HE STRANGE VENTURES OF A WHALE'S TOOTH

By Rev. WALLACE DEANE, M.A., B.D.

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The Great Whale's Tooth.

THE STRANGE ADVENTURES OF A WHALE'S TOOTH

A Missionary Story of Fiji for young people and others

By

Rev. W. DEANE, M.A., B.D.

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To my Mother

FOREWORD.

Whales and elephants have a way of their own. And they are like St. Paul's Cathedral—too big to be ignored. What stories of brave deeds, of the prowess of the explorer, and alas! what horrible tales of the white man's hideous cruelties to his black brother, we have woven about the Elephant's Tusk! But here is the Whale's Tooth, and hereby hangs a tale! And he, who tells the tale, warms to his work, for he knows all the beauty of those Sunny Isles where his Whale's Tooth saw and slept and travelled so much. Around this Whale's Tooth he has entwined the beautiful story of the white man's love for his brown brother. He has told of some of the most daring of Christ's soldiers, and of how, in a land where chiefs chopped off, and hung up, little children's hands—and all to show how brave they were—these same soldiers won their peaceful victories. The Whale's Tooth saw and heard some wonderful things, I can tell you, and our boys and girls all over the world should read this story. The Young People's Department of the Church that made Mr. Deane what he is, and then sent him out to her Mission Fields, will rejoice to know that this book is in every Sunday School library, that it is being discussed in Young People's Societies, and that it is being made a gift to youths and maidens everywhere.

HAROLD WHEEN,

General Secretary,

Methodist Young People's Department of N.S.W.

AUTHOR'S NOTE.

The events related in the following pages are chiefly based on facts, and especially so in that chapter describing occurrences which arose out of Mr. Langham's journey into the interior of Fiji. The details were given to me verbatim by a participant in those thrilling episodes. The customs referred to in the course of the story are well known to most of us who are acquainted with the native character. Even the tests of the future world, which are collected in the chapter entitled "A Dream," have their counterparts in the beliefs of several tribes in Lomaiviti and Kadavu. As the story proceeds, the whale's tooth which relates it grows in knowledge, and finally comes to rest on a nail in a missionary's home.

NOTE ON PRONUNCIATION.

By way of explanation, the Tabua or Whale's Tooth is the chiefly symbol of the Fijians. The following hints will be useful in the pronunciation of native names :—b=mb, d=nd, g=ng, q=ng (hard), c=th.

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Crossing a Mountain Torrent.

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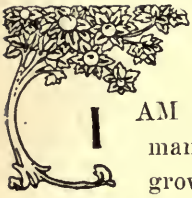
THE MIGHTY OCEAN.



I AM solid ivory, and I grew after the manner of my kind. I did not, however, grow on a tree like the ivory nuts of the Solomon Islands; nor yet again did I make my first appearanee in the mouth of an ungainly elephant. Indeed, I have never even seen my relations, the elephant tusks, for it has not been my lot to visit their country. Rumour has it that they are of the giant species, while I, forsooth, am termed a dwarf.

But big as my cousins, the elephant tusks, may be, I doubt very mueh if they have a higher opinion of their virtues than I of mine. This self-conceit may be called my one failing. Those who read my history, as told in these pages, will pardon me for my solitary sin, especially as it is partly due to the high plaee I have always held in the estimation of a certain race of men. Moreover, no elephant tusk has ever passed through such experienees as I have survived. Since I first saw the light, innumerable adventures which would have thrilled and astonished my ivory friends, the elephant tusks, have fallen to my lot. I speak truly when I say that throughout my long career, I have loved adventure as my life. Now that I have come to the evening of

existence, and am resting on my hard-earned laurels, I look back with a certain wonderment, not to say yearning, upon the path I have travelled during more than a century. It is no small wonder that I am yellow and shining, and give the impression of great age. It piques me somewhat to be hung up as a mere ornament on an iron nail after having been an active sharer in the affairs of men for so many years. Therefore, when strangers come and gaze on me, asking pointless questions the while, I am dumb to them. Indeed, it is only after a struggle that I bring myself to break the long silence, or to tell of the things of yore. I feel bound to do so now by the knowledge that I alone can speak from actual experience of the events which I here narrate.

My earliest recollections are brine—good, wholesome brine. With regard to my own feelings about it, I may say that there is nothing so sweet to me as brine. It is sweeter than honey or the honeycomb. What makes it sweet to me and salt to you I cannot say. The Great Being who created us all has His own explanation of that. But as the stream loves and laves its mossy course, and as the cooing doves fly back with joy to their windows, so do my thoughts hark back to the days of brine.

Now, some reader will immediately think that I am referring to a butcher's keg, where beef lies soaking for weeks until it becomes indigestible. Let

me be quick to the point lest you misunderstand me to my disadvantage. It is the brine of the "Mighty Ocean" to which I refer and which I love. Can one forget his first home? May I forget my cunning (and I have some in my ivory heart) if I forget Thee, Mighty Ocean, Eternal Reservoir of my beloved brine.

I said I grew—how I grew I know not. That mystery has puzzled wiser heads than mine. I first saw the light in a school. Some lad will quickly say, "What a queer place to be born in!" But, dear boy, you did not wait until I had finished. I was about to add, "in a school of whales." I remember that it was very cold at the time, but I had a nice, warm couch to lie on, and the room where I was born was usually cosy. What matter if at times the cold water of the south did swish in and round about. That only helped to strengthen me. In this world I have met so many who are afraid of a little hardship. It is either too cold, or too hot, or too wet, or too windy, and upon these pretexts some turn away from their rightful duty. Surely they miss the great truth that hardship hardens—in short, makes one able to withstand the ravages of time, and so to achieve much before the days of the sere and yellow leaf. Personally, I am thankful for the hardship of my early existence. To my experiences, then, I attribute my present durability and solidity. Consequently I have lived

long, and seen and heard many strange things which I shall relate in subsequent pages.

I am a "Whale's Tooth," as the title of this book has it, which means that I belong to a whale. But if you will allow me to be a little more precise, I will change the wording a little. I am "My Whale's Tooth." There are two possessives in that phrase, and they tell you that I belong to my whale, as my whale belongs to me.

My whale was born at the same time and in the same school as myself—if you ask me where, I would boldly say: near the Bay of Whales, far down in Antarctica. We were both very little for a time, but we grew apace. In the same school there were many fat whales who did nothing but play with the waves. It was an eternal play-ground. I can fancy some of my little readers will say, "How very pleasant!" And so it was pleasant, and right —for the whales. I am not quite so sure that it would be right for boys and girls to be always playing, or even to covet an eternal play-ground. Whales are just big, lovable whales, and were intended to do nothing else but frolic. They were never troubled with business cares, or that strange thing you call politics, and so all they had to do was to sport amongst the waves the livelong day.

Now, my whale was not at all behind the others in play. Often I think he made quite a serious matter of his gambols and tried to do everything in

the most accomplished manner. When the whales were splashing, he would splash the farthest; when they were spouting, he would spout the highest. In the races he would invariably be first, and when he dived, he outdistanced all the rest; for he was a right sperm whale, much larger than the kind which usually lived in the Bay of Whales. Indeed, I am told that it is quite extraordinary for a sperm whale to be found so far south.

As my whale played, I played. When he dived, I perforce must dive also. When he rested, I rested. There was therefore a sort of sympathetic relationship between us, the memory of which has never wholly passed away.

I remember I took a pride in my whale. At first he was such a soft, round, wallowy fellow that you wanted to put your arms around his neck and caress him. But as time passed he grew too large for that. He became as big as a little island; and although he looked soft and flabby, his muscles were stronger than the waves that rose and fell on the great salt sea. I have remarked them as he romped across the sea, leaving a foamy wake behind him, and I protest that the sinews of your brawny blacksmith were but threads compared with my whale's muscles. He was so strong, that the Mighty Ocean was his natural home.

There was a race one day in the bay, and the school dived and plunged in the very joy of free-

dom. I could tell by the salt foam which rushed in at my whale's mouth how fast he was cleaving his way through the sea. He excelled them all, and then, in joyous revel, lashed the water with his broad flukes and spouted it in a foamy fountain over his sleek back. Ah! I was proud of my whale.

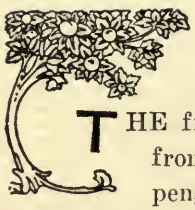
One day he went out to meet the storm, such a one as can blow only in Antarctica. The icy tempest screamed like a fiend on the face of the waters. The ocean arose in tremendous fury. It was sheer bravado to go out against it. But the spirit of the sea-wave was in him, and on we went. Those wonderful waves! Shall I ever forget them? The world of peace seemed to have departed for ever. Then I learned a lesson from my whale. Lifting his mighty flukes, he plunged. A second more it was quiet, for are not storms but on the surface of the sea, and is not the everlasting rest of the ocean just below? Where the waves are rolling, the angel of peace appears to have taken flight; yet he is not so far away that we cannot find him if we will to do so.

The lesson, therefore, that my whale taught me was clearly this: tumult and calm lie close together; into that great truth he took me so swiftly that my respect for him became firmer than ever. It was hard to realise rest on the ocean surface, but it was actually experienced when we dived down into its quiet gloom.

My whale was certainly a very especial kind of cetacea, and we were both very proud of the fact. But neither he nor I realised in those happy days how much his importance would be due to me. Very few of those who have a destiny are able to see it clearly at first. The revelation comes slowly, like the shining of the light at daybreak.

And now I am to tell how my destiny began to work. The first move took place when my whale bade farewell to the scene of his birth. Whatever prompted him to do so I know not. It was scarcely on account of his being tired of play, for he never ceased his frolics. Neither was it because the cold was too great for him in Antarctica, since he had a soft thick blanket of blubber fat all about him. Evidently it was a freak on his part, but it had a great influence on his life and mine. So Destiny works in all our lives, taking up what we deem the waste moments and careless acts, and turning them to dread account in the final settlement of things.

CHAPTER II.
CAPTURED.



THE freak led my whale northwards, away from the icebergs and the land of the penguin, to the warmer climes, where snow and ice are never seen; away from the flashing aurora to a land where the light of the sun shines strongly on all things.

In that long journey I learned something of Geography. We most certainly passed New Zealand on the right and Australia on the left. I might have used the terms starboard and port, but they are scarcely applicable to that early stage of my experience.

Of land we saw little, but many strange sights in the sea itself greeted our wondering vision. Fish of various kinds which we had never seen before came to gaze on us, and then darted away to turn again, rounding their glassy eyes with curiosity. Some were in shoals and some travelled alone. As we drew farther north, the bodies of many became tinted with exquisite hues, with which we were quite unfamiliar. My whale affected to despise the finny tribes, for he does not consider himself a common fish. He says he belongs to the order Cetacea, of the high-class Mammalia, of the animal sub-king-

A Charming Scene. Fish Fence in the Distance. Stinson Photo.

dom Vertebrata. Where he got the names is a mystery. One fearful day when we were far north we fell in with a curious thing, which I afterwards learned was a ship. With his usual high spirit, my whale affected to despise it by blowing two or three jets of water in defiance. Nevertheless, I felt him tremble somewhat when he saw that the huge creature, with the broad white fins, crept slowly towards him. It had the appearance of a giant Nautilus as it turned with the wind. "Pshaw!" said he scornfully, "it is only an iceberg." Suiting the action to the word, he spouted water like a silver fountain. Nearer and nearer came the strange monster. An uneasy feeling crept into my ivory heart as I watched, which gradually became a presentiment of coming evil. By sympathy I knew that my whale also was much disturbed. If I could have warned him to flee I should have done so, but Fate had it otherwise. A great pity arose in me for my whale. Years have passed since then, and time is kind to ease the pain of things, yet I have not wholly lost the pathos that filled me on that fateful morning.

But to my story. Somewhat alarmed, my whale dived and came up far from the ship. When he rose he spouted water riotously. "That," said he, in his language, "is the way to treat the discourteous stranger." All the flying fish around wondered what was the cause of the commotion, so they spread

their blue, red, and silver wings and flew in shoals to a safe distance. With a persistence worthy of a better cause, the ship of the sea drew on. The sunlight fell on its masts and sails, making it a thing of rare beauty. "Nonsense," thought I, jealously; "icebergs are far prettier." Still the impression was such that even my jealous soul could not disregard it. My whale and I were engrossed in watching the ship, and we did not notice what events were happening, fraught with danger to ourselves. Strangers that we were, we could not understand that the crew, with fell purpose, were putting off a boat full of daring men. Consequently, we saw not its stealthy approach, and were not aware of it until it climbed the crest of the next wave. Then so astonished were we at its sudden appearance that we could not move for a few moments. It looked like some denizen of the deep, with long sweeping fins, and appeared to have no connection at all with the ship. What the man in the bow was bent on doing we could not possibly conceive. On it came, with a soft dip and swish—dip and swish. If I could have shouted, I should have cried out: "Come ye as friend or foe?" But no sound broke the silence save the swish of the oars, and a low murmur:

"Steady men, steady."

"Gently there. So ho!"

"Ease her off a bit. Right there."

"Be ready, men."

"Watch the rope that it does not fire the boat."

"Stop."

The sun glinted on the tall figure of the man in the bow of the craft as he poised his harpoon. A sudden stroke. What tragedy! Ah! A sharp thrill of pain shot through my whale. He rose with a violent convulsion and slid down from the sunlit surface of the sea into the depths of ocean blue. Never before had he failed to find peace there, but now his trouble was within, and not of the things without. Back again, poor whale, and taste what Destiny hath in store.

He appeared lashing the waves in fury, and spurting water high in the air. "Water, did I say?" "Water and blood" were nearer the truth, for when the foam cleared the light shone red through the waves.

So for a time he lay.

Silence again, and then the soft dip and swish as before. How persistent these men are! Once more:

"Gently there."

"Steady, men, steady."

"Be ready."

The same poise and lightning stroke.

What terrible agony is this? My whale raises aloft his majestic flukes, and with a swift mighty movement, plunges for the last time straight down like a plummet. It was a dive worthy of him. Needing air, he sought the surface with terrible shud-

ders passing through his body. Those muscles, stronger than the wild sea waves, were strained to their utmost in the agony of the death flurry. The men in the boat respectfully kept their distance, for one stroke of that tail would send them swiftly to their account. All my whale's titanic strength was put forth in his last effort to keep the free, joyous life he prized. If a lover of words had been there he would have said that it was "an imposing spectacle," while it lasted. So men are prone to describe with fine words the moment of death.

My whale soon lay still, no more to slide in gloomy depths, nor to play with the waves above.

. . . . . .

Faintly on the breeze was heard the cry of triumph: "Pull away, my lads."

Once again the dip and swish of the oars, and the sound of men laughing now.

"By merry St. George—what a beauty!"

"There'll be double rations to-day, men. So ho! my lads. Fasten him securely."

Soon we were moving slowly forward to the accompaniment of the dip and swish.

The golden sun was setting as we drew near to the ship. It was a vessel of three hundred tons burden, after the size of whalers in those days. Built of oak, it had braved the stress of all weathers for many years, and would still do so for years to come.

Hoarse voices were calling, and feet were scurrying as the boat came alongside. A man looked over at the boat and then departed to report something to the captain. In the galley a man was singing as if his very life depended on it. An order rang out, and some ropes were flung to the crew of the boat. In a very short time my whale was trussed securely to the vessel to await the morrow.

. . . . . .

A whaler is a very strong ship, so I am told, built especially for its work, with great tanks fitted in its hold to contain the blubber. As a rule, when most kinds of whales are captured, the blubber is taken off the body in large strips a ton in weight. Those sailors who work on deck are engaged in cutting these larger pieces into smaller portions, which are then stowed conveniently away in the hold. The odour arising from the tanks when this plan is adopted is most disagreeable, and the oil extracted from the decaying blubber is not of the best quality.

When fishing for sperm whales a different course is pursued. The blubber is boiled at sea by the sailors, and this is why sperm oil is most highly valued.

Early next morning, therefore, the crew were astir preparing the cauldrons for the purpose of rendering down the whale-fat. Slings were hoisted over the side as safe foot-holds for the men. The

body of the whale was raised just above the water, and tackle affixed to allow the body to be turned slightly as occasion required. Knowing by experience what to expect, the workers donned their oldest clothes for the oily task.

When every preparation was made, the work began of cutting up my whale. The first act was to draw me out of my cosy bed. It did not cause me pain, of course, as my poor whale was dead; and death is the most effective soother of pain.

One of the sailors named Dan Sawyer flung me upon deck with a shout: "There's a tooth worthy the name," said he, at which I was pleased; you already know I have always thought well of my native powers.

"Bill," cried Dan to a man of the deck, "take care of him; he will be handy in Fiji." Whatever could he mean? I queried within myself. Where and what was Fiji? But more anon.

The work of cutting proceeded rapidly. Dan was one of the hardest workers, and it was his habit to accompany his efforts with a running conversation. He made a queer picture, adorned as he was with a blue apron and a large butcher's knife stuck in his belt. Dan seemed to be a favourite with the thirty sailors who composed the crew. His popularity was largely due to the cheery talk with which he pleased the men.

At the first cut he shouted in surprise: "Why," said he, "the blubber is two feet deep in places. There will be over fifteen tons of oil on this fellow," Another slash, and then: "It's a fine prize, by merry St. George."

By the latter phrase I recognised him as the harpoonist of the day before. It was quite evident from his words that he thought no wrong could be attached to the killing of a whale.

"What a time we'll have when we return to old Plymouth!" he added.

"I suppose you'll get spliced then," called Bill from the deck where he was engaged in boiling blubber.

"That will I," quoth Dan, as he laboured in the blubber heap below. "My Jane has been waiting this many a year, and if our voyage is as successful in the future as it has been so far, she shall have her reward. A good wench she is, and she deserves it."

Apparently, then, the killing of whales does good for others; at which thought I became a little more reconciled to the course things had taken.

The work of stripping the whale proceeded rapidly, for the men were in excellent temper, partly because the captain had promised double rations, and partly because their ship was nearly full. In their bunks that night some of them perhaps dreamt of "Merrie England," and the dear ones they might

soon meet again. It is certain that some such thought was in their minds even during the daytime, for it appeared in their words as they gave themselves with a right good will to the task before them. So the men talked and worked while the blubber was being conveyed to the cauldrons, whence the separated oil was taken to the tanks below.

Some few of the men were told off by the Captain to obtain the spermaceti oil, which is found in a cavity within the head of the Cachalot or Sperm Whale. So much I heard from Dan, who was chatting to a boy. He said further, that much care was taken lest this valuable substance should be lost. A wax called spermaceti is separated from the oil, thus procured by first boiling it, after which it is allowed to cool. The spermaceti then crystallises, and is easily collected.

During a temporary lull in the operations, the following conversation took place between Dan and the cook. The latter remarked:

"D'ye know, Dan, the captain says he makes for Fiji to-night, as the larder is low. Bob Torrens is down with scurvy for want of fresh vegetables, and there is a likelihood of it spreading amongst the men. The fire-wood for the cauldrons is also running short."

"So ho!" said Dan. "We shall buy some Island taters from the niggers in Fiji, with some beads and

axes the skipper has below. The teeth also will be valuable. Isn't he a beauty, anyway?" said he, looking at me admiringly as I lay on the deck. I confess the prospect puzzled me a good deal. There was nothing for it, however, but to wait patiently. Dan went off to measure the whale, which was voted a large one. Ten minutes afterwards he reported to the Captain that the total length over all was seventy feet. The length of the head was twenty-one feet.

"Is the blubber all on board?" asked the Captain.

"Almost, sir," said Dan, touching his cap.

"Hurry matters up, Dan; I am anxious to set sail for Fiji to-night."

"Aye, aye, sir," was the ready response.

Dan then took his place aft, while Bill went forward to the bow to direct operations.

"Stand by, you land-lubbers." cried Dan. "Let go the ropes; heave up the tackle. Hurry aboard there." Each man clambered on deck by the rope that hung nearest to him.

"All ready?" called the Captain.

"Aye, aye, sir."

"Let go." The sharp order was obeyed instantly, and silently, slowly, my whale slipped away, the ocean kindly hiding the mangled mass from view.

It was just nightfall, and by the faint light of the moon, we could see the albatrosses soaring over the spot where my former companion had gone down.

Quick commands from the Captain were followed by the trimming of the sails to the steady trade wind. All that night we sailed, and for three other nights we went gliding over the waves, bound, as Dan had heard from the Captain, for Fiji, the land of savages, fire-wood and "island taters."

CHAPTER III.
BARTERED.

DURING the three days' sail to Fiji the crew were not idle by any means. The remainder of the blubber had to be boiled and placed in the tanks. When that was finally accomplished, it was no easy matter to "swab down decks," as everything was covered with grease.

In their moments of leisure the men amused themselves by collecting all their old pipes, knives, and any stray tobacco tins they might possess. These articles were to be exchanged in Fiji for food and curios, according to the custom of seamen in those days. Dan had obtained me from the Captain, with strict injunctions to barter me away for not less than two hundred yams. "Anything over and beyond," said the Skipper, "you may have for yourself to take home to Jane." Everybody had their joke with Dan about Jane, but he took their fun good-humouredly; indeed, he seemed to enjoy it.

"Aye, aye, sir," was his response. At the same time he determined to keep the Captain to his word.

Now, Dan had never been to Fiji before, though he had read and heard of the voyages made to the Group by Captain Cook and others. He was non-

plussed. therefore, as to how he should succeed as a trader when he did not know the language. Fortunately, a few of the older men had made several voyages to the Pacific, and had picked up a little pidgin-Fijian. To these Dan had recourse for help. It was a case of the "blind leading the blind." Still. Dan's vocabulary was enriched by two useful words, which are understood in many places of the Pacific. One of these was "kaikai," meaning food. and the other was "vinaka"—good. A third word, "saka," which expresses the English word "sir," Dan would not learn, because he was determined not to humble himself "too much before these savage islanders." Dan used to lie awake in his hammock repeating the words "kaikai" and "vinaka." As often as not, he had the former meaning good and the latter representing food. but that mattered little to him. The thought of Jane stimulated him to face all difficulties with a brave heart. "Moreover," said he, "I depend on the insperashun of the moment in matters of this sort. I never yet saw the nigger that could outwit me in a bargain."

On the fourth night the look-out man was told to keep a sharp watch ahead for reefs. In those times the Pacific was practically an unknown ocean, and the charts were very untrustworthy. Coral reefs are exceedingly dangerous to vessels, even in these more enlightened days. and especially so at high tide, when the reef is almost completely hidden from view.

The Captain, therefore, took every precaution to ensure the safety of his vessel.

All were very much excited, stern old sea-salts though they were, at the prospect of seeing land again, and also because they hoped to feast themselves on fresh vegetables; "island taters," as Dan called them. Some of the men were most anxious to procure bread-fruit, of which they had heard from the old sailors or read in books of travel. Others extolled the cool drink of the young cocoa-nut, so pleasing to the palate on a hot, tropical day. "Wait," said they, to those who had come to the Pacific for the first time, "and we shall show you how to live like lords and such-like."

At six o'clock in the morning the look-out man cried, "Land oh!"

"Whereaway?" This question came from the deck where the Captain stood.

"On the starboard bow," answered the look-out man. Accustomed eyes could just make out a thin blue line along the horizon; at first, indeed, it was a query whether the land were not cloud. A quarter of an hour, however, made a great difference, and the look-out man was proved to be right. The sailors called out to one another excitedly, as point after point and range after range appeared through the mist.

"A bigger country than I thought," said one.

"Yes," replied another, who hied from Wales; "and I see mountains there which are almost as high as Snowden, near my native town."

"By merry St. George," quoth Dan Sawyer, "there must be a fine sight of people on those islands. The hills stretch away as far as these peepers of mine can see."

"No one can rightly say," the cook ventured; and then he proceeded guardedly, "some say 150,000 and some say 200,000."

"Aye. Those savage rapscallions are not so easy to count," said Dan. "They are alike as so many peas."

"Are they savage?" asked a timid youngster.

At which there was a loud roar of laughter from the whole crew.

"They just are," answered one of the men who had an innate love of giving a scare. "The most bloodthirsty, heathenish crowd that the sun ever shone on."

Young Sammie's face grew pale.

"Couldn't a white man live there?" said he again.

"Impossible," his tormenter replied. "They would surely eat him." Young Sammie collapsed. I could not help feeling a little sympathetic for young Sammie. He is not an ivory tooth, and might well be excused for being afraid.

By this time the land was well in sight, and as we drew closer the bright colours of the tropical

forests began to appear. The mountains on the island which we were approaching were greater in height than any icebergs I had ever seen. A distinct sense of newness came upon me. The panorama spread out before us was so different from the icefloes and the bergs to which I had been used that I could be forgiven, ivory tooth though I am, for feeling strange.

A cry from the look-out startled everybody on board: "Breakers ahead!"

"About ship," commanded the Captain. "Too near the coral reef," he muttered under his breath. "Give me plenty of sea-room in this locality." Then he shouted to a sailor standing near by: "Go aloft, Smythe, and keep your weather eye open for the passage in the reef." The man was one whom he could trust, or you may be sure he would not have chosen him for the task. Smythe clambered up the rigging until he looked very small against the sky. From that height he quickly descried an opening into the calm lagoon beyond. Once more the Captain steered for shore, allowing a point or two to windward, in case the ship made a little leeway. So skilfully did he manage his ship that within thirty minutes he passed through the opening, the white breakers on either side showing clearly whether he steered too much the one way or the other. Swiftly the whaler glided in, and finally came to anchor about

two hundred yards from shore, in twenty fathoms of water.

"Well, where are we?" asked Bill of Dan.

"Wait till I see the rapscallions that live in those queer huts," was the gruff reply; for Dan's quick eye had discerned Fijian dwellings along the low-lying portions of the coast. A little closer observation showed others on the sides and the tops of the smaller hills. Not a soul appeared in sight, and the whole island, apart from the houses and a few beached canoes, looked as if it were deserted.

"What shall we do, sir?" said the mate. "Go ashore?"

"No," answered the Captain, "We can wait. These people are very treacherous, and I don't like the look of the place. There is not a native to be seen. If I were to send a boat ashore the crew might be set on. No, no; I can't afford to lose a single man at the hands of a hidden crowd of niggers. Wait, I say, until someone appears on shore, and then we can act as we think best.

All gave way to the Captain, as a matter of course; on this occasion, however, the men were, one and all, seized with the wisdom of his advice. The sequel showed that he was right.

In about an hour figures emerged from the grass houses and began to launch the canoes with a good deal of speed. A dozen or more of these shot out

Poling an Outrigger Canoe. Stinson Photo.

from under the shadow of the hills. The noise of excited jabbering could be heard clearly across the water. The whole picture was bewitching in its strangeness. Here was the touch of romance, mingled with the idea of adventure. Here were the stirring events which could only be supplied by the presence of a savage people and a cunning enemy. Here, too, was a scene which would charm anyone with an eye for beauty. The rich emerald green of the clear shallows contrasted well with the purple-blue of the deep water, and the dozen canoes skimming on the calm lagoon added the necessary touch of life. Beyond rose the many-peaked mountains covered with vivid green.

When the canoes were about half-way, they stopped, as if the occupants wished to confer with one another as to the best course to follow. The arrival of a ship was such an unusual occurrence that it was looked upon as something from another world. But when they saw no sign of warlike preparation on the vessel, they came on more boldly. Wilder-looking fellows it would be difficult to imagine. They were tall and well-made, though not roundly-moulded. Their muscles stood out in bunches, giving the impression of great strength. Their dress was scanty, and chiefly made from dried grass. A girdle of this material hung from the waist to the knees, lending to the wearer a most barbarous appearance. All of the savages had their hair brushed or combed into

high tufts of weird shapes. Some of them wore armlets and anklets made from sea-shell, to indicate, as I afterwards discovered, that they had slain ten or fifteen men in battle. A few feathers and head ornaments completed a costume that was fantastic in the extreme. As for weapons, every man had a spear and a club. Some of the latter were curiously wrought and inlaid with mother-of-pearl. There could be distinguished amongst the clubs, imitations of the pineapple, and of the old-fashioned blunderbuss, which the natives had probably seen on former visits of European ships to the Group. This piece of information fell from the lips of the cook as he and Dan leaned over the rail.

It was clear, from the way in which the warriors were armed, that they expected treachery. Their numbers, also, were increasing every moment. Other full canoes were seen gliding around the headlands until Dan counted thirty. The crazy craft were each built with an outrigger, which must needs be kept to windward, lest the canoes should overturn.

The crew of the whaler were deeply interested in what was happening, and especially were they full of admiration as they noted the skill with which the savages handled their canoes in the gusts of wind that frequently swept down upon the lagoon.

Some of the remarks made by the men were not so complimentary as their enforced admiration

might have prompted. "A heathenish crowd, indade!" said Mike Hooley. "Moind ye now, I'd as soon mate the evil wan himself as wan o' thim varrmints in the darrk. Ochone! Oi'll ate me ould beaver hat that Oi left at home, in the ould counthree, if they don't look savage enough for anythin' this soide o' the grave."

Then up spake Jack the Cornishman, who was inclined to religion: "Ah! If the Methodies 'd coom t'm they'd be better, sure 'nough. I'd b'lieve that if John Wesley, 'im that held forth in Gwennap Pit, could preach to 'm, they'd be mooch different."

Jack had much to bear from his mates as a penalty for being religious. Still, he had won the respect of the crew by his fearless advocacy of Christianity, which was the name of his religion. On this occasion, however, the ideas expressed by Jack seemed so much out of place that a great laugh burst from the crew.

"My merry St. George," shouted Dan, "they would be better stokers of the other pit."

From behind the nearest point a canoe appeared, the occupants of which were intoning a weird, wild chant. The refrain sounded like "Ulei! Ulei!" and ended with a bloodcurdling yell.

"Hark at that," said Bill. "It is worse than anything I ever heard, I'll warrant ye."

"What is it that they are saying?" asked Dan. "I have it." And he broke into another shout of laughter. "It's Hooley they are wanting. Hark ye!"

Again came the chant across the water: "Ulei! Ulei!" concluding as before with the fiendish yell.

"Howld yer wisht," said Hooley, trembling with the superstition of his race. "I'd as soon go wid ye as wid a crowd o' Kilkenny cats."

"Ulei! Ulei!" the natives replied.

This was too much for Mike Hooley, for he made a bolt to the fo'castle, whence he peeped warily at the oncoming canoes.

Some few of the sailors wished to fire the brass cannon, but the Captain would not hear of it. "We must not frighten them, as it is food we want. If that cannon were to be fired they would be off in a trice, and we should perhaps die of scurvy. Send aloft the white flag."

The little sign went up, causing a stir amongst the natives. But they were evidently reasurred, for they began now to circle around the ship as if they were on parade. The Fijian people are very quick to read the intentions and dispositions of other people, so that it was not very long before they made advances in the direction of the rope-ladders hanging over the side of the vessel. At last one, in answer to the friendly greetings of some of the men, and seeing no

trace of weapons (though each sailor had, by order, placed a pistol in his jacket), leaped daringly on board. When no harm attended him, the rest speedily clambered up, leaving but one in each canoe. As nothing could be made out of the excited ejaculations of the savages, a conversation by signs then began. The sailors showed their knives and trinkets, and endeavoured to make known by gestures that they were in need of food and wood. While the pantomime proceeded, Mike found courage to sidle up to the little Welshman.

"And phwat wud they be after feeding themselves on at all, at all? They are moighty strong men, so they are."

"They are vegetarians usually," said the Welshman, giving Mike the benefit of his reading. "On occasion they make a feast, at which they cook fish, pigs, and human beings." Mike made a wry face at the latter suggestion, and his hand stole to his pistol."

"Tunder an' taties," cried he, "they are foine specimens of vegetarians, so they are."

Mike's remark was true, for every man was a model, with huge muscles on leg and arm that would make a hand-to-hand tussle with him dangerous, to say the least. One tall savage, with armlets and anklets on his limbs, and covered with cocoa-nut oil from head to foot, approached Dan, who had been hold-

ing me in his hands, ready to barter me in the best interests of his dear Jane. The barbarian's eyes glinted as they rested on me, and he made a move forward as he asked: "Acava?" (What is it?) The question caused Dan to flounder, so he fell back on his limited vocabulary.

"Kaikai" (food), answered he."

The islander looked incredulous, and put out his hand to feel me. Dan, perhaps thinking it the best way to arouse the greed of the barbarian, trusted me to him. The latter was bent on finding out what sort of kaikai I might be. Heart of ivory that I was, I feared no man's teeth. Accordingly, when he took me up, tapped me with his fingers, opened his mouth widely, displaying two handsome rows of teeth, I knew that he would be the sorrier of the two in a duel between ivories. Strong as his teeth were, they could make no dents or scratches on me. Evidently the test was sufficient for him, and he laid me down with covetousness peeping out of his dark brown eyes. He strolled to the other side of the ship, but very soon his curiosity overcame him, and he returned to where Dan was sitting. In rather a bold manner he took me for the second time from Dan's hand. The latter said "Vinaka" (good), and the savage answered "Vinaka." They apparently understood one another on that point. But when the Fijian said "Sa noqu" (It is mine), and made as

if to take me away, Dan jumped up, saying: "Drop that, you black rapscallion. By merry St. George, I want kaikai for it. Plank down your yams like a gentleman and you may have it. Hark ye!"

One word of this harangue attracted the savage's attention. On hearing the word "kaikai," he turned laughingly to Dan, and pointing to him, said "kai-kai." This was too much for those of the crew who were standing by. Dan was all muscle and bone, and did not promise to make a dainty morsel.

"Get out, you lubber, I am too hard in the head for that." The joke was lost on the heathen, who looked a little bewildered at the effect of his action. Dan was equal to the occasion, however, and rattled off the two words "Vinaka, Kaikai," pointing alternately to me and to his waist-coat button. At last it dawned upon the native what was required. Relinquishing me, he made for his canoe as fast as his copper-coloured legs could carry him. That savage paddling to shore was a sight worth seeing. So said Dan's little company. His paddle he used now on the right and now on the left of his outrigger canoe to such good effect that he was quickly hidden from view behind a small headland. Evidently he was set on being my possessor. Some such thoughts as the following were apparently passing through his brain: "If I become the owner of that tooth I shall possess a charm which shall give me power in the eyes of

my people. Such a tooth we have never seen before. With it I could do anything, for it would be more valuable than a club or a spear, or any of the symbols that my people use."

As a matter of fact, I afterwards learned that the Fijians never did any work of importance without ceremony, and especially, no great compact was ever made without the aid of a recognised sign, such as a shell, a club, or a cocoa-nut branch with the fruit hanging to it. This particular savage was shrewd enough to see that he might turn me into a symbol, to be used to good purpose on special occasions. Moreover, I was easily carried, durable, attractive in appearance, and by far the best whale's tooth on the ship.

My would-be owner had been away for some time, and Dan had begun to doubt whether he would return. At length, two canoes were noticed coming out laden with yams, which looked like huge potatoes; in addition, the warrior had brought young cocoa-nuts, a few woven mats, and some ornaments made from sea-shell.

Dan's face shone with delight as he thought of Jane and the pleasant surprise he would be able to give her. It was clear that my fate was sealed, and that from henceforth my home was to be amongst these wild people of the South Seas. The bargain being concluded, I was handed over to my

new owner, who at once carefully wrapped me up and hid me in his canoe.

Other canoes had been conveying supplies of food and native manufactures, and soon the crew had provisions sufficient for months to come. As the savages seemed peaceful, two boats had also been sent to shore for fire-wood, and they had returned several times laden to the gunwale. The Captain, having no further cause to stay, heaved anchor the next day, set sail, and departed to seek for more whales. Of Dan, I heard no more; but there can be no doubt that he made good his claim to the curios which he got in exchange for me, thereby keeping the Captain to his word.

CHAPTER IV.
NEW POWERS.

AS I have already told my readers, I have been in the habit of thinking exceedingly well of myself. But shortly I was to receive new powers hitherto not dreamt of in my wildest imaginings. Instead of being a mere whale's tooth, I was to become a mystic sign, with virtues destined to shape the lives and institutions of a strange people. So real did these powers prove to be, that by-and-bye I came to trust in them as if they were an actual possession born in me. I am given to understand, however, that even in societies of men this identical self-deception is quite customary, so that I am not alone in my fault.

It soon become apparent that my new owner regarded me with a certain amount of superstitious awe, and even with fear. He bored holes in me, by which he might attach native-made cord, and every day he would hold me up by it, the better to admire my shape and colour. Then he would turn me over in his hands, clicking his tongue the while, thus giving expression to his pride and pleasure.

One day a sudden thought came to birth in his savage mind. Acting immediately upon it, he went

into the woods. It was not till evening that he returned, carrying a plant, which is called in English, Turmeric. From it he made a yellowish dye. Judge my scorn and shame when I found that my ivory whiteness was now to be made yellow to suit the caprice of my barbarous possessor. We are ever at the mercy of the opinions of others, and I have found it is one of the hardest things to please everybody, even barbarians like this Fijian. I must pass through the unpleasant treatment, therefore, and lose for ever the gleaming whiteness of which I had been so proud.

The daily visit was paid as before, but now I was forced to undergo a massage with oil and turmeric. Thereupon I turned as yellow as a golden guinea. If I became more and more disgusted with myself on that account, I rose daily in the estimation of my owner.

The savage into whose hands I had fallen was named Dakuloa. He was a high chief in the town of Kulatu, and was related to a still higher chief in the town of Ula. To this latter personage, who was named Ratokaitua, there came one day a rumour of the good fortune which had befallen his younger relative in the possession of myself. Wishing to hear more of it, he sent a special message to Dakuloa to attend on him at once. Fijians are entirely respectful to their leaders, and are in the

habit of obeying, without question, any command that is given to them. Dakuloa forthwith embarked in his canoe, not however before coming to take a parting glimpse at his treasure.

As he turned to go, his face showed that he was inwardly displeased with the intentions of Ratokaitua.

Dakuloa was away several days. When he returned (it was night) he came at once to see if I were still in my hiding-place. By the light of a reed torch, which he carried, I noted that his face was sullen and lowering. His mission evidently had not met with great success. He muttered a few words in Fijian as he entered: "Isa! sa dua na ka ca." (Alas! it is an evil matter.)

Next morning I was taken up carefully and carried to Dakuloa's canoe. A curious three-cornered sail made out of dried grass, finely woven, was hoisted on two poles, placed anglewise, and we shot across a strait fifteen miles wide in an incredibly short time. Dakuloa was taking me to the town where Ratokaitua, his dreaded uncle, lived.

The approaches to the village were rough bush tracks, over which the tropical green hung densely. Underfoot the soil was of a sandy nature, and had doubtless been formed by the constant washing of the sea, for it was full of broken coral, pumice, and shells. A dampness constantly arose from the path,

owing probably to the fact that the sun scarcely ever shone through the thick foliage overhead. Several birds of bright plumage flitted through the half-gloom of the track. Passing a stockade, we came upon a few uncouth pigs, which I afterwards learned were brought to the Islands by Captain Cook. There were also some fowls, which had long since lost all semblance of breed. As we drew near to the town, several naked children ran and hid behind the tall cocoa-nut trunks. One boy sat upon a huge drum, nine feet long and nearly four feet high. It had been an immense tree, and had been hollowed out by means of stone axes. Of this drum and its uses I was to learn much. Suffice it now to say that it was never beaten except for signalling purposes. We entered the village, and Dakuloa immediately took me to a large Fijian house at the end of the square space, which occupied the middle of the town.

Before entering, Dakuloa gave a curious cry, which was intended evidently as a mark of respect to the dignitary within. We then entered the building, and Dakuloa sat down in silence. After some moments had elapsed, the voice of the high chief, Ratokaitua, was heard, as he gave the customary Fijian greeting:

"Life is good."

"Life is good, sir."

"Have you brought the tooth?"

"Yes, sir."

"Good!"

A few moments of silence. Then:

"Let me see it."

I was slowly produced, and brought to the front, where I got a good view of the face of the man who was coveting me as his possession. It was the very embodiment of cruelty. Vile living was written on every feature. Evil purposes were patent to the most casual observer. His eyes were red from his drinking heavily of native grog.

"Good!" said he again, in an abrupt way. It was plain that he was endeavouring to appear indifferent, but I noticed there was a glint in his bloodshot eyes which signified more than did the stolidity of his face.

"Give it to me."

I was handed over. Ratokaitua then turned to his nephew and said:

"Go and get something to eat. There is food in the next house."

Dakuloa went out as he was bidden. As soon as he did so, the cruel savage who now possessed me, began to exult with devilish joy. He took me up, and muttered as he looked upon me: "I will have them now, my enemies. Last moon they mocked me, but soon they will be mocked. Three more nights

and then they will be in the oven, and a great feast will I make."

The villain mumbled on in this fashion until a footstep outside the house warned him that someone was approaching. Hastily placing me beneath a mat, he resumed his former passive demeanour.

Not many days afterwards I was carefully brought to light, but this time in the presence of a second person.

"See," said Ratokaitua to his companion, "I have now the means by which I shall carry out my desire upon my enemies. This tooth shall bring me the joy of vengeance. Take it by night, as far as possible, to the town of Naiqoro, where Matavou is chief, and inquire if he will deliver to me the two youths who took refuge with him last moon. Should he still refuse, then show this tooth, and inform him that I send it with these chiefly words: 'You are a great chief, and here is a small tooth, which I bring from my master. Many times he has asked a favour, but now he sends his respects, and asks for the two young men who fled to you last moon, and he wishes you to accept this tooth as a token of his good-will. It is a ka-mana (a thing with magic power).'"

The messenger was a descendant of a family which had followed the calling of courier for many generations. It was therefore no difficulty for him to remember the words as dictated by his superior. He

received me with well-defined awe, and, placing me in a plaited grass basket for the journey, set forth without further preparation. It was a wild, rugged pathway which we followed. Gradually we mounted upwards until the morning light broke from the east. The valleys were then seen to be choked with thick cloud, which gradually lifted, revealing the wondrous beauties of tropical scenery. Various promontories jutted out boldly to the sea in the direction whence we had come, while nearer there were circular beaches of glistening sand. As a contrast to the latter stood heavy fringes of cocoa-nut trees. A mile out to sea stretched the foaming coral reef, as white as the snows of Antarctica. Between the reef and the beach lay the lagoon, set like a piece of many-tinted opal in a rim of ivory.

But all this beauty threw into dark relief the low state of the people living in it. Already I was being initiated into the treachery, tyranny, cruelty and crime of these curious tribes. And, unfortunately, I was to be made an active co-worker in their plottings. Like true-born ivory, I shrank from anything which was not all of a piece. But Fate had ruled that I must follow her commands to the full, and perforce, I obeyed.

Our destination was reached shortly after sunrise. It was a mountain village, prettily situated amongst the hills and valleys of the interior. The

A Typical Fijian Path. Stinson Photo.

ocean could no longer be seen, as the mountains hid it from view. There was the usual flutter of fowls and rush of pigs, as the messenger climbed the stile which formed the entrance into the town. Two or three ill-favoured curs snapped at him viciously. Without looking to the right or the left, the messenger made straight for the house of the chief, Matavou. This man had a darker face than many of the Fijian people, probably because he was descended more directly from the original inhabitants of the Group. According to the custom or etiquette of the people, the messenger sat down in silence until he should be saluted by Matavou.

"Where have you come from?" is almost an inquisitive question with Europeans, but in the mouth of Matavou it was a sign of his gracious attitude towards his visitor.

"Ratokaitua has sent me," was the answer. This with great deliberation, for unseemly haste is thought bad diplomacy by Fijians, as well as bad manners.

"Is he well?"

"Yes, sir."

Silence again; then:

"What have you come for?"

"My master has sent me, sir, to pay his respects to you, and he hopes you are well."

"Good."

"And he also wished me to ask for the granting of his former request."

The change in Matavou's aspect was remarkable. If possible, his face grew still darker, while his eyes flashed in anger. But restraining himself, he answered in a hard voice:

"Go back to your master, and tell him that it is impossible. The word of a chief has been given, and I am ashamed that he who has sent you asks so often that I should break it."

The messenger shrewdly waited until the storm of anger had passed, and replied softly:

"He bade me press his request, sir."

"Foolish and impudent man! Go, lest evil happen to you. Tell your master that once for all, it is impossible."

Very cool and deliberate was the messenger's next action; for, disregarding the angry chief's command to be gone, he drew me from the basket in which I had hitherto been concealed, and holding me by the plaited fibre cord, said: "Look, sir, you are a very great chief, and this is a small tooth which I bring from Ratokaitua. Many times he has asked a favour. But now he sends his respects, and begs for the two young men who fled to you for refuge last moon, and he also requests that you will accept, as a token of his good-will, this tooth. It is a ka-

mana." The well-planned ruse was so unexpected that it swept the old man from his self-possession. One would have thought that there were actually some magic power coming from me, for as soon as his eyes rested upon me his countenance changed, as does the face of a child when a new toy is placed within its reach. There was more than mere curiosity in his attitude, however, for he realised in a moment that the possession of me meant power to him.

Eagerly his bony hand clutched at me, and quite as eagerly he raised me to his wide nostril, at the same time drawing in his breath sharply (the Fijian kiss), which action became from that time the right way for all others when receiving the whale's tooth.

"It is well," said he; "for your master's chiefly character has overcome me. He is a true chief, and the sign thereof I hold in my hands. Leave me for a time."

The messenger retired with the air of a man who had done his part successfully. Matavou continued to inspect me as if I were a spirit from the world of the dead. Gradually a dark look of an evil purpose crept over his face, boding ill for the two young men. A message was sent to the leading chiefs of the clan to meet him in council. Obediently they crept in, one by one, and took their places, accord-

ing to their rank and influence, in a half-circle. So they sat, a council of death, and as they listened silently, the old chief proposed that the two young men should be given up. It was no hard matter for them to agree to their chief's decision. Two men more or less in the world, seemed a mere trifle to these wild men of the Islands. Of more importance was the manner of their capture. To this fell task they bent all their savage inventive power. After long deliberation, it was decided that sports should be held in honour of their two guests, and that all the residents in the town should vie with one another in the game of throwing the spear. It was further arranged in their dark counselling, that when the two young men were watching the performance, certain braves should be told off to throw them suddenly on their backs and bind them. Matavou informed his Privy Council, in a hoarse whisper, that he had decided to send the refugees to Ratokaitua, that that chief might vent his hatred upon them. Not one of those present were ignorant of the possible fate of the victims, but the knowledge of it did not deter them from their project.

The whole affair was carried out as arranged. The game of "Veitiqa," or throwing the mock spear, is one which has engaged the idle moments of Fijians for generations past, and is as much a delight to the onlookers as to those competing. By long practice the warriors have acquired singular skill

in the amusement. The mock spear is a reed about four feet long, with a heavy knob of wood attached to one end. It seemed the easiest matter in the world to make this improvised spear travel like a flash a hundred yards, but it is actually one of the hardest things to do. Let the doubter try for himself.

A long space had been cleared between the cocoanuts from older times; even the grey-beards did not remember when it was prepared. Many happy gatherings had made the locality ring with loud laugh and crude joke, and the crowd of savages who meandered to the spot on this particular occasion were happy enough; for even cannibals can, for a moment, lay aside the cares of life in order to make merry with their friends.

No suspicion of foul play lurked in the minds of the fine young athletic victims. The day was charming. The spear-throwers gave themselves heartily to the sport, while their admirers shouted their approbation of any especial feat upon the part of their favourites.

The two young men were sitting with their faces towards the game, nor did they notice the stealthy movements of half a dozen warriors who were appointed to the traitorous act. When the excitement was at its height, there was a sudden leap, a cry, and the two were struggling on the ground with

their would-be captors. As they attempted to rise the others leaped upon them heavily, making it impossible for them to defend themselves. Temporarily disabled, they were easily secured, and were soon lashed securely to stout pieces of bamboo, and so, with terror in their eyes, they were carried face downwards through the forest to the town of their fierce enemy. When the full meaning of what had happened dawned upon the merry crowd, their laughing was effectually stopped; the people made no noise, excepting for a fierce yell that occasionally broke upon the stillness from some overwrought warrior. Night fell, but no sleep came to the villagers, their excitement completely banishing repose.

They conversed in whispers until early morning, when a faint boom and thud, heard alternately, floated upwards from the coast. It was fully ten miles as the crow flies, but the huge drum in Ratokaitua's village was distinctly heard in the still morning air. Men spoke with fear in their voices, and women trembled, as they listened to the ominous beat—the awful meaning of which they had learned by bitter experience.

Again the eventide, with its soft colours and cool breezes. The long shadows of the cocoa-nuts gradually disappeared in the gloom of night. A solitary traveller, carrying two small baskets upon a pole,

made his way from the rugged path to the chief's house. His burden he deposited in the midst of the company assembled for the evening meal. After a few moments' rest he displayed his gift to full view. Horror of horrors! Could it be a cannibal peace-offering?

My readers will not be sorry to pass from this scene. The new powers vested in me were grievous indeed to be borne. Had I consulted my own wishes, it is certain that I should not have chosen my present existence. Jack the Cornishman would surely have been less hopeful with regard to the savage inhabitants of the Islands if he had witnessed the deeds which came directly under my notice. Acts such as the one I have described were common in those dark days, but I spare me the gruesome details.

My next adventure was more to my liking, which I shall relate, however, in a new chapter.

CHAPTER V.
THE ATONEMENT.

MY readers will pardon me if I indulge in a little dry talk. I must confess to a weakness in that direction, though a whale's tooth is not supposed to know anything of hard thinking. A little explanation is, however, necessary just at this point in order to make my story clear.

It is a mistake to think that savage peoples are always bent on wrongdoing. If they had without ceasing sought to commit deeds such as that described in the last chapter, they would be fiends of hell. Cruel though the Fijians were, they had their times when they tired of doing frightful things. It may be said that the Islanders are much like children, in this respect, that the bad deed of to-day they want to forget, if possible, to-morrow.

It seems also to be a necessary part of their existence that they shall relieve their minds by certain simple games.

If it were not so they would have destroyed themselves by constant warfare.

These pastimes and amusements release the pent-up animal spirits in their breasts, just as in the

The Village Square. Stinson Photo.

case of schoolboys amongst my readers, and the natives throw themselves into their games with great zest, every person taking part, as far as possible, in the fun. No native game caused so much genuine enthusiasm in Fiji as the sport called "Veitiqa" (throwing the spear). For the time being, at least, the people forgot their enemies and their enmities, and they lost the vague fear of the ever-possible attack which haunted them in their hours of indolence.

Their amusements also were, in the main, a display of pure fun. Even their dances, in which they decorated themselves to some effect, were not suggestive of evil as in other islands of the Pacific; on the contrary, they were a simple, healthy pleasure. The crowds of onlookers are on such occasions carried completely away by the happiness of the moment—not by any direct hint of evil, but by a fresh movement or manner of dress set off on the village green. The dances of the present day were handed down, as far as their form goes, from the forgotten past, and to outsiders who see them for the first time the picture of the regular movement, flashing with colour, is very pleasing, especially when the surrounding foliage is rich in shades of green.

There were times, then, when the people turned for a moment from the more terrible aspects of

their savage life to pursuits and occupations of peace. It happens often, therefore, that a savage leader, grossly cruel on some occasions, will tire of his cruel acts and seek change in his planting, his amusements, or some other method of lessening the weariness of his mind.

Thus it was with Matavou. After the revolting episode related in the last chapter, he looked for a salve to his disturbed spirit. and therefore his thoughts turned in the direction of peace. Might it not also have been the sign of a better thought that man's life is not altogether at its highest when spent in slaying and plotting?

On account of this passing change in the man, it was my lot to be lead gradually into another phase of Fijian life and character.

Matavou had had a long history of bickering and quarrelling with a neighbouring chief, whose name was Sikalutu. It had come to such a pass that the affair might, like a festering sore, break out at any moment into violence. When a man was injured in Fiji by another he pledged himself never to forget the insult until it had been avenged. If the injured one were to die, it was the custom to pass on the evil burden to his son, and to his son's son. Many sad stories may be told how anger, like a stream. has begun in but a little thing, and has grown by mutual wrong into something out of all proportion to its cause.

Matavou's trouble was a true instance of the foregoing native practice, and was on this wise. When he was a young man (which was about thirty years before) he had been an energetic native planter. It was his custom to go into the mountains before sunrise, and work in his garden. He was an adept in the art of growing yams; also taro, with leaves like a lily, and sweet potatoes.

The yams he grew by first digging up little hillocks about a yard apart and about a foot high. In these he planted slices of old yams after the manner of potato-planting in European countries, with this difference, that he did not need to look for the eyes. After planting he watched the hillocks until the long, running vine of the plant began to make its appearance. Matavou then went into the woods to get reeds, which he placed in the ground beside the runner, so that the latter could climb according to its nature. If an old dead tree stood near, so much the better, for the vine could then wind itself around the trunk and branches until they were covered. Should there be too many stones in the plot, he piled them up into a strong hedge, over which the plants might freely clamber. Carefully did Matavou tend his yams until they were mature, which was about six or eight months after planting. Matavou also built in the centre of his garden a neat little reed house, in which he might keep his spare produce until required.

When the yams were dug, sweet potato twigs could be placed in the empty hillocks, and a second crop raised in the same ground. It took but three months for sweet potatoes to come to perfection, and the vegetables thus procured became indispensable during a season of the year when yams were scarce.

But Matavou had also neat irrigation plots made by damming up a small stream with earth, so as to cause the depth of water over the flat surface to be about two or three inches. Merely using a pointed stick, he made holes about a yard apart, where the water thus flowed, and then planted deeply the young shoots of the taro. These again were exceedingly useful in the season when other foods had been exhausted. Matavou was very proud of his terraced taro beds, and indeed, he had good reason for so feeling, as his taro was admittedly the best in the district.

The chief was following his usual pursuit with great ardour when he was about the marriageable age, as Fijians say, and determined to make a yam-garden high up in the ridges some distance from his town. He chose a fine piece of land above a rock cliff where the earth was rich and loamy, fitted for the production of yams. His judgment, as usual, was not at fault, and in the month of March the vegetables were ready to dig. Matavou paid an early morning visit, therefore, in order to get the very finest, as a present of first-fruits to his chief.

While engaged in his task he heard a step, and immediately seized his club and spear, which he always kept beside him. The tall reeds parted, and a young chief of a neighbouring tribe stood before him with anger depicted on his face.

"What are you doing here?" asked he.

"Digging the first fruits." answered Matavou.

"You shall have none to-day," was the fierce response.

"Why not?" said the other, grasping tightly his spear and club.

"Because you have been planting on my land."

"It is a lie," retorted Matavou.

"It is you that lie, you base-born serf," returned the savage stranger, at the same time spitting on the ground between them.

Quick as a flash Matavou threw his spear, but his antagonist as quickly evaded it, and the shaft buried itself with a hiss amongst the reeds.

They two then challenged each other to mortal combat. Placing their clubs handle downwards upon the ground, they encircled each other, watching their opportunity to make the first blow. While they executed this movement their muscles stood out in coils. Their eyes flashed mutual defiance. There was a panther-like leap and the two struck mightily. It seemed as if they had but parried. A rain of heavy blows followed, so that they were almost exhausted, and their breath came in short,

quick gasps. Suddenly Matavou dropped his club, every wild instinct now awakened within him. He seized his adversary around the waist, and putting forth all his powers, flung him over the cliff. There he lay, a helpless, huddled mass. A cry rang out from above. It was clear to Matavou that the conflict had been seen. He therefore sped away as swiftly as possible to a safe refuge.

His enemy did not die. The cry that was heard by Matavou came from one of Sikalutu's own people, who had by chance come upon the combatants at the crucial moment. His warriors were speedily called, who bore him away, and tended him until he recovered strength.

But Sikalutu had sworn a solemn vow of vengeance. From that time, these two were unrelenting foes, and through the years that had elapsed, many insults and injuries had been heaped by each upon the other.

Matavou was appreciably different, however, as an old man, from what he was in the wild days of his youth. The day after he had received me from Ratokaitua he sat in his house pondering long over this long-continued feud. For some time he had wished in his heart that he could bring it to an end. It had come to him suddenly, in the midst of his reflections, that now he had the means by which the whole bitter quarrel might be amicably settled. He

would take me, the whale's tooth, which he had had the good fortune to secure, and he would present me to Sikalutu, with a large gift of food, and so make a lasting peace. Long did he brood upon the possibilities of the case, until the determination to make amends found permanent lodgment in his mind.

So soon, then, as the month of the maturing yams (March) came round, he gave orders to his people to bring in the first-fruits. "For," said he, "I wish to make a present to Sikalutu." All wondered at the humility of their savage chief, and at another time they would have despised him. On this occasion, however, the people were as tired of the continual fighting as their leader was, and with some alacrity they set themselves to obey the command. In addition to the yams, ten pigs were to be provided, together with twenty fowls. Each woman was to supply a mat, woven with the best dried grass they could procure.

When all the preparations were made, a messenger was sent to his old-time enemy to say that he was bringing a gift. Such a thing was unheard of in the personal relationships of these two. Nor could Sikalutu suspect anything other than treachery. It was, therefore, with a forced appearance of goodwill, that he appeared in the village green to receive Matavou. The meaning of his large escort was unmistakable. According to the custom, he and his

retinue occupied one side of the clear space, while Matavou and his followers sat opposite. They were all armed as if for war, and looked like opposing armies.

At a command from Matavou, his men suddenly laid down their spears and clubs, taking up instead their gifts. With great self-possession Matavou then led them forth into the centre space, intoning a native chant composed for the event. When the food had been deposited carefully, they returned to their places. An ominous silence ensued. It was evident that Sikalutu still thought it a plot. At a given sign, Matavou's messenger advanced, as spokesman, to a point midway between the principal parties. He stood there silently for a half-minute, holding me out at arm's-length. Slowly turning from side to side, he displayed me to Sikalutu and his warriors. The sun shone upon me, making me to gleam like burnished gold. What magic spell was moving outwards from me I know not.

The speaker began! "Sir, we are here to-day to make amends. My master has called me to speak to you on thiswise. He is tired of the war that has been going on between our clans. He has considered long and earnestly the whole matter, and now feels he desires peace. But how to secure all that he wished for he knew not.

At last there came into his keeping this small tooth, which he knows is a ka-mana; and now he

brings it to you with the chiefly request that we cease from our quarrel. We ask, sir, that the past may be buried, of which let this tooth be the sign. So may you and we live, and let the country prosper."

A long cry, beginning high in the scale and descending to a deep guttural, a cry not unmusical, yet fearfully thrilling and penetrating, arose from Matavou's men, sealing what had been uttered.

He who held me in his hands stood awaiting in a dramatic manner the issue.

The change in the countenances of the others was instantaneous, as when a thunderstorm empties itself of rain and passes away.

Then Sikalutu did in the sight of all a thing unprecedented. Forgetting, in his change of feeling, the usual dignity of a chief at such a time, he rose and received the present himself, kissing me as did Matavou on a previous occasion in his private house.

Returning, he whispered a few words. His men thereupon laid down their arms, and the town-crier arose, holding me in his hands before him as Matavou's messenger had done, and after a short pause, said: "Chiefs from Naiqoro, I am directed by my master to say that the whole affair astonishes him beyond measure. He is of one heart and one mind with you, as he too is tired of the feud. He would have given it up long ago but for the evil spirit

that was in him. Now he has learned a lesson from Matavou, and says that as for him, the past is buried for ever. I have finished."

A long-drawn cry followed, in confirmation of this speech, ending in a loud chorus from the assembled onlookers as they repeated again and again their word for "good": "Vinaka! Vinaka!"

Sikalutu gave orders that food should be brought and placed before his visitors. Which being done, they all joined in the repast with much heartiness, entirely free from treachery.

My achievement on this occasion was more to my ivory heart. In the light of later history, the happy ending of this quarrel was a sign and prophecy of a still greater reconciliation, having respect to the whole Fijian people, and brought about by an Atonement availing for ever and ever.

CHAPTER VI.
THE RED FLAME OF WAR.

DARK races are said to be vainer than their white brethren. Whether the statement be true or false, it is certain that the former are bolder and more unblushing in their vanity than the latter. Sikalutu, now in possession of the mysterious power vested in me, was wont to plume himself upon his good fortune. Moreover, he could not resist the temptation to self-conceit whenever he thought of the humbling of Matavou. He gradually began to consider himself as the higher and better of the two, and to flatter himself that the honours of the long quarrel rested with him. The sweet taste of superiority proved too potent, and ambition rose in his heart. Why should he not increase his influence amongst the surrounding tribes to such an extent as to make himself supreme? Such was his thought. Only one serious rival could be seen on the political horizon, viz., Uluimoala, a powerful chief, whose town was situated about twenty miles to the north-west. If he were vanquished, then Sikalutu would be the dominating ruler throughout the district.

With me, the celebrated whale's tooth, my owner hoped to win trusty allies for his cause. Relieved of the strain which had resulted from the feud between himself and Matavou, he felt now that he would be strong enough to essay the difficult task of conquering Uluimoala. But first he must test his own people, his savage warriors, and his priests, as to what they thought of the chance or likelihood of success. He therefore called a secret meeting of his priests and most influential followers. These numbered, when gathered in their council meetings, about thirty men. Before the main discussion began, the members of the council performed a ceremony, which, unfortunately, is still the custom, viz., of plying their leader with native grog. Long did he drink, until the red flame of war leaped out from his wild eyes. Then said he: "You have seen the trend of events of late, how that Matavou has been humbled before me, making a peace of his own choice. The position of our people is now firmer than before. Why not make ourselves yet stronger?"

"It is true, sir," they answered in unison.

"Now," said he, "our gods are the spirits of our fathers, and they have hinted in a dream to me that we shall be as the lords of the land."

"True, sir," was the obedient echo, accompanied by the sound of clicking tongues.

Encouraged by the temper of the meeting, Sikalutu continued: "There is but one who threatens us

in these times, and he prevents us at every turn. His name is Uluimoala. It was only last moon that he stopped our men from using the pathway to the fishing-grounds in the bay, where we and our forefathers before us have fished during many generations. It is he who must be conquered. I have decided, therefore, that there shall be war, for which reason I have called you together this day."

Such was the tenor of his speech, and perforce his followers agreed. The two priests, on the other hand, moved probably by their covetousness of the chief's powers, spoke on a rather different line. It was their mind that the war should begin, but first they thought it wise to ask, in the ancient way, the spirits of the departed chiefs (who were the gods of the clan), whether they approved of the venture or not. True, their leader had given them his intention to wage war, but now let them first of all inquire of the gods, lest evil follow. Then they would advise the council, and not till then.

"Good," said they all. The two priests were freely offered native grog, which was looked upon as a necessary aid in all such matters. One of the two was selected to place himself in touch with the spirits.

The priests thereupon departed to the spirit-house, where they imbibed more grog. It was not long before the chosen one was thrown into convulsions by the excited state of his mind, and he

rolled upon the ground as if in mortal agony. Then his eyes became fixed, as when a man falls into a trance; thus he lay quite still for about fifteen minutes. At the close of that period he arose, as though nothing had happened, and communicated what he had seen to his companion. The verdict of the gods was favourable.

"Two things are necessary," said he, "and must be done to insure success in battle. First, the warriors should be tested by the priests; secondly, the great tabua (whale's tooth) should be sent to Raivotu, who was a neighbouring chief, asking for aid in the war."

The council of chiefs was delighted with the result of the enquiry, and drank more grog than ever, so that their evil passions and vindictive feelings were now aroused to the highest pitch.

On the next day the warriors were tested according to the direction of their spiritual advisers. Very early in the morning the former blackened their faces in anticipation of the forthcoming martial display. For further decoration they used cocoa-nut oil, poured freely upon their shoulders, until it ran down in streams. A vegetable black, together with a red earth, they sprinkled thickly on their chests and arms. For a girdle, they wore grass of varied colours, which was securely fastened to the waist, giving the wearer an ostrich-like appearance.

The sun was high when all their arrangements were completed. A feast, specially ordered, was almost ready for those who should pass the trial or test of a brave warrior. Intense excitement prevailed. It was toward midday when Sikalutu took his place upon a mat spread under a large bread-fruit tree, which threw a dark shadow upon the green grass. He himself was adorned with native cloth of a curious pattern; also with armlets and feathers. In his hand he held a mosquito swisher. No sooner was he seated than a messenger was directed to inform the braves that they might advance. Immediately they ranged themselves into an irregular body. Each man had all the available weapons he could carry. A spear, bow and arrows, a large and a small club, comprised the list.

When the warriors, who numbered one hundred strong, had entered the square, one of them advanced toward Sikalutu, at the same time uttering a curious cry in honour of him. Forthwith he assumed a fighting attitude before his general, as if the battle had begun. His long spear he poised in his right hand, making it to vibrate so rapidly that the tips were as indiscernible as the wings of an insect hovering in the air. Taking a step forward, he laid his spear at his feet, and then placed himself in the act of challenging an imaginary foe. This he did by resting his large club upon the ground with the handle downwards, grasping with both hands the heavier

end. So he stood for a moment, his body swaying to and fro, as if he waited for the onslaught of the enemy. His eyes made savage contrast with the black paint with which the sockets were surrounded, and now began to gleam with frenzy, demon-like. Then swiftly he snatched the spear from the ground and leaped high in the air, challenged, crouched, sprang forwards, vibrated his spear, lunged with it, whirled his club; and so for the space of a couple of minutes he exercised his muscles to the savage delight of the chief and the watching crowd. By the time he had concluded his gymnastic display he had come directly in front of Sikalutu. Quickly stooping low, he uttered his curious cry once more, and stood still. Between his quick breaths, he made a short speech, promising that thus and thus would he do in battle, nor would he return until he had slain his opponent.

Through more than a couple of hours the warriors boasted themselves in the eyes of all, each man varying his actions according to his own caprice.

Meanwhile the priests had been arranging the test as they had proposed. Mere boasting, empty promises, and vain words could be uttered by any man. Now should the gods prove which was the brave warrior, and who would die for his chief. They had therefore planted reeds in the ground a few yards away from where the exhibition above-described had taken place. These reeds were but four feet high, and were about three feet apart, like the posts of a

A Peaceful Retreat. Stinson Photo.

doorway. Across the top several reeds were fastened in the form of an arch. Two such arches were made at a little distance from each other.

Now the cunning test was that each warrior must pass, fully armed and in a stooping posture, under the archways. He who gave signs of fear to the spirits would be indicated at the door of judgment by the trembling of his body. The sign to the onlookers, and especially to the priests, would be that the weapons carried by the fearful would rattle. There was a method in this madness, for any hero who could silently pass through the low aperture without even rattling his weapons, would he not be a trustworthy man to approach a beleagured town, or to wait in ambush, or stalk a foe?

Great was the shame of some half a dozen who failed to pass the test, and greatest was their ignominy before the assembled women, whose power of ridicule at such times was much feared.

Sikalutu himself was pleased with the result of the trial, and plied the priests with native grog and roasted pig, which the two agents of the spirits were, of course, pleased to accept.

The chief then arranged for a swift messenger to carry the great whale's tooth, as they styled me, to Raivotu, in the town of Rarama. This chief was exceedingly influential and a very serviceable ally. I was now to ignite the flame of war by securing his aid for Sikalutu.

Raivotu was about to go down to the coast to fish when the message arrived. He turned back, therefore, with some show of reluctance to his house. When he and his councillors were seated at one end of the long building, the messenger came, as soon as possible, to the venture in hand, by holding me out in full view of all. He then began deliberately to utter the following words: "Chiefs and warriors, I have brought you this small tooth, that it might be the means of death to Uluimoala and his people; that they may be killed, every one of them. Foster kindly feelings, I pray you, towards my master, and may the outcome be the burning of our enemy's village, for Uluimoala and his men are our mutual foes. We are trusting and hoping much in you, that you will do as we have requested."

The other members of the deputation (there were three who supported the messenger) cried together, "Mana," referring to the efficacy of the powers vested in myself.

Raivotu, when he saw me, lost a little of his vexation, and was the more willing to hear the request because of my attractive and uncommon appearance. He had also an old score to wipe off with Uluimoala. I could see, however, that the very thought of owning the celebrated whale's tooth, of which so much had been heard, was quite sufficient to influence him in the direction of war. It was as if I were a fetish, potent, devilish.

Forthwith preparations began to be made. The fishing expedition was postponed, and the time of the assault was chosen instead. Two nights must elapse, and on the third night they would, in conjunction with Sikalutu, invest the ill-fated town. Before the third night Raivotu took the precaution to convey food to his hill-fort, where the women and children, the old men and the sick, might find refuge during the fight. The fort was a steep ridge, about three hundred feet high, surmounted by a few houses, amongst which grew cocoa-nuts and other fruit trees.

Despite the secrecy which attended all Sikalutu's movements, an inkling of what was brewing came to Uluimoala's ears, nor did his small army leave any stone unturned in their endeavour to repel their enemies. Their chief fortifications were the stockades, a series of reed fences mounted upon clay or earth ridges. Behind these the defenders might resist the besiegers for a considerable time, for the stockades were placed along the approaches in such a way that the warriors could flee from the first to the second, and then to the third, and so to the village itself.

On the third night the allies invested the town where Uluimoala lived. The besieged were in no way surprised when, in the early morning, a taunting challenge was heard from beyond the first stockade. They ran to their posts and flung back as bitter insults as they had received. Yet they did

not accept the challenge to go out and fight in the open.

Shortly after daybreak the first attack was made. A flight of arrows heralded the approach of the besiegers as they leaped from cover to cover. Nothing could withstand the onrush of those men who had passed through the priests' test. A certain frenzy seized upon them, and it seemed as if they were immune. The superstitious belief which they had in their religious leaders filled them with a reckless daring.

The first stockade was taken, and the second also, before night. There remained but the third, which was exceptionally strong. The leaders therefore ordered the warriors to cease fighting, while they held a council of war. Weary with the long day's work in the hot sun, it was with relief the savages flung themselves upon their mats. Several were set apart to cook food in the ground ovens. I will spare the reader the details of the viands.

Fijian tactics in war time were full of cunning. To outwit the opponent was the joy of battle with these wild children of nature. Less pleasure was attached to the act of crushing the enemy by sheer force of numbers. To keep under cover as much as possible, and to leave it only when danger seemed least imminent, was also characteristic of the Fijian warrior.

The task that now lay before the allies was a more risky one than they had hitherto faced, and could be successfully accomplished by strategy only. Any other course would mean the sacrifice of many lives. One grey-beard suggested, therefore, that an attack should be made on one side of the town, so as to draw off the garrison in that direction. A second force could be held ready to make a breach in the defences on the other side. After some deliberation, this proposition was deemed unlikely to succeed.

Then the chief of the priests outlined a plan which was finally accepted.

"Let the archers," said he. "tie frayed masi (native cloth), about a finger thickness, around the heads of their arrows. The masi shall then be ignited and allowed to smoulder a little. When it has properly caught, the archers shall shoot the darts at night upon the houses within the town. As they speed through the air they will burst into flame and will then bury themselves in the thatched roofs. The men who are defending the stockade will, in their fear, rush to put them out. Then will be our chance." The assembled chiefs praised the sagacity of the priest, and immediately decided to follow his scheme.

That night was one of unequalled beauty. Every leaf on tree or shrub glimmered in the moonlight. There was no sound, though every ear was alert on either side to catch the crackling of a twig or the

rustle of a leaf. Even the breeze, blowing off the land, scarcely stirred the lightest branch as it hung daintily from the parent stem.

At midnight this glorious scene was changed suddenly into an inferno. The twang of thirty bowstrings awoke the echoes of the woods. Thirty meteors sped like rockets for swiftness. A house immediately burst into flame near its ridge, for the hot summer sun had made the thatch as dry as tinder. A startled cry from within the town drew the attention of the defenders to a cruel fact. "A gasau vakabuka! A gasau vakabuka! Fiery arrows! Fiery arrows!" To save their houses by pulling out the flaming darts was the thought that leaped into action. But what of the stockade? Half a dozen braves vainly endeavoured to resist a force of fifty men tested by the priests, and they paid the penalty with their lives. The cries of the dying savages mingled with the demonaiacal yells of the invaders as the latter slew without mercy.

A dozen huge bonfires lit up the surrounding forest with a weird light, that added to the awfulness of the moment. Gradually the inferno grew quiet again, save for the shout of some warrior maddened by the lust for blood.

The victors, wildly exultant, drew around their camp fires at the close of the fight, and told of their prowess in battle. In the flush of their triumph they

did not discover that they themselves had not come off scathless. The red flame of war had indeed left a black scar where Uluimoala's village had stood, but it had also swept away one of the chiefest of their number, Raivotu himself.

CHAPTER VII.
BURIED.

UPON the large wooden drum in the town of Rarama men played a funeral beat which filled every valley with its mournful sound. A panic seized the women and children, the old men and the sick, who had been taken to the hill-fort for safety, because they knew what the dread signal indicated. A chief, mighty in battle, had fallen. Very spitefully was the message taken up by a small drum, which in its turn was accompanied by three large drums booming ominously like the thunder of the Pacific rollers on the coral reefs. Moreover, the beat came from the direction of their own town. Who has been slain? So they queried as they watched anxiously down the woodland path.

A messenger came running up the hill. In his haste he stumbled the last few yards. "The battle is over, and we are the victors," he gasped; "but our chief is fallen. Raivotu is no more. Bravely did he fight, like a champion always. It was at the very last that he fell, pierced by a spear thrown at random in the final skirmish.

"He lay there mortally wounded, but was able to speak. These are his words: 'I am about to die.

Cocoanuts. Stinson Photo.

The enemy flee. Now bury me in the depths of the great cave at Soqeda. I know this is not the custom of my people, but let the battle be remembered in this way. Another request and my spirit goes. The tooth, the great whale's tooth from the south, let it go with me to secure my entrance into the happy resting-place of my race. They, the enemies whom we have slain, shall live with the spirits of hogs in yonder bare hill, but I shall triumphantly go to the land where only the brave can enter.' These were his last words, my friends, and we promised him that we should carry out all his desire. While he drew his last breath we waved a cloth about his chiefly body, so fast growing cold, to catch his chiefly essence, and the crier has it this instant wrapped on a piece of hardwood in his house."

The story was cut short by the sad wailing of the women, as is the custom with these strange people.

"Ule! Ule! Isa! Isa! Sa bale na turaga."

"Woe! Woe! Alas! Alas! The chief has fallen."

Thus their cry continued to the setting of the sun.

Meanwhile the dead warrior had been brought slowly and sadly into the village where the people all repaired to carry out the last rites. Only the bravest might carry him. To these simple folk he was half-god, of the divine race of chiefs. True it

was that he had been terribly cruel at times. By his oppression and tyranny he had inspired them all with abject fear. In his paroxysms of anger he had been like a devil incarnate. All this, however, had the more deeply imbued their minds with the idea of his power as a member of the divine order. Now that he was dead they were ready to elect him to a position among their already numerous gods. Never would they forget him while life should last. As often as they spoke of him, so often would they omit his name by substituting the title—"the chief who has fallen"—or at the most, whisper the name itself with bated breath.

And what of the two requests which he had made before he died? The last words of the lowest commoner were always sacred; much more, then, the dying commands of this most powerful chief.

The council of minor dignitaries sat long while they debated the course to be adopted, and the outcome was that they should first install his successor according to the time-honoured way. His brother, being the next-of-kin, was the heir. Orders were given to the town crier to call out aloud in the village that the arrangements for the installation would be effected on the morrow, after which the burial would take place. The town crier went into the village green, where he stood and cried:

"Men and women of Rarama, you know that our chief is fallen, and there is one who lives to take his

place. He will be made chief to-morrow before the sun mounts high in the heavens. Prepare! Prepare! When that is done, let everybody make his way to the place of burial. It is finished.''

The morrow broke fine, and the ceremonies began. Mats were spread under a large nutmeg tree in the village. Here the new chief took his seat, accompanied by those nearest of kin. Bowing low, the crier advanced towards him, holding in his hand the piece of wood around which was twisted the native cloth that had in it the essence of the dead warrior. Then in full view of all the people, the chief crier begirdled it, sash-like, about the waist of the new hero. Again bowing low, he crept away in a stooping attitude until he had reached a respectful distance. His next act was simply to take his seat, and then gently clap his leg in token that his duty was over.

Immediately all the people gave the same blood-curdling cry that I had heard on so many former occasions, and which seems typical of the Fijian people. By this means the clans accepted their leader, and recognised that the essence of Raivotu had passed into his successor.

The installed chief now took control of the proceedings and ordered the feast to be presented, which ceremony occupied the attention of almost everybody in the town until the afternoon, when the burial was to take place.

My readers will perhaps think it strange that these curious folk should feast in the hour of sorrow. But the Fijians are not alone in this custom, for many other peoples do the same thing. The reason of it is possibly that the simple minds of inferior nations cannot bear the strain of grief too long, and therefore have recourse to this method of diverting their attention from the object of their sorrow. Some have said that the funeral feast arose first of all from the desire of the survivors to provide sustenance for the departed on his journey. It is much more, however, than the thought of helping the dead which prompts the Fijian to make feasts on such occasions. They live in clans, and they feel as clans; as clans therefore they attempt to relieve the oppression of present sorrow. Doubtless only inferior minds could be comforted in this coarse way, yet the value and meaning of funeral feasts must not on that account be underrated.

The body of the dead chief was wrapped in fine mats for interment. His wives presented a sad spectacle as they sat fanning the face of the departed. The house was also full of relatives and sympathisers, who sat mourning. At last orders were given for the burial. The body in its mats was then lifted by chosen young men, and was slowly carried away.

The pathway had been previously cleared of the jungle, so that the funeral cortege had no difficulty

in its progress. The town crier was appointed to carry the "great whale's tooth," for I was to be buried with the dead, according to his last wish.

With regard to his desire to be interred in the cave, the peoples were all of one mind. Under ordinary circumstances a grave deep and wide would have been excavated by a picked band of men. In that case the followers would have each been provided with mats, which would have been laid one upon another, in order to make a clean resting-place for the dead. But no grave was needed for Raivotu, for had not he asked to be laid far away in an unfrequented portion of the cave? Still, one or two mats were taken by the party, to be spread on the ground.

The procession wound irregularly beside a shallow stream, from which it headed after a while to the right, in the direction of a moderately high range of mountains. Naked boys sped on in advance as fast as their sleek brown legs could carry them.

Arriving at last at the mouth of the cave, which was situated in the aforesaid range of mountains, the band of warriors halted a moment while the young men prepared torches. These were simply long pieces of dry bamboo, about three inches thick, cracked or crushed by means of a heavy stone. The bamboo thus treated makes a very acceptable and dependable torch, howbeit a flaring one. By rubbing a pointed piece of hard stick upon a length of soft timber a fire was quickly made, at which a few of the torches

were lighted. The rest of the bamboo was carried by boys, to be used as required. Then the party began the toil of carrying their heavy burden along the difficult underground passage. With commendable patience and perseverance they pushed forward, aided by the bamboo lights. The cave was exceedingly low for a long distance, and slender stalactites hanging from the roof interfered with the bearers. Likewise the floor was singularly rough, and huge boulders lay in the midst of the gloomy corridor. At the side, and sometimes across the track, bottomless fissures yawned. Meanwhile the air became damp and heavily laden with the curious odour of bats and other evil creatures that live in the dark. Despite the obstacles in the way, we advanced slowly and surely into the depths of the cavern. Torchbearers proceeded in front of Raivotu. I myself, the great whale's tooth, was carried next, in the hands of the crier, to be buried with the dead hero. The retinue followed as well as they could in the midst of flickering shadows.

As we advanced a dull roar could be heard from the midst of the cave directly on in front. I was at a loss to know what it was until at last the passage opened into a majestic, dome-like cavern, so high that the roof could scarcely be discerned by the light of the flaring bamboos. In this mammoth underground chamber a broken foaming torrent rushed pell-mell downwards on one side, being finally lost in the

bowels of the earth. A curious whirring noise, like the sound of a thousand looms, persisted upon the ear, caused by the presence of myriads of bats. Upon the ground lay thick animal mould, which had been deposited probably through ages.

A halt was made here in the dense darkness that the warriors might hold a consultation. Weird indeed was the spectacle as they came to a standstill. In the gloom, which was almost to be felt, the torches threw an uncertain glimmer upon savage men with savage faces and dress, standing around an uncouth burden. With an active fanciful mind, the whole scene could easily be converted into the entrance hall of a vast Fijian inferno.

On one side of this cavern there opened another passage into a less spacious portion of the cave, where the shadows seemed like a solid wall. That smaller cavity was to be the resting-place of the chief for ever. His body would there become one with the mould of the floor, though his name might be remembered for a century by his descendants. There, too, was to be my abode for more than fifty years.

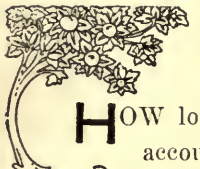
One of the warriors boldly plunged a torch into the thickest part of the gloom. So dark was it that it was a matter for surprise when the light was not immediately extinguished. Following closely upon him, the party, brave in numbers, penetrated into the furthermost recesses of the cave. There they spread

the mats upon the floor, and, not irreverently, laid their burden down.

The only ceremony observed when this had been done was that of placing me upon the dead man's breast. Then, taking the loose ends of the mats, the barbarous sextons folded them one after another over the chief. More torches were lit, and the company departed, their broad feet splashing noisily in the water lying here and there on the floor of the cave. A few moments elapsed, and the warriors had disappeared in the gloom, their voices echoing more and more faintly as they receded in the distance. The long dark night had set in, and I was alone with the dead.

A Group of Fijian Christians.

CHAPTER VIII.
A DREAM.



HOW long I lay there I cannot tell, for all account of time was lost. Even the faint muffled dripping of water from the roof, which might have served to mark the seconds. only helped to deaden thought, and the consciousness of earthly things. It must have been that not only minutes and hours and days, but months and years, passed away. It seemed, as I lay there, that a change was gradually taking place, and the very recollection of former things had faded. A strange new light began to shine into the cave, a soft harmonious light, which lit up everything around, and shone from neither candle nor torch. The very rocks grew luminous. Raivotu stood beside me, divested of his burial raiment, a Fijian still, but with the appearance of one without the gross characteristics of the flesh.

He was trying evidently to recall the past, for from time to time he pressed his hand upon his head. Then he began to search for something, but without avail, if one might judge from the disturbed expression on his face. At last he chanced to come upon me as I lay in the mould of the floor. His perplexity cleared, and, stooping with eagerness, he seized the cord by which I was carried, and held it tightly.

As he lifted me, I, too, appeared to myself to be different from what I had been. The solidity on which I had prided myself had departed, and I was but the semblance of "the great whale's tooth."

This fact did not, however, impress Raivotu with any sense of unreality. He seemed content, and clung to me as if all his hope depended upon me. Then, without any difficulty (for the whole cave was light from the soft shining), he proceeded towards the entrance.

On arrival there we made no delay; but immediately ascended the mountain spur to the right. The incline was steep, and though he did not breathe heavily, Raivotu began to weary rapidly as one out of his element. Before he sought rest, however, he persevered until he reached the summit.

Immediately on the top of the spur, a wide path led through the forest. It was quite evident that no woodman's axe had cut this open way, nor was there any other sign of human being. Yet the track was very clearly marked. Raivotu breathed a sigh of relief, and sat down. Near by were some cocoa-nuts, half-formed, plucked just when they were sweetest to drink. A stone knife lay beside these, and both knife and fruit had for me that curious unreality which distinguished everything I had yet witnessed.

Taking the little set-out feast as a matter of course, the chief essayed to break open the tops of the cocoa-

nuts just as when he was in the land of the living. To judge by the look of pleasure which came into his countenance, the cool juice suited and satisfied some inward spiritual need. We then proceeded along the way stretching out before us. This path was exeeedingly pleasant and cool, for it was heavily wooded on either side, but not so densely that the breezes could not blow freely. At certain fixed distances cocoa-nuts were found as before, and Raivotu missed no opportunity of refreshing his strength and eourage.

The way seemed to be perfectly familiar to him, though he could never have travelled there previously. For was it not the path of the spirits? But without hesitation, as though by a sure instinct, he pursued his journey, clasping me tightly as before.

Our route now led down a pretty glade, overhung by spirituelle trees, amongst which were entwined charming creepers, with dark green leaves, stippled with crimson. Here and there graceful tree-ferns showed their perfect forms. Through this glade we made our way, until we had almost reached the further side. Here we were suddenly met by a messenger, who asked Raivotu if he were bound for the land of spirits. The latter answered in the affirmative. He was then informed by the man that the first test was awaiting him at the top of the next slope.

Raivotu inquired exeitedly of this strange personage what the test might be, and receeived the reply

that directly in the pathway two heavy stones were set horizontally and face to face; and all who went that way must pass between the stones. The chief next inquired the reason of the test, and was told that it was instituted to determine whether the pilgrim spirits were mean or generous on earth. To which Raivotu nodded his head several times, for he remembered the belief of his tribe that a mean man cannot possibly pass between the stone grinders. All beliefs come home in the long run, and so in the case of Raivotu. It would be proven clearly now whether he were sordid or not. He ventured another question: "Do many mean people come this way?" The caretaker smiled and said: "Not many Fijians. Despite their numerous faults, they are usually generous and hospitable to their guests; but sometimes a miserly soul is found out by the ordeal, and then it is grimly amusing to see him endeavouring to clamber between the spiritual crushers."

Desirous of advancing on his journey, Raivotu said: "Let us go." And the guide led the way up the slope. "There," said he, 'they are before you," showing them with a wave of the hand. It was even as he had described, except that in addition, the stones were slowly and heavily moving the one against the other. No likelihood appeared of any man entering there. At first Raivotu hesitated, but at a sharp word of command, he made as if to go on his way. The spiritual mortar caught up the chief as if to

crush all life out of him, albeit with no untoward result, for nothing of meanness was found in the bold warrior. With an open heart he had vouchsafed his gifts, for which virtue his people had forgiven him many wrongs.

It was good to see the Fijian leader as he stepped forward with renewed hope and vigour. The pathway was as before, neither was there any need of guide. Raivotu's spiritual instinct led him aright on every occasion. Our journey now took us up to the heights, where a wonderful view of a new country was obtained. The finest panorama was certainly that directly in front, but still far off. Through a fruitful plain ran a broad silvery river, of which more anon.

Continuing in our course, we were forced to climb a very rocky ridge. The courage almost died away from the traveller's heart. But fortunately, some more cocoa-nuts were found near the top, on a ledge of rock. I say fortunately, because awaiting him above was a woman with a very sharp gaze, to meet which calmly Raivotu needed all his self-possession.

"Whence comest thou?" said she.

"From the great cave at Soqeda," answered Raivotu.

"Where goest thou?"

"To the land of spirits."

"Art thou brave?" the woman asked.

"Men said I was." This with becoming humility.

"Still thou must be tested," was the woman's rejoinder.

"The second test, Raivotu," she added, "is near by."

"Will you be kind enough to enlighten me with regard to this test?" Raivotu requested.

"Yes," said the woman, "it is the proof of the brave. Come." The pilgrim mounted the last steep rock. Upon the flat shelf four women stood holding a cloth by the four corners. "Thou art required to place thyself within this cloth, and thou wilt then be tossed high in the air. If the winds above blow thee far from here, thou wilt have been declared thereby a base coward. Of a surety thou wilt not be allowed to pass to the land of spirits."

The prospect was one to try the stoutest in heart. Driven as it were by some irresistible power, the chief sat within the cloth. Moving together, the women skilfully tossed us until we felt a strong wind blow upon us from the right side. The strength of it was sufficient to bear a craven to the land of nothingness. But Raivotu descended as directly as he had arisen, being caught easily again in the cloth held by the four spiritual inquisitors.

The chief stepped out on the further side with the air of a man who had been attested a brave man, as well as a generous one. Confidently now we moved

rapidly forward. According to the beliefs of his tribe, there awaited him but a single ordeal. Past waterfalls shot with changing hues, and overhung with dewy grass, across mountain torrents that leaped high in wildest glee, beside gloomy clumps of quaint banyan, and through reedy flats, lay our path. A hill arose in front, and we had but gone down the slope of it, when at a point the river appeared. At this very look-out a man stood waiting.

"The third test is at hand," said he.

My possessor said: "Speak quickly, for is not that the river, beyond which lies the land of spirits? What more remains for me?"

"Thou hast spoken truly, Raivotu. That is the wide river that waits to bear thee to the spirit-land of thy fathers. My ordeal for thee is soon over, for it is but a question. Art thou married or single?"

As I look back to that time the question as a test of a man's good virtues appeared to miss the mark. Indeed, all the trials through which the Fijians had to pass had no trace of the best ideas. Their beliefs were nothing but the image of their way of thinking and acting while in the land of the living. Animal courage, generosity, marriage—these were the chief things which won their praise. Many Fijians added cruelty to the list, and few of them failed to live cruel lives.

To return to my story, the solitary one, as I have shown, had asked Raivotu if he were married or

single. Unhesitatingly the chief answered: "Married. Had I been chief of Bau, my three wives would now be with me as witnesses to the truth of what I say; for the women of Bau prefer to follow their departed husbands rather than to live."

The man standing before us immediately vanished, as if into thin air. As there was now no obstacle in our way to the ford, we descended speedily.

Our path became smoother and the country more level. Raivotu's excitement grew with every step. For this was the hope of all his efforts, that, having passed the ordeals, he should be allowed to make a friend of the deity of the ford and of the tree that stood by, and so pass to the land of spirits. Having been reared in an atmosphere of cruelty, no thought of the wickedness of his many evil acts entered his mind. He was a brave man, a generous man, and a married man. More could not be demanded of him. Again, he had great faith in the magical virtue of myself, as I was in his eyes a charm of the first order. He reasoned thus with respect to my value: If anklets and clubs might be acceptable gifts to the god of the ford, how much more the priceless ivory which he held in his hand!

At last our journey came to an end. The scenery was indescribably beautiful as we approached the crossing. Many-tinted greens rested the eye of the traveller, and a rich medley of dense forests, velvety grasses, distant hills, and adjacent rivers, satisfied

the most refined desires. Beside the ford stood a tree of mammoth proportions. Its top at times appeared to reach to the very clouds. Hanging in its branches were countless gifts that had been flung by former pilgrims: clubs, valuable bracelets, and shells, such as a Fijian himself would prize in life. Not a single whale's tooth was to be seen. Raivotu was the first to bring one to please the deity. It was therefore an hour of triumph to him, and his breath came thickly on account of his joyous feeling of hope. He was just about to cast me on to the tree, and was already muttering the words of dedication, when a man appeared near by, saying:

"Hold! What wouldst thou do here?"

'I have come a long journey to cross the ford," replied the chief. "I am weary of my pilgrimage, and now I wish to appease the god, so that I may pass over and rest."

The other was visibly disturbed, as he said:

"Hast thou not heard?"

"What do you mean?" asked Raivotu, apprehensively.

"I mean," said the man, "that these old beliefs are to pass away and give place to those that are true and which remain for ever."

"What matters that to me?" queried the warrior. "My fathers rested in these old teachings, and I throw in my lot with them. I know no better way."

Then said the man: "I am afraid they will help thee no more. Even now I feel the approach of the Mighty One. I must needs go. But remember, what comes is best for thee. Accept it, and shou shalt live. I represented the days of darkness, but He that is the Light draws near. See!" he cried, and pointed to the tree. It was gradually fading, with its gifts, into a vaporous exhalation. And so standing, and pointing, the man himself disappeared.

A groan broke from the chief, as he cried:

"Why should I die twice?"

"Nor shalt thou die again if thou wilt listen to me," said a voice of wondrous power.

Raivotu looked up and said: "Who, sir, are you?" He who had never said "sir" to mortal man had it wrested from him by the majesty of Him who stood near.

"I am the Truth," was the dignified answer.

Slowly the proud head of Raivotu sank upon his breast; his knees trembled, and he fell a broken mortal upon the ground. The scenes of his life swept before him, with its falsity, its ignorance, its superstition. Misery and wretchedness so seized upon him as he lay, that he cried out:

"I am dying. It is the second death."

The Vision spoke again:

"I am the Life."

The despair of the warrior was at once arrested,

and its terrible ravages ceased. But still Raivotu bore the look of one who had gone for ever astray.

"What shall I do? Where shall I go? Alas! Alas!" Agonised cries broke from him again.

"I am the Way," said the Vision.

Strong emotion shook the chief as he said:

"I have not heard of you at any time."

"I know it," said the Master.

"Why then, Sir, have you been so long time coming, for I feel in my soul that I am in the presence of the Truth?"

"The work began many years ago," replied the Master, "and it has been delayed by the hardness of man. My will was that the islands of the sea should know me according to the prophecies. And even now the message is coming to thy native land."

"I would I were alive again, having seen the Truth. For then would I fight for it." Raivotu uttered these words with great earnestness.

"That may not be," answered the Christ. "But fear not; thou shalt not suffer more, if thou canst pass the fourth test. But first let me ask of thee, Whither goest thou now?" Raivotu pondered the question, and said: "Where the Truth goes, I will go."

"Then thou must first pass the test."

"What test? What ordeal shall I pass? I am ready," cried the chieftain. "I have been through three already, and surely may succeed again."

Very quietly, yet incisively, the Master said: "Lovest thou Me?" The man shook like an aspen. A long silence ensued, until finally Raivotu, whose name means vision, slowly lifted his eyes to that benign face, and said: "Thou knowest the love of my spirit is Thine."

The Vision stretched out His hand, and taking Raivotu's in his, they two vanished out of my sight. I was left in total darkness—the darkness of the cave.

CHAPTER IX.
THE NEW RELIGION.

FROM my earliest days, I have had a rule of living to suit my peculiar temperament. Some may count me very strange when I express the opinion that our rule of life should correspond to the kind and quality of our nature. Yet surely is my judgment right in this matter, not only with regard to myself, but also to the heathen. It is worse than useless to impose a very high kind of goodness upon an inferior nature. The Master, whom the Fijians came to worship, was most wise when He said to His followers: "I have many things to tell you, but ye cannot bear them now." For myself, I am not vain enough to think that my list of virtues will be accepted by your philosophical professors, or by your purist pharisees. There are but three main principles which seem to fit my constitution: First, Solidity, by which I mean, every part of me is permanently filled with atoms; my nature abhors an empty space. Second, there comes Durability, which arises out of my Solidity; it is no idle boast that I could live a century and not feel it; I might indeed become a little yellow, but many other marks of old age I escape altogether. Durability

makes it easy for me to bear buffets and changes with a certain quiet, calm demeanour which a philosopher might envy. As a consequence, it amuses me to see how men are the most excitable of all creation. Thirdly, there is Genuineness, which finds its source in the fact that every atom in me is ivory. If there had been any other thing mixed in with the ivory I should have had less faith in myself.

As I think carefully of my own code, I am vain enough to believe that it is not a bad one after all, even for boys and girls. The teaching I offer you for everyday life is: Be solid, be enduring, be genuine. Many a wise man has fared worse in practice.

But the teaching which I so boldly offer you is the limit of my efforts in that direction. Of religion I know nothing. My first introduction to it was in the dream which I had just experienced. It was, therefore, with a strange glow, as when something altogether new enters one's life, that I recollected my weird vision.

But if I know nothing of religion, I am as little acquainted with theology. It would therefore be impossible for me to say, with any certainty, whether such an experience as befell Raivotu could be the lot of any man after death. Despite my ignorance of these things, however, my interest was greatly aroused by my dream. Nor was it unnatural that I should wish to discover how much of truth was in it, and

whether the amount of truth would affect my future experiences.

Proceeding with my story, the vision left me in the darkness of the cave. But vast changes had come in the years that had passed by. Instead of being wrapped in mats, I rested on a heap of mould. The dripping of the water, the roaring of the underground torrent, and the whirring of the bāts' wings seemed strangely familiar. To my confused senses it appeared but a few moments since the savages had left me with Raivotu. Yet the evidences of the lapse of time were so plain that they were not to be gainsaid. Those who had possessed me before the time of my burial must now be long dead. Mike Hooley, Dan Sawyer, Jane, Jack the Cornishman, must now have passed to their account. The good ship in which I travelled would perhaps be a hulk or a wreck on some coral atoll. Other whales played in Antarctica. So ran my legitimate musings; for over half a century had elapsed since I was buried in the cave with Raivotu.

In the midst of my meditation the murmur of men's voices suddenly broke in upon the everlasting rush of the torrent and the whirring of the bats' wings. It might have been that Raivotu's party had returned to see that they had done their work well But fifty years had elapsed, and the majority of those would now be in the spirit-land. Yet the speakers were evidently Fijians, and they stood in

the large cave at the entrance of the smaller one where I lay.

The words uttered by them I heard distinctly through the passage.

"This is the place, so the old men tell us. Ever since our childhood we have heard the story, and no one has ever had the courage to enter the dense darkness beyond."

"Well, let us break the custom," answered the other, "let us go into the cave and see what is there."

"Never," said the first; "we should die within three months if we did so—that is, if we did not fall dead in the cave itself. It is taboo."

"Are you afraid, Daurere?" queried his companion.

"Yes, Joni, my hand even now trembles, and the perspiration pours from me, while my skin creeps."

"But why fear the ancient spirits, Daurere? They can do no harm."

"Joni," said Daurere, "I know what is in your mind. You have been baptised into the new religion, and the first thing you do is to belittle the ancient beliefs."

"You have spoken truly, Daurere, and that is what makes me brave to enter into the darkness of the cavern. Come with me."

"No, Joni." This most emphatically. "I dare not. You have a new magic in you, of which I am

A Wedding Pair. Which is the Bride?

ignorant. If I enter I shall surely die. If you go, you go alone."

"Then will I go alone, for I have an object in view. I shall not die, but live. Give me the lantern, and I will also take my torch. If the torch gives out, I can depend on the lantern. You keep your own torch burning brightly, so that it will guide me on my return."

The voices ceased, and footsteps sounded splashing in the water, as Joni advanced towards me. The gloom of the innermost cave was lit up by the flare of the torch and the steady gleam of the lantern. Joni is seeking everywhere for something which must be the cause of his visit. He overturns stones, kicks aside the mould, and scours the place thoroughly for the object of his search. As he swung the lantern around the light fell upon his figure in such a way that I could see him clearly. He was dressed in a white piece of English cloth, instead of the barbarous grass girdle of the early Fijians. His countenance had in it a quiet, steady purpose, utterly different from the ferocious expression of such a man as Ratokaitua. His glance fell upon me at that moment, as he kicked away the earth. The cord which had been tied through the eyelets made in me by Dakuloa had long since decayed, but Joni very quickly grasped me, and turned to go with a look of triumph in his eye. I will not say that he was not frightened at his daring act. As he

stood in the very sanctum of the dead it was not wonderful that the old stories became very vivid. His new faith felt the strain, but stood it well; he stiffened himself to the task, and deliberately carried me along the passage to where his companion stood trembling with fear.

"I have been to the end of the passage," he informed Daurere, "and I have found what I desired. "See," said he, as he held me up to the light. The mould had fallen away from me, and when the other saw the treasure that had been recovered, he clicked his tongue in admiration for several moments.

"Where did you find it?" asked he.

"On the floor in the earth," said Joni. "The old stories are true to that extent. Someone was buried there, and this was buried with him, as the legend says."

They two then slowly departed in silence, thinking over the things that had happened.

Once more I was in the daylight, but what changes had taken place! Where plantations had thickly grown together, the forest stood. The very path we had used before had been long forgotten. Raivotu's own village site was lost in the impenetrable scrub. The names of the new villages which had sprung up were not those of the old. Though still plentiful, the people were less numerous than

formerly. The facts of those days had become the legends of these.

For some time the two men talked of the transformation that had taken place in many phases of their village life, and then passed on to discuss the new religion which they had mentioned in the cave.

I could see that Joni was trying to persuade his companion to accept it, and be baptised with a new name. Evidently Joni's previous bravery and present arguments affected Daurere considerably, and his soul burned within him, as he said: "It is my desire, Joni, to follow your religion. I have seen to-day what it can do, and how it can triumph over the ancient fear of our dead chiefs. Yes, I have it," he said with enthusiasm; "I shall be baptised, and with a new name. My old one means 'Always fearing.' My new name shall be Daunui-nui—'Always hoping.' "

At that moment Joni and Daurere crossed a stream, and on the farther side they rested in the shade of a large ivi tree. Daurere broke the silence between them by saying: "I have a question to ask you. Do not be angry with me."

"Say on," replied his companion.

"Well, then, why did you want the whale's tooth so earnestly?"

After a short pause Joni said to Daurere:

"Since you are decided to become a Christian, I will tell you, for you will thereby partly understand

me. If you were still a heathen, you would laugh at my desires, and what I am now decided to do, because it is against the custom of our people."

Joni paused to gather his thoughts together, and then began: "You have heard of the manner in which the new religion came from Lau to Viwa, and then spread to Bau and other parts. I was one of the first to accept the new teaching, and from that moment I believed in Christ the Saviour. I had two ambitions. One was to be a teacher of the Lotu (religion), and the other was to be married to a Christian woman, after the Christian ordinance.

"My first desire was easy to realise, as it happened, for the missionary wanted me to go to him at Viwa, and prepare myself for the work. I have been there now two years, so that I shall soon be equipped sufficiently to be sent out in charge of a town. But how to get a Christian girl as my wife was my difficulty. God guided me in this also. It happened in this way: There had been very heavy rains in Colo, and the upper reaches of the Rewa River were quickly flooded. No thought of a fresh in the river entered the minds of those who lived lower down. The waters came suddenly, sweeping along near my native town, while the men were all away at their gardens.

"There were two fine canoes but lately cut out. and they were tied to stakes beside the landing-

place. One of these was caught by the flood and was in danger of being lost. A young woman named Vula was preparing yams for the morning meal by the river-bank. It was she who first saw the canoe disappearing swiftly around the bend of the stream. She threw down the shell with which she was peeling the yams, and ran as fast as she could to where the other canoe anchored. Leaping in, she pulled up the stake which constituted the anchor, and using it as a driving-pole, went after the drifting craft.

"Very skilfully she managed to overtake it, and with a piece of cocoa-nut cord tied it to the canoe in which she herself sat. Having accomplished this with some risk, she then set herself courageously to pole the two vessels against the flood.

"The waters were flowing so swiftly that Vula could make no headway against them, and gradually her strength began to fail owing to her great exertions. At last she found that she was being carried with increasing swiftness to the rapids, just below the further outskirts of the town. Making a final effort, she thought she might save the canoes by guiding them into the swirling eddy on the other side. But her decision came too late; and the torrent, becoming faster and more disturbed on account of the nearness of the rapids, caught the two canoes and capsized them.

"Vula, seeing she could do nothing, plunged into the stream to save herself. She was a good swimmer, but was partially stunned by a collision with a piece of drifting timber. The most she could do after the accident was to keep herself afloat, and scream for help.

"Now comes my part in the story. I was working in my garden when I heard the scream. I ran at once to the river-bank, where I saw the woman struggling in the flood. Without hesitation I leaped in, and being a strong swimmer was able to bring the woman to land.

"Quite fatigued, she lay there; but she was not so exhausted that she could not speak. She said as she rested upon the grass: 'I give my thanks to you. Your religion has not made you less brave than you used to be.'

"After a time she was able to walk to the village, which she did alone. It is bad manners for a man to walk with a woman in the woods, and is against the custom of our people, as you are aware.

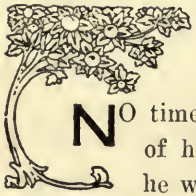
"That night I knew whom I should marry, and I asked my mother, who is a Christian like myself, to speak to Vula about the religion of Jesus Christ. It was not very long before she quietly turned from the old superstitions of witchcraft and witch-doctoring to the pure beliefs of Christianity.

"And now I am come to the question which you have asked. I made a request to her father, a

very savage heathen chief, that he should give me his daughter in marriage. He refused angrily. I did not press my case then, but afterwards, when he was more kindly disposed towards me for saving some of his pigs from drowning, I again asked him for her. He gave his consent, on condition that I should find for him the celebrated tooth which was said to have been buried with the chief called Raivotu, in the cave at Soqeda. The cunning old man thought that I should never dare to do it. If I had not been a Christian, I should certainly not have dared to enter the place made sacred by the strange stories we have known from childhood.

"And now, my friend, let us go. I have the tooth, and I shall soon have Vula as my wife. You will stand by me while I offer the charm in return for the old chief's daughter."

CHAPTER X.
A CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE.



NO time was lost by Joni in the furthering of his plans. With his new-found ally, he went to see the missionary at Viwa, who baptised Daurere with the name of Daunuinui. Subsequently the two friends made a journey to the town where Vula lived, thus bringing the marriage negotiations to a head.

A shade of annoyance passed over the face of Vula's father when the two young men requested to speak to him. He granted the privilege, however, and they entered the house for the purpose.

Daunuinui explained the object of their visit in a formal manner, for the older man was, of course, aware of their intentions. But when Joni followed up his friend's words with a few earnest pleadings that the marriage be brought to pass at once, Vula's father, whose name was Waidrodro, answered:

"Did I not tell you, Joni, that only on one condition could I give my daughter to you, to wit, that you should bring me the great whale's tooth from the cave at Soqeda? Until that is forthcoming, it is vain for you to press this matter."

How the Missionary Travelled.

Stinson Photo.

"Sir," said Joni, "I have the tooth for which you asked recently," and he brought me to view.

The expression on Waidrodro's face was a curious one. He first showed the greatest vexation that Joni had been successful, and for an instant it appeared that his anger would blaze out. At that moment I exerted all the powers vested in me, for I was conscious of being an agent for good. Slowly but surely his anger gave way to my charms, and delight filled his breast instead.

"It is well," he ejaculated, "you are a brave man. Give me the tooth." A cunning look had crept into his eye. But as he stretched forth his hand to take me, Joni resolutely covered me up again, while he said to the perfidious old man:

"No, sir. On the day of the wedding it shall be presented by me in the usual manner. Then when the gifts are divided, you will receive it for your share."

Chagrin now showed itself in the countenance of Waidrodro, which clearly proved that he had intended to outwit Joni, and acquire the tooth by fraud. Being defeated in his attempt, he was forced to grant Joni's request.

Having gone so far, the anticipation of possessing the charm completely filled his mind, expelling his former evil passions. He even unbent so far as to speak highly of Joni, of his bravery in sav-

ing his pigs and daughter, the pigs apparently being more important than the latter. Nor did he stint his admiration when he heard how daringly Joni had entered the haunted cave in search of the tooth.

What was of more importance to Joni, the chief made arrangements for an interview between the former and Vula, to the end that a proposal might be made formally to her.

A house was placed at their disposal. Vula and a few of her female friends proceeded to it and waited for the deputation. Proposals of marriage are not usually made in Fiji, except in the presence of others. Joni was accompanied to the house, therefore, by his friend. The women sat in silence. Then Daunuinui, Joni's faithful ally, broke the awkward pause, and said:

"We are in your presence, and there is something in our minds which we want to make clear. My friend here has made known his desire to the great chief that he might have his daughter as his wife, and the great chief has approved. Now we come to you to know if it is your mind that it should be so. Joni is a Christian, and desires that he may have a wife who wishes to marry him, and not one who is unwilling."

Joni supplemented the words of his friend, and told how that from the day he saw her on the river-bank he thought of her as his wife, and he was ready now to take her, if Vula would consent.

When Joni ceased, there were a buzz of excitement from all the women present. One or two of them said to Vula:

"Speak! Speak! Tell him what is in your mind."

It is the mark of the female sex, even in savage lands, not to be won too easily. Vula made a show of reluctance, and hung her head. At that, the others began to persuade her with much noisy appeal.

"Speak! Speak! Vula. Tell him what is in your mind. Speak quickly."

But it was only when modesty's claim had been satisfied that she raised her head a little and whispered shamefacedly:

"I want him."

"Vinaka! Vinaka!" Everyone seemed heartily glad that the affair was settled so easily.

There was nothing more now to be done or said. It would have been bad form if Joni had shown undue delight in words. A close observer, however, might have noticed the flush of victory in the whites of his honest brown eyes.

The two men retired in a dignified way, to make arrangements for the wedding. A message was sent to the missionary, requesting that he should be present at the function, and conduct a Christian service. He, of course, was exceedingly glad to do so, since a Christian marriage was an excellent example for

the heathen around; moreover, this particular event, being the first in that town and district, marked an epoch in the history of the people.

Without waste of time on unnecessary preliminaries, the day was finally fixed. Intense interest prevailed, and as the country was then at peace, visitors flocked from the adjacent villages to witness the sacred ceremony. The pioneer missionary himself was a centre of attraction, and many wondered at the chiefly air of him who had dared to risk his life again and again for the sake of the people amongst whom he worked. This chiefly dignity they attributed to spirit-power or to a kind of magic; they did not understand that it arose from the consecrated soul of the man.

The marriage arrangements proceeded apace. A house was set apart for Joni and his young men, while another was allotted to the bride and her party. A third house was specially built, in which the ceremony might take place.

Although the marriage was to be Christian, other customs handed down from olden times were also to be observed, for the missionaries did not believe in changing the ancient institutions so long as their observance did not interfere with the chief tenets of Christianity.

The scene of the marriage festivities was the village green, and was therefore cleared of the rank

grass which so quickly grew upon it, and the large house belonging to the chief at the end of the open area was given to the visitors.

This building was soon filled with interested spectators, dressed in holiday attire, and oiled until they shone with the extract of the cocoa-nut.

In the house of the bridegroom great doings were going forward, especial attention being given by the occupants to the combing of their long hair with combs, the teeth of which were six inches in length. Their muscular bodies were anointed until they appeared like polished bronze. The final touch was given to the bridegroom himself, when a long piece of native cloth, printed with curious patterns, was wrapped around his waist many times, until he became so large that he could scarcely pass through the door.

A merry scene presented itself likewise in the bride's house, for the young women were decorating their hair with flowers and feathers. They, too, appeared like shining bronze statues, but of a less savage type than the men. The bride gradually evolved until she might well be mistaken for a gay butterfly; a finely-woven mat reached almost to her ankles, and above that, a huge bulk of painted native cloth was twisted around her waist in the same manner as the waist-cloth of the groom. Everybody had their best armlets, and red coral orna-

ments, and as much other gaudy finery as they could put on without eclipsing the bride.

When the final arrangements were completed the interested parties made their way, laughing and chattering, to the wedding-house. The young women of high rank were distinguished by the feathers in their hair, whilst the young chiefs carried, as a mark of dignity, their mosquito swishers. In such array did they appear before the missionary. It is true that there was some shuffling and mistakes, and much excited speech, before the bride and bridegroom took their proper stations, for everybody claimed the personal right to correct somebody else, until peace was finally restored by the command of the chief.

The solemn and musical words of the Fijian marriage ceremony were then read by the missionary, every neck being craned, meanwhile, to the utmost extent, and every eye being fastened on the speaker.

"Wilt thou have this woman to be thy lawful wedded wife?" said the servant of God.

Joni answered readily, for he had duly prepared beforehand:

"That is my mind."

Turning to the woman, the missionary asked:

Wilt thou have this man to be thy lawful wedded husband?"

Vula answered:

"That is my mind."

The two then clasped hands, no ring being used, and were pronounced man and wife in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. The sacred words fell on wondering ears, and several in that throng felt drawn by the very dignity of the ceremony, and the solemnity of the occasion, to think a little more favourably of the new religion.

The Benediction was pronounced while all stood, although it was so strange to the majority that only a few closed their eyes. The audience maintained a grave silence until they got outside, then their pent-up feelings found vent in a great chattering and merriment. It was a red-letter day for them, and some of them would probably count their time from it, so that other events would be remembered by their proximity to the marriage of Joni.

Next began the first great ceremony according to native fashion. The bride and her people sat on one side of the village green, while the bridegroom and his escort sat on the other side. Mutual gifts of food were made; but the most important feature was the presentation of a long piece of painted native cloth, which was done in the following manner:—

When all had been seated, Joni arose, holding myself in his hands, and advanced towards the bride. There followed him a retinue of young men, who carried a long piece of painted native cloth a hundred fathoms long, and more than a fathom broad.

The time it took in the making would be about six months, with all the women in a large village employed upon it during their leisure hours. This huge piece of tapa, as it is called, was piled up loosely before the bride, and upon the top of it I was duly laid. Whereupon the young women arose and folded the native cloth neatly, and laid it by for distribution. The division was made by cutting it into equal shares for equals, and into slightly bigger portions for chiefly members of the clan.

A similar gift was offered by Joni's newly-made wife, together with her young companions. in exactly the same manner. For myself, it presented a pleasing spectacle to see Vula gracefully leading her maidens forward to the place where her husband sat, in great satisfaction and pride. The colours of their various adornments contrasted well with the rich green of the grass. and made a novel picture.

The interesting ceremony being now at an end, the presents were allotted according to the time-honoured method mentioned before. I was apportioned to Waidrodro as his share, together with a piece of the tapa. As he fingered me I was conscious that he was full of awe concerning me. and it was not long before I fathomed the reason. I was laid aside that day, however, in Waidrodro's large house, where feasting was the chief occupation, and talking the principal accompaniment. The

guests sat in a semi-circle, with Waidrodro at the head of it, in that part of the house which was farthest from the entrance. Food, smoking hot, was placed in the centre on stiffly-woven mats, which were shifted to whatever place was most convenient for the guests. Fijians are only of late beginning to use spoons or forks while at their meals, the substitute for these utensils, except in one dread instance, being their fingers. Cups were always a necessary adjunct, and these were found ready to hand in the halved cocoa-nut. Needless to say, this drinking vessel was unbreakable.

From the conversation, I could gather what further felicities were going forward. Vula and her company were even then busy preparing food for another feast, which might be called the wedding breakfast. Yams and taro, fish and pork, stewed dishes of varied cuisine, and several kinds of native pudding, made from the breadfruit and taro, constituted the fare.

This feast was to be held in a new house built specially for the bridal pair, and could not be partaken of, if either had been married before. When everything was ready, a message was to be sent to Joni and his party to come as guests. On their arrival the bride, with her friends, were to serve the young men, who doubtless would do full justice to the repast. To be waited on by such fair attendants would be sufficient piquant sauce to the food for less

ardent natures. At the conclusion of the meal, presents were to be offered by the young women, of mats, fans, and other articles of manufacture, to the young men, who then would depart, well pleased with their gifts.

"Yes," said one, "after that is done, Joni's company intend to give a return bridal feast in another house, whither the new wife is to go accompanied by her girls to receive gifts in like manner. The men will act as hosts to the bride's party, and many gifts will be presented by them in return for those they had accepted at the hands of the young women." Much more to the same effect did I hear from the merry gossipers in the chief's house.

The missionary also came in for his share of discussion; his happy face, full of a power unearthly, as befitting a man who carried his life in his hands, was remarked by all. Fiji owes much to the brave men who, standing alone in those fierce days, impressed the savages with the sense of higher things.

Little more remains to be told with regard to Joni and his wife. Two weeks after they departed for their future home in canoes, their friends running along the pathway to bid them farewell. As the canoes out-distanced the villagers, these latter stood and waved pieces of native cloth until the wedding party could be seen no more. The friends of Joni and Vula were being left swiftly behind, but

these two did not waver for that. Through many years they lived and laboured faithfully, and gave their utmost energy to a task that was often dangerous in the extreme. They grew old in the work, were true to one another, and died blameless in character and of a good report, Joni himself having risen to be a native minister.

CHAPTER XI.
EARLY CHRISTIAN BRAVERY.

IN this chapter some of the names are hard, but I cannot make them easier, because they are the names of real men. Now let me tell a story which has never yet been recorded.

When the reaction from the marriage festivities had come, it was clear that Waidrodro began to view me, his new possession, in a different light. At first he was full of pleasure, but gradually he began to think of the dead chief with whom I had been buried. Waidrodro was a man, fierce in his treatment of inferiors, but cringing and fearful in the face of beings whose power he had no means of measuring. The dead Raivotu, for instance, was in no way superior to himself when living, but death had entered in as a new factor not to be despised. Raivotu had travelled away to the region of spirits, and might even now be wielding evil powers against him. The superstition, once admitted to his mind, loomed darker and darker, until it became a positive apprehension, or warning of approaching harm. Daily he would come and handle me, turning me over and over, with a growing dread in his eye. It

was a matter of fact now, that I had for him a potency of evil that must not be trifled with.

He did not choose, however, to give me up at once, because, partly, he had a strong admiration for me, and partly, he did not care to confess to having made a bad bargain.

At last his fears overcame him, and he resolved that he would no longer retain me. But how to dispose of me was the difficulty. For no small chief would receive me for the same reason which caused my owner to reject me. They, too, dreaded the spirit of the departed. Numerous stories arose in Waidrodro's memory of those who had fallen seriously ill because they had done some wrong or insult to the ghosts of the dead.

At last he thought of Cakobau, the great chief at Bau, who was so high in rank and authority that he need fear no departed spirit. Moreover, he was a Christian, and was therefore safe from evil powers that have their home in the land unseen. He would send me to Cakobau as a present, and as a token of respect. He would thus gain Cakobau's help, and the treaty might prove of value at some future time.

The solution of the problem seemed so easy that he immediately acted upon it. I was sent by a special messenger to the Great Chief, whose name had been reported throughout the world.

The virtue of Cakobau's new religion had made him a changed man. From being one of the most ferocious and bloodthirsty of men, he had become calm and kindly, without losing one whit of his natural strength of will.

I was not presented immediately on the arrival of the messenger. He must eat first, and then he might enter the presence of the Great Chief. When he was thoroughly refreshed he was admitted into the long and lofty house in which the Chief of Bau usually resided, and was allowed to explain the object of his visit. Cakobau smilingly received me, saying, as he saw for the first time the "great whale's tooth":

"Good! Good!"

That night he sent a return present to Waidrodro, with this accompanying message:

"I thank you for your gift, and I will be your ally in any time of difficulty. I put my trust in you also if at any appearance of trouble I want you to help me."

So spoke the old diplomat, and I became the property of the Great Chief.

Up to this time the interior of Fiji (Colo, as it was called) had not been Christianised, and it was Cakobau's great ambition that the Gospel should be carried there as well. He was earnestly supported in his desires by the Rev. Mr. Langham, who was

at that moment living on Bau, as the representative of the Methodist Missionary Society. Nor was there any other venture dearer to his heart than that of penetrating to those tribes who still lived in cruelty and vice. Arrangements were then being made for an expedition which afterwards became famous for many reasons, the story of which it is my privilege to tell.

It was not long before the cession of Fiji to England, when a brave little party sailed from Bau down the coast in a Fijian canoe. Mr. Langham, at that time a slight young man, Samuela Seru, who was employed in Mr. Langham's house, and Ratu Aisea Volavola, a baptised Christian, who was captain of Cakobau's large double canoe Kinikinilau, were the chief members of the party. These, with a crew, coasted down to the district of Ra until they arrived at the small section of Nalawa, where they made known to the people the reason and aim of their journey. They also informed the villagers that they had brought from Cakobau a large whale's tooth (myself) for the purpose of enlisting the favour of the tribes inland, or at least of adding some force and prestige to the message of the Gospel.

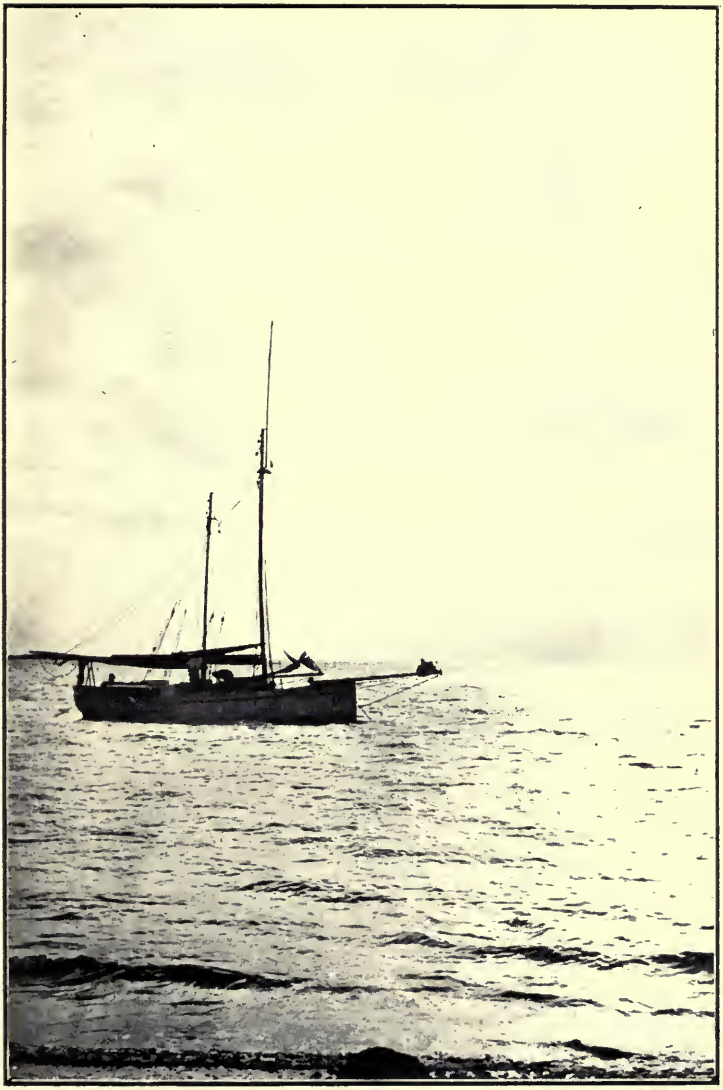
After much earnest debate upon the part of the inhabitants of Nalawa, two of their chiefs, Soqonaivi and Naqari, inspired by the bravery of the little band, offered to accompany them and show them the pathway.

Following the route through Nalawa, it is not very far to the district where lived the wild mountaineers. One long day's journey would suffice to bring the missionaries into touch with the barbarians at the head of the Wainimala River. The way led upwards for a long distance until it reached the watershed of the Rewa. The mission party had at this point a glorious prospect of the interior of Fiji. Far below them stretched a wide river basin, in which the main stream could be traced as it wound itself amongst the mountain spurs. Clouds covered the surrounding high points, throwing long shadows across the landscape, and thus adding new beauties to the panorama. Here and there appeared bluffs of rock, which gave character to the confusion of tropical vegetation.

At the head of this valley lay Nakorosule, on the Wainimala River.

Not without trepidation did the little forlorn hope enter the village, but to their joy, they were received hospitably by the chief.

Accommodation was found, and a house given, in which they might pass the night. The foundation of the house is still preserved, and is pointed out as the spot where the Rev. Mr. Langham slept when he brought religion to the inland peoples. Despite the stimulus of adventure, and possible danger, the men slept well, being wearied out by their long tramp.



A Cutter at Anchor. Stinson Photo.

In the morning, audience was granted by the war chief (Vunivalu) of Nakorosule, and Mr. Langham appealed to him to put aside his old evil practices and to accept the religion of Jesus Christ. "Moreover," said Mr. Langham, "I have a whale's tooth from Cakobau the King, which he presents to you, with the request that you will listen favourably to the story of the Gospel."

Without a doubt the message was a powerful one, and especially as it was coupled with the support and the approval of Cakobau, not to mention the effect which my own appearance had upon the Vunivalu of Nakorosule. But on this occasion my magic powers and the influence of the Great Chief's name could avail nothing with the head man of this mountain town.

After hearing what Mr. Langham had to say, the war chief sat still for a long space, Mr. Langham also keeping silence in obedience to Fijian etiquette. Finally he answered on this wise:

"If I embrace the religion which you bring, my relatives will be angry with me. My advice is: Go to the Taukei ni Waluvu at Navaulele. He is my chiefly uncle. If he desires the Lotu (religion), I will accept it also."

There was nothing more to be done save to do as the heathen chief had said. Mr. Langham thereupon set forth on his journey to interview the Tau-

kei ni Waluvu, which in Fijian is the picturesque phrase for the "Native of the Flood." He lived a few miles down the river at Navaulele, opposite to the town now called Nairukuruku.

When they arrived there they found the chiefs and people engaged in a curious custom. It had been an ancient practice amongst these tribes to build a "Bure Kalou," or spirit house (which was usually a very high-thatched hut), before going to battle. It was to be dedicated by the chiefs and priests, the dedicatory offerings being gifts of native grog and food, which were supposed to insure success in battle.

At the moment of Mr. Langham's entrance to the town one of these spirit-houses was almost completed, and the people were thatching it. Their warlike intentions were clear, and a more unsuitable time could scarcely have been chosen. The missionary party, however, were compelled to make the best of any chance that came, and approached the people, offering presents, according to native manners, to one of the oldest of the chiefs.

Then said Soqonaivi, one of Mr. Langham's party:

"What are you doing? We have brought the missionary. Put this work on one side and let us go into the spirit-house. We at Nalawa have accepted the Lotu. You do likewise. You are the

chiefs of the land. If you do not 'lotu' the land will be in trouble."

The speech, uttered in quick, sharp sentences, sounded well in the ears of the "Native of the Flood." Approving of the proposal, he led the way into the house.

When everybody was seated the ceremony was performed of presenting me, in a similar speech to that made in the house of the war chief at Nakorosule. The "Native of the Flood" was not proof against the high honours placed upon him by Cakobau, and after a long talk with his councillors, agreed to receive the Gospel in a nominal way—an act that was fraught with gravest calamity and greatest blessing for his people.

It was strange, indeed, that such a momentous discussion should have been made in a new "spirit-house." When the savages began to build it, their thought was only of the war, to which they had set their hands. While they worked, their spears and clubs lay beside them. Yet before the building was properly finished the Evangel entered, and made it the temple of the Most High.

The "Native of the Flood," acting at once, gathered the people of his own together, and told them of his decision. His word was, of course, practically supreme, and after hearing what he had to say, they shouted their approval with loud voices and allowed the Gospel into their midst.

From Mr. Langham's standpoint he had won a great victory. For now that they had accepted the Gospel, it was possible to preach to the mountaineers and teach them. He was well aware that their belief in the new religion would, for a time, be only on the surface, until, in fact, the doctrines and truths of Christianity had had good opportunity of affecting the minds and characters of the barbarians. To expect ripe and perfect fruit on these wild trees immediately after their undergoing a new treatment, would be foolish. The finest product could be hoped for only after careful and tender nurturing. A century would be all too short.

At this juncture a party of prominent chiefs from Viria arrived, bringing a gift of food, with the object of bringing the warfare to an end. A long discussion ensued, in which Mr. Langham took part, for the coming of these ambassadors seemed to aid the work that was dearest to his heart. He then returned to Bau with the Virian chiefs, sleeping at their town, which was some distance down the river. With him went as escort Drekenivere, who was a son of the "Native of the Flood."

Mr. Langham left behind him a savage people who had nominally accepted Christianity, and who were in the midst of old and savage foes. The time was coming when they would be called upon to suffer for their faith. They must be tried, and tried by fire and club.

Trouble soon arose. A native of Gau, with the curious name of Yamenatavi, was sent as a teacher to Nakorosule, the town which Mr. Langham first entered. One day when he was preaching he saw the warriors heaping up fire-wood, and, taking it as a grim hint, fled to Navaulele, on the opposite side of the river. This was one only of many signs that the anger of the heathen was about to blaze forth. Everybody was full of fear of what was surely approaching. All the Christians could do was to wait.

Several villages belonging to the district of Matailobau (the district that recognised the influence of the "Native of the Flood") had not yet become Christian, and the inhabitants of them had gone to Vugalei to help the natives there against Cakobau, who was besieging the place. The invincible Bauans chased them, with others, right up the river Wainimala to Navaulele, where the new Christians lived. There they captured one of the refugees, viz., Muakalou, of Soloira, who was not a Matailobau chief. Him they took to Viria, where he was released, with a lecture and a caution to keep the peace. It was a mistake to have given him liberty, for it was the beginning of evil.

The chief Muakalou was a pastmaster in the art of deception, and completely hoodwinked the Bauans. On his return, he immediately caused mischief, and was the chief one to bring about the murder of two young men of Navaulele, thus retaliat-

ing against Cakobau by striking at the town which had received Cakobau's "whale's tooth." But the result was other than he expected. Blood flows thicker than water, and Muakalou's action only served to draw away from himself the clan sympathy of the Matailobau villages. They now joined in with their nominal superior, the "Native of the Flood," and became Lotu people. The position then was, that a small district now professed Christianity in the midst of many enemies.

At this particular time a council of surrounding chiefs was held at Nakorosule, and they were angered at the turn of events to such an extent that they actually suggested that the chiefs of the Matailobauans should be slain, to supply flesh food for their council meeting. The only difficulty in the way of the attempt was that the war chief of Nakorosule (to whom Mr. Langham had gone at first), was not only their strong ally, but was likewise the nephew of the "Native of the Flood." Nevertheless, these savage councillors, by dint of persuasion, flattery, and presents, gained his consent to their diabolical project. Forthwith they set themselves to carry it through.

The town of Nacau was appointed to open hostilities, and the plot was carried into effect by the Nacau braves in the following manner:—

A chief of Navaulele named Cabecabenivalu, had married a woman at Nacau. The latter had been on

a visit to her native place. albeit her husband belonged to the faction which opposed her own relatives. Cabecabenivalu, probably because he expected that soon there would be trouble between the tribes, went to bring her home. At that time he did not know that Naeau was the town chosen to bring war upon them.

The man and his wife were returning on Monday when they came up with two chiefs of Nacau. These latter were apparently dawdling in the pathway. Pretending to be friends, they began to chat with the couple. One of them suggested a smoke. They then invited Cabecabenivalu to "nita" (produce fire by friction). Without a thought of treachery, the latter began to rub two sticks together in the native manner. As he stooped they struck him down.

Two boys fishing heard the sound of strife, and came running into Navaulele. and crying out that Cabecabenivalu had been slain. The Matailobau chiefs were infuriated, and war broke out, as when a smouldering fire is fanned by a strong breeze. Nacau, which had been the cat's-paw of the enemy, was attacked, and some of the inhabitants slain. The enemy answered this by an assault on Ulira, a Matailobau town. They appeared before it in full war-dress. whilst the teacher was giving out Methodist membership tickets. From a distance they shouted their challenge to the people to come out for a fight.

The teacher said: "Don't go. Let the women remain still."

The enemy fired a musket, and all the district of Matailobau heard the report. The inhabitants, fully armed, came running down from their villages, but were attacked in the pathways, and lost heavily. Fifty of them were killed; four of them were eaten. The opposing forces were too strong, and besieged Ulira in complete war fashion. They took and slew one hundred people of both sexes. Another town called Taulevu shared the same fate. These two villages were totally destroyed.

Flushed with success, the enemy sent an ultimatum to the "Native of the Flood," couched in the following terms:—

"Give up the new religion and you shall live." His noble answer was:

"If I die, and all belonging to me, I will not give up the new religion."

On the arrival of the fierce demand of the heathen, some of the Christian teachers, who belonged to districts far away, resolved to stay in the beleagured towns, and die with the people. Their brave self-denial is remembered to-day by the villagers of those parts. Some of their names are Taitusi, from Nairai; Pita, from Rewa; Rupeni, from Dravo; Nafitalai, from Namuka; Solomoni, from Nakoroivau; Nemani, from Waikete; and Nasoni, from Buretu. They

should be written on the missionary "Scroll of Fame." In the crisis, an urgent plea for help was sent to Bau.

Ratu Wiliame, son of the "Native of the Flood," was selected for the risky journey. He and a youth named Ratu Samu came away in the night, and arrived at Bau on the second day. Ratu Wiliame said to Cakobau:

"We are nearly finished. Two villages are empty. But we have not given up the Lotu yet. Come and help us."

Cakobau made answer:

"Take a tabua (whale's tooth) to the enemy and ask for a parley. You will thus gain time."

On the return of the messengers, once more I was brought into use, but the minds of the savages were so inflamed that not even my wonderful powers could influence them. Chief after chief refused to touch me. To them I was polluted by the Lotu. At last I was accepted in Nacau, the very town from which the war began. To be the messenger of peace was more to my liking than to be the signal of blood-red war.

Soon the allied enemies were divided amongst themselves. One section therefore carried the tide of war down the river, where they annoyed Cakobau by destroying a herd of pigs belonging to his daughter. He immediately came with an army, and

utterly dispersed them, taking a large number of prisoners.

The religion of Christ began from that time to change the peoples inland, as well as on the coastal districts of Fiji. The lives of the inhabitants grew better, and these cruel tribes of the thick inland forests became peace-loving people, freely and fearlessly intermingling with each other and those far away. The missionaries were enabled to raise up from amongst those who flocked to them, a faithful band of native ministers, who were ever anxious that their island home might be crowned with goodness and God's blessing.

CHAPTER XII.

"THE FORMER THINGS HAVE PASSED AWAY."

ONE effect of the Religion of Peace amongst the Fijian people was that it became safer for them to travel farther afield. In the early days it was fraught with danger for a native to go very far from his home. Persons who before never dreamed of going to Lau or Kadavu, now did so without fear.

I was destined, therefore, to see more of the Fijian Group, being taken to the island of Kabara, in Lau, by a mission teacher, whose name was Apakuki.

Life on a small and lonely island of the ocean is very dull. During my stay in Kabara, however, I was to witness one of those swift changes in the routine of island life that serve as a topic of conversation for months after the actual event occurred.

It was after the summer time, when men began to think that the days of the hurricane season were over for the nonce. The fresh sea breezes blew softly from the south-east, and the climate of the island was almost at its best. In the middle of the month of April, contrary to expectation, there fell a dead calm. Shortly afterwards the wind sprang up

from the west in fitful gusts. A curious haze covered the sun's disc, giving it a steely look. Little bits of cloud scudded across the sky, and the sea waves became tipped with white. Riding at anchor in the lagoon was a cutter, which rolled and plunged at its moorings, making the boom creak loudly enough to be heard on shore.

Old men gravely shook their heads and muttered that "something was coming." Even the fowls felt the general depression, and the little chicks crept under their mother's wings. For the people of the island there was nothing to do but sit and wait, except that a second anchor was thrown out from the cutter, and the boom was lashed more securely. As nightfall approached, the wind blew more meaningly, and each gust had an angry snap that boded ill. The sun, with scarce a touch of gold, set behind thick flying scud; the sea waves rose in fury, only to have their curling crests smitten by the blast into flying spray; proud cocoa-nuts bowed themselves to the ground, and showers of leaves swirled around the closed huts of the villagers.

It was now night, and what a night! The events between sunset and sunrise, who shall describe? It was as if all the forces of the world came to work damage. Through the long hours of darkness the villagers fearfully watched their houses swaying in the grip of the hurricane. In some cases the strong huts fell; in others, without a moment's warning,

the roof crashed in under the weight of a falling cocoa-nut tree, torn up by its roots, or of a flying branch from a wrecked ivi tree. Rain poured in, the thatch being lifted up wildly by the storm; and the natives sat, wet and shivering, amid the ruin of their homes. The cutter drove from its anchorage to the beach, and was driven some distance inland A dreadful feeling that anything might happen seized the population, which brought its own relief in a madly, careless spirit. Men even laughed and joked at intervals, though their voices were drowned by the roaring of the waves and wind without.

Towards midnight the wind died away, only to blow again with renewed violence from the opposite quarter.

Two men, with a number of women and children, were sitting in the teacher's house. One of them, Jemesa, was lying upon the damp mats, while his companion, Apakuki, the teacher, sat with his shoulder against one of the rocking posts.

"This is a fearful wind," shouted the former. "I am thinking of any vessel that might be out in it. The mail cutter will be caught, I am afraid."

"True! True!" answered the teacher. "I also have been remembering the sailors at sea. Shall we pray for them?"

"Good," replied the other; "let us pray, if you please, for our friends on the big waters."

The women were invited to join in their devotions, and a prayer, earnest in its utter dependance upon God, was offered by Apakuki. Jamesa followed with a second petition. They then arose from their knees comforted. Meanwhile the storm raged on.

Broad daylight showed a spectacle of havoc on shore which could not be imagined by those who have not seen the track of a hurricane. The villagers would scarcely recover from their losses in the course of years.

At sea the sight was one never to be forgotten. Mighty Pacific rollers, towering high, swept in on the devoted coral reef, to be crumpled and shattered into a hundred clouds of white foam, which were cast up sixty feet high. Not a sail could be seen on the horizon; nothing but the tossing, tumbling sea.

As the days passed by the natives plucked up courage to repair their houses as best they could, and things settled into somewhat of their usual monotony.

A fortnight after the hurricane, however, there was a shout from the hills:

"A waqa ciri! A waqa ciri!" "A drifting ship! A drifting ship!"

There was a rush to the heights, from which the hull of the vessel could be seen rising heavily upon the swell. It was drawing towards the island, for the wind was from the sea.

Many were the exclamations of the simple folk. Some conjectured as to the likelihood of men being

on board, and others hoped that this was not so, for then they themselves might be enriched by the wreck. Jemesa and Apakuki remembered their prayer and kept their counsel.

On the following morning the whole population were up early to watch the progress of the vessel. And to the disappointment of some, it seemed to be drifting away. A sharp-eyed youngster startled everybody at that moment by yelling at the top of his high-pitched voice:

"A velovelo! E rua!" "A boat. Two of them."

Two boats could certainly be descried like black dots on the water, and they appeared to be coming from the direction of the derelict. They were still many miles away, and the chief of the village said that they could not possibly be in before dark. One of them, however, made a swifter passage, owing to a piece of sail which the crew hoisted, and arrived at four in the afternoon. As the boat touched shore the villagers rushed down pell-mell, to find half a dozen men standing in the little craft, scarcely knowing what to do next.

"It's alright, Tom," said a grey-bearded old man, who seemed to be the captain. "They don't appear to carry arms."

"Right you are, Captain," Tom replied. "Anyway, they are too many for us, and this is our last chance."

"Come, men," cried their leader, "we shall go ashore and show them that we trust them. It may be that they will pity us."

Taking their lives in their hands as they thought, the six men walked ashore, when, to their great relief and delight, the chief stepped forward and shook hands with them. A short word from him sent half a dozen brawny fellows to carry the sailors' belongings out of the boat to the village.

With a beckoning motion, the native chief then led the wondering party by the inland path to the village.

"Captain," said a tall sailor named Smithson. "this beats all. What will be the next? They are the tamest savages ever I did see."

"I have a thought," replied the Captain, "that these peoples are Christians. If so, we are safe. But we shall know soon."

The party emerged from the undergrowth into the little space occupied by the houses. Three of them, the Captain, Tom and Smithson, were located in the teacher's house, where I was ensconced.

Thoroughly wearied out with their toils, the three men threw themselves upon the mats, and regardless of any thoughts of danger, fell into a deep sleep, from which they did not awake until sundown, when the sound of singing from the adjacent house fell upon their ears.

An Honoured Native Minister, Inoke Buadromo.

"In the name of all that's curious, Captain," queried Smithson, "what's that?"

The Captain turned over on his side and said:

"It is true, Smithson, what I told you. They are Christians, and that hymn is nothing more nor less than "Precious Name," that I learned when I was a youngster. We have much to thank the Great God for. But now let us look for the other boat."

They all jumped to their feet, feeling ashamed that they had forgotten their companions in distress. The Captain suited the action to the word, and led the way through the village and up the hill-path which he had noticed when first they entered the town. After a stiff climb they could faintly see, in the growing dusk, that the other boat was still about a mile outside the reef, and far from the passage.

"It will be dark by the time they arrive, so let us go and have something to renew the inner man, and then come and meet them. It will be full tide about ten o'clock, and they might get safely across the reef itself without going to the passage. Let us put up lights to guide them." This being done, the men followed the advice of the skipper and returned to the house for something to eat. What was their astonishment and pleasure to find a little feast of steaming taro and yam, together with boiled fish as an appetiser. The fresh food, with canned goods and some bread they had brought from the ship, pro-

vided an excellent meal for hungry men, and they set to with a will. Nor were the villagers less pleased when they received some tinned meats for their share.

The meal was scarcely finished when a faint halloo was heard on the still evening air.

"It is from the mate's boat," said Tom. "He must have come to the reef and is afraid to tackle it in the dark."

Making signs to the Fijians to follow, and calling their fellow-sailors from the house where they were lodged, with flaring reed torches the little band followed the curving beach to a place nearest the point whence the halloos proceeded.

Some of the natives, amongst whom were Apakuki and Jemesa, brought the boat round, and rowing in fine style, made signs that they were going out to meet the ship-wrecked sailors. Gladly the Captain consented, and away they went.

It was late when they returned with the two boats. The belated sailors were thoroughly worn out after their long row in the tropical heat, and were glad indeed to hear their names called out by their companions on shore. Nor were they less astonished than the Captain and his crew had been when strong-limbed natives, with much chattering and laughter, shouldered all their goods and carried them a mile and a half along the beach to the town.

"What have we struck here?" asked the mate, as he wearily plodded beside the skipper.

"Christians," answered he.

"Humph," grunted the mate, who was known to have a strong dislike to anything of that sort. He was still more silent after he found a meal ready for him at the house. Truly he had much to think about.

Sleep was almost as necessary to the sailors as food, so stretching their limbs out upon the reed mats, and using pieces of carved wood for pillows, they were soon unconscious of their surroundings.

At five o'clock in the morning a gun-shot broke the stillness of the village. The Captain, not yet quite awake, and feeling for his pistol, hastily stepped to the door. There he found Apakuki, the teacher, smiling, and holding in his hand a smoking gun and a dead fowl.

Reassured, the skipper returned to his companions, saying:

"We're in luck's way, chaps. Chicken for breakfast, smoking hot."

Nor was he mistaken, for the chicken was duly placed, together with yam, on the improvised table made of boxes; and the little shipwrecked party were invited to partake, while Jemesa and Apakuki sat down before them, ready to rise at once if anything were needed by their guests.

"Captain," said Tom. "this has got me beaten. Two weeks ago we were driven at the mercy of the hurricane. Our masts snapped like carrots. We had lost our rudder, and had given ourselves up for lost until we saw this island. Then we came off in the boats, not knowing whether we were rowing to our death or not. When we beached, we met Christians instead of cannibals, and the last is, that they shoot their fowls for us. I vote we say grace."

The events of the past had so affected the men that they agreed, and to the delight of Apakuki, Tom said grace. Nor did the grace affect their appetites adversely, as some might think.

The conversation that ensued had reference to the past of the Fijian people, and the evident change made in them by Christianity. Each had his little quota of knowledge to give, and at last the Captain said:

"It is a fact, men, that we have much to be thankful for. If we had come to a cannibal shore we should have had to say good-bye to this life. And all I can do is to describe the change in these people by the words my old mother often used to quote, 'The former things have passed away.'"

The Meandering Stream. Stinson Photo.

CHAPTER XIII.
A NATIVE MINISTER.

THE changes in the manners and customs of the Fijians from this time on was rapid and marked. The dark clouds of heathenism were shot through with light. Undoubtedly the body of native ministers which I mentioned in a previous chapter was one of the main levers by which the missionaries endeavoured to raise the habits and practices of life then in vogue amongst the Islanders. Again and again their noble deeds were reported. Men like Joeli Bulu, and Samuela Seru, when contrasted with their own relatives, were as jewels set in a dark garment. Their light appeared as a wonderful thing beside the gloom of surrounding superstitution. The glow of their spiritual fervour seemed to illumine their minds as well, so that often the missionary himself owed his life to their sagacity and timely advice.

I have for these men, as a class, nothing but the sincerest admiration. Having passed through the fiery ordeal of their Fijian youth, they have become settled in their faith and mode of living. Therefore, if any inquirer wishes to see more definitely the best result of the Methodist mission in Fiji, let him

first go to the old men. In them there is to be found a steadiness of purpose and fire of enthusiasm that marks their witness as unique. If occasionally one has fallen, it is precisely what we should expect from these weak souls, who were but yesterday sick of a wasting fever. The marvel is, that so many are strong and vigorous. Gradually, and as a result of the self-sacrificing and unceasing efforts of the early missionaries and their dark-skinned helpers, the immense heap of evil showed signs of moving. One effect this transformation had upon myself, viz., to lessen my importance in the eyes of the natives. The extraordinary qualities which I had before possessed began to fade. In these days, though I am not without honour amongst the people, the Fijian could well do without me. Instead, therefore, of being kept for special occasions and purposes, I found myself often used for minor objects, such as acquiring a pig, or gaining permission to cut trees or reeds on another's land. My new and manifold duties increased so much that I was never long in one place.

It came to pass, in the lapse of years, that I was sent to Kadavu upon the death of an old chief called Naba, and became the property of his young kinsman named Kelepi Naba, in the town of Nakasaleka. It so happened that he determined to keep me as an heirloom, as was the custom with some Fijians when they acquired any article which they

prized very highly. The story of Kelepi I shall now relate.

He was a short sturdy youth, of rather a sober disposition. His face betokened repose and perseverance. Unlike most of the Fijians, his hair had a tendency to straightness, which pointed to Polynesian blood. As a young man, he came under the preaching of the Gospel. The first sermon he heard was from a Tongan, and from that moment his heart was warmed by the good tidings. Being slow to decide upon important things, in this matter he made no haste. But, considering the whole question in his heart, he gradually came to the conclusion that he would accept the Gospel and give himself to the work of preaching. As the conviction grew upon him he became more and more earnest in his daily deportment. His companions noted the change in him, and some mocked, while others approved. The adverse opinions of men, however, did not appear to affect Kelepi, for he kept on steadily pursuing his course.

While still a young man he formed a habit which greatly assisted to shape his sturdy character. It came to pass thus: In the addresses and exhortations he had heard, there were many appeals to the congregation that they should give up their vain calling upon the spirits of the dead, and pray, especially in secret, to the living God. Consequently a desire arose in his heart to make known his requests to God in prayer. But how to do so in secret was the

difficulty. Fijian life was so free that one could be said to have no privacy. The houses of each and all might be entered at any hour, as in the case of the ancient Jews, by those who wished to do so. In addition, the houses were but single rooms, and used indiscriminately as eating place, sleeping chamber, and reception room. Kelepi therefore had recourse to the quiet woods. Searching around, he happened on a large tree some distance from the regular path, and in its deep shade he found the solitude he needed. Every morning, before sunrise, Kelepi sought out his trysting-place and prayed that God might save him from the evil that was in the world, in words like these:

"Oh, God, I am but a poor Fijian, but Thou hast the light. Thy Son has died for me, and He has power from Thee to save. Show me the way through Him, and lead me in the right path. Keep me until Thou shalt call me to Thyself, for the sake of Christ, the Righteous Sacrifice. Amen."

So he pleaded for years. The missionary noticed his growing zeal, and placed him on the plan as a local preacher. Praying and preaching, he grew in favour and usefulness. It appeared to all that he was marked out by his intelligence to become a native minister. Step by step he advanced, till he attained to that rank in 1887.

In this honourable capacity he served God faithfully, and was true to the teaching of the Methodist

Church. He was as a rock in the midst of the rushing stream, and no one could say that he lapsed at any time from his high resolve.

The following story is told of him:—In Tavuki the natives had nominally accepted Christianity; the result was that they had given up many of their superstitious practices, particularly that of spirit-worship. It was not to be supposed that there would be no recurrence of their old customs, for the majority had but the name without the power of the Gospel. Suddenly, by one of those strange unaccountable movements of the native mind, the villagers fell back into a deliberate act of heathenism. The old habit, like an avalanche, swept the new teachings aside like frail brushwood. For a moment the people were as barbarous as ever. It seemed as if the Gospel had utterly failed. News travels rapidly in Fiji. From mouth to mouth the tidings flew, until all Kadavu knew that the people of Tavuki were heathen once more. Kelepi arose in his righteous enthusiasm for the Lord, and without delay, went straight down to those people. Apparently they had already become a little ashamed of their act. When he called them together they obeyed, but with the air of guilty school-boys.

A white man tells the story of the doughty champion of the Cross, and his vehement denunciation of their foolishness and weakness. No chiefly influence nor other earthly power did he fear; but he spoke as

one inspired, as he stood in that congregation and exhorted them all to repent of their action, and receive again the Lord Jesus Christ as their only Master. To his burning words they gave good heed, for they turned from their dark ways the second time, and began once more to walk in the better path.

Kelepi's reputation grew amongst his brethren. In debate he was cautious and shrewd, and if the need of the work demanded it, he could be liberal in his views. It was his custom to sit amongst his brethren till he had heard all that was to be said, and then to quickly sum up their views before giving his own views. After he spoke, the listeners usually came round to his way of thinking.

That Kelepi's heart was in the right place is conclusively proved by the following incident:—

On a certain occasion he paid a visit to the mission station. A new school had been recently established, and there were upwards of forty-five boys in residence. Kelepi was at the time over sixty years of age. His hair was grey and his face furrowed by the plough of time. His appearance, therefore, was that of a patriarch, as he sat in a meeting of the school-boys.

The missionary seized the opportunity of asking Kelepi to speak a few well-chosen words to the lads, words that they might remember throughout their lives.

Very real dignity clothed the old man as he rose and made this speech:

"Young men, the missionary has asked me to speak some words to you which you will remember all your days. It is with gladness that I do so. You see that I am old in the service of God, and, indeed, I am, for it is over forty years since I became a preacher of the Gospel. The last twenty-six years I have had the honour of being a native minister. It has been a long service, but I am glad that I have persevered in it. I feel that the end cannot be far away now. It is therefore my desire to tell you the reason that I have stood so long in the work. When I was a young man I was converted, and the Spirit led me to think very seriously of the things of eternity. One thing above all others was dear to me, and that was to pray to God in secret. But as you know, our houses are not suitable for such a custom as they are usually but a single room. Therefore I sought me out a large tree in the woods, some distance from the pathway. There, every morning, very early, I asked God to help me and preserve me from evil. To that prayer often repeated I attribute my forty years of preaching and my preservation to the present time. God cared for me day by day, and now I thank God from my heart for His goodness. Young men, I ask you to remember these words in the days that are coming. Pray to God in secret, in some

secluded spot where your soul can commune with His Holy Spirit. I have finished."

Kelepi sat down with his eye kindling. There was silence, and the boys gazed on him as if they had got a new glimpse of his character. A short prayer closed the little gathering, and the youths dispersed. Surely some of them, at least, will keep in mind till their dying day the excellent advice that Kelepi gave them on that memorable occasion.

The Synod of 1909 approached, and, as usual, Kelepi was elected as representative. But the hand of sickness struck him down. The old man had exerted himself too much by climbing over the hills at Daviqele, where he was stationed at the time. It was a great sadness to him that he could not go to Synod, for it had always been a joy to him to take a share in the discussions on the work of God, and to participate in the ordination of his younger brethren, as was his wont. But God willed it otherwise, and the faithful servant murmured not.

Gradually his strong body grew weaker, until it was clear that his days were numbered. And now let those who sneer at the simple religious life of the natives draw reverently near while the majesty of death ennobles Kelepi with a new dignity. The place where we stand is holy. Never is man so sincere as when dying. All hypocrisy falls to the ground as cast-off clothes when the angel of God pays his

dread visit. A man's past life rises up so vividly that the soul has no courage to deceive any longer.

The august angel of death entered at last the humble dwelling where Kelepi lay. His presence Kelepi knew by that mysterious insight that dying Fijians have when they are crossing the borderland. Then, while all listened in solemn awe, he commended each of his dear ones to God, praying for his wife and children by name, that they might be kept, when he was gone, from the evil that is in the world.

His breath grew laboured, and he could but utter one more sentence. Turning his dying eyes to the people who had gathered around his bed, he made his last request: "Give my love to my brethren in the ministry." With these words on his lips, he passed to the higher service, where love only is the moving passion, and the law of love shall govern the happy relations between the redeemed.

Outside the house a curious thing was happening. A Chinaman fled for his life in terror, because a ball of fire shot from the sea to land. A Fijian also took refuge from what appeared like a fiery chair that floated out to sea. It was probably a meteoric display, but the simple folk thought it had come as a sign to them that a good man had fallen in death.

The village was full of the praises of the departed, and the leaders discussed how they might best honour him. They finally decided that they would bury him amongst the chiefs, which was an unusual honour paid to one who himself was of humble rank. On the morrow they carried the remains to the little plot sacred to the memory of chiefs. Slowly the procession wound its way under the shade of the ivi and dawa trees, each man and each woman carrying, according to their custom, a plaited mat. Folded in these mats, the dead was laid to rest, while another native minister read the words: "Na soso ki na soso, na qele ki ne qele, na nuku ki na nuku—ni da sa nuitaka na nodra tu cake tale ki na bula tawa mudu."

"Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust, in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to the life everlasting." Then the company, led by Kelepi's son, sang:

"Ulu Vatu dua bau,
Mo ni yaga tu vei au."
"Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee."

Few of the singers could control their voices sufficiently to finish the hymn. The evening shadows fell over the land as the sun sank beyond the Pacific rollers. Above the grave towered an extinct volcano, crowned with clouds fired by the gorgeous light of departing day. Near the crest soared an eagle-

hawk. From the woods came the trumpeting of wild pigeons, and from the ocean-reef the thunder of broken waves. How long shall these things continue to be? Be it ever so long, the soul of Kelepi Naba rests in sure and certain hope of the Resurrection of the Just, when the heavens shall be folded up as a vesture, and the elements melt with fervent heat.

. . . .

A few months later the grave of Kelepi was surrounded by a neat white picket fence, erected by his comrades as a mark of respect for their former leader.

CHAPTER XIV.
A MISSIONARY'S WELCOME.

ON the death of Kelepi, I fell to the lot of one of his relatives in Nakasaleka. This town, which was Kelepi's birthplace. is situated between heavily-wooded ranges, which rear their dark terraces against the blue sky at the back. The frequent rains cause them to be verdant in the extreme, the surplus waters being carried to the sea by a turbulent mountain torrent. In one place there is a waterfall, where the stream dashes downward into a deep pool in such a manner as to raise the drooping spirits of the sight-seer to a state of exhilaration. The pool is famous as a swimming resort for strangers, and can scarcely be bottomed by good divers. Leaving the pool, the stream meanders more leisurely down through the town, where women make use of it for washing dishes and clothing. On every hand grows luxurious vegetation, affording secure retreat for thousands of wild pigeon, parrots, and wood-doves. Such is Nakasaleka.

On a certain warm evening there was a stir in the village, for a teacher came from Yale, to report that a letter had been received containing good news. The missionary was to begin his annual tour of

inspection within a fortnight. It was not long before everybody in the neighbourhood was acquainted with the fact. The missionary would first visit the adjacent town of Rakiraki, and then row round the point into Nakasaleka. Being the centre of a district, it was the custom of several smaller towns to send their strong quota of people to join in the services at Nakasaleka. Chiefs and people helped willingly in the arrangements, and vied with one another in their generosity. On this occasion the schools were to be examined in reading, writing, arithmetic, and geography. The children went almost frantic, therefore, with delight and excitement. They practiced dances till late in the night to celebrate the event, and longed for the day when they might display their skill.

It was arranged also that just as the missionary turned the point in his new boat, the young people of the district should suddenly appear from behind the cocoa-nut trees, and that they should carry long poles, to which would be tied streamers of native cloth. With the native cloth were to be fastened also articles of local manufacture, as gifts for the crew. It is a pretty little custom, handed down from former times, and was intended as a salute to any new boat coming for the first time to the town. The procedure was that as soon as the missionary's boat should touch the sands of the beach, the boys were to leap out and chase the children for the prizes. The chiefs

decided that they would buy a bullock and kill it in honour of the visitor, and that every man should bring a present to him of a yam or root of taro. It was very simple and very sincere. Since then I have heard some people scoff at the preparations made by Fijians in honour of their visitors, but it is quite clear therefrom that they do not understand the minds of the people. Such a reception is almost a sure sign that the inhabitants of a town or district are glad to receive their guests. If the feast and other little festivities were omitted, it would indicate that the natives were not pleased with the visitor. Let us pass the simple indulgence then, and allow the native hearts to rejoice as their spirits suggest.

Another matter I must not omit, which was important to me as well as to others. One of the leading men called on my owner to ask if he would relinquish me, since they wished to present the best whale's tooth procurable to the missionary as a chiefly sign of their pleasure and respect. The finest tabua in the town was the one which had been the property of Kelepi, viz., myself. Now my owner was in no way desirous of losing me, but for the sake of the missionary he willingly gave me to the chiefs, who kept me safely until the day of presentation.

At last the time appointed arrived. The school children stood waiting behind the cocoa-nuts, everyone arrayed more or less tidily in holiday clothes, albeit

there was a slightly barbarous smack in their adornments. They wore garlands of green, intermingled with flowers. In their hands they held the poles with the long streamers and the gifts. Their faces betrayed glad anticipation as they awaited the appearance of the boat. A watchman came running hastily along a rough path, shouting that the vessel was just near the headland. In a second or two it shot round the promontory. The native crew, who were the mission boys, rowed perfectly, feathered beautifully, and moved with an easy rhythm. It was an ideal scene. As the boat drew rapidly nearer, one of the elder boys approached the landing place, and blew a long blast on a conch shell, as a challenge to the rowers. The latter became visibly excited as they cried: "A cere! A cere!" With redoubled effort they bent to the oars. At the same moment the crowd of small boys and girls appeared at the other end of the beach, looking very picturesque as they held aloft their white streamers against a dark background of cocoa-nuts. The boat shortly after grounded, and immediately the boy with the conch shell ran towards his comrades, while the boat's crew leaped out on the shingle, and ran helter-skelter in pursuit of the school children. The scrimmage was soon over, and the mission boys returned to the boat laden with spoil.

The missionary was then assisted to shore, where he was met by the native minister and teachers, who

were quite superior-looking in their clean white clothes, especially ironed for the occasion. Farther on stood the congregated chiefs, and these also showed their gratification in warm hand-shakes and words of welcome. They led him, by arrangement previously made, to a house set apart, in which he took his seat at a table covered with a white cloth. Several of the men entered with the chiefs and sat down in an irregular semi-circle.

To those who have seen the little ceremony, this description might be dull, and indeed almost needless. But there was one intensely interested participant in the proceedings. For I, the great whale's tooth, was to be presented for the last time. My career was drawing to a close, and henceforth I was to be hung in the missionary's house like a trophy of the chase.

The function began with a strange cry from without, which was answered by another from within the house. A man whose duty it was approached in a stooping posture, holding me in his two hands. In this manner he delivered his message. The missionary meanwhile sat listening carefully. As regards the words, the speech was couched in something of the following style:

"Sir,—We bring you this small tooth, and present it to you. Some time ago we heard you were coming, and our hearts rejoiced greatly. Our town is a small one, and our district is poor. But we give thanks that you thought it worth your while to come.

Fijian School Children.

We rejoice for yourself that you are with us, but we are gladder because of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, which you lead and guide in this island. We ask you to pray for us. But I have spoken too long in your presence. We offer this tooth in thanks, and ask you to remember us in the presence of God, that the land may prosper, and that the religion of Christ may spread in our midst." With these words, the old man sat down. As he retired, his long grey beard swept his breast. That very man had been with Cakobau in the wildest days of Fiji. His name is Josefa, and while I write he still lives, honoured of all, a patriarch of the past. Backed by the experience of a lifetime, his action was a graceful one, despite the fact that it was of a barbarous sort. For myself, I took it as a hopeful augury of a calm and peaceful eventide. Swiftly my thoughts flew backwards to the past. Like ghosts, Dan Sawyer, Dakuloa, Raivotu, Matavou, and the others passed before me. Surely the "Methodies," as Jack the Cornishman had called them, have been the instrument of God for good, and that warm-hearted sailor, if he could have seen the fruit of fifty years' toil, would have shouted for joy.

The same night a most orderly meeting was held, the church being crowded with earnest listeners. Impressed with the spectacle of so many upturned faces, the missionary spoke with power upon the great subject of sin, life and death, judg-

ment, and our duty to our fellows. It could not be expected that these native Christians would see every side of the truths set before them, yet, according to their nature, they gladly accepted that which was beneficial to themselves. He who expects more is unwise and unreasonable. The brand of a thousand years is not rubbed out in half a century.

After the hearty singing of "Work, for the Night is Coming," many stayed to talk with the missionary. Some desired to become prayer-leaders, others wished to confess their sins, others, again, signed the pledge

Wise man that he was, the missionary would not "quench the smoking flax" nor "break the bruised reed." On the contrary, he uttered words of cheer or direction, according to the needs of each. Tiny pebbles they were, thrown into the vasty deep; but the ripples therefrom will doubtless break large on the shores of eternity.

The morning shone clear, for the heavy clouds of the night had left but fleecy remnants in the gullies and around the mountain peaks. Cool, dewy breezes fanned the warm coast. Merrily the stream leaped amongst its rocks; and it was a joyful company of simple-hearted natives who conducted the missionary beside the stream to his boat that morning. The picture is with me still, for I, too, made one of the mission party. The fringe of cocoa-nuts, the characteristic white beach beneath, the people in their many-

hued garments, contrasting sharply with the deep blue-green mountains beyond, made a study as the missionary said, for an academy painting. Add to this the mother-of-pearl bay, with the boat skimming on its surface, and you have a vivid memory that lives in the heart till memory dies.

As the boat pushed off the villagers sang: "To the work, to the work." Never, probably, shall I see them again; but are not many of them in thy Book, O God?

Bending lightly to the oars, the happy crew plunged the blades into the yielding water. So, with the strain of the hymn ringing in our ears, we swiftly glided over the sea till the wooded point hid us from view. The sail was set and trimmed, and the oars were laid in the boat beneath the thwarts. Then, with a favourable breeze, we steered for the mission station far down the coast.

One incident on that memorable journey I am bound to relate. We were passing a wooded slope. High up on the mountain side stood a solitary Fijian house. Just beyond this were several small yam patches and taro plots. When almost opposite, the missionary asked his boys what perchance the house might be. "A leper's dwelling," said they. "He is separated from his village, and now he makes his own gardens, and lives by himself in this place." Even as they were talking of him the sounds of singing

came floating from the mountain side. The men raised their heads to listen. It was the voice of a man, and he appeared to be singing from his garden.

"What is he singing?" asked the missionary. "Let us all listen carefully." As the words came clearly upon the land-breeze, the crew could distinguish the hymn, "To the Work, to the Work." The man had recognised the missionary's boat, and was singing this hymn as his contribution to the general welcome. He might not mingle with the rest of the people, though it would have been a great joy for him to do so; but there still remained this means by which he might show his deep interest in the work of the Lord. Thus also might he indicate how he, too, believed that Jesus Christ had come to save the world from sin. In that little hut, doubtless he had his Bible and his hymn-book, which would comfort him in his hours of loneliness. Needless to say, the missionary and his party were very much touched by the pathetic incident. Instead of the dread cry, "Unclean! Unclean!" comes a song. Instead of harsh cynicism comes sympathy with the work.

"What shall we sing in return?" said the missionary. After some little discussion, the following hymn was chosen as the most suitable: "Lead, Kindly Light." So they sang it with much feeling, and the sound of it arose from the sea to the mountain, the echo returning with sweet effect:

"Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on;
The night is dark, and I am far from home;
Lead Thou me on.
Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene—one step enough for me.

. . . .

So long Thy power hath blessed me, sure it still
Will lead me on
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
The night is gone,
And with the morn those angel faces smile
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile."

Much more need not be said. Driven by a splendid breeze, we crossed bay after bay, and sailed past point after point, until we came to the mission house, which was set, like Sion, upon a hill.

The missionary and crew were received by young students, who composed the major portion of the population in the mission village. A warmer welcome still awaited him in his own home, and there I was hung in a conspicuous place as an ornament to the walls of the mission house.

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