasteful to the woman he desired, has compelled her lover to do the wooing in a dark house, and has then taken his place without her discovery of the fraud. The lack of self-control seems to be more marked in low-born than in chief women. When Andi Kuila, the daughter of King Thakombau, had been reproving two of her women for levity of conduct, they replied, "It is all very well for you great ladies to talk, but as for us common women we cannot control ourselves" (*keimami sa senga ni vosoti keimami rawa*:" *lit.*, "endure ourselves"). This speech did not imply that the sexual impulse was uncontrollable, for in the Fijian woman the contrary is the case, but that their power of resistance was weak.

Apud tribus quasdam quae regiones montanas habitant, dixit princeps Vaturemba, non fit coitus in modo assueto, saltem a senioribus. Mas, genibus nixus, crura feminae levat atque trahit donec nates in suis femoribus jacent, et sic fit coitus. In judicio quum senex virginis violatione accusatus est, testimonium puellae non fuit perspicuum utrum animum verum ad deflorationem habuerit accusatus necne. Interro-gavit ille princeps, qui judex fuit, "Crura tua levavit?" et quum negavit puella "Ergo,

quamquam animum libidinosum habuit, non te deflorare voluit," dixit judex.

INFLUENCE OF CONCUBITANCY

There is a mass of evidence to show that in heathen times the majority of girls were virgin until they married or entered into concubinage, because the law of custom allowed them no opportunities for secret amours; whereas, after fifty years of individual freedom, it is extremely rare for a girl to preserve her virtue to the age of eighteen. The commonest age for seduction seems to be from fourteen to fifteen, and grown men are more often to blame than boys of the same age. On the other hand, many young girls give themselves to their *ndavola* (*i.e.* concubitant cousin), who, by Fijian custom, has a right to them, and their relations do not appear to resent this so far as to prosecute the man for fornication. The birth-rate being high, these early excesses cannot affect their prolificness, but it is quite possible that it may injure the viability of the children born after marriage.

Though the girls do not appear to fear suspicion of their chastity, they do fear the disgrace which follows the discovery of their pregnancy. It is to avoid such exposures that they resort to means to procure abortion, though habitual profligacy seems to be so seldom followed by pregnancy that this fear does not act as a deterrent. Vitienses credunt nullam feminam ex uno coitu gravidam fieri, ultroque hymenem ruptum sarciri posse herbis quibusdam maceratis et immissis. Itaque virgines, quum ad coitum solicitantur, facilius concedunt. Some Fijians also believe that girls who have been deflowered

before puberty retain their youthful appearance long after the usual period. There is also a widespread belief that when a woman has been cohabiting with more than one man before conception the paternity of her child is shared equally by all her paramours.

When the morality of unmarried women is compared with that of the married the position is reversed, for whereas in heathen times married women were lax, they are now less accessible. This is due, no doubt, to the state of espionage in which the married woman now lives. Formerly the husband and his relations only were concerned with her behaviour, and if they were indifferent, she was free to follow her inclinations; but since the Missions have branded adultery as a crime, and the law has made it a criminal offence, every person in the village makes it his or her concern to bring the offenders to justice. Probably half the acts of adultery that take place are committed by the wife to avenge herself upon the husband for his infidelity or unkindness.

The Fijian is not naturally a hot-blooded or lascivious race, in spite of all that I have said. Its growing profligacy has been called in to fill the place of the forms of excitement that formerly contented it. Yet in certain directions the sexual appetite is easily aroused. The act of *tokalulu* (spying upon women bathing) is reprobated by the tribal conscience, but is nevertheless exceedingly common among the young men, and the women exhibit their contempt for it in a remarkable manner. Slightly clad as they are, Fijian women are as particular about absolute nudity as their European sisters. A Mbau girl of rank who was bathing in the river discovered a young mountaineer spying upon her from behind a clump of reeds. Instead of concealing herself, as her instinct

prompted her, she allowed him to see that he was observed, and came out of the water before him *in puris naturalibus*. Having passed him proudly by, she dressed herself leisurely and returned home to announce what she had done. The man never held up his head again in that village, for he caught the meaning of the action—that he was of no more account to her than a pig who had strayed down to the bathing-place. To the Fijian mind no explanation was necessary.

Dancing in the *meke* appears to be a strong stimulus to passion in the women. At a big *meke* on the Ra coast one young man surpassed all his fellows in the war-dance, and as the torchlight gleamed on his oily limbs a young woman, unable to contain herself, rushed into the middle of the dancing ground, and clutching him, took his loin-cloth in her teeth. This terrible breach of decorum became the gossip of the district, and when she came to her senses she would have taken her own life for shame if her friends had not prevented her.

I must touch lightly on certain horrible forms of sexual exaltation provoked by carnage. The corpses destined for the oven were received by the women with indecent songs and dances which were only ceremonial in part. At the sack of a fortress the corpses of young girls were subject to outrage, vaginâ cadaveris fructu bananae cocto immisso calefactâ.

FIJIANS ARE NEUROTIC

Some forms of sexual perversion exist, but are not

common. They are held to be contemptible rather than criminal and horrible. Offences against nature seem to be confined to the inland tribes of Western Vitilevu, who have been the least affected by intercourse with Europeans, and they have there, no doubt, been occasionally practised from very remote times, though, curiously enough, they are there called "white man's doings" (*valavala vavalangi*). In one lamentable case of a European addicted to such vice, Thakombau ordered him to leave the group, and he was afterwards killed in the New Hebrides.

The nervous system of the Fijian is curiously contradictory, and it is at least probable that the premature excitement of the sexual instinct in the women has an injurious effect upon their fecundity. In sexual matters they are certainly neurotic. I have met with several cases of what is called *ndongai*, which corresponds with what is called "broken heart" in Europeans. Two young people who have come together once or twice, and who have been suddenly separated, sicken and pine away, and unless their intrigue can be resumed, they do not recover. It is not regarded as a psychological or interesting malady, as love-sickness is with us, but as a physical ailment for which but one remedy is known.

The causes of the growing laxity of morals lie too deep for the efforts of the Wesleyan missionaries to check it. They have prohibited tattooing (*veinkia*), hair cutting and hair-dressing by persons of the opposite sex, and the old swimming games. But, on the other hand, certain church festivals have innocently tended in the opposite direction. All the older natives are agreed in saying that the dances of school-children (*meke ni kilovolt*), which bring together the young people of several villages, are

made the occasion for dissoluteness as soon as the native teachers' backs are turned. The early missionaries failed to see that in breaking down the *mbure* system, and inculcating family life on the English plan, they were leaving the native to follow his own inclinations. Intertribal peace and the possession of boats to make travel easy did the rest. Nevertheless, the Fijians as a race practise less sexual licence than many races which are not decreasing, and if it were not for the frequent attempts to procure abortion on the part of unmarried girls in order to conceal their shame, it would have but little influence upon the vital statistics of the race.

CHAPTER XVI

EPIDEMIC DISEASES

While the great island groups of Tahiti, Hawaii, Samoa, New Zealand, Tonga, and the Solomons had been known to Europe for many years—some of them for nearly two centuries—the Fijians lived their lives unconscious that there was another world beyond the reefs that encircled their islands. They planted food sufficient for their needs, they obeyed the rigid code of laws with which custom had bound them, they intermarried with their friends and fought their enemies, but without the carnage that followed the introduction of fire-arms. It is still unknown who was the first European to enter the group.[84]

For the evils innocently produced by the first visitors

we must turn to native traditions, those irresponsible records that can lay claim to historical value in respect of their irresponsibility, recording what the historian would have forgotten, and omitting nearly everything to which written histories attach value.

The Rev John Hunt,[85] writing in 1843, says:—

> "The first white people with whom the Fijians had any intercourse were four or five shipwrecked mariners, one or two of whom were dressed something like ministers of religion: probably the master and a passenger. The vessel was wrecked on a reef near Oneata called Mbukatatanoa, and the party referred to were either killed at Oneata or Lakemba, and, I fear, eaten also. Shortly after their death a dreadful distemper scourged the natives. It appears, from the description given of it, to have been a very acute dysentery, or a form of cholera. Its progress through the group was fearfully rapid and destructive; in many places it was with the greatest difficulty that persons could be found to bury the dead. Those who were seized died in the most excruciating agonies."

The native version, given nearly fifty years later, one was that morning after a great gale from the eastward the men of Oneata, looking towards the islet Loa on the great reef Mbukatatanoa, saw red

streamers waving in the wind; strange beings, too, moved about among them. It chanced that some men of the Levuka tribe in Lakemba, off-shoots from distant Mbau, holding special privileges as ambassadors, who linked the eastern and the western islands, were visitors in Oneata. Two of these, bolder than the natives of the place, launched a light canoe and paddled near to Loa. The report they brought back ran, "Though they resemble men, yet must they be spirits, for their ears are bound about with scarlet and they chew burning sticks." After anxious discussion the double canoe *Tai-walata* was launched, and when they drew near Loa the spirits beckoned to them, and persuaded them to draw near and carry them to the main island. One of these they proved to be mortal as themselves for he was buried on Loa, being dead of violence, exposure, or disease. Here the tradition becomes confused. Muskets and ammunition were taken from the wrecked ship, but the men of Oneata knew nothing of their uses, else perhaps the native history of Fiji had been different. The powder they kept to be used as a pigment for their faces, and the ramrods to be ornaments for the hair. One warrior, relates the tradition, smeared the wet pigment over hair and all, and when it would not dry, but lay cold and heavy on the scalp, he stooped his head to the fire to dry the matted locks. There was a sudden flash, very bright and hot, and a tongue of flame leaped from the head and licked the wall, and the warrior sprang into the square with a head more naked than when he was born.

A TERRIBLE EPIDEMIC

The red-capped sailors had scarce landed when a

pestilence broke out among the people. Here is a literal translation of the poem that describes it:—

The great sickness sits aloft,
Their voices sound hoarsely,
They fall and lie helpless and pitiable,
Our god Ndengei is put to shame,
Our own sicknesses have been thrust aside,
The strangling-cord is a noble thing,[86]
They fall prone; they fall with the sap still in them.

A lethargy has seized upon the chiefs,
How terrible is the sickness!
We do not live, we do not die,
Our bodies ache; our heads ache,
Many die, a few live on,
The strangling-cord brings death to many,
The *malo* round their bellies rots away,
Our women groan in their despair,
The *liku* knotted round them they do not loose,
Hark to the creak of the strangling-cords,
The spirits flow away like running water, *ra tau e*.

The strangers never left Oneata alive. One tradition ascribes their death to the pestilence, another to the vengeance of the men of Levuka, and as the natives believed them to have brought the scourge, we may accept the more tragic of the two. At any rate, though various strange plunder from the wreck was carried westward to Mbau, there is no record of any foreigner accompanying them.

It is not certain that this was the only visitation of the epidemic called *lila*. The traditions are so confused, and the versions so different in detail, that

there is some reason to believe either that there were two visitations or that infection travelled so slowly that the disease only reached the western portion of the group some years after it had decimated the islands to the eastward. The traditional poetry of every district records the disease, and there are several data that enable us to fix the visitation within the limits of a few years.

Most accounts refer to the appearance of a large comet with three tails, the centre tail coloured red and the outer white, that it rose just before dawn and was visible for thirty-seven nights in succession. Here is the native account of it:—

Sleeping in the night I suddenly awake,
The voice of the pestilence is borne to me, uetau,
I go out and wander abroad, *uetau*,
It is near the breaking of the dawn, *uetau*,
Behold a forked star, *uetau*,
We whistle with astonishment as we gaze at it, *uetau*,
What can it portend? *uetau*,
Does it presage the doom of the chiefs? *e e*.

Now, as I have already said, the great chief of Mbau, Mbanuve, died of the *lila*, and was thereafter known as Mbale-i-vavalangi—the victim of the foreign disease. When the comet of 1882 appeared, the old men declared that it presaged the death of Thakombau, for that a larger comet had foretold the death of King Mbanuve, and a smaller one the destruction of Suva in 1843. We know that the successor of Mbanuve, Na-uli-vou, or Ra Mate-ni-kutu, was reigning in 1809, when Charles Savage, the Swede, arrived in the group. The only comet recorded about the beginning of the century—Donati's, which appeared in 1811, was too late for

Mbanuve's death—was the comet of 1803, and this date corresponds exactly with the other traditions we have of Na-uli-vou's reign, which we know lasted until 1829.

It is perhaps worth noting that on the day of the installation of Na-uli-vou, while the sickness was still raging, there was a total eclipse of the sun. "The birds went to roost at high noon, thinking from the darkness that night had fallen." In the same year, says the tradition, there was a hailstorm that broke down the yam-vines, followed by a great hurricane which flooded the valley of the Rewa, swept hundreds of the sick out to sea, and purged the land of the pestilence. I have already given reasons for identifying this eclipse with that of February 1803. There seems to be evidence enough for the belief that a great epidemic was introduced by a vessel wrecked on the Argo (Mbukatatanoa) reef in 1802-3.

And now for the symptoms. Mbanuve, it seems clear, died of acute dysentery, but tradition also speaks of a lingering disease with headache, intense thirst, loss of appetite, stuffiness of the nose, and oppression of the chest. The second visitation, if indeed the two were not raging together, seems to have been a very acute form of dysentery.

CONTACT PRODUCES EPIDEMICS

"Before white men came," says the oldest of the natives, "no one died of acute diseases; the people who died were emaciated by lingering infirmities. Coughs came with white men; so did dysentery, for Ratu Mbanuve died of a foreign disease resembling

dysentery soon after it was brought here. This we have always heard from our elders." In attributing the diminution of their race to infectious diseases introduced by foreign ships, the Fijians do not limit their meaning to such illnesses as measles, whooping-cough, or other zymotic epidemics, but they include diseases now endemic among them, such as dysentery and influenza—not a specific influenza which has overspread the world since 1889, but the annual recurrent febrile catarrh or severe cold in the head and chest which is now one of the commonest ailments in the country, and which often terminates fatally in the case of the aged, infants, and those already affected by pulmonary disease.

Fijians are not the only islanders who assert that dysentery and influenza have been introduced among them by foreigners. The late Dr. Turner[87] of Samoa says that this is the general belief of the natives of Tanna and most other Pacific islands. Writing of Tanna in the New Hebrides fifty years ago, he says:—

> "Coughs, influenza, dysentery, and some skin diseases, the Tannese attribute to their intercourse with white men, and call them 'foreign things.' When a person is said to be ill, the next question is, 'What is the matter? Is it Nahac (witchcraft), or a foreign thing?' The opinion there is universal that they have had tenfold more diseases and death since they had intercourse with ships than they had before. We thought at first that it was prejudice and fault-finding,

> but the reply of the more honest and thoughtful of the natives invariably was, 'It is quite true; formerly here people never died until they were old, but now-a-days there is no end of this influenza, coughing, and death.'"

Turner himself, with every member of his Mission, was obliged to flee from Tanna because an epidemic of dysentery was ascribed to his presence. A worse fate befell the missionary family of Samoans living on the neighbouring island of Futuna for the same reason; others were killed at the Isle of Pines and at Niué and the Mission teachers on Aneiteum were threatened with death.

On May 20, 1861, the Rev. G. N. Gordon and his wife were murdered by the natives of Eromanga in consequence of an outbreak of measles which had been introduced by a trading vessel.

Referring to Samoa, Dr. Turner writes that:—

> "Influenza is a new disease to the natives. They say that the first attack of it ever known in Samoa was during the Aana War in 1830, just as the missionaries Williams and Barth with Tahitian teachers first reached their shores. The natives at once traced the disease to the foreigners and the new religion; the same opinion spread through these seas, and especially among the islands of the New Hebrides, has proved a serious hindrance to the labours of

> missionaries and native teachers. Ever since, there have been returns of the disease almost annually ... in many cases it is fatal to old people and those who have been previously weakened by pulmonary diseases."

At Niué, the natives, whose demeanour earned for them from Cook the designation of Savage Islanders, persistently repelled strangers who attempted to land among them. Captain Cook[88] says: "The endeavours we used to bring them to a parley were to no purpose; for they came with the ferocity of wild boars and threw their darts."

Dr. Turner, who visited Niué in 1848 and again in 1859, says:—

> "Natives of other islands who drifted there in distress, whether from Tonga, Samoa, or elsewhere, were invariably killed. Any of their own people who went away in a ship and came back were killed; and all this was occasioned by a dread of disease. For years after they began to venture out to our ships, they would not immediately use anything obtained, but hung it up in the bush in quarantine for weeks."

He had great difficulty in landing a teacher. A native of Niué, whom he had found and trained in Samoa, could not be left, as armed crowds rushed upon him to kill him. The natives tried to send back his canoe and sea-chest to the Mission ship, saying that the foreign wood would cause disease among them. John

Williams, a missionary, during his memorable voyage in 1830, recruited two Niué lads and subsequently brought them back to their island; but influenza breaking out a short time after their return the two men were accused of bringing it from Tahiti: one of them was killed, together with his father, and the other escaped on board a whaler with a man who returned to the island in 1848.

MURDEROUS QUARANTINE

Dr. Turner states that in 1846 an epidemic broke out in the island of Lifu in the Loyalty Group. Towards the end of 1846, the teachers who had just arrived were accused of having brought it. "Kill them," said their enemies, "and there will be an end to the sickness."

In New Caledonia, as elsewhere, the natives believed white men to be spirits of the dead and to bring sickness; and they gave this as a reason for killing them.

The Tahitians accused the Spaniards of introducing a disease like influenza during the visit of a Peruvian ship in 1774-5. In Tonga there is a tradition of a destructive epidemic breaking out shortly after Cook's first visit in 1773. The only symptom now recorded was a severe headache resulting in death after a few days' illness, and the native name for the disease, *ngangau*, is the word used for headache. It does not appear, however, that the Tongans associated this visitation with the arrival of Captain Cook's ships.

The crew of the brig *Chatham*, wrecked on Penrhyn Island in 1853, were the first Europeans to land on

the island. Some three months after their arrival an epidemic, accompanied by high fever and intense headache and generally ending fatally, broke out among the natives. Mr. Roser, one of the survivors, has assured me that none of the crew were suffering from the disease when they arrived, but that some of them caught it in a milder form from the natives afterwards. Besides this fever an epidemic of sores had previously broken out among the natives shortly after the wreck, but this the Europeans attributed to the unaccustomed animal food which they had obtained from the ship. Speeches were made against the visitors. "Why had we come to their land? They had never any sickness like this before we came, and if we remained we should be bringing them other complaints to carry them off. Better for us to leave. They would furnish us with canoes and we must return to our own land."[89]

The islanders of the Kau Atolls, named on the charts the Mortlock or Marqueen Group (lat. 4° 45'S., long. 156°30'E.), when the epidemic was prevalent on shore disinfected, or disenchanted, the crew of the barquentine *Lord of the Isles* while parleying with them at sea. One man in each canoe had a handful of ashes done up in leaves, which he scattered in the air when closing the interview.[90]

In October 1888, when the present writer was with the Administrator of British New Guinea in his exploration of Normanby Island in the D'Entrecasteaux Group, the natives in one of the bays would not consent to hold intercourse with the party until the old men had chewed a scented bark and spat it over each of the visitors and his own following.

The people of the island of St. Kilda charge visitors from Scotland with bringing disease, and call their ailment the "stranger's cold" or "boat cough."

Instances might be multiplied of the intercourse between different races resulting in mysterious epidemic disease from which neither were suffering before the meeting. The Pacific Islanders, believing that all disease is due to the malevolence of an enemy, often resorted to the one effective method of quarantine, and murdered their visitors; and it is probably to this instinct of self-preservation that many of the hostile receptions of visitors, for which they have been from time to time severely punished, was due. In the matter of skin diseases we know as a fact that European ships introduced *tinea desquamans* into Fiji from the Tokalau Islands in the persons of native passengers, and that yaws was carried to these islands from Fiji and Samoa about the year 1864, within the recollection of Europeans still living there.

DYSENTERY PROVED CONTAGIOUS

The Fijians recognize the infectious nature of some diseases, though they have hardly learned as yet to separate the idea of physical contagion from that of supernatural agency—the *mana*, or occult influence of the disease. If it be true that dysentery, colds and coughs were unknown until foreign ships visited the islands, their opinion that these diseases were imported by Europeans would have a strong probability to support it. Modern bacteriological research tends to show that almost every acute disease results from infection. This law may apply to fluxes and catarrhs. Dysentery is well known to be

capable of spreading by contagion, varying, of course, with the conditions of the place and people, but still sufficiently catching to be sometimes a distinct epidemic traceable to contagion derived from persons or excreta. "Dysentery," says Gliezgra[91] "is an inflammatory infection of the large intestine, due to specific virus. The exact nature of the virus is unknown, but it is probably bacterial. The infection is epidemic, endemic, or sporadic in its occurrence." In quite recent times a bacterium of dysentery has actually been isolated, and we have evidence enough both in Fiji and in Futuna (New Hebrides), where in February, 1893, the *Empreza*, a labour ship from Queensland, landed a child suffering from dysentery, and caused the death of nearly a third of the population by dysentery during the following six months,[92] to show that dysentery is highly contagious.

To those who may contend that tropical dysentery is a malarial disease, and therefore unlikely to be conveyed across the wide stretch of ocean which ships must traverse to reach these islands, the case of Mauritius may be cited. Malarial fever was there unknown until the year 1867, when an epidemic of that nature ravaged the island to such an extent that the price of quinine rose from 21*s*. to £40 per ounce. Malarial fever has remained endemic there ever since.

Besides the great epidemics of dysentery and *lila* there is a tradition of a less serious disease about the year 1820, called by the natives *vundi-thoro*, from the fancied resemblance between the skin of the patient and a scalded banana. This visitation does not appear to have caused many deaths. There have been several smaller epidemics in various parts of the

group since 1820, but none of these approached in importance the terrible visitation of measles in 1875. [93] The measles were introduced by H.M.S. *Dido* in the persons of Rata Timothe, the Vunivalu's son, and his servant returning from Sydney, and was communicated to the members of a great native meeting that had assembled in Lavuka to welcome the *Dido*. They scattered to their own homes with the seeds of the disease upon them and spread it broadcast through the country. The people at that time numbered about 150,000, and it is recorded, probably with fair exactitude, that 40,000 persons died from measles, and the famine and dysentery that followed, within the space of four months. The great mortality was due partly to the suddenness with which the infection spread. Unprotected by any previous attack, every person was susceptible to infection; whole communities were stricken down at the same time, there was no one left to procure food and water, to attend to the necessities of the sick, or even in many cases to bury the dead. Many, therefore, died of starvation and neglect, of disregard of the simplest nursing precautions, of apathy and despair. They became what is so well expressed by their own word "*tankaya*" overwhelmed, dismayed, cowed—incapable of any effort to save even their own lives. So deep an impression did the measles leave upon the race that it has become their principal date mark; whether it left behind it physical effects in lowering the stamina of the survivors is a matter for conjecture.

Since the measles the principal foreign epidemics to which the natives have been exposed are whooping-cough in 1884, 1890, 1891; dengue, 1885; cerebro-spinal meningitis, 1885; influenza, 1891-2.

Of these whooping-cough has proved the most fatal, being now permanently domiciled in the colony. It appeared in Samoa in 1849, but eventually died out there.[94] It is worth recording that in 1893 the measles reached Samoa and Tonga from New Zealand, and destroyed nearly one-twentieth of the Tongan population; but although the disease was raging in every port from which steamers sailed for Fiji, the Government succeeded in preventing it from being communicated to those on shore by a rigid system of quarantine.

BLIGHTING INFLUENCE OF FOREIGNERS

Many Fijians believe that the white race always brings death to coloured people, saying that they have heard it from Europeans. When the Commission on the native decrease was sitting in August, 1893, I received from a native of Thithia the following letter, accompanied by a rude sketch of a Fijian grasping a Bible and retreating before a European from whose body were drawn a series of radiations to indicate his pernicious influence.

Translation.

"The decrease of the natives.

"I wish, sir, to make a few remarks. There has been much consideration and discussion on this matter. There appears to me to be only one reason for the decrease of the natives: it is the white chiefs living among us. It is this:—

> "(1) They blight us—they are blighting us, the natives, and we are withering away. It is not possible for a chief to live with his inferiors, to wear the same clothes, to use the same mat or the same pillow. In a few days the neck or the belly of the low-born man will swell up and he will die; his chief has blighted him. It is so with the white chiefs and us the natives. If we live near them for long, we, the natives, will be completely swept away.
>
> "(2) They are great and we are insignificant. A plant cannot grow up under the great Ivi tree, for the great Ivi overshadows it, and the grass or plant beneath withers away. It is thus with the chiefs from the great lands who live among us. This is the reason why we Fijians are decreasing. 'Let us move gently: we stand in the glare of the light' (Fijian proverb): let us practice religion."
>
> "JOSEFA SOKOVANGONE."

Such a belief must naturally be accompanied by bitter feelings, and for Europeans to foster this belief is cruel, and not devoid of danger for the future. There is proof enough that the first contact of voyagers with indigenous people or peoples who have been isolated for generations is fraught with danger for the latter, and it is natural enough that even without such promptings the Fijians should blame the Europeans of the present day for the harm

that has resulted from the introduction of foreign epidemics; but to remind them of this, as some Europeans are fond of doing, is not only to afford them an excuse for neglecting all efforts of sanitary reform, but to give them justification for feeling a resentment that may some day take the form of reprisals.

FOOTNOTES:

[84] See Chapter II.

[85] Memoir of Rev. William Cross, missionary to the Fiji Islands, by Rev. John Hunt. London.

[86] An allusion to the custom of strangling the sick.

[87] *Nineteen Years in Polynesia*, by Rev. George Turner. London, 1861.

[88] *A Voyage towards the South Pole and round the World*, by James Cook, Book iii, chapter i. London, 1779.

[89] *Wild Life in the Pacific Islands*, by H. E. Lamont.

[90] Official Journal of Government Agent on *Lord of the Isles*, 1882.

[91] *Text-book of Pathological Anatomy and Pathogenesis* (English edition). London, 1885.

[92] Letter from Dr. William Gunn, Presbyterian missionary at Futuna, dated September 14, 1893.

[93] Parliamentary Paper C. 634, and *Transactions of the Epidemiological Society of London*, N.S., Vol. iii, 1884.

[94] *Nineteen Years in Polynesia.*

CHAPTER XVII

LEPROSY (*Vukavuka* or *Sakuka*)[95]

No less than one per cent. of the native population of Fiji are lepers, and, if native tradition is to be believed, the decay of customary law has not affected the people in this respect either for better or for worse. All the old men are familiar with the disease; they can diagnose it with surprising accuracy; and they generally concur in stating that it has neither spread nor decreased since heathen times.

The history of leprosy in the Pacific is remarkable. The Maoris have had the disease ever since their arrival in New Zealand—certainly not less than four centuries ago;[96] with the Fijians it is ancient enough to have taken its place in their mythology. In Hawaii, on the other hand, it seems to have been unknown before 1848, in New Caledonia before 1865, and in the Loyalty Group before 1882.[97] It is impossible to speak with certainty about the other groups, because the early voyagers did not stay long enough to make accurate observations, and were prone to mistake the disfigurements of scrofula and syphilis for the symptoms of leprosy; the naval surgeons of the last century were generally men of inferior attainments; and the missionaries, traders, and runaway sailors who had the opportunity for leaving valuable information regarding native diseases did not possess the necessary medical knowledge. Moerenhout, who wrote in 1837, is the first to make undeniable reference to it. In enumerating the diseases of the Society Islanders, he gives an excellent description of the symptoms of

leprosy under the native name *Hobi*, which is identical with *Supe*[98] (H and B being interchangeable with S and P), the Samoan term for leprosy, without a suspicion of the real nature of the disease he was describing. It may, therefore, be assumed that leprosy was endemic in Tahiti and the adjacent islands long before the arrival of Europeans. Native tradition seems to indicate that it was so in Tonga, and its history in islands into which it has been recently introduced suggests that it was not a recent arrival in any of the Polynesian groups except Hawaii. For, whereas in Tahiti, New Zealand and Fiji it is no commoner now than it was a century ago, in Hawaii it has increased so rapidly that in forty years after its introduction it had infected one in every thirty of the native population; in New Caledonia in twenty years it had infected 4000; and in the Loyalty Islands six years of the disease in Mare alone had produced seventy lepers. If the other Polynesian groups had been virgin soil the crop of lepers should have been no less fruitful.

Among the Maoris, with whom it was formerly common, it has now died out. Their traditions relate that among the immigrants who arrived from Hawaiki in the canoe *Tuwhenua* there was a leper who infected all his companions. They landed at Te Waka Tuwhenua (Cape Rodney), a little to the south of Whangarei, and scattered among the immigrants of the Tainui and Ngapuhi parties. Leprosy is still called Tuwhenua in the Whangarei district, but whether the disease was called after the canoe, or the canoe after the disease, it is difficult now to determine. In other districts it is called Puhipuhi and Ngerengere.

IN ANCIENT TIMES

The fact that leprosy was endemic among some branches of the Malayo-Polynesian stock would be another argument, if any other were needed, for tracing it to a Western rather than an American origin, for we may infer from the silence of the Spanish historians, that leprosy was unknown among the aborigines of the American continent. The primitive home of the disease was Asia and North Africa, and there is negative evidence that it was introduced into Europe somewhere between 400 and 345 B.C., in the fact that Hippocrates barely mentions the subject, and that Aristotle is the first to give an unequivocal description of the disease. On the other hand, the frequent allusions in the oldest Chinese, Syrian and Egyptian writings to a disease bearing all the marked characteristics of leprosy, seem to show that it was as common in the East in times of remote antiquity as it is at the present day. The Roman conquests carried it far and wide through Europe, until it became so terrible a scourge that nearly all the European states of the Middle Ages were driven to enact stringent laws for the segregation of lepers, which so far fulfilled their object that after the fourteenth century, when leprosy had touched its culminating point, it began to decline. The last British leper died in Shetland in 1798, and, though indigenous lepers are still occasionally met with in most of the countries of Southern Europe, the disease is extinct in all the northern states except Norway, where there were still 11,000 known lepers in 1890.

Though there are lepers in Iceland, in the Aleutian

peninsula and in Kamschkatka, leprosy may be said to be a disease of tropical and subtropical countries. With the exception of a few insignificant islands, no country in the tropic zone seems to be entirely free from it. In India—the only large country in which accurate statistics have been taken—the proportion of lepers to the total population is estimated at 5 to 10,000, though errors of diagnosis and concealment have doubtless combined to make the estimate merely approximate. In China, judging from the numbers observed in the southern treaty ports, the proportion is probably higher, but both fall far short of the Fijian figure of one per cent., and the Hawaiian of one in thirty.

Nothing was known of the specific cause of leprosy until 1874, when Armauer Hansen isolated the *Bacillus lepræ*, a discovery which has cleared the way for formulating precise ideas on the subjects of heredity and contagion, and the proper treatment of the leper as a public danger.

It is, of course, impossible for any organism, however small, to create itself *de novo*. It must come from some pre-existing germ whose habitat may be earth, air, water, beast or man, and since leprosy has never been found in any animal except man, nor in any virgin country to which a human leper has not had access, and since the arrival of a leper in such a country is followed by an outbreak of leprosy among those who have associated with him, there is little room for doubt that man acquires the germ of the *Bacillus lepræ* from man, and not from other animals, nor from local or climatic conditions. The most ancient, and, as it now turns out, the most correct belief, was that leprosy is contagious; the leper was unclean. Driven out from the society of men, he was

compelled under heavy penalties to warn wayfarers of his approach by voice or bell. In comparatively recent times the belief arose that leprosy was hereditary, and even that it could be acquired from the soil of certain countries. The latter belief has been disproved absolutely by the behaviour of leprosy when introduced into virgin countries. The hereditary theory is also on the wane, although the Indian Commission on leprosy in the early nineties did not absolutely disprove it. If leprosy be hereditary, how explain the striking fact brought out by Hansen, the discoverer of the bacillus, that of the numerous offspring of 160 Norwegian lepers who emigrated to America none have developed the disease, or again the equally well-attested fact that children sometimes become lepers first, and their parents afterwards. Another strong argument against heredity is to be found in the fact that lepers become sterile at an early stage of the disease; unless, therefore, leprosy finds recruits in some other way than by heredity, the disease would inevitably die out in one or at the most in two generations. Moreover, leprosy is often developed quite late in life, and if the germ had been received into the system at birth, one would have to suppose that it had remained latent for thirty, forty, or even seventy years, a circumstance without parallel in pathology. In one respect, however, leprosy, like tubercle, is hereditary; that is to say, it often shows a preference for the members of a single family, whose constitutions have some predisposing family characteristic, and who are living together, breathing the same air, and eating the same food.

LEPROSY NOT HEREDITARY



The opinion of students of the disease is now almost universal—that leprosy is communicated by contagion, and by contagion alone, though it has not yet been determined how the contagion is communicated. Very few of the nurses and doctors in leper asylums acquire the disease, and, except in one doubtful instance, every attempt to inoculate man and the lower animals with the *Bacillus lepræ* has failed. It may be that the leper-germ is sterile except in certain phases of the disease, and that only in favourable conditions in the recipient's health, combined with intimate contact with the leper, can the disease take hold.

Modern opinion, therefore, holds that leprosy is contagious, and, in a sense, hereditary also in so far as it tends to cling about certain families whose members show a constitutional readiness to receive it. I have dwelt upon this opinion at some length in order to show that this is precisely the view which the Fijians themselves take of the disease. A man is said to come of a *kawa ni vukavuka* (leprosy-stock), which implies no disgrace except among the highest families, and if he develops the disease his misfortune is regarded as one of the family traits as inevitable as the shape of his nose. At the same time he is believed to have the power of infecting others (not necessarily by actual contagion), and he was generally made to live alone or with other lepers, at a distance from the village. In Tonga the contagious nature of leprosy was fully recognized, and the lepers were isolated on separate islets or uninhabited parts of the larger islands. It is there a grave breach of good manners to apply the word leprosy (*kilia*) to any one in polite society, and many ingenious shifts are resorted to in order to express the meaning without using the word. In the session of the native

parliament of 1891, when a member of the upper house was discovered to be suffering from the disease, and a resolution to assign an island to him as asylum was passed, I covered myself with shame by unwittingly pronouncing the forbidden word after other speakers had been skirmishing round it for fully half-an-hour after this fashion—"Havea's friends were pining for him at home, and therefore it was but right that he should be excused further attendance at the house; nay, more, to the westward lay many delightful little islands which Havea was longing to visit, where his every wish would be gratified, and where—well—the prevailing wind would blow pleasantly from them to him, and he would be supremely happy."

The Fijians are no exception to other primitive races in believing that neither death nor disease can overtake a man naturally. Their first reflection on seeing the condition of the patient is, "An enemy hath done this!" their second, that the enemy must be discovered and punished, and his malignity neutralized by counterspells. It is not a logical theory of infection, because in their simple creed it is generally not necessary that the infecting agent should himself be suffering from the disease. But in the case of leprosy, as in their laws for the sexual abstinence of parents and for securing the sanitation of villages, they arrive at right conclusions from wrong premises. Leprosy, they argue, is inherent in certain families, therefore the evil spirit of leprosy, which is their equivalent for contagion, is a sort of family retainer, ever obsequious to the commands of his hereditary masters. And, since a living spirit must live somewhere, certain stones in various parts of the country are pointed out as his shrines, and are hedged about with a tabu that is never in danger of

infraction, inasmuch as to touch them is to meet Gehazi's fate. The existence of these stones was discovered by Dr. Bolton Glanvill Corney, C.M.G., the Chief Medical Officer of Fiji, who is not only the principal authority on all medical questions in the Pacific Islands, but has a very accurate knowledge of the Fijian language and character. He has visited and described the stones himself, and has elicited from their owners on the spot such traditions concerning them as they still remembered or cared to tell.

STONES THAT IMPART LEPROSY

Until within the last few years there were three leper stones on the river island of Tonga near the mouth of the Rewa river. One, called Katalewe, was vested in a family called Navokai, now living at Navasa village, but formerly of Nankavoka (the Skull), a deserted entrenchment that lies back from the river-bank behind the present site of Mbulu village. Two miles distant is a second stone, called Toralangi, who is said to be still *in situ*, though Dr. Corney did not actually see him. The third stone, known as Ratu, was missing from his former position, the cleft between two buttresses of a *ndawa* tree, and, although to the consternation of the native bystanders Dr. Corney was bold enough to dig up the ground in the hope of unearthing him, he was not to be found. This is the less to be regretted since Ratu was a peculiarly active little stone. When the Notho warriors were storming Nankavoka village, one of them unwittingly dropped his *masi*, which lighted upon Ratu. It is said that he became a leper in consequence. The leper woman Mereani, wife of the

chief of Navasa, who had her plantation within a few yards of Ratu, is said to have acquired the disease by working in his neighbourhood.

Katalewe was described to Dr. Corney as having been (for he exists no more) "about the size of a large orange or small shaddock, very round and smooth, ash-coloured, homogeneous in substance, and unlike any other stones in the neighbourhood," which, being soft alluvium deposited on old mangrove swamps, is singularly free from stones. So potent was he that the creeping stems of plants withered or turned aside as soon as they came within the radius of his poison, and a patch of ground surrounding him, about the size of a sponge-bath, was always destitute of vegetation. None knew whence he came. As long as tradition ran he had been vested in the Navokai family, now extinct but for Karolaini, a married woman about forty years of age, living at Lukia. This woman told Dr. Corney that her father, Totokea, long since dead, was a leper, and that she developed the disease in childhood. She had lost all the phalanges of three of the toes of her left foot, and had besides an extensive patch of anæsthetic skin on the right thigh. A "wise woman" of Bureitu had treated her for leprosy, and she had observed tabus on and off for some years. By the time she was old enough to marry the disease had ceased to make any advance; the stumps of the toes were healed; she could walk without lameness; and the patch on the thigh had begun to regain its natural colour. After marriage there was no return of the disease. Dr. Corney examined her, and found sensation to be perfect all over the patch, and the left foot perfectly sound except for the loss of the toes. She was quite convinced that her leprosy was hereditary, and did not result from contagion, and that she would have

died of it but for the ministrations of the "wise woman" of Bureitu. She had two children (the eldest about nine when Dr. Corney saw them), and both were healthy.

THE CURSE OF KATALEWE

Katalewe's owner (*taukei ni vatu*), that is to say, the senior member of the Navokai family, could harness the power of the stone to his own needs if he had an enemy to injure, or to his own profit if other people had enemies and were willing to pay for his services. It was not necessary that the doomed person should himself be made to touch Katalewe; it was enough if the victim's clothing, or hair, or scraps of food he had been eating were laid against the stone with suitable prayers by the *taukei ni vatu*. The victim would then develop leprosy, but the mode of operation was not the same with all the leprosy stones, as will presently appear. It remains to relate the fate of Katalewe, who has now lost all power to harm. There came to Mbulu a pious enthusiast to represent the Wesleyan Church, a certain Sayasi, a native of another village. "Hors de l'eglise; point de salut," was his motto, and, Katalewe's natural protectors having died out in the direct line, he laid violent hands upon the unprotected stone, and carried him home in derision for his wife to use like a paper-weight for keeping down the mats she was plaiting. When not in use he was thrown with the other weights into the fire hearth, where he fell a prey to the consuming element and crumbled away to powder among the yam-pots. He did not leave the indignity unpunished. The poor iconoclast not long afterwards had his mind racked by the indiscretions

of his wife, divorced her, and found himself ostracized by his fellow-pastors in consequence, and finally, a broken man, he relinquished his cure, and returned to his native village, where death soon afterwards put an end to his sufferings. From this tragic story one fact is patent—that Katalewe was made of limestone, and since there are but two kinds of limestone in Fiji, coral and dolomite, and coral would have been immediately recognized by the people of Tonga village, it is evident that Katalewe must have been a fragment of dolomite washed down from the head-waters of the Rewa river, and polished smooth by the action of the water. A stone so unusual in the delta would naturally be an object of remark; it might be taken to decorate the grave of a dead leper, and, when time had obliterated all other traces of the grave, tradition would still cling about the stone—the one feature of the forgotten grave that would survive to catch the eye of successive generations. As the graves of ancestors are the vested property of their descendants, so the leper stone, and together with the Djinn that was believed to inhabit it, would belong to the seed of the original leper for ever.

In Noikoro, near the chief village of Korolevu, almost in the centre of the great island of Vitilevu, Dr. Corney found another leprosy stone, called simply Na Vatu-ni-Sakuka (the Leper-stone), a large basaltic rock having upon it natural markings in which the natives see a resemblance to the leprous *maculæ* on the human skin. Among the Vunavunga people to whom it belonged, and who formerly lived near to it, there are several bad cases of leprosy. The stone was vested formerly in one Mbativusi (Cat-tooth), a leper, but on his death it passed into the hands of Rasambasamba, his *vasu*, *e.g.* a man whose mother

belonged to Mbativusi's family, and to his children. Their family is called Nakavindi, and the elder of the Nakavindi family, being *ex officio* proprietor of the stone, is held to have the power of conferring leprosy upon whom he wishes. His dreadful powers are, of course, invoked secretly: the offended person comes to him with a root of *yankona*, whale's teeth, bark-cloth, or mats, praying him to impart the disease to his enemy. The leper-priest lays them on the stone with incantations (*veivatonaki*) for a successful issue. Then, returning home, he drinks *yankona*, and in blowing the dregs from his lips and moustache, cries as his toast—"*Phya! Uthu i au!*" which, being interpreted, is "Phya! May his face be as mine!" *i.e.* leprous; and speculation would run high as to who was the object of the curse. When the curse failed there was, as in all similar public impositions, an easy way out. No doubt Elijah slew the priests of Baal because he knew that in five minutes they would have been ready with a plausible excuse for their failure to call down fire from heaven. The leper-priest could always plead the inadequacy of the offering (which, of course, became his perquisite), and ask for more, or decline to make a second trial. All the leading men of the Nakavindi family, which, be it remembered, is only a collateral branch of the original proprietors of the stone, have leprosy in its most terrible form.

Dr. Corney found another leper stone lying in the silt of a small stream, Nasova creek, about a mile and a half from the village of Nankia, in the Sawakasa district. Part of its surface was rough, and the smooth portion was interrupted with three ripplings or corrugations which the natives called *vakalawarikoso*. The village where the family to which the stone belonged was living proved to be a leprous centre

from which the disease appeared to be radiating to the other villages in the neighbourhood. As this stone appears to have neither history nor malign influence, it is possible that it owes its name to its macular markings and its situation near a leprous centre.

A GRISLY STORY

Near Walá, a village about three miles from Fort Carnarvon on the opposite bank of the Singatoka river, is another stone, or rather collection of stones, for they are described as forming a miniature cairn of red stones like jade. As the cairn stands within the burial-ground of part of the Walá village, it may be actually a grave. The natives are very reticent about it; I lived for more than a year in almost daily intercourse with the Walá without hearing of it, and Dr. Corney, who went to see it after hearing of it from the Mbuli of the district, was adroitly put off the scent by his native guides. He learned its history under somewhat dramatic circumstances. Being called one day to examine a number of native prisoners recently admitted to the prison in Suva, he found that one of four lepers among them gave Walá as his native village. With the permission of the Superintendent of Prisons, he took the young man to the hospital in order to question him at leisure, and there, with the unknown terrors of prison discipline before his eyes, his reticence gave way. The gist of his replies to Dr. Corney's questions as taken down at the time was as follows:—"My name is Namanka; I come from Walá, but my family belongs properly to Talatala in Vaturu. They left Talatala in heathen times when Vaturu was burned out by the enemy, and took refuge at Sambeto, but my father and

mother fled to the hills and settled at Walá, where we have lived ever since. I have one brother older than myself, and he, my father, and my mother are all lepers. My father was Kuruwankato; he died a few months ago at Keyasi, whither he had gone for treatment for leprosy. His hands were withered and contracted, there were ulcers and blisters upon them, he had lost his fingers and toes, and had patches upon him that had lost all feeling. He had no brothers; I have no uncles, and no leprous relations except my father, mother and brother. My father was the first to show symptoms. This was the way of it. On a certain day, several years ago, we all went out into our plantation, and left the house empty. Not even a child was left to keep the house. I was but a small boy at the time, but I often accompanied my parents to the plantation. When we returned in the evening we saw that the Sakuka (the Leprosy) had crossed our threshold. He had entered by the end door, and had crawled to the hearth, and there in the ashes of the hearth we saw the prints of his hands and his feet, the prints of leper hands (*mains-en-griffe*) and toeless feet like hoofs. Thus we knew that the Sakuka had put his mark upon our house, and wondered which of us was to be the first. We knew that we should be lepers, being thus marked for it by the Sakuka, and my father was the first, my mother next, and I was last of all. The Sakuka is a stone, red like a patch of leprosy, red like red paint. It is in five or six pieces, heaped together. Sometimes a piece is missing from its place at Navau. I have been at the burial-ground myself when a piece was missing, and have seen that it was so. Vasukeyasi is proprietor of the stone; he is not a leper, but Kaliova, who also has a vested right in it, is. Vasukeyasi is priest of the stone, and he can move it to infect a person with

leprosy, and so compass his death. I do not know what forms or ceremonies he uses when he would do this, but it is a sort of *kaitha* (witchcraft). When I said that the Sakuka marked our hearth I meant the spirit of the stone which is obedient to Vasukeyasi. The thing is true; there is no doubt about it. I do not know the origin of the stone; it is an ancient institution. I have told you all that I know about it."

In this grisly story we have the essence of the belief in leper stones. The cairn of strange red stones set up in a burial-ground can be none other than a tomb, probably the tomb of a leper. The spirit of the dead man haunts the site of the grave, and his eldest descendant is his priest. His priest can conjure him forth in corporeal shape to crawl into the house of a person whom he has foredoomed to leprosy. This, of course, is no explanation of the *main-en-griffe* in the ashes on the hearth. That episode may have been a coincidence or it may have been a lie; but that a family of healthy aliens came to live in the neighbourhood of a leper stone, and were infected one after the other by means which every native believed to be the malignant ministrations of the priest, was indubitable fact. And if we smile at his theory of infection, let us remember that it is logical reasoning as compared with our own in his eyes, and that he can point to more lepers in support of his plan of infection by incantation than we can adduce as the result of inoculation with the *bacillus lepræ*.

Dr. Corney heard of two other leper stones—one at Navitiviti in the Mbure district, Ra province; the other near Mbukuya, fifteen miles north of Fort Carnarvon. There may be others in Vanualevu and elsewhere.

DROPSY STONES

Two instances of stones sacred to other diseases have been met with by Dr. Corney. One of these is situated near Narokovuaka, on the Wainimbuka branch of the Rewa river, and the other in the Tonga district, the home of Katalewe, the leper stone. They are both called *vatu-ni-bukete-vatu* (dropsy stones). Abdominal dropsy is generally termed *mbukete wai* (water pregnancy), but when very tense it becomes *mbukete vatu* (stone pregnancy). The latter term is also applied to abdominal tumour, which, though a rare disease among the Fijians, is occasionally met with. In neither case does the stone appear to take an active part in imparting the disease to which it is sacred. Probably it was the menhir of some chief who died of the disease, or some fancied similarity to the symptoms of the disease was noticed in its shape.

It must not be supposed that the natives as a whole have as matured a theory to account for the dissemination of disease as might be gathered from the foregoing account of the leper stones. Few of them have turned their thoughts to the subject; even the youth who described the visit of the "Sakuka" had not speculated upon what motive the proprietor of the stone could have had in letting loose his horrible familiar upon the unoffending family. His reasoning went no further than this: that they had leprosy, and he supposed that it was the leper stone that did it. It was only when Dr. Corney asked the question that the youth remembered that the leper-priest had the power of conferring the disease, and that he thought of connecting the fact with his own case. So with the

doom that overtook the iconoclast teacher; the natives related his destruction of Katalewe and his subsequent fate as totally unconnected episodes. The occult powers of Katalewe were so much a commonplace of their lives that, when Dr. Corney translated his notes to them, they were astonished that any one should think it worth while to collect the scattered fragments of information they had given him into a connected narrative.

It is, therefore, scarcely correct to say that they hold decided views upon the manner in which leprosy is transmitted. Most of them would say that they had never thought about it, and if pressed for an opinion, would point to its prevalence in certain families as a reason for thinking it hereditary. Natives of places where there are leper stones believe it to be the heirloom of the family connected with the stone, or the work of the leper-priest when the disease appears in other families for the first time. But among the coast tribes there seems to be a strong suspicion that lepers breed contagion, since in many districts lepers are compelled to live by themselves in the bush. This has long been the belief of the Tongans, and it is possible that Tongan immigrants have impressed their views upon Fijians, since it is more marked in the Lau Islands, where the Tongan influence is strongest.

A painful case came to my notice in 1887 at Lakemba. A leper had been driven out into the bush, and his wife had been in the habit of taking food to him daily. Her relations, having failed to dissuade her from what they regarded as a practice dangerous to themselves, told her at last that she must choose between their society and his, for that if she persisted in visiting a leper, she would be debarred from ever

returning to the village, but must live thenceforth in the woods like a wild animal. The poor woman refused to abandon her husband, and the relations came to me to ask whether she could not be legally restrained from thus cutting herself off from all that makes life worth living to a native. She was brought before me, and as soon as I had satisfied myself that she was acting of her own free-will I forbade any one to interfere with her liberty of action. The husband was described as suffering from nodular leprosy. He had been isolated, not from horror at his appearance, for men afflicted with lupus in as revolting a form were allowed to live in the village, but from fear of contagion.

In places where isolation is usual lepers conceal their condition as long as possible, and it is not uncommon to hear that so-and-so is strongly suspected of leprosy because he will never take off his shirt to work, and avoids bathing in company.

LEPERS IN ISOLATION

There are, as most people know, two kinds of leprosy, nerve and nodular. Nerve leprosy is manifested by patches of discoloration on the skin in which all sensation is destroyed, and the Fijians suffer so much from scrofulous affections that this symptom may be easily passed over. Nor is nerve leprosy, at any rate in its early stages, revolting in appearance. Nodular leprosy, on the other hand, which often attacks the face, and is far more horrible in appearance, is unmistakable, but it is less common in Fiji than nerve leprosy or a mixture of the two.

The isolation enforced by the Fijians appears to

correspond with the practice of the Hebrews and Philistines, who drove the pauper lepers without the city gate, but let the high-born leper alone. Ratu Joseva, Thakombau's son, like Naaman, still maintained a household of retainers. The lot of the isolated leper in Fiji is not a very hard one while he has strength to move about. A hut is built for him in the bush; firewood is abundant; wild yams are to be had for the digging, wild fowls and pigs for the trapping; he can pick the best land for his plantation. But when the poor wretch loses the use of his legs an awful fate may await him. A horrible story is told of a leper on the Tailevu coast who had lost all sensation in his feet. Waking by his fire one morning he noticed a smell of roasting flesh, and wondered for some moments whence it came, until, when he moved himself to look out of the doorway, he noticed that the logs in the fire-place stirred, and saw that his own feet had been lying in the fire, and were burned to cinders.

FOOTNOTES:

[95] The greater part of this chapter is drawn from an able paper contributed to the *Folklore Journal*, 1895, by Dr. Bolton G. Corney, Chief Medical Officer of Fiji, who has made a special study of the subject.

[96] White.

[97] Manson, *Tropical Diseases*.

[98] *Voyage aux iles du Grand Ocean*, par. J. A. Moerenhout. (Vol. ii, p. 156.) Paris, 1837.

CHAPTER XVIII

YAWS (*Thoko*)

While the decay of custom has been hastened by the introduction of new diseases, it has not been accompanied by any attempt to eradicate the old.

Chief among indigenous diseases (if diseases introduced before contact with foreigners may be called indigenous) is yaws, called by the Fijians *thoko*, or by its Malayo-Polynesian name—*tona*, and by various dialectic modifications of that word, which is also used in Tonga, Samoa, Tahiti, and many other Polynesian islands.

The disease is but little known to the medical profession in Europe, either in practice or in medical literature. Its medical designation is *Frambœsia*, so called from the strawberry-like eruptions that accompany it. By the French it is called "Le Pian." In Great Britain it is now extinct, but in the Hebrides and in the south-west counties of Scotland it was met with under the name of "sibbens," or "sivvens," as late as the beginning of the nineteenth century.

THE SYMPTOMS

It is common throughout Africa, Malaysia and Polynesia. Being contagious, it was carried by means of the slave traffic from Africa to tropical America and the West Indian Islands. From the east coast of Africa and Madagascar, about 340 years ago, the Dutch or Portuguese traders carried it to Ceylon, where it still bears the name of "Parangi Lede" or

"Foreigners' evil." Hamilton noticed it in Timor in 1791, saying "it seldom terminates fatally and only seizes them once in their lives."[99] Crawfurd, who wrote in 1811-1817, noticed it in Java. Dr. Martin, the able editor of *Mariner's Account of the Tonga Islands*, writing in 1810, was the first to recognize the identity of *tona* with yaws, though he never saw the disease. But the existence of *tona* was recognized by Captain Cook and numerous other visitors to the South Seas during the last and the beginning of the present century, though they were not aware of its real nature.

The premonitory symptoms of yaws are, as a rule, insignificant and obscure; the appearance of one of the sores is generally the earliest indication that a child is infected, but adults have noticed pains in the limbs, fever, restlessness, or languor. The first sore, called the *tina-ni-thoko*, or mother-yaw, is usually a large one about half-an-inch to an inch in extent, and is often surrounded by a group of smaller sores. It generally appears on the site of some wound or scratch, more often about the lips. Those that follow are generally developed upon some part of the body where the skin is delicate, such as the neck, the groin, or the axillæ, or in parts where the true skin joins the mucous membrane. Doubtless the lips of children are first infected owing to the child's habit of putting the hands to the mouth, the hand being the part most likely to come in contact with the virus of another child.

After an uncertain interval a crop of pabules, or in some cases blebs, begin to appear, the face and the parts already mentioned being their favourite point of appearance. If the eruption begins with blebs the case is spoken of as *thoko se ni niu* (cocoanut flower

thoko, from the resemblance of the eruption to a spray of the unexpanded flowers of the palm).

In the next stage a soft warty excrescence, which is the matrix of the sore, pushes its way through the true skin by forcing it aside rather than breaking down its substance. On reaching the surface the granulations which form this out-growth exude a fluid which is highly contagious. It forms in time a crust or scab, the reddish appearance of which is very characteristic of the yaws eruption. If this be removed by means of oil or a poultice, the granulated surface of the sore beneath it has that resemblance to a raspberry or mulberry which has given the name of *Frambœsia* to the disease. In some cases the crust assumes a curvilinear outline, recalling the appearance of the well-known Pharaoh's serpent. These are especially seen about the corners of the mouth, the neck and the axillæ, and constitute the *thoko ndina* or true yaws. In other cases they retain a circular shape on all parts of the body, and are then called *thoko mbulewa* or button or limpet yaws. During the healing process they become converted into annular or horse-shoe patterns, the centre receding before the periphery.

The sores may remain for two weeks or they may persist for fully two years. Throughout the progress of the case they may number anything from one to several hundred. The commonest number is from six to twenty or thirty. Weakly and ill-nourished children take the disease more easily than strong ones. While the active symptoms seldom last for more than two months, the dormant features last much longer, and some of the tertiary consequences may appear at almost any age.

The chief ill effects from *thoko* are dysentery, diarrhœa, and marasmus; sometimes the joints are implicated, even the larger ones, such as the wrists, knees and ankles, and partial paralysis may follow; pot-belly is a frequent concomitant, and *tabes mesenterica* are believed to follow it. In a later period of life the feet of those who have had yaws as children become affected by the disease, and on account of the thick and horny skin by which the soles of shoeless races are protected the extrusion of the growing yaw through the sole becomes an acutely painful process. Not only do the typical granulations known as *suthuvi* and *soki* force their way through the skin, but the sole is also liable to a cracking and peeling form of excoriation called *kakatha*, which is nearly as painful and is also said to be contagious. The Fijians do not recognize the connection between any of the sequelæ of yaws and the original disease, and hence perhaps the indifference with which they regard it.

MODE OF INOCULATION

An idea of the serious nature of yaws may be gathered from the cases in which it has been contracted by adult Europeans. Such cases have been numerous enough in Fiji to impress the European settlers with dread and disgust. In most of these cases the disease has permanently shattered the health of the person attacked, its tertiary effects simulating those of neglected syphilis, for, while no less severe, they have proved quite as ineradicable. They are shown in permanent impairment of the digestive functions, emaciation, inflammation of the bones or joints, intractable ulceration, and marked

constitutional weakness, thus producing liability to other diseases such as diarrhœa, dysentery and pneumonia, and not infrequently ending in death. From this it may be readily imagined that the consequence of yaws to native children can be anything but trivial. With Europeans as well as with natives an attack is more likely to pass off easily when contracted in childhood than when taken in adult life. The most favourable age for getting over it safely seems to be between two and three years.

Yaws is communicated by the inoculation of virus from one of its characteristic raspberry-like sores to the abraded surface of the skin of another person. But, though the natives have never discovered this for themselves, they do not, as in other diseases, attempt to explain yaws as the work of a malignant spirit. The fact is that they scarcely believe yaws to be a disease at all. They think that if a child makes a good recovery it becomes more plump and healthy than one who has never had the disease. Mothers are pleased when the first symptoms make their appearance, regarding it as the best thing that could happen to their children to set them on the high road to a vigorous manhood, provided that the disease is not contracted at too early an age. At Mbau, however, the chief women appear always to have recognized the contagious nature of yaws. They say that in former time the children of high rank were not allowed to enter the houses of common people or play with their children, and in consequence of this exclusiveness they seldom contracted yaws until they were of an age to resist its ravages. Thus some escaped it altogether, and the majority had it very mildly. Andi Alisi and Andi Ana are cases in point, so were the late Andi Kuila and Ratu Joseva. Now-a-days there is scarcely an exception to the rule that

every Fijian child contracts yaws. Whatever may have been the case formerly, it is now quite common for children to contract the disease while suckling and teething; not infrequently before they can crawl, and even at as early an age as three or four months. When this happens the eruption sometimes recedes prematurely; this is the only danger feared by the natives, who usually attribute the recedence to *ndambe*, *i.e.* incontinence on the part of the parents, or to *ramusu* (internal injury). When the eruption recedes, as it undoubtedly does in some cases, the child becomes sickly and feverish and subject to diarrhœa, and whether these symptoms be spontaneous or secondary, death is more often the result in these cases than in others. The native treatment is purely empirical: native drugs are administered in the expectation of causing the eruption to reappear, but if the attack pursues its normal course no attempt is made to heal the eruption; on the contrary, it is intentionally abandoned to the chances of easy and plentiful development. In very severe cases natives have occasionally made application to the European medical officers; but, as a rule, it is only when the eruption has almost disappeared, and only one or two of the sores persist, that the Fijian mother will allow any interference with it. The usual native treatment in such cases is to apply a poultice of the leaves of the *lewe ni sau*, or some other native herb. The more modern practice is to heat a piece of rusty hoop iron red hot and to rub a cut lemon on it, and then to apply the rust-stained juice as a mild escharotic. It is said that in West Africa the natives use a decoction of iron filings in lemon juice, with the addition of ants and a portion of the pepper plant for the same purpose. As the old Fijians had no

metals, it is possible that they have learnt the recipe from Europeans who have read of it.

CHILDREN PURPOSELY INFECTED

The Fijians do not claim to have any positive remedy for the cure of yaws, nor, indeed, do they desire any. They are satisfied that native medicines suffice to "drive out" the eruption if it has prematurely receded, and that if they do not succeed in such cases the child will die. The great body of the people cannot be made to grasp the idea of inoculation. While some admit that yaws can be caught from one person by another, others assert that the cause is intrinsic and that every Fijian child must, or ought to, develop it, and that it is solely a Fijian disease about which white men are naturally ignorant. In Mathuata the "wise women" administer medicines to bring on the disease in cases where children do not readily contract it. They believe that the occurrence of yaws in a child of a proper age—from two to six years—is a good augury for the future physical strength and mental vigour of the subject, and they think that persons who escape its contagion will grow up stupid, clumsy, and dull (*dongandonga*), and useless mentally and physically. The fear of contracting disease in adult life, when it affects the patient far more severely than in childhood, disposes the Fijian mother to look favourably on the acquisition of the disease in infancy. They are, indeed, far more anxious that their children should contract yaws than are the uneducated mothers of English factory towns that theirs should contract measles. The desire of getting over inevitable diseases during childhood is the same in both cases,

but the Fijians have less excuse, for yaws is not only a far more virulent disease than measles, but it might be far more easily stamped out if the Fijians could be disabused of the idea that it "grows out of the child." In the days of slavery, from commercial considerations, the West Indian planters insisted on segregation in yaws-houses, and were partly successful in keeping the disease under control. But as soon as the West Indian negro was emancipated and permitted to revert to his own careless life, the disease began to gain ground very rapidly.

It is impossible to estimate the mortality directly due to yaws. In the yaws-hospitals of the West Indies the mortality amounted to less than the annual death-rate of the islands. When it occurs during the first year of childhood in Fiji it is almost invariably fatal. Indirectly, there can be no doubt that it is sapping the vitality of the whole native race. Some authorities—Hutchinson, for example—hold that it is possibly syphilis modified by race and climate. Syphilis is practically unknown among the Fijians, but although there are many points of difference that prove the two diseases to be distinct, it is highly probable that, from its close relationship to syphilis, yaws has an enervating effect on the child-bearing functions of the native women.

Though it would now be extremely difficult to stamp out the disease, much might be done to keep it under if the natives could be convinced of its contagious nature. In the mountain districts of Tholo *Tinea desquamans*, or *Tinea imbricata* (Tokelau ringworm), which infected nearly 25 per cent. of the native population a few years ago, has now so far yielded to the efforts of the people themselves that it has been almost entirely stamped out in some of the

provinces. As soon as they were convinced of its contagion, and understood that the Government would supply remedies to those who chose to pay for them, they buckled to the work in earnest, and needed little driving by European officials.

FOOTNOTES:

[99] A Voyage round the World in H.M.S. *Pandora*, by Mr. George Hamilton, surgeon. Berwick-on-Tweed, 1792.

CHAPTER XIX

TUBERCULOSIS[100]

The tubercular taint in the Fijians, though less marked than among some of the Polynesian races to the eastward, is sufficient to influence the vitality of the race by impairing its power of resistance to other diseases, both in children and adults. It is seen in the form of phthisis, strumous ulcerations, chronic bone diseases, and most commonly as strumous ulcerations of the face, nose, pharynx, or throat, which is named tubercular lupus. More rarely it appears as *tabes mesenterica* in infants, tubercular peritonitis, and tubercular disease of the internal organs.

All these forms of tuberculosis are more common in the windward parts of the group, in Kandavu and in Thakaundrove, where the Tongan admixture is

strongest; they are less common in Western Vitilevu and in the mountain districts, but even in these, where the Melanesian blood is purer, tubercular disease is far from uncommon. Half-castes are especially tainted with struma in all its forms, and from this it would appear that the Fijian does not bear crossing with the European, for while the negro-Fijian half-caste is usually healthy, the English Fijian cross is peculiarly subject to phthisis, lupus, and chronic disease of the bones.

Pulmonary tuberculosis occurs as hæmorrhagic phthisis, as acute, rapidly breaking-down pulmonary tubercle of young adults, or as chronic fibroid phthisis in older men and women. Though the returns of the Colonial Hospital do not show a large number of deaths from this disease, it is probable that many die after returning home after a period of treatment, and in the outlying districts may die without making any attempt to get to the hospital.

Lupus, though it may make its appearance at any age, is developed most commonly at puberty, and is most destructive in its results from fifteen to twenty-five or thirty. It attacks the face, nose and neck, and it usually destroys the fauces, palate and pharynx; the soft palate is entirely destroyed, and the only remains of the pillars of the fauces are scars of cicatricial tissue. The mouth then appears as a vast cavern instead of being filled with the usual structures, and the nose may be entirely eaten away. The disease is commoner among women than among men. I remember seeing a family of high rank in Lakemba, whose women were remarkable for beauty. The sons were fine, sturdy fellows, to outward seeming quite untainted, but of the three daughters the eldest had no face, the second was marred by a

depression at the root of the nose, betokening the first ravages of the disease, and the third, a girl of sixteen, was the most beautiful girl in the island. "She will soon be like the others," they told me; "they were more beautiful than she is, and look at them now!" It was comforting to notice that her impending fate did not seem to damp her enjoyment of the hour.

Strumous ulcerations of the limbs are the commonest diseases in Fiji. Thus, out of 621 cases admitted to the hospital in 1892, including people of many races and every kind of disease, there were 104 cases of "ulcers" in Fijians alone—the total number of Fijians admitted being only 246; that is to say, more than 40 per cent. of the Fijians were admitted for ulcerations of strumous origin. This disease, which the natives call *vindikoso*, takes the usual form of an indolent, excavated ulceration, sometimes extending down to the bone. It generally runs a slow course, and when of large size, the resulting *cachexia* is serious. It is generally left uncovered, or at most wrapped in a filthy piece of native cloth, and unwashed for days together—a fruitful breeding-ground for flies and parasites.

FIJIANS ARE TAINTED WITH STRUMA

To the same taint are due tubercular glandular enlargements, chronic disease of the bones, with deformity and enlargements, necrosis of the long bones, and the tuberculosis of abdominal glands, which is believed to cause many deaths among

children, and not improbably also tubercular diarrhœa both in children and adults.

Yaws (*thoko*) occurring in children of tubercular parents is probably intensified, and children whose constitution has been weakened by a prolonged attack of yaws are more prone to die of some form of tuberculosis. It has also been noticed that adults who bear the scars of severe yaws in childhood are more prone to contract some form of tuberculosis in after-life.

The possible identity in the origin of all these diseases offers a wide and most interesting field for scientific investigation. It is but a step, for instance, from yaws to syphilis, and from syphilis to strumous diseases of bone and skin (especially those prevalent among the Pacific Islanders), and from struma to pulmonary or general tuberculosis. If such an investigation be too long delayed there is the danger that the races who furnish the material may have ceased to exist.

The undoubted facts are these:—

(1) That the Fijian race is tainted by various forms of tubercle, acquired and inherited;

(2) That the taint is more marked where there is an infusion of Polynesian or European blood;

(3) That females are more affected than males;

(4) That the disease is on the increase;

(5) That the inherent debility of the race is partly due to this taint.

FOOTNOTES:

[100] I am indebted to Dr. Lynch, who has made a special study of the subject, for the medical portion of this chapter.

CHAPTER XX

TRADE

The necessity for bartering commodities, which is one of the earliest needs of primitive society, was met by the Fijians in an original manner. Nomad tribes, who are perpetually at war with their neighbours, and are not self-supporting, satisfy their wants by raiding and plunder; settled agricultural tribes in the same condition invent some artificial condition under which combatants may exchange their goods to their mutual advantage. Thus, in south-eastern New Guinea there are settled markets on the tribal frontier fitted with counters of saplings on which the women of either side may lay their goods and barter them without fear of molestation by the warriors, for the ground is strictly tabu, and neither side would dare to commit the sacrilege of striking a blow within its precincts.

In Fiji the natural productions of the country led to localizing of industries. No tribe, however wide its territory, was entirely self-supporting. Salt came only from the salt-pans in the mangrove swamps; cooking-pots from the clay-pits on outlying islands; the painting of *gnatu* was an art peculiar to a few; the carving of bowls and the building of canoes were the

craft of the carpenter clans and no other. The comfort, if not the existence, of a tribe depended upon barter, and the form of barter devised by the Fijians accorded exactly with their passion for formal ceremonial.

The Solevu (*So-levu, i.e.* Great Presentation)

CEREMONIAL FORM OF BARTER

The *solevu* is the formal presentation of property by one clan or sept to another. The ceremonial was much the same whenever merchandise had to pass, whether as tribute, reward, or free exchange between equals. There were formerly many reasons for *solevu*. Help given by allies in war time entitled them to a *solevu* from the succoured; quarter given by a conquering army in the moment of victory placed the vanquished under a like obligation; the death of a high chief gave his relatives a claim upon the subject tribes; a marriage entitled the relations of the bride to a *solevu* from the bridegroom's people. *Solevu* celebrated under these circumstances, being in the nature of payment for services rendered, did not call for any return, though they brought about the circulation of property. But between tribes of equal rank that had no such excuse for demanding presentations from each other there was a form of *solevu* that was trading pure and simple. A tribe that owned salt-pans such as those at Nandi Bay wanted mats. It would send a formal messenger to one of the islands of Yasawa, asking permission to bring them a *solevu* of salt. Yasawa accepted. The *solevu* took place, both donors and recipients preserving a very

accurate remembrance of the value of the present. After some months, or even years, Yasawa, having plaited a store of mats equivalent to their estimate of the value of the salt, would propose to return the *solevu*, and the score would be wiped off. If they seemed to hang fire, deft hints would be conveyed to them by the gossip-mongers, that they were fast becoming a by-word on the Nandi coast. If their offering fell short of the value due from them the formal gratitude of their entertainers would lose nothing of its correctness at the time. The speeches would be as complimentary as usual, the hand-clapping as hearty, but none the less would they be made to hang their heads with shame when they had returned to their own island, and heard from the gossip-mongers some of the caustic epigrams current in Nandi at their expense.

Technically, the merchandise of a *solevu* was presented to the chief, but the greater part of it reached the people whose labour had provided its purchase-equivalent. A good chief divided it out upon the spot among the septs composing the clan, who in turn assigned it to the individual heads of houses; a selfish chief stored it away, and doled it out to such of his dependants or subject chiefs as chose to ask for it by *kere-kere*, but he applied it to his own use at the cost of his popularity, and, therefore, of his power. So long as a chief felt that his position depended on the suffrages of his subjects he did not dare to indulge his greed, and the trade balance was preserved. He might, however, apply it to the common advantage of the tribe, to pay off allies, or to purchase a new alliance, in which case the consent of his advisers carried with it the consent of the whole tribe. A European, staying with a great chief such as the Vunivalu of Mbau, is astonished at

the number of minor presentations. Several times, perhaps, during the course of the day the *tama* is shouted from without the house. The chief's *mata* looks out, and announces the arrival of some subject clan with an offering—a roll of sinnet, a bale of cloth, a turtle, and the inevitable root of kava. A few of the household step out to listen to the speech of presentation and clap their hands in the prescribed form, but the chief himself scarcely deigns to check his conversation to listen. The merchandise is carried to a storehouse, where in due course it will be doled out to some chief desiring it, for the use of his numerous dependants, or used in the tangled political negotiations on which the safety of the federation depends. These minor presentations are in reality public revenue, and their equivalent in England would be found if every landowner brought his income-or land-tax in kind to Windsor and laid it with due ceremony at the gate of the castle.

THE RITUAL

The ceremonial varied slightly according to the local custom and the cause for which the *solevu* was presented. The details of a marriage-gift differed from those of the obsequies of a dead chief; the ordinary trade *solevu* between equals followed a simpler ritual than that of an offering of a vanquished tribe to its victors. But the general form was the same. Upon the appointed day the donors carried their wares to the village of the recipients, and halted upon the outskirts while their herald approached the chief's house and *tama*-ed, asking permission for his people to enter. The notables of the village being assembled in the square, the donors

approached in procession, and were dismissed to the empty houses prepared for them, or, if the party was a large one, to the temporary shelters erected for their accommodation. To these they carried their merchandise, and they were scarcely settled when their entertainers filed in procession to the door, bearing the feast (*mangiti*) of cooked and raw yams, fish, hogs half-roasted and the ceremonial root of *yankona*. This having been presented and accepted according to the usual formula, the visitors were left to their own devices. In the evening individuals might visit their acquaintances in the village; the young men or women of the village, perhaps, entertained their guests with a night dance by the light of bonfires, but there was no general intercourse between the entertainers and the entertained. On the morrow, after the morning meal, the visitors removed their merchandise to the cover of the forest or the outskirts, and made ready their ceremonial entrance. There, the leaders wound many fathoms of native cloth about their bodies. The leading chief wore so cumbersome a cincture of it that his arms stuck out horizontally, and a man had to walk beside him on either side supporting its weight. The grown men blackened their faces and festooned the cloth about them until their bodies were entirely hidden, and they resembled turkey cocks with tails outspread. Armed with spears and clubs, bearing enormous turbans on their heads, they were ready for the great ballet that was to follow. The rest shouldered the salt or mats or pots, and the procession was formed. A warrior with blackened face led the way. With his spear poised he crept forward step by step as if about to launch it at his hosts, pausing every few yards with a sharp jerk of the elbow that set the point quivering. The chief and

his elders followed, bending under the weight of their huge girdles. Then came others with a litter of boughs supporting a great bale of white bark-cloth, and many more followed with the rest of the merchandise, their hosts greeting them with shouts of "*Vinaka! Vinaka!*" (Well done! Well done!). In the centre of the square they halted, and laid down their burdens on a fast-increasing pile, each retiring when his task was done. The chiefs unwound their girdles, a process that occupied many minutes, and stepped out at last, naked to their waist-cloths, leaving the cloth as a stiff rampart about the spot where they had halted. Meanwhile some twenty of the bearers had seated themselves apart. They set up a chant, marking the time with a small wooden drum, and the boom of hollow bamboos struck endwise upon the earth. Then from behind the houses came the ballet, five or six deep, with a few paces' interval between each. With their black faces, their enormous turbans, their strange dress and their arms they were a terrifying spectacle. No ballet is so well drilled as this. Every gesture of the hands, the heads and the eyes is timed with a precision that months of practice would not achieve were there not an inborn dexterity to build upon. Little boys of four or five may be seen on the outskirts of the practice-ground swaying their limbs and bodies in elaborate contortions which Europeans after a prolonged gymnastic training would execute very clumsily. The words chanted by the band may either be traditional poems whose meaning is obscure, or the composition of the leader of the dance, for nearly every district has its poet, who retires to the forest for free access of the muse, and surpasses the mediæval troubadours in that he sets his words, not only to music, but to action, and is poet, composer and ballet-master in one.



A GREAT WAR DANCE

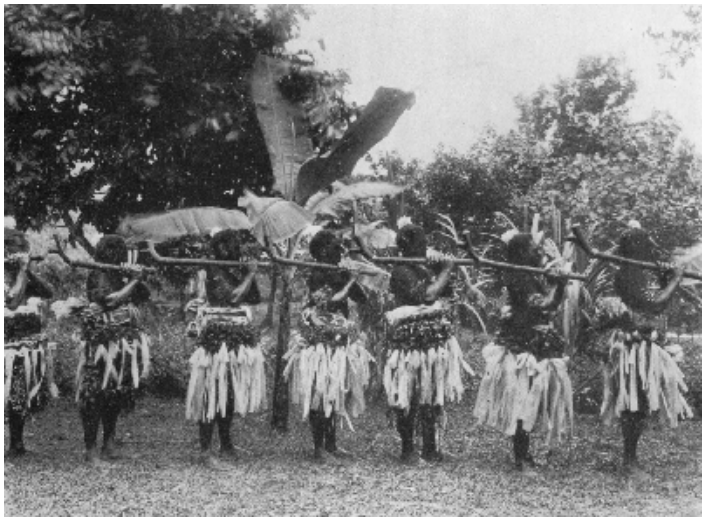
A description of one of these dances given by the mountaineers of Bemana at the Great Council of Chiefs held in Nandronga in 1887 will serve for all. The dancers marched into the great square in twenty ranks of ten, and squatted down with spears poised. In their crouching posture the festoons of their draperies took on the symmetry of haycocks, each surmounted with a heavy knob for ornament, for their enormous turbans almost hid the blackened faces. Their sloping spears swayed like a thicket of bamboos swept by a breeze. And now the chant quickened to a sinister rhythm, and there was a menace in the stillness of the dancers. One huge fellow, detached from the rest, began to mark the exciting drum-beat by fluttering the enormous war-fan he carried in his left hand; the rest seemed motionless unless you looked into the shadow of the turbans, where their restless eyes gleamed unnaturally white from the soot that besmeared their faces. As the chant grew in shrillness and the drums beat a devil's tattoo that set the muscles of the vast concourse of spectators twitching with excitement, the dancers became unnaturally still, not a spear wavered in its slope.

The spell was broken by a shout, deep-toned and mighty, from a hundred warriors' throats. A third of the band leaps up, and, with spears poised aloft, marches straight and compact to the further end, turns about and retreats to its place. But ere the foremost are within touch of their companions another third springs up and joins them, and together they repeat the manœuvre. Another shout

and the whole body is in motion. The earth trembles with its tramp; the rattle of its stiff trappings drowns the whine of the singers. This time they do not return. The first rank is within a pace of the line of spectators when the leader—he of the war-fan—gives the signal. They are down now, with bodies bent low, and spears poised for stabbing or hurling. Their legs are like bent springs, so lightly they leap as they take open order. The leader flirts his huge fan, and runs swiftly up and down, shouting orders that need never have been shouted. For every movement, of body, head, arm or foot, is executed as if one wire moved the whole two hundred. They pursue, they flee, they stab a fallen enemy, they dodge his blows by a sideways jerk of the head, they run at topmost speed, and the earth shakes at the tramp of their running, though they do not advance an inch, and their running feet strike always in the same spot. Their eyes blaze and their teeth grin with fury, the sooty sweat courses down their skin, the loops of stiff drapery clash about them. In other dances some luckless dancer commits a fault not to be detected by European eyes, and excites the loud derision of the spectators, but here all the dancers are perfect in their parts and the crowd is awed by the verisimilitude of the piece. At the outset a few ribald spirits of the coast tribes applauded the terrific appearance and gestures of the warriors in obvious irony, but presently, when the play seemed to settle to sober earnest, a fearful silence fell upon them all. The evolutions of the dancers gave occasion. Retiring step by step before an imaginary foe to the further end of the square, they would dash forward in compact phalanx upon the bank of spectators, checking their onset with a suddenness that seemed to defy the laws of momentum. If this was but the

image of war, surely the reality must be less terrible. To sit still unarmed while two hundred untamed devils charge over one with their stabbing-spears is not courage, but foolhardiness—so, at least, thought the men of Mbua who faced the dance. And so, when the grass was strewn with the fragments of the trappings, and the dancers were struck to stone in the midst of their most furious onslaught, the solid bank of spectators broke and fled. Only when the warriors had walked tamely off to add their finery to the heap of presents did they begin to slink back one by one, looking the more foolish for their heroic efforts to join in the laugh against themselves.

The Solevu in Decay



A War Dance.

ABUSE OF THE *SOLEVU*

With the arrival of the trader who, all unconsciously, was set to teach the natives an entirely new system of trade based on currency, all need for the *solevu* vanished, and each native product immediately acquired a recognized place in the scale of values, either in money or calico. Nothing shows the extraordinary conservatism of the Fijians better than the fact that they did not at once abandon the *solevu* in favour of an informal sale of native products to one another. The two systems continued to flourish side by side, the native carried his produce to the trader and took cash or groceries in exchange on the spot, but he continued to manufacture large quantities of goods intended for ceremonial presentations to his neighbours and to trust to receiving the equivalent at some time in the uncertain future. For a time the *solevu* was encouraged by the Government upon the ground that it would form a substitute for commerce until the natives should become accustomed to money as a medium of exchange, and that it was inseparable from the native social system, which for political reasons it was convenient to retain. It was felt that without the *solevu* the manufacture of mats, pottery, salt, bark-cloth, sinnet, wooden bowls, etc., would fall into disuse, and that the material comfort of the people would be affected for the worse. Therefore it became usual for the *solevu* to take place at every half-yearly Provincial Council at which each district became in rotation the entertainers of the others. Upon the entertainers fell the burden of building new houses, a very salutary provision, of providing food for a vast concourse of people for several days, and of manufacturing an immense quantity of mats of native cloth to be presented to the visitors. In return the entertainers would theoretically be entitled to a

share of the property presented by the guests on their arrival, and of that given at other councils when the part of playing host fell to others. This would have been well enough if the presentation had been kept within bounds, and the spoil had been properly divided, but the emulation of the chiefs to outdo one another in hospitality led them to bring pressure to bear upon their people, and the chief burden fell upon the women, whose principal duty was to produce the things required for the *solevu*. Moreover, less of the property reached the producers than formerly, the lion's share being appropriated by the chiefs who attended the council. Being a distortion of the real native custom, the *solevu* began to lose much of its native character.

At Ndeumba, where the natives earn considerable incomes from growing bananas, the property given consisted exclusively of European commodities, such as kerosene, tins of biscuits and calico, purchased in Suva, while at Rewa a cutter, filled to the hatches with tins of kerosene, formed the contribution of the Tonga district. The *solevu* had thus grown to be an intolerable burden. They were far larger and more frequent than in the old days, they were given and received by the wrong people. As long as a single tribe or joint family was concerned, every householder or head of family got his fair share according to his rank. It was not custom that the group of tribes that form the modern district should receive a presentation in common, and, as usual, the native mind could devise no new law to meet the new emergency. Accordingly, in June, 1892, the Government formally forbade the interchange of property at Provincial Councils. By the people at large the order was welcomed, and as a means of commerce the *solevu* may now be said to have ceased

to exist.

But one evil resulting from the mutilated custom still survives. In the old days a single district or village was rarely called upon to feed large assemblages of people; now, every Provincial Council is made the excuse for immense profusion and waste. At some of them as many as one hundred and sixty pigs and turtle and six thousand yams and taro are consumed in two days, and at the Annual Meeting of the Chiefs the food provided by the entertainers reaches more than ten times that amount. It is not all eaten, of course. Several tons of cooked food are thrown to rot on the seashore, but the Government is probably right in not interfering to check this prodigality. The necessity of planting large reserves of food secures the people against an unexpected famine, caused by flood, hurricane or droughts; if they lost the fear of being reproached for being niggardly it is more than probable that they would cease to plant sufficient food for their bare needs.

When the *solevu* of the Provincial Councils was abolished the Governor laid before the chiefs the proposal to establish a system of intertribal barter in the local markets, which is a Melanesian and Papuan custom; this ought not to have been repugnant to Fijian ideas, but the chiefs could not be induced to take any interest in the proposal, which shows that their attachment to the primitive *solevu* was no longer due to the necessity for barter, but rather to the elaborate ceremonial display which is so dear to the native mind.

MARKETING AND *SOLEVU*

Yet the Fijians are by no means deficient in the mercantile instinct. In some districts side by side with the *solevu* a regular system of trade by barter was practised. At Lekutu in Mbau the townspeople were in the habit of bartering fish and salt with the hill people for vegetable produce. There were regular market-places, and the barter took place at fixed intervals. At Kandavu a single household or tribal sept having a store of bark-cloth, or some other commodity, would invite the possessors of some coveted article to trade with them, and on the appointed day would visit their village and hand over their property in exchange for cooked food as well as the wares they needed. Similar practices prevailed in Western Vitilevu between the natives of the coast and the mountaineers; these customs were called *tango* or *veisa*.

The growing use of money has been developed side by side with a system of traffic in native produce, not only with European buyers, but among the natives *inter se*. Natives of the coast districts of Tailevu, who are required periodically to take contributions of food to Mbau on the occasion of some ceremonial without expecting any remuneration, at the same time carry on a regular trade with their chiefs at Mbau, hawking vegetables or fowls from house to house for money or its equivalent in European articles. Thus they draw a clear line of distinction between *lala* and barter.

CHAPTER XXI

NAVIGATION AND SEAMANSHIP

Whatever may have been the origin of seagoing ships, the evolution of the outriggered canoe is not difficult to trace. We may imagine a savage in remote antiquity standing on the banks of a river and watching logs of wood from a mountain forest floating swiftly down the current. His home lies down-stream. There is no path, for the banks are overgrown with a tangled mass of thorny creepers. This log will pass his village doors. He wades out and intercepts it. With one arm cast about it he is borne by the current right to his door without an effort. The women filling their jars at the water's edge applaud his originality. But when he next tries the experiment an alligator comes unpleasantly near his legs. He tries to haul himself astride of the log; it turns round with him. A bamboo is floating close at hand; he seizes it, and finds that by holding it athwart the log he can steady himself on his perch. But the bamboo, being too narrow to offer resistance to the water, tends to sink until he rests the end upon a floating branch. But on his next aquatic journey, remembering that the bamboo tired the arms and kept slipping off the branch, he takes a vine with him, and lashes the bamboo to log and branch. This leaves his hands free to use another bamboo to keep the head of his craft down-stream by poling on the bottom. He even punts it laboriously to land at the village, and ties it up for use in crossing the river on the morrow. He has taken the first step towards building a craft of his own. The thin end of the log cleft the water better than the other. He chips the end to a point. There are tribes that stop at this

point. The catamarans of Eastern New Guinea are merely three shaped logs lashed together, and depend for their buoyancy upon the displacement of the solid wood. A chance experiment shows that a hollow log is more buoyant, besides having the advantage of providing a dry resting-place for the feet. The discoverer of this phenomenon widens the natural hollow with fire, lashes his cross-ties to a smaller log, also sharpened at the ends, and he has made a Fijian canoe. The next steps are easy. By trying to propel it up-stream with a bamboo too short to reach the bottom he discards the pole for a slab of bark, and he has invented the paddle. To use the wind in the estuary to the best advantage he props a slab of bark on a stick and steadies it with a stay of vine. On his next voyage he takes a mat with him, staying his mast to the outrigger, the bow and the stern. Going about on the other tack the pressure of the wind bearing on the outrigger sinks it and capsizes the canoe, teaching him by painful experience that he must turn his sail inside out, and keep the outrigger always to windward. He has now devised the most complicated, the swiftest, and in many respects the most beautiful sailing machine in existence—the sailing canoe. The raising of the sides, and the decking of the bow and stern are expedients that need no deductive process.



The *Thamakau*.

THE SAILING CANOE

Four kinds of canoe are used by the Fijians: (1) The *Takia*—an undecked dug-out furnished with an outrigger, which is used on the rivers and on the calm water inside the reef, and is propelled with poles or with paddles.

(2) The *Thamakau*—a seagoing canoe with sides

raised by planking to carry a deck; with solid outrigger and mast and sails.

(3) The *Tambilai*—a dug-out with ends cut square, several feet at each end being left solid.

(4) The *Ndrua*, or twin canoe—which is, as its name implies, made of twin hulls, the one smaller than the other, connected by a deck, on which the mast is stepped. The smaller hull is the outrigger, and is always kept to windward. These vessels being often too large to be made from a single trunk, are put together in sections with a sort of scarf joint, secured by lashings of cocoanut sinnet. The adze and the auger were the only tools used, every plank being adzed from a solid trunk, and, since every joint must fit true, and the planking be less than an inch thick, and one false stroke of the adze might spoil many days of labour, some idea of the skill and patience of the native carpenter may be formed. These vessels were of great size. The *Rusa i vanua* was 118 feet over all. Her yards were 90 feet long, and she carried a crew of 50 men. Maafu mounted cannon on two of his *ndrua*, which were capable of making long ocean voyages, and with the wind on the quarter could run from ten to fifteen knots in the hour. Though they could lie close to the wind, being keel-less, they made much leeway, and were bad sea-boats to windward or in a seaway, for the play of the twin hulls was apt to work the lashings loose. There is, however, no sea sport so exciting and exhilarating as sailing on a calm sea in a *ndrua* or *thamakau* with the wind abeam. A clever sheet-man will contrive to lift the outrigger out of the water until it barely skims the surface, and then the canoe becomes a veritable flying-machine.

The *ndrua* is enormously expensive to keep up, and for this reason it will be seen no more. The mat-sail, which costs far more than canvas, rots quickly if it gets wet, and must be unbent and taken into shelter after every trip. The sinnet lashings, both above and below water, soon work loose and become rotten, and the whole structure has then to be rebuilt. To manage the great sail in tacking a crew of from ten to twenty men, all expert canoemen, is required. By the year 1890 the *ndrua* in the group could be counted on the fingers, and probably the last has now fallen to pieces.

Thomas Williams has given so admirable a description of the building and management of these canoes[101] that it need not be again described.

THE PAY OF CANOE-BUILDERS

The handicraft of canoe-building was hereditary. Every considerable chief had his *matai*, but those of Rewa, descended from Tongan immigrants, were the most esteemed in the west and those of Kambara in the east. In 1860, however, the Fijian *matai* fell upon evil days, for the chiefs preferred the Tongan craftsmen, who had begun to settle in the group. Besides canoes the *matai* made *lali* (wooden drums), kava and food bowls, all cut from the solid timber with the adze. Every stage of canoe-building called for its special feast and presentation to the *matai*, and in order to test the actual cost of these I once had a canoe built by a Rewa *matai* and his mate on the Fijian system of remuneration. I was acting as Commissioner of Tholo West at the time, and being in native eyes vested with the powers of a Roko Tui,

I could play the part of carpenter's patron with plausibility. The men who hauled in the logs were given the appropriate feast, the *matai* had his feast at the completion of the hull, at the fixing of the upper works, at the lashing of the deck. I obtained the mats for the sails from Yasawa by *kerekere* (begging), and sent their equivalent in kind; the neighbouring villages performed the ceremony of *rova* (and received their reward) after the launching. When I came to reckon up the bill I found that it came to £13—a little more than the contract rate for building canoes at that time, which was £2 a fathom; or, to put it in another way, as the canoe was two months in building, about £3 a month for each man besides rations. But since my carpenters were on their mettle, the canoe was better built than it would have been by a contract builder.

Forward and abaft the deck both in the *ndrua* and the *thamakau* are open wells, in which a man stands baling with a wooden scoop, for the joints and seams of the planking let in a good deal of water when under sail. Beyond these wells some fluted work is left by the adze, and a line of beading is left along the lee side both to afford footholds to the men who carry over the foot of the yards in tacking and to carry fixed blocks for the *tuku* or mast-stay. A remarkable feature about these carvings is that they never vary, though some of them have no object but that of ornamentation, and they are sufficiently elaborate to have been only arrived at after a long period of evolution.

If the Fijian canoe is so carelessly handled as to bring the outrigger to leeward she immediately capsizes, for the pressure of the wind drives the outrigger under water. In order to keep the outrigger to

windward when tacking it is therefore necessary to make what was formerly the bow become the stern, the sail must be turned inside out, and the mast, yards and steer-oar must all be changed over. This complicated manœuvre is accomplished with extraordinary skill. Instead of luffing up into the wind as in a cutter the steersman keeps away until the wind is abeam, the sheetman slacking the sheet simultaneously until the sail is flapping. Two or three men then run out to the prow, seize the foot of the yards and carry them bodily amidships. During this operation they have to bear the weight of the mast, which is sloping forward at an angle of 45 degrees, and to relieve them of some of this extra weight a man is hauling on the running stay, which runs through a block astern. As they pass the mast with their burden the lower yard is let go, the sheet is passed round their legs, and the sail turns inside out. They tramp forward, and the mast again begins to incline, throwing its weight upon them. A man now seizes the other stay, and in obedience to their loud cries of "*Tuku!*" begins cautiously to pay it out. If he is too quick the weight of the mast precipitates the men and the sail into the water; if he is too slow he holds them back. At last the foot of the yards is planted with a thud into its nest in the carving and lashed secure, but before the sheet can be hauled in the heavy steer-oar, which takes two men to lift, has to be dragged inboard and carried aft. All this time the hull is heaving in the trough of the sea, and the mat sail is thrashing itself to pieces. Sometimes the yard-carriers slip on the wet deck, and tumble overboard, sail and all, in inextricable ruin, but if all goes well the canoe is gathering way on the new tack in less than sixty seconds, and though to the spectator on board the moment is full of excitement

and risk, to those watching it on shore it is the most precise and beautiful manœuvre known to seamanship.

NEW MODELS OF SCULLING

And now we come to a remarkable paradox. The Tongans were the great navigators of the Pacific; the Fijians are not known to have voyaged beyond their own group. The Tongans were so expert with the adze that they rapidly displaced the Fijian canoe-builder in his own country. And yet the Tongan counterpart to the *ndrua* was the *tongiaki*, a craft so clumsy and ill-finished that it did not survive the eighteenth century, when the Tongans learned the art of canoe-sailing from Fijians. The *tongiaki* was like the *ndrua* in build, but its mast was immovable and it tacked like a cutter. To make this possible the mast was stayed on both sides from a clumsy transom which protruded many feet beyond the deck. It could lie close to the wind on one tack, but on the other the sail was broken up into pockets by the mast, which held the wind and stopped all headway. Consequently it was the practice to wait for a fair wind, and set the sail on what would be the lee of the mast, and if the wind changed there was nothing for it but to change the course. It was, no doubt, this fact that led to so many Tongans being cast away on remote islands, and to the mixing of Polynesian with Melanesian blood. From 1790 to 1810 it had become the custom for Tongan chiefs to voyage to Fiji in their clumsy *tongiaki*, join in the native wars, and take as their portion of the loot Fijian *ndrua*, in which they beat back to Tonga, and

in a very few years the *tongiaki*[102] was extinct.

There were two ways of propelling a canoe in a dead calm—the *vothe* and the *sua*. The *vothe* is a leaf-shaped paddle cut from one piece of *vesi* hardwood, five feet long and eighteen inches across the widest part of the blade. Adapted for propelling light canoes on the rivers, it is ineffective against the dead weight of the heavy *thamakau*. In shape and size the *sua* resembles the oar of a ship's cutter. Thrusting it down perpendicularly into the water between the hull and the outrigger, and using the cross-tie as a rowlock, the sculler describes short, semicircular sweeps with the blade, throwing his weight against the handle in front of him as he stands upon the deck. When two are sculling they swing in time, but in opposite directions, and there is no exercise that displays the grace of the human body in action to better advantage. A speed of three miles an hour is the maximum that can be attained with the *sua*, but the scullers can maintain this speed for a long time without fatigue. The stroke is as difficult to acquire as that of the gondolier, but when you have once acquired it you wonder wherein the difficulty lay.

The craft of seamanship was hereditary, and every considerable chief had his fisher tribe to man his canoes. In war time they were his navy, since many engagements were fought at sea. Manœuvring to windward of the enemy was even more important in a war-canoe than in a frigate, because by getting within striking distance of his outrigger you had him at your mercy. While he could not venture out upon his outrigger without capsizing himself, one stroke of a hatchet at his mast-stay brought the whole of his rigging down about his ears, and you could club his head as it bobbed up under the sail. A body of

etiquette grew up about the canoe. The high chief's canoe was marked by a streamer or a fan floating from the tip of the lower yard. It was an insult to cross her bows, or to sail to windward of her. The custom which required the serf to stoop in passing or approaching a chief was extended to canoes passing or approaching chief villages such as Mbau. All had to lower their sails, and toil past with the *sua*, however fair the breeze.

FOOTNOTES:

[101] *Fiji and the Fijians*, pp. 71-76, 88-89.

[102] A full description and diagram of the *tongiaki* is given by Captain Cook.

CHAPTER XXII

PHYSICAL POWERS

Though the contrary is asserted by European residents, I think that the physical strength and endurance of a Fijian are greater rather than less than that of the average Englishman. Native prisoners, used as porters, will carry a box weighing from 50 to 60 lb., slung on a bamboo between two men, over very hilly roads a distance of thirty miles in a hot sun without distress, if they are allowed occasional halts, and will do this for several days in succession. A letter-carrier will cover thirty-five miles of hilly road as an ordinary day's march, and

more if haste is enjoined. On a fairly level road, such as the hard beach, a native will walk ten miles easily in two hours and a quarter. It is probably true that most Europeans in good training could do all these things equally well in cool weather, if they were barefooted and could reduce their clothing to a loin-cloth; for having once been shipwrecked at night, with ten miles of sand in the darkness to cover, when I had given my wet clothes and shoes to a native to carry, I found that I outpaced my men easily. But this, of course, was no test, for the cool breeze which was pleasant to me cut through them like a March east wind, and left them shivering, starved and miserable.

On the sugar plantations the overseers have a good opportunity of comparing the strength and endurance of Fijians and East Indian coolies, and they find that where steady hard work, such as thrashing cane, is required the coolie is the best labourer, but that the Fijian excels in work such as unloading punts, or hauling logs, in which great muscular effort is required, with rests between. This is exactly what one would expect. In India the man who cannot work steadily must starve; in Fiji food is so easily come by that a few spurts of labour at planting and harvest and war time are the normal conditions of life.

A Fijian can hurl a spear and throw a reed into the air farther than a white man can, and in those feats in which knack is in favour of the white man, such as throwing the cricket ball, he is probably more than his equal.

His extraordinary powers of endurance in the water far surpass anything recorded of Europeans. I have

twice talked with people just rescued after being 48 hours in the water, swimming without support, in both cases from the capsizing of their canoes in mid-channel. They seemed little the worse, though they had been without food or drink for two days in a burning sun and in constant peril of sharks, which had eaten several of their companions, and their faces were raw, owing to their continually brushing the salt water out of their eyes. Men suffer more acutely than women in these cases, because the long immersion in salt water produces a horrible and painful affection of the male organs.

On the other hand, Fijians seem to be more sensitive to cold and hunger than Europeans. The average daily weight of roots consumed by a healthy adult Fijian is from seven to ten pounds, and the stomach is probably larger than that of a European, and feels hunger sooner. Cold and hunger tell rapidly upon his buoyant spirits, and make him silent and depressed. Fijians are heavy sleepers, and dislike being aroused. It is difficult to induce a commoner to awake his chief at all, and if he must, he does it by calling "*Iele!*" softly, or scratching at his sleeping-mats, but never by touching him. He bears deprivation of sleep less easily than a European, and for this reason he makes a bad sentry.

CHAPTER XXIII

ATTITUDES AND MOVEMENTS

The Fijian generally sleeps upon his back, with his head turned a little to one side, so that the part of the skull immediately behind the ear may rest upon the wooden neck-pillow. His hair is wrapped in a turban of bark-cloth to keep it well off the neck, and, if he has no blanket, his *sulu* is spread over head and all, like a winding-sheet over a corpse. This is perhaps as much for keeping off mosquitoes as for warmth. When not walking, he is either sitting cross-legged on the ground, or squatting with his haunches resting upon his heels. Except among the high chiefs, standing seems to be felt as a breach of good manners, for to stand up when others are sitting, or to reach over their head for something suspended above requires the apology, "*Tulou! Tulou!*" and a clapping of hands after the sitting posture has been resumed. Sitting in a chair is as irksome to the Fijian as sitting tailor-fashion is to us. He will not only sit cross-legged for hours without fatigue, but will even lay one foot upon the inner surface of the other thigh. But in the presence of equals, when social restraint is removed, he prefers to lie upon his stomach with his chin propped upon his hands. It is not uncommon to find half-a-dozen men thus lying with their heads converging upon the native newspaper, *Na Mata*, which is spread out uncut between them, so that each is able to read a different page. When a visitor enters they spring up, knotting their *sulus* round the waist, and sidle away cross-legged into the place proper to their respective ranks, the chief nearest the bed-place, and the inferiors facing him at the lower end of the house. During the brewing of the *yankona* bowl, even in the family circle no one would think of lolling until the cup has been handed round; then tongues and attitudes are loosened, and every one may loll as he pleases.

Women never sit cross-legged. They sit with their knees together and their feet drawn up under them on one side or the other, changing the side at frequent intervals, by half-rising on the knees, and shifting the feet to the other side. The attitude in micturition is the same for both sexes, namely, squatting.

In regionibus interioribus feminæ in medio fluvio, mares in virgeto, defæcare solent; apud tribus litorales feminæ morem hominum obsequuntur; igitur carnem porcorum, qui fœdam sentinam comedunt, edere non fas est. Feminæ fragmento panni (tapa), mares calamo deflecto usi, se detergent. Morem Europensem papyro se detergere contemnunt; igitur pueri Vitienses comites mestizos derident, clamantes "Ngusi veva!" (Ecce puer qui se papyro deterget!)

There is so much difference between the carriage of the body in chiefs and in commoners that in some districts on ceremonial occasions the attitude is an indication of the rank. For the commoner, having always to leave the path and squat down as a chief is passing, or at least lower and avert the head, acquires a habit of stooping, while the chief, accustomed to command, carries himself erect and dignified, every inch a king. There is nothing remarkable about the gait of a Fijian, except the freedom and swing which are common to all men unhampered with clothing. The women do not walk as gracefully as the men, especially in the hill districts, where they begin to carry burdens on their backs at a very early age. They seldom carry anything upon their heads; everything is packed in bales and baskets, which are slung on the back by cords passing over the shoulders and under the

armpits. In the old days the men carried nothing but their weapons if they could help it. They now carry all burdens slung to a pole or a bamboo. A single carrier will make his load into two packages of equal weight at either end of the pole, and balance them across his shoulder, but a heavy load is slung midway between two carriers, who do not hold the pole in position while walking, and touch it only when shifting it to the other shoulder for a change. In moving any heavy object they seldom push, preferring to haul upon it by rhythmical jerks delivered in time to a chant. They have never taken kindly to an English saw, because it is against their instinct to exert force in pushing, and their own tool, the adze, delivers its blow towards them.



They are the best tree-climbers in the world. While other races use a rattan round the waist or round the ankles in climbing cocoanut palms, the Fijians plant their soles against the trunk, grasp it with both hands, and simply walk up it to a height of fifty feet or more.

Though very voluble in speech, they do not gesticulate, and, as a rule, use their hands only to indicate the size of an object they are describing. They point with the open hand, and they beckon with a downward sweep of the hand as if they were hooking the person towards them with their fingers. They raise the head and the eyebrows simultaneously in token of assent, and shake it as we do in negation. They show astonishment by cracking the finger-

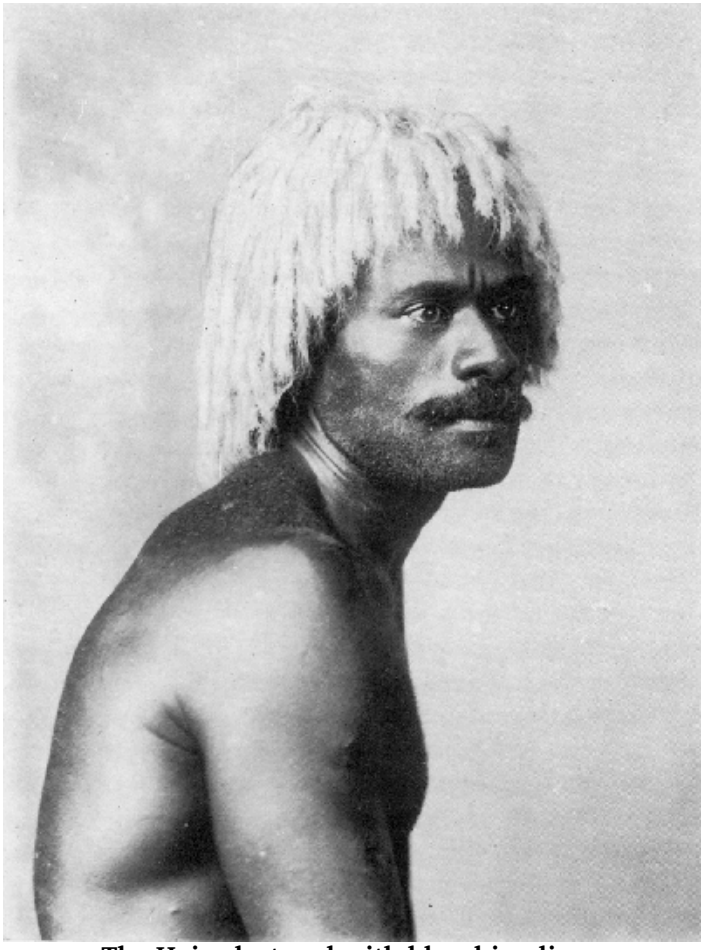
joints, or by shaking the fingers loosely from side to side from the wrist, with the hand raised to the level of the shoulder, or, if the emotion is intense, by pouting out the lips in trumpet shape, and crying "O —o—o," on a high note, while patting the lips with the open fingers. Their gesture of defiance is to cross the arms on the breast and slap the biceps with the fingers of the other hand. In sudden anger the complexion grows darker and the eyes flash, but they have their features so well under control that they seldom betray anger, but nurse it and brood over it, while waiting for an opportunity for revenge. Only once have I seen an open rupture, and that was between two first cousins, who "slanged" one another across the barrack square, hurling imputations against the virtue of the female ancestors who were common to them both. Their companions spent the whole day in trying to patch the quarrel, for, they said, "a quarrel between brethren is the most difficult of all to heal," and towards evening they were successful, for I saw the two enemies strolling up and down with their little fingers linked, and dressed in one another's clothes.

Their laughter is hearty, open-mouthed, and not unmusical, though I fear that it is heartiest when the subject is of a kind of which the missionary would not approve.

Clever as they are in not betraying their emotions in their faces, they are very apt at making secret signals with their eyes, and many an assignation is made by question and answer with the eyes when the house is full of people.

They show shame or embarrassment by drooping the heads and picking at the grass or the floor-mats.

Their behaviour when in acute pain is much the same as that of a European. When a native submits to have the *soki*, or soft corn on the sole of the foot, to which many are subject, touched with nitric acid, he grasps the foot with both hands, and rolls about on the floor, sucking the air in through his teeth with a hissing noise. When under the lash for serious offences their pride deserts them; they dance and howl, and either implore the gaoler to have mercy, or curse his ancestresses to the fourth generation. Yet three minutes later the same man is laughing at the contortions of a fellow-sufferer who has taken his place at the triangle.



The Hair plastered with bleaching lime.

SENSE OF SMELL

Though the enormous heads of hair worn by the warriors of olden times have disappeared, being regarded as the badge of heathenism, the young men still cultivate mops which, being dyed with lime, stand out like a golden aureole. The lime is smeared

over the head on Saturdays and washed out on Sunday morning, more than an hour being spent in combing and oiling it with cocoanut oil scented with grated sandalwood. The arms, neck and breast are also plentifully besmeared. Young girls wear the hair shorter, but dyed and clipped symmetrically like the men, and many wear the long *tombe* locks. In Mathuata (Vanualevu) and some other places young unmarried men also wear a cluster of *tombe*. After middle age the men cut their hair shorter, but continue to lime it for the sake of cleanliness even after it is grey. Widows allow their hair to grow without liming it for a year or more after their husband's death as a symbol of mourning. Baldness is not very common. The natives say that baldness and bad teeth have only been known since the introduction of sugar and other foreign goods, but though there may be some truth in this as regards their teeth, there can be no doubt that baldness has always existed. They never brush or cleanse their teeth, which nevertheless are, as a rule, beautifully white. Corpora sua non depilant Vitienses; et feminam pilosam etiam diligunt. Morem Tongicum pubes et alas depilare derident.

Painting the face, which was inseparable from warfare, is now used for ceremonial dances. Lampblack and vermilion are the favourite colours. Soot is also smeared over the face as a protection from sunburn on a journey. Girls sometimes decorate themselves with a patch of vermilion for a dance.

The Fijians are free from the peculiar smell which is exhaled by the negro, and though one is always aware of his presence in a room, I am not sure that his scent differs much from that of a European under the same conditions of nudity, physical exertion in

hot weather, and absence of soap in washing; for though the Fijian has a bath every day, mere immersion in cold water does not do much towards cleansing his skin. The odour of perspiration is more marked in males than in females, and in the hill people than the coast natives. Fijians have a keener sense of smell than we have; in examining an unknown object they will generally carry it to the nose, and I have heard one say that they detected a peculiar smell in Europeans and disliked it, but the man who said this was probably retaliating for some remark of a trader in disparagement of his race. As with us, the intensity of odour varies much with the individual, and it is more noticeable in old men than young.

CHAPTER XXIV

TRAITS OF CHARACTER

As the natural disposition with which a child enters this world, restrained though it may be by caution or fear of public opinion from expressing itself in acts, remains unaltered till he leaves it, so the character of natural man is untouched, even superficially, by the decay of his customary law. The surface of the lake is lashed into foam by the passing squall; but a fathom beneath the water lies untroubled.

Though the Fijian character has been described as full of contradictions, when it is examined by the light of their moral code, which differs vitally in

some respect from ours, it will be found to be as consistent as our own. How, it may be asked, can a people addicted to cannibalism and to acts of ferocious cruelty be the most timid, polite and hospitable of mankind? To any one intimately acquainted with the people these facts are perfectly consistent, though it is a little difficult to reconcile them in cold print. Timidity, as Williams stated many years ago, is the key to the Fijian character. Beset by a myriad perils from the cradle-mat to the burial-cave, he went in terror of his life. On the one hand there were the Unseen Powers quick to avenge every infringement of a tabu, however unwitting; on the other was his own chief, quick to take offence, and beyond him the enemy, ever ready to waylay the unwary in a lonely part of the road. In such an atmosphere the cardinal virtues do not thrive, and it is not to be wondered at that the Fijian was suspicious, and held craft and adroit lying in high esteem. He was polite and hospitable, because, with so many enemies already, his instinct was always to convert every new potential foe into an ally, or at least not to give him an excuse for thinking himself slighted. His cruelty also proceeded in part from timidity. "*Moku na katikati*" (Slay the women and children) was, as a Christian native once assured me, a sound maxim, for the object in war was to crush your enemy beyond the power of retaliation, and women and children breed avengers to harass your old age. The horrible cruelties inflicted on captives were in part propitiations to the War-god, and in part the same thoughtless love of mischief that moves English school-boys to tie a kettle to a dog's tail, because its sufferings are amusing to watch, and they do not understand.



CONTRADICTIONS IN CHARACTER

The sympathies of the Fijian reached to the limit of his tribe and no further, but within that limit they were active enough. After torturing, mutilating, and devouring his helpless captives, the warrior washed off his war-paint, went home and played with his children, received his visitors with stately politeness, and performed his part in the ornate and elaborate ceremonial of social life. Both phases were custom, and to his mind not in the least incongruous.

In the matter of lying he drew a nice distinction. It was a crime to lie to his chief; it was, if not a virtue, at least a title to public admiration to display something cruder than the craft of Odysseus to an enemy, or to a person not a member of his tribe. The maxim "All is fair in love and war" was applied literally. To pretend alliance, and then treacherously to smite the ally from behind, as Namosimalua did to the people of Naingani, was more esteemed than barren courage. I have heard a young chief boast of having gratified his passion by compelling the lover of the girl he coveted to overcome her scruples while he hid in the dark behind him, so that at the last he might push him aside and personate him. In these days the European has dropped easily into the place formerly occupied by the extra-tribal man. By an administrative fiction the Governor of the colony is supreme chief over the natives, and the natives have fallen easily into the habit of paying him all the external marks of respect which are due to their own chiefs, even, rather incongruously, greeting him with the *tama*, or shout of respect which is due only to the chief in whom is enshrined the ancestral spirit of the

man who utters it. There have been governors who have been deceived into the belief that they really enjoy *ex officio* the prestige of a supreme chief, and that the natives will not dare to lie to them. In 1888 an European named Stewart was murdered on the Sambeto coast. Another European was arrested and tried for the crime, but the issue was confused by a number of native witnesses, who came forward with two wholly incompatible stories, both designed to fasten the guilt upon the accused man. One of these stories hung upon a letter said to have been written by a petty chief who in heathen times would have held an office akin to that of hereditary executioner. The governor interrogated this man, and, convinced from his knowledge of native character that the man would not dare to lie solemnly to his supreme chief, accepted the story, and placed the matter in my hands as Acting Head of the Native Office. Everything turned upon the question whether the man had himself written the letter, and I knew that he could not write, but since the Governor could not be convinced without proof, I induced him to send for the chief, and put my statement to the test. I could not help admiring the native's courage and persistence. Even when writing materials were put before him in the Governor's presence, and he was ordered to copy a verse from the Fijian Bible, he did not falter. For a full ten minutes he plodded away with an implement that he had never had between his fingers before, trailing a drunken zigzag across the paper like the track of a fly rescued from drowning in an inkpot. He took his unmasking with quiet dignity, however, and the murder remains a mystery to this day. To his own chief he would not have lied: the Governor of the colony was simply a foreigner to whom he owed no allegiance.



DEFRAUDING WITH DIGNITY

Europeans hold opinions regarding the honesty of Fijians according to their individual experience. There is no equivalent for the word in the language, though there is a word for theft. In the ancient moral code theft and cheating were virtues or vices according to whether they were practised upon a stranger or a member of the tribe and inasmuch as the white man falls into the former category, and is possessed of priceless treasures to boot, it was not to be expected that the Fijian would regard cheating him as an offence against morality. It was an injury, and since to injure a man who had befriended you is a mean action, public opinion would mildly condemn the robbing of a friendly white man. Cheating and theft really date from the arrival of Europeans, for in the small communities of the old time it was well-nigh impossible to rob a fellow-tribesman without being found out, and to despoil an enemy was, as it is with us, legitimate.

In the matter of dishonesty it is, of course, the country storekeeper who suffers most, and it is therefore he who gives the Fijian the worst character. The native, from the highest to the lowest, will run into debt under the most solemn promises, and would never pay unless induced by cajolery, or compelled under the pressure of a refusal to give further credit. Even so he will display great ingenuity. A few years ago the Government, anxious to introduce copper coinage into a colony where a silver threepenny piece was the lowest currency, tried the experiment of paying a portion of the tax refund in copper. The natives showed a great

unwillingness to accept it, but the late Roko Tui Lau, an old chief noted for his stately and dignified manners, won the gratitude of his people by including all the copper coins in his own share. On the following day, accompanied by his train carrying bags of money, he presented himself at the German store, where his credit had long been overstrained, and intimated that he had come to pay off his debts. The heavy bags were clapped on the counter, and the unsuspecting trader, believing the coins to be florins, pressed fresh supplies upon his illustrious client, who loaded his men with goods and departed. The trader's feelings (and, I suspect, his language) when he came to open the bags and found not a florin among the lot, need not be dwelt upon.

The commoner forms of dishonesty—putting white stones among the *yankona*, and watering the tobacco and the copra to increase the weight—are well-nigh universal, and there have been a few instances of childish attempts at forgery among domestic servants, but when the Fijians are compared with Indian coolies, it must be confessed that pilfering is rare. I have myself lived for years in native districts without a door to my house, which has stood open night and day even in my absences, and I can only recall one theft of a few shillings. A Fijian servant will sometimes secrete a thing which he covets to see whether it is missed. If inquiries are made for it he will be most active in the search, and will eventually discover it in some unlikely place, hoping to acquire merit by his diligence, but deceiving nobody.

On the other hand, money is a temptation which few natives can resist, and it is to be feared that few native magistrates or scribes have not at some time or other borrowed from the funds entrusted to them.

They might well plead the excuse that their wants and the calls of hospitality have greatly increased, while their wretched salaries of from £3 to £12 a year have not. It is much to say for them that bribery is uncommon, and that though they may show partiality in the administration of justice they are not corrupt.

Considering what must appear to the Fijian as the fabulous wealth of the white man, unprotected save by a wooden wall and a crazy door, and so temptingly placed at the mercy of the village as is the native store, it is surprising that house-breaking is not more frequent. It is the belief of many Fijians that every white man has a chest of money in his house, and occasionally some restless spirit organizes a burglary among his chosen associates. I have related elsewhere[103] how Kaikai robbed a store at Navua, set it on fire, and sank the safe in the bed of the river, but in order to show the school-boy light-hearted inconsequence of the burglars, I may repeat here the confession of one of them:—

NATIVE BUSHRANGERS

> "Sir, the root of the matter was Kaikai. He seduced us to do this thing. We therefore are innocent. It happened thus: Kaikai came into our house in the evening and said 'Eroni, let us have prayers.' So we had prayers. Then Kaikai said, 'How would it be to break open the white man's store?' And we said, 'It is well.' And when we came near the store, Kaikai said, 'How would it be to set

> the store on fire, and then perhaps the white man will come out?' So we set the store on fire, and presently the white man did come out. Then Kaikai said, 'Let us trample him.' And so we did, and having put the chest of money in the river, we all went home."
>
> "And what did you do then?" asked the Court.
>
> "Kaikai said prayers."

A similar case occurred in Vanualevu, while the Australian papers were of full of the exploits of the Kelly gang of bushrangers. Fired by the halting translation of the local storekeeper, three otherwise blameless youths, church-goers every one, resolved to take to the bush and make the world ring with the story of their crimes. They began tentatively by setting fire to an empty house, and waxing bolder, they waylaid an elderly German storekeeper in broad day, and by dint of yelling their tribal war-cry into his ears, put sufficient heart into themselves to cut him down with a hatchet. A couple of mission teachers, attracted by their shouts, put them to flight, and thereafter they seem to have lost heart, for a week later their dead bodies were discovered far up the mountain. They had perished like the Fijian widows of old. Two of them had strangled the third by hauling on the loose ends of a noose of bark-cloth; the first had then strangled the second by tying one end of the noose to a tree, and pulling on the other, and had then hanged himself, English fashion, from a bough.

Though naturally so timid, the Fijian has shown

himself upon occasion to be capable of extraordinary courage and self-devotion, generally, however, when assailed by the forces of nature. There is no reason to doubt the truth of the story that a Kandavu chief, whose canoe capsized a mile from the Serua reef, when attacked by sharks, was protected by his men, who formed a ring round him as he swam. As man after man was dragged down, the rest closed in, until there were but three left to reach the shore. I myself questioned two girls, the survivors of a party of twelve, who had been picked up by a cutter off the mouth of the Rewa, after all their companions had been devoured by sharks, and they had been eight hours swimming in a rough sea. They described without a shudder how a huge shark, glutted with the body of the last of their playmates, had rubbed himself along their naked backs as they swam, and had played about them until the moment of their rescue. Their fortitude seemed, however, to be due to a lack of imagination.

To the European the natives must always seem wanting in natural affection. Parents are fond of their children until sickness calls for sustained effort or self-sacrifice, but their love will not bear the strain of these. As with all races such affection as there is tends downward and not upward. The mother is fonder of her child than the child of his mother. In the old days the young man obeyed his father, because he was one of the elders, the repositories of tribal lore, not because he was his father; but when the father grew infirm he helped to bury him alive without a trace of emotion beyond the mourning which customary law enjoined. In these days of schools and Government employment the young man regards the opinion of his elders no more. A few years ago the senior Wesleyan missionary appealed

to one of Thakombau's sons to mend his ways, saying, "What would the chief, your father, have said?" The young man jerked his thumb contemptuously towards the tomb on the hill above them, and replied, "My father? Why, he's dead." While there is a certain comradeship between brothers and the first cousins who are classed as brothers, the customary law that forbids brothers and sisters to speak to one another is a bar to any affection between these. On the other hand, there is loyalty and fidelity between husbands and wives, though it is more perhaps the mutual regard of partners in the same firm than warm attachment. The only instance of demonstrative family affection that I can recall occurred in Lomaloma when a prisoner sentenced by the Provincial Court was being sent on board a vessel bound for Levuka. His aged mother caught hold of him, to prevent him from entering the boat, wailing and storming at the native policeman by turns. When they had been separated by force, and he was fairly afloat, she cast herself down on the beach, shrieking and throwing the sand over her head in utter abandonment of grief. Though not more noisy, this was a very different exhibition from the ceremonial wailing at a death. At the funeral of Tui Nandrau, one of the last of the cannibal chiefs, I came upon two or three of the widows howling with dry eyes, like dogs baying the moon. Seeing me, one of them nudged her neighbour to point me out, and grinned knowingly, and then drowned her sister wives in a howl of peculiar shrillness and poignancy. During a cricket match at Lomaloma a canoe arrived carrying news of the death of the father of one of the bowlers. At the end of the over his aunt came over to the pitch to tell him, and I overheard the conversation.



CEREMONIAL WAILING

"Here is a painful thing," she said; "Wiliame is dead. Pita has just landed and brought the news."

"O Veka!" exclaimed the boy.

"How then? Shall we wail now, or after the game is finished?"

They discussed the point for a few moments. There were, it seemed, only three female relations on the ground, and if the others were sent for it would make a braver show. The boy decided the point. "Send for them," he said, "and let us finish the match first; then we can weep."

As soon as the last wicket was down I was startled by a piercing shriek from the scoring tent: the wailing had begun. The aunt and half-a-dozen old crones were howling "*Oo-au-e-e*" with a peculiar long-drawn wail, ending in a sob, while real tears coursed down their wrinkled cheeks. It was difficult to believe that the grief was only simulated.

The reasoning power of the Fijian is not easy to classify. He is extraordinarily observant, and in respect of natural phenomena he shows a high power of deduction. He is an acute weather-prophet; he knows the name and the nature of every tree and almost every plant that grows in his forest; he is a most skilful gardener. A broken twig, a fallen berry, are enough for him to assert positively where a wild hog has its lair; he knows by the look of the weather where the fish are to be found. He will tell you correctly from a footprint in the sand which of his fellow-villagers has passed that way and when, and

whether he went in haste or leisurely, for he knows the footprints of his people as he knows their faces, and will swear to them in court. He will probe the secret motive that lay behind every action of one of his own people, and he is beginning to draw deductions even from the manner of Europeans.

"Mr. ——," a Fijian once said to me of a colleague of blunt manners, "is from Scotland. I suppose that Scotland is a 'bush' village!"

When justice has to be defeated he is remarkably acute in the story he will concoct. Assembling the false witnesses into a house by night, he will cunningly dissect it, dictating to each witness the part he is to tell, repeating it over and over until the man has it by heart, even interpolating some trifling discrepancy, so as to render it more life-like. It is only by showing in cross-examination that none of the witnesses will budge an inch beyond his original narrative that the fraud can be detected.

Fijian boys, educated at an European school, are probably quite equal in capacity and intelligence to European boys of the same age, but, though there has hitherto been no case in which their education has been continued beyond boyhood, there is no reason to think that this equality would not be maintained through manhood. In early boyhood they show some talent for arithmetic, and an extraordinary power of learning by rote. Those who had been sent to school in Sydney speak English with but little foreign accent. For drawing, for science, and for mechanics they do not appear to have much aptitude. As might be expected from a people to whom oratory comes easily, they write with ease, and their letters and articles for the native

newspaper, *Na Mata*, show close reasoning, and sometimes scathing satire. One contributor, Ilai Moto-ni-thothoka, displayed both imagination and literary talent.

PRODUCTS OF THE TRAINING SCHOOL

In education, however, the Fijian has never had a fair chance. The Wesleyan and Roman Catholic Missions support native teachers in every village in the colony, and every child learns something of reading and writing. The teachers themselves are educated at training schools, where more attention, naturally, is paid to fitting them for their duties as local preachers than to giving them secular education. The two Government enterprises, the technical school and the school for native medical students, have not been a marked success. The boys leave the technical school with a fair knowledge of carpentry and smithing, but as soon as they return home the fecklessness of village life crushes all the enterprise out of them. Either a powerful chief expects them to work for him without pay, or relations swoop down upon them, borrow their tools, and force them back into the daily round in the village community to which they were born. Therein lies the secret: Custom again asserts herself. The native hereditary *matai* (carpenter), whose labour and remuneration were alike prescribed by Custom, plies his adze with profit to himself: Custom never contemplated a Government-taught carpenter; she intended the boy to take his turn at yam-planting and hut-thatching, and she revolts. She treats the native medical practitioner in the same fashion.

During his three years' training at Suva Hospital he may have shown great aptitude; he may know by rote the uncouth Fijian version of his Pharmacopoeia, in which tincture is *tinkatura*, and acid is *asiti*; he may even have acquired some skill in diagnosis. But no sooner is he turned adrift in his district with his medicine chest than complaints begin to come in. He has demanded from the chief four porters to carry his chest without payment; he is behaving like a chief, demanding food wherever he goes, and interfering with the customs of the people; and, at last, he is doing nothing for his pay, and his chest is rotting in an outhouse. He has his own tale to tell: the porters dropped his box and broke the bottles; the chief stole all his *masima Episomi* (Epsom salts), the most popular of his drugs, and what is a doctor to do who has nothing but *belusitoni* (blue-stone) with which to treat his patients? It was not many months before Dr. Corney, the Chief Medical Officer, who had trained them with so much care, was fain to confess that the native medical practitioner was a failure.

It is perhaps the strength of the Fijian race that education makes so slight an impression upon his habits and character. The esteem of his own people is more to him than that of strangers, and, if he has been brought up by Europeans in English dress, he will revert to the national costume as soon as he is back in his native village. Ratu Epeli, the late Roko Tui Ndreketi, insisted on wearing the *sulu* even in Calcutta, and cared nothing for the notice he attracted. The Tongans, on the other hand, and the other Melanesian races love nothing better than to dress up as white men. Most of the chiefs will dine with you with perfect decorum, and use a knife and fork as if they had been born to them, but in their

own houses they will sit upon the ground and eat with their fingers as their fathers did. They have adopted such of our inventions as are better than their own—our boats, our lamps and our dishes—merely for convenience, but they care nothing for contrivances that entail a change of habit. The native carpenter, whose only tool is the adze, will buy a Sheffield blade, but he will mount it on the same handle as his fathers used in the age of stone, and will explain, with some reason, that the movable socket, which enables him to cut a surface at right angles to the handle, is an invention that we should do well to adopt.

Though they have a considerable body of traditional poetry, the Fijians cannot be said to have much literary taste. The *mekes* are mythological and historical, and in the latter the fiction of exaggeration is freely mingled with fact. Without a native commentator they are difficult to translate, being often cast in the form of a dialogue without any indication of a change of speaker. In descriptions of the deaths of heroes the dirge is put into the mouth of the dead hero himself. Boating songs, lullabies, love songs and descriptions of scenery are not to be found in the native poem. In their indifference to the beauty of nature they are in sharp contrast to the Tongans, whose songs are full of admiration for flowers, running water and lovely scenery.

HISTORICAL POETRY

They judge the merit of a poem by the uniformity of metre and the regularity with which every line in a stanza ends with the same vowel or diphthong. This

is secured by a plentiful use of expletives, by abbreviating or prolonging words, by omitting articles, and other poetic licence, but in very few is this kind of rhyme carried out consistently. Some bards profess to be inspired. Others make no such pretensions, but set about their business in the prosaic manner of a literary hack. They teach their compositions to bands of youths who master every detail of the poem in a single evening. It is then as permanent and unalterable as if it had been set up in type. I had a curious instance of the remarkable verbal memory of Fijians in a long poem taken down from the lips of an old woman in 1893. The poem had been published by Waterhouse twenty-seven years earlier, and on comparison only one verbal discrepancy between the two versions was found. Repeated from mouth to mouth, a popular poem will travel far beyond the district in which its dialect is spoken, and thus one may often hear mekes whose meaning is not understood by the singers. English popular songs, heard once or twice, will thus run through the group corrupted into Fijian words that have the nearest sound to the English ones. The common *yankona meke* conveys no meaning whatever to the modern Fijian, but it is not necessarily very ancient, for it may be the corruption of a poem composed in a local dialect.

The popularity of an historical *meke* is not often more than sixty years; those that are older survive only in fragments. The Mission schools have enormously increased the output of trivial and ephemeral poetry; at every annual school feast the children perform *mekes*, celebrating petty incidents of village life, composed by their native teacher, and the old tragic historical poetry has fallen upon evil days and may soon be heard no more.

FOOTNOTES:

[103] *The Indiscretions of Lady Asenath.*

CHAPTER XXV

SWIMMING

Swimming seems to come naturally to every Fijian. As soon as a child can toddle, it is playing at the water's edge with older children, and little by little it ventures out until its feet are off the bottom. Being supposed to be a natural action like walking, no attempt is made to teach it. Inability to swim is always a source of derisive amusement. I remember a journey inland, where many swollen creeks had to be crossed, and all bridges had been broken down. A servant who was with us, a native of Malicolo, who could not swim, had to be ferried across clinging to an impromptu raft of banana stumps. Though the wearied carriers had to cut and make this raft anew at every crossing, the roars of good-natured laughter seemed to be ample reward, and the joke never grew stale.

In long-distance swimming the natives adopt a sort of side-stroke, in which nothing but the head is above water. They move smoothly and rapidly through the water, the legs and the right arm giving the propulsion, and the left hand striking downwards under the body. When a quick spurt is required, they use the overhand action with both arms alternately,

with the cheek resting flat on the water as the arm on that side is driven aft. With this action they can swim at greater speed than all but the best European swimmers. They can swim immense distances, and no swimming-board or float is ever used, as in the Eastern Pacific, in surf swimming, except by children in their play.

METHOD OF DIVING

There are many swimming games, such as chasing a fugitive and wrestling in the water. On a calm evening the water is black with the heads of laughing men and women. I have joined in these sports, and though I am at home in the water, as swimmers go in England, I confess that when I was pulled down by the legs from below, and ducked from above when I tried to come up, I was glad to escape from them with my life. In the game of *ririka* (leaping) a cocoanut log is laid slantwise from the beach to an upright post in the water. The people run up this incline in endless file, and their plunges whiten the surrounding water with foam.

The Fijian is a good diver, though inferior to the Rotuman and the native of the Line Islands. When diving he does not plunge head first from the swimming position, but draws his head under, and reverses the position of his body under water without creating a swirl. If the water is not too deep, when he reaches the bottom he lies flat with his nose touching the sand, his hands being behind the back, and propels himself with incredible speed by digging his toes into the sand. English divers, who can realize the difficulty of this manœuvre, may be inclined to doubt this statement, and for their benefit I will

relate how I came to have ocular demonstration. At Christmas-time in 1886 I organized athletic sports at Fort Carnarvon, an isolated little quasi-military post garrisoned by fifty men of the Armed Native Constabulary in the heart of Vitilevu. The mountaineers of the neighbouring villages were invited to compete with the soldiers, who were recruited from the coast. In wrestling and running the soldiers held their own, but when it came to swimming and diving they were nowhere. The course was a backwater of the river about 8 feet deep, and I went down the bank 150 yards from the starting-point to judge the winner. Our most expert diver was a Mathuata coast man, and he came to the surface 20 yards short of me, after being down 75 seconds. I had already written him down as winner, when a head bobbed up fully 20 yards beyond me. It was a sooty-skinned, insignificant little mountaineer, who did not seem much distressed, and was so pleased with our applause that he offered to repeat the feat. I sent for him next day, and took a lesson in 4 feet of clear water, where I could plainly see his every movement. It amused him immensely to see my futile efforts to keep my head on the bottom, for whenever I drove myself forward with my toes, my head would rise to the surface. The art seemed to be to arch the body so that the head and feet were lowest, and to move the legs with the knees drawn straight up under the stomach. I raced him, he using the ground and I swimming under water, and found that he went more than twice as fast. The hill natives, who bathe only in fresh water, are better swimmers than the coast people.

Another water game is peculiar to the rivers. In flood-time, when the river is running like a mill-race, you put to sea on a banana stump, with the thinner

end held firmly between the knees, and the butt under your chest, using the hands to steer and keep yourself in mid-stream. In shooting the rapids, you let the submerged end take the bump over the stones, but sometimes you receive serious bruises. Woe betide you if you get into a whirlpool and turn over, for you then have to part from your craft, and are in danger of being sucked under and drowned. From Fort Carnarvon the river sweeps round a bend of fifteen miles, and returns to a point not very far from the place of departure. We used to set forth in a flotilla of twenty, and cover the distance in little more than half-an-hour, our native companions keeping up an incessant chorus of laughter and song as we swept past the villages.

In one place on the Singatoka, near Nakorovatu, the sunken rocks cause a back current nearly as fast as the main stream, an elongated whirlpool half-a-mile long. A few strokes at each end are enough to take you from one stream into the other, and you may thus be carried up and down the river without effort.

THE DEEP PLUNGE

Fijians never take headers. Under ordinary circumstances they bathe without immersing the head, because their thick mat of hair is difficult to dry. When they plunge from a height it is always feet first. I once lost my ring in the deep pool at the mouth of the submarine cave at Yasawa-i-lau, and I offered a sovereign to any one who would find it. The water was over twenty feet deep, and the divers found that they could not reach the bottom with breath enough to search for it without plunging from a height. Even then they plunged in feet first, and

turned over when near the bottom. But the ring had evidently sunk into the soft white ooze, which the divers churned into a thick cloud until further search was useless.

CHAPTER XXVI

FISHING

Every Fijian is a fisherman by instinct. At ten years old, with a little four-pronged spear, or with a bow and a four-pronged arrow, he is scouring the pools left on the reef by the receding tide, and by the age of eighteen his aim is unerring. He fishes for the pot, not for sport, and seldom does he come home empty-handed. The spectacle of a big fish swimming in the sea never fails to stir his emotion. A *sanka* darting across the bows of your boat will touch the most lethargic of your crew to tense excitement; no spear being at hand he will poise and cast your precious boat-hook at the monster, and fling himself into the sea to recover it. Even among the tribes of hereditary professional fishermen this emotion is never staled by use.

Wherever the sea runs up into sandy or muddy inlets there stands a fish-fence belonging to some village in the neighbourhood. The fence is from 100 to 200 yards long, built of reedwork supported by stout stakes driven deep into the mud, and shaped like the segment of a circle with its axis on the shore, and about the middle there is a bag-shaped annex with

an intricate entrance so contrived that a fish making for the sea as the tide recedes will nose his way through it into the annex and not be able to make his way out again. There is a scene of wild excitement and confusion when the spearmen enter the annex at low-tide. Mad with terror, the great fish lash the water into foam as they dart hither and thither and leap clear of the water to escape the spear-thrusts.



The Chief's Turtle Fishers.

THE ROYAL FISH

These fences do not survive tempestuous weather. The waves soon make a breach in them, and the smallest hole renders them useless. When they are rebuilt it is generally at a different place, and ruined fish-fences may be seen at every inlet along the coast. But this is for another reason; after some months of use the fish appear to know their danger and to avoid the fence. Perhaps their range is very much restricted, and when the fence has caught all the fish in its immediate neighbourhood the sea at

that point is depopulated for the time. At Nasova a superior fence was built of wire-netting. Its daily catch for the first few weeks was enormous—on some tides not less than 1500 fish of five pounds' weight and over—but a few weeks later the catch failed quite suddenly, and thereafter the trap was scarcely worth examining.

In the larger rivers the natives build stone fish weirs constructed to lead into a basket trap. A rope bristling with fibre streamers is dragged by men on both banks to frighten the fish down-stream, and the basket is filled.

But these are mere amateur expedients compared with the methods of the fisher tribes. These, as will be explained in another chapter, own no planting lands, but barter their fish for vegetables, or live upon the bounty of the great chiefs for whom they work. Their skill as seamen was unsurpassed, and in the great confederations they manned the big war-canoes.

In Fiji the royal fish is the turtle. Every considerable chief had turtle fishers attached to his establishment. He would allow them to take service with other chiefs for ten expeditions. The hiring chief paid them by results; for blank days they received nothing, but food and property were given to them for every catch, and a considerable present was made to them at the end of their engagement. The turtle men use nets of sinnet from 60 to 200 yards long and 10 feet wide, with meshes 8 inches square. The floats are of light wood 2 feet long and 5 feet apart; the weights pebbles or large shells. A canoe takes the net into deep water, and pays it out in a semicircle with both ends resting on the reef. This intercepts the turtle on

his way back from his feeding-grounds in shallow water, and only a perfect knowledge of his habits guides the fishermen to choose the proper time and place. If the turtle takes fright at the net the men drive him forward by striking the water with poles, and stamping of the canoe deck, and the dipping of a float is the signal that he is entangled. The catch is announced by loud blasts on the conch, and the canoes are received with the same noise of triumph as when they brought back bodies for the cannibal ovens. The women meet them with songs and dances, and sometimes they pelt the crew with oranges and are chased from the beach with loud laughter.

A CRUEL DEATH

The hen turtle is taken when she crawls on shore to lay her eggs, and the nest itself is robbed when eyes are sharp enough to detect the place where she has so cunningly smoothed the sand over it. But in Kandavu the turtle is actually taken in the sea without nets, and this is sport indeed. Two men go out in a light canoe; the one paddles in the stern while the other lies upon his stomach with his head projecting over the bow, and with a heap of pebbles under him. With scarce a ripple from the paddle the canoe is gently propelled to and fro over the bottom where grows the green sea-grass which is the turtle's favourite pasture. The watcher in the bow lifts his hand; the motion is checked; he takes a pebble from the heap beneath him, and drops it gently into the water. Down it goes pat upon the shell of the feeding turtle. Unsuspecting danger, the beast crawls lazily out of range of such accidents and begins to feed

again. Steered by hand-signals from the watcher the canoe swings her head over him again, and another stone taps rudely at his shell. It may need a third or even a fourth to convince him that this rain of solid bodies from the upper world is more than accidental, but this unwonted exercise at meal times has bereft him of breath. Air he must have, and he makes slantwise for the surface. Then the sport begins; the watcher snatches off his *sulu* and plunges down into the depths to meet him. The art lies in seizing him by the edge of the fore-flipper, and in turning him over before he reaches the surface. It is a slippery handhold, but the hand that grasps the limb higher up will be nipped between the flipper and the sharp edge of the shell, and to seize a turtle by the hind-flipper is to be the tin can tied to the puppy's tail. Having seized your flipper by its edge, you must turn the beast over on his back (if he will let you) and propel him to the surface, where your companion will help you to hoist him on board. The turtle spends his few remaining days lying on his back, and throughout Western Fiji he dies the horrible death which is prescribed by custom: an incision is made at the junction of the hind limb with the under shell, and through this the entrails are drawn out. After their removal, and even during the process of dismemberment, he continues to live. I have often reasoned with the natives against this cruelty, and they have listened to me with amused surprise; "It was the way of our fathers," they said; "if we cut off his head he would not die any sooner, and the meat would be spoiled." When a great feast is in preparation turtle-fishing begins several weeks in advance, and the beasts are kept alive in a stone or wickerwork enclosure in shallow water, which is called a *mbi*. They can thus be kept alive for several

months. There was a tragic note in the fate of one little turtle captured when he was no bigger than a soup plate, and presented to an European as a pet. The owner had moored him to a stake by a string fastened to his hind-flipper, and for several days and nights he swam bravely but fruitlessly towards the open sea. But when, in pity for this wasted expenditure of energy, his owner built a wickerwork *mbi* for him, and cut him loose, and he had explored every inch of his cage for an opening, he abandoned the hope that had buoyed his spirits, and died in twenty-four hours—a victim, one may suppose, of a broken heart.

The Fijian nets are so like our own that a newcomer may believe that they have been imported. They are made of hybiscus fibre, and the mesh and knot are identical with those of the European net-maker. Long seines are used occasionally, but a commoner practice is to drag the *rau*—a rope of twisted vines, bristling with cocoanut fronds, several hundred yards long. The ends are brought together, and the fish are speared and netted in the narrow space enclosed by the *rau*.

The women do most of their fishing with two-handed nets mounted on sticks six feet long. A line is formed with two women to each net, standing to their waists in the sea. As the fish make for the sea in the ebbing tide they are scooped up and held aloft; the ends are brought together, and a bite in the head from one of the women kills the fish before it is slipped into the basket hanging from her shoulder. The *kanathe*, a kind of mackerel, and the garfish spring high out of the water in their efforts to escape, and it needs very dexterous manipulation of the net to intercept them; sometimes women receive ugly wounds in the face

from these fish.

Eels grow to a great size in the rivers, and in the inland districts the women mark their lairs in holes in the bank, and stupefy them with a vegetable poison extracted from the stalk of a climbing plant, or with tobacco. A sort of sponge made of bark-cloth is saturated with the poison, and is quickly immersed and pushed into the mouth of the hole; the poison distils into the surrounding water, and after a few minutes it is safe to explore the recesses with the naked hand. The narcotic effect of the poison is only temporary; left to itself in clear water the fish would recover in about five minutes.

MBALOLO FISHING

Strangest of all fishing is that of the *mbalolo*, which is still an annual festival in the districts where it is taken. The *mbalolo* is a marine annelid about six inches long and of the thickness of vermicelli. It is found on certain sea reefs in various parts of the Samoan, Tongan and Fijian groups, and probably elsewhere in the Pacific. For ten months in the year it is never seen at all. Somewhere deep in a reef cavern it is growing to maturity, but on the night of the third quarter of the October and the November moons it swarms in myriads to the surface and dies, phoenix-like, in the propagation of its kind. So exact a time-keeper is it that it gave names to two months in the native almanac. October was called the *Little Mbalolo*, because the swarm in that month was comparatively insignificant; the *Great Mbalolo* was November, and preparations for the fishing in that month were made several weeks in advance. The fact —and it is a fact—that an annelid should observe

lunar time would not be very remarkable in itself, but it seems that the *Mbalolo* observes solar time as well. As Mr. Whitmee has pointed out, the moon directs its choice of a day, and it follows that the creature cannot maintain regular intervals of either twelve or thirteen lunations without changing the calendar month of its reappearance. For two years it rises after a lapse of twelve lunations, and then it allows thirteen to pass, but since even this arrangement will gradually sunder solar and lunar time it must intercalate one lunation every twenty-eight years in order to keep to its dates. It has now been under the observation of Europeans for more than sixty years, and it has not once disappointed the natives who are on the watch for it. What are the immediate impulses of tide or of season that impel it to rise on its appointed day no one has attempted yet to show.

Consider for a moment how many centuries must have passed before the desultory native mind became impressed with its regularity. Even on the night of the *Great Mbalolo* it is not a conspicuous object on the sea. Mere chance must have brought the fisherman into a *mbalolo* shoal; years must have passed before a second chance again revealed its habits; decades before the unmethodical mind of natural man had realized its annual recurrence and had noted the day and the hour.

It is only at certain points in the sea reef fringing outlying islands that there are *mbalolo* holes. The canoes congregate there before midnight. The behaviour of the fish is the first signal; they are there in hundreds, dashing hither and thither in a criss-cross of phosphorescence. Towards morning they lie, stupid from surfeit, flapping their fins helplessly on

the surface, and are speared in great numbers. It is an orgie of rapacity and greed. *Salala* gorge themselves on *mbalolo*; *sanka* devour the *salala*; rock-cod swallow the *sanka*; a few sharks fill their bellies with rock-cod; and man, as usual, preys upon all alike.

As the night advances the surface of the sea is oily and viscid with the interlaced bodies of millions of *mbalolo* that feel slimy to the touch as one stirs the water. There are breaks in the mass, and natives have assured me that through these they have seen an oscillating stalk, about the thickness of a man's thigh, coiling up from the depths—a fountain of worms spouting from some chasm in the reef. The fishermen scoop up the worms with cocoanut baskets and empty them into the canoe until the hold is full. The masses of worms are boiled, cut into slabs, and sent, like wedding-cake, all over the country, packed in banana leaves. To the European taste these dark-green masses, though unappetizing to look upon, are not unpalatable. They taste like caviare.

Mr. Whitmee, who made a scientific examination of the *mbalolo* in Samoa, took a glass jar with him to the fishing, and watched the behaviour of the worm in captivity. His catch included both brown and green worms, the brown being the males and the green the females. They varied in length, and as they swam incessantly round the jar with a spiral motion he noticed that the shorter ones of six inches long had two screw turns and the longer at the most three. Fished up by the finger and thumb they broke spontaneously into short lengths at their jointings.



Slaughtering the Turtle.

HOW THE EGGS ARE FERTILIZED

At eight o'clock the *mbalolo* have disappeared. If they break up earlier the natives believe that there will be a hurricane between January and March. As the sun gains power the *mbalolo* may be clearly seen in dense patches with individual worms bridging the clear water between. They are now more active than in the night, the closer masses even churning the surface of the water. A little before eight they begin to disintegrate and break up; the sea becomes turbid and milky, and when it clears they are gone. Mr. Whitmee's captives in the glass jar behaved like their fellows in the sea. After swimming more rapidly for a few moments they gave a convulsive wriggle and broke into half-a-dozen pieces each, which wriggled about near the surface, squirting out their contents. The vase looked as if a teaspoonful of milk had been

emptied into it, and the little transparent envelopes of the fluid sank empty to the bottom, just as the green worms discharging their cargo of eggs began also to settle down. After a few minutes' immersion in the fertilizing fluid the eggs themselves sank gently to the bottom, where they lay among the husks that had given them birth and being. Under the magnifying glass a faint whitish spot was detected on each of the tiny green eggs. Thus by a voluntary act of self-immolation the worms had handed on their lives to a new generation.

CHAPTER XXVII

GAMES

While ceremonial dancing takes the place both of theatrical shows and of sports with the Fijians, there are two national games that have held their own, and a number of amusements which may be briefly enumerated.

Veiyama was a sham fight among children, in which serious injuries sometimes resulted, and, as they have no longer the example of their elders, it is now very rarely played. A swing consisting of a rope tied to a high branch with a loop for the foot, formerly very popular, has now also fallen into disuse. The children now play hide-and-seek, and a few impromptu games, without prescribed rules, and with the warm water on the beach to sport in, and the school dances to practise, they do not feel the

want of them. They have no toys except miniature canoes, which they make for themselves as they want them.

Veimoli, or pelting with oranges, is played both by children and young men. The skill consists in dodging the orange, which is thrown at short distance and with full force, and their activity in dodging is so extraordinary that it has given rise to the myth that Fijians could avoid a bullet by dodging at the flash of the gun.

A DANGEROUS ROMP

The *there*, or foot-race, was always run on some occasion such as the first voyage of a canoe, or the digging of a plantation, for a prize offered by the owner. In my first voyage in a canoe I had had built at Fort Carnarvon we found a crowd of young men waiting for us on the river-bank, decked in streamers, and shouting a sort of shrill war-cry. My men declared it was a *there*, and a bale of *masi* (at my expense) was hastily unpacked, and a streamer of the cloth fastened to a stick. With this one of the men landed, some two hundred yards lower down, and ran at topmost speed with the whole rabble baying at his heels. The man who caught him and tore the flag from him received the bale, which he afterwards divided out among the others.

The *veisanka* was a sort of wrestling match between men and women, who met at the top of a steep hill, and, having closed, a couple would roll down the hill together. It was a rough sport, resulting often in a sprain, and it has now been discouraged by the missionaries.

There were also the *veitenki-vutu* (throwing the vutu), a fruit, which from its buoyancy is used as a float for fishing nets; the *veikalawa-na-sari*, a sort of "hop, skip and jump"; and a kind of skittles, played with stones. All these have been abandoned.

The *veisolo* is a custom rather than a game, and it is still occasionally practised in Western Vitilevu. The last case I heard of occurred in 1887, and some of

my armed constables were the victims. They put up in a small village in the Nandi district, and hardly had the food been brought to them when the house was beset by a number of girls bent on mischief. The traditional object of the besiegers is to disperse their visitors and take away the food, but the real motive is to have a romp. The men are expected to be gentle with their assailants, and either to take them captive or lay them gently on the ground, but in this instance they were greatly outnumbered, and all the men of the village being absent, they were really in fear for their lives, for they had heard stories of men dying from the violence of these Amazons. They barricaded the door, and, having succeeded in wresting one of the pointed sticks that were thrust at them through the grass walls, for a time prevented any of the women from getting in. Their assailants then became infuriated, and shrieked for a fire-stick with which to fire the thatch, and one of the men holding the door thought it well to take a hostage. So he drew back, and a strapping girl bounced into the hut. Then followed a scene which suggests that there is a sexual significance in the custom, for the girl was stripped and cruelly assaulted in a manner not to be described. The women outside were actually setting fire to the house, and would have burned their village to the ground had not the men, alarmed by the uproar, returned from their plantations in time to put a stop to it. The guests beat a hasty retreat under cover of the darkness, and, curiously enough, no complaint of their behaviour to the girl was made, probably because it was custom.

The two national games that have held their own are *veitinka* and *lavo*. The *tinka* or *ulutoa* is a reed four feet long fitted into a pointed head carved out of ironwood, and about four inches long. On the

outskirts of every village in Western Vitilevu is the *tinka* ground, a level stretch of bare earth over one hundred yards long by ten wide. The *ulutoa* is thrown thus: the thrower rests the end of the reed on the ball of the middle finger of the right hand, and, with the arm extended behind him and the point of the *ulutoa* on the level of his armpit, he takes a short run and discharges the weapon with the full force of the right side of his body. It flies through the air for the first thirty yards with a low trajectory, and touching the ground with its smooth surface, skims along it, barely touching the earth until its force is spent. The longest throw wins the game. The heavy head and the light shaft make the *ulutoa* an attractive missile, but the unpractised European finds the knack of throwing straight very difficult to acquire. Almost every fine evening finds the youths of the village at practice on the *tinka* ground, and on feast-days challenges are sent out to the neighbouring villages and matches are played. Good players regard their ironwood heads much as golfers do their favourite driver, but they cut the reed shafts from the roadside as they want them.

THE GAME OF *LAFO*

Lavo has a curious history. It was originally a Fijian game, and was played with the *lavo*, the flat round seeds of the *walai* creeper (*Mimosa Scandens*), which from its shape has given its name to all European coins, for the dollars recovered from the wrecked brig *Eliza* in 1809 were used for the game in preference to the seeds. The Tongan immigrants learned the game and carried it back with them to Tonga, under the name of *lafo*, where, the seeds

being scarce, they substituted discs of cocoanut-shell, which were a great improvement. In Tonga it flourished exceedingly; the rules were improved, special sheds were erected for it, and valuable property changed hands in the stakes.

Meanwhile it had died out in Fiji, and when it revived through the influence of the Tongans domiciled in the group, it was in its Tongan form with cocoanut-shells.

I have described it elsewhere in detail,[104] and I will here only indicate the rules. A board is made with mats about fifteen feet long, slightly raised at the sides so as to form a sloping cushion. The four players sit, two at each end, so arranged that the partners are divided by the length of the board, and each is sitting beside an adversary. Each player throws five discs alternately with his opponent, and the object is to skim the disc so as to be nearest the extreme edge, and to knock off an adversary's disc that may be nearer.

The under edge of the disc is oiled with a rag, and a very nice judgment is required to impart a "break" from the cushion so as to topple off an opponent's disc and leave your own in its place. In scoring it is not unlike tennis. You begin at six and count to ten, and the best out of five makes the set. I have taken part in many a match, and can testify to the excellence of the game and the skill that may be acquired with practice.

The men amuse themselves sometimes with a game of guessing. One flings out his hand suddenly, and the other guesses the position of his fingers.

The chiefs sometimes play practical jokes by punning

(*vakarimbamalamala*). Thus as the word *ulaula* means both to thatch a house and to throw short clubs at one another, the Mbau chiefs send to their vassals to come and *ulaula*. They come expecting to thatch a house, and find themselves received with a volley of throwing clubs.

Story-telling is the principal amusement on long evenings, and the best story-tellers are professionals. The most successful are tales full of exaggeration of the Munchausen order, and these, especially when unfit for polite ears, provoke roars of laughter. The story-tellers have now begun to draw upon European literature for their inspiration, and the result throws a very instructive light upon the Fijian's sense of humour.

I once gave a Fijian the outline of Mr. Rider Haggard's *She*, and a few nights later I chanced to hear his version of it delivered to a spellbound native audience. The author would not have enjoyed it, for the central figure was the native servant of the travellers, who, it will be remembered, was incidentally "hot-potted" by an unfriendly tribe. This servant had become an Indian coolie, talking such broken Fijian as coolies talk in a sort of nasal whine. The narrator enlarged upon his skinniness, his absence of calf, his cowardice, and many other qualities in the coolie which the Fijians hold in contempt. There were endless interpolated dialogues, and the coolie argued at great length against the fate decreed for him, but when the red-hot pot was finally on his head the story was drowned in shouts of appreciative laughter. "She," being but a love-sick white woman, of course talked in "pidgin" Fijian, but she had little more than a walking part. The professional story-tellers are promised *nambu*, or fees

in kind, by the audience as an inducement.

Wherever a ground is within reach, and Europeans are at hand to organize the game, the Fijians have taken keenly to cricket, though not to the same extent as the Tongans. They have a natural aptitude for fielding and throwing up, but their idea of batting and bowling are still in the elementary stage, where force is thought better than skill. It was, however, possible to send a native team on tour through the Australian colonies, under the captaincy of Ratu Kandavulevu, King Thakombau's grandson.

TRIBAL FEELING IN SPORTS

The native constabulary took keenly to Rugby football for a time, but as they wore no boots the sick-list after every match was unduly swelled with men suffering from injured toes, and the game was not encouraged. In a temperature of 80 degrees in the shade, where passions are apt to rise with the thermometer, football is unlikely to become a national game.

English athletic sports are held occasionally at native meetings, but so strong does tribal feeling still run, that it is unsafe to encourage wrestling matches and tugs-of-war between rival tribes, such contests being apt to degenerate into free fights. The instinct of the weaker side is to run for a club with which to wipe out the disgrace.

FOOTNOTES:

[104] *The Indiscretions of Lady Asenath.*

CHAPTER XXVIII

FOOD

Famine, in the European sense of the word, is unknown in Fiji. Even in times of scarcity every native can find sufficient food to satisfy his hunger, but, though the quantity is sufficient, the quality is not. Ample in amount and in variety, it is lacking in nitrogenous constituents, and it is unsuitable for young children and for women during the periods of gestation and suckling.

The staple foods of the Fijians are Yams, Taro (*Arum esculentum*), Plantains and Bread-fruit. Next to these in point of order are Kumala, or Sweet Potatoes (*Ipomœa batatas*), Kawai (*Dioscorea aculeata*), Kaile (*Dioscorea bulbifera*), Tivoli (*Dioscorea nummularia*), Arrowroot, Kassava, Via (*Alocasia Indica* and *Cyrtosperma edulis*), China Bananas, Cocoanuts, Ivi Nuts (*Inocarpus edulis*), Sugar-cane, and a number of other vegetables and fruits. Meat and fish are not reckoned as "real food" (*kakana ndina*). They are eaten rather as a luxury or zest (*thoi*).

METHOD OF PRESERVING FOOD

All these vegetables contain a large proportion of starch and water, and are deficient in proteids. Moreover, the supply of the principal staples is irregular, being greatly affected by variable seasons, and the attacks of insects and vermin. Very few of them will bear keeping, and almost all of them must be eaten when ripe. As the food is of low nutritive

value, a native always eats to repletion. In times of plenty a full-grown man will eat as much as ten pounds' weight of vegetables in the day; he will seldom be satisfied with less than five. A great quantity, therefore, is required to feed a very few people, and as everything is transported by hand, a disproportionate amount of time is spent in transporting food from the plantation to the consumer. The time spent in growing native food is also out of all proportion to its value. The most valuable of all the staples is *ndalo*, or taro (*Arum esculentum*), which can only be grown successfully in the wet districts of the islands, or in places where there is running water. The only way of preserving perishable foods known to the natives is the *mandrai* pit. Bread-fruit and plantains are packed in leaves and buried in a deep hole weighted with stones and earth. Fermentation, of course, sets in, and when the pit is uncovered at the end of several months the stench is appalling. The fruit is found reduced to a viscous pulp, and though it turns the best regulated European stomach, it certainly tastes better than it smells. It has never occurred to the Fijians to dry any of these fruits in the sun, and grind them into flour, as is done in Africa. The yam crop is precarious, and, at its best, only yields about seven-fold, and then after immense expenditure of time and labour. In places in which taro and bread-fruit are not plentiful the natives have become accustomed to a season of scarcity from the month of November, when the yam crop has been consumed, till February, when the new crop is ripe, and in some districts this scarcity has been increased by the ravages of the banana disease, which destroys the plantains. At these seasons, if bananas are not obtainable, the natives subsist upon *ivi* nuts, and unwholesome and indigestible fruits and

roots, such as *yaka* (*Pachyrrhizus angulatus*) or *kaile nganga*, or upon such wild yams as are obtainable. But even at such times every able-bodied man or woman seems to be able to find enough to eat.

The staple animal food of the Fijian is fish, which is fairly abundant in the coast villages, especially in those parts where fish-fences can be erected, except in very stormy weather. Even in times of reported famine it is found that the natives can always procure enough fish to satisfy their hunger. On one occasion, when the province of Lau was reported to be starving from the damage done by the disastrous hurricane of January, 1886, the Government dispatched a relief steamer from island to island to distribute rice and biscuits, but it was found that the natives consumed the whole of their dole in one prodigal feast, having quite sufficient fish and pumpkins for everyday use. The regularity of the supply is proved by the fact that, though in Mathuata and one or two other provinces the natives are acquainted with a method of smoking or drying fish, they resort to it but seldom, preferring to waste or throw away their superfluity to the trouble of curing it. In Rewa, after a good haul, fish is preserved for a few days in leaves by repeated cooking, and is thus often eaten tainted. At Mbau mullet is eaten raw with a sauce of sea-water as a delicacy—a practice introduced from Tonga.

Pigs and fowls are to be found in every native village, but they are reserved for feasts or the entertainment of strangers, and are seldom eaten by the owners as part of their diet. Except on such occasions fowls are rarely killed, even for the use of a sick person. It is not that any complicated system of joint ownership limits the use of these animals to

communal purposes, for pigs and fowls are owned by individuals absolutely, and though the native will often treat one of his pigs (called a *ngai*) with an almost Hibernian indulgence, and pet and feed it in his house like one of his children, this affection does not prevent him from slaughtering it and eating his share of it, when he considers it sufficiently fat. Whatever may be the reason the Fijian seldom eats a chicken and never an egg, although almost every other denizen of the reef and the bush—shell-fish, snakes, iguanas, lizards, grasshoppers, rats, grubs, chameleon-eggs, cats, dogs, wild duck, and, in recent times, mongoose—at some time finds its way into his maw.

PAST AND PRESENT COMPARED

Milk, the principal sustenance for children in their first years, is not to be had in native villages, and many Fijians vomit on first tasting it.[105] Their agricultural system has imbued them with a prejudice against cattle, which break down their weak fences, and trample and destroy the yams and plantains. In the isolated instances, where the chiefs keep goats or cattle as pets, they show, by their callous disregard for their wants, that they have no sympathy with the sufferings of the lower animals. The want of milk, as has been shown, has an important bearing upon the relation between the sexes.

The Fijians have two regular meals in the day. The principal meal is eaten in the afternoon when they return from their plantations. Sometimes food is cooked for them before they start in the morning, but

more often they take with them some cold yam or taro left from the previous day, or trust to being able to roast some wild food during the intervals of their work. The women, however, generally cook a meal for themselves and the children if there is sufficient food and firewood in the house. The boys either eat with their parents or forage for themselves in the bush, eating large quantities of unripe fruit, and thus inducing the bowel complaints that are so common among them. In some cases it is the custom to boil a separate pot of food for the children to eat during the day. The men eat first, and when they are satisfied the women and children may fall to upon what is left, but the latter, during the operation of cooking, know how to take care of themselves.

It is impossible to say whether the Fijians now plant less food than formerly. The traces of extensive clearings that are to be seen on almost every hillside prove nothing but that the population was once much larger, and that the native planter shifts his ground year by year. But the decay of custom has not left the food-supply untouched, for supposing the production to be proportionately as great, the consumption is proportionately far greater. In heathen times feasts were confined to occasions of ceremony within the tribe, such as births, marriages and funerals, or the rare visits of allies. In these days every meeting connected with the Government or with the Missions is accompanied by a feast to the visitors. There are, besides the half-yearly Provincial Council, a District Council every month, and some three or four missionary meetings every quarter, and, though these feasts are often small enough, and the meetings are held in different villages of the district or circuit in turn, they are all to be added to the ordinary expenditure of food upon births, marriages

and funerals, as well as the little tribal *solevus* that are held from time to time. Moreover, with the introduction of European-built vessels, and the safety of travellers from attack, travelling for pleasure has much increased, without any diminution of the hospitality to visitors, which is enjoined by customary law. The ravages of the imported banana disease, and the damage done in some islands to the bread-fruit by horses (lately introduced), which are inordinately fond of gnawing the juicy bark, have diminished the supply of two important articles of food.

While intercourse with foreigners has had an unfavourable influence on the regularity of the food supply, it has done very little to provide the natives with new articles of diet. Preserved meats, biscuits, bread, tea and sugar are used by many of the richer natives, but always as luxuries, not as part of their daily diet. To these, and more particularly to the use of sugar, the natives attribute the decay of their teeth, a condition which they declare was unknown to the last generation. Whether this be true or not, it is a remarkable fact that among quite a hundred skulls which I have examined in burying-caves I have never seen a decayed tooth, whereas it was lately possible for an American dentist to realize a considerable sum by selling sets of false teeth to the native chiefs.

The obvious defect in the Fijian dietary is the absence of all cereals. It is alleged by planters of experience that in Fiji, where the immigrant Melanesian labourer is fed upon native food, he is of less value as a labourer than in Queensland, where he receives a ration of bread and beef.



PRIMITIVE IMPLEMENTS

Cereals are the staple food of vegetarian races like the Indian and the French peasant, and indeed of all races that have left their mark upon history. But, though the Fijian has cultivated maize in the tax plantations for many years, and has tasted rice prepared by the coolie labourers, even growing it himself under European direction, he refuses to regard either as fit for human food. And, though he has a liking for bread and biscuits, he seems to consider both inferior to yams and *taro*.

The labour of agriculture has been much lightened by European tools, and for this reason more food may now be planted than in heathen times. Formerly the reeds and undergrowth were broken down with a sharp-edged wooden club, and burned as soon as they were dry enough; this work is now performed in a tithe of the time with a twelve-inch clearing-knife. The ground was then ready for the digging-stick, a tool which does little credit to the inventive powers of the Fijians considering their ingenuity in other directions. It is merely a pole of hard wood tapered at the point by flattening one side. The diggers work in parties of three or four, by driving their sticks into the ground to a depth of twelve inches in a circle two feet in diameter. Then, bearing upon the handles, they lever up the clod and turn it over. The women follow them on their knees, breaking up the clods with short sticks, and finally pulverizing the earth with their hands. The soil is then made into little hillocks in which the yams are planted. The yams were weeded with a hoe made of a plate of tortoise-shell or the valve of a large oyster. Iron tools have superseded these, but, strange to say, the European

spade remains less popular than the digging-stick, because it cannot, without pain, be driven into the ground with the bare foot. The most popular implement at present seems to be a compromise between the two—a digging-stick shod with a blade of iron—and it is astonishing how quickly the Fijians will dig a piece of ground with this unscientific tool.

Planting is made a picnic; the planter alternates spurts of feverish energy with spells of rest and smoking in the shade. Though the Fijian has learned the use of carts and wheel-barrows when working for Europeans, he does not adopt them, preferring to harvest his roots by carrying them in baskets slung across his shoulders with a stick. He uses no mean skill in the irrigation of his taro beds, leading the water to them by canals or by pipes made of hollow tree-fern trunks. For these he is now substituting troughs of corrugated iron.

The question of diet may have but little bearing upon the stamina of the adult Fijian, who is able to bear fatigue and exert his muscles as well as the men of any race, but it may well be concerned with those obscure qualities that threaten the race—the failure of the women to bear vigorous children.

Water

It is strange that, though the islands are richer in unpolluted streams of pure water than, perhaps, any country in the world the natives are notoriously careless about the water that they drink. At the Annual Meeting of Chiefs in 1885 they were reprehended by the Administrator, in his opening address, for their careless habit of drinking bad water. In their reply (Resolution 14) they said: "You

mention bad water and insufficiency of food as causes (for the excessive mortality), but we are usually careful about the water we drink, and we think that there is more food now than in former times." The Fijians are, in fact, quite ignorant of what constitutes purity in drinking water. They assume any water to be drinkable that is moderately clear and does not contain solid impurities. There are villages that draw their drinking-water from shallow holes that collect the surface-water from burying-grounds. Many of the native wells are shallow pools lined with a sediment of decayed leaves and supplied from the surface drainage from the village square, which swarms with pigs. In the villages situated in the mangrove swamps of the deltas of the large rivers no wholesome water can be obtained without a journey of several miles, and the people use exclusively water collected in surface depressions. In the sandy, rocky and riverless islands the natives are content with surface-water when deep wells might easily be sunk. And, even in villages which draw their water from pure running streams, the water is carried and kept in bamboos and cocoanut-shells that are half rotten, and are never cleansed. In this respect, it is true, contact with Europeans has not affected their customs either for better or for worse.

FOOTNOTES:

[105] The Government has succeeded in persuading a few chiefs to keep milch cows, but they are not milked regularly.

CHAPTER XXIX

YANKONA (*Kava*)

Yankona (*Yaqona*) the *Kava* or *Ava* of the Polynesians, is an infusion of the root of the pepper plant (*Piper methysticum*), which is indigenous in Fiji. Throughout Polynesia it occupies the place which coffee takes among the Arabs, that is to say, it is used on occasions of ceremony and in the entertainment of strangers, and its preparation, even in private houses, is always accompanied by a ceremonial more or less elaborate. Its geographical distribution in the Pacific may be roughly described by saying that the races that chew betel do not drink *yankona*. The plant is unknown in the Solomon Islands and the other Melanesian groups, with the exception of the Banks and New Hebrides Islands. We know that the Banks Islanders acquired the habit of drinking it only recently, and it is possible that the New Hebrides natives learned the habit from labourers returning from the plantations in Fiji. Kava-drinking, indeed, seems to be so purely a Polynesian custom, that the Fijians might be supposed to have learned it from the Polynesians were it not for the fact that the yankona songs of the hill tribes are so archaic that the people have quite forgotten their original meaning. In the New Hebrides and Banks Islands the quasi-religious character of the custom has not yet given place to everyday use, and *yankona* is not drunk by women.

Even in Fiji itself there was considerable diversity of custom. Thomas Williams says it was not in common use in Vanualevu and part of Vitilevu in his time. The hill tribes of Vitilevu seem always to have used it, though its use was confined to the old men, who

often drank it to excess. They prepared it without the elaborate ceremonial with which the coast tribes have made us familiar, but on great occasions they made use of a peculiar weird chant, accompanied by gestures whose meaning has been long forgotten. In Williams's time the natives used to assert that the true Fijian mode of preparing the root was by grating, and that the practice of chewing it, which is now universal throughout Fiji, was introduced from Tonga. About thirty years ago King George of Tonga absolutely prohibited the chewing of kava as a filthy habit, and the practice of grating the root or pounding it between two stones has now become so universal that the Tongans regard the Fijian habit of chewing it, which they themselves introduced, with the utmost disgust. The customs of the two countries have thus been reversed.

A COLD-BLOODED EXECUTION

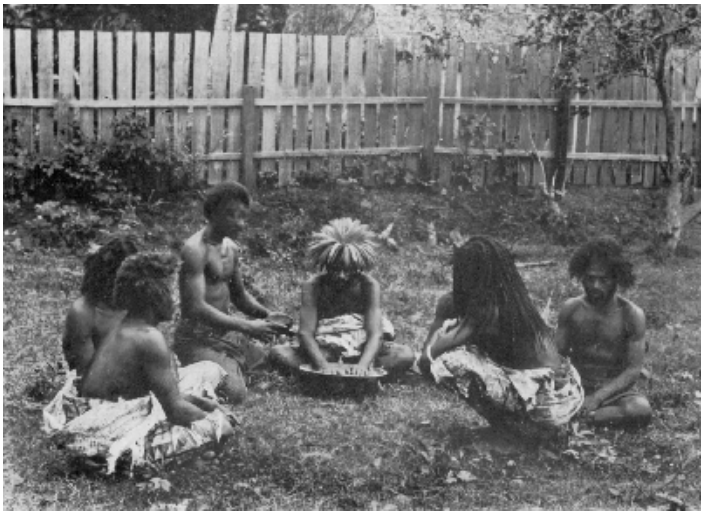
In former times the use of *yankona* in Fiji was purely ceremonial. A dried root was the indispensable accompaniment of every presentation of food. The spokesman of the donors held it in his hand while making his speech, and the representative of the recipients tore off a rootlet or two while acknowledging the gift. The chiefs *yankona* circle supplied the want of newspapers; the news and gossip of the day were related and discussed; the chief's advisers seized upon the convivial moment as the most favourable opportunity for making known their views; matters of high policy were often decided; the chief's will, gathered from a few careless words spoken at the *yankona* ring, was carried from mouth to mouth throughout his dominions. No

public business was transacted without *yankona*-drinking. The late Mr. William Coxon, who acted as English secretary to Tui Thakau, told me that he witnessed an execution at the chiefs *yankona* ring, which it would be difficult to surpass in cold-blooded horror. The ring was formed as usual, except that the open space between the chief and the bowl was occupied by the condemned man, Tui Thakau's cousin, who had been guilty of sedition after repeated warnings. Four hulking fellows, seated on either side of him, held the ends of the cord that passed about his neck. The chewing and mixing proceeded with their usual decorous deliberation, and none knew better than the condemned man that the hand-clapping of the person officiating at the bowl, notifying that the drink was brewed, would be the signal for his death. He could hear the liquor slopping back into the bowl as the strainer was wrung out. Knowing exactly how often the operation must be repeated, he could count the moments of life left to him, yet he sat like the others in deferential silence with his eyes upon the floor and his breathing as regular as theirs. At last the brew was made: the brewer gathered the strainer into a tidy parcel, swept it once round the lip of the bowl, and struck it smartly with the other hand. It was the signal. The executioners threw their whole weight upon the rope, and the body fell writhing upon the floor with the head almost wrung from the shoulders, and the tongue hideously extruded from the open mouth. They stayed so until the tortured limbs ceased to writhe, and then, at a signal from the chief, the body was dragged by the shoulders to the doorway, and flung, rope and all, out of the house. It fell with a heavy thud upon the hard ground below, for the house was built upon a foundation fourteen feet

high. Not until all was finished did any one break the silence, and the talk turned upon the ordinary topics of the day, and the men laughed at the jester's jokes as usual.

Allowing for certain local variations, the ceremony of *yankona*-drinking as practised throughout Fiji at the present time is a fair guide to the ancient practice. The chief is seated with his back to the raised bed-place at the further end of the house, the bowl is hanging from the eaves with its strainer; a few young men, preferably those who are known to have good teeth, are called in by one of the attendants. A man unhooks the bowl from its hanging-place, and, squatting on his heels, claps his hands several times in apology to the company for having reached above their heads. The man who is to make the brew faces the chief with the bowl before him, carefully turning it so as to allow the cord by which it hung to be stretched out in the direction of the presiding chief. The others, still conversing, move their places so as to form two lines, the sides of an oblong corresponding with the shape of the house, the president closing one end and the bowl the other. When all is ready a herald, sitting near the chief, says, "*Na yankona saka*" (the *yankona*, sir), and the chief, or his own herald in his place, says carelessly, "*Mama!*" (chew!). The outer rind is scraped off with a knife, the root is cut into small pieces, and while water is poured over the hands of the brewer to cleanse them, the young men munch the root into a pulp, which they deposit in the bowl until it is studded all over with little doughy lumps of the size of hens' eggs. When all is chewed the brewer takes the bowl by the edge and tilts it towards the chief, and the herald calls his attention to it by saying, "*Sa mama saka na yankona*" (the *yankona*, sir, is chewed);

the president glances at it and says, in a low tone, "*Lomba*" (wring it), an order which the herald repeats in a louder tone. Water is poured into the bowl from a jar or bamboo, the brewer meanwhile stirring it into a muddy fluid. It is at this point that the *yankona* song is chanted. Each verse is sung in a quavering duet, which is broken in upon by a chorus chanted in unison, each verse ending with a sort of sigh or grunt and accompanied by gestures of the arms and body, which are executed in absolute time. The effect of the double line of bodies swaying gracefully in the uncertain light of the lamp has an extremely picturesque effect. The words of the chant have been so far conventionalized that they have ceased to convey any meaning.



Brewing Yangkona.

THE *YANKONA* CEREMONY

Throughout the chant the brewer is busy at his task.

He first places the strainer, a bunch of the fibres of hybiscus bark, over the surface of the infusion, on which it floats like a buoyant net. Then he presses the outer edge of it down along the sloping bottom of the bowl, and coaxes it upwards towards him with his fingers so as to enclose all the solid matter of the infusion in a sort of bag or parcel. Slightly twisting the ends of the parcel he folds them together, and doubling it again so as to reduce its size to a comfortable hold for the hands, he lifts it gently from the liquor and begins to wring it, allowing the liquor to drain from it back into the bowl. Taking a new handhold he twists it tighter and tighter until the last drop is wrung from it and the fibres crack with the tension. On a little mat spread at his left hand he now shakes out the woody portions of the root, holding the strainer up with the left hand and combing it with the fingers of the right. The operation of straining is repeated three or four times, until the liquor is sufficiently clear, and sometimes two strainers are employed, the one to relieve the other. An old strainer is preferred to a new one, from which the acrid quality of the fibre has not been washed by frequent use. If strained too often the liquor becomes weak and tasteless, and some judgment has to be exercised by the brewer to regulate his movements so as to bring his operation to a conclusion without interrupting the singers in the middle of a verse. The signal, warning them not to begin another verse, consists in making a feint in the air as if to wipe the lip of the bowl, and in then holding the strainer in the left hand while striking it sharply three or four times with the hollow palm of the right. The cup-bearer now crouches before the bowl, holding his cup over it with both hands, while the brewer fills it by using the strainer as a sponge.

The cup-bearer now approaches the chief in a stooping posture, holding the full cup with both hands at arm's length before him, and empties a portion of its contents into the chief's own private cup, which has been carefully wiped for the occasion. While the president is drinking all clap their hands in a quick and merry measure, finishing abruptly with two sharp claps as the president spins his cup upon the ground, the herald crying, "*Mbiu*" (thrown away) at the same moment. At this the clapping becomes independent. It is prolonged according to the rank of the chief, and it is naturally more hearty on the part of his own dependants. Some sycophant usually continues to clap for some moments after the others have ceased in the hope of attracting the chief's attention. The next to drink after the president is his private herald or attendant; after him the chief next in rank and his attendant, and so on until the liquor is exhausted. Unlike the practice of Tonga, the cup-bearer has the delicate duty of serving the company in the order of rank without assistance from the herald, who, to qualify himself for his hereditary office, has made a lifelong study of the table of precedence. When two persons of nearly equal rank are present a very pretty contest of modesty ensues, the first served declining the proffered cup in favour of the other, who in his turn vehemently repudiates the honour thrust upon him. It is an empty form prescribed by convention, for the fact of drinking before another would confer a step in the social ladder no more than preceding another to the dinner-table in more civilized communities. If the cup-bearer were to make a mistake—a very rare occurrence—he would be set right by one of the heralds before he could commit his solecism. The task was less difficult, because when custom was the

law it was impossible for reigning chiefs to eat or drink together, and even now, when they are brought together by the Government, the feast is always apportioned, and taken away by their attendants to be eaten in the privacy of their temporary lodging. But, since no native council would be fruitful of debate unless it were opened with a solemn *yankona*-drinking, the problem of precedence has been boldly solved by the English commissioners by prearranging a fictitious table of precedence, alphabetical or otherwise, so fictitious that it cannot be construed into a ground of offence, even by the most jealous and susceptible.

It is only in modern times that women have become *yankona* drinkers. All the old natives agree that it used to be considered a shocking thing for women to drink *yankona*. Some of them assert that the emancipation of women from the old restriction was introduced from Tonga, while others think that Nkoliwasawasa, the sister of Thakombau, was the first to drink it in Mbau, and that she was allowed to do so to comfort her for the loss of her husband. Others were not allowed to imitate her, for that would have been disrespectful, but as soon as the status of women was raised through the influence of the missionaries they began to drink *yankona* as the men had done before.

FORMERLY FORBIDDEN TO WOMEN

Other changes have crept in. In the old days, it was not drunk in every house nor on every night, but only in chiefs' houses by the chief and his retainers,

and on the occasion of special feasts and ceremonies. Now, however, it is drunk in the houses of the common people whenever they can obtain a supply of the root. Far more *yankona* is now planted than before, and one chief at least is in the habit of growing it for trade. European traders import it in large quantities from Samoa and other Polynesian islands and retail it to natives at the usual rate of from 1/6 to 2/- a lb.

Boys begin to drink it as soon as they leave school, say at the age of eighteen; girls do not begin till later, though they are often required to chew the root for others to drink. Women seem to drink it as a beverage, as a stimulant, as a laxative, and also as a diuretic. They drink it during pregnancy in the hope that it will give an easy labour and produce a fine child; and also during the suckling period under the excuse that it increases the flow of milk when all other expedients fail. There is among some natives a fixed belief that frequent draughts of *yankona* are a specific in the early stages of diarrhœa.

There can be no doubt that moderate drinkers find it quite innocuous, but it is otherwise with confirmed *yankona* topers, who are easily recognized. Their bodies become emaciated, and their skin, especially the palms of the hands, the soles of the feet and the forearms and shins, become dry and covered with scales. They lose their appetite, their sleep is disordered, their eyes bloodshot, they complain of pains in the pit of the stomach and sink into unwholesome lethargy. Any more prolonged debauch than usual leaves its marks upon the drinker for two or three days.

Natives describe the symptoms of habitual *yankona*-

drinking as follows:—

Kaui (peeling of the skin), at first about the hypogastrium only, but eventually over all those parts of the body where it usually occurs; offensive perspiration; smarting of the conjunctivæ; darkening in hue of the nose and cheeks; *lakatha*, *i.e.* cracking of the palms and soles, weariness and lethargy, pins and needles in the hands and feet. If an habitual toper goes without *yankona* for one day he feels restlessness and sleeplessness, a parched feeling in the mouth and viscidity in the saliva. If the abstinence is continued for two or three days he has borborygmi, occasionally tenesmus.

The following are the effects of a single debauch on a person unaccustomed to drink *yankona*: restlessness, headache and sleeplessness, singing in the ears, salivation, hyperuresis, languor, temporary loss of control of the legs, tremor of the hand when grasping, and disinclination for food.

From my own experience I am bound to say that one may drink a very great deal of *yankona* without experiencing any of these symptoms. The visitor to the Pacific who fondly hopes that a single draught of the national beverage will send him careering over the country with a clear head but rebellious legs will be woefully disappointed. On one occasion I joined a party of investigation to test *in propriâ personâ* the effects of a carouse. We drank a bucketful of strong *yankona* between the three of us in three-quarters of an hour, until, to put it plainly, we could hold no more. The effect was negative. We felt no stimulation, no soothing, no depression. Our lower limbs continued to behave as lower limbs should. The drink neither kept us awake nor sent us to sleep,

and it left no headache behind it. So far from the hands trembling in the act of grasping, one of our number played a better game of billiards that afternoon than usual. We felt a little sick, perhaps, but not more than if we had been compelled to swallow the same extravagant quantity of any other liquid.

A SUBSTITUTE FOR ALCOHOL

We noticed the familiar numbing sensation of the fauces and the soft palate which swallowing strong *yankona* always induces. For a time the quantity of saliva was increased, and it became more viscid than usual. Europeans who are accustomed to drink *yankona* in moderate quantities find, not only that it quenches thirst better than any other beverage on a hot day, but that it acts as a mild stimulant to social conversation, and to the fullest enjoyment of tobacco. Its capacity for loosening the tongue is fully recognized by all those who have to conduct native meetings. Native chiefs of high rank, confronted with each other, are usually tongue-tied with awkward constraint, but as soon as the *yankona* cup has gone round, their reserve is dispelled like the mists of a summer morning, and they become prone to betray confidences that would otherwise have remained locked in their bosoms. Europeans have discovered an even more useful quality in *yankona*. The great temptation that besets lonely Englishmen in tropical countries is intemperance, which grows upon some of them until they lose all power of resistance to the vice. Some confirmed drunkards have cured themselves by substituting *yankona* for spirits. They

drink, it is true, incredible quantities of the root, but it satisfies the craving for a stimulant, without producing intoxication. In this respect it is a pity that *yankona* cannot be acclimatized in Europe.

It is a common fallacy among writers of the South Seas that "the natives of the Pacific Islands use a fermented beverage called kava." So far from its being fermented, kava is always drunk as soon as it is made, and any dregs left in the bowl over night are unfit to drink the next morning, because by that time fermentation has generally begun. Those who desire to know more of the chemical analysis of *yankona* can consult the monograph on the subject given by Dr. Lewin with the German love of ponderous detail before the German Medical Society in 1885. The chief physiological influence of the drug in the human body is exercised on the motor nerves, but the sensory fibres are also affected, and the influence is cumulative. The alcoholic extract, when evaporated to the consistency of soap, is as active as cocaine, weight for weight, in inducing local anæsthesia.

There is, no doubt, in these days, a greater consumption of *yankona* than in heathen times, for at present the consumption is limited only by the supply. Except in favoured localities, such as the island of Koro, the root requires from two to five years to come to maturity, and demands a good deal of attention during its growth. The importation of the dried root from other islands in the Pacific has certainly made the natives independent of the green crop; but since a single root of the ordinary size generally suffices only for a single occasion, and its equivalent in dried root cannot be purchased at the local stores for much less than 2/- a pound (a pound

being the minimum required for an evening *yankona* party)—the constant use of the root is beyond the power of any but the richer natives. Natives probably drink *yankona* once a day throughout the year, far less, in fact, than persons of the same rank in Tonga, where the pounding stones are never silent. Commoners, unless they are in attendance on chiefs, go many days without tasting it.

In one respect there are signs of a change for the better. The custom of chewing the green root not only tended to foster a taste for drinking in the young person selected to prepare the bowl, but was probably the means of communicating the bacilli of disease through the saliva. There are Europeans who defend the dirty habit on the ground that pounding reduces the woody fibre to dust which cannot be removed by the strainer, and who allege that the root is merely masticated, and leaves the mouth uncontaminated as it went in. But this comfortable belief received a rude shock when the experiment was made of weighing an ounce of the root before and after chewing, and it was found that the ounce had increased by something more than 10 per cent. Happily, the Tongan chief is the *arbiter elegantiarum* to the Fijian Courts, and it is fast becoming the fashion to regard the habit of chewing *yankona* in its proper light and to substitute the pounding stones of Tonga.

DISCOURAGED BY MISSIONARIES

The Wesleyan missionaries have attacked *yankona* drinking with a fiery zeal which is scarcely commensurate with the importance of the subject,

for if it is a vice at all, it cannot reasonably be condemned for bringing in its train any of those social evils that are due to alcohol. A large number of the native teachers wear a blue ribbon on their shirt-fronts in token that they have abjured tobacco and *yankona*, and suspend conspicuously in their houses a card bearing the legend, "*Sa tabu na yaqona kei na tavako*" (drinking and smoking are forbidden). In the interests of the mission the wisdom of this crusade may well be questioned, for the path of virtue for the native has been made dull enough already by the prohibition of all his ancient heathen distractions, and to curtail any more of his pleasures would be to invite an inevitable reaction which up to now has taken the course of going over to the Roman Catholics, whose policy it is to make the lives of the Fijians as joyous as they dare. Nevertheless, in so far as they have checked the habit of *yankona*-drinking among youths and childbearing women, the efforts of the Wesleyan missionaries are likely to be of some immediate if not ulterior advantage.

CHAPTER XXX

TOBACCO

The tobacco plant was indigenous in Fiji, but until the beginning of the nineteenth century the leaf was only used for killing lice, from which it took its original native name of *mate-ni-kutu* (lice-slayer). Smoking was introduced by a Manila ship, and it

spread rapidly through the group, being adopted by both sexes.

The plant is grown in dry, sandy soil, preferably on the sites of old houses which have been well manured by the village pigs. The leaves are hung suspended in bundles from the rafters of a house to wither, and are then twisted tightly together to sweat. This produces a leaf of great pungency and strength. It is smoked almost exclusively in the form of a *suluka*, or cigarette, rolled in dry banana leaf. The ribs of the tobacco leaf are stripped off, the leaf is partially dried over a firebrand, and shredded before being rolled, and a supply of ready-rolled *suluka* is either stuck into a cleft reed to keep it from unrolling, or carried behind the ear.

Until about 1880 every native over fourteen years of age smoked; many of the children began at a much earlier age, and, if punished for it, continued the practice in secret. About twenty years ago the Wesleyan missionaries tried to discourage the practice, by instituting a blue ribbon for total abstainers from kava and tobacco. They may have induced five per cent. of the adults to abandon the habit.

PIPE SMOKING

As long as smoking was confined to the *suluka* it had a picturesque side, but latterly the inconvenience of a cigarette that goes out every two or three minutes, even with continuous application, has favoured the introduction of the English pipe. The young chiefs are seldom seen without one, and as they omit to remove it when speaking to you, it has not tended to

preserve the courtliness of Fijian manners. The women have now begun to use it, and may be seen working in their plantations, smoking a short, black clay pipe, with the bowl turned downwards to keep out the rain. It would no doubt be universal were it not that the imported tobacco, though it is admitted to have a pleasant smell, is objected to as being less narcotic than the native-cured leaf.

The women smoke a great deal during pregnancy, but abstain for the first ten days after confinement. One woman told me that she had noticed, when suckling, that when she was smoking heavily she had less milk, and that her baby cried a great deal, whereupon she discontinued smoking until the child was able to crawl. Few Fijian mothers show so much consideration. With the view of testing the important point as to whether excessive smoking affected the mothers, an experiment was made on May 29, 1883. A healthy Fijian woman, with a child at the breast, was taken to Suva hospital and given half-an-ounce of native leaf to smoke. She consumed is all in two hours, and then declined to smoke any more. One and a half fluid ounces of her milk were drawn off and submitted to examination by the late Dr. Zimmer. Unfortunately there were not sufficient appliances for securing a positive analysis, but the addition of platinum bichloride to the distillate gave a yellow precipitate, such as is produced by the combination of nicotine with that salt.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE TENURE OF LAND

At the cession of the islands in 1874 the form of land tenure among the Fijians was very imperfectly understood. Most of the settlers, seeing the large tracts of uncultivated land and the comparatively small patches of cultivation round the native villages, planted one year and deserted the next in favour of virgin soil, did not believe that the natives had any definite system of land tenure, or that, with so large a tract of waste land, they had found the necessity for evolving proprietary rights in the soil.

THE PROPRIETARY UNIT

As soon as the sale of land by the chiefs to Europeans came to be investigated by the Lands Commission there was a bitter controversy as to what was the proprietary unit in the eye of customary law. It was the object of every claimant to land to show that the proprietary unit was the chief who had signed the deed upon which he relied. The natives on the other hand, chiefs and people alike, were at pains to prove that the land was vested in the people, that the chief virtually had no interest in it at all, and had acted *ultra vires* in selling it. The reader will remember the disastrous mistake made by the Government in British India—how as our empire spread our representatives took from their Mahommedan predecessors the assumption that all private property in land was held from the sovereign; that the soil was therefore theirs, and that any land laws would

be of their creation; how Lord Cornwallis converted the Mahommedan tax-gatherers into landed proprietors, and how in the southern provinces this was reversed and the Government recognized nothing between itself and the proprietors. Both these beliefs proved to be erroneous, because as in Fiji they were attempting to make certain facts accord with European ideas. In India the real unit was the village community; in Fiji, the tribal community.

The inquiries of the Lands Commission have shown that the proprietary unit is an aggregation of Matankalis seldom less than four, subdivided in their turn into Tokatoka (septs), but known for ordinary purposes by the name of the village they inhabit, or on occasions of ceremony by their title, *Thavu*. This title is in some instances, probably in all, taken from the name of the site of their original village. Matankalis generally took their name from the house site of their founders. A process of fission and fusion (unfortunately the latter in these days of excessive mortality) is continually taking place. If a Tokatoka becomes too numerous it is subdivided, and the new sept takes its name from that of the house in which its leader lives. If it becomes more numerous still it is called a Matankali. When the Matankali becomes reduced to six males or less, it is usually absorbed, and becomes a Tokatoka of the Matankali most nearly allied to it.[106]

The early basis of society throughout the world is kinship. If a man is not a kinsman, then he is an enemy, the craftiest order of wild beast. Among primitive tribes the groups of consanguineous relations are much larger than among civilized peoples, because there is always a tendency for

persons owning any tie of kinship to band together for mutual protection. The Fijians had no territorial roots. It is not too much to say that no tribe now occupies the land held by its fathers two centuries ago. They are united by consanguinity, not by the joint ownership of the soil. But the longer they stay upon land, the stronger becomes their connection with it, until at last it becomes the basis of brotherhood, and the adoption of a stranger confers nearly the same privileges as those enjoyed by full-born members of the tribe.

The evolution of the chief in Polynesia is not so complicated as in Europe. Chiefs in ancient Greece were necessarily wealthy, and in Europe wealth led to chieftaincy. But in Fiji the chief arrived at his position only in virtue of being the representative of the purest line of the common ancestor, related to his inferiors of the same tribe, but distinct from the surrounding tribes, who admitted his authority in virtue of conquest. Sir Henry Maine well says, "When the relation which it created lasted some time, there would have been no deadlier insult to the lord than to have attributed to him a common origin with the great bulk of his tenants." For tenants in England innocent names have come to bear an insulting meaning; "villain," "churl" and "boor" are names perverted by the chiefs to indicate their contempt for the tenants, with whom in reality they were related.

The exalted rank of the high chiefs in Fiji does not seem to arise until his tribe has subdued others by conquest. His people seemed to treat him with far greater respect when he had allowed *fuidhir* tenants —fugitives from broken tribes—to settle on the waste lands of the tribe. The superstitious element that had

hitherto lain dormant then brought into prominence the fact that in his body ran the purest blood of the Kalou-Vu, the ancestor-god, a being to whom reverence as well as obedience must be paid. The priests, who always cultivated an excellent understanding with the chiefs, encouraged this feeling, and in return the chief took care that the offerings to the gods were not stinted. At the death of the chief there was a limited election, such as was practised in Ireland as late as 1596. The candidates for election were limited first to the brothers of the deceased, and in default to his cousins, the sons of his brothers' brother. In default of these the son was elected if he was old enough. The reason for this law of succession is obvious. The tribe must have a leader in the zenith of his powers, and the dead chief's brother was looked upon as the most fit person to be regent during the son's minority. The eldest brother succeeded, unless there were objections to him. In Bureta the ancient ceremony was still practised up to a few years ago. The people were assembled after the burial of the chief, and one of the elders of the tribe proposed the name of his successor. Often voices from the crowd shouted objections. "No, he is hasty tempered." "One goes into his house hungry and he gives not to eat." Even if they had resolved on the appointment of the eldest brother as successor the objections were still made as a delicate hint to him to amend his conduct when he became chief. He was then taken to a stream and bathed, and the chief's *masi* was then wrapped round him. Once elected, whether by the actual ceremony or by a survival of it, he assumed control over the tenants in villeinage and over the waste lands of the tribe.

THREE

KINDS OF REAL ESTATE

Now, among tribes sprung from a common origin, living upon adjacent lands, practising the same form of religion, subjected to the same conditions of intertribal warfare, and having attained the same social development, one would expect to find the land laws almost identical, but, on the contrary, in the narrow area formed by the watershed on the eastern part of Vitilevu, no less than eight systems of tenure have been found to exist.

The title to land is vested in the full-born members of a tribe. Three kinds of land are recognized. The *yavu* or town lot, the *nkele* or arable land, and the *veikau* or forest. The two first of these are nominally in the occupation of the heads of families. The *veikau* is common to all the members of the community, but it is always liable to be encroached upon and appropriated according to the rules to be laid down when I come to discuss the *nkele*.

The Yavu or Building Site

The nucleus of every Fijian village has been at no very remote date a single family, inhabiting a single house. As Fijians from the parent stock multiplied, houses were built round the site of the house of the common ancestor. Each son when he married and settled down, chose for himself a site for his house, within the limits of the fortification. He named it after his own fancy, and when imagination failed him, after the nearest natural object. Thus most Fijian houses are named after some native tree. In the course of years, or the vicissitudes of war, the

village was removed, but when this was done, the new settlement was built as nearly as possible upon the exact plan of the old one. I have watched the process. When the site was decided upon the chief went with his people, and selected a site for his own house. In heathen times, the position of the *Mbure*, or temple, was first marked out, and the chief pitched his temporary shelter in a position that corresponded with the site of his house in the village he had abandoned. Then his nearest neighbours marked out the sites of their houses. Their neighbours followed, and so on until the new village corresponded exactly with the old, as far as the nature of the ground permitted. If the town increased in size, new ground from outside the moat was appropriated by the householders in want of a house, and the moat was dug so as to include it. These house sites descended by the ordinary law of inheritance to the eldest brother, or in default of a brother, to the eldest son. One man, especially if he were a representative of a decaying family, might own several. For years no house might have been built upon them, and yet, unless he formally conveyed them to another, the right of himself and his heirs was never disputed. The proprietary rights were most jealously guarded. Between each *yavu* there must be space for a path, and the eaves of your house must not project so as to drip upon a part of the path appertaining to your neighbour's *yavu*. A *yavu* might occasionally, though rarely, be given in dowry, but in such cases it reverted, as in the case of arable land, to the descendants of the original owner.

Nkele, Or Arable Land



OF APPROPRIATING COMMONS

The *nkele* is simply that portion of the *veikau* or forest that has been appropriated. Once appropriated it descends according to the fixed laws of inheritance. But the ownership of a proprietor is strictly limited. There is no more absolute ownership known to the Fijian customary law than there is to the English. "No man is in law the absolute owner of lands. He can only hold an estate in them."[107] The tenure of the *nkele* may be best compared to an estate for life. Each owner holds for the household to which he belongs; the household holds for the sept, the sept for the clan, the clan for the community, and the community for posterity. The owner of the *nkele* had over his land a little less than *dominium* and a little more than *usufruct*.

Now that the tribes have been so reduced in numbers by war and foreign diseases, and whole villages have been swept away, leaving only one or two representatives who have merged themselves for shelter and protection in the community most nearly allied to them, there is still little, even of the forest land, that has not some reputed owner. Thus, when a man would clear and cultivate some patch far removed from the village and overgrown by trees he first inquires (if he does not know) who is the direct descendant and representative of the tribe that formerly planted on the land. It is rare that no claimant can be found, and in some cases the communal rights have apparently merged into the individual ownership of a solitary survivor. But among tribes who have quite lately fought their way into land belonging to their neighbours, and who

have successfully held the conquered territory until the cession of the islands to England, no member of the tribe can have rights over the *veikau* greater than those enjoyed by his fellows. Among these one may almost daily observe the manner of appropriating land when required for planting purposes. Under the primitive system, agricultural crops could not be grown in the same soil with success for more than two seasons, and consequently an industrious planter will have patches of cultivation scattered about upon the flat land bordering the watercourses for a large area surrounding the village. When he would acquire and dig a new garden he goes to the chief and uses some such formula as this: "I have come, sir, to speak about my garden. I wish to plant on the little flat known as So-and-so." The chief asks those round him whether the land has an owner, and if they answer in the negative, tells the man to report his intention to his Matankali. Thenceforward the land, or the usufruct of it, is appropriated by that man and his heirs.

So simple a procedure cannot of course be tolerated unless the land far exceeds the requirements of the population; and it is curious to note in some communities such as Rewa, where the people outnumber the planting-grounds, that the procedure for appropriation or transfer becomes at once more formal and elaborate.

The ancient boundaries of lands were continually contracting and extending, in accordance with the military strength of the tribe. But when tribes were of nearly equal strength, and the fortunes of war were doubtful, both sides were as anxious to maintain peace as the diplomatist of modern Europe. Questions of land boundaries, where the land was so

far more abundant than either side required, were submitted to a rough form of arbitration. If one tribe could show occupation, the other gave way rather than fight about such a trifle. Unless it had strategic importance or bore valuable fruit-trees, or salt-pans, or some other product whose loss would be felt, land in itself in those days was of no account. Almost the only things of value that the Fijians recognized in connection with land were the products of human industry—wells, trees and crops. To claim another man's plantation was a *casus belli*: to appropriate a patch of forest, reputed to belong to a neighbour, was an offence that could be palliated by a paltry present. Thus, if the council of the tribe determined to lay claim to a boundary enclosing a strip of debatable land, they sent men to acquire and plant gardens as near the projected boundary as possible. These gardens became the property of the men who planted them, and of their heirs, unless of course the neighbours resented the intrusion, and drove them back. The same custom prevails even more largely under the English Government. As soon as the lands court is reported to be about to visit the district, every tribe begins extending its forest boundaries. The claims invariably overlap, and when the surveyor visits the spot, he finds newly-made plantations overlapping one another for several furlongs in inextricable confusion. Any of these plantations, if the claimants be successful, will be vested in the persons who acquired them, with of course the same restrictions as applies to the tenure of *nkele* generally.

METHOD OF EVICTION

Having sketched the manner of acquisition and appropriation of common land, I will now describe the common method of divesting the person of ownership. This could only be done immediately after appropriation, as a protest against his right to acquire and plant, or as punishment for a crime. In the latter case the crime must in some way have infringed upon the rights or dignity of a chief, and that chief must feel in himself the power to support his prohibition by force of arms if need be. The custom was called *veisauthi*. It consisted in sticking a row of peeled reeds into the acquired ground. From this the land-grabber understood that he planted again at his peril. If he felt strong enough he might continue, but he would have to fight for it. As a general rule he desisted, because he knew that the protesting parties, whoever they were, had not taken this step without counting the cost. If the protestors were persons within his own tribe, the dispute would be brought up before the council of headmen, and adjusted one way or the other. If the *veisauthi* was resorted to as a punishment for an injury to the chief, it was erected upon all the planting-lands of the offending person. It had only one meaning, that he must flee for his life, and, conscious of his guilt, he almost invariably did so. Even if he were stronger than the chief he fled to collect his strength among the enemies of the tribe, for the *veisauthi* in this case meant that he would be killed by foul means rather than fair—by the club in his sleep, or by poison.

The Veikau, or Forest

EVOLUTION OF THE LANDLORD

This term included all the uncultivated lands within the reputed boundaries of the tribe. As I have already said, these boundaries fluctuated with its military strength. Much of the land was worthless for cultivation, rough, bare hills, from which every scrap of soil had been washed by the summer rains, and on which the scanty herbage was scorched dry by the winter drought, and burnt annually in the autumn bush fires. To such land as this no value whatever was attached. At the foot of every hill ran streams, with patches of rich land here and there along their banks. To include this, the claim was laid to the whole tract. Besides its value as planting land, the actual forest was often claimed for the rights of cutting timber, and pasturing herds of half-wild pigs. Forests containing the *vesi*, valued as the best timber for the posts of houses, or sandal-wood, a profitable article of barter from remote times, were claimed with the same tenacity as in the case of the *nkele*; but they were claimed by the whole community, not by individuals. We have now to observe a very curious transition from communal waste lands to land owned exclusively, under the law, which is so well described by Sir Henry Maine. The waste lands belonged, collectively, to the tribe, but inasmuch as tribal matters were decided for the community by the chief, and an oligarchy of his supporters, the ordinary freeborn men of the tribe gradually ceased to ask for any voice in the disposal of the waste lands. The chief, accustomed to decide questions of appropriation without reference to his people, came gradually to look upon the waste lands as his private estate. The change finally came when fugitives approached the tribe asking for their protection. They came, of course, to the chief, as the tribal representative, and asked for protection, and for the

usufruct of land on which to plant their food. He, in the name of the tribe, allotted to them a portion of the *veikau* on the ordinary tenure of dependants, namely, an annual tribute from the crops grown upon the land. This tribute, presented to the chief, was divided out among his own people, but gradually the annual tribute was supplemented by produce yielded on the chief's demand, whenever he had a feast to make. In making these demands he was no longer acting as a tribal representative, but as an individual. In the course of generations, the origin of tenure faded from the memory of the people, and it was only remembered that the land was held upon the condition of personal tribute to the chief, to be yielded on his demand. He was, in fact, the landlord, they the tenants. I shall describe in detail various tenancies that arose in this manner. We are concerned at present with its bearing upon the *veikau*. Among the lands thus granted to dependant tribes were considerable tracts that remained uncultivated. In theory the grant had been only in respect of the land actually used, but in practice it was common to regard the *veikau* surrounding the plantations as tenanted by the dependant tribe. This portion of the *veikau* was held on a different tenure from the main portion claimed by the predominant tribe. In the latter case the chief alone claimed the disposal of it, or of the trees that grew upon it. In the former he rarely gave leave even for the cutting of trees, without first intimating his intention to his tenants. They had in fact acquired rights over it allied to usufruct. They might cut timber in moderation without leave. They could appropriate to individuals of the tribe such portions as they required, but they might not grant leave to cut timber to outsiders without first obtaining the chiefs

permission.

The owners of the soil of a conquered tribe are reduced to a servile status provided that their conquerors settle within reach of them. Mere conquest without occupation produces no change in the form of tenure. Tribute may be paid perhaps for a year or two, but as soon as the conquered tribe feels itself strong enough to repudiate its subjection the tribute ceases, and the tenure of land within the limits of the tribe have from the beginning remained unaffected. It is otherwise where conquest is followed by occupation. In such cases, from free landowners the conquered are reduced at one sweep to the *nkalini-ni-kuro*, or kitchen men, the lowest status known to the Fijian customary law. An instance of this sudden change is to be found in the tribes of Maumi, Ovea and Mokani, who were probably originally owners of the soil on which they live, but who have been reduced by the occupation of the Mbau chiefs to the status of kitchen men. The ceremony of transfer varied in different districts. In Mbau it took the form of the *soro-ni-nkele* (earth tribute). When the conquered people came to pay their submission, besides the whales' teeth they presented a basket of earth in token that their land was at the disposal of their conquerors. This does not necessarily mean that the land was conveyed to their conquerors, for land, without people to cultivate it, was valueless. They rather conveyed their own bodies with the land on which they lived as being inseparable, and only valuable when in conjunction. Among primitive peoples an act done at regular intervals tends to become a permanent institution. There is no legislation among primitive tribes, but custom, however it may arise, tends to become law.



Picking Cocoanuts.

OWNERSHIP OF TREES

We come now to a feature in the rights of property that is very hard for a European, trained in the systems that are based upon the ancient Roman law, to comprehend. The doctrine *ab inferno usque ad*

cœlum has no bearing in the islands of the Pacific. As I have already said, land as land had no value. Its value arose only from its potential produce. The thing treated with most consideration among primitive peoples is human labour, and the products of it. In Rome, and therefore of course in modern Europe, if a man plants fruit-trees on another's land, he has no claim to them. They belong to the soil in which they grow; but in Fiji, while you may be wrong in planting cocoanuts upon land which belongs to your neighbour, you do not on that account part with your rights over the product of your labour. The land remains his, but the trees are yours, from the surface of the soil to the topmost frond. You have, moreover, in virtue of your property in the trees, a right of way over his soil to get at your trees. To our minds this seems very unjust, but it must be remembered that in a country where the population is sparse, and where cocoanuts have at once a commercial value which land does not possess, cocoanut trees are held in far higher estimation than the soil in which they grow. As a general rule this conflicting form of tenure does not arise through the secret planting of trees. The tree owner or his father has, in almost every case, asked the leave of the owner of the soil before planting his cocoanuts. Where two men are connected through the marriage of their children or by merely personal friendship, this is a very common form of mutual obligation. In the case of chiefs, moreover, it is no uncommon thing for the overlord to pick out the pockets of soil most suitable for the growth of cocoanuts, and to order his vassals to go and plant them there. The tenants still possess their rights over the soil, but they would not dare to claim the nuts growing upon them. The distinction may be best seen

by comparing the crops of yams or plantains. The tenants would take the first-fruits to the chief, preserving the rest for themselves, but they would take all the cocoanuts, even after expending their own labour in gathering and husking them. This form of tenure has been a great embarrassment in settling the ownership of land. Now that modern ideas have begun to take root, and that every land-owner hopes to let his land to a European at a fixed annual rent, payable in cash, the owners of the trees confront him at every point with their claims. The result is that the rights in the trees are very often disputed. European notions have been dimly seized upon, and land-owners stand upon their rights as if they had been bred under the English law of Real Property. The only way to settle these disputes is to buy out one of the claimants. Where this is not done, the owners of the trees should be allowed to have twenty-five years' usufruct of them, after which they and all others they may have planted in the interim should pass to the owner of the soil.

Tenures in Rewa

Rewa is the most perfect example of a Fijian state known to us. Even its disruption in the great war with Mbau in 1845 has not been able to snap the ties that join the various units to the central power. So intimately is the question of its political constitution connected with the tenure of land that it is impossible to avoid giving it at some length.

The supreme government of the state was vested in the spiritual and temporal chiefs, the Roko-tui Ndreketi and the Vunivalu, who was the head of Nukunitambua. Unlike the system in the rival

confederation of Mbau and many other native states, the spiritual chiefs had not yet parted with their executive power, nor had the Vunivalu yet succeeded in reducing them to a position of secondary importance. Before the great war between Mbau and Rewa, every clan had its part to play in the state. Below the two great families of Narusa and Nukunitambua, the spiritual and the temporal, which divided the power between them, were the six clans that formed the Sauturanga (*lit.* defence of the chiefs). These clans owed the superior chiefs no service but that of leading the army into battle and of conducting ambuscades. They also supplied the *matanivanua* (heralds or *aides-de-camp*). In order of battle they were the horns of the net—that is to say, while the main body of the army held back in cover, they led simultaneous flanking movements under cover of the grass or trees, and fell upon both flanks of the enemy at once, driving them into the arms of the main body, who were lying in wait. They were land-owners, and received *thokovaki* rent from their tenants, but they supplied no *thokovaki* produce to the two governing families.

CONSTITUTION OF THE STATE

Next to these in rank were the chiefs of the allied states of Mburebasanga, who were the *nkase* (elders) of the Rewa chiefs and of Notho. These were only subject to Rewa in so far that they were pledged to order their vassals to perform work for the supreme chiefs. Of course this tie arose from the Rewa chiefs having at some remote time conquered them and come to live among them, and in the case of Notho, through the Notho people as fugitives, having

obtained leave, on the condition of tribute, to settle upon land belonging to Rewa.

Next to these came the Kaso (cross-beams), who were perhaps originally descendants of the younger sons of chiefs. The Kai Nalea, the first of these, were the hereditary priests, whose power was broken in the reformation already described, and next to them were the Kai Mbuli, who had as tenants the Kai Malase.

Next came the trade clans, the fishermen of Vutia, Nukui and Nasilai, the carpenters of Ndorokavu and the Tongan sailors of Nambua and Singatoka. All these tribes owed service to the chiefs in the exercise of their trade, and received grants of land from time to time in recognition of their services.

Below these again were the free yeomen, the Kai Nandoi, and the villages of Nakuru, Ndrekena, and Veiniu, called collectively the Kai Mbatikeri. Next and below them came the Muainasau; below these again were the three clans whose lands were in the mangrove swamps, and who were therefore called Nkalivakawai (water subjects). These were the Kai Norothivo, Kai Tavuya, and Kai Naiteni.

Lastly came the villeins, the Kai Loki and the Kai Nandoria, who were *adscripti glebæ*, and whose proprietary rights in the soil were so slight as to be almost indefinable.

The Kai Vanualevu enjoyed a remarkable status. They were the sacred tribe (Nkalitambu), and they owed the chief no service. Their special function was the investiture of the Roko Tui Ndreketi in the ceremony of the *yankona* drinking, but this privilege does not seem to have conferred upon them any

special rank. Nevertheless, in such veneration did they seem to have been held, that no one dared to plant on land they had vacated. It is possible that this tribe are descended from the same ancestors as the chiefs, and perhaps from an elder branch, but that, owing to some tribal upheaval, the younger branch came to the front, and with the loss of power the consideration in which the elder was held dwindled away to this merely nominal status.

INDIVIDUAL TENURE

While the change from the independent Fijian state to a principal province of the colony has done much towards obliterating the old distinctions, it has not materially affected the customary law bearing upon land tenure. Clans who are *thokovaki* tenants of the Rewa chiefs, such as Waivau, Vanualevu, and Vuthi, having been included for administrative purposes within the boundaries of the Tailevu province, are now required by law to render tributary service to Mbuli Tokatoka, while they still continue voluntarily to pay tribute to their landlords at Rewa. In this respect the establishment of a settled government has accentuated in some measure the degree of their subjection. The taxation system, in requiring that land held by individuals shall, for taxing purposes, be regarded as communal property, has forced upon the natives a retrogressive movement in their views of land tenure, but otherwise the tenure remains unchanged. When the laws that now govern the native race were framed, very little was known of the real nature of the services rendered by commoners to their chiefs. The levies of the chiefs were thought for the most part to be exercised in virtue of some kind

of divine right, or at least, if exercised in connection with land, to be in virtue of the chief's exclusive ownership. But it certainly never occurred to any of the members of the Governor's Council that *lala* was merely another form of rent. If this had been so, assuredly some steps would have been taken to see that *lala* was only exacted by the proper landlords. For twenty years *lala* has remained very loosely defined, but unfortunately it has been often necessary to replace hereditary chiefs by well-conducted persons of inferior rank, and the *lala* has been allowed to be exercised in virtue of office, rather than heredity. All the native feelings of justice have naturally been outraged by their being required to pay rent for their holdings to the mere nominee of an alien Government, while the one person who, in their minds, has a right to demand service from them is prohibited from doing so. In every instance they have continued voluntarily to pay their rent, and have grudgingly yielded a second tribute to the Government nominee, and have further paid in respect of their lands a tax to the Government. If there has been murmuring against the present form of native government, it has been due, I am convinced, to this cause. In one respect the cession of the colony has affected land tenure in a marked degree. It has put an end to the continued transfer of land that flourished under the ancient custom. With the abolition of heathen customs and the cessation of native wars all reasons for permanent transfer have been swept away.

Individual Tenure

The communal tenure of the *veikau* is found only in parts of the country where the land is in excess of the

requirements of the population. Fortunately for students, there are in the group districts where, from war, migration, or other causes, the population has become congested. This is especially so in the delta of the Rewa river. The customary laws in force in this district deserve special study. In Rewa there is practically no communal tenure. Individual tenure is there due to the fact that every unit of land had to be reclaimed from the river or the sea. To this day, if one digs down a few feet below the surface, anywhere upon the alluvial flats, one finds mangrove roots. Perhaps the mangrove swamps were partly reclaimed by Nature, for the great floods that occur almost annually bring down a vast quantity of silt, which they deposit when the water recedes. But man has done much to extend the process.

When floods are expected long trenches are dug, which leave tiny embankments along their edge. The surface is flooded, the little ditches are obliterated by the deposit, and the waters, held in by the embankments, raise the entire surface of the land an inch or two. It is obvious that among the primitive peoples a man must acquire proprietary rights over land upon which he has expended labour.

Besides man, there is another agent at work in reclaiming land in the mangrove swamp, which extended from the present coast-line to about two miles below Nausori, where islands are raised a few inches above high-water mark. These were the haunt of a burrowing crayfish, called the *mana*, which plays the same part in the swamps as do the earth-worms in the grass land in England. They are continually bringing up the subsoil of the swamp to the surface, leaving a long tunnel, reaching from the surface to the water underneath. As the tide rises they crawl

backwards, until at high tide they are close under the mound they have raised. The Fijians, knowing this peculiarity, set at low tide a most effective trap, by which the *mana* is caught in a noose. I had heard it said that they carried a number of them to their taro plantations, and there set them at liberty, to carry on their unceasing work of raising the soil. But all the natives I have questioned on the point deny this, saying, "When did you ever know a Fijian let go an animal that is good to eat? We do not look ahead like you white men." However this may be, the *mana* undoubtedly does increase the size of these islands very rapidly.

RECLAMATION FROM THE SWAMP

The Rewa province is composed entirely of the alluvial flats in the delta of the great river. Over a large portion of these flats the land is broken up into little plots, surrounded by ditches, in which grow *via* and *taro*, while the higher ground included by them is covered with fruit-trees, and yams or plantains. Each of these plots has an owner; but the owners of contiguous ground are not usually men of the same tribe. We found it quite impossible to set a boundary to the land of any particular tribe, for the holdings of the individuals were scattered about the country, among the holdings of other tribes, in hopeless confusion. To explain this remarkable *morcellement*, which is unknown in any other part of the colony which has yet been investigated, we must turn to tradition, and to the peculiar political constitution of the Rewa people. The first settlers who came to the delta from the higher reaches of the river were the ancestors of the people of Nandoi, driven down by

internal commotion among the tribes that inhabited the mountains. They found, at first, no land fit to grow yams or plantains, but the little islands in the mangrove swamp were excellently adapted for defence, and they planted swamp *via* and *taro*, digging for the purpose trenches with banks on either side. The floods came and filled the trenches with silt. The process was repeated, until by degrees the ancient trenches and ridges were obliterated, and the whole country was converted into a rich alluvial flat, raised above the influence of the tide, but not beyond the fertilizing action of the highest floods. It was at this period that individual began to take the place of communal ownership. Considerable labour had to be expended before a supply of food could be grown. The wide circular trench must be dug, and the earth built up in the middle to make a bed for yams and plantains, while the trench was suitable for taro. This work was not severe enough to be beyond the power of a single family, and no call was therefore made upon the labours of the community, as in the case of public works of greater magnitude. Thus, as the Nandoi people came to regard these valueless swamps as their peculiar property, individual families appropriated portions of their common land, upon the undeniable claim of having expended labour upon them. Once appropriated, the land followed the customary law of the inheritance of chattel property—that is to say, it descended to the eldest surviving son, or, failing a son, to the eldest surviving brother. In default of a male heir, it passed to the clan, to be appropriated by an individual. It was like appropriation of *nkele* in other districts, only the appropriation was more complete, inasmuch as the labour expended on the property had been more severe.

In Rewa, moreover, the idea of communal ownership of land has died down, since the whole of it has been appropriated, and there is none left to be held in common.

While this explanation suffices to account for the existence of individual tenure, it fails to explain the curiously scattered location of the holdings. This, we thought, could only have been produced by an organized system of conveying land from tribe to tribe, and we were therefore at pains to trace the history of a number of these holdings, in order to formulate a customary law, by which such questions were governed. The result of our inquiries may be summarized as follows:—There are nine distinct customs under which land may be transferred:

1. Ai-thovithovi-ni-ndraundrau (*The plucking-place for the flooring-grass*)

This was land given by the family of a bride as her dowry. In the ceremony of conveyance they said, "We give this land that Nambutu's child may eat of it, since he is our child as well as his." The husband, as long as he lived with his wife, had the control of the land, and it descended to her male children, but if she died without male issue it reverted to the donors at the second generation. In this case it was redeemed by the ceremony of *vakalutu* (making to fall back). Until it was so redeemed, the husband or his representatives could till or lease the land, but not dispose of it. Cases have occurred in which the donors have so long neglected to redeem their property that the circumstances of the original transfer have been forgotten, and the tenants have repudiated the demands for restitution. If there were a direct line of male descendants of the original

grantee, the land never reverted, and it may be assumed that after land has been held for four or five generations, the failure of the male line would not lead to the restoration of the property to the original donors. There was no actual customary law of limitation, but the grantees would decline to accept the offerings of the *vakalutu*, and would be upheld in their refusal by public opinion.

There was another form of dowry, called *ai-solisoli-i-tamana* (the gift to the father), which was a plot of land given as a personal present to the bride's father, with which his sept or tribe had nothing to do. Such land could never be redeemed, but this form of dowry was rare, being confined to the marriage of daughters of high chiefs, whose families were large landowners.

THE
CHILD'S
INTRODUCTION

2. Ketenialewa (*The woman's womb*)

This is land seized as a punishment for adultery.

As soon as the offence became known, the friends of the injured man planted reeds (*sau*) on the land of the offender, or of his family, as a token of forfeiture. Reeds so planted were called *ai-wau-tu-i-vu-ni-vundi* (the club set in the banana patch). The family of the offender knew that they must either abandon the land or fight for it, but when by lapse of time the offence was forgotten, the land could be redeemed by *vakalutu*.

3. Veitumalelake (*Defending the dead*)

This was land given as a reward for defending the corpse of a fallen warrior from being seized by the enemy. If the disgrace of being spoiled of armour by the enemy led Hector to stake so much upon the rescue of Sarpedon's body, so much the more deserving of reward was the same action among the people who cooked and ate all bodies of fallen enemies.

4. Ai-thovi-ni-nkanka (*Reward for bravery*)

This was land given to allies or to persons conspicuous for their bravery, for services in war. Land so given could be redeemed after a lapse of time.

5. Veitau-ni-vanua (*Land given out of friendship*)

This was land given by one friend to another to bind their friendship, but the tenure was temporary only, and the land was usually redeemed after the death of either the donor or the transferee.

6. Ai-thuruthuru-ni-ngone (*The child's introduction*)

The child of a high chief was taken immediately after birth into the houses of the inferior chiefs to be exhibited to them. Property of various kinds was given to it, but if there were insufficient chattels in the house, a plot of land was often formally presented. In such cases the tenure was not absolute, and the land reverted after *vakalutu* had been performed.

All these cases amounted to little more than the transfer of the usufruct of the land for life or for an uncertain period. The person enjoying the usufruct

had the right to all the crops and timber grown upon the soil, but the fruit-trees remained the property of the donor. He might improve the land or let it go to waste, and in this respect his rights were superior to mere usufruct, but, as in the usufruct, he had no power to transfer or even to sublet. The reason for this was obvious. He would have been creating rights in the soil, which could not be redeemed by the original donor by the ceremony of *vakalutu* performed to him alone. It is worth noting that all these systems of transfer, though temporary, did not provide for the reversion of the land spontaneously as at any given time. Unless the donors in their own interest redeemed their property by the ceremony of *vakalutu*, the transferees acquired an absolute title by prescription.

Under the following kinds of transfer land could never be redeemed—

1. Ai-sere-ni-wa-ni-kuna (*Loosening of the strangling cord*)

This was land given by the family of a dead man to the family of his widow, who strangled herself in honour of her husband's memory. The custom of strangling wives is closely interwoven with the ancient beliefs regarding a future state. As has been explained already, the widow who did not court the strangling cord was assumed to have been unfaithful to her dead husband, and by following him along the path of the Shades she saved his memory as well as her own from dishonour, and her services thus deserved a recompense at the hands of his kinsmen.

[Page header: THE LOPPED FINGER]

Land given in this form of transfer could never be

redeemed. But it must be remembered that the transferees belonged to a tribe very closely connected by the ties of marriage and vasu with the donors, and that land was therefore virtually a transfer within the limits of the tribe.

2. Ai-sere-i-soli-ni-mate (*The unrolling of the shroud*) and

3. Tholambuka (*Carrying firewood*)

Under these two customs, the relations of a sick man brought a bale of native cloth in which to wrap his body when dead, or firewood with which to cook his food when too ill to go and get it for himself, and the dying man, unable to make other return, presented them with a piece of land. Land so transferred was never redeemed, but in these cases again it is to be remembered that it was a transfer within the limits of the tribe.

4. Mundulinga (*The lopped finger*)

One of the chief forms of mourning for the dead was to lop off the little finger of one of the hands. Few of the older natives can be found who have the fingers of both hands intact; most of them, indeed, have lost both little fingers This act of mourning was confined to the relations of the deceased, unless he was one of the highest chiefs, and the transfer was therefore confined to the limits of the tribe. Like the other customs connected with death, the transfer was irrevocable.

It is to be noticed, therefore, that the only irrevocable transfers were confined to the limits of the tribe. Transfers from tribe to tribe could be

redeemed by the ceremony of *vakalutu*. It often happened, therefore, that the male line of succession did not fail for several generations, and in such cases the original circumstances were forgotten, and the transfer became absolute by prescription. The ceremony of *vakalutu* was as follows: On a date agreed upon by both parties the original donors came to the house of the transferee or his heir, and formally presented him with a whale's tooth and perhaps a quantity of native goods in addition, saying, "We have come to make the land (naming it) fall back to us. Akesa ate from it and her children, but now she is dead, and they are dead, and there are none of them left to eat from it. Therefore we would have it fall back." If the representatives of the transferee accepted the tooth, the redemption was complete, but if on the other hand they refused to accept it, the question remained in abeyance until one or other of the parties had brought it before a joint council of the tribe. Under very exceptional circumstances it might even become a *casus belli*, but as a rule the ground for refusal was, that the property presented was inadequate. For in Fiji, as in Europe, land, like all other commodities, has a commercial value estimable in chattels. The ceremony of *vakalutu* above described varied to some extent in different districts. In Vatulele and Tailevu, for instance, the symbol of transfer is a basket of earth, and the symbol of usufruct a leaf or a bunch of plantains.

Leasehold (*Thokovaki*)

HOW RENT AROSE

These holdings were not necessarily farmed by the persons to whom they were granted. There is throughout the Rewa province a remarkable custom of subject tenure known as *thokovaki*. This tenure is sometimes communal, sometimes individual. It is found throughout the Rewa delta from the Nakelo to the sea, thus including a portion of Tailevu. In the eastern end of Kandavu it reappears again in the form of rent paid by tenants called *uraura-ni-vanua*. Properly to understand the system it is necessary to glance at the history and political situation of the Rewa people. After the arrival of the Nandoi people already referred to, other tribes came down from the mountains into the delta. Principal among these were the Kai Rewa proper. They settled at first at Mburembasanga, where the land was naturally elevated above the mangrove swamp. They were warriors descended from an older branch of the first Melanesian immigrants, and they naturally signalized their coming by preying upon the agricultural settlers below them. In this way they imposed upon them the task of contributing to the feasts on ceremonial occasions, and in course of time tradition has it that the Kai Nandoi themselves invited them to cross the river and settle on their lands, so as to spare them the irksome necessity of ferrying quantities of food across the river. By this time there had been intermarriage between the tribes, and land had been transferred to the new-comers under the form of transfer described as dowry. They did not cross the river for nothing. We find the Nandoi lands spread in a deferential semicircle round the holdings of the chief families, showing that the former had been despoiled of all their lands in the neighbourhood of the new settlement. Then the usual process of aggression

began. The chief family was strong enough to protect fugitives, and fugitives came to them accepting at once, in return for their lives, the status of kitchen men (*adscripti glebæ*). Thus probably the most servile form of *thokovaki* originated. The chief also began to acquire holdings further afield. Like his peers on the highlands of the island, he ordered his newly-conquered vassals to plant him gardens on their own lands, and in process of time as the crops of *taro* and *via* succeeded each other in the same soil, the land came to be regarded as set aside for the chief, and as claiming the expenditure of annual labour for the chief's support. Succeeding generations did not stop to inquire how this came about. They had to cultivate year by year a certain plot of land for the chief, subject to their occupation. Another, perhaps the commonest, origin of *thokovaki* tenure is to be found in reclamation. The swamp was valueless and belonged to every one, but as no stranger could be allowed to settle upon it, the tribe, if they thought of it at all, thought of it as their communal property. The chief had a lien upon the labours of his vassals, provided that he paid them in food, and so it came about that the chief was the author of most of the reclamation. Of the land thus reclaimed he was regarded as overlord, and he could put whom he would upon it as his tenant. We found one piece of land in the very process of transition. A reach of soil near Mburembasanga was reclaimed by order of the former Roko-tui-ndreketi, and planted regularly by his vassals. In Mburembasanga there was a difference of opinion whether this land was *thokovaki*, or whether it belonged to the tenants in fee simple. The chief left the question to the tenants, and they immediately chose to have it regarded as a subject tenure, *thokovaki*. Another origin of *thokovaki* may be

found in the transfer called *kete-ni-alewa* (forfeiture for adultery). The chief seized the land and allowed the former owners to cultivate it under a subject tenure.

The small coastal islands, being unoccupied for agriculture, were also regarded as the property of the chiefs. These are sometimes found to be tenanted by vassals who tend the chief's pigs or gather his cocoanuts, and this is in a sense *thokovaki* tenure.

One of the most remarkable features about *thokovaki* tenure is that the tenants themselves disclaim the actual ownership of the land they cultivate. The chiefs seldom know where their land is. Before the Native Lands Commission the Roko Tui, or some other chief, often asked his tenants for the names and boundaries of the lands over which he was overlord, and if the tenant denied that a particular piece of land was *thokovaki* the chief asked the commissioners to accept the statement. It happened more than once that tenants gave the name of land for registration in their own name, saying, "We hold the land only on *thokovaki* tenancy, but the chief has favoured us and says that he will make it over to us absolutely."

RENT ALWAYS PAID IN PRODUCE

It must not be understood that *thokovaki* rents are paid only to the superior chiefs. Persons of almost equal rank are found in the position of overlord and tenant. In the case of Nalea and Nambuli the Kai Nalea were the principal heathen chiefs before what

I must call the Reformation, and the fact of their being extensive lords of *thokovaki* lands is an instance of the natural disposition of all ecclesiastical bodies to acquire landed interests. I may add that the Reformation which reduced Notho to unimportance occurred early in this century. The assumptions of the priesthood had grown so intolerable that they threatened the prestige of even the chiefs themselves. At last the chiefs and people together determined to destroy the privileges of these upstart priests who were originally people of no birth. They therefore deprived them of their offices, and put in chiefs of rank in their place. The success of this experiment of a state church was never put to the proof, for Christianity came and swept away priests and gods alike. Of the six great clans known as the Sauturanga we find that persons of one are often in the relation of overlord to persons of another, though they are of almost the same rank.

The rent paid under *thokovaki* tenure was variously called *ndrawe-ni-vanua*, *ura-ura-ni-vanua*, etc. It varied according to the produce of the land itself. It might even take the form of manufactured property, but with the inexactitude of all primitive people, neither the amount nor the time for yielding it seems ever to have been fixed. Among the fishing tribes on the coast, who might easily have paid their rent in fish, we find that the fish is bartered first for produce and that the produce is then carried to the landlord. We may therefore assume that the rent must always in some sort be in the form of produce capable of being grown upon the land. Thus sinnet is permitted, because the fibre composing it may have been husked from cocoanuts growing on the land; mats, because the land grows the rushes used in their manufacture; baskets, because the osiers could be cut

upon the land. The time for paying rent was fixed by the necessities of the landlord. If he had a feast to make or contribute to, he sent to his tenants, apportioning among them the total amount he required of the supply. It might happen that he made only one call upon them in a single year, while in another he might demand more than half their crops. But the safeguard against excessive demands lay in the fact that the tenant had always the power of deserting the land and offering himself as a tenant to a rival chief. In practice, therefore, no overlord dared to make excessive levies upon his tenants.

THE CRIME OF FISH-SCARING

The most striking example of *thokovaki* tenure is to be found in the tribe of Notho. From the myths which concern the origin of this tribe, we can gather that they are an offshoot of the tribe that now inhabits the distant island of Nayau, with which it is *tauvu*, that is, it worships the same gods and has a common ancestress. Tradition says that their ancestress when bathing was swallowed by a gigantic shark and was carried to the mangrove swamp where now stands the village of Nambundrau, where she was ejected by the fish and attended by the natives of the place. As a proof of this tradition the natives point to the fact that their ancient god is a shark, but it is scarcely necessary to observe that in this case, as in many others, the romantic history has been woven round the totem of the tribe and incorporated into the folklore. Seven generations ago, that is about 1750, the ancestor of the present chief moved to Nambundrau. At that time the only dry ground was a

narrow island in the mangrove swamp. The chief was followed by the septs related to his family, and by two tribes that were tributary to him. They immediately began the work of reclamation, until year by year the island grew. Causeways were put forward into the swamp surrounding the moat so as to form fish-ponds. Sites were built for six other villages, which formed the nucleus of reclamation, until at the present day the whole area is composed of a network of causeways, gardens and fish-ponds. For the first fifty years of this process the swamp was regarded as exclusively the property of the chief. But as sufficient villages were formed under the leadership of one of his relations the swamp came to be looked upon as the property of the chief upon whose lands it bordered. The property rights of the chief in the swamp were of course of a negative order. He could only exercise them by refusing to others the right to reclaim it; but as no reclamation could be undertaken except under his directions, the land as it grew became the property of the chiefs. In Notho alone in all Fiji do the overlords not draw tribute from their own dependants, but gather it haphazard from tenants not their hereditary subjects. As each reclamation was completed the chief chose from his followers a tenant. The tenancy descended from father to son, but at any moment the tenant was free to throw up his holding and become the tenant of a chief more to his liking. The chief, too, for sufficient cause, had a right of eviction, and might offer the holding to any person of whatever sept, so long as he belonged to the aggregation of tribes known as Notho. So much was this liberty recognized, that now when a child is born in a family of tenants, the father and mother choose to which of the chiefs he should become client. Of a family of

four boys the eldest would succeed his father in the tenancy, but the other three would each become tenants of a different chief. It will thus be seen that the *clientèle* of the minor chiefs have no common tie of blood, and therefore the position of the overlord approaches far more nearly that of the landlord in Europe than is usually to be found in primitive communities.

The property of Notho consists of *taro* beds, cocoanuts and fish-ponds, and the rent therefore differs slightly from that paid in other districts. There are, besides, special offences. It was a penal offence to walk on a causeway bordering on another's fish-pond, and stamp on it so as to make the fish jump out.

This offence was often committed for the purpose of theft, but sometimes also out of pure mischief. These little fish are often given to the landlord as rent for the pond from which they were drawn. It will thus be seen that Notho cannot be said to be divided into *matankalis*. The only way to describe their social status is to say that the villagers of Nakuroiwai and Nathuru are all chiefs, and that the commoners in the remaining four villages are apportioned out among these chiefs individually, as tenants of their lands. The first-named villages own all the land, and the others are mere agricultural tenants, removable at will. But even in Notho, where the chief's rights in the soil most nearly approach to the absolute, it may well be doubted whether he could sell his lands to any European without violating the sense of justice of the whole district.

Province of Tailevu

The tenures of land in Tailevu vary with the status of the tribe occupying them. They may be classified as follows—

(1) Land which is admitted by the occupiers to be the absolute property of the Mbau chiefs subject only to their occupation on the condition of paying regular tribute in the form of *lala* of food and labour.

Instances of this tenure are to be found in Kamba and Nambua. The people do not claim any rights in the soil, but represent that they are only occupying at the will of the chiefs, who have the absolute disposal of it. They are subject to levies of food whenever a large feast is to be made at Mbau, but they plant no special gardens for the chiefs, and they are unstinted in the use of the cocoanuts and other fruit. The tribute is called *drawe ni vanua*, perhaps the nearest equivalent for the word "rent" that can be found in the language of any primitive people. The people account for their position by stating that they formerly lived with the chiefs as their servants, and that when the chiefs removed from Kamba they were left upon the land to cultivate it under the present conditions of tenure.

Roko Tui Tailevu asked that the land should be registered in the name of the tenants subject to his rights as overlord.

(2) Land which is the joint property of the chiefs and their tributaries, who both plant gardens for their superiors and pay regular tribute in food to the chiefs to whom they are attached.

This form of tenure is to be found in the lands occupied by the people of Namuka, Nakoroiwau and Natila. These tribes hold a peculiar position. In

former times they did not *tamaka*[108] any but the chief of the Vusarandave, and at the death of a Vunivalu they alone could prepare the body for burial. This may be accounted for by the tradition that they originally formed part of the Tui Kamba family, and that they were left behind to occupy the tribal lands when the Mbau chiefs moved to their island.

THE OVERLORD

(3) Lands of which the occupiers, though *nkali* (tributary), claim to be the proprietors, acknowledging only the overlordship of the chief at Mbau, to whom on that account they are subject to *lala*.

An instance of this tenure is to be found in Mokani. The people account for the difference in their status from that of the other *nkali* tribes by saying that they were given their lands by the Ndravo people, to whom they are related. In this case the land was registered in the name of the people, endorsing the register with a statement of the usual tribute due to the overlord.

It should here be noted that it is only in these cases that the *turanga-i-taukei*, provided for in the Regulation of 1883 as the recipient of forty per cent. of the rents for lease moneys, can be said to exist, and as a measure of justice to the people, the Regulation should be so amended as to allow ninety per cent. to be divided among the people in all cases in which the Native Lands Commissioners certify that there is no *turanga-i-taukei* (overlord).

(4) Lands which are owned by the tribes

independently of Mbau, and are subject only to the overlordship of their own local chief.

Namata may be cited as an instance of this kind of tenure. The clan was *mbati* to Mbau, and therefore subject only to military service. As a consequence the Mbau chiefs have no power to levy food or personal service from Namata.

(5) Land of which the local chief claims to be the absolute owner.

The only instance we have found of this tenure is in Nakelo, which was a very powerful tribe until the introduction of firearms by Charles Savage about 1802-7 enabled Mbau to reduce it.

In spite, however, of the assertion of Tui Nakelo it is doubtful whether the chief's rights could ever have been exercised without the assent of his own tribe. In these days at any rate, they could not be so exercised without shocking native opinion.

(6) Lands owned by the commune without the overlordship of any chief either local or central.

Nausori and Kuku afford instances of this tenure. It is the natural result of their geographical situation between the *mbati*(borders) of two rival confederations, Mbau and Rewa—of being in fact a "buffer state."

In these communes there is a difference between waste and cultivated land. The *yavu* (house foundation) is held by the individual and is inherited by his heirs. The *teitei* or *nkele* (cleared and cultivated land) is also regarded as the individual property of the occupier; the waste lands are held in common, and may be appropriated, cleared and

cultivated by any member of the tribe with the consent of the rest. A man thus owns individually neither more nor less than he can keep in cultivation.

(7) Lands owned by a commune who have been fugitives from a distant part of the country, and have been placed on their lands by the chiefs under whose protection they have placed themselves. Until their position was assured they paid tribute both to their protector and to any other neighbouring chief strong enough to annoy them. An instance of this form of tenure is to be found in the Kai Naimbosa, who came from the Vungalei country, and for some time paid tribute both to the chiefs of Mbau and Namata.

RIGHTS OF FISHER TRIBES IGNORED

Among all the coast tribes are to be found small communities of fishermen, who by the nature of their occupation are debarred from cultivating the soil. As might be expected, therefore, their tenure of land is quite different from the tribes surrounding them. In Mbau there are two of these tribes Lasakau and Soso; in the Rewa province the Kai Naselai and the Kai Vutia. The Kai Soso claim all the shallow shore reefs from Kamba Point to Uthui Kumi. They use fences only, a kind of fishing that cannot be carried on unless the right of a reef is exclusive. The Kai Lasakau are fishermen using both traps and nets, but not fences. They claim the exclusive right to fish on all the deeper reefs from Waikelia in Sawakasa to the Suva Point, including those near Moturiki. There is a clear understanding between them and the Rewa fishermen of Naselai and Vutia that they shall not

interfere with the shallow reefs on the Rewa coast. The members of this clan live almost entirely by their skill. As soon as a man returns from the reef, his wife takes the fish and hawks them from house to house, in exchange for yams or *taro*. Failing to dispose of them in Mbau, she takes them to the villages on the mainland. This system of barter has greatly taken the place of the old system, under which the fishermen were fed by the chiefs to whom they owed allegiance, that is, they were a continual tax upon the chief's tenants. The Kai Soso have acquired a plot of land by right of occupation, and their claim is not disputed. The Kai Naselai used in return for their fish to be allowed the run of the plantations. They would go and take whatever food they required, provided they confined themselves to the gardens of those who had received fish from them. Now, however, they have acquired land in right of occupation. The Government here encounters another difficulty. At the cession all the reefs were declared the property of the Crown, and unless the fishermen were made a charge upon the lands registered as the property of the natives they would have no means of subsistence. They must either be given land belonging to other people, or the reefs belonging to the Crown must be handed over to them. It is to be feared that the Government will adopt a middle course, that of giving them a right to fish upon the Crown reefs and withholding that right from others. But this is a course that will inevitably lead to trouble in the future. If rights are to be defined, now is the time to define them, before holders have had time to acquire property by prescription.

Under the pressure of European land customs the Fijian conception of land has begun to break up.

Owning two-thirds of the land of their islands, it was impossible that they should be left in useless possession, and though they may not sell an acre of it they have been encouraged to lease to planters at a fair rent all that they do not require for their own support. As soon as they understood that they were to have the spending of the rent, land, to which they had hitherto attached little value, became their most precious possession, and their natural earth-hunger was keenly whetted. In some instances the proprietary unit had dwindled to a few individuals of low birth, and these men, contrary to all custom, found themselves courted by powerful neighbours on account of their wealth. This sudden acquisition of money without effort has been demoralizing, but it has quickened the growth of new tastes and new wants, which is the first step towards material progress. On the other hand, it is fostering a spirit of lying and cheating in every transaction concerned with the ownership of land. Happily it has not led to one form of demoralization—that of drinking—thanks to the rigid enforcement of the liquor law, which forbids the sale of alcohol to natives under heavy penalties.

FOOTNOTES:

[106] The divisions of Tailevu and Rewa are—

(1) *Matanitu*—Tribe or Confederation.

(2) *Matankali*—Clan.

(3) *Tokatoka ni matankali*—Sept.

(4) *Mbatilovo* (*lit.* "brink of the same pit-oven") —Joint-family.

[107] Williams's *Real Property*.

[108] Shout the cry of respect.

CHAPTER XXXII

CONCLUSION

It has been too readily assumed that the ancient system of the Fijians was wholly evil. The disposition of early explorers and missionaries is to describe the races with whom they came in contact as living in a state of savage anarchy, the motive of travellers being to excuse their own rapacity and cruelty; and of missionaries to vindicate their iconoclasm and to magnify their courage and self-sacrifice. "Nothing," says McClennan, "is more common in these old narratives than to find the peoples who were being sacrificed to European cupidity described as living in a purely animal state, without government, laws, or religion, and yet the student will sometimes be able to spell out from these very narratives themselves that the peoples so described were intensely religious, and that they dwelt under the constant pressure of a rigid body of customary law, and what we would call a highly developed system of constitutional government."[109]

It was so with the Fijians. In seeing how admirably adapted many of the old superstitions and tabus were for securing sanitation and moral and physical cleanliness, one is led to wonder whether they were survivals of a code brought by their ancestors from the land of their origin; the work of some forgotten

law-giver, or merely a gradual evolution from experience coloured by superstition. So admirably were they suited to the haphazard and indolent character of the people who obeyed them, that we can scarcely hope that any European system will take their place until the character itself is regenerated.

Let us consider three instances. What could better secure the sanitation of villages than the fear of *ndrau-ni-kau*, which taught the people to destroy or bury all offal and excreta for fear of affording an instrument for witchcraft to a secret enemy? The villages are no longer swept clean, for Christianity threatens the people with no immediate punishment for being dirty, and they have not yet come to believe that dirt produces the germs of disease.

How could the proper nourishment of young children in a country destitute of milk and farinaceous diet be provided for than by the fear that intercourse between the parents during lactation would impoverish the mother's milk and injure the child? In these days the custom of abstinence is decaying, and the mother is again pregnant before her child is fit to assimilate solid food, and she must either continue to nourish the child within her and the child at the breast, to the injury of both, or prematurely wean the latter to the certain injury of its health.

How could the sexual morality of the people be better guarded than by shutting up all the unmarried men at nightfall within the *mbure-ni-sa*, and placing all the girls under the protection of their parents; by training the young men in the emulation of arms and seamanship until they were old enough to marry; by making death the penalty of loss of virtue; by constituting the absence of virginity in a bride a

sufficient cause for withholding the dowry, or even by holding up an unchaste bride to the ridicule of the community through the mutilation of the cooked pig presented by the bridegroom's people at the feast given after the marriage? But the *mbure-ni-sa* was a heathen institution, and boys and girls are now thrown together as they are in civilized communities; there is no more war or other spur to emulation among the young men, who now seek their excitement in sensuality, and the loss of virtue if discovered entails only consequences that can be borne with equanimity, so far at least as the men are concerned.

EVILS OF THE TRANSITION STAGE

It would be unjust to blame the missionaries for the mutilation of the social system, for by the time they gained a foothold in 1840, the native civilization—for such it is fair to call it—had been so marred by the influence of worthless Europeans and the introduction of firearms that the people groaned under a system of continual war, barbarity and oppression under which no people could increase. The ancient social system was mutilated; part of it was already broken down. During the first twenty years of the last century whole provinces had been swept by the powerful tribes fortunate enough to possess firearms, and their internal affairs were dislocated by the oppression of their conquerors. The early missionaries were no more far-sighted than others of their class, and their zeal was as narrow as the zeal of proselytizers is apt to be. They looked not for hidden causes of the customs they found. It was

enough for them that they were in someway connected with heathen superstition; though often they were not incompatible with the acceptance of Christianity their existence interfered with mission work, and their discontinuance established a convenient line of demarcation between the Christian and the heathen. It would have been impossible to graft the principles, the refinements or the arts of modern civilization upon the ancient customs. Some of them had to go, and the criticism that occurs to the unbiassed historian is that the missionaries either destroyed too many of the ancient customs or not enough.

For the transition stage we now have is undoubtedly worse than what it has displaced. The Fijians have been slow to adopt foreign habits, and for more than a generation they have been crawling upon the stumps of their old customs propped by ragged fragments of European innovations. Civilized sentiments have not taken the place once filled by customary law. The Fijian, at all times the creature of circumstance has in the passing of things a pleasant feeling of lack of permanence which affects his whole family life and blunts his sense of responsibility for his children's welfare.

The apathy and indolence of the Fijians arise from their climate, their diet and their communal institutions. The climate is too kind to stimulate them to exertion, their food imparts no staying power. The soil gives the means of existence for every man without effort, and the communal institutions destroy the instinct of accumulation. As Sir Henry Maine said of the native policy of the government of India, those responsible for guiding native races in Fiji, as elsewhere, are "like men

bound to make their watches keep true time in two longitudes at once. Nevertheless the paradoxical explanation must be accepted. If they are too slow, there will be no improvement; if they are too fast, there will be no security." There is no reason to despair of the ultimate arrival of the Fijians at some degree of physical and moral prosperity. Our own forefathers in the time of Cicero seemed to the Romans no less unpromising, for, writing to his friend Atticus, the orator recommends him not to procure his slaves from Britain, "because they are so stupid and utterly incapable of being taught that they are unfit to form a part of the household of Atticus."

FOOTNOTES:

[109] *Studies in Ancient History*. London, 1896.

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RELATIONSHIPS OF THE CHIEF FAMILY OF MBAU.

Table.

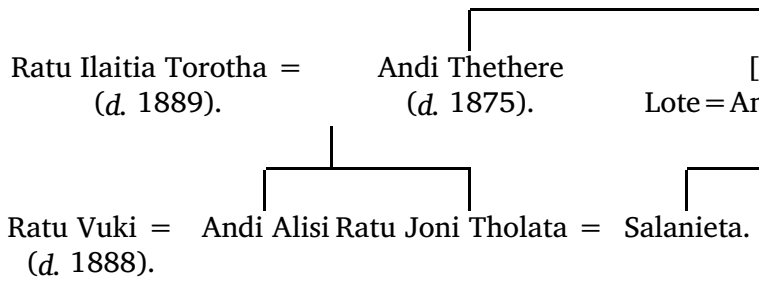


Table B.

Table of Relationships of the Chief Family of Mbau (See Table A), showing the Concubitant Cousins in red.

[To be read from the left-hand top corner downwards, thus:—To ascertain what relation Ratu Beni is to Ratu Kandavu Levu, find Ratu Beni's name on the left hand of the table, and follow the line horizontally to the column headed "Ratu Kandavu Levu," when it will be seen that Ratu Beni is Ratu Kandavu Levu's *tavalena*.]

	Andi Thethere.	Ratu Thakombau (King of Fiji).	Andi Litia.
Andi Thethere was to	Self.	Sister. Nganena.	Sister-in-law. Ndauvena.
Ratu Thakombau was to	Brother. Nganena.	Self.	First-cousin, Concubitant. Ndavolana
Andi Litia was to	Sister-in-law. Ndauvena.	First-cousin, Concubitant. Ndavolana.	Self.
Ratu Joni Tholata is to	Son. Luvena.	Nephew. Vungona.	Nephew. Vungona.
Andi Alisi is to	Daughter. Luvena.	Niece. Vungona.	Niece. Vungona.
Ratu Epeli Nailatikau is to	Nephew. Vungona.	Son. Luvena.	Son. Luvena.
Ratu Timothi was to	Nephew. Vungona.	Son. Luvena.	Son. Luvena.
Andi Kuila was to	Niece. Vungona.	Daughter. Luvena.	Daughter. Luvena.
Ratu Kandavu Levu is to	Great-nephew. Vungona.	Grandson. Makumbuna.	Grandson. Makumbuna.
Andi Thakombau is to	Great-niece. Vungona.	Granddaughter. Makumbuna.	Granddaughter. Makumbuna.

Andi Vuikamba is to	Great-niece. Vungona.	Granddaughter. Makumbuna.	Granddaughter. Makumbuna.	(
Ratu Nailatikau was to	Great-nephew. Vungona.	Grandson. Makumbuna.	Grandson. Makumbuna.	(
Ratu Beni is to	Great-nephew. Makumbuna.	Grandson. Makumbuna.	Grandson. Makumbuna.	(
Ratu Ravulo is to	Great-nephew Makumbuna.	Grandson. Makumbuna.	Grandson. Makumbuna.	(
Andi Senimili is to	Great-niece. Makumbuna.	Granddaughter. Makumbuna.	Granddaughter. Makumbuna.	(
Ratu Timothi Ngkiolevu is to	Great-nephew. Makumbuna.	Grandson. Makumbuna.	Grandson. Makumbuna.	(

NOTE.—This table does not include all the members of the family in the degrees represented. A selection has been made for the purpose of illustrating the Fijian system of classing relationships, which is all that is intended in this place. Besides the concubitant relationships marked in the table, therefore, it must be remembered that many of the persons are concubitant to other cousins not included in the table.

FOOTNOTES:

[A] Ratu Kandavu Levu is in reality *vungona* to Ratu Joni Tholata; but he calls the latter his father, because his own mother and Ratu Joni Tholata's wife happened to be sisters—as

shown in the plan. Ratu Kandavu Levu also addresses Andi Alisi by the familiar term "*Nau*" or "mother," and speaks of her as *tinanku*; but this is for the reason that she and his father are *vei-ndavolani*—concubitant.

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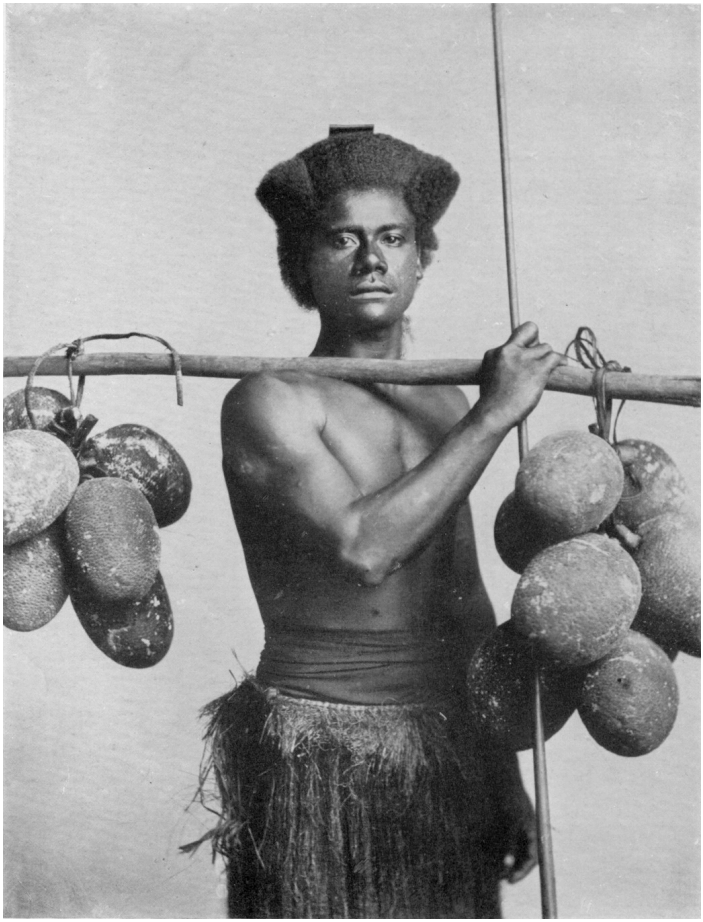
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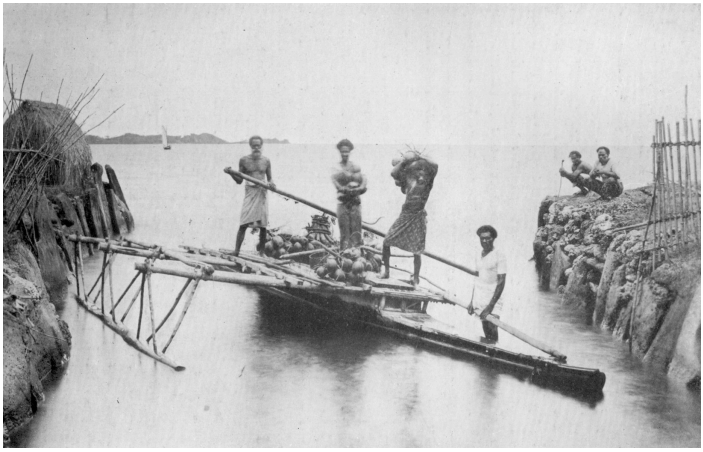
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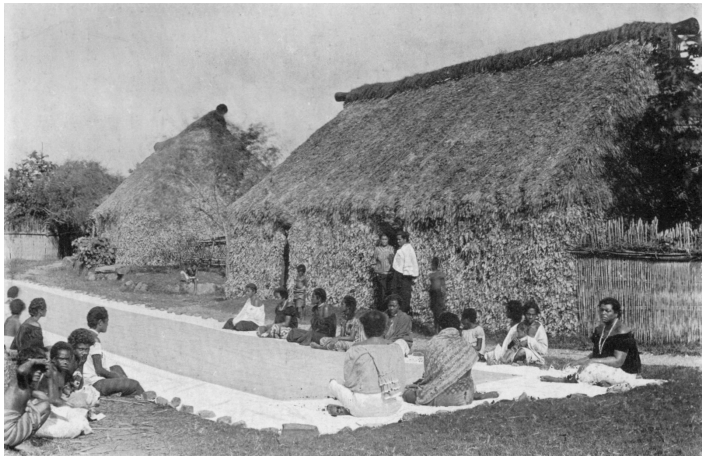
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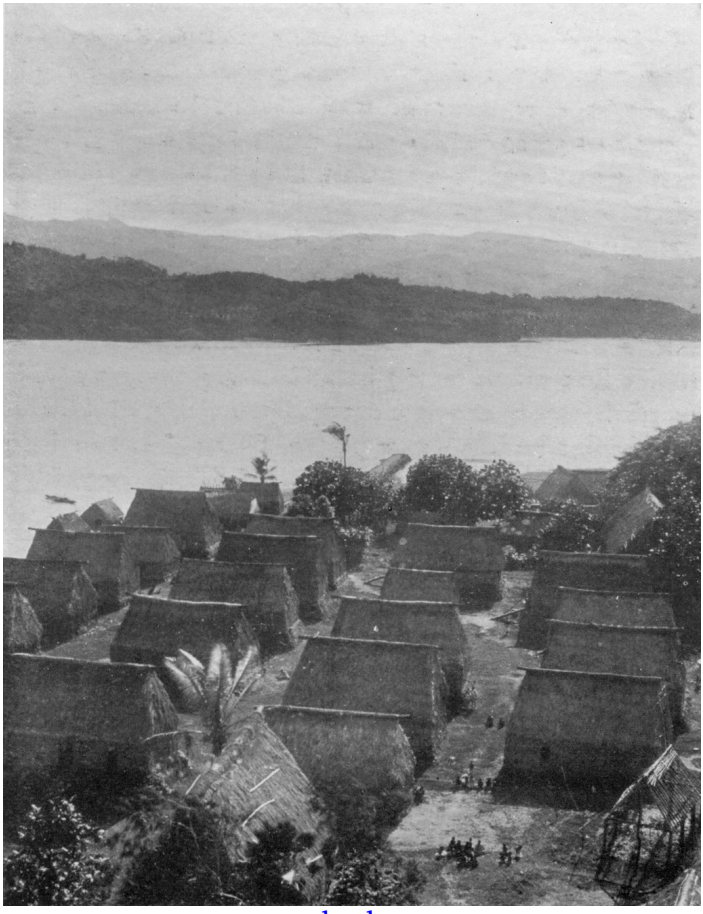
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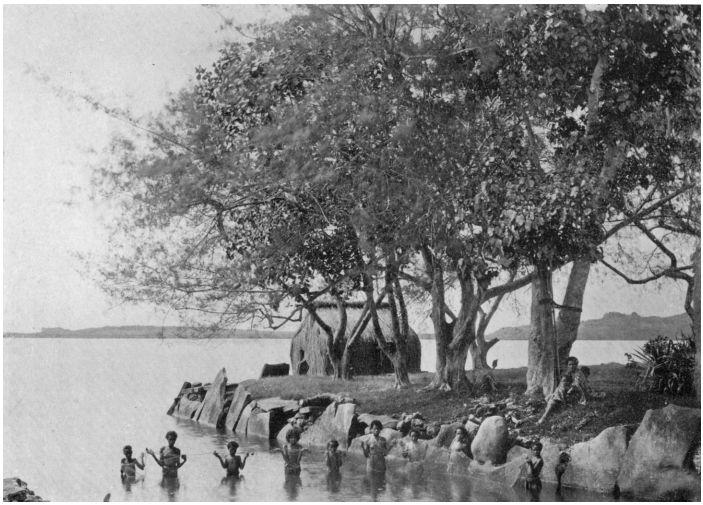
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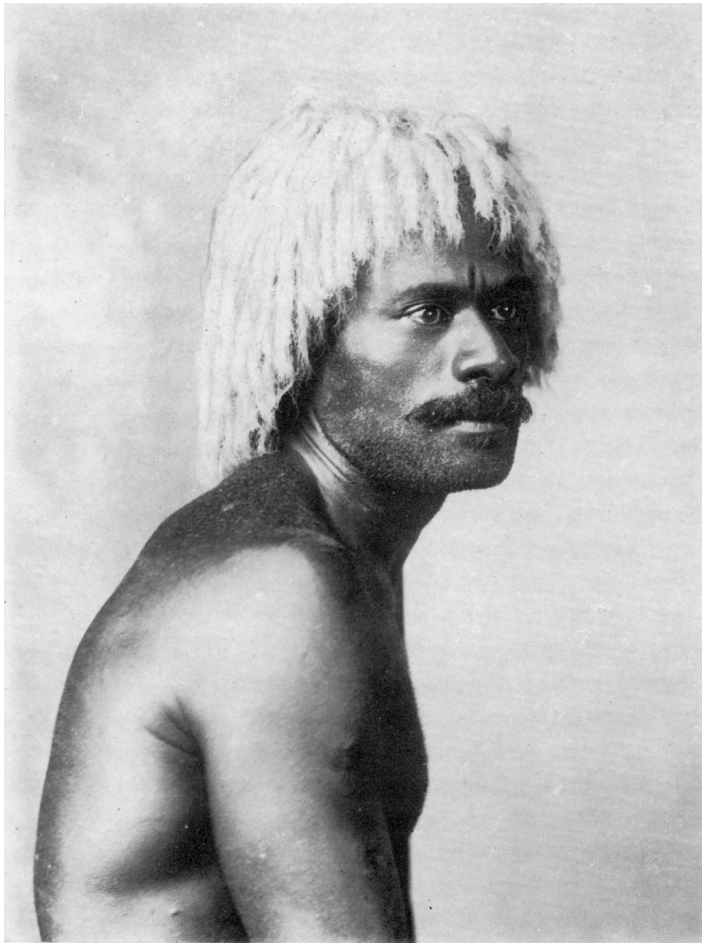
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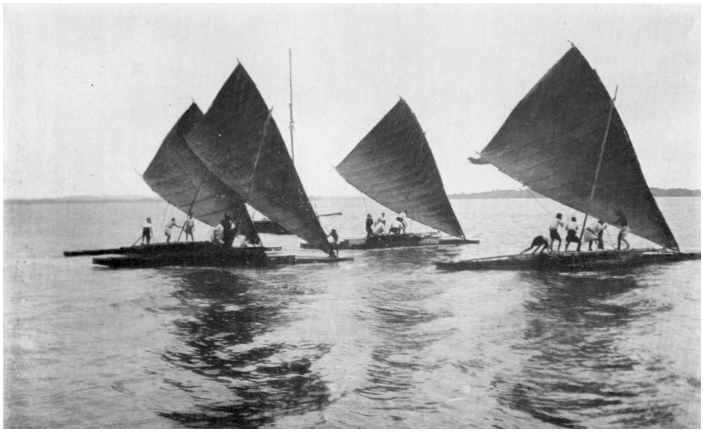
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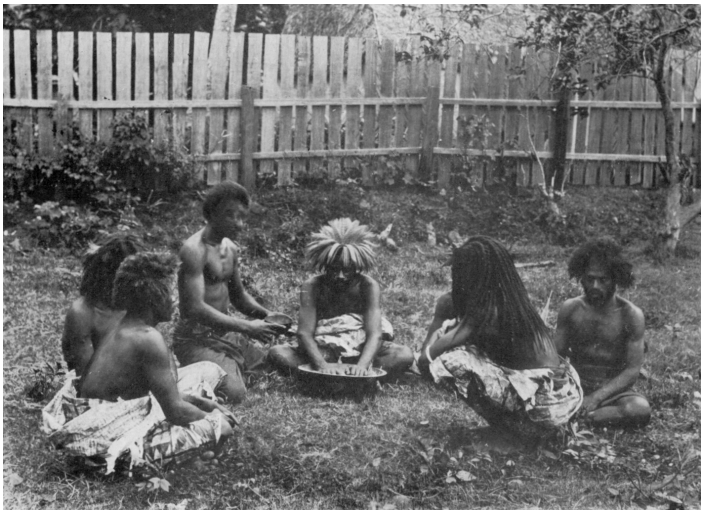
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